

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مَجَلَّةٌ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا سَمَّاهَا مَجَلَّةُ الْمَدِينَةِ

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BY THE LIGHT OF THE QUR-AN

Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth ; a likeness of His light is as a *pillar on* which is a lamp, the lamp is in a glass, (and) the glass is as it were a brightly shining star, lit from a blessed olive-tree, neither eastern nor western, the oil whereof almost gives light though fire touch it not—light upon light—Allah guides to His light whom He pleases, and Allah sets forth parables for men, and Allah is cognizant of all things :

In houses which Allah has permitted to be exalted and that His name may be remembered in them ; there glorify Him therein in the mornings and the evenings :

Men whom neither merchandise nor selling diverts from the remembrance of Allah and the keeping up of prayer and the giving of poor-rate ; they fear a day in which the hearts and the eyes shall turn about.

That Allah may give them the best reward of what they have done, and give them more out of His grace ;

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and Allah gives sustenance to whom He pleases without measure.

And (as for) those who disbelieve, their deeds are like the mirage in a desert, which the thirsty man deems to be water ; until when he comes to it, he finds it to be naught, and there he finds Allah, so He pays back to him his reckoning in full ; and Allah is quick in reckoning :

Or like utter darkness in the deep sea : there covers it a wave above which is another wave, above which is a cloud, (layers of) utter darkness one above another ; when he holds out his hand, he is almost unable to see it ; and to whomsoever Allah does not give light, he has no light. —The Holy Qur-án, Ch. XXIV : vv. 35-40.

A CHARACTERISTIC MISSIONARY TACTICS

BY ABDUL LATIF ARNOLD

As an example of the lines of argument adopted by Christian Missionaries for the purpose of attacking Islam, a book issued by the Christian Literature Society for India will prove helpful.

The book in question is one of a collection known as "The Islam Series." It is entitled *Islam Refuted On Its Own Grounds* and is by the Rev. E. M. Wherry D.D.

The arguments employed are, in the main, very unsound, and the logic is exceedingly poor ; but the author has done his pathetic best with most unpromising material.

To quote Dr. Wherry's own words :

The purpose of this little book is to prove from the principles of Islam, as found in the teachings of the Qur-án and traditions of the Muslims, that the true religion which has existed in the world from the beginning is the religion of Christ, and that they are

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true Musulmans who, in accordance with the direction of the *Taurat*, *Zabur* and *Injil* (the Bible) believe in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Indeed, a truly formidable task.

The author, after a more or less correct statement of Muslim beliefs, opens his attack in the following words :

The Quran, if given by inspiration, as it claims, would be found to be in accord with the doctrine of Jesus. It may not contradict it or reject it.

In support of this, Dr. Wherry quotes the chapter THE FOOD, vv. 48-52, and remarks :

Each succeeding portion of the Divine revelation must, therefore, confirm and attest that which precedes it.

This, of course, is a reasonably accurate statement of Muslim belief on the subject. In his attempt to prove that the Holy Qur-ān is at variance with the Gospel of Jesus, Dr. Wherry then discovers that Islām denies the sonship of Christ, the Trinity and Incarnation, and exclaims triumphantly :

From these passages of the Qur-ān it is evident that the teaching of the Qur-ān by no means agrees with that of the *Taurat* and *Injil*.

Dr. Wherry has, however, omitted one very important link in the chain of reasoning ; and, unfortunately for his argument, his whole theory breaks down when this argument is examined.

He assumes, most unwarrantedly, that the sonship of Christ, Trinity and the Incarnation are actually teachings of the *Taurat* and *Injil*, whereas the reverse is the case. Christ himself, (surely a higher authority than Dr. Wherry) says, in answer to a man who addressed him as "good Master:"

Why callest thou me good ? There is none good but One, that is, God.¹

¹Matt. XIX. 16-17.

which is as positive a denial of his Divinity, and therefore of the Trinity and the Incarnation, as can be imagined.

The author also states that the Prophets Daniel and Isaiah foretold that, when Messiah should come, he would be put to death (Dan. IX. 26 and Isa, LIII). When we refer to the text of this chapter of Isaiah, however, we find that Dr. Wherry has been most unfortunate in his choice of Text, for Isaiah LIII states that Messiah was '*wounded for our transgressions*' (that is, of the Jewish race), but continues :

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief : *when thou shalt make his soul a offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days.*

A very clear prophecy that Christ would be delivered from an accursed death on the Cross and that his life would be prolonged.

Daniel IX : 26 merely says :

And after three scores and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself.

If this Text actually does refer to the death of Jesus, the Messiah on the Cross, it is an extremely vague and unsatisfactory reference to such an important event in the world's history as the crucifixion of the Creator (we take refuge with God for such a blasphemy !)

On the other hand, it is quite consonant with the belief held by many Muslims that, after being delivered from the hands of the Jews, Christ was cut off from his original disciples by his flight from Palestine.

The words "but not for himself" probably refer to the fact that, after being cut off from his first community, his Mission was not finished, but that his labours for others must be continued in the new surroundings of the country to which he escaped.

In a later portion of the book by Dr. Wherry, several quotations from the Gospels are given which the author

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considers to be sufficient proof of the Divinity of Christ. These are :

I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world (John XVI : 27-8).

I am from above.....I am not of this world. (John VIII : 23).

I and my Father are one. (John-X : 30).

Verily, verily, I say unto you : The hour cometh and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. (John V : 25).

The dead referred to in the last quotation are, of course, the spiritually dead. All of these sayings and the others referred to by Dr. Wherry are entirely in accord with the sayings of other prophets especially the more mystical among the prophets.

The following criticisms of Islam are also advanced by Dr. Wherry :

1. That in the Quran God's love is subordinate to His Will and Power,

An intelligent perusal of the Qur-án will prove quite the contrary: " My mercy encompasses all things." (7:156)

2. That

Although there is frequent mention of angels in the Qur-án and according to the teachings of the Qur-án they, as the servants of the True Believers, assist and guard them from evil yet the teaching of the Qur-án is very incomplete.

This is a manifest absurdity, as the comparatively few references in the Old and New Testaments to the angels are very much less informative than similar references in the Qur-án.

3. That

Muslims are under obligation to read and obey, not only the Qurán but also the *Taurat* and the *Injil*.

This curious proposition he pretends to deduce from the Qur-án, Chapter 5, v. 68.

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mere laymen, with the lack of both shewn by the majority of those who should be the best exponents of Christianity, *i.e.*, the Clergy.

At this point a curious remark may be quoted from the book by Dr. Wherry :

We would here note that, according to the Qur-án, Believers are again brought under the yoke of the Ceremonial Law from which Jesus had delivered them ; instead of the perfect liberty of the Gospels, there is a slavery to the Law.

Is not Dr. Wherry aware that it is recorded, even in the Christian version of the Gospels, that Jesus Christ said :

Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

Therefore, if Christians have broken away from the Law, it is entirely without the authority of the Prophet they profess to follow. Unfortunately, the perfect liberty of the Gospels has degenerated into licence and an appalling confusion of blasphemous beliefs, which Christ himself, (as the Qur-án says) would be the first to deny.

And when God shall say — O Jesus, son of Mary, hast thou said unto Mankind — " Take me and my mother as two gods besides God ?" He shall say : " Glory be unto Thee! It is not for me to say that which I know to be not the truth ; had I said that, verily Thou wouldst have known it; Thou knowest what is in me, but I know not what is in Thee; for Thou well knowest things unseen ! I spake not to them aught but that which Thou didst bid me :

Worship God, my Lord, and your Lord, and I was a witness of their actions when I stayed among them." ¹

This verse, which is quoted by Dr. Wherry, is culled from a Christian translation of the Qur-án (Rodwell), so that we may meet on common ground with Dr. Wherry with regard to the authority, to which he has had recourse.

¹ The Holy Qur-án, V : 79.

Say : O people of the Book : Ye have no ground to stand upon, until ye observe the Law and the Evangel, and that which hath been sent down to you from your Lord.

Dr. Wherry entirely disregards the fact that "people of the Book" refers to the Christians and the Jews.

4. That the information in the Qur-án regarding the Prophets of God, meaning Jewish Prophets, is sparse.

It is, of course, admitted that the scandalous and incredible anecdotes concerning the Jewish prophets, (which are such a noticeable feature of the Old Testament), are entirely omitted from the Holy Qur-án for the obvious reason that such falsities can have no place in the Word of God. Nevertheless, all that we need know of these Prophets, who have been superseded by the Holy Prophet of Islam, is to be found in its pages.

5. That the Qur-án teaches that God is the author of all evil, in the same way that it teaches that He is the author of all good. This he deduces from the Holy Qur-án 54:49 and 17:14.

It is, however, obvious that God must necessarily be the Ultimate Cause of everything, good or evil. If we deny this we deny His Omnipotence. The Qur-án, however, attributes good to the positive Will of God and evil to the imperfection of man setting in motion the law of evil as created by Him.

6. That

The one point of contrast between.....the religion of Islam and Christianity is the emphasis placed upon more formal obedience to ritual, mere lip-service in the Muslim practice, and the emphasis which the religion of Christ places upon a life of holiness, righteousness and love.

This again is sheer absurdity, as an unprejudiced comparison of the Qur-án and the Gospels will reveal immediately. If practical proof is needed, it is only necessary to compare Muslim piety, as evidenced by

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Nevertheless, it is encouraging to observe that there is a tendency amongst Christian Missionaries to search for some kind of argument against Islam, in place of the falsehood and bitter invective formerly employed by them. In our possession of the perfect religion revealed by Allah, we are secure against all argument. Their former attitude, by exasperating all sincere Muslims, merely gave us a feeling of contempt for such efforts on the part of the Christians, and forbade our meeting them on those friendly terms which the best of all books, the Qur-án, prescribes.

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BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

It is not very long ago that we noticed a change coming on all real free-thinkers of Europe.¹ We had then discussed the confessions of Mr. G. B. Shaw and had anticipated that before long he would be followed by other eminent thinkers. We hardly knew at that time that Mr. H. G. Wells, the unswerving votary of science and its inventions, would be the very next man to follow in his footsteps. Shaw, it must be said to his credit, has always been critical of everything and hence cautious about his advocacy of anything. His confessions about his failures in pulling up his nation, though illuminating, were not startling. But Mr. Wells, an undaunted optimist throughout, has always represented the spirit of modern civilization, which, according to him, was linked with scientific discoveries. He has glorified science and for him the human salvation lay in the control of world affairs by the scientists. For him a glorious future for humanity could only be achieved through science.

¹ *Islamic Review*, June 1944, the article: *Pharaoh's Magicians*.

7. That the Qur-án says that the Christian Trinity is supposed to be composed of God, Mary and Jesus.

This he bases upon a mistranslation by Rodwell of Chapter 4, v. 169, which even then gives inadequate support to this entirely erroneous view. The Qur-án certainly condemns Maryolatry in Chapter 5, v. 116, but nowhere is this distorted view of the Trinity put forward in the Qur-án.

Finally, with that superb contempt of logic, a hallmark of Christian apologetics, Dr. Wherry quotes the following verses from the Qur-án as evidence of his claim that the Scriptures were uncorrupted in the days of the Holy Prophet Muhammad:

Desire ye, then, that for your sake the Jews should believe? Yet a part of them heard the Word of God, and then, after they had understood it, perverted it and knew that they did so. (II: 70).

Moreover, the Jews say, "The Christians lean on nought." "On nought lean the Jews", say the Christians: yet both are readers of the Book. (II: 107-8).

Bring ye, then, the Law and read it, if ye be men of truth. (III: 87).

And if thou art in doubt as to what We have sent down to thee, inquire those who have read the Scriptures before thee. Now hath the truth come to thee from thy Lord: be not therefore of those that doubt.

In a short article such as the present, it is obviously not possible to enter fully into the question of the authenticity of the Old and New Testaments in their present forms. Suffice it to remark that it will require greater ingenuity than that possessed by Dr. Wherry to deduce from these Qur-ánic verses that the Bible was uncorrupted 1300 odd years ago.

In conclusion, then, we find that Dr. Wherry has not only failed signally in his attempt to prove his case, but also has given us no just cause to congratulate him either upon his learning or his use of logical argument.

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ends in a social chaos. As the Holy Qur-án has put it :

Those who forgot God, so He made them forget their own selves.¹

Religion in all ages has tried to persuade man to shed this indifference to God, the source of creation and to break this crust of complacency covering his mind. It has always insisted that in order to derive true benefit from matter, while applying our mind to it—we must also have a vision of the Source of our existence. It is not enough, from the point of view of religion, that we should be conscious of our power over matter and be able to harness it to our use. We must necessarily seek the blessings of One Who has brought them into being and also the help of His light, in order to derive the utmost happiness from such an exploration. Apart from the fullness of knowledge which we gain thereby, we also benefit by curbing our arrogance which results from our consciousness of our power. Indeed, this tempering of power-consciousness by a devotional mood, is of utmost importance in making us happy with our conquests of and control over nature. In the absence of this we are bound to fall out with our fellow beings and in trying to destroy them, we are sure to destroy ourselves. As a matter of fact, the greater our knowledge of, and power over nature, the more potent will the weapon be, which we will forge for self-destruction. The Atom Bomb is a concrete example of this tragedy of our knowledge of things. Our control over nature is extensive but we cannot check and control our own greed and jealousy. We are aware of many laws operating in the universe but we are ignorant of this basic law that operates in our own minds—the law of the supplication of the mind to the Invisible Creator of both mind and matter—which should be the finishing touch to all efforts for knowledge. We

¹ The Holy Qur-án 59 : 19.

Triumph of science was to him the triumph of man over all the ailments of suffering humanity. Science, he has argued, would establish a veritable heaven on earth. And this triumph of science, if it came, would, in fact, be the triumph of the mind of man, his intellect, his brain. It would be the triumph of reason *per se*. A modern scientist, and his admirer like Wells, cannot be a believer in revealed light. He sees no need for it. In his investigations into the laws of nature he considers any reference to the Creator of those laws as not only unnecessary but even ridiculous. No doubt, he is as much in the dark about the origin of these laws, as one who has no knowledge of their working. But by a strange process of reasoning he thinks it is unreasonable to worry about it. His arguments in this respect can be summed up as follows :—

Here is my mind. Here is the mysterious universe with its manifold laws that govern life and motion and the relationship between things. I apply my mind to these laws and they reveal themselves to me. My knowledge of these laws enables me to exercise control over things. I become their master and they my servants. I enjoy life. What is the use of my worrying as to how these laws came into existence—whether any one created them, whether that Creator has still anything to do with them and with man who wants to use them to his own benefit? It is all waste of time. It is enough that I should know them and they should serve some purpose of mine.

It is this frame of mind against which the Holy Qur-án issues the following note of warning :

Beware, surely man is inordinate because he considers himself self-sufficient.¹

It is the sense of self-sufficiency on the part of human reason which the Holy Qur-án speaks of here. The pagan outlook on life, founded on this attitude, leads invariably to arrogance. This entails injustice and oppression and

¹ The Holy Qur-an, 96 : 6-7.

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The revealed guidance has been chasing it from age to age in all corners of the globe. It was the misfortune of Christianity to become a tool of this pernicious attitude towards life and to deceive a whole world by an unprecedented display of an outward brilliance. The professed followers of this unfortunate religion were persuaded to believe that there was no light higher than that of the human reason, the implication being that the universe and its fate had to be guided and controlled by no higher power than man himself. Whatever its official creed, in practice the whole system became atheistic. So much so that some of its enlightened sects had come officially to believe reason to be the seat of authority in religion. This was the greatest sacrilege to the tradition of religion. A whole world was misled into thinking that revelation, if not a myth, was at least a superfluous thing. One of the outstanding advocates of this creed among the free-writers and thinkers of Europe was this Mr. Wells, whose latest conclusions have exposed the frailty of his mind. His confessions are of great importance. He is a representative free-thinker. He must be reflecting the mind of the British nation. Obviously, the British people have come to realise that if there is nothing better and higher than human mind to fall back upon, the doom of humanity is really imminent.

The pagan element in the British mind has thus realised its limitations and proclaimed its helplessness. Will the religious element now assert itself and announce for the need of revelation? Will it now consider that however powerful the light of the mind may be in detecting the laws of physical nature, to detect its own laws it must rely on a higher light—the light from heaven received on behalf of mankind by the chosen Prophets of God? Will it listen to our contention that the light of reason with other things, has always failed man in his handling of

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forget that it is the light coming from this source that gives perfection to the light of reason.

It is scarcely remembered that all struggle for knowledge originates with an attitude of devotion. But with progress and some acquisition we discard that attitude and become arrogant and feel self-sufficient. This entails chaos and the resultant frustration.

The history of scientific Europe is an apt illustration of this. The early scientists may or may not have possessed much of ceremonial piety but they did possess deeply religious hearts. Our modern scientists, on the other hand, are people who are strangers to all devoutness. To what results we are more or less aware; but let Wells, their valiant spokesman, describe it in his own characteristic eloquence. In his latest book—*Mind at the End of its Tether*—this born undaunted optimist gives expression to the following forebodings:

The end of everything we call life is close at hand and cannot be evaded—Life is passing plainly into a phase of complete finality—A frightful queerness has come into life. Even quite unobservant people are betraying by fits and starts a certain wonder, a shrinking and fugitive sense that something is happening so that life will never be quite the same again.

So this apostle of science can see nothing but annihilation facing humanity at this hour of its highest triumph over matter. But he is not to blame. He is telling the truth. If we consider the things as they are, the prospects are exactly as they have been depicted here, the sneers of the thoughtless notwithstanding. If matters are allowed to drift in the manner they are doing, and human mind rushes along the route it is following at this moment, the destruction is really inevitable. The European scientists have certainly dug their own grave and left to their own resources, are stepping into it.

Of course, the pagan frame of mind which has brought things to such a pass is as old as the religious one.

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Arab marauders, and carried away and sold into slavery. For years his father searched for him. At last a party of his tribe recognised him at Makka. By then Zaid had become a convert to Islam. His father came to Makka and wanted to take him back. The choice was left with Zaid, for he was by then a freedman. He refused to go and preferred to remain with his brethren-in-faith and to suffer their fate.

Is it conceivable, I ask once again, that these men, who were the least gainers from a worldly point of view, would have willingly suffered for a cause which, if they had been assisting the Holy Prophet in the preparation of the Holy Qur-án, they must have known to be false, or for a Book which to their knowledge was a forgery? The sincerity, the firmness, and the resolution of these converted slaves, their readiness to suffer any loss, their willingness to undergo any hardship are everlasting monuments of their living faith in the Word of God and the Divine Mission of the Holy Prophet. It is preposterous to suggest that they had individually or collectively taught, or even indicated to, the Holy Prophet what he should have put in the Book. They could never have remained loyal to the faith, particularly when the Holy Qur-án was proclaiming :

This is (of) the announcements relating to the Unseen (which) We reveal to you.¹

These are announcements relating to the Unseen which We reveal to you. *You did* not know them—(neither) you nor your people—before t' is (knew of them).²

And it is not the word of a poet, little is it that you believed, nor the word of a soothsayer, little is it that you mind. It is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds.³

¹ The Holy Qur-an, XII : 102.

² *Ibid*, XI : 49.

³ *Ibid*, LXIX : 41-43.

social affairs? Will it, at this moment of a moral crisis in the history of this great nation, turn to a Book, which unerringly embodies the purest and completest of revealed guidance ever vouchsafed to man, but which has hitherto been despised by it on account of inherited Christian prejudice? On the reply to these questions will depend whether the forebodings of Wells will come true or whether there is still a way out of this *impasse*.

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HIS BIRTH AND DEATH

BY KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD

(Continued from vol. XXXIV, p. 23)

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THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF THE HOLY QUR-ĀN

The spirit these slave-converts displayed is unique in history. Yasir was put to death along with his wife and son in a most inhuman manner. Jaber was also killed at Makka in similar circumstances.¹ In the same way Khobeib, who had been perfidiously sold to the Quraish, had been put to death by them by mutilation and cutting off his flesh piecemeal. He was asked, in the middle of his tortures: Whether he would not wish Muhammad to be in his place and he sitting in security at home. He replied:

I would not wish deliverance and to be with my family and children, on condition that the Messenger of God suffer the pain even of a thorn.²

Take the case of Zaid. He was still a child when, travelling with his family, he was waylaid by a band of

¹ Ibn Hisham, p. 260.

² *Ibid*, 648.

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No sooner was the chapter recited by the Holy Prophet, the whole camp with one voice, thanked God for His Mercy : their doubts were at once dispelled for the Word of God made the position clear. Such was the faith of the Companions of the Holy Prophet. And subsequent history testifies to the truth of this Divine announcement.

Before dealing with the internal evidence I should like to mention that although most of the references to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures appear in the Makkan verses, yet it is an indisputable fact that there were neither any Jews nor any converts to the Jewish religion at Makka. The only ground on which it has been alleged that the Holy Prophet, while at Makka, must have found some means of communication with the Jews or Christians, or at least with some person acquainted with the Jewish lore and Christian fables, is that between the fifth and the tenth year of the Mission the Qur-ánic revelation began "to abound with narratives taken, often at great length, from their scriptures and legends."¹ But this is begging the whole question. In fact it is an indirect admission that there is no evidence at all and that the allegation is based merely on conjectures and wild speculations. It has further been alleged that at Madina the Holy Prophet came a good deal in contact with the Christian heretics and borrowed freely from the Gnostics. But for the Holy Prophet to have confused Christianity with Gnosticism, the latter must have prevailed in Arabia far more universally than we have reason to believe from history. In fact there is no justification for believing that the doctrines of this sect were taught or professed in Arabia. It is certain, on the other hand, that Basiledans, Valentinians and other Gnostic sects had completely died out by the end of the

¹ Muir, *Life of Mohammad*, 96.

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Or do they say : He has forged it. Nay ! they do not believe. Then let them bring an announcement like it if they are truthful.¹

Here was a direct challenge. Could not those who had tutored the Holy Prophet say so or accept this challenge? If the Holy Prophet had in fact received secret instructions from some one he could not have so boldly and so repeatedly made these declarations, or proclaim that every verse of the Holy Qur-án was a direct revelation from God and that he had no human instructors. No, the truth is that he had none, and his followers, one and all, believed the Holy Qur-án to be the Word of God. Sir William Muir, speaking of the faith of the early Muslims and of the Mosque at Madina, says :

Here the Prophet and his Companions spent most of their time, here the daily service, with its oft-recurring prayers, was first publicly established : *and here the great congregation assembled listening with reverence and awe to messages from heaven.*²

Speaking of the return journey from Hudaibiyya, Muir goes on to say :

At the close of the first March, the pilgrims might be seen hurrying across the plains, urging their camels from all directions, and crowding round the Prophet. "Inspiration had descended on him," passed from mouth to mouth throughout the camp. Standing upright upon his camel Mohammad recited the Sura entitled : "The Victory."³

The Truce of Hudaibiyya, some of the Companions of the Holy Prophet had thought, was not honourable for the Muslims. The conditions agreed upon were decidedly disadvantageous to them. Even *Hazrat Umar* had some misgivings about them, and said so openly. But this chapter declared :

Surely, We have given to you a clear victory.⁴

¹ The Holy Qur-án, LII : 33-34.

² Muir, *Life of Mohammad*, 177.

³ *Ibid*, 360.

⁴ The Holy Qur-án, XLVIII : 1.

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Qur-ân repeats some incidents of Jewish history and also refers to certain Christian dogmas ; but it always, at the crucial places, differs with the narratives as contained in the Old and New Testaments.

I now proceed to consider the internal evidence. If we study the Holy Qur-ân with a view to find its Author the conclusion of its Divine origin is irresistibly forced on us. It opens with the formula : *In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful* ; and its Author is mentioned at the very outset as : *I am Allah, the Best Knower*.¹ Again, the *Qul (Say)* verses, with which the Holy Qur-ân abounds, clearly point out that the Book is proceeding direct from the Almighty. These verses also indicate that the Holy Prophet was made to realize, what Moses and Isaiah believed on special occasions and in special circumstances, that he was the mere mouthpiece of God.

I have already referred to the perfection of the language of the Book, and have also mentioned the challenge it contains to non-Muslims, to wit, that they cannot, even if they all unite, produce even a single chapter like it.² There is one significant fact which proves that the language used in the Book was not that of the Holy Prophet himself. The language of his most inspired sayings appear to be flat when compared with the language of the Holy Qur-ân ; the human element is apparent in the one, while the Divine Majesty and grandeur is obvious in the other ; the inherent light of the former is eclipsed by the brilliance of the latter. They both disclose their authors : the servant and the Master, the helpless mortal and the All Powerful Everliving Creator. Let me compare the prayer of the Holy Prophet at Taif with the Qur-ânic verses revealed at the same time :

¹ The Holy Qur-ân, II : 1

² *Ibid*, II : 23-24 ; X : 38 ; XI : 13 ; XVII 28

fifth century of the Christian era. Even Muir has to admit :

Gnosticism had disappeared from Egypt before the sixth century, and there is no reason for supposing that it had at any time gained a footing in Arabia. Besides, there is no affinity between the supernaturalism of the Gnostics and Docetæ and the rationalism of the Koran.¹

Muir, therefore, himself demolishes the very foundation on which the charge is based. Some Christian writers on Islam have tried to trace the various references in the Holy Qur-ân to the Christian dogmas to be found in the Apocryphal Gospels. They allege that these Gospels were within the easy reach of the Holy Prophet. Others imagine that he had acquired his knowledge from the Christian traditions then prevalent in Arabia. I again quote Sir William Muir. He says :

But though some few of its (the Holy Qur-ân's) details do coincide with these spurious (Apocryphal) writings, its statements in no wise correspond...There is no ground for believing that either at Mecca or Medina there existed anything of the kind from which could have been framed a narrative agreeing...with the Gospels both genuine and apocryphal.²

But in spite of their conjectures, the Christian writers on Islam have hopelessly failed to explain away or account for a very patent and outstanding feature of the Holy Qur-ân. The Gospels portray Jesus to be the son of God, who died on the Cross. The Holy Qur-ân declares him to be a mere man, a Prophet of God, but still an ordinary man. The Holy Qur-ân discredits the Jewish and Christian versions in asserting that Jesus did not suffer the death of an accursed one—he did not die on the Cross. Could the Jews and Christians of his, or any other age, have ever dreamt of these teachings or instructed the Holy Prophet in these matters? No doubt the Holy

¹ Muir, *Life of Mohammad*, 154.

² *Ibid*, 155.

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ing Divine Source? The message must be delivered, the non-believers shall be punished and their number shall be reduced, for Allah encompasses all. These two passages clearly show that two different voices, one human and the other Divine, were speaking at one and the same time.

The Bible lays down a criterion whereby we can judge the Divine origin of a message delivered by a Prophet. It says :

But the Prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that Prophet shall die.

And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a Prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken but the Prophet hath spoken in presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him.¹

Thus even if a prophet has delivered innumerable true revelations, but if he falsely ascribes to God a single word which He has not spoken, such a prophet shall be destroyed, and his work shall perish. Similar words occur in another place in the Bible :

Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that prophesy in My name, and I sent them not, yet they say, sword and famine shall not be in this land: By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed.²

The Bible also tells us that the Lord is against those to whom He has not spoken and yet they prophesy falsely in His name. Such prophets and their people, says the Lord, shall never profit nor prosper.³ By way of illustration the Prophet Jeremiah cites the fate of Hana-niah, his contemporary, who was killed within one year

¹ Deut., XVIII : 20-21.

² Jer., XIV : 15.

³ Jer., XXIV : 31-32.

O my Lord! to Thee do I complain of the feebleness of my strength, of my lack of resourcefulness and of my insignificance in the eyes of the people. Thou art Most merciful of all the Merciful. Thou art the Lord of the weak. To whom art Thou entrusting me? To an unsympathetic enemy, who would sullenly frown at me; or to a friend, whom Thou hast given control over my affairs? I do not care for anything except that I may have Thy protection. I seek for refuge in the light of Thy countenance. It is Thine to chase away the darkness, and to give peace both for this world and the next; let not Thy wrath light upon me, nor Thine anger. There is no strength, no power, except in Thee.

And when the servant of Allah (Muhammad) stood up in prayer to Him, they crowded on him almost stifling (him). Say: I pray unto Allah only, and ascribe unto Him no partner. Say: Verily, none can protect me from Allah, nor can I find my refuge besides Him. (Mine is) but the conveyance of the truth from Allah, and the message; and *whoso disobeyeth Allah and His message, verily his is fire of hell, wherein such dwell for ever, till (the day) they shall behold that which they are promised; (they may) doubt but then they will know (for certain) who is weaker in allies and less in multitude.* Say: I know not whether that which you are promised is nigh: or if my Lord hath set a distant time for it. (He is the Knower of the Unseen, and He revealeth unto none of His secrets, save unto every messenger whom He hath chosen; and then He maketh a guard to go before him and a guard behind him, that He may know that they have indeed conveyed the message of the Lord. He surrounds all their doings and keepeth count of all things.¹

Could a man give vent to these feelings of utter hopelessness and weakness and also simultaneously express the most unbounded confidence in his ultimate triumph and predict so forcibly the destruction of his opponents? A solitary man, left to himself without a friend, without a helper, rejected at home, goes for shelter to a neighbouring place. He is cruelly treated and turned out. Could he have even dreamt of such events? Could these words proceed from any one but the All-powerful, All-Pervad-

¹ The Holy Qur-an LXXII: 19-28 (Translation by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthal.)

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prophet, he would not have been spared. He would have suffered a worse fate than that of Hananiah ; for says the Holy Qur-án :

And if he (Muhammad) had fabricated against Us some of his sayings, We should certainly have seized him by the right arm, then We would certainly have cut off the artery of his neck. And not one of you could have withheld Us from him.¹

And this did not come to pass, because as stated in the very preceding verse, the Holy Qur-án was

The Revelation from the Lord of the worlds.²

It is obvious, therefore, that whereas God is against false prophets and He punishes them, He showers His blessings on His true prophets and destroys those who oppose them. This is the criterion put forth by the Lord God of Moses, Jeremiah, Jesus and Muhammad, by which the falsehood of an impostor is exposed and the truth of His righteous and true prophets is established. The Holy Qur-án repeatedly draws attention to this testimony. I quote but a few verses :

Say : Call on your associates, then make struggle (to prevail) against me and give me no respite. Surely, my guardian is Allah, Who revealed the Book, and He befriends the good (only).³

And Allah shall help you with a mighty help.⁴

Allah has written down : I will most certainly prevail, I and My apostles ; surely, Allah is Strong, Mighty.⁵

And when Allah guides (one), there is none that can lead him astray ; is not Allah Mighty, the Lord of retribution ?⁶

Most surely We help Our apostles, and those who believe, in this world's life and on the Day when the witnesses shall stand up.⁷

Have We not...exalted for you your eminence.⁸

The Holy Qur-án teems with verses, of Makkan origin, in which assurances were repeatedly given to the Holy

¹ The Holy Qur-an, LXIX : 44-47.

² *Ibid*, LXIX : 43.

³ *Ibid*, VII : 195-196.

⁴ *Ibid*, XLVIII : 3.

⁵ *Ibid*, LVIII : 21.

⁶ *Ibid*, XXXIX : 37.

⁷ *Ibid*, XL : 51.

⁸ *Ibid* XCIV : 1-4.

of his having tried to mislead people by attributing to God prophecies which He had never commanded him to make¹. The same fate, we are told, befell Theudas and his followers.² Jesus also compared a false prophet to a corrupt tree which is hewn down,³ and he also reminded his people :

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.⁴

Let us test the Holy Qur-án, the Holy Prophet and his work by these Biblical criteria for the Holy Prophet claimed that every word of the Book was revealed to him direct from God. Was the Holy Prophet killed? Did his work perish? Was he or his Companions consumed by sword and famine? And, lastly, was the Holy Qur-án destroyed or forgotten? For about a quarter of a century the Holy Prophet kept on proclaiming the Holy Qur-án to be a revelation of God, and his Companions believed it to be such, and yet far from being destroyed, he and they prospered. Every day brought him new converts, every month brought him new success, every year brought him new glory. And he did not die until he was able to say :

O Lord ! I have delivered my message, and have accomplished my work.

The Holy Prophet and his Companions were successful to a degree which is unique in the annals of history. Surely, the God of Moses and Jeremiah was the same God as that of Muhammad. He had not changed, nor become helpless or powerless, nor could He have forgotten His promises and assurances to Moses and Jeremiah. Indeed, He had not, for He did lead His true Prophet Muhammad to victory and did destroy those who opposed him. Had the Holy Prophet been a false

¹ Jer., XXVIII : 15-17.

² Acts, V : 36.

³ Matt., VII : 15-19.

⁴ Matt., VII : 20.

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to and did drive him out of Makka. These verses refer to these events and foretell his ultimate victorious return, as the ruler of the land, after his opponents' power is crushed. Thus the Migration of the Holy Prophet from Makka and his re-entry into that city as a conqueror and ruler was prophesied in the clearest possible terms, and this prophecy was also literally fulfilled.

The third prophecy is :

I am Allah, the Best Knower. The Romans are defeated in a near land; and they after being vanquished shall overcome within ten years. Allah's is the command before and after, *and on that day the believers shall rejoice with the help of Allah!* He helps whom He pleases, and He is Mighty and Merciful. ¹

These verses contain a double prophecy: the victory of the Romans, after their defeat, at a time when the Muslims themselves would be rejoicing.

The people of the Roman Empire called themselves Romans, and to them the term *Greek*, which was synonymous with heathen, was a term of reproach. ² Therefore, the term *Romans* has been used instead of *Greek*.

The struggle between the Persians and the Roman Empire began in 602 C.E., when Chosroes II of Persia waged war against Rome to avenge the death of Maurice who was murdered by Phocas. The Persians ravaged Syria, and overran and plundered Asia Minor. In 608 C.E. they advanced to Chalcedon. In 614 C.E. Jerusalem and Damascus were sacked by General Shahbaraz, and the Holy Cross was carried away in triumph to Persia. Soon after Egypt was conquered. The Romans could offer but little resistance, as they were torn by internal dissension and were also pressed by Avars and Slavs. The Persians advanced upon the Bosphorus and pitched their camp within the sight of Constantinople. When the news of their conquest reached Makka, the Quraish

¹ The Holy Qur-an, XXX : 1-5.

² Butler, *Arab Conquest of Egypt*, 144 f.

Prophet of his ultimate triumph and of the glorious eminence to which in fact he was raised.

The Biblical verses already referred to give another criterion : whatever a true prophet shall say, in the name of the Lord, must happen.¹ I will apply this test also to the Holy Qur-án. There are innumerable prophecies in the Book. They were all literally fulfilled. I will mention only four of them.

The Holy Qur-án claimed that Allah will Himself guard and protect the Book against corruption and interpolations ;² and that "there is none who can change or alter His word,"³ - It further claims that its verses shall never be forgotten.⁴ I have already dealt with these unique prophecies,⁵ and explained how they have been fulfilled. The Holy Qur-án has retained its pristine purity and is to-day the same as the Holy Prophet left it.

The second prophecy, I wish to discuss, reads :

And those who disbelieved said to their apostles: We will most certainly drive you forth from our land, or else you shall come back to our religion. So their Lord revealed to them : *Most surely We will destroy the unjust. And most surely We will settle you in the land after them.*⁶

In another place we are told :

Most surely He who has made the Qur-án binding on you will bring you back to the destination.⁷

These verses are of Makkan origin and prophesy the final triumph of the Holy Prophet and the utter defeat and overthrow of his enemies who had threatened

¹ Deut., XVIII : 20-21.

² The Holy Qur-án, XV : 9 ; LVI : 77-78 ; LXXXV : 21-22 ; etc.

³ *Ibid*, VI : 116 ; XVIII : 27.

⁴ *Ibid*, LXXXVII : 6.

⁵ *J. R.*, Vol. XXXIV, 306, 330.

⁶ The Holy Qur-án, XIV : 13-14.

⁷ *Ibid*, XXVIII : 85.

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into one and to destroy the limitations of colour and creed. Again, there would have been no necessity for the revelation of the Holy Qur-ân if the previous scriptures had been intact; and had this Book suffered the same fate, there would of necessity have come to this earth another prophet with a new code of law. The *finality of revelation* saw its perfection too, and through the *Seal, the Last*, of the prophets the Beneficent God perfected the religion and completed His favours¹

And history bears witness that no prophet has come after the Holy Prophet.

There is another piece of internal evidence which satisfactorily proves the Divine origin of the Holy Qur-ân. One would expect, if the Book was a forgery, to find the author justifying his acts, which his contemporaries may have called in question. But, on the contrary, we find, in the Holy Qur-ân, incidents referred to, which, if it was not a revealed Book, would never have been put in it by the author. I will mention but a few of them:

On one occasion the Holy Prophet was engaged in deep conversation with the chief Al-Walid. Just then Abdullah Ibn um Maktum, a blind man, chanced to pass. He asked the Holy Prophet to teach him a portion of the Holy Qur-ân. The Holy Prophet got displeased at this interruption, and frowned and turned away from him. Then the chapter entitled: *He Frowned*, was revealed in the following terms:

He frowned and turned his back, because there came to him a blind man. And what would make you know that he would purify himself, or become reminded so that the reminder shall profit him? As for him who considers himself free from need (of you), to him do you address yourself. And no blame is on you if he would not purify himself. And as to him who comes to you striving hard, and he fears. From him will you divert yourself.²

¹ The Holy Qur-ân, V: 3.

² *Ibid.*, LXXX: 1-10.

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idolaters were jubilant, as their sympathies were with the fire-worshipping Persians. It was then that these verses were revealed and proclaimed in 615 C.E. the ultimate victory of the Romans within ten years. In 621 C.E. Heraclius was roused from his slumber and, after three years of arduous conflict, rolled back the invaders and totally discomfited the Persians. In 624 C.E. he advanced into northern Media, where he destroyed the great temple of Goudzak.¹

In the same year; 624 C.E., a small band of Muslims, three hundred and thirteen in number, routed a force of about one thousand of Quraish warriors at Badr. The Muslims were rejoicing at this victory when the news of the victory of the Romans reached them. Both the Muslims and the Romans continued to meet with success; and the final triumph of both over their respective enemies again coincided. The Quraish were crushed by the conquest of Makka in 630 C.E. and in the same year the Persian Empire, from the apparent greatness to which it had reached some years ago, sank into hopeless anarchy. And thus this prophecy was fully justified by subsequent events.

The fourth prophecy deals with the finality of the mission of the Holy Prophet. He proclaimed: "There will be no prophet after me," and this was in keeping with the Qur-ánic announcement:

Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets.²

The Holy Qur-án alone claims to be a guide for the whole humanity.³ Whereas every other prophet was sent to one people, for the reformation and unification of one nation, the Holy Prophet came to unite all nations

¹ *Ency. Britannica*. Art. Chosroes II.

² The Holy Qur-án XXXIII: 40.

³ *Ibid*, VII: 157.

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And again :

Men ask you about the Hour ! Say : the knowledge of it is only with Allah.¹

Would any forger or impostor who aspires to be a leader or guide of his people, have ever put such admissions in a book of his own creation? There is no affectation, no personal consideration. The Book represents him to be but a man, devoid of supernatural powers, without any worldly wealth, without any knowledge of the future, nothing more than a mortal ; neither a wonder-worker, nor a fortune-teller. For all the good he did, for all the prophecies he uttered, he claimed no credit for himself. It was all from the Almighty Allah, Who selected him to be His messenger, a *plain* warner.

Had Muhammad been the author of the Book he could never have had the implicit faith he had in its Divine origin. The Holy Prophet and his Companions were commanded :

Continue then in the right way as you are commanded, *as also he who has turned (to Allah) with you*, and be not inordinate (O men !), surely He sees what you do.²

This verse appears in the chapter called *Hud*. This and some other *sister* chapters³ are sometimes called the *Terrific Suras*. It is recorded that, while *Hazrat* Abu Bakr and *Hazrat* Umar sat in the Mosque at Madina, the Holy Prophet entered the Mosque and was looking at his beard. *Hazrat* Abu Bakr observing some grey hair said : "O Messenger of God, for thee I would sacrifice my father and mother, *white* hair are hastening upon thee." "Yes", replied the Holy Prophet, "*Hud* and its *Sisters* have hastened my *white* hair." And why ? Apart from the command to follow the Holy Qur-án himself, the

¹ The Holy Qur-án, XXXIII : 63.

² *Ibid*, XI : 112.

³ Chapters LVI and CI.

Is it conceivable that a forger would blaspheme the name of God, and at the same time perpetuate an incident which would expose him for ever to the crushing retort of his enemies?

I give another instance. Abdullah bin Ubayy was the chief of the Madina hypocrites. On his death-bed he had asked the Holy Prophet to send him his shirt, so that he might be buried in it, and to conduct his funeral prayers. The Holy Prophet complied with both these requests. Then came the Divine revelation :

And never offer prayer for any one of them who dies, and do not stand by his grave, surely they disbelieve in Allah and His Apostle and they shall die in transgression.¹

The Divine revelation thus pointed out that this action of the Holy Prophet, though magnanimous in itself, was wrong. It directed that the unbelievers should not be treated as Muslims.

We read in the Holy Qur-án :

Say : I do not say to you I have with me the treasures of Allah, nor do I know the unseen, nor do I say to you that I am an angel : I do not follow aught save that which is revealed to me. Say : Are the blind and the seeing one alike ? Do you not then reflect?.²

In another place, it is said :

I am only a mortal like unto you.³

Again :

Say : I do not control any benefit or harm for my own soul except as Allah pleases ; and had I known the unseen I would have had much of good and no evil would have touched me. I am nothing but a warner and the giver of good news to a people who believe.⁴

¹ The Holy Qur-an, IX : 84.

² *Ibid.*, VI : 50.

³ *Ibid.*, XLI : 6.

⁴ *Ibid.*, VII : 188.

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which unfortunately are of too frequent occurrence in other Scriptures, are conspicuous by their absence in the Holy Qur-án. So exempt is it from these undeniable defects that it needs not the slightest castigation, and can be read from cover to cover without causing a blush to suffuse the cheek of modesty itself.

5. All its prophecies have been fulfilled.

6. There are no discrepancies in the Book, even in the details of the narrative. Its verses are conformable throughout.

7. It affirms, by repeating certain portions, and replaces the older Scriptures.

8. It contains rules of guidance for humanity and supports its assertions by arguments.

9. It is the fundamental code, not only of theology, but of civil and criminal jurisprudence, and its laws regulate the actions and the property of mankind. It is a general code, a religious, social, commercial, military, judicial, civil and criminal code. It regulates everything from the ceremonies of religion to the actions of daily life ; from the health of the body to the salvation of the soul ; from the rights of the individual to the privileges of the community and humanity at large ; from the interests of man to that of society ; from crime to morality ; in short from the life in this world to that of the next.

10. It contains a political system on the foundation of which the throne itself is erected ; and from which every law of the state is derived ; and by its authority every question of life and property is finally decided.

11. It produces an unprecedented change in the outlook of those who believe in it and act up to it. To them it brings new hope and sustenance of life.

12. It establishes the unity of God and the messenger-ship of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

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Holy Prophet had also been directed to see that his followers did the same. The Holy Prophet knew that when Moses' followers did not follow him, that great law-giver had to confess.

My Lord ! surely I have no control (upon any) but my own self and my brother ; therefore make a separation between us and the nation of transgressors.¹

Jesus had asked his followers to watch with him for a short time while he prayed,² and they had gone to sleep,³ and forsaken him. ⁴

The Holy Prophet was conscious of these events of the past and this injunction taxed his mind. He believed that this injunction was Divine, and feared lest his followers be found wanting and become inordinate.

Can any one, in the light of these facts, honestly assert that the Holy Prophet did not himself believe in the Holy Qur-án as the Word of God, and knew the Book to be of his own creation ?

I will now close this rather lengthy discussion and summarize the points which establish the Divine origin of the Holy Qur-án :

1. Its text has maintained its pristine purity and has remained free from all human interpolations.
2. It stands without a rival, being the only revealed Book in a *living* language.
3. The language is pure, and it always observes a tone of reverence when speaking of, or referring to, the Almighty God, to Whom it never attributes human frailties and passions.
4. Its language is chaste. The impure, immoral and indecent ideas and expressions, narratives and blemishes,

¹ The Holy Qur-án, V : 25.

² Matt, XXVI : 38.

³ Matt, XXVI : 40.

⁴ Matt, XXVI : 56.

POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM

"It is no use arguing about polygamy," says Shopenhauer, "it must be taken as *de facto* existing everywhere, and the only question is how to regulate it." Of course, it existed throughout Arabia. The Holy Prophet restricted and regulated this institution.

But the so-called civilised and cultured people, it may be argued, think it to be a relic of the uncivilised past. Well, we are not at all enamoured of the existing civilisation and its standards. We must not bother about those who, through sheer lack of true vision of things, have been ridiculing the only way towards reforming the social evils of this age.

Another objection that is levelled against polygamy is that it is detrimental to women's rights, as women claim an equal share of their rights and responsibilities with men. Hence polygamy is an absurdity.

If by equality we mean the rigid equality in all respects without considering the natural, biological and functional differences between man and woman, that is unfortunately not possible. Moreover, those who allege that polygamy necessarily lowers the status of women seem to be unaware of the hard facts around them. They ignore the fact that the percentage of women, on the whole, throughout the world is proportionately much bigger than that of men, which gives rise to many sex problems of modern life. This suggests, naturally enough, the necessity of polygamy to be allowed in a civilised society for the safeguard of the rights of women. The legal permission of polygamy must be given in the interest of those thousands of unmarried girls who are in danger of becoming "mistresses", "illegitimate girl friends," and "prostitutes" of the society. If the world does not take recourse to polygamy it will certainly hamper the realisation of the ardent desire for justice and equality to

13. It is the *last* revealed Book, and is the *final* Word of God. The religion it proclaims is the *summum bonum* of the Will of God.

14. It declares the innocence of Jesus and Mary from the charges and calumnies levelled against them by the Jews and Christians alike ; and affirms the *humanity* of Jesus
(*To be continued.*)

POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM

A Brief Note on Polygamy

BY S. M. TUFAIL, M.A.

Wars have been the source of many evils and corruptions which constitute a glaring blot on the face of humanity. Since the days of the Holy Prophet Muhammad this state of constant wars and turbulent conditions of society has not changed. Human nature is the same as it was in the seventh century or even before. There may be wars to restore peace and order; and they will always leave behind problems of great consequence. One of the most baffling problems that face the world to-day is the considerable surplus of women crying for protection after the cessation of war. It is suggested from some quarters that polygamy is a very poor and mean solution of the prevailing corruption and laxity in the sex affairs consequent upon this surplus.

The considerable majority of women always calls for a proper solution. Now the world is forced to accept polygamy as a necessary evil. The extraordinary circumstances, under which polygamy was allowed to flourish, are no more extraordinary than those obtaining now. And there cannot be any other solution excepting this "poor" and "mean" solution, offered by Islam.

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the spiritual, moral, and material equality between the two sexes :

If any do deeds of righteousness, be they male or female and have faith, they will enter Heaven and not the least injustice will be done to them.¹

To men is allotted what they earn and to women what they earn.²

For Muslim men and women, for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves); for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in God's praise, for them has God prepared forgiveness and great reward.³

He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts); verily in that are signs for those who reflect.⁴

In this connection the sayings of the Holy Prophet must also be kept in view :—

A virtuous wife is man's best treasure.

Women are the twin halves of men.

Heaven lies at the feet of your mother.

These words were uttered at a time when fornication and adultery were a common curse of society, when wives were considered to be no better than chattels and as "street girls" or "other women" known to the present day society. After the death of a person the nearest male relation inherited his widows and had the right to cover them with his own mantle. Even a son in this way took his step-mother as his wife. This heinous sin was abolished by the advent of Islam ;⁵ and the status of woman was thus raised by Islam at a time when the Arab mind was

¹The Holy Qur-an, IV : 124.

² *Ibid.* IV : 32

³ *Ibid.* XXXIII : 35.

⁴ *Ibid.* XXX : 21. See also II : 22 ; VII : 178 ; XXIV : 30, 31.

⁵ *Ibid.* IV : 12.

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women-folk. However, if we take a long view of things polygamy, practised within the limits and injunctions of the Holy Qur-án, only goes to serve the interest of womanhood.

Monogamy is thoughtlessly supposed to be an ideally just solution of the existing problems of marriage. This condition is very unfavourable, as we have seen, to woman's interest in view of their numerical superiority over men.

Polygamy legally practised increases the responsibility of men towards their wives. They must, however, be quite just, fair and impartial in looking to their spiritual, physical and economic comforts. A man cannot truly love more than one wife, it may be said, so he must not marry any other. Well, why should he get more than one child then?

Of course, Islam has permitted it under extraordinary circumstances. But if such circumstances do arise, surely it becomes an act of virtue and it is not culturally and economically degrading to womanhood and all those who practise it can on no account be called sensuous, irresponsible or selfish, provided they do not trespass the regulations laid down by Islam. And it must be remembered that in spite of all this Islam does not interfere with the happiness of those couples who want to remain monogamous.

It is sometimes again alleged that with the dissolution of the patriarchal society and emancipation of woman, polygamy is dying its natural death. If emancipation of women alone has sounded the death-knell of patriarchal society, this revolution was effected by the Holy Prophet about fourteen hundred years ago. He gave legal rights to women without outraging nature's own design. And never were such rights given to them before. And it was Islam alone that established, as far as it was possible,

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new, which then becomes the bed-rock of all subsequent progress. When matter has reached its consummation in the body of man on the physical side it gives birth to something new, the human soul. The philosophical import of this fact is that life is innate in nature and is not a putting in of something from another sphere. The soul at its inception lies concealed in the animal consciousness of man, and it comes to the surface at a later stage, after which further development makes it perfect.

But one very important change now takes place. While up to this stage all progress was on the material plane, and was therefore instinctive: now, matter, having reached its consummation, has given birth to something non-material—the soul, which is conscious of itself and of the universe around it, and is able to exercise its choice between good and bad. Now, in order that it may avoid the evil and follow the good, it rests upon God to enlighten it with the laws of nature, which it had up to now been following unconsciously, and which it now needs to follow consciously in order to work out its own potentialities.

The object of life, thus, is to work out the unfoldment of the soul—all its potentialities seeking actualisation. The means prescribed for doing so in the Holy Qur-ân is to live in conformity with the laws of nature, or better still, to imbue ourselves with Divine attributes. God has been revealing to man these laws,—which being followed will lead to the evolution of his soul,—ever since man's creation, through His Prophets raised from time to time in every nation. Now when the national age was over, and the whole world was standing on the brink of unification, and every nation alike demanded a new prophet, God sent His final Prophet with His

shocked at seeing a little girl affectionately caressed by the Holy Prophet.

But if the emancipation of women means the emancipation of women wrought under the communist influence *i.e.*, "an openly legalised community of women" we have nothing to do with it. Islam never meant to make the women-folk free from all standards of law and morality. Male and female members of the society are required to develop their potentialities in their own spheres of life. No doubt, customs of the patriarchal society have undergone great many changes, and the problems arising in the past have not lessened in their intensity. But the principles of Islam are of universal applicability and hold good to day and will do so for ever.

EVOLUTION OF THE SOUL

BY M. A. SAMAD

(Continued from vol. XXXIII, p. 30)

Consider the sun and his light, and the moon when she borrows light from him, and the day when it exposes it to view, and the night when it draws a veil over it, and the heaven and its make, and the earth and its extensions, and the soul and its perfection. So he intimated to it by inspiration its deviating from the truth and its guarding against evil, he will indeed be successful who purifies it, And he will indeed fail who corrupts it.¹

I have already shown how the Holy Qur-án had anticipated the general features of the Darwinian theory of the evolution, and described at length the various stages of evolution from the creation of the "first cause" down to the evolving of man. But this is not the final stage. When a thing completes its evolution in one stage, it gives birth to something

¹ The Holy Qur-an XXI: 107.

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different sets of moral instructions for men on the different stages of the evolution of their souls. For persons standing on the borders of animality it prescribed very elementary rules of morality, rules which if obeyed will raise them from the animal stage in which they stand and lead them on to the next stage, the stage of 'Nafs-i-Lawwamah' or the Self-accusing Soul.

The obvious change that now takes place is that whereas in the previous stage our natural impulses inclined us towards evil, now a sort of struggle begins. While there is yet the attraction of evil in us, something from inside—generally called conscience—seems to be preventing us from listening to the dictates of evil. It is for this reason that it is called the Self-accusing Soul.

As I have said, a sort of struggle has now started ; we may fall many a times, but that must not dishearten us. If we are determined to carry on the struggle—and bitter and hard it certainly is—then we have the assurance that at last we shall succeed.

And if you shun the great evils that have been forbidden unto you, We shall do away with your evil inclinations.¹

And what are these "great evils" ? – They are exceeding the limits, mischief-making, ungratefulness, injustice, pride, boasting, treachery, utterance of hurtful language, extravagance, unfaithfulness and exulting etc. Higher are the demands of morality in this stage. The Holy Qur-án divides these under two headings. First, those that prevent us from injuring other's life, property and honour ; and the chief among these are chastity, honesty, meekness, and politeness ; secondly, those that prompt us to do good to others ; Among these are forgiveness, goodness, courage, truthfulness, patience, sympathy and tenderness.²

¹ The Holy Qur-án IV : 31.

² 'Al-Islam' by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din.

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complete message in order to guide all the nations to their destined goal.

We have not sent thee (O Muhammad !) but as a mercy to all the nations.¹

Now, several are the evolutionary stages before the soul reaches its perfection in this world. In its initial stage, when natural inclinations predominate, it is garbed in bestial passions, and inclines man towards evil and rebellion. This stage has been rightly called by the Holy Qur-án as the stage of 'Nafs-i-Ammarah' or the Commanding soul. It is so called because its dictates are very exacting, and a man who blindly listens to them paves his way to sure destruction. And yet we find millions of men being led away by the nose by this Commanding soul and standing on the borders of animality.

Says the Holy Qur-án :—

They have hearts but they understand not, have eyes and they see not, have ears and they hear not ; they are as cattle, nay, they are in worse error.²

They cling to the earth and follow low desires.³

But we have to sublimate this very soul, and take it to a higher stage. Extremely difficult, though the task may seem, it is not hopeless :

Say : O My servants ! who have acted extravagantly against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allah ; surely Allah forgives the faults altogether ; surely, He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. And turn to your Lord and submit to Him before there comes to you the chastisement, then you shall not be helped.⁴

It is the beauty of the Holy Qur-án that it speaks to man according to his receptive capacity, and so it has

¹ The Holy Qur-an XXI : 107.

² *Ibid.*, VII : 179.

³ *Ibid.*, VII : 176.

⁴ *Ibid.*, XXXIX : 53-54.

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The Holy Qur-án does not read any vague sermons on them. It defines them and shows the right occasions for their use. Emotions and deeds, in themselves, are neither good nor bad. It is the propriety of the occasion that gives them the dignity of morality.¹ Now, if we carry on the struggle and follow the moral instructions, the Divine promise is "We will do away with your evil inclinations". He will evolve our souls into the next stage—the stage of 'Nafs-i-Mutmainna' or the Soul at Rest. A battle against evil has been fought and won, and the result is that evil has been eradicated and the soul has acquired its well deserved rest. But this is not the last stage; for stop means stagnation, and stagnation signifies decay. No, but ever fresh vistas are kept open before the soul until it reaches the stage of 'Nafs-i-Kámilah' or the Perfected Soul. Here God Himself speaks to man, who now becomes at one with Him, and sees that "All is from God", and that all the universe is but a mirror of Him. He alone is seen as True Being, all else is non-being, and man by illumination rises from non-being to being, and returns whence he came.

Surely we are God's, and to Him we shall surely return.²

¹ 'Al-Islam' by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din.

² The Holy Qur-án, II : 156.