



THE GREAT MOSQUE AT DAMASCUS

# THE REBUKE OF ISLAM

BEING THE  
FIFTH EDITION, REWRITTEN AND REVISED,  
OF  
THE REPROACH OF ISLAM

BY

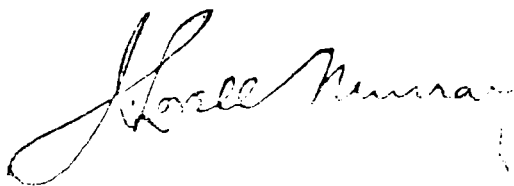
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"D. M. THORNTON: A STUDY IN MISSIONARY IDEALS AND METHODS"

"EDINBURGH, 1910," ETC.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Horace Murray". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned centrally on the page, below the author's name and above the publisher's information.

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## PREFACE TO FIFTH EDITION

TEN years have gone since this book was first brought out<sup>1</sup> and studied. The present edition is not merely a reprint, it is a thorough revision. Chapter IV has been revised and largely added to (the *mystical* aspect of Mohammedanism has in particular been given greater prominence), and Chapter VII has been entirely rewritten. Nevertheless, it remains the same work. A few blunders have been corrected, but in general, the author has modified his positions by additions not by subtractions.

The title has been changed. It was with pain that the author found, when too late, that an undesigned double entente lurked in the original title. Nothing more was meant than that Islam was a perpetual reminder to Christendom of the latter's failure truly to represent her Lord. For if she had done so, Mohammed would have been a Christian. And the world by this time had been won for Christ. The Biblical sense of the word "reproach" escaped him—namely a thing so unspeakably vile that its very existence is a shame.

The book is the fruit of twenty years spent in the East in one of the great centres of Islam, and of some sincere hard thinking, which has been unsparingly given both to the object itself, as studied

<sup>1</sup> Under the title, *The Reproach of Islam*, August 1909.

in experience, and to the Arabic reading with which that experience has been supplemented.

It is one of the galling necessities of such a task as this, that the author seems to be forced into playing either the advocate—which he feels is partial, or the judge—which he feels is unfair. He hovers painfully between each position, content with neither. It must suffice him if he can humbly claim that he has tried to burke no fact and to blink no truth; to weigh as scrupulously as he can words and judgments; to give to all the facts that are known to him their full weight before embarking on that most perilous of all things—a generalization. No writer of a book like this can pretend that he writes it without what friends call strong convictions—enemies, strong prejudices. But he can at least see to it that all his views have a rationale; and that his fundamental position is not made void by facts which he refuses to face.

There is one word of explanation which the author would like to make, to avoid the chance of misunderstandings which would be especially regrettable. Throughout the book a very special emphasis has been placed on the Person and work of the *Spirit of Jesus*. If the whole book, in its entire scope and significance, does not explicate these words, the writer will account it to have failed. But this much may be said here. The expression is pregnant to the very highest degree. It means all that God in Christ is; all that the heart of Him who was and is Jesus contained and contains; His whole

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character, His whole view of the world and God and religion and man and man's healing—His *Spirit*:—all *this*, clothing itself in the lives of those who confess His name, taking flesh in the life of His Church. . . . For the rest, let the book itself speak ; it being well understood, that this insistence on the utter and fundamental necessity for a *spiritual* Christianity is not for one moment intended to disparage or throw doubt on the necessity of order and form, and all that goes with them. But the vital thing is that they be informed by the Spirit from within. If not, they abide indeed, but only like the dried husks and pods that litter the roads after the life that once informed them and quickened them from within has fled. How are the pages of history, how are the countries of Orient and Occident, thus littered and strewn with the husks of churches, systems, theologies, organizations, rituals, forms, creeds, orders, canons . . . which the Spirit of Jesus may once have caused to grow, true organisms once, but now, alas, to all appearance little more than outsiders !

But, ever and always "abideth hope." It was said of that Spirit . . . "that He may *abide with you for ever.*" . . .

"Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God ; Come from the four winds, O Spirit, and breathe on these slain, that they may live."

W. H. T. G.

CAIRO,  
Whitsunday, 1919.

## NOTE ON THE PRONUNCIATION OF ARABIC WORDS AND NAMES

No attempt has been made to distinguish the various *consonants* which are peculiar to Arabic. Such an attempt would have involved the use of tiresome diacritic marks, which disfigure the page and are equally useless to the reader who knows, and who does not know, Arabic. The only consonant that calls for remark is *kh* (e.g. in *Khâlid*), which is pronounced something like the Scottish *ch* in *loch*. *Gh* has also been written:—it is pronounced rather like a continental *r*, *grasseyé*. But in difficulties let it be *g*.

Very different is it with the vowels, which can and should be pronounced approximately correctly. And if the simple indications given below are observed, the reader will find that he avoids the painful hash made by the non-Arabic scholar when he pronounces Arabic names without guidance, and he may have peace in the thought that his rendering is quite respectably near the mark, even when the consonants are pronounced as in English.

(1) A circumflex has been used to denote a long vowel.<sup>1</sup> And that vowel practically always has the accent. Other vowels in the same word are (practically) short.

(2) In words without circumflex it may be assumed that all the vowels are short. The accent is generally self-evident, but is occasionally noted (see next page).

(3) The values given to the long vowels must be the continental, not the English ones. That is to say, *â* like the *a* in *ah* or *spa*, e.g. *Khâlid* (*Khahlid*, not *Khaylid*): *î* like the second *i* in *quinine*, e.g. *Khadijah* (*Khadeeja*, not *Khadaija*); and *û* like the *oo* in *soon*, e.g. *Mahmûd*.

The circumflex has not been marked in every case, e.g. *Islâm* has been written *Islam* throughout. [Ed.]

(4) The short vowels are likewise very simple: *a* like the English *a* in *man*,<sup>1</sup> e.g. Ma'mûn, (the apostrophe is sometimes written to indicate that the syllable before it must be finished up sharp and the next syllable begun afresh); *i* like the *i* in *pin*, e.g. Ibn; and *u* like the *u* in *full*, not like the *u* in *mud*, e.g. Uhud. In the latter word both the *u*'s are pronounced north-country fashion as in *full*, not *mud*, and the accent is on the first syllable.

(5) A few names have been given their conventional spelling when it results in a pronunciation sufficiently near to the original, and when a change would have seemed rather pedantic: e.g. Mohammed (accent on the *a*—we have passed for ever from the days of Mahomet, pronounced Mayomett!). For the information of accurate persons it may be said that Mohammed is, properly, Muhammad, and Moslem properly Muslim, to which names the above rules may be applied. The double *m* in the former case is pronounced like double letters in Italian, not English: the secret may be discovered by the reader's discovering how, as a matter of fact, he has always pronounced two words the first of which ends, the latter begins, with *m*. Imagine, in fact, that you were saying to a child three nonsense words, pronounced rapidly together, moo ham mad. Try it. *Voilà Muhammad.*

AYESHA. *Ā'isha*, first syllable long and accented and separated from the next two, which are short.

CALIPH. Arabic Khalifa, or "Successor" to the Prophet.

YATHIRIB. Both syllables are short; accent on the first.

MOSLEMS. Properly, *Muslims*; participle of *islām*: i.e. those who surrender to God.

OMAR. Properly, Umar; the first syllable is short, but accented.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the true *Arabic* pronunciation; in Persia and India *a* is as a rule equivalent to the *u* in *mud*.

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# THE REBUKE OF ISLAM

## CHAPTER I

### THE EXTENT OF ISLAM

THERE is a city, a garden-city, an emerald set in the glowing desert-plain, beyond the long ranges of Lebanon, beyond the snowy dome of Hermon, Damascus, one of the cities that are in themselves epitomes of world-history. That city has seen many a kingdom come, increase, and pass away. Gods many and lords many have been acknowledged there, both before and since the day when a King, leaning on a great officer of state, confessed <sup>1</sup> Rimmon, god of Syria and of the plains, mightier than the Jehovah whom he thought to be but the hill-god of a highland nation. But Rimmon of Syria passes away, and Asshur of Assyria, and Nebo of Babylon, and Ormuzd of Persia, and Zeus of Hellas. Last of all comes Jupiter of Rome. But the time has come when JEHOVAH, the God of Israel, is made known, through His Son Jesus Christ, to be the God and Father of all. . . Who is this coming from Jerusalem, with garments

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings v. 18.

drenched in the blood of saints from the city of Jehovah? A man with threatening mien is approaching this city of the ages. But a dazzling light from heaven strikes him down; a voice more terrible than thunder speaks to him. A divine work, begun then and there, is completed in a room of a house overlooking the main bazaar of the great city; and that man rises from his bed, redeemed and made whole, assured now that in this JESUS, Jehovah, the God of the whole earth, has fully and finally revealed Himself; that the future is His; and that nought remains now but to bring all nations of the earth to His pierced feet, through the power of His Cross and the mighty working of His Spirit. . . . The task is entered upon; it proves a costly one; blood, and tears, and lives are poured out on it: but the issue is sure—the Cross has won the day! And lo, there arises in that great city of the East and of the West a glorious fane, where the One God is worshipped through the Lord Jesus Christ. And the Cross, the symbol of Suffering, has become the symbol of Triumph, for it crowns the entire building, just as the building itself dominates the whole city and country. And so an order is given to one of the masons to carve on the architrave of a beautiful gate in one of the transepts of that fane a triumphant verse, in which Old Testament and New Testament blend their voices to the glory of God in Christ:

THY KINGDOM, O CHRIST, IS A KINGDOM OF  
ALL AGES;  
AND THY DOMINION ENDURETH THROUGHOUT  
ALL GENERATIONS.<sup>1</sup>

And yet to-day when the traveller stands in that city and contemplates that great fane, what does he see and hear? Within, long, even rows of worshippers are bowing to the earth. But lo! the direction towards which they bow is South, not East. . . . They are bowing before an Unseen. A low, subdued roar, like a wave breaking on a beach, fills the whole building—they are proclaiming that God is One.

But—they are joining another name to His in their confession, a name that is not the Name of Jesus! And that book which the Reader is now reciting is not the Gospel, nay, it is proclaiming to the worshippers that Jesus, Son of Mary, is neither Lord nor Son of God, and that He never died upon the Cross. . . . And when the traveller passes out of the building and raises his eyes aloft, he sees no Cross crowning all, but a Crescent moon—a Crescent that reminds him also of a Scimitar.

This Church epitomizes the character of the phenomenon that meets us in a most startling way almost all over the Eastern Hemisphere. And the phenomenon is unique: nowhere has it the least parallel. For though there be many

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Psalm cxlv. 13 (Septuagint).

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Sacred Books other than the Gospel, yet when you interrogate them concerning Jesus Christ they return you no answer either good or bad; for they were written or collected long centuries before He came. And though there be many shrines and temples, in which many gods and lords many are confessed, yet none of them were ever Churches dedicated to the Name of Christ. The Brahman in Benares reading the Rig-veda, the Parsi with his Zend-avesta, the Buddhist, the Confucian pondering their Masters' wisdom—know nothing of Jesus Christ; and their temples are their own. But in Constantinople, in Damascus, in Egypt—Europe, Asia, Africa—the Moslem is bowing down where once the Christian knelt. And this symbolizes the fact that of religious founders the Founder of Islam alone is later in time than the Christ of God, and coming after Him is by many preferred before Him; and that his book alone claims to supersede, and alone denies, the Book in which the world is claimed for the Lord Christ.

### 1

“Europe!” yes, even Europe harbours Islam. It is strange that the land from which the visionary Macedonian cried out to St Paul, the land which was the first-fruits of Europe for Christ, is now mainly Mohammedan. In Constantinople (Byzan-



Centres of Christianity in the countries on the shores of the Mediterranean prior to the rise of Mohammed (about A.D. 600).

tium), capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, foundation of the first Christian Roman Emperor, city of the greatest of the Eastern Patriarchates, the glorious Byzantine Cathedral of San Sofia, like the great Church of St John Baptist at Damascus, is surmounted by the Crescent. In Turkey alone there are a million Moslems, and in the Balkan States, all of them now separated from Turkey, over half a million.<sup>1</sup> It is not generally known that there are between three and four millions, mostly of Asiatic origin, in European Russia, especially in the south and south-east.

In Turkey in Asia, though there are some fragments of ancient Christian Churches, they are but islands in the sea of Islam. The weary continuity of oppression and persecution, both civil and religious, has hardened their spirit, impaired grievously enough, as it already was, by superstition, and internal dissension, and decay. The great cities and sights which apostolic names and deeds rendered glorious are either lonely ruins or towns of no repute, at least no Christian repute. The candlesticks of those Churches have been taken away.

As the steamer runs past the huge mountains of Crete, or the softer coastline of Cyprus, both places for ever associated with the name of St

<sup>1</sup> These figures (*cf.* p. 244) are taken from the Statistical Survey by Prof. Westermann and Rev. S. M. Zwemer, given in *The Moslem World*, April 1914. No post-war statistics of Moslem populations are available at the time of going to press.—W. H. T. G.

Paul, it is sad to reflect that those islands are to-day partly Moslem, and that though the majority of the inhabitants are still nominally Christian, the spirit of St Paul is but faintly discernible in their hearts and lives.

What of Antioch in Syria, with its great Patriarchate? It too is prevailingly Moslem. Northwards, all along the routes made sacred by St Paul's first and third missionary journeys, you shall find little save Islam. East of that, in Armenia and the Caucasus, Christian Churches—Greek, Armenian, Nestorian—struggle on against the overpowering weight of an Islamic social system.

And south of Antioch it is the same. The highlands of Lebanon, like those of Macedonia and Armenia, are like an island peak to which have clung many Christians since the armies of Arabia flooded the Syrian lowlands. It is the same as we pass southwards. Upper Galilee, Lower Galilee, Samaria, Judea, Damascus, Gilead, Moab—Islam still predominates in them all. Very near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre may be heard the voice of the muezzin proclaiming from the minarets hard by that Mohammed is the supreme Prophet of God. And passing again to Bethlehem, one finds once more mosque, minaret, muezzin, and hears again the loud call that is intended to challenge the Saviour's claim to be the Incarnate Son.

What of the Other-Side-Jordan, the lesser nations that galled the flanks of the Chosen People? What

of the great desert beyond with its scattered Bedouin tribes? What of the great world-centre, Euphrates, where Babylon rose and fell, Mesopotamia, and the Tigris on whose banks rose Nineveh, the hammer of the ancient world? It is all the "House of Islam," as the Arabs call Mohammedan countries. Once Irâk (the lower Euphrates and Tigris valleys) was the very glory of the Saracenic empire, and the great cities of Islam—Basra, Kûfa, Baghdad—came nigh rivalling the forgotten glories of Nineveh and Babylon. But now, in the decrepitude that has overtaken these parts, those cities remind us in their turn of a glory that has long faded. In these regions, too, there are broken fragments of ancient Eastern Churches—Armenian, Syriac, Chaldean, Greek. But their eloquence is dead: they are eloquent only of the coming in of Islam as a flood. Moreover, in all these countries, Babylonia, Assyria, Palestine, Syria, the old tongues of Aramaic, Syriac, or Greek, the tongues of our Lord and of the Church of the early centuries, are almost entirely disused, and the language of Mohammed and of the Korân is everywhere, whether among the twelve millions of Mohammedans, or the communities of Christians scattered like islands in the sea of surrounding Islam.

As we pass in thought down the Red Sea, Arabia is on our left, Egypt on our right. The first is the nursery of Islam, the latter, once one of the glories of Christendom, is a Mohammedan realm under a Mohammedan ruler. In Egypt less than a million

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Coptic Christians still remain to remind us of the great Church of Clement, of Origen, and of Athanasius. But ten times that number, from Assuan in the South to Alexandria in the North, passionately disclaim the religion of their forefathers and the truths which Athanasius the Egyptian stood *contra mundum* to defend. Here also the old language of the Church, itself a heritage from the days of the Pharaohs, has perished; in town and village, bazaar and home, in Church as in Mosque, the language heard is that of the extraordinary race which boiled over from Arabia in the seventh century, and streamed seething into all the world around.

And Arabia, the Cradle of Islam—that peninsula, the great extent of which we hardly realize (little smaller in actual area than India itself)—Mohammed and his successors decreed should be wholly and totally given over to the Religion of the Korân. All other religions were utterly exterminated, and to this day the Christian travels there at the risk of his life, while to penetrate into the Holy Cities of Mecca or Medina is to forfeit it. Yet Arabia is not happy—it is rent by faction, and weakened by the fever of fanaticism. Nevertheless, its two and a half millions of people, whether Bedouin or in settled communities, give allegiance to the Prophet of Islam.

## II

And if, leaving the Near East, we ascend in mind into the highlands that bound the Tigris valley and the Persian Gulf, the ancient land of the people that overthrew Babylon and were overthrown in turn by Greece, it is still the same. Persia—for as it was called then, so is its name now—is Moslem. The old religion of the Zend-avesta disappeared before the irresistible vigour of a younger faith, only finding a despairing refuge in Western India, whither the Parsi fled from the religion of Mohammed that he might cling in peace to the religion of his forefathers. And in Persia Islam reigns supreme, even though its Islam is deemed a noxious heresy (*Shîa*) by almost all the rest of the Moslem world, and though the traditional free-thinking of the Persians has tinged their religious faith with a pantheism that makes it less fierce and intractable than that of the orthodox and traditional (*Sunni*) Mohammedan. None the less, throughout Persia all agree in denying utterly the claims of Jesus Christ, to whom, indeed, Persia was never won. The religion of the Crescent as yet holds the field among five millions of Persians.

Between Persia and India there are two great lands inhabited by wild, fierce peoples, Afghanistan and Baluchistan. These two, with their six millions of inhabitants, are practically solid Moslem countries. In Baluchistan there were some heathen

tribes, which might have come under British protection and have been won for Christ. But diplomacy ordered otherwise, and under Moslem rule those tribes will be added to the one hundred and fifty-seven millions of Asiatic Mohammedans. In Afghanistan the hatred of all who do not believe in Mohammed, and of Christians especially, is so fierce that it is impossible for anyone to preserve so much as his life there whilst confessing Christ as Lord.

In the great lands which we have left, with their thirty-six millions of souls, we have found independent peoples under Mohammedan rulers. A marvel is now to greet us as we cross the great passes of the towering highlands between Afghanistan and India. We descend into the Punjab, as countless hosts of invaders—Aryan, Semitic, and Tartar—have descended, and we find ourselves in a mighty Empire over which waves the Union Jack, and which owns the King of Britain as its Emperor. Yet this Empire of India is the greatest Mohammedan country in the world. Of its three hundred and fifteen million people, more than one-fifth are devoted believers in the claims of Mohammed, firm deniers of the claims of the Lord Christ. These sixty-six million Mohammedans are found almost all over India, though their distribution is very unequal. In Bengal alone there are nine million; in the Punjab, over fifty per cent are Mohammedan. This enormous mass of sixty-six million Mohammedans

utterly surpasses the total number of the Moslems found in the lands of Islam's birth, and its early conquests, and its later conquests under the Turks, all put together. The Mohammedan subjects of Great Britain are more in number than those of any other power.

From whence came the conquering hosts of the Crescent that poured into India over Khyber and the other passes of the North-West? That is a story which shall be told in a later chapter: it may be said here that they were mainly members of the great Turanian family of nations which so powerfully reinforced Islam in Asia, after the energy of the Arabs burnt itself out, just as the negro races have so powerfully reinforced it in the continent of Africa. They caught the sceptre from the now nerveless hands of the Persians, as the Persians had caught it from the Arabs; they streamed west and founded the Ottoman Empire; they streamed east and gave Islam in India the powerful start which it has used so well. Their home was in the steppes of Central Asia, to us a great, dim, bleak, unknown land. Into that region we must now cross in our thought-journey, for there, too, Islam has sway. Christianity has been there, little though the fact is known. Where is it now? It could not hold its own before the irresistible forces—religious, racial, social—controlled by the Crescent. To-day Central Asia, except where it is Buddhist, as in Tibet, is Moslem.

We cross the Hindu Kush and Pamirs, or, if

travelling through Persia, the highlands of North-Eastern Persia : we come down to a famous country between the Oxus and Jaxartes, the old and still best-known names for the rivers that flow from the Pamirs northwards into the Aral Sea. Here was Alexander the Great's furthest limit ; here are famous cities—Bokhara, Samarkand. . . . It is Turkestan, the land of the Turks. Almost all its seven million inhabitants are Mohammedan. Come eastward, into a territory that looks on the map as if it were bitten out of Tibet. It is Chinese Turkestan, also the home of the Turk, but in loose political relations to China, Western Turkestan being part of the Russian Empire. Here, too, are great cities—Kashgar, Yarkand. . . . Here, too, in the very heart of Asia, Islam entirely predominates. But we go further north still, over the dreary steppes between Lake Balkash and the Aral Sea ; or across mighty mountain chains and descend great valleys—the Irtish, the Obi ; we find ourselves in Russian Asia, in Southern Siberia ; we arrive at great cities—Omsk, Tomsk, even to Tobolsk. The Crescent has been with us all the way ! To the very boundary of Northern Siberia, almost to the latitude of Petrograd, where the winter day is so short that the Moslem can hardly find time to pray all his statutory prayers, this extraordinary faith has penetrated.<sup>1</sup> Twenty

<sup>1</sup> The trans-Siberian railway marks the sharp boundary-line between the southern districts, where Islam prevails (60 to 80 per cent), and the northern, where it includes only 10 to 5 per cent of the population.

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million Moslems of what were till recently Russia in Asia and Russian Turkestan, more than one-tenth of the whole of that "Orthodox" Christian empire, cover those enormous tracts. For the most part, all over those millions of square miles inhabited by a medley of races speaking a jumble of languages and dialects, all that is known of Jesus Christ is the Name of Him and the travesty of Him contained in the Book of the Prophet of Arabia.

### III

It might be thought that we have reached the limit of Islam in Asia: but we have only reached its northern and western limits. What of the eastern? Through Central Asia, through the two Turkestans, lie the caravan routes of immemorial antiquity from China to European Russia north of the Caspian, and to the Persian Gulf south of the Caspian. Those routes have been trodden hard by swarms of Turks and Mongols in times past. These Mongol Turks alternately raided China or sought her protection. Against them was built the famous Great Wall of China, to stem their furious and bloodthirsty incursions. Nevertheless Mongolian dynasties have ruled in China; and it was to be expected that Islam also should flow eastward over the great trade-routes and play its part in China too. And so it has been. We talk of Confucian China; we think of that great

people numbering one-fifth of the world's population as being one in race, one in faith. But are some ten millions of souls negligible? For that perhaps is the number of Mohammedans in China,<sup>1</sup> most of them in Kansu in the North-West, but many in other parts of the North, and many in Yun-nan in far South-West; from which last it is easy to pass in thought to the one and a half millions of Moslems, also of the yellow race, subjects of another Christian power, the French, inhabiting the French territories of Indo-China. And thus we have come round full circle to British Moslem India, between which and French Indo-China there only lies the Buddhist kingdom of Siam. Yet here, too, there are nearly half a million Mohammedans.

If it is a surprise to most English readers to find out that ten millions of Chinese, indistinguishable from their fellow-countrymen in dress, language, and manners, confess Allah and Mohammed, and pray according to the ritual ordained by the Prophet of Arabia in the name of God, it is perhaps still more of a surprise to know, lastly, that Islam is the predominant religion in the East Indies. We have seen that this amazing faith has claimed all the great races of Asia—the Aryan, the Semitic, the Turanian or Tartar. But one great race remains—the Malay; and it, too, Islam has claimed for its own. We have, moreover, seen Great Britain and France in their strange rôle of Moslem powers. Yet another Christian

<sup>1</sup> See Statistical Appendix, p. 244, footnote 2.

European power has sway over more Moslems in the East than over Christians in the West—Holland. Thirty million Dutch Moslems of Malay race are found in the immense islands of Java, Sumatra, Borneo, and Celebes. Only some seven millions of heathen are left in those islands, and between Christian missionary and Moslem preacher and trader, an unequal race is going on for the possession of those tribes.

## IV

And what of the Moslems whom the eye of our imagination sees prostrating themselves towards Mecca from the *opposite* quarter, from the West, the South-West, the South, those forty-two millions of African Mohammedans who also follow the prophet of Arabia? It is a far cry from the East Indies to the farthest west of Africa; from the Pacific to the Atlantic; from the frozen deserts of the steppes of Asia to the burning deserts of the Sahara of Africa. Yet both here and there has Islam easily penetrated, and easily holds a sway that seems well-nigh absolute.

From the border of Egypt the whole of North Africa to the Atlantic is Mohammedan practically to a man. Yet we are treading on the dust of martyrs, confessors, pastors, doctors of great Christian Churches. In Egypt there are at least nearly a million Copts to remind us of the Patri-

archate of Alexandria ; but in Tripoli what is there to tell us, as we traverse the fanatical Barbary States, with their one and a quarter million of Moslems, that we are passing over the territory of the Churches of Cyrene? In Tripoli the Greek tongue of Synesius, in Tunis and Algeria the Latin of Cyprian, of Tertullian, of Augustine, have wholly disappeared : the language of these countries is the tongue of the prophet of Mecca. The country now known as Tunis was a veritable centre of the Christian faith. Its soil was drenched with the blood of Christian martyrs. Its confessors preferred torture rather than betray the Christian Scriptures. Its territory was divided into dioceses numerous to an unparalleled degree. The great name of Augustine of Hippo, the man who did so much to shape the Christian thought of the West, shed a lustre over the whole of that North African Church. Where is the fruit of all that learning, all that self-sacrifice? Gone! leaving not a wrack behind. The churches are in ruins or mouldered into dust. The Cross has disappeared before the Crescent, and men acknowledge a Book, which claims to supersede the Book over which Augustine pored, saved from sin and for God by its living words.

On through Algeria, the ancient Numidia, to Morocco, the ancient Mauretania, to the southern Pillar of Hercules ; past it, round the long curve of the north-western coast where Atlas ends, and the Atlantic surf, which alone stopped the furious

onset of the Saracen, beats upon the shore. Algerian and Moor, Berber and Kabyle make practically a solid Mohammedan people. Arabic is the tongue of the great majority of the twenty millions of Moslems from Port Said to the Atlantic, and the Arabian Prophet alone they have taken for their guide. As the noonday sun passes over North Africa we might say that it sees the entire population turn eastward and prostrate itself towards the city of Mohammed.

What of the mighty region summed up for us in the vague, dark names Sudan, Sahara—the Hinterlands of Tripoli, Tunis, Algiers, Morocco? It is but a geographical expression to most of us; yet desert as much of it is, it seethes with life—tribes that inhabit the oases, or wander over the great inland trade-routes from the Atlantic to the Nile; and far more, in the Sudan, settled peoples who inhabit the lands through which flow great rivers, as the Senegal, Niger, and Benue; peoples dwelling in great and famous cities, as Timbuktu, Kano, Sokoto—capable of organizing great empires, like the Fulah empire of Sokoto which absorbed the great Hausa people, or like the central-Saharan religious empire of the Senussi chief to-day. This huge territory also is a “House of Islam.” In that heady desert air which makes men violent they know not for what, passionately eager they know not to what end, their minds are disciplined to one sole idea, the only idea and the only interest which their narrow lives admit, the religion of the

Crescent. South of that, Islam has been and is ever still creeping on; now by great conquests, now by the gradual, sure assimilation of the ignorant tribes to their merchant-settlers.

In every one of the West Coast lands, from Sierra Leone to the Bight of Benin, a very considerable proportion of the population is Mohammedan, and for the balance, the heathen remnant, the contest is going on, and at present on utterly unequal terms, between Islam coming in with its dead-weight from the North, and Christianity coming all too feebly and fitfully from the South. In these great central and western regions eighteen millions of Moslems reproach us for our great failure.

Coming south now, in this thought-journey in which there has been so much to dismay and sadden the believer in the Christ of God, we find that, starting from the Gulf of Guinea, Islam has a firm hold in the French Congo State, where there are one million Mohammedans out of ten million inhabitants. Even south of the Congo they are found; and here it fills one with dismay to think how little the Congolese have had reason to prefer the system, the morals, or the principles which they might have inferred to be Christian from the practices of their Belgian "rulers." May God enable them to judge rather from what they see in their heroic missionaries!

Further east, among the Southern Sudanese of the Nile Basin, we find Islam threatening, through the sheer imitateness of the Sudanese, and his

fatal contact with Moslem officials, whether Egyptian or Black, though the intense conservatism of these tribes has yet resisted the drift to Islam in an unusual manner. But in the north of Abyssinia they are going over very fast. While as for Somaliland—solid Islam with nearly one million people, Moslem to a man, alas, and again alas!—once more the Christian Church has made its ultimate task one hundredfold more difficult through being *too late*. But a little time ago these Somali tribes were heathen. Now they are fanatical Mohammedans.

In Uganda, on the other hand, the Cross has been in time—but only just in time. It was only by a hairsbreadth that all Uganda has not been Islamized. As it is, there are six hundred thousand Moslems out of a population of three million.

And all down the east coast and in the centre of Africa it is the same tale—Islam coming in like a flood, from the North and from the East, where Zanzibar is a veritable centre for the influence of the Crescent. It would seem as if this extraordinary faith thrives through its evil deeds just as easily as through its good, for there can be no doubt that the start which Islam has got in the interior of the Dark Continent is due to the operations of the Arab slavers, for all their inhumanities and unspeakable atrocities. Memories in Africa are short: the slave trade is largely at an end now, thanks to Christian England; and the slave trader, turned respectable, is, in his capacity of

honest trader, making Islam the *mode* in Dark and Darkest Africa. In all these regions down to the Zambesi there are believed to be already upwards of a million Mohammedans. And it is a stern fight between Crescent and Cross for the bulk of the heathen tribes.

Did we say, "Down to the Zambesi"? The Muezzin is heard in the numerous Moslem colonies in Cape Colony, Natal, and the Boer ex-Republics, as if to emphasize the fact that Islam regards the African Continent as in a special sense its own. And a loud note of warning has been sounded by wide-awake Christians in South Africa, where Indian Moslems often marry white women, and adopt low-grade white children. To complete the tale, nearly two hundred thousand Moslems are found in the islands on the east of Africa—Madagascar, Seychelles, Mauritius, Mayotte, and Comoro. In all Africa it is believed that there are forty-two million Mohammedans—over one-fourth of the total population, and beyond question their rate of increase is greater than that of any other faith.

## V

The centre to which all Moslems turn is a black stone in an old Meccan temple. On the pilgrimage at Mecca, the African negro meets the Malaysian Moslem, almond-eyed Russians of Mongolian or Turkish blood from Omsk and Samarkand meet

Indians from the cities of Punjab and Bengal, cultured Syrians from Beyrout, Egyptians from Cairo, Turks from Asia Minor and Stamboul. All this crowd of races, peoples, nationalities, and tongues own one faith : to the Christians' One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of all, they proudly and contemptuously confess one Allah, one prophet, one sacred book, one sacred city, Mecca—that city towards which we may imagine one hundred and fifty-seven millions of Asiatic, and forty-two millions of African, Moslems turning daily as they prostrate themselves in prayer, facing inwards in huge concentric circle, from north and east, west and south. This then is the phenomenon with which we have to do :—nearly two hundred million souls in the continents of Asia and Africa, in addition to the Moslems in Europe, spread out in the form of an enormous Cross, the arms of which reach from the Pacific to the Atlantic, and its upright from Siberia to the Zambesi, and its centre and focus, physically as well as spiritually, *Mecca* in Arabia.

We have caught a glimpse of what this means—vast, almost inaccessible regions, whether of frozen steppes of Tartary, or of torrid deserts of the Sahara and Sudan ; civilizations, great, unsympathetic ; semi-barbarous peoples, almost unintelligible to us ; closed lands, such as Arabia, Afghanistan, Tibet ; enormous distances ; multitudinous tongues and races, Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Urdu, Tartar, Malaysian, Chinese, Bantu, Hausa ;

yet tightly united by a belief in one God, and a common faith which carries with it a fraternity and a religious enthusiasm in its adherents without parallel; a people bound together by this Faith, and by a social system which insinuates itself by the privileges it offers, the penalties it can impose, and the easiness of the spiritual demands it makes:—such is the Islam which faces the Church of Jesus Christ in this twentieth century of its era, challenging both its past, its present, and its future.

We are standing again before the Church-Mosque of St John the Baptist at Damascus. How its significance has grown for us since we stood there first!

Then let it be significant to us in one final respect also! For there, not understood by the alien Occupant, and passed over by his obliterating hand, we still descry, on the architrave of that once beautiful gate, the prophetic letters of the words:

THY KINGDOM, O CHRIST, IS A KINGDOM  
OF ALL AGES;  
AND THY DOMINION ENDURETH  
THROUGHOUT ALL GENERATIONS.

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## CHAPTER II

### WHENCE CAME IT ?

THE phenomenon of Islam, as it is seen in the world to-day, is then most startling ; it is one that inevitably sets us enquiring into its underlying causes. And naturally the first question we ask is, *Whence* came it ? And the second, *How* came it ? The answer to these enquiries forms the subject of this and the following chapter.

In the last chapter we took a journey on the wings of thought, in *space* ; in the present one we take another journey, on the same wings of thought, in *time*. Backwards in time we fly, leaving the centuries behind us, retracing the slow evolution of history :—how fast and how amazingly the scene changes ! Back, past the modern European period, with its formation of great nations ; past the fifteenth century with its two crucially important events, the fall of Constantinople and the discovery of the New World ; past the mediæval centuries, with their chivalry, romance, monasticism, their popes and emperors, their kings and counsellors :—past all this, and we alight at a certain century when the Roman Empire has its seat at Constantinople, the New Rome



DESERT LIFE

of the East, under the Byzantine emperors, the successors of Constantine the Great. For Italy and the whole West have been overwhelmed by successive floods of Teutonic tribes from the North, whose savagery is being slowly and hardly tamed by the Church from her metropolitan centre, Rome. Rome is no longer a world-capital, the city of emperors, but for that very reason she is the more conspicuous as the seat of the great Bishopric of Rome and the centre of the religious forces in the West. To the eye of a Græco-Roman in Constantinople, the West seems little better than a chaos.

All the hope of the world as seen from Constantinople seems to lie in the eastern half of Christendom. The Byzantine empire holds sway over eastern Europe, Asia Minor, Egypt, Syria, and eastward as far as the great Persian Empire of the Chosroes. The latter, having extended northwards, has swallowed up the great Parthian Empire, the old enemy of Rome, while eastwards her borders stretch towards India. The Persians are mainly Zoroastrians, believers in a god of good and a god of evil, Ormuzd and Ahriman, and in the sacred writings of the Zend-avesta. Yet there are scattered through these regions, and through Turkestan towards the spaces of Central Asia, many Christians, with churches and bishoprics, the work mainly of Nestorian missionaries, who, with all their separative views regarding the doctrine of the Incarnation, are earnest "foreign missionaries" in these early days. For alas! the seamless robe

of the Church has been rent; throughout the Christian world Christians are bitterly divided among themselves. In Rome and in Constantinople there are already ominous signs of the division which actually took place in 1054 into the "Catholic" and "Orthodox," or Roman and Greek Churches of the present day; while in the East, the Nestorian Christians, and in Egypt the Copts are wholly separate from the Orthodox (Greek) or "Melchite" Church of Byzantium. In this century our Lord's prayer is surely forgotten: "That they all may be one . . . that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

Such is the "world" which we survey at the end of our flight in time; for we have alighted at the seventh Christian century, and this is what we have seen.

We had almost forgotten! A country remains unnoticed in our survey—really so unimportant that it is hardly worth while mentioning it—Arabia, a barren peninsula, shut off from civilization (we are Byzantines speaking) by three seas on three sides, and the desert on the fourth; peopled by barbarous tribes, mostly nomads, some others settled in towns, but all of them utterly irresponsive to civilizing influences from Europe. Rome tried her hand at administering Arabia, and failed; Byzantium and Persia hold her now at arm's length by means of garrison-towns and buffer-tribes, content if thus the hot-headed "Saracens" refrain

from troubling their marches. For the rest, the Arabian is a familiar figure in Syria with his caravans and his merchandise. As it was in the days of Joseph, so now, the Ishmaelite is the wandering merchant of the East. As for what that incomprehensible person does, or where and how he lives when he returns to that stony Arabian peninsula, it is hardly worth the while of Byzantine Christian or Zoroastrian Persian to enquire. True it is that in extent this peninsula is an immense tract—its area is almost as great as that of India—but with such inhabitants as it has, we, the world of 600 A.D., may really ignore it altogether.

And yet, before the century is out, there shall have arisen in that peninsula, and issued from it, a power which, rolling on like a flood, shall annihilate that Persian Empire, and shall be laying siege to Constantinople herself; and more than half of that Byzantine Roman Empire shall have been lost to her for ever. Thus unstable and incalculable are human affairs in this seventh century.

And therefore we may and must seek to pass within that Arabian peninsula and see, with the eyes of its inhabitants, what is really going on there, and how the world beyond looks to the eyes of a certain Arabian named Mohammed, son of Abdallah, sometime caravan-manager, now independent citizen of the town of Mecca, the chief city of the tribe of the Kuraish, in the Hejâz or western coast district of Araby.

## I

He was a posthumous child, born about A.D. 570, and his mother did not long survive her husband. The orphan was brought up under the care and the patronage of his uncle Abu Tâlib. When a boy he used to look after his uncle's sheep and camels. When a youth he had some experience of the desultory fighting in which the Arabs used to indulge in the course of settling the innumerable blood-feuds, which were one of the chief features of Arab society. And when a young man, he took his part in organizing and managing the yearly caravans which went forth from Araby to trade. In this way he visited different parts of the Arabian peninsula, of Syria, and possibly further afield. So well did he manage the caravan of a certain wealthy lady named Khadîjah, that on his return, at about the age of twenty-five, she bestowed on him her hand in marriage. By her he had children, and through her ample means he enjoyed financial independence. Thus he continued till his fortieth year.

That does not seem to be a very eventful existence; yet it was a life which, given a reflective and imaginative mind, might afford suggestion and food enough for thought, both in respect of what he saw in the Arabian peninsula itself, and in the more civilized provinces through which he journeyed. Let us try to see what he saw, using the eyes of the man himself.

Arabia itself was a congerie of tribes and clans with hardly any cohesion. There was a common language, of course with various dialects ; there were some sacred spots like Mecca with its bethel (Bait Allah) or Kaaba (cube), the names for the immemorial sanctuary into which the sacred Black Stone was built. There was an annual " Market " or " Fair " at Ukâz, and four sacred months for attending fair or making pilgrimage, during which none might attack his fellow. These were the chief factors of unity, and slight enough they were, but enough to tell very powerfully when the right moment came. Students of Hellenic history will be able to trace a curious parallel for themselves.

In regard to social organization, the nation was divided into tribes, the tribes into clans, the clans into families. The conception of the blood-feud tyrannized over the whole ; if the member of one clan, or a man under its patronage, were slain, the clan of the slayer must yield a victim, or pay blood-money. Hence tedious wars, languidly pursued, terminating, as in the case of the " campaigns " witnessed by Mohammed, in the balancing of credit and debit of deaths, and the paying up of the difference in blood-money. Did the young Mohammed contrast this futility with the strenuousness and the definiteness of the social organizations he saw abroad, comparing the impotence of the Arab nation with the puissance of the Byzantine or the Persian Empire, as witnessed by him on his travels ? Why should these things

continue?—for the Arabs, having a great language, poetry, tradition, and immense pride of their own, had all the ingredients of a great patriotism.

So also the political contrast. Instead of a mighty king with his civil and military hosts organized under him, Mohammed saw a headless nation. Even the tribe-unit was headless, looking, for justice or for leadership, to a vaguely-defined number of local notables.

In education it was no better. The Arabs had no learning. Very few of them troubled to learn even reading or writing any more than Mohammed had done. The Arabic language was their only education. That marvellous tongue lent itself to contests in poetry, in extemporaneous rhetoric. Assuredly Mohammed had witnessed and taken his part in criticizing these contests even if he had not personally shared in them; his tribe, the Kuraish, spoke the standard Arabic of Arabia, the *Attic*, so to speak, of the Arabian nation; and he must have had a good command of pure Arabic. It would, therefore, seem that the *uneducatedness* of Mohammed, of which such a great point is made by Moslem apologists, has been very much over-rated. Yet he apparently despised the forms of Arabic literature then in vogue. Was that because he had caught a glimpse of some real learning and education in his travels in Syria?

The Semites are a religious race; it was not possible for a Semite, even an Arab of the Kuraish, one of the least religious of all Semitic tribes, to reflect

upon social and political phenomena without coming immediately upon religious considerations ; and between the two he would infallibly see effect and cause. The little limits of Mohammed's world gave him plenty of food for thought on this matter also. By the side of Judaism and Christianity—or even heathen Zoroastrianism—the religion of the Arabs must have seemed to him a miserable affair. Local deities with puny powers limited to their own borders ; a shadowy Supreme Deity, Allah, who at times seemed to pale before the nearer minor deities, and at other times to be the one supreme reality of all . . . but nothing certain, no open vision, no revelation, no prophet. Yet he had seen enough of Jews and Christians to know how much happier their plight was ; for Arabia was full of Jewish tribes or colonies and there were also in Arabia Christian monasteries and even Christian states. And both Jew and Christian had the tremendous prestige of *learning*—of being “ People of the Book.” Did not the Empire of Roum (Byzantine Empire) own allegiance to the Injîl (Gospel), and the Jews to the Tourâh (Law) ? Even Abyssinia over the water, at least a homogeneous kingdom, was subject to the Gospel. Why had every nation its Book, its special revelation from the Divine, and the Arabian nation none at all ? Why had every nation, except his own, its own Prophet and Leader, the Jews, Mûsa (Moses), the Nazarenes, Îsa (Jesus) ? Even the Persian had his prophet Zoroaster, and his Book, the Zend-

avesta. Surely *here* must reside the reason for the hopeless futility of his nation and the favouredness of the rest of the world (his purview cannot have extended west or north of Constantinople, nor east of Persia)—“ And lo! Jew and Christian worship Allah and say that He is one, and that there is no god but He! Thus it was revealed to the *nabi* (prophet) Moses, in the Law, and to the *nabi* Jesus, in the Gospel, and so each became the Apostle (*rasûl*) of his nation. Truly it must be so. And they say that there is a Judgment Day, an assignment of reward and of punishment for ever, a *Firdous* (Paradise) and *Jehannam* (Hell), and that unbelievers shall be consigned to that *Jehannam*. It must be so! Are there not some of us, Warakah my uncle among them, who are seeking to return to the faith of our forefather Ibrahim (Abraham)? Did I not myself in boyhood listen to the inspired Christian Bishop of Najrân, Kuss ibn Sâ'ida, seated on a red camel at the fair of Ukâz and preaching as though in ecstasy? To this day I have not forgot that man nor his message. Then do I also testify—‘*Lâ ilâha ill-Allâh!*’  
THERE IS NO GOD BUT GOD! . . .

“ ‘ . . . *wa Muhammadun rasûlu-llâh . . . !*’  
(And Mohammed is the Apostle of God.)

“ *Why not!*

“ *Why not ‘ Mohammed the Prophet of Allah? ’*”

This thought once in mind was bound to come, and come again, and recur with cumulative force again and again. The spirit of enquiry was in

the air ; contemporaries of his among the Kuraish had been or were still enquiring after truth, after the reality of that One and Supreme Allah whom the Kuraish honoured in name, but not in deed. The thoughts that crowded upon a mind like his were therefore as the piling of fuel, pile upon pile, the material of a mighty flame of fire which only awaited the spark in order to burst forth.

Always a pensive man, he became, towards his fortieth year, more and more contemplative and retiring. He was wont to go apart for days at a time into the wilderness, for solitary meditation. His favourite spot was a cave near the foot of Mount Hira, a lofty, stony hill a few miles north of Mecca. Close by was the grave of one of those enquirers who had spent a life-time in the same search. The solitude worked upon him. The awful silence of the desert, which none who has not experienced it can appreciate, strained and strung every faculty of his soul to breaking-point. . . . Until at last It came. . . . A heavenly Shape appeared to stand, "high and lifted up," then drawing close to him—as it were "within two bows' length, or yet nearer" : and It spoke to him : he heard It : and this is what It said :—

" RECITE !

" IN THE NAME OF THE LORD WHO CREATED,

" CREATED MAN FROM BLOOD CONGEALED.

" RECITE ! "

So, it had come! Allah *was*, then, the One and the Only God; He had appeared, or had sent His angel Gabriel, to Mohammed; Mohammed *was* the Prophet and Apostle of God; and these strange, beautiful rhymed verses, what were they if not the beginning of the Arabic "Book" which should be to Mohammed and the Arabian nation what the Tourâh had been to Moses and the nation of Israel.<sup>1</sup>

"VERILY IT IS NO OTHER THAN A REVELATION  
THAT HATH BEEN INSPIRED.

ONE MIGHTY AND STRONG TAUGHT IT HIM,—  
ONE ENDUED WITH WISDOM. HE STOOD  
IN THE HIGHEST PART OF THE HORIZON,  
THEN HE DREW NEAR AND APPROACHED,  
UNTIL HE WAS AT THE DISTANCE OF TWO BOWS'  
LENGTH OR YET NEARER :  
AND HE REVEALED UNTO HIS SERVANT THAT  
WHICH HE REVEALED."

The best proof of the reality of Mohammed's belief in the reality of the revelation, and of the completeness of his sincerity, is that he fell at the first into a state of doubt concerning it. The first experience left him ardently longing for a second, yet the vision delayed and tarried. Khadijah, the faithful wife, was the witness and consoler of his mental agonies.

And after long waiting, of a sudden the same

<sup>1</sup> It is notable that "Korân" (Qur'ân) is simply the verbal-noun of the first word heard by Mohammed from the lips of the Apparition—"Recite."

strange physical experience gripped him. He was convulsed. Ah! at last the fit of prophecy! "Cover me, cover me," he cried to Khadijah. And she covered his convulsed prostrate form with a mantle. And again the words came to him, in the same rhymed prose as before :

" O THOU THAT ART COVERED WITH A MANTLE !  
 ARISE AND PREACH !  
 AND MAGNIFY THY LORD,  
 PURIFY THY GARMENTS,  
 AND DEPART FROM ALL UNCLEANNESS ! "

And after this there was no gap in these " periods " of revelation.

He was God's warner (*mundhir*), prophet (*nabi*), apostle (*rasûl*). He had now a mission, and he lived but to fulfil it. The revelation-experiences remained in his mind, the essential part of the whole matter. As these revelations recurred, they were jealously memorized or written down, and after his death the collected sum of them constituted the " Scripture," the " Korân," the " Book " for the Arabian nation, endorsing the Scriptures that had come before. And to him, as to his followers, physical symptoms were what indicated the objectivity of the revelation: they would come on at all times or any time. . . . At first consciously sincere, unconsciously the realization of the extraordinary utility of these experiences no doubt grew upon him. From speaking of the

broadest and most general religious truths, GOD, the Resurrection, the Judgment and After, he began to expand and give detail to his themes. Then, as his contact with the hard realities of life at Mecca and still more Medina produced ever altering circumstances, it seemed that a Sûra (chapter) or Ayah (verse) came to meet every circumstance. Later on, after the death of Khadijah, the fitness of the revelations to the circumstances increased, and ever increased, until they seemed to degenerate into sanctions for his personal needs, and notions, and policies—and saddest of all, his revenges and his personal desires. At no point is it possible to say for certain: "Here he not only was self-deceived, but was deceiver." Yet the style of the Korân shows the change for the worse. As its sincerity, in the deepest sense of the word, seems to diminish, its subject-matter gets more and more mundane and prosaic; and with that the fire, the terseness, the rhymed beauty of the style gradually fades away into prolixity, tameness, obscurity, wearying repetitiousness.

## II

We now turn to the development of events—covering about twenty years—between Mohammed's second "experience" and his death, that we may understand how the Arabian prophet created the forces, which immediately after his death turned

the civilized world upside down. This period divides itself naturally into two parts—the time of preparation before his flight to Medina (622 A.D.), and the time of the consolidation of his power, temporal as well as spiritual, after that flight. The consciousness of Mohammed, its preparation and development, must be very firmly grasped, for without this the whole narrative becomes dead and devoid of living significance ; while on the other hand if that is grasped, it will be possible to abridge very considerably the narrative of events.

The son of Abdallah stood, as Carlyle finely says, in a minority of one. But his faith in the reality of his mission was so unfaltering that not for one moment did he hesitate to make his message known and call others to " submission " (*islâm*) to it. His very first convert was his own wife. Her influence over him, and his over her, were equally great and complete, and her death (c. 620 A.D.) was an irreparable loss to Mohammed. The next convert was a remarkable man, his friend Abu Bakr—a man who may be said literally to have saved Islam twice over ; for, but for him it would not have greatly spread in Mecca during these early days ; and but for him, as first Kahlifah (Caliph), *i.e.*, Successor, after Mohammed's death, it would never have left the Arabian peninsula, if indeed it had escaped destruction there.

It seems that at first the new religion was kept a secret among the initiated. Their numbers

gradually grew, largely by the personal efforts of Abu Bakr. "Not many wise, not many learned" were called in those early days: slaves, many of them were. When at last the secret got out, and it became known that a sect had arisen that contemned and wished to destroy the national gods and idols, a persecution arose in which some of these poor people bore themselves heroically, in one or two cases even unto death. Mohammed himself could not be touched—he was under his uncle's patronage, and to injure him would have been to start a blood-feud with the powerful Hâshimite clan, and this the Kuraish were not prepared to do. His own immunity, however, did not save him from obloquy and insult. But the sight of the distresses of his followers so worked on him that he gave them leave to deny their faith with mental reservation, if torture or death were threatened. There was nothing meek about Mohammed himself under persecution. His cheeks blazed as he denounced Hell-fire to them, and bitter as gall are the curses recorded in the Korân itself. He is said to have been of "middle height, with hair that was neither straight nor curly: with large head, large eyes, heavy eyelashes, a reddish tint in his eyes, thick-bearded, broad-shouldered, with thick hands and feet." He had a prominent vein on his forehead which swelled up black when he was angry—and this added to the effect produced by his denunciations.

The years passed on—persecution was real and

vexatious. It is noticeable that some of the very best converts to Islam were made in this period, among them Omar, a brave and noble man, of whom we shall hear again as Abu Bakr's successor in the Caliphate. The fact of these converts in the midst of persecution must be taken as positive proof of their sense of the reality of Mohammed's revelation at this time, and its felt superiority to anything the old order had to offer.

Of the followers of the former monotheistic religions, the Jews were the ones of whom Mohammed saw most. The successively appearing Sûras (chapters) of the Korân dilated on the stories of Bible heroes with ever-increasing unction and detail. It can hardly be questioned that Mohammed's knowledge of these things came from what he heard from the Old Testament and the Talmud. The confusedness and grossly blundering character of his versions must be ascribed to the fables and absurdities of the Talmud, and to the natural confusions made by a man who takes no notes of what he hears.

His knowledge of the New Testament was even more limited—in all probability he had never heard a word of it. The pages of the Korân itself bear silent testimony to the shameful fact that the only way by which the "Christianity" of that time and place reached the Arabian prophet was through the false "gospels" and the other literature of some heretical sects, which denied the divine Sonship and the redeeming death of Christ, or

through the religious romances of the Church, which themselves ignored both, and in effect substituted for the Holy Spirit of GOD the Maiden-Mother of Christ.

The persecution of the Moslems finally became so vexatious that all who were not under the patronage of the powerful families were given leave to fly to Abyssinia, which they did. At this time even the starkness of Mohammed's puritanism was relaxed, and in a weak moment he attempted a compromise between the new faith and the old. It is related by one of the Moslem histories that he was willing to recognize the favourite deities of the Arabians as "exalted intercessors" with the One God, Allah Most-High, if the Meccans would on their part ascribe *deity* to Allah only. The scandalized indignation of his followers warned him that he was on the wrong track, and hastily attributing the verse about the exalted intercessors to the suggestion of Satan, he returned to his former uncompromising attitude; and the Abyssinian refugees who had returned, probably on hearing that a reconciliation had taken place, went back to Abyssinia, where they remained till after Mohammed himself had fled to Yathrib. The traditional story makes Mohammed alter his Sûra, by a further revelation, on the evening of the day on which it was uttered.

The remaining Moslems, since they could not be touched, were boycotted, in the literal sense of the term. So severe was the boycott, and so precarious

had become Mohammed's own position now that Abu Tâlib, his patron, was dead, that he decided to leave Mecca as soon as he could. The "sacred months" during which all hostilities ceased, and pilgrims from far and wide resorted to Mecca, gave him his chance. Some pilgrims from Yathrib, on arrival at Mecca, were accosted by Mohammed, who preached to them his religion. In him and in it they saw the solution of their own pressing domestic problems. For Yathrib was hopelessly torn by schism—tribes of Jews and tribes of Arabs, divided against themselves and against each other :—a stranger, and outsider, with a politico-social religion like the prophet's, might well prove the unifying factor which they knew they were utterly unable to produce themselves. The men went back, secured the allegiance of many, and at Mecca next year took an oath to Mohammed. The story is told as follows :—

The days of pilgrimage at last again came round, and Mohammed \*sought the appointed spot in a narrow sheltered glen near Minâ. His apprehensions were at once dispelled ; a band of twelve faithful disciples were there ready to acknowledge him as their prophet. . . . They plighted their faith to Mohammed thus : *'We will not worship any but the one God ; we will not steal, neither will we commit adultery, nor kill our children ; we will not slander in any wise ; nor will we disobey the Prophet in anything that is right.'* This was afterwards called the Pledge of Women, because, as not

\* *Note.*—To avoid confusion, the spelling of names in quoted passages has in most instances been made to harmonize with the spelling adopted throughout the text.—W. H. T. G.

embracing any stipulation to *defend* the Prophet, it was the only oath ever required from the female sex. When the twelve had all taken this engagement, Mohammed replied: '*If ye fulfil the pledge, Paradise shall be your reward. He that shall fail in any part thereof, to God belongeth his concern either to punish or forgive.*' This memorable proceeding is known in the annals of Islam as the first pledge of Acaba, for that was the name of the little eminence or defile whither Mohammed with the twelve retired from observation.<sup>1</sup>

These twelve men then returned to Yathrib, and preached with such extraordinary success that at the pilgrimage of the following year they were able to invite Mohammed to reside in their midst as prophet, and, *as was thereby involved absolutely*, as theocratic chief.

A secret meeting was arranged at the same spot as in the preceding year. One or two hours before midnight, Mohammed repaired to the rendezvous, the first of the party. He was attended only by his uncle Abbâs. To secure the greater secrecy, the assembly was, they say, kept private even from the Moslems of Mecca. . . . Mohammed had not long to wait. Soon the Yathrib converts, singly, and by twos and threes, were descried through the moonlight moving stealthily along the stony valley and among the barren rocks towards the spot. They amounted to seventy-three men and two women. All the early converts who had before met the prophet on the two preceding pilgrimages were there. All came forward one by one and took the oath of fealty. And Mohammed

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Muir, *Life of Mahomet* (2nd Edit.), p. 123.

named twelve of the chief men and said :—" Moses chose from amongst his people twelve leaders. Ye shall be the sureties for the rest, even as were the Apostles of Jesus ; and I am the surety for my people." And all answered : " Be it so." . . . Mohammed gave the command, and all hurried back to their halting places. Thus passed the memorable night of the Second Pledge of Acaba.

Nothing now bound Mohammed to Mecca ; especially as Khadijah, his wife, was dead. After some exciting adventures he escaped with a number of the Meccan followers, to be called for all time " The Companions," and arrived at Yathrib in June 622 A.D. Yathrib was henceforth to be known as El Medina, " The (Prophet's) City," and from 622 was to date the Moslem Calendar, so that epoch-making year is known as " *Annus Higræ* " I, the First of the " Flight " (*Higra*).

### III

It is often said that from that time Mohammed *became* a potentate invested with worldly power, and that the theocratic character of Islam was from this time determined. The Medina period gave Islam its *opportunity* to become a temporal power, but in principle it never was anything else. Let us be very clear on this all-important point.

It is perfectly clear that in Arabia in the seventh century religion was, and inevitably was, simply

the obverse side of the social and political organization of the Arabs. Among them, as in all undeveloped communities, the social arrangement was indissolubly bound up with politics and religion. These three were a trinity that was assuredly an indivisible unity. A study of the Old Testament shows us that no other theory ever occurred to the minds of nearly all of the prophets and other sacred writers. To Isaiah, for example, the social, political, and religious position of Zion were three aspects of the same thing—Jehovah's election of the Israelitish nation to be His people. It was only the shock of the Babylonian captivity that compelled the beginning of the reconsideration of this theory, which nevertheless reigned even through the centuries of Judah's weakness and prostration. It was JESUS CHRIST who came to proclaim that the hour of separation between religion and world-power had come, and to rouse against Himself the deadly hatred of men who would not let go of worldly hopes, nor tolerate their separation from religion, nor assent for one moment to that Magna Charta of the first purely spiritual faith the world had ever seen.

"MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD: IF MY KINGDOM WERE OF THIS WORLD, THEN WOULD MY SERVANTS FIGHT. . . . BUT NOW IS MY KINGDOM NOT FROM HENCE."

"RENDER TO CÆSAR THE THINGS THAT ARE CÆSAR'S, AND TO GOD THE THINGS THAT ARE GOD'S."<sup>1</sup>

The first Magna Charta—and the Last. For the

<sup>1</sup> St John xviii. 36; St Mark xii. 17.

Islam of Mohammed, coming after Christ, reverted to the lower types before Him. The Prophet of Islam was in fact precisely the type of Messiah after which the Jews of Christ's day hankered, and which Jesus Christ Himself definitely rejected, from the Mount of Temptation and from the Mount of Calvary.

The Kuraish saw clearly enough that Mohammed must join politics to religion, civil force to religious authority. The man who determined the fate of the Kaaba must *ipso facto* be the chief of the nation and remodel its entire structure ; he must *ipso facto* involve them with the other Arab tribes for whom the Kuraish, as it were, held the Kaaba in trust ; and the Abyssinian incident had taught them that he must *ipso facto* involve them with foreign enemies also ; for Abyssinia had quite recently proved a deadly danger to Arabia in general and to the Kuraish in particular. Hence their vehement opposition to Mohammed, a political and an economic resistance at bottom, as many a religious persecution has been before and since.

And what they knew, he knew. When he passed from Mecca to Medina, the opportunity had come ; the day of physical weakness had passed, the day of power was at hand, power to be a Moses, to lead a new nation, to set up here in Arabia a kingdom where Allah should reign *through his prophet*. To deny Mohammed was ever to Mohammed an even more unforgivable offence than to deny Allah ;

witness his subsequent treatment of the Jews, as rigid deists as himself.

But opportunity, while it merely brings out what is already in a theory, may result in the deterioration of a character. And so we find at Medina after Khadijah's death the tares beginning to show up quite as prominently as the wheat in that mixed character of Mohammed, and that mixed religion of Islam. It is not possible to do more than indicate the history of the ten years that elapsed between *A.H.* 1 and the death of the Arabian prophet.

#### IV

It is clear that from the first Mohammed regarded himself as in a state of war with the Meccans, and it is equally clear that it was by him and his followers that war was forced on. Having expelled the troublesome revolutionary the Meccans had no further concern with him. But in that revolutionary's view the Meccans were unrighteously withholding Allah's own people from the chosen shrine. And as Medina commanded the trade-routes on which life itself in Mecca depended, he had it in his power to force them to fight. And he did.

Simultaneously he broke with the Jews of Medina. The man who appealed to a book which he had never read paid the penalty usually attached to this particular indiscretion—he was found out,

and was in perpetual danger of being shown up, by the people who knew the said book from cover to cover. The Jews' consequent rejection of his prophetic claims was a maddening blow. Moreover it carried with it their denial of his right to be leader. So a breach was soon forced. One of the richest Jewish tribes, inhabiting Medina itself, was attacked, dispossessed and exiled—indeed its *massacre* was only just averted by the pertinacious intercession of a Medinan grandee. After this, actual plotting on the part of the remaining Jewish tribes undoubtedly went on. But plotting or no plotting the sentence had gone forth against them, and one more tribe was dispossessed, another reduced to serfdom, and of a third, more ill-starred, the males were exterminated by massacre, and the women and children sold into slavery. The Jewish menace was no more.

And before this there had been private assassinations of certain Jews! These things are familiar enough in history—it is only when they are done in the name of a religion thought to be God's last word to man, and by one whose figure is taken as the eternal human ideal, that we exclaim—"The pity of it!"

The breach with the Jews involved the final decision to make Mecca the centre of the new faith. It had at one time seemed that Jerusalem might be the centre; now everything connected with the Jewish Faith was abandoned, new fasts and feasts and rites of a more material complexion

were substituted for the old, of course all by divine commands, "abrogating" the former ones.

In the life of the autocrat of history also, matrimonial and other alliances and amours play an inevitable and important part. Here again that part is said to be, and is of course to some extent, a matter of politics. The easiest way of binding this and that great family or nation to the autocrat and his house is by marrying into them. And in polygamous Arabia the method was so obvious that it caused no question. The size of a man's harem moreover is a demonstration of his importance. Even the practice of servile and captive concubinage may be palliated by the consideration that it settled the fortunes of many homeless women; and, in the case of the conqueror, his fame as such could not be marked unless he took the noblest and the most beautiful for himself. And if these processes involved this particular Potentate's marrying more wives than his own divine law allowed, or taking unto himself women who were barred to him by the social law of the community, such things could be smoothed over—by a very peremptory smoothing sometimes—with as many special divine commands as was necessary. Once more, the thing that disquiets is that this is the man who stands forth as the ultimate ideal of humanity, and all the unedifying matters of Zainab, Miriam, Ayesha, Rihâna, and the rest are dignified as the signs of God's special favour to His prophet. In manipulations of the marriage

laws, at which even sixteenth-century Popes of Rome drew the line, Allah showed the most accommodating spirit in seventh-century Arabia.

Finally, the methods whereby in ten years he became master of Mecca and of the whole peninsula :— in these once more, his actions, if judged by the standard of his time and by the character of the work taken in hand, excite little surprise. In some things they rose above the average, in others sank below. The secular historian would rightly find him great and magnificent for his indomitable faith in his cause ; brave, skilful, and dauntless ; clever in making capital even out of defeat, and quick as lightning to follow up success ; relentless where severity was profitable, but loving neither war nor slaughter for their own sake ; mild towards the vanquished, unless they had irritated him at some weak point. How much was admirable in his dealings with men ! how courteous he was to enquirers, how kind to children, how wise with his hot-headed followers ! And, informing and warming everything, there was that burning zeal for God ; which, begotten in those times of retirement at the first, never wavered, much though its quality may have deteriorated. Here are all the elements of a great man ; nay, a man of a unique type of greatness. Had it not been so, he would not have commanded the enthusiastic devotion of that first generation of followers, well-nigh the worship of the next, and the boast of all succeeding ones. Had it not been so, the hosts

of Islam would not have gone forth, loyal to the commands of their great leader, to smite and to convert the world.

Such, or some such judgment on the character of Mohammed is what is given by the secular historian, nay, by any student of human nature. Be it so! "If there be any virtue . . . think on these things." But, there is the dark reverse. For just as the best feeling and the conscience of the time were shocked at the man of God, who in cold blood slaughtered the males of a whole tribe of Jews in one evening; or who induced the divorce and marriage of another man's wife, and that man his adopted son; so in this matter of warfare and conquest they were indignant at the spectacle of Moslems coolly breaking through universally binding pacts, such as the non-destruction of palm trees, and the suspension of hostilities in the sacred month; or violating their parole; or outraging the very natural affections themselves, when believing son was heard glorying in the death-penalty that fell on unbelieving father, nay with ferocity urging that the executioner's sword *should* smite and not spare. Spirit and flesh, gold and clay, higher-than and lower-than average human nature—such is the strange double phenomenon that Mohammed presents to us all through; and with him, the religion he founded, the Book he left, the history he caused, the organization he initiated.

The Meccans were vanquished, to put the matter

very concisely, through the strategic position of the Moslems at Medina. The position of this town, lying as it does on the trade-route to Syria, on which the very life of Mecca depended, enabled them to threaten and finally dictate terms to the proud, chivalrous, disorganized, and hopelessly futile aristocracy of Mecca. It is not necessary to detail the varying fortunes of those years; how Mohammed was soon driven by the starvation of the Moslems in Medina to resort to freebooting raids on the Meccan caravans, his victory of Badr (March 624), his defeat and set-back at Uhud, his successful repulse of an attack on Medina which proved the turn of the tide; the enormous accession to his strength as the Arabian tribes sought to come to the light of the star so clearly in the ascendant; his triumphant entry into Mecca (under a truce) to perform the pilgrimage; and his final triumph, two years later, when he entered Mecca, this time as unquestioned conqueror, and destroyed every idol in the Kaaba and the whole city, consecrating that bethel with its Black Stone to be the visible centre of the worship of Allah for evermore.

This event was of great importance. Mohammed had advanced on Mecca with ten thousand men (Jan. 630). There was little fighting—he was soon lord of Mecca. “ He proceeded to the Kaaba, reverently saluted with his staff the sacred stone, and made the seven circuits of the temple. Then, pointing with the staff one by one to the numerous idols placed around, he commanded that they should

be hewn down. The great image of Hobal, reared as the tutelary deity of Mecca in front of the Kaaba, shared the common fate. 'Truth hath come,' exclaimed Mohammed, in words of the Korán, as it fell with a crash to the ground, 'and falsehood hath vanished; for falsehood is but evanescent.'"<sup>1</sup> Thus throughout the land idols were destroyed, but the sanctity of Mecca was to be cherished and perpetuated.

This last was a magnificent stroke of policy, besides satisfying his own insuppressible hankering after Mecca and its fetish, for it bound the Meccans, and the Mecca-visiting Arabs, to the new régime and faith as nothing else could have done. The spiritual inconsistency of the procedure was only vaguely noticed by the people. Mohammed was clearly the prophet of Allah: let him do what he list—it was from Allah.

A very short term was now set for every man in Arabia to submit to Islam: Arabia was to be solid for Allah and the Arabian prophet-leader. "*And when the sacred months are past, kill those who join other gods beside God wherever ye shall find them.*" The tribes knew how to take care of themselves, and came to heel. Their "conversion" was accepted with all complaisance, for Mohammed waived scrutiny into the motives of his converts as naïvely as Islam has done ever since. The Arabian prophet was undisputed lord of all Arabia.

How far did the prophet intellectually realize

<sup>1</sup> Sir Wm. Muir, *Life of Mahomet* (2nd Edit.), p. 422.

the *universality* of Islam ? How far did he explicitly teach and command a world-wide propaganda ? That there was development in his mind with respect to this matter is highly probable. His original ambition was to be the Arabian prophet-leader, a Moses to his people. But he was one of those who move a step at a time and allow their dreams to grow, progressively with their success. He was too much of a man of action to be a thorough idealist, and too lacking in knowledge of the world scientifically to foresee all the implications of his own creed. But that that creed was in the very core of it at once universalistic and aggressive is even already, it is hoped, amply evident.

And to a very great extent Mohammed did dare to realize those implications. More admirable, more daring, and more captivating to the imagination than any of his Arabian conquests, is the "circular note" he sent to the surrounding realms, including Byzantium, Egypt, Syria, Persia, and others, in which with splendid audacity and faith he bade their rulers embrace Islam ! *How* splendid were that audacity and that faith will, it is hoped, be grasped by the reader who has in imagination sufficiently entered into the relation of Arabia to the rest of the world, in the century to which we have been trying to transport ourselves.<sup>1</sup>

And at the back of that summons the sword already glinted menacingly, half drawn from the

<sup>1</sup> It is right to say, however, that some of the best critics consider this story very doubtful, or at least fantastically exaggerated.

scabbard. Nay, the Rubicon had been actually crossed in the life-time of the prophet ; for to avenge a slight on one of those ambassadors of Islam, a Moslem force had actually crossed the northern frontier and penetrated into Roman Syria as far as the Dead Sea. The Byzantine official met the little force with an army. The great man must have rubbed his eyes at so mad a business, so much madder than he would have predicted of even those madcap Arabs. On that occasion indeed he sent them reeling back whence they came. But at the very hour of the prophet's death, another expedition, burning for revenge, was ready to set forth ; and go forth it did, though all fickle Arabia was springing back like a broken bow. The raid met with success. The Roman authorities probably did little more than shrug their shoulders ; but in less than three years, at the battle of Wacûsa on the Yermuk, in one pitched battle, these men of the desert had annihilated the Roman hosts, and Theodorus their general, brother of the mighty Emperor Heraclius himself, covered his face with his mantle, as he sat, unable to endure the intolerable spectacle of slaughter and of shame, awaiting his own end. . . .

We have anticipated the next chapter to make the reader realize how entirely of a piece the period of Mohammed's personal reign in Medina is with the period that immediately followed his death. His own work was indeed done. He passed away in Ayesha's arms with a muttered prayer for for-

givenness "for the former and the latter sins,"  
*A.H.* II, A.D. 633.

## V

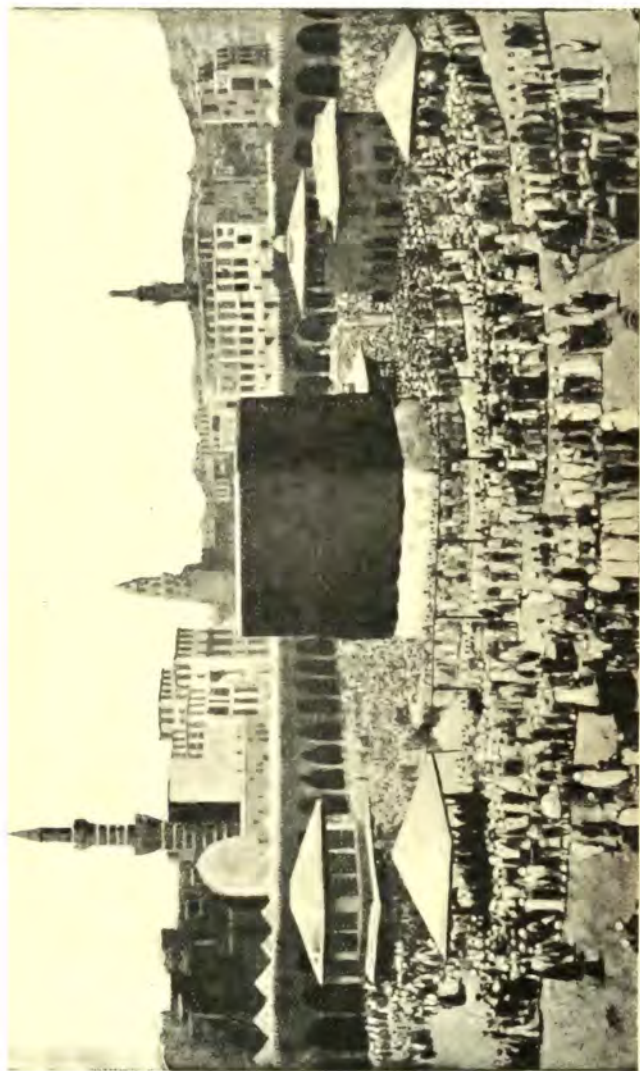
The sketch that this chapter has presented has been that of a very great man, with the mixed character of light and shade which the natural great man ever displays. We have seen, moreover, a man with a burning religious zeal, and this very fact perhaps makes the lights very bright, the shades very dark. The mixture is further complicated by the mixed character of his office, as uniting prophet and medium of communication between God and man with theocratic chief. For it must be remembered that of all things in this puzzling world, the theocratic autocrat is bound to give rise to the most contradictory puzzles of all. Hebrew history itself affords no parallel :—a David was supplemented by an order of priests and confronted by fellow prophets : Isaiah was limited by Hezekiah, Hezekiah by Isaiah. But what would David have been had he added to his sacrosanct claims as Messiah Isaiah's absolute confidence in his own inspiration, and had Nathan and Gad either not existed at all, or been only used to endorse all his actions in the name of God ?

But, summoned up inevitably by his own special claim, silently there rises beside Mohammed . . . the figure of the Son of Man. The man of Arabia, for lack of knowledge of Him, set up for his followers a

universal ideal of character. Carlyle measures him with other man-made ideals, and finds him great. But *he* has measured himself with the stainless, the all-loving, and all-lovely Christ! And as that white Life, from Bethlehem and Nazareth, to Calvary and Olivet, appears once more to the eye of our soul, how can we but find that that other life-record, if, when, and because it thrusts itself in competition with JESUS, raises a shudder in the soul? And yet it stands as the ideal, passionately loved and defended by hundreds of thousands of souls to-day, blinding their eyes to any other, be it the Lord from Heaven Himself. Can this indeed be the will of the FATHER?

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THE KAABA, MECCA

## CHAPTER III

### HOW CAME IT ?

THE whence of Islam was, then, Mohammed. What he was, what he taught, the way he took hold of mighty latent forces and subdued them to work irresistibly towards an end—in all *this* we found the primary cause of the phenomenon we saw in the first chapter.

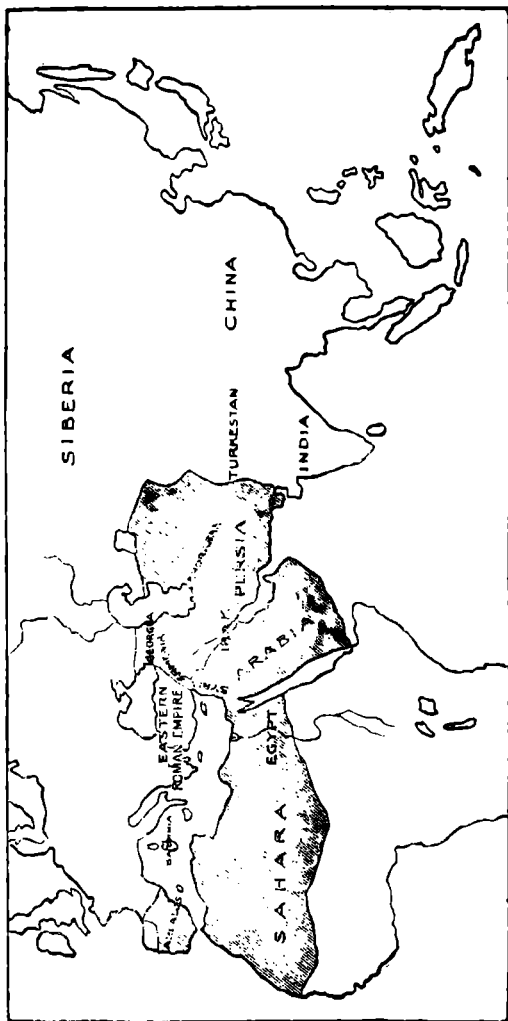
In this chapter we are still, indeed, considering the same theme. The explanation of Mohammed is the explanation of the Saracens, as the Moslems used to be called. To understand why *he* triumphed in Arabia, is to understand why *they* triumphed in Europe, in Africa, and in Asia. The bitterness of our souls as we contemplated the failure of the Church in his case—a bitterness which was no unworthy passion—will be felt again intensified in this chapter, as we look on at the anti-Christian forces, the birth of which she did not prevent, now sweeping irresistibly through the world. The same deep pain with which we saw an ideal of Mohammed being set up beside the spiritual ideal of Christ, will disquiet us still as we see that ideal faithfully reproduced, to its minutest details, all the way down the centuries of history which we must now track.

The kingdom of this world, of which he dreamed, was set up, and the methods which he sanctioned—with all their admirable, all their contaminating features—were with enthusiasm adopted and employed.

We have already taken two immense journeys, one in space, the other in time. In this chapter we shall travel both in space and in time, as we trace the history of the spread of Islam from the death of the Prophet to the twentieth century of our era. In so doing we shall get a tremendous lesson in missionary methods, those which the Church might itch to use—yet must leave alone; and in that one which often means very weakness—yet alone can avail.

What was the situation at the death of the Prophet of Arabia? In Medina there were a large number of men, led by believers of unquestioned sincerity like Abu Bakr and Omar, who believed passionately that the One, Almighty God, had revealed His truth to Mohammed; that the Word given to and through Mohammed was the Word of God; and that the remainder of their lives could only be occupied with one thing, the carrying out of the Will of God as interpreted by His Prophet.

Such was the intense conviction of the inner circle of Islam. Beyond them there was circle after circle of believers and adherents whose faith and devotion varied very considerably, down to zero in the case of the Arabian tribes whose “con-



(1) Extent of Islam, A. D. 700.

version" had been virtually by pure force, in terror of Mohammed's ultimatum. These outer circles required, in varying degree, many other stimuli of a palpable order before they became part of the missionary army of Islam. The driving-power was in Abu Bakr and the real zealots; yet but for the enormous majority, whose zeal required much and constant material stimulus, Islam could never have advanced beyond Arabia. Even in the case of the believing inner circle it is no more possible quite to disentangle the spiritual and the carnal strands than we found it to be in the case of the Founder himself. With many, the attraction of the wars of the Crescent must have been purely the stupendous material advantages which they soon held out. But true to the formal character of Islam no difference was made in the commendation and admiration meted out to the Moslem soldiers. Those who struck for God alone, or for God plus Paradise, or for God plus Paradise and plunder, or for Paradise and plunder without God, or for plunder pure and simple, were all the Blessed of the Lord, heroes and saints, and, if they perished, martyrs in the "path of God," as the religious war, or Jihâd, was called.

For purposes of clearness we may name at the outset the three main movements of Moslem energy and aggression. During the *Arab movement*, which spread from A.D. 632 to 800, Islam took root in Persia, and northwards to the Aral Sea; in Syria; in North Africa and Spain. During the *Turkish*

*and Mongol movements* (A.D. 1080-1480), the influence of the Prophet was strengthened and extended in the Turkestans, China, India and beyond, Asia Minor, and the Balkans. In the *modern movement*, which dates from the end of the eighteenth century, and is one of the great world movements of our own day, Islam is still spreading in negro Africa with a rapidity which makes the Dark Continent the chief scene of conflict between Islam and Christianity.

## I

To go back to the time of the Prophet's death. Almost at once the greater part of Arabia was in revolt. The first Caliph, Abu Bakr, had no time for reflection or discussion, yet he saved Islam. By a perfectly magnificent exhibition of fortitude, faith, and skill, he won through that hour, the darkest Islam has ever known. For at its darkest, he refused to cancel the expedition ordered by Mohammed on the Roman-Arab tribes on the Syrian border, which was then on the point of starting, though it denuded him of almost his whole available force!<sup>1</sup> "*L'audace, messieurs, et toujours l'audace*" was Napoleon's prescription for the production of a conqueror, and well was that prescription justified in this case. The expedition returned victorious, and the moral result was im-

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. II, p. 54.

mense. The Arabs were impressed by the stability of Moslem rule ; and the stunning blows which the Moslem " gospel of the mailed fist " had speedily given them all over Arabia quite completed the proof to their genuine satisfaction. For such events *are* a real argument to such men. We may fall into an unconscious fallacy when we say " Force is no argument." In the highest sense this is true. But in the middle and lower spheres, where Islamic thought so often moves, it is not true. To the Arabian Bedouin, force was a very real, solid, and true argument. He reasoned that if these men could twice bring him to heel they must be right and he wrong. Their Allah must be indeed the God, and his gods, who had failed to vindicate their own honour, should be abandoned. Henceforth with absolute sincerity he shouted for Allah with the best of the Moslems.

Meanwhile Abu Bakr's stalwarts have been re-subjugating the Arabs of the Peninsula. And now the work is done ; the dogs of war are straining at the leash ; they are unloosed ; with what fury do they set about their work ! No formal declarations of war were needed. That came quite naturally. The tribes on the Arabian side of the border were in a state of violent, warlike agitation, one quite congenial to them, and collisions with the Arabian tribes on the Roman <sup>1</sup> and Persian side of the marches were inevitable. Fighting began : the subject tribes of Constantinople and

<sup>1</sup> Eastern or Byzantine Roman Empire.

Persia were of course supported by their suzerains—the Roman Emperor Heraclius had already two scores to settle against the Arabs—and the Moslems in two streams crossed the marches and hurled themselves on the two Empires which between them controlled the East. Filled with burning, furious zeal for Allah and Paradise, and intoxicated with the hope of spoil and that hope's dazzling fulfilment, they flung themselves on the Persian and the Græco-Roman armies. The numbers in these armies could not make up for the fact that they were slaves dressed as soldiers. Their religion, paralysed by its unspirituality, and made futile by its factiousness, failed them against men possessed at least with a faith in living and irresistible deity. One great battle at Wacûsa on the Yermuk (634), and the power of Constantinople in Syria went with a crash, as horrible as that of the living bodies which, penned by the Moslems from behind, went helplessly over the precipices on that awful field, crashing, whole companies at once, to the bottom of the gorge beneath. The Byzantine Empire retired to Asia Minor after the loss of Syria, and there held a precarious frontier against the Moslem East. Later on it had even to retire from Asia, and maintain an isolated existence in Constantinople. Thus it was not for eight hundred years that the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire was completed by the fall of its last fragment, the city of Constantine itself (1453).

At the battle of Kâdesîya (635), the backbone

of the Persian resistance was broken, and the capital, Medâin, taken. Eight more years of hard campaigning, and the whole of Persia was in the hands of the Moslems;—once the heart of the Empire was touched, it collapsed with a crash owing to its excessive centralization.

And so, in only *eleven* years after the prophet's death, the Moslems had utterly vanquished the two great Empires of the seventh-century world, and were administering all Persia and all Roman Syria with Palestine—nay, Egypt also, for in 640 the Moslems were made masters of Egypt, as much by the shameful reciprocal animosity of the two great Christian sects there, as by the force of their own arms. Amr, the son of El Âs, pitched his tent near the spot where El Kâhira (Cairo) was afterwards to rise, and Christian rule in Egypt was at an end. And that first decade was the merest beginning. Westwards and eastwards rolled the lava-streams from the ceaselessly active crater of Arabia. *Westwards*, over Barca, Tripoli, Tunis, Algeria, Morocco (to use their modern names), and barely *thirty years* after the Founder's death, Ukba<sup>1</sup> was furiously spurring his horse into the Atlantic rollers (what a subject for a picture!) with the same intoxicated impulse for Westward Ho! in which he anticipates the heroes of nine centuries later.

The Atlantic alone resisted the Moslem charge. But it could not arrest it; it did but divert it. The

<sup>1</sup> Cf. pp. 70-71.

Straits of Gibraltar were crossed, and Andalusian Spain was entered. By the end of the first century of Islam wellnigh the whole of Spain was subjugated, and the south of France boldly penetrated. The victory of Charles Martel at Tours in 732, exactly one hundred years after Mohammed's death, was the first sign that God's Destroying Angel was staying his sword over those western Christian lands. The Moslems were hurled back from France, but for many centuries Spain was still theirs. Europe had another narrow escape in the next century: in 846 Rome was partially sacked by the Moslems and only saved by the bravery of Leo IV. Crete was occupied in 823, Sicily in 878. The Moslem grip on South Italy was not relaxed till the eleventh century.

Meanwhile, *eastwards*, the never-ceasing waves of conquest were rolling on over the province of Khorasan (Northern Persia) to the Caspian, and as far as the Oxus itself; and by the end of the century the first contacts with the *Turkish* race were established, on both the hither and the far side of the Oxus. The great cities of Balkh (c. 705), Bokhara (c. 709), and Samarkand (c. 712)—Christian cities!—fell to them; and their territory was with difficulty subdued and settled. The district now known as Turkestan has thus been invaded, and the Moslem general, Kutaiba, is reaching to the very furthest confine of Alexander's old Empire. By the year 714, he is even said to have advanced through Eastern Turkestan (now

"Chinese Turkestan" in the maps) to Turfan on the very borders of the Chinese Empire, "imposing Islam as he went."

In 755 China proper was reached,<sup>1</sup> for there was a regular trade route through Central Asia between China and Turkestan. The Caliph had sent four thousand troops to the assistance of the Emperor against his own commander-in-chief, and when their work was done, these soldiers were settled in Yun-nan as a reward for their services. There by intermarriage and preaching they won many to the faith. Yet even before this, even in the lifetime of the Prophet, a Moslem enthusiast, using the regular sea-route between Araby and China, had preached in Canton, apparently with success! The Chinese Mohammedans themselves speak of an uncle of the Prophet, who was received as envoy at the Chinese court in 628.

Thus the interior of Asia with its Turanian races had been decisively reached. And the comingling of Arab with Turkish blood that then ensued was to have results of vastest importance, reaching down to our own day, as we shall see immediately.

When we add (to complete the picture of that first resistless onrush) that Cyprus fell in 648, Rhodes in 653, and that Moslem armies pushed through Asia Minor to the gates of Constantinople itself, which was twice besieged (in 668 and 716),

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. XVI in *The Mohammedan World of To-day*. Report of Cairo Conference. Oliphant.

enough has been said to indicate with sufficient clearness both the extent and the intense momentum of this first Moslem period.

## II

And now in the lull of the tenth century, ere the Turks take the sword of Islam from the now palsied Arab hand, and while Europe is still maturing the mighty forces that are presently to produce the Crusades, and later on the nations of to-day, let us pause and set ourselves with earnestness to study the causes which led to these Moslem successes. The more truthful our enquiry, the more fruitful it will be in suggestiveness and in result.

(1) No answer is worth anything that does not take into account the burning enthusiasm which their new faith gave these sons of the desert. It had suddenly made them feel that they were a nation; and more, that they were God's chosen nation. "The Sword!" cries Carlyle . . . "that he take a sword, and try to propagate with that, will do little for him. You must first get your sword!" And where did Mohammed get his sword? We tried to arrive at a just answer to this question in the last chapter, and that answer is, to a large extent, the answer to the further question, "Where did the *Moslem* get his sword?" The primary impulse, as in the case of the founder, so in that of his followers, was given by a zeal

for living Deity, which indeed varied in degrees of purity very greatly, but nevertheless was alive, and was dynamic in those Moslem armies. After the first momentum had been acquired, all sorts of secondary, and very material, motives were found necessary to sustain it. But even this does not alter the fact that at the head-quarters at Medina, for the years during the reigns of Abu Bakr and Omar, the first two Caliphs, the warlike operations were directed with a self-devotion, an uncorrupt sense of duty and responsibility, a simple enthusiasm, that can only be compared with those of a Cromwell. And there were many in the armies at the front of the same moral calibre as these Ironsides of Islam at head-quarters.

(2) But however purely burned a zeal for God and His cause in the breasts of these Moslems, it never lacked powerful reinforcements of a very concrete nature. The Prophet had given a law by which the spoil was distributed to those who shared in his expeditions: and the Arab, who in becoming a Moslem emphatically remained an Arab, was touched by Mohammed's practice at his most responsive point. The Arab passion for war, wine, spoil, and women was only limited by his new religious principles in regard to the second of these particulars, and the absolutely unlimited extension, nay, holy sanction, which those principles now gave to his righteous indulgence in the other three, bound him hand and soul to the Cause in this life: while, in the case of his life being forfeited,

rewards of an exactly similar character, infinitely intensified, were promised him in the next world. In the time of the Prophet the appetite for spoil had been thoroughly whetted. In the war with the apostates after his death it was well seen that the Prophet's admirable arrangements were to be carried on. And so from the very first the invading armies had the intoxicating hope of spoils that were larger and richer by just so much as Rome and Persia were richer than Arabia. How that intoxication worked, the annals of the early Caliphate show most faithfully. Muthanna, when haranguing his troops at the outset of the Persian campaign, and in the very first flush of *religious* enthusiasm, says much of plunder, captives, concubines, forfeit lands, but not one word about Islam, God, or the Faith! The first victory over a Persian army revealed to the transported Moslems a booty animate and inanimate, the like of which they had never even dreamed of before. The fifth of the spoil was sent to Medina, where, like the spies' grape-cluster, it gave tangible proof of what was to be enjoyed at the front, with, however, a much more stimulating effect. And as the armies pushed on, and the decisive battles with Persia were fought, and the capital Medâin was taken, the armies beheld riches and luxuries and delights that their most sensuous dreams had never imagined before. These things acted as new wine to the Arabs. Allah was indeed with them! Every Arab in the peninsula became a heart and soul believer

in the Prophet's doctrine of the Jihâd—the duty of fighting in the Path of God—and an enthusiastic adherent of the Caliph's home-and-foreign political theory, which was that the Arabs should be the fighting men of Islam, holding no land in the conquered countries, but, instead, state-maintained by the spoils of new conquests and by the tribute of the countries whose subjugation was complete. And thus Arabia was converted into one huge depot for breeding and training soldiers; for the unlimited supply of female slaves swelling the enormous harems of these Moslem lords led to such increments of population that the prodigious wastage of life in the campaigns was easily met and more than met. And so an apparently unending flood of soldier-Arabs rolled, wave after wave, from the breeding-ground and training-camp of the peninsula, to share in the treasures of the conquered countries, and to find new homes (never a difficult thing nor a hardship to the true Arab) in lands unimaginably richer than his own. Truly he served not God for nought; nor, to do him justice, did he pretend that he did so.

Four typical exclamations by certain Mohammedan soldiers during the first flush of these religious wars, when motives and impulses were at their best and most characteristic, well sum up for us the secret of Mohammedan success:—

“By the Great God, if I were not stopped by this raging sea, I would go on to the nations of the West, preaching the Unity of Thy Name, and

putting to the sword those that would not submit." (*The exclamation of Ukba as he urged his horse into the Atlantic surf.*)

"A people is upon thee loving death as thou lovest life." (*Khâlid's message to Hormuz the Persian general.*)

"Were it but as a provision for this present life, and no holy war to wage, it were worth our while to fight for these fair fields and banish care and penury for ever!" (*The same Khâlid's address to his troops.*)

"O Paradise! How close art thou beneath the arrow's point and the falchion's flash! O Hâshim! Even now I see heaven opened and black-eyed maidens all bridally arrayed, clasping thee in their fond embrace!" (*A Moslem soldier's exclamation at one of the earliest fights.*)

The conduct of the armies in those "missionary campaigns" was very much according to the custom of their time and country. Smoking homes, plundered villages, slaughter and blood, rape and rapine, were inseparable concomitants to all campaigns, and for the matter of that, save in the case of the enslavement and forced concubinage of female captives, they are still inseparable. In all these things the Moslems were neither better nor worse than their day; indeed the offer of Islam to the conquered, though from the Christian point of view an iniquitous way of making converts, was humane in its intention and its effect, for it imposed a definite limit to the work of destruction. Once

grant that the soldier of God must strike, and it follows he must strike hard and strike often. Even the feature of the concubinage of captive women, vile and odious as it is to us, seemed to the Moslem to be a necessary and humane way of providing a home for many homeless women. Her captor became responsible for her, and if she bore a son she became *ipso facto* free. These considerations, and the fact that by this method the numbers of the faithful were at the same time increased, probably prevented any one Moslem soldier, however pious, from having one single conscientious scruple in the matter. Yet for all that it was a demoralizing business. Even Moslem public opinion stirred uneasily at the practice of Khâlid, their bravest general, in actually wedding a captive woman, perhaps the wife of a foeman slain that day—aye or *not* slain, but still alive—on the stricken field itself. But then, had not their prophet done nearly the same? What of Safiyya, the beautiful Jewess, taken to Mohammed's couch within a few days of the débacle of her tribe and the torture and "execution" of her husband, the bridegroom newly stained by the husband's blood? And again, if the colossal fortunes made by some of the saints made the more religious ones shake their heads, had not the tendency begun even in Mohammed's lifetime?

It is no cause for wonder that Islam, and the methods of the spread of Islam, have excited such opposite feelings in critics. Viewed simply from

the historico-sociological standpoint, the character and acts of Mohammed and his successors often receive, and naturally receive, a relative commendation. In the mediæval period of the Christian evangelization of Europe, missionary methods, though often spiritual and apostolic, sometimes appear parallel to some of the Moslem methods which we are now studying. Yet when we place them side by side with the acts and methods of our Lord and His followers ; when we recall the picture of Paul, the chaste, the brave, that Crusader with the Cross on heart and life ; . . . John, the apostle of Love, with his " little children " ; . . . the goodly fellowship of Prophets, the glorious company of Apostles, the noble army of Martyrs, chaste and brave youths, Christ-ennobled and Christ-beautified maidens, old saints and child saints, going to their doom, to their triumph and the triumph of the Faith, with smile on face, and hymn on lips :—when we recall these, and thousands like them, right down to our own day, and see all down the ages, the blood of saints poured forth—their own blood, not the blood of others shed by them—so bringing in the Kingdom of God and of Christ and of the Spirit, . . . Enough ! Do we perhaps, in the anguish of this comparison, gain some glimpse of what Christ<sup>1</sup> saw when He travelled in temptation on that lonely mountain peak, choosing between the ways by which the kingdoms of this world might be gained for God ?

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. iv.

(3) Marvellous, however, though the rapid success of Islam was, the real point of the marvel does not reside there, but in the fact that Islam *came to stay*;—that it developed into so stable and permanent and complex a system; that Mohammed, the Korân, Islam—call it what you will—did somehow contribute a germ of extraordinarily vital energy which impregnated the ancient civilizations of the East, in that new civilizations were forthwith born—new literatures and new systems of theology, of ethics, of politics and jurisprudence. And thus was evolved a socio-politico-religious system which has seemed to defy time, and which was easily able to absorb not only the older civilizations of the East, but the barbarisms of Africa and Asia likewise, and to inspire Mohammedans everywhere and at all times with a fierce esprit de corps and sense of fraternity. To overrun two continents in some decades does not impress us so much—feats of that sort had been done before and were to be done again. What does give us pause is that permanence, that many-sided vitality, that effective fraternity, felt by the meanest Moslem and extended, in some sense, by the most conspicuous; especially when we contrast that effectiveness with the *ineffectiveness* of the same in Christendom, honey-combed as it has been by sectarian hatred, by heresy-hunts, by racial repugnances, and by caste-and-class divisions.

(4) But just as the military successes had their dark side, so beside the thought-compelling social

success just described must be set methods that are less worthy of respect. It is true that after the first bloody work was done—"opening the countries" they call it in the East—the sword was not used to bring about forced conversions. Neither the law nor the practice of Islam sanctioned such a thing (at least in civilized countries). Rather did Mohammed's followers, after the conquest, rely on the impression already made, and on the general pressure exerted by the whole system they immediately set up. For between the method of actual threats and the method of spiritual conversion there are a multitude of stages. In a multitude of ways a very shrewd pressure may be brought to bear on the unbeliever. Whether conversions thus effected should be called "forcible" depends on how one interprets the word. A man may, apparently freely, yield—because to do so is so very advantageous, and not to do so is so very uncomfortable, painful, and even dangerous.

At first the institutions of the Moslems were characterized by a very large measure of good sense and humanity, and justice was frequently well administered. Jews and Christians who refused to become Moslems paid tribute, and received in return the protection of the Islamic state. So popular was this arrangement that Christian subjects of Islam were in those days not infrequently the objects of envy, and Moslem rulers frequently received appeals from Christians pleading to be transferred from Christian rule to that of Islam!

And although the diminution of the number of Christian and Jewish tributaries by conversion involved a financial loss to the state, more than one Moslem ruler showed a genuine religious earnestness by refusing to prefer a fat revenue to the salvation of souls.

On the other hand, there were many ways in which a sterner and less excusable pressure was brought to bear in addition to the eternal bribe of the tremendous social and political advantages offered by submission to Islam. The fierce contempt felt and shown by the Moslems; the treatment of Christians as utter inferiors; the vexatious and humiliating conditions often imposed on them, increasing more and more as time went on;<sup>1</sup> the fatal lawfulness of bloody violence whenever these things produced their inevitable results;<sup>2</sup> the laxity and the carnal character of its marriage and divorce systems, and its divine sanction of concubinage, all these are considerations that have undoubtedly, from those times down to the present day, influenced the majority of men to accept Islam, carried away by a social current the force of which it was almost impossible to resist. The mass of the populations of Persia, Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, North Africa, and Spain, undoubtedly in this way slipped over the line, quietly, gradually,

<sup>1</sup> Sir Win. Muir, *The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline, and Fall*, pp. 149, 529.

<sup>2</sup> This is the true explanation of the Armenian massacres, and the forced conversions (!) connected with them.

and in the mass. The same phenomena may be seen to this day. Islam has always known how to make it easy for the average sensual man to be "converted," knowing that his children are sure to be as proud and bigoted Moslems as the heart could wish. The most illuminating remark the writer has ever had made to him during twenty years in the East, was in a conversation between himself and a Moslem Cabinet-minister in Cairo. The latter expressed and urged his conviction that *all* "converts" were hypocrites, and were induced to change their religion by material motives only:—really to change one's religion was impossible! Utterly astonished, the writer reminded him of Christian St Paul, Moslem Abu Bakr. . . . The minister was not to be moved. . . . "No," he said, "converts are not, as you say, the *sincerest* religionists, though they may be the most *useful*. *It is the children of these men who are sincere.*" A whole volume of commentary on the Moslem advance in the past, of Moslem advance in Africa to-day, is packed into that last sentence.

The practice of polygamy and concubinage, so freely practised by the ruling race merits special notice, for in itself it led to a great transference of the balance of creeds. It mattered little whether those mothers professed Islam or remained Christians, their children were inevitably Moslems. This readiness on the part of the Moslem to intermarry with whatsoever race he conquered or dwelt amongst was, as it still is, the most potent

means of making that race Islamize. And, *per contra*, history has shown us, that where a ruling race will not intermarry with its subjects, be its prestige what it may, the fact of its being the ruler will *alienate* its subjects from its faith, not attract them to it. The white race, and Christianity with it, has had a fearful handicap here.

And then again, even more drastic methods were certainly often used. A religion which punished apostasy with death, and never allowed proselytizing on the part of the other side, could hardly be called "free." Bokhara struggled desperately against the new faith; and every Bokharî was compelled to share his dwelling with a Moslem Arab, and those who prayed and fasted like good Moslems were rewarded with money! Nor was this sort of thing condemned as illegitimate; nor was it as a matter of fact unique.

All this is true. And yet we cannot shirk a last consideration, in which the blame turns more closely home upon ourselves. The "survival of the fittest" is a principle that has a more than merely biological bearing. And in God's mysterious counsels it would seem that religious privilege, however sacred, is not exempt from its working. Islam survived because Persian and Byzantine rule was unfit, and because the salt of the latter's Christianity had lost its savour.

It was not animated by the Spirit of Jesus. Religious interest was frittered away in interminable wranglings about ever more and more

infinitesimal points of metaphysical theology, whilst real faith waxed cold and love languished, amongst clergy, rulers, and laity alike. The love of Christian for Christian had been replaced by a burning hatred of sect for sect, so that when the Moslem appeared the one would openly exult when the other was smitten, or would even co-operate with the invader (as in Egypt) in fulfilling his victorious will !

Has the Church learned the lesson ? She failed in the seventh century ; is she going to retrieve the failure in the twentieth ? Will she definitely realize that the SPIRIT OF JESUS is her only asset, and in Him become irresistible ? Or is the waiting and watching world to

“ record one lost soul more,  
One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,  
One more devil's triumph and sorrow for angels,  
One wrong more to man, one more insult to God ” ?

### III

The second great period of expansion may be called the *Turkish and Mongol* period, as the first was the *Arab*. It began when, in the eleventh century, or the fifth after the Higma, the Turks from Central Asia, followed in the thirteenth by the Mongols, took the sovereignty of the Moslem world from the Abbaside Caliphs of Baghdad (Persianized Arabs by descent) ; and Islam spread northwards towards

Russia and Siberia, westwards through Asia Minor to Constantinople and the Danube, and eastwards to China and India and the East Indies, as a direct or indirect consequence of that event.

(A) During the Arab period the seat of the Caliphate had been in turn Medina, Damascus, Baghdad. The growing weakness of the Abbaside Caliphate at Baghdad led to its taking a step of great moment and significance. It formed a bodyguard of *Turks* from the marches of Turkestan, where the outposts of Islam were. These men, who had no religion of their own, "adopted their masters' religion like an army-order,"<sup>1</sup> and became Moslems of a stiff, unreasoning type. Meanwhile the Islamizing of Turkestan was going on, from Bokhara as a centre; and thus it happened that when in the eleventh century a tribe of Turks, called Seljûk, which had recently accepted Islam, came South, crossing Transoxiana and Khôrasân, it found men of its own race, language, and religion, ruling the Rulers of Islam. The time had therefore now come for a transference of the leadership of Islam from the Arab and Persian races to the Turanian. The first stock was now effete—even its own almost unlimited vitality had been bled white by the extraordinary calls made upon it. But the Turks were a young and vigorous people. The Turkish "Sultans" (for so the monarchs were called who ruled in practical independence of the Caliph) became from 1050 the *de facto* rulers of the Moslem

<sup>1</sup> Vambéry.

kingdoms, from Egypt to Turkestan. And so the second period of expansion began.

*Westwards* the Turkish Moslems completed the Islamizing of Asia Minor. It was they who, under the Circassian Saladin (Salâh ed Din) fought the Christians in the Crusades, and spread the fame of the "Saracens" or "Paynims" throughout Europe. Then, as the Seljûk Sultans also weakened, like the Arab Caliphs before them, another tribe or family of Turks, the Ottomans, gave fresh life to Islam; they organized and led the wars in which the Crescent was carried over into south-east Europe. Thrace, Bulgaria, Wallachia, Serbia, were rapidly and thoroughly conquered. Greece became a Turkish province; and finally the Eastern Roman Empire—by that time miserably shrunk to the territory immediately round its capital—was extinguished, when, in 1453, Constantinople fell with a crash that shook Europe. Once again it seemed as if the Crescent was to conquer Europe altogether. But the armies of the Turk were rolled back from Vienna in the seventeenth century, and the limit of Islam in Europe was settled. The Greek war of independence began the backward wash which continued all through the nineteenth century; the Treaty of Berlin declared the independence of the Balkan States; with the Balkan War (1911-2) the sands all but ran out: and the Peace of Paris brought what it has brought.

*Eastwards*, other Turks, just before the Seljûk

period, had been active. From Bokhara as a centre Afghanistan and Baluchistan had been Islamized, and now the famous or notorious Sultan, Mahmûd of Ghazni, invaded India with a ferocious host. The connection of Islam with India has been as violent and bloody as its connection with China has been quiet and peaceable. Before the eleventh century, violent and destructive expeditions had taken place and forced conversions had been made. Mahmûd's expedition (1019) was one of naked conquest, murder, and robbery. After two centuries, when Delhi became the Moslem capital (1206), a second Sultanate was formed in Bengal and Behar by Bakhtiyar Khan (1206-1288). Timur ("Tamerlane") and his Moguls (Mongols) "turned India into a shambles."<sup>1</sup> Then was founded the brilliant Mogul Empire (1525-1707), with the well-known names among others of Akbar and Aurungzeb. To say that Islam's success here also is not primarily owed to the sword is to say what is a lie. Yet even in these extreme cases the initial violence for the most part only gave Islam its *start*—a good one, it must be allowed. After that, the same political, social, and civil influences which we have already mentioned got to work as usual, with the usual results. In Bengal, where there was little violence, there are 9,000,000 Moslems. In South India, where there was none at all, and where legitimate preaching has been the means used, there are 3,400,000. For a long

<sup>1</sup> T. W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam*.

time past Islam has progressed in India by its preaching, its social advantages, and its prestige. There are now 66,000,000 Moslems in the Indian Empire—more than one-fifth of the whole population.

(B) In Chapter I we gazed with surprise on the spectacle of a generally predominant Islam from Persia to Siberia northwards, forming a great wedge with its apex about Tobolsk in Russian Siberia. This fact is connected with a series of events in which Islam is seen perhaps at its very highest advantage, and its victory appears to be most legitimate. These events were, the appalling deluge of *Mongol* barbarism overwhelming Islam, which in the thirteenth century swept from North Central Asia, under that tremendous personage Jenghiz Khan, over Turco-Arabian Islam; the rising again of Islam from its own ashes; and its leading captivity captive when in the hour of its prostration it actually won over the heathen Mongol conquerors now settled in Persia, in Turkestan, in Eastern and Southern Russia, in Western Siberia.

It is worth while to realize what took place.

No event in the history of Islam . . . for terror and desolation can be compared to the Mongol conquest. Like an avalanche, the hosts of Jenghiz Khan swept over the centres of Moslem culture and civilization, leaving behind them bare deserts and shapeless ruins where before had stood the palaces of stately cities, girt about with gardens and fruitful corn-land. When the Mongol army had marched out of the city of Herât, a miserable remnant of forty persons crept out of their hiding-places and gazed

horror-stricken on the ruins of their beautiful city—all that was left out of a population of over one hundred thousand. In Bokhara, so famed for its men of piety and learning, the Mongols stabled their horses in the sacred precincts of the mosques and tore up the Korâns to serve as litter; those of the inhabitants who were not butchered were carried away into captivity and their city reduced to ashes. Such too was the fate of Samarkand, Balkh and many another city of Central Asia, . . . such too the fate of Baghdad. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Here we have the reverse of what we have seen up to now; we have Islam in its hour of utter weakness, nay, wellnigh of annihilation, commending itself to a barbarous, bloodthirsty nation, and winning its own conquerors. There is scanty record of how these Mongol hordes were won to the Moslem faith, but in the main it was through the devotion of its followers. The method usually was to begin from the top;—a Khan or Chief would be converted, and his people would as a rule follow suit as a matter of course. We are here reminded of the conversion of the Saxons of Kent.

So the Mongols were won. Nor are elements of shame wanting here also to us Christians, for Nestorian Christianity was found right across Central Asia as far as the north of China; Christians had, moreover, at first enjoyed privilege, prestige, and favour with the Mongol Khans, while Islam was looked on with suspicion and severely persecuted. From every point of view, then, Christi-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185.

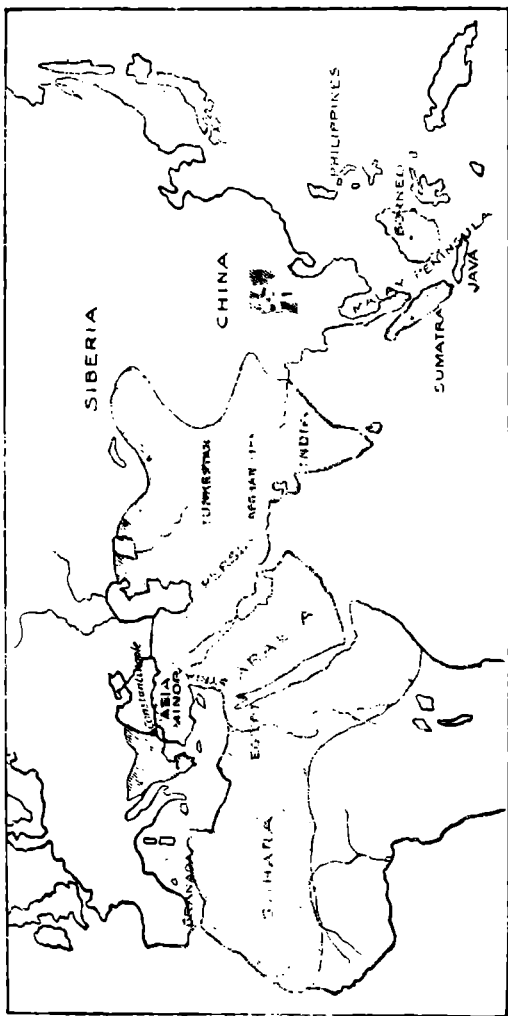
anity had the best chance of winning the Mongols and all Central Asia—and lost it. Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity were the rivals in the contest for Central Asia. Buddhism held Tibet, and Islam won the rest. And had not Russia set up the bulwark of the Greek Church in Northern Central Asia and Siberia, the whole of the Continent round to China would probably have fallen to Islam. In Turkestan and Russian Asia, none can say that the sword played a main part in conversion, though Russian historians draw a picture of two centuries of Moslem misrule. We hear of one *prisoner-of-war*, who, by his *preaching* “converted thousands.” Here, too, a king or chief would be converted, and his subjects would follow his example.

In China, the Mongol upheaval had important bearing on the future of Islam in that country. An enormous and varied immigration of Moslem traders, artisans, soldiers, and colonists took place, following on Jenghiz Khan's and Kubla Khan's Chinese conquests. *These Moslems intermarried with Chinese women.* And since then they have been careful to attract as little attention as possible ; they abandon all distinction of dress and language ; they adopt children orphaned at times by famine or other disaster. Thus their numbers have reached some ten millions. Their very unobtrusiveness is their chief strength. And although their zeal and ability in the matter of proselytism are open to some doubt, yet they constitute a problem that cannot for a moment be ignored.

The history of the spread of Islam in the East Indies is another instance where it has taken place in the main peaceably, by preaching or under the influence of its *social prestige*. The whole or part conversion of Sumatra, Java, the Moluccas, the Spice Islands, Celebes, and Borneo began in 1507, and has been continued on to our own day; so that it properly falls outside our Second Period. Force has sometimes been called in as an auxiliary, but far the greatest proportion of the work has been done by merchants and Malay pilgrims who have returned from Mecca. The following account is admittedly typical: "The better to introduce their religion, these Mohammedan traders adopted the language of the people and many of their customs; *married their women, purchased slaves so as to increase their personal importance*, and succeeded finally in being reckoned among the foremost chiefs in the state." Christianity has only its own unfaithfulness and miserable want of zeal to thank for these things. The King of Celebes, for example, desired to choose between the two religions, after instruction in each. The missionaries from Mecca, however, arrived sooner than the Jesuits from Portugal, and that king and his people became Mohammedan.

#### IV

We turn lastly to Africa, where the Third Period of the Moslem missionary movement is chiefly



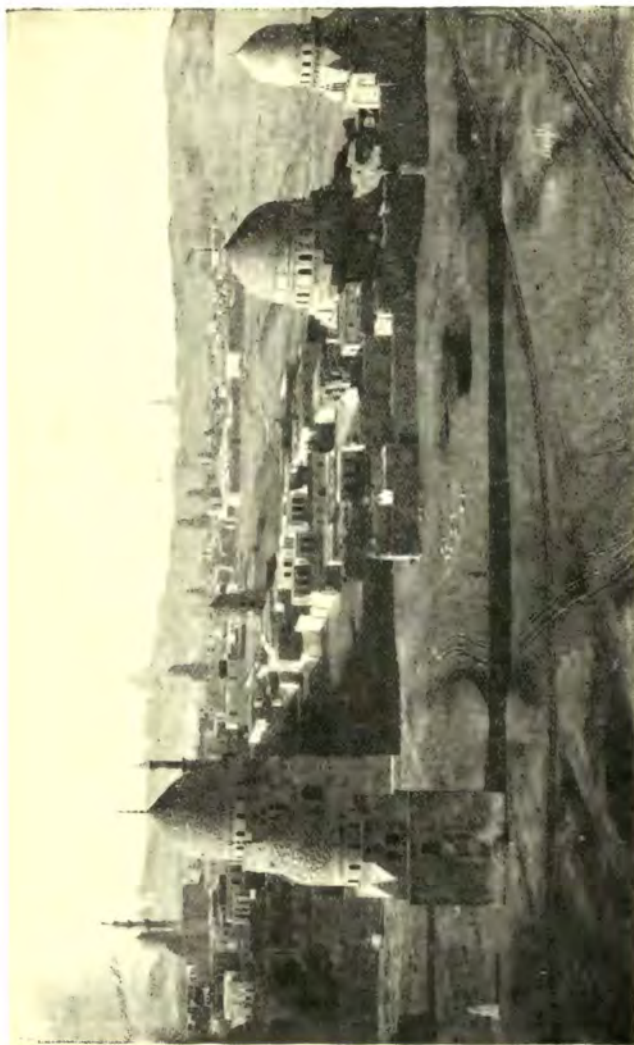
(2) Extent of Islam, A.D. 1480.

exemplified. The conquest of Northern Africa in the *first period* has already been mentioned. From the coast Islam gradually advanced into the interior during the *second period*. The conquest of the Sahara presents the old familiar features, especially the argument of hard knocks:—"The success that attended his [Abdu-llāh ibn Yassīn's, a pious Moslem monk's] warlike expeditions appeared to the tribes of the Sahara a more persuasive argument than all his preaching, and they very soon came forward voluntarily to embrace a faith that secured such brilliant successes to the arms of its adherents."<sup>1</sup>

From the Sahara, still southwards, Islam spread towards the Niger and the Western Sudan, making very many converts from among the negroes. Little is known about the history or methods of these first conquests (eleventh and twelfth centuries). From the West, Islam then spread eastward and met another stream of propagandism setting from Arabia and Egypt. Thus the Sudanese states from the borders of Abyssinia to Timbuktu and Senegal became all of them Moslem. It would seem that the great and important nation of the Hausas accepted Islam at this time.

And this brings us to the *third* or modern epoch—a period of about a century and a half. A great deal of it can be traced to the movement in Arabia in the eighteenth century started by Abdul Wahhāb. Influenced by his doctrine, a certain

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 201.



TOMBS OF THE CALIPHS, CAIRO

Sheikh, Othmân, son of Hodiou, returned from the pilgrimage at Mecca, and proceeded to start a movement for the reform of doctrine, ritual, and morality among his people, the Fulahs, a great and important pastoral tribe, living in settlements all over the Sudan. But his pietism, like his Prophet's, had no scruple against handling a sharp sword. The Fulahs, under his leadership, became one of the most terrible fighting forces in the history of Islam. Othmân sent letters to all the tribes around threatening chastisement if they did not submit to Islam. Nor was the threat idle. "The conquering Fulahs spread southwards and westwards, laying waste whole tracts of country, and compelling all the tribes they conquered to embrace the faith of the Prophet."<sup>1</sup> Amongst others, the great negro nation of the Hausas—already Moslem—willingly submitted to their rule, and Sokoto was built, and made the capital of a great Moslem empire in Western Equatorial Africa, which has only recently been overthrown by the British power. The Yoruba country on the Niger was reached. Only a broad fringe along the whole Guinea Coast remained pagan, and for that fringe Christian missions, with the odds all against them, are contesting with the dead-weight of Islam

<sup>1</sup> T. W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam*, p. 266. The last fact should be noticed. The "tolerance" of the Moslem religion is now being as much exaggerated as its "intolerance" formerly was. This compulsion is, in the case of *heathens*, considered lawful by the vast majority of Moslems, on the strength of Mohammed's "ultimatum" to the Arab tribes.

pressing in everywhere from the north. Here again we find the old story ; the prestige of conquest first, intermarriage second, an unexacting creed and a morality which may be as low as possible without being in the least un-Moslem. To these attractions the Africans fall victim by tens of thousands—while Christians who are unable to tolerate the high standard of a spiritual religion and the pure Mastership of Jesus Christ, when they fall away, fall into the arms of Islam. At the Pan-Anglican Congress<sup>1</sup> it was made terribly clear at what odds the Church is fighting in West Africa ; with what difficulty crude, tempted negro Christians so much as hold their own in face of the cruelly subtle temptation of Islam.

It must not be forgotten, however, that an immense amount of proselytizing work has been done over these vast districts of Africa by perfectly peaceful means, preaching, schools, and the like. Take for example the extraordinarily powerful order of the Senussi—an order that is spread over all North Africa. From their schools and monasteries go forth missionaries, and by real missionary effort they convert heathens, and reform professing Moslems. How long this peaceful Islamic theocracy will refrain from becoming an aggressive and warlike one is another matter. The law of Jihād is a very easy one for great Moslem rulers to resort to.

On the other hand, there is a reverse side to

<sup>1</sup> London, 1908.

this picture. The basest and most unspiritual methods have been used, and are being used, to convert negroes to Islam. What of the negroes forced to Islamize at the sword's point, conformably with the spirit and letter of the Korân (in the case of other than the "Peoples of a Book")? <sup>1</sup> What of the thousands of negroes dragged by Zebehr Pasha and other Arab slave-raiders from the interior of the Sudan, and placed in an environment where their Islamizing was practically inevitable? What of the abominable slave-raids still going on, and dignified by the name of Jihâd—"Holy" war, God save the mark! And if it be held that such victims of Islam cannot be conceived as being in earnest about religion at all, and so should be ignored in this enquiry, we must remember the dictum of that Egyptian Cabinet-minister: "*No, but their children are sincere.*"

We have hitherto been considering Africa north of the Equator. We must close this chapter by a consideration of Islam south of the line. As on the Guinea Coast, so in the whole of Africa down to the Zambesi, it is a race between Christianity and Islam for possession. The odds are great, and the penalty for losing terrible, for when Islam once takes hold, it becomes, for reasons that will be dwelt on later, almost impossible, humanly speaking, to dislodge it.

In addition to what we have noted above, we see, on the other hand, that the success of Islam

<sup>1</sup> See footnote, p. 89.

through its villainies is sometimes due to the degradation of the natures which are subjected to this treatment. For example, incredible though it may seem, the unspeakably brutal, cruel, and dastardly Arab slave-trade is the direct cause of the rapid progress made by Islam in East Africa of late. Crushed and degraded natures often admire the very strength of their tormentors, and the Moslems undoubtedly acquired immense prestige, if not love, all through the slave-raiding districts in the old slave-raiding days of last century. "Ah, those Mahdists were something like men!" recently said some poor Nilotic Sudanese to the missionaries. Now these same Mahdists had done nothing for these Sudanese but murder and spoil them. The missionaries—nay the English themselves—seemed to them poor creatures. They did not even beat them!

It was in *those* days that the Christian Church had its *best* chance, such a chance as, alas! is not presented to-day, and never will be again. The mission-fields of Uganda (C.M.S.), Barotsiland (French), and Nyassaland (Universities' and Presbyterian Missions, including Livingstonia) have indeed shown what might be done in the way of stemming and counteracting the onward march of Islam, but the fact still remains that the brightest hour for saving Africa from Islam was allowed to go by. The new condition that has given Islam its chance is the righteous action, the humane policy, the just governance of Christian nations,

which in most parts have stopped slave-raiding and slave-trading, and turned the Moslem slave-raider into "honest trader," who, in the ring-fence created for him by Christian officials, itinerates, intermarries, and uses his old prestige to influence the negroes for Islam. African memories are short, old wounds heal rapidly, and the scars are disregarded. And so Africa, north of the Zambesi, shows every sign of becoming a Moslem ocean, with here and there a large Christian island in its midst.

In Africa is exemplified a further point. The Moslem evangelist may be good, bad, or indifferent ; a warlike saint, a reforming enthusiast, a noble monarch, an easy-going merchant, a scoundrel of an ex-slave-raider ; but—how comes it that every Moslem is proud of Islam, loves Islam in his own fashion, and therefore *stands for* Islam wherever he goes : and so is a Moslem missionary ?

To the modern Christian world, missions imply organization, societies, paid agents, subscriptions, reports, etc. All this is practically absent from the present Moslem idea of propagation, and yet the spread of Islam goes on. With loss of political power, the zeal of Islam seems to increase, for Egypt and India are more active in propagating the faith than are Turkey or Morocco.

In Burma (where Indian merchants are the Moslem missionaries) the Moslem population increased thirty-three per cent in the last decade.<sup>1</sup>

In the Western Sudan and the Niger, where whole districts have become Moslem, to a large extent

<sup>1</sup> S. M. Zwemer, *Islam*, p. 79.

the work has been done by merchants, travellers, and artisans.

A pearl merchant at Bahrein, East Arabia, recently, at his own expense and on his own initiative, printed an entire edition of a Korân commentary for free distribution. On the streets of Lahore and Calcutta you may see clerks, traders, bookbinders, and even coolies, who spend part of their leisure time preaching Islam or attacking Christianity by argument. The merchants who go to Mecca as pilgrims from Java return to do missionary work among the hill-tribes. In the Sudan the Hausa merchants carry the Korân and the catechism wherever they carry their merchandise. No sooner do they open a wayside shop in some pagan district than the wayside mosque is built by its side.<sup>1</sup>

But when all has been said *pro et contra*, the following consideration has the last word:—Moslem prestige would be as unavailing to effect conversions as English prestige has been in India or Egypt, if it were not known that every man may share this prestige by making the Moslem confession, and becoming—outwardly at least—a Mohammedan. Every woman may in a sense share that prestige by becoming the wife or concubine of the Moslem great man, and by bearing him Moslem children. This may not be a good way of inducing conversion from the side of the "convert," but from the point of view of Islam, does it not point, we ask ourselves again, to a real brotherhood, a real readiness to admit to and share privileges, a real breaking down of race barriers

<sup>1</sup> S. M. Zwemer, *Islam*, p. 79.

and animosities?—all of which things seem so strangely difficult to most of those who bear the name of Jesus Christ.

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## CHAPTER IV

### WHAT IS IT ?

NOT until the fourth chapter do we come to the thing, the religion of Mohammed, the *It* itself. We are not engaged in an abstract study of this subject. We have rather approached it as an observer might approach a visible organism which has arrested his attention. First he takes a good look at it from the outside, observing where it is placed, and in what environment, and what it is ostensibly doing. Then, his curiosity being aroused, he asks whence it came, and how it arrived at its present state. And not until then does he give a more penetrating study to the object itself, his knowledge of which, however, has been greatly increased by what his friends have told him as to its origin and history.

Similarly we first made a rough, elementary observation of the great phenomenon of ISLAM; and although we have not yet turned to a closer study of its inner character, its doctrine and theory, yet we have found that our knowledge of that, too, has insensibly, but considerably, increased by the mere study of the man who was its source, and the history of its spread up to the present

time. We thus begin a deeper study of what Islam is in itself, without losing that touch with life and reality which is so absolutely necessary if our study is to have practical results.

## I

We have already seen the external influences which helped to lead the Arabian Prophet to a belief in Allah—the One God. But it was no mere intellectual process, so far as can be made out, by which he passed to this belief. He did not merely come to possess it ; it came to possess him. He was filled with a burning conviction that it was real, actual—that Allah was gripping him, and that neither he nor any created thing had any might at all as against Him. Mohammed was not a philosopher ; we might say he was not even a theologian ; he never troubled to remove crudities from his faith, or give them an explanation—his followers were left that delicate task—he felt he had *experienced* Allah, a living, absolutely all-powerful and irresistible Being. And this feeling of Allah's reality and personality was so strong that the language and imagery of the Korân and the Traditions in speaking of God often employ as startling human metaphors and images as the Old Testament. At the same time, no hint being given that Mohammed's words were to be interpreted with anything but prosaic literalism, a task of end-

less difficulty was left to the future theologians—that of deciding how, and in what sense, such images and metaphors were to be construed; in what sense Allah “settled Himself on the Throne,” or “spoke,” or was to be “beheld” by the saved, or “descended into the lowest heaven,” or held the Prophet “between two of his fingers.” . . . These things enable us to feel the naïveté and the overwhelming convincedness of Mohammed’s faith in this irresistible, Omnipotent One. Allah was to him most emphatically “a Force” . . . “a Force not ourselves.” . . . It is no process of pure thought that leads a man along this way. What Mohammed experienced belongs only to him who feels that a living God has laid hold of him with Will and with Power, that he is apprehended before he apprehends; while he himself neither knows nor questions *why*. He bows in adoration, he acknowledges the grace, he worships. The great Augustine sounds this note in his Confessions—this, and some deeper notes still to which Mohammed’s non-Christian ear was deaf. It is the characteristic note of souls who have experienced a violent conversion, who have felt the special, personal, not-accountable, in-coming or on-coming of God. Mohammed was of the same family; and there was in his case all too little to mitigate or qualify or balance or soften the stark conviction of God as all-active Power.

There was something. For one thing Mohammed, like other religious enthusiasts, appears to have

found room in his mind for the idea that it was possible for men to *resist* the invitation of Allah, and that the Arab Unbelievers actually did resist it and had themselves to thank for the fiery penalty which Allah (with considerable gusto it must be admitted) proceeded to inflict.<sup>1</sup> And for another thing, as Canon Dale has well pointed out :

The ideas of gentleness and loving-kindness are certainly not absent from the Korân. Every Mohammedan who says his rosary calls GOD "The Merciful," "The Compassionate," "The Forgiver," "The Clement," "The Guardian," "The Loving," "The Acceptor of Repentance," "The Pardoner," "The King," "The Patient" . . . these gentler attributes are mentioned again and again. . . . Mohammed, we are told, was never tired of telling his followers that the love of GOD for man was more tender than that of a mother bird for its young. Still, although there is this recognition of the loving-kindness of GOD, it is true to say generally that . . . the predominating thought in the mind of the Mohammedan is that of the power of GOD. . . . The Mohammedan call to prayer is "God is Great,"<sup>2</sup>

This was the mystic side of Mohammed ; it was accompanied by religious experiences of a fervent, even ecstatic character ; by fastings and night watchings, with much "commemoration of the Name of Allah." And as we have seen, there was the more prosaic side also. An external ritual,

<sup>1</sup> So the most thoughtful modern students of the Korân. It was the later theologians who stereotyped and made absolute the predestinarian aspect of the Korân.

<sup>2</sup> G. Dale, *The Contrast between Christianity and Mohammedanism*, p. 14.

with minute directions for observances of all sorts, was gradually elaborated. "Leading articles" appeared in the form of revelations, in which observations on the last battle and latest domestic complication might be jumbled with social regulations which were clearly destined to form the basis of a new legislation. And, withal, Allah himself seems to become at once more remote and yet more of a busybody, pervading all things, yet less, not more, adorable.

And the Korân is an unassorted record of these tendencies, these intuitions, these practices. Mohammed was no theologian and no systematizer. It was left for the next generations to think through and live through the indications given in the Korân.

## II

Looking at the broad course of Islamic development from those times to this, we can see that the pedants carried the day. A stiff system of theology, a stiff system of ritual, a stiff system of canon-law covering the whole of life, personal, social and political, were evolved, and logically evolved from the data given in the Korân and by Mohammed's own life and practice. Only, as we shall see, it never wholly satisfied the more devout and mystical souls. And so *these* too, while loyally, we might almost say slavishly, believing and practising "the Law" as evolved by the theo-

logians and the legists, developed, parallel to it, "the Way"—a mystical theology and a mystical ritual. These were the Sûfis, the mystics of Islam. They too, as we have seen, found data in Book and in Biography to which they could appeal, and from which they could elaborate the science of the mystic ecstasy and the art of producing it,—the "Way" of the soul, whereby it comes direct to Deity, nay (according to the most developed doctrine) becomes merged in It.

But whether we regard Law or Way, we find that that conception of a living omniscient, irresistible Will and almighty Power, has left its indelible mark upon Islam. The systems of the theologians, gradually extracted by dry logical processes from the vivid data of the Korân, helped out by the Traditions of the Prophet's conversation (*Hadîth*), show that this conception regulated all their thinking. Efforts made to get away from it only proved the impossibility of doing so. In their reasonings as to the essence and attributes of Allah, they deduced seven primary Attributes: He is absolute in (1) Life, (2) Knowledge, (3) Will, (4) Power, (5) Hearing, (6) Seeing, (7) Word<sup>1</sup>: and in these we see but an elaboration of the conception of absolute *power*; for "hearing" and "seeing" add nothing to omniscience, and "word" is the mere vehicle of omnipotence. The con-

<sup>1</sup> This might well have led to some conception like that with which St John's Gospel opens. Alas, it did not do so; and why? Because there was no JESUS CHRIST with which to identify THE WORD, only a Book! and that book the Korân.

ception of Will-and-Power modifies and is not modified by any other conception whatever. Take a crucial example. In what sense, asks a recently published Mohammedan text-book, is it right to say that Allah has the characteristic Loving—that He *loves*? The answer is that Love must be understood as Allah's *favour* bestowed on a favoured individual, and that similarly His Wrath is the negation of that favour. Now, of course, this at once to all intents and purposes identifies Love with Will, for favour is simply Allah's Will in relation to an individual. And what He wills He surely performs by His power. To this day in Cairo—or anywhere else in the Moslem world—you cannot get a Sheikh to advance beyond this conception. The text "God is Love" moves him not at all, so strongly does he feel that to admit anything like an emotional element in the Godhead is to imagine a degree of weakness or helplessness in It. The words "The Merciful, the Compassionate" head nearly every Sûra in the Korân; but the conception never comes near that of an all-pitying Father. It is rather the "mercy" of an autocrat, who spares a few from the general destruction, for motives entirely beyond their understanding, or for no motives at all.

In the mystical development (see p. 101), the conception of love is indeed prodigiously developed. The most favourite imagery for the description of the relation between God and the aspirant Soul is erotic: they become Lover and Beloved. And

the mystical " Way " was the deliberate organizing of a method whereby this love could be fulfilled by the merging of the human in the ocean of the divine, where passion loses itself and, so doing, reaches its consummation.

It was assuredly not the meagre hints in Korân and *Hadîth* that made this development possible. It was rather the contact of mystically minded Mohammedans with Christian mysticism on the one hand, and Eastern pantheism on the other. Starting from the ascetic and ecstatic side of Mohammed's teaching and practice they eagerly absorbed whatever nourished their mystical aspiration, from whatsoever quarter the nourishment came. And the Mohammedan Walî at his best is wonderfully like his Christian brother saint.

And yet the difference is profound. And it will be found to centre upon this fact, that to the Christian the Love of God was manifested in the Cross of Christ, with all that that stood for. But in Islam even the mystics ignored the Cross and denied that Love was crucified.

### III

To the Creator, then, is assigned the sole Will and Power, and from the whole creation, including Man, all genuine semblance of independence or spontaneity in thought or action is taken away. One school of philosopher-theologians, the

Mu'tazilites, or Seceders, made an attempt to mitigate this pitiless doctrine ; to introduce into Allah's omnipotence the notion of responsibility for the good of His creatures, to guard somewhat of the responsibility of man to find Him and to please Him ; in other words to make the whole system in some degree rational. For one generation, helped by royal patronage (Ma'mûn and Mu'tasim, the Abbaside Caliphs of Baghdad), they made a great effort against the dead-weight of Islamic public opinion, with its only too faithful instinct for the true implication of the Korân. The attempt utterly broke down. Like the swimmer against some mighty current they tired and failed, and Caliph, Doctor, and Populace swung back with relief into the old current, and heartily cursed the men who thought that God's concern for His creatures' good might be looked for as the motive for His actions towards them ; and who asserted that man was responsible to seek for the will of God, and to perform it if he knew it. Such were the doctrines cursed by El Ash'ari and all orthodox Islam with him, before and since !

Now a faith in a living God who wills and acts is indeed a vitally necessary thing in religion and it was never more needed in the West than to-day. Frederick Denison Maurice well points out how irresistible the Moslems were when possessed with it : indeed how morally right and necessary it was that men in the living heat of this conviction should have put to shame and to flight men in whom

this conviction was a thing of name and not of reality. But he shows, too, that this faith is only efficacious and constructive when it is in ebullition. At other times it sinks into a dead fatalism which, instead of goading to action, paralyses it. It needs the angel to trouble the pool to produce real results; the results are therefore fitful, and the action liable to sink back into listlessness. An example of this is the utter apathy into which Arabia fell, as we have seen, when the fever-fit of conversion had spent itself. Then the sword fell from the inert hand of the Arabs and was taken up by the Turks, and now Moslem Turkey has been utterly inert for centuries. Just the same can be said in regard to that frantic ebullition known as the Mogul invasion of India. Again, the Wahhâbite puritan movement in Arabia inspired the central African Fulâni, Othmân, with a belief in his God-appointed office as reformer and conqueror. In the passion of that belief he built up the Fulâni Empire. The Moslem realm of Hausaland received the reformers and conquerors . . . yet in one generation the moral impetus of the movement had utterly ceased, and reforming Fulâni and reformed Hausa had sunk back into a more profound apathy than before. The striking instance of the volcanic outbreak of Mahdism in the Egyptian Sudan in 1883, and the veritable prostration of inertia which immediately succeeded it, is fresh in everyone's mind. In other words, it needs MORE than this concep-

tion of unconditioned, irresponsible, arbitrary Will-Power to produce on the part of man a steady upward moral effort towards a mark and along a course which his Creator has shown to him—has confided to him, not as a slave, “for the slave knoweth not what his Lord doeth,” but as a “friend,” who is capable of feeling sympathy with the end itself, and of being fellow-worker, aye, fellow-traveller in the working of it out.

Christendom indeed cannot possibly dispense with this conception of a Living, Knowing, Willing, and Acting God; nay, must relearn that conception whenever it becomes merely formal in her, even if her teacher be Islam. But this is only a part of her Faith. The spirit of Jesus revealed “*God is Love. . . .*” “*Your Father which is in Heaven. . . .*” “*God so loved the world that He gave . . .*”! And over against the blank “God is not to be questioned as to what He does”—as to why He called the worlds into being—the Spirit says, “*For Thy glory they were and are created.*”

True, the Christian religion does not claim to have fully solved the problems of the Will of God and the will of man, of universal love and the existence of sin and sorrow; but it has kept both facts in view, and above all it has refused to lose sight of the Love of God: it has been willing to seem inconsistent, to fail partially in its logical construing of Deity rather than utterly to fail in its moral conception of Him; to confess that the human reason finds ultimate insoluble difficulties

rather than to abolish the philosophical difficulty of GOD'S Will and man's free-will at the appalling cost of confessing a faith in unrational, unmoral Almightyness.

For in truth the conviction that this hard deistic doctrine of God is barren and dishonouring has steadily grown in recent times in proportion as it has been realized how non-moral are the notions of Will and Power *in themselves*. Power, for example, may stand for the strength of a brute, the mechanical force of an engine, the passionless energy of the laws of nature ; in short, is in itself a physical category, unless united ever and always with Holiness and Love. It is the absence of these elements that makes the Islamic notion of divine Might appear practically identical with mere physical *force*. While as for *Will*, has not Christendom, ever since Schopenhauer delivered his message, been unable to admire, much less adore, the mere arbitrariness of pure Will, the mere imperious "Thou shalt, not because it is right or good for thee or Me, but because it is My reasonless pleasure?" She has been taught to hate such a thing in her earthly kings ; and the Spirit of Jesus has not bid her see it or adore it in the King of Kings. Behind the divine Will, Christ's Spirit has shown to her Love and Righteousness ever standing. It is before the Will of the *Father* (not the Despot) that the Christian, in the Spirit of Jesus, bows and says with adoration, "Not my will, but Thine be done !"

In fact, modern Christian thought has more and more come to feel that loveless will-force is the contradiction, the very opposite, of Christ's revelation of God. And one recoils from the conception of this almighty despot—and takes refuge in the deep bosom of Him in whose very essence the eternal felicity and beatitude of love in Father and in Son, through the oneness of a Spirit of Holiness, was, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

## IV

Which leads us further. We ask: is *Holiness* to be found in Allah?

The Church of God, from its origin in the Jewish Church, did not climb to the idea of a *Holy* God without difficulty. How many traces there are in the Old Testament of the idea that the Holiness of God is not absolutely related to *goodness*; that it might be considered, on the one hand, Jehovah's dislike for ceremonial uncleanness, or on the other hand, Jehovah's infinite transcendence of all mortal things whatsoever, the dazzling glory of a light too bright to be illumining. But as the revelation of God deepened, through patriarch, psalmist, and prophet, it was seen that in His holiness was righteousness, and an intrinsic antagonism to sin; that He was "of purer eyes than to behold evil"; and that therefore He Himself, and in Himself,

was good and holy, and that evil had not its source in Him. Thus the revelation in and through Christ found the foundations already laid. The conception of God had been made thoroughly moral; and Jesus Christ endorsed all, crowned all, fulfilled all when He said—“*Holy Father.*”

The Moslem intellect, on the contrary, asserts that God is not to be questioned as to what He does. To the Moslem, moral goodness is a finite affair, and to apply it to Allah is a vain thing to do. He does not even feel the passionate spiritual need of falling back on an unseen, ultimate goodness “believing where we cannot prove.” The idea of God as pure *will* is confessedly enough for him. He has no scruples and no soul struggles. The slave asks no questions of his lord; what the latter does is right *because he does it*, not for any quality in the action itself.

This only shows that Pure Will in itself is not, any more than Pure Force, necessarily moral. It is no more possible to deduce goodness from either separately or both together, than it would be to deduce goodness from the actions of an enormous engine, endued for the moment with vitality (“Life”), consciousness (“Knowledge”), and self-direction (“Will”). But it also makes clear an even more startling point: and that is, that Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, are in this light seen to be evacuated of intrinsic meaning. For the distinctions now depend entirely on Allah’s decree; but the reasons for that decree are not

to be sought ; they need not be believed to exist at all, either in the nature of Allah Himself (" Allah is not to be asked concerning that which He does ") or in the nature of Right and Wrong in themselves. What then ? The decree pronouncing certain things right and certain others wrong is more of the nature of an administrative act : it does not so much create them " right " or " wrong," as " permitted " (*halâl*), or " not-permitted " (*harâm*—tabooed !); not as odious in themselves because issuing from an odious condition of heart, but as infringing the fiat of the Absolute Ruler. Orthodox Moslem theologians have not scrupled plainly to assert that it is only Allah's decree that constituted " good " actions right, and " bad " actions wrong : and that had the decree been the other way round, as it might have been, the whole of mankind's moral judgments would have had to be reversed. Fortunately for Islam and the world, Allah is assigned, on the whole, a certain consistency in His decrees upon these matters, and the uniformity with which He has tabooed adultery, theft, cruelty, and so forth has conveyed to the ordinary Moslem, no doubt, the sense that these things are necessarily, and in themselves, evil. The Korân is by no means so unethical as the theological system deduced from it ; and men are often much more moderate than their logic : and so the earnest Moslem has real love for righteousness, and that love is the intenser because it is the declared will of Allah. But there is no real

understanding of holiness, or of sin in themselves. Allah could and did legitimize actions that were otherwise illegitimate, and for the benefit of His prophet, of all persons! Nor did such actions belong only to the purely ceremonial sphere, where abrogation, it might be allowed, does not touch morals: they often seem to us to fall completely within the ethical sphere. The Moslem might indeed say that in these cases also they were matters of regulation. But that only shows how strong is the tendency to conceive of morality as mere regulation, and to degrade the eternal laws of holiness into decrees which might be changed to-morrow, by the Despot who ordained them.

Thus we see that a heavy price has to be paid by those who worship unconditioned Might: it appears to involve the disappearance of both Love and Holiness in any full sense of the words. After this it causes no surprise, though it does deepen regret, to find that Islam has no place for *Atonement*. For the necessity, or rather the fact of atonement, sprang from just these things in God—His Love and His Holiness. And man's consciousness of the need of redemption by atonement is only realized when the Spirit of Christ convinces the conscience of sinful man that God *is* holiness and that God *is* Love; that in the CROSS is shown against the dark background of man's failure and sin, the measure of the Divine Passion against evil (God's Holiness), the measure of the Divine Passion for redeeming the sinner

from it (God's Love). The agnosticism of Islam in regard either to *love* or to *holiness* in Allah made it impossible for Mohammed to find room for Atonement in his conception of Allah, or to realize the need of it in man. In that inscrutable, passionless life of His, in which He does everything, and no other does anything, the wickedness of man means, in the last analysis, nothing whatever to Him. There is no real failure, no real offence: for everything is from Him.

It follows absolutely that just because the *holiness* of God is not understood, so the very idea of atonement is absent even from the deepest depths of Moslem thought. And from the other view-point the agnosticism of Islam with regard to the nature of *love* in Allah makes the idea of Atonement, in which God sacrifices Himself, impossible. That God should *be affected*, suffer, is a thought utterly intolerable to the Moslem. All patience, all passivity is *weakness*, is a temporary abandonment of the Omnipotent activity of Allah, and is therefore even more repugnant an idea to the Moslem than is the notion of the interruption of natural cause and effect to the scientist of to-day. So love itself, and pity, and the desire to save at whatever cost, and passion, and redemptive sacrifice, and every other idea that is comprehended in the thrilling word Atonement, go together in one clean sweep. No champion of the impossibility of a suffering God is half so devoted or so consistent as the Moslem. He explains away a few expressions in the Korân about

the love or wrath of Allah, for even His favour to Believers and His fiery vengeance on Unbelievers are too inscrutable to seem like real love or real resentment. But the Moslem sees that no amount of explaining will explain away the great texts of both Old and New Testament, where Hebrew Prophet and Christian Apostle, equally under the guidance of the Spirit of JESUS, pointed, the one to HIM "who in all their afflictions was afflicted," the other to Him "who was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself," and who "so loved the World that He gave. . . ." And therefore he indignantly rejects those Books as miserably corrupted—blasphemies against the Absolute Monarch of Creation.

It is true that a wraith of the idea of atonement appears in certain Mohammedan rites and ceremonies of a primitive and elementary religious character. Examples are seen in the slaying of a sheep in the Feast of Sacrifice, to commemorate Abraham's "redemption" of his son by a ram; certain sacrifices at the pilgrimage; and the prophet's praise of bloodshedding as highly pleasing to God. But these are but dead shells of once living ideas. Unexplained, in themselves, they have no spiritual significance to the Moslem.

Then again the tendency is shown in Persian or Shi'ite<sup>1</sup> Islam to fall back upon the intercession of a suffering mediator, efficacious in proportion to the agony of his suffering. The "merits" of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Zwemer's *Mohammed or Christ*, pp. 239-40 and p. 60.

the Shi'ite Man of Sorrows—the pathetic figure of the ill-fated Husain,<sup>1</sup> that grandson of the Prophet who fell at Kerbela, done unjustly to death—are pled by every Shi'ite Moslem, and may perhaps point to a deep-seated instinct of the human heart. But all these sacrifices are at most paid by *man*. As to the idea at the very base of atonement, the self-sacrifice of God, it is utterly *incompatible* with the whole Islamic conception of Allah. It may be that Christendom herself has not fully realized the self-sacrifice of *God* in Christ. The story of Calvary is further incompatible with the Islamic conception of a Great Prophet who must not be allowed to suffer such indignities. Consequently the Korân explicitly denies that Jesus was ever crucified, adopting an old heretical fiction, that someone else, in His likeness, was nailed to the tree. Nothing is more striking, in talking with Moslem sheikhs, than to see the disgust and horror with which they spurn the idea of God's atonement as bitterly dishonouring to Him. It is to them *both* "a stumbling-block" *and* "a foolishness." As little as Jew or Greek of old can they see in it the wisdom and the power of God.<sup>2</sup>

To sum up: the creation of man was in no sense the creation of a *free* agent; therefore it was not

<sup>1</sup> Cf. M. E. Hume-Griffith, *Behind the Veil in Persia and Turkish Arabia*, p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> The question of the Mohammedan attitude to Christ is dealt with more fully in Chap. VIII. See also Zwemer's *The Moslem Christ*. (Oliphant.)

the creation of a *moral* agent ; therefore it introduced no new element into the world, set up no possibility of moral struggle, or the *cost* that the winning of a moral being, by purely spiritual means, necessarily involves. That Allah as a matter of fact did not will or permit such a thing as divine self-sacrifice is asserted by Islam. Nay, it was impossible for Him to permit such a thing. Islam in its zeal against limiting God actually ends by limiting Him.<sup>1</sup> It knows not the moral "*could not*"; it repeats Peter's "*Thou shalt not wash my feet.*" It confuses physical and moral power. It cannot stoop with the God-man to the Cradle of Bethlehem ; it cannot stand with Him on the Mount of Temptation making the great decision between the strength of God and the strength of this world ; it cannot bow with Him in Gethsemane ; it cannot see that in the Cross He was lifted up, and that the Reign upon the Throne above is the more glorious because it keeps the mark of the Reign on the Cross-throne below. So Incarnation and Atonement are alike impossible to its thought : <sup>2</sup> it preserves, indeed, Allah with His unity, His majesty, and Power, but at the ruinous cost of depriving Him of Love and Holiness. Mysticism strove hard to realize if not a God that so loved the world, at least a God that desired the merging

<sup>1</sup> Readers of Robert Browning will remember how this idea is developed, especially in his "*Saul.*"

<sup>2</sup> The Korân explicitly denies the Sonship or the Divinity of Christ ; and not only the doctrine of His Atonement, but even the fact of His Death.

of the Pilgrims of the Way in Himself. And yet it was the greatest of Mohammedan *mystics* who endorsed that tradition to which in the long last the Mohammedan mind returns and must return, "These to Felicity *and I care not*; and these to Fire, *and I care not.*" To that came the long effort of the human mind, having discarded the Christ and the Cross. To that : not the FATHER.

## V

In spite of the belief that God hears, sees, and speaks, Moslem theology after Mohammed more and more took refuge in the doctrine of *Mukhâlafah*, or the total and absolute difference between the Creator and the creature from any and every point of view. If this chapter were a philosophical or theological treatise it would be most instructive to develop this point and to show the profound agnosticism which this doctrine of Difference really embodies; and how it almost appears to reduce Allah to a negative term, according to the strange rhyme current in Egypt which may thus be rendered :

" Whatever idea your mind comes at,  
I tell you flat  
God is NOT that."

Even the Mystics, of whom it might be said, as it was said of the pantheist Spinoza, that they were "God-saturated men," oscillated in their

doctrine of Allah, between an obliterating pantheism and an utterly agnostic deism. According to the former, Allah leaves no room for anything else in all existence ; creation itself is merely a manifestation of the Only-Existent, being unreal and illusory in so far as it is otherwise conceived of. According to the second, Allah is so inscrutable in His transcendence that it becomes impossible for the creature to assert anything about Him whatsoever or attribute anything whatsoever to Him. The "Light of Lights" gives off nothing but dark rays. Across the dark gulf the mystic must take his irrational leap. In either case the result was agnosticism : for to the pantheist there *was* no human Knower ; to the deist, the human mind could never know. Contrast " I know Whom I have believed " ; " then shall we know even as we are known " ; " to know the love that passeth all knowledge."

This slenderness of relation between God and man, morally speaking, comes out also in the teaching of Islam, with regard to the Last Things. There is indeed little in the representations of Paradise given in the Korân, and expanded by the commentators, to uplift the soul. It is first and foremost a garden of delights of either a gaudy or a sensual nature. It is true that in one or two places the vision of God is set down as the greatest joy of all, and the most spiritual of the Moslem doctors, saints, and mystics have not failed to seize that point, nay have revelled in it : and these have

attempted to spiritualize the gross imagery employed. But these attempts have been a failure. And it is notable that the most remarkable of them, al Ghazzâli, when elaborating the doctrine of the Garden for general consumption outdoes others in elaboration of sensuality. In fact, orthodoxy cannot go far in this direction. The huge mass of Moslems always have taken, and always will take, the description of Paradise in the Korân as literal.

It need hardly be said that there is simply no comparison between this imagery (if indeed it is, or was ever intended to be mere imagery) and that of the book of Revelation. The latter is clean, beautiful, and simple: the spiritual antitype of every image is clearly indicated at every turn. It immediately kindles *spiritual* emotions. But the curse of the Korânic imagery is that its most direct and significant appeal is carnal, and that it stimulates that which in the Oriental stands in least need of being stimulated. A unique chance to uplift, to spiritualize was lost. On the contrary, it was turned into a unique means of standardizing the low level at which ordinary fallen human nature is all too content to live.

The imagery of Hell, *Jehannam*, is similarly material, and its elaborate and revolting details are intended to be interpreted in a strictly material sense.

All the descriptions of both Heaven and Hell, the Intermediate State, Resurrection, and Judg-

ment are, then, thoroughly and frankly materialistic. They are also curiously circumstantial; details, into which it is totally unnecessary to enter here, being multiplied to an extent which really robs the subject of its awe—even of its dignity. It is fair to say that for a great many of all these defects the Korân itself is less responsible than the Traditions. But it was the Korân that set the tone in a way that was all too unmistakable; and the Traditions more than confirmed that which the Korân suggested.

## VI

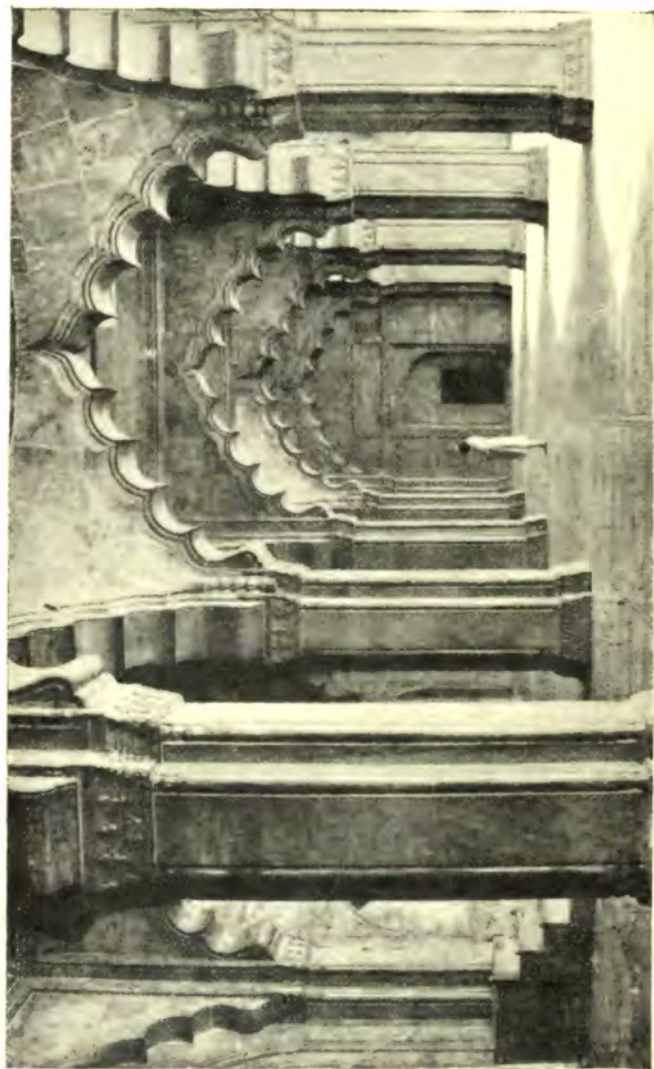
How shall Allah, so remote or rather so totally and essentially "different" from man, nevertheless reach man? What link can He forge?

The Epistle to the Colossians shows how in St Paul's day the question was answered by some who believed in an infinite descending series of grades of spiritual beings thus connecting at last God and Man. And Mohammedanism may be said to have gone a little way in that direction by the importance it has attached to the doctrine of an angelic hierarchy, the chamberlains of the Heavenly Monarch; and by its explicit belief in regularly organized hosts of jinns—demi-supernatural beings of uncertain spiritual temper and spiritual location. Belief in these beings is obligatory, for they appear prominently in the Korân;

and charms for the evasion of the more malign influences of the mediate spiritual world are also mentioned in its pages and are therefore *de fide*.

But far the most important conception of Islam in respect to the nexus between God and Man is the Prophet (or Apostle) with his inspired Book. The root of the Arabic word for *prophet* means "to tell clearly about the unseen"; the word for *apostle* signifies, like the English word itself, one "sent." Many of the thousands of prophets who, according to the beliefs of Islam, were sent in times past into the world, were given no "Book." Their work was to warn, and their inspiration was general. But the greater ones were inspired with "Books," yet the majority of these also perished, superseded by the four great revelations, the Tourâh given to Moses, the Zabûr to David, the Injil to Jesus, and the Korân to Mohammed. The three former have, according to Moslems, though not according to Mohammed or the Korân, been hopelessly corrupted by Jews and Christians alike; when, where, why, or by whom is not clear: in any case the Korân stands out as being the last and greatest, virtually superseding all that had gone before, even as Mohammed as prophet surpasses all his predecessors, and closes the line of prophets, until Jesus ('Îsa) come again, followed by El Mahdi, and ushering in the end of the World.

Now we come to the interesting and important point connected with the Korân, considered as the perfected type of Revelation. It is the very Word



THE PEARL MOSQUE, AGRA

of Allah,<sup>1</sup> eternal and uncreate; it was written upon the Tablet by the Pen (two of the first created things); it was carried down by angels from the Highest Heaven to the Lowest on the Night of Power; and from thence it was "brought down" by Gabriel piecemeal to (*Arabice* "upon") Mohammed in the revelations that came to him. The prophet was purely passive—indeed unconscious; the Book was in no sense his, neither its thought, nor language, nor style: *all* was of God, and the Prophet was merely a recording pen. The whole of the contents of the Korân from the sublimest doctrine down to the most trivial command (abrogated perhaps, a week or two after it was revealed, by another); from the passage describing the ineffableness of God down to the passage authorizing Mohammed's marriage with the divorced wife of his adopted son: *all* is equally, in kind and in degree, inspired and eternal and Divine. The word of God eternal became, then, a Book, limited in quantity to the contents of this Korân, and communicated to Mankind through an unconscious prophet by the hand of an angel. Such is Islam's main solution of the problem, how did the Infinite God project Himself into the ken of finite man? . . . The contrast between this doctrine of the Logos of Islam and the Logos of the Gospel furnishes food for very abundant thought.

<sup>1</sup> The "Word" is, it will be remembered, one of the seven Essential Attributes of Allah. Its relation to the Korân is obscure. "The import of the Korân is equivalent to the import of the Attribute, if the veil were taken away."

The puritans of Islam have made frequent attempts to make the Korân the sole source of religious knowledge, and to find in it all that is necessary not only for salvation in the next world, but for moral, social, and political guidance in this world also. But the historical evolution of Islam did not find the book sufficient for such an enormous programme. The conquered civilized world had needs which the rather barbaric world that gave rise to Islam could not supply. In elaborating a system that should cover the whole of life, it was found absolutely necessary to accumulate more data to work on. The sanctity and the moral perfection ascribed to the Prophet soon supplied, in his recorded acts, conversations, and decisions, a vast amount of additional material; much, perhaps most of it, spurious, to which was attributed an inspiration virtually, though not theoretically, equal to that of the Book itself: so that to the first great "Pillar" of Islam (*the Korân*) was added a second, the *Prophet's Practice* (*Sunna*, as handed down by the *Hadith*, see p. 101). The third was the Unanimous Consent of the Islamic Community, believed, when attainable, to be infallible<sup>1</sup>—*Consensus (Ijmâ')*. The fourth Pillar was Analogical *Deduction (Qiyâs)* from the

<sup>1</sup> It was this principle of Catholicity that rendered development possible in Islam. For example, mysticism in doctrine and practice, and prayers to saints (Walis) were at one time of doubtful orthodoxy. But now they have been admitted by this *Consensus* into orthodox Islam. "Consensus" pronounces or withholds its *nihil obstat* when an innovation is proposed.

statements or judgments afforded by the first two sources.

And thus was gradually evolved, elaborated, and stereotyped, the four great orthodox schools which between them divide the allegiance of the whole of orthodox (Sunni) Islam, the most colossal system which the world has ever seen or will see, more gigantic than even the system of Rabbinical Judaism which affords a parallel to it on so many points. For Islam being intrinsically a theocracy, religion covers all the functions of the state, and by the state its infinite decrees are ideally enforced. Cæsar vanishes and God is all in all: the sword of Cæsar *is* the sword of Allah.

It is precisely this that makes Islam so stubborn a political problem in the East to-day. The section on Political Status is just as intrinsic a part of the Shari'a or Sacred Law as the section on Marriage or the section on Prayer. And that section says that all Moslem realms must look to the Khalifa as their supreme political leader and chief: that the government in every several realm must be exclusively in the hands of Moslems: that only Moslems have full citizen-rights: that members of all other faiths must be kept in humiliation and must pay tribute, and if they continue thus shall be given protection in return, but if not, "their blood and property thereby become lawful." It is these principles (which lie at the back of the *feeling* of almost all Mohammedans and the *thinking* of most) that made possible the Armenian

massacres. It is these which make true nationalism or true democracy so impossible in the East, and place the mutual relations of Mohammedan and non-Mohammedan on so unhealthy and unstable a basis. The fraternizations between the two which, under the stress of some temporary emotion, sometimes manifest themselves, prove superficial and false, and sometimes are succeeded by fierce reactions. There is no hope for the East while the Shari'ā remains unrepudiated, or unreachd by the disintegrating forces of time.

## VII

It follows from all that has been said—whether of the Moslem conception of God, or of His relation and revelation to man, or of man himself—that the Moslem conception of the *practical* side of religion is the performance of certain well-defined *duties*.<sup>1</sup>

The most important of those are authoritatively limited to five :—(1) The *Creed*—openly to confess Allah *one*, and Mohammed His Apostle. (2) *Prayer*—at the stated times, after the prescribed language, form, and manner (genuflections, prostrations, etc.), and preceded by the prescribed purifications and ablutions, the details of which are far too numerous to mention—they all concern bodily

<sup>1</sup> Islam divides religion into two parts: *belief* (all that has to do with creed)—*imān*, and *practice* (all that has to do with religious *duty*)—*dīn*.

purity and all involve the ceremonial use of water. (3) *Alms*—given according to well-defined rules. (4) *Fasting*—according to a strictly determined system, viz. : total abstention from sunrise to sunset during the month of Ramadân. (5) The *Pilgrimage* to Mecca, including the elaborate and minute ritual performed on arrival at the sacred site. The Holy War (Jihâd) is an equally stringent duty on the proper occasions for it : but naturally the qualifications with which this duty has been surrounded have removed it from the practical to the ideal sphere.

In Egypt, Mohammedans, at any rate in the country districts, are very punctual in the performance of the ordinance of *Prayer*. Every one must needs be struck by the spectacle of the long ordered rows of Moslems at united prayer in the mosques, or of individual worshippers in field, or city. The air of quiet, of total absorption in the devotional task, and entire aloofness from their circumstances is most striking.

Looking around from an eminence one day in Cairo, the writer saw down into the interior of the open court of a mosque far beneath. It was the hour of mid-afternoon prayer, and the little company were standing, bowing, kneeling, prostrating together in two or three short rows, with that strange machine-like precision that accompanies Moslem worship. Their leader was the Sheikh of the mosque, in the usual flowing robes ; behind him, an effendi (native gentleman) in black frock coat

worshipped shoulder to shoulder with a coarsely clad workman from the streets ; further on were a negro from the Sudan, an old middle-class merchant, and one or two young lads. . . . The concerted movements went steadily on till the end ; the Recording Angels at right and at left were saluted by the swift turn of the head towards each shoulder ; and the group broke up, and resuming slipper, shoe, or elastic-sided boot went their several ways. Thus and not otherwise has that afternoon " hour " been performed for thirteen centuries ; thus, without a hairsbreadth of deviation, shall it be performed while Islam itself shall last.

Or the solitary worshipper. . . . Walking one day on the beach twelve miles east of Alexandria over the very site of Canopus of old, one who had strayed there saw a poor fisherman casting a line into the sea, and, after a lucky cast, hauling out a large fish. When next he looked, the man was prostrating himself towards Mecca !<sup>1</sup> The beach was utterly deserted. There, on the site of the riot luxury, the orgies of that dead Græco-Roman world, where the sand was choking the mosaic floors of their villas, and the sea flooding their rock-hewn shrines and tombs, cut for them out of the living rock, that poor fisherman in his one ragged blue garment was prostrating himself before Allah—the one solitary figure on that deserted coast, with its desolate beach, along which no longer

<sup>1</sup> This is, indeed, a custom with the fisher-folk—after a catch, a prayer.

echoed any voices save those of the singing of the north wind and the breaking of the long Mediterranean surf along the lonely shore.

And other like solitary worshippers may be seen in the many-mansioned House of Islam, camel-driver in the desert, fellah in the boundless arable lands of the delta, boatman on sailing, porter on a bench in railway-station, portier in his lodge at the foot of the common-stair, wayfarer by the way-side. . . . No one takes any notice of the sight, or calls attention to it. Neither in passer-by nor in worshipper is there any embarrassment or surprise.

The exact and complicated formulæ of movements and of words have to be taught to little Moslem lads with much care. It is late in the evening in a back street in a provincial town—the day's work is over, but one of the oriental shops is still unshuttered. The owner, a merchant in silken robe, is giving his little boy some practice in the art of prayer. Down he ducks his little body, collapses on to his knees, bobs down his head, and so up again without changing the position of his toes. . . . The little fellow is giggling, as small boys do when they are being taught some new feat.

These authorized devotions have never satisfied the more devout and mystical minds, and through all the world of Islam they have been supplemented by the *Zikr*, the ecstatic, not to say corybantic, corporate prayer of the Sûfi mystics. We have already seen how Sûfism arose and how it developed.

The "Way" fell under deep suspicion during the third and fourth centuries of Islam, but in the fifth won its right to exist alongside of the Law, provided that the ritual and prescriptions of the latter were duly practised. And no sooner had it been accorded this right by the Catholic Consensus of Islam than numbers of Societies or Orders made their appearance, each with its Grand Master, its hierarchy of Spiritual Directors, its grades of Initiators, its Way, and its *Zikr*. The Ways—all of them slightly different—were the Pilgrims' Progress-path to perfection; and the *Zikr*-rituals—also differing in their details—were the mode whereby the soul could capture ecstasy and with it a period of union with the divine All. These Orders have had a prodigious development all over the House of Islam, but particularly in North Africa, in Turkey, and in Persia. To belong to them it is not necessary to enter community life: the ordinary man may be affiliated to one or other of them, put himself under the spiritual direction of the local Head, and attend the local *Zikr*. And it is *thus* that millions upon millions of the commonalty of Islam, peasants, village shopkeepers, tradesmen of the town, rangers of the deserts, feed their emotional life and find their chief interest in religion.

Emotional: but how far spiritual? The faces of the enthusiasts as they wildly sway, bow, or whirl in the mystic prayer-dance, with their rhythmic raucous cries upon Allah, are not beautiful to

behold. The excitement is not so much spiritual as psychical, nay physical. The ecstasy attained is hypnotic, not union with the divine. The "Way" is not the Truth; therefore not the Life.

It is for the most part these Communities which have given to the Moslem world its greater and lesser Saints, whose intercession is so much valued in the House of Islam.

For that the Moslem mind *has* rested, and does rest, on its journey to God, and has often given its practical allegiance to the creature rather than the Creator, is plain from the immense development to which tradition and popular superstition have treated this intermediate spiritual kingdom. There is often found in even orthodox Islam a system of what is practically saint-worship. The spirits of great saints are vaguely supposed to linger about their tombs; their intercession is continually claimed with God, and their protective powers are ardently invoked. Notre Dame de — is not more devoutly worshipped, more dearly prized, or more truly assigned the virtual functions of God by the Roman Catholic, than are some of the great saints (Walîs) of the Mohammedan world. "Oh Lady Zainab, save us!" was the cry of the Egyptian soldiers in the deserts of Sudan, as the Mahdist hordes began their butchery. St Zainab; not Allah. The present writer saw the Khedive of Egypt make a special journey to pray at the tomb of the Sheikh of Abukîr, a noted protector of those going a sea-voyage. The accepted ex-

planation was that he was giving thanks for the Saint's protection on a recent occasion at sea. . . . At Cairo you may see men praying at the city gate where the departed spirit of a certain mighty Wali is supposed to linger; hanging teeth, bits of rag, or other souvenirs, to keep the owners thereof before his exalted mind. At that great city gate a man is bowing his head, resting his brow on the huge nails that stud the wood-work: he is, very clearly, pouring out his heart to the saint whose spirit lurks behind the door. He is an ignorant fellow, perhaps: but that other one is dressed in Azhar robes; he is a Sheikh, and he is fixing on to one of the iron studs a twist of cotton which may recall him to the mind of the saint. . . . And the same sort of thing goes on all over the Mohammedan world, sometimes reaching very degraded depths of pure superstition. As for relic-worship or relic-reverence, we heard of the Khalifa lately praying at the shrine where are preserved some bones of the Prophet. The men of Cairo mob the "carpet" that is sent annually to Mecca to cover the Kaaba, seeking to touch it for the blessing that it communicates. After it is finished with, fragments and scraps of it become relics, blessing the very house in which they are stored. . . . All these practices and engrafted acts of devotion are condemned by modern reformers of the Abdul Wabhâb or puritan type, and such men indignantly assert that they are a corruption of Islam. But orthodox example and Korânic precept can generally

be found for them—the whole system of *Walîs*, for example, is defended on the score of one text in the *Korân*. And after all, what can be effectually said, when the very earthly centre of the religion itself is a sacred Black Stone, which originally was a fetish pure and simple, and is to this day paid the same outward honour as it was before, in act, and rite, and posture, by all Moslems whatsoever, following the example and the express command of the Founder? If the act is not superstitious, it is slavish and meaningless. One or the other.

*Almsgiving*, as well as prayer, is a duty. How often, at some halt of the tramway, you see a beggar pass along by the car. He passes an *effendi* (gentleman)—there is a quick movement towards the waistcoat pocket, from whence a minute coin is transferred into the twisted palm of the maimed object beneath. You may look narrowly, but you shall see neither the light of interest nor sympathy in the eye of the donor, nor of gratitude or even pleasure in the eye of the recipient. Each is a necessary feature in the act, the real interest of which for the donor lies in the performance of a prescribed "righteousness" (*zakât*), and probably in the merit added thereby to his credit column in the future life.

The month of the *Fast* is a phenomenon that forces itself on the attention of every one in a Moslem land. The gun is fired at sunset, the little gamins raise a shout (not that *they* have been fasting all day!) and the world of Islam addresses itself

to the genial dissipations of a Ramadân night, the month of fast whose nights are the jolliest in the year. More is spent on meat and drink and clothes during the month of fast than any other, and it is a high time for merchants and tradespeople. Not so good a time is it for employers or teachers in the schools; for very sleepy and sulky-tempered is the fasting Mohammedan liable to be—and no wonder, for the terrible privation of a summer Ramadân, when during the burning day no drop of water must pass the lips, must be an awful trial. And there is always the upset given to the digestive system because of having to eat thrice betwixt sunset and dawn, with broken sleep in between.

### VIII

These duties make up the Whole Duty of Man in this sense, that the doer of these things shall live by them to all eternity. But we have already seen how every sphere of life and duty is determined by the laws laid down by the sacred system. To attempt to describe these is of course impossible. All we can do here is to summarize.

The Moslem, we may say, divides ethical practice into five parts: what must be done; what it is laudable to do; what is indifferent; what it is laudable not to do; and what must not be done. Statutes define the limits of his actions on each

side—*e.g.* he may have *four* wives at once, but not *five*. And statutes also prescribe the punishments which are merited by the various possible violations of the statutes. In a word, religion takes over the functions of the law-court or police-court, and identifies its functions with theirs. And from the opposite viewpoint jurisprudence, to the western lawyer, continually encroaches on the domain of morality. In practice every ruler has found himself compelled to add to this Shari'a or Canon-law, and to place alongside of it a body of administrative decrees, *i.e.* civil law. But the strict Moslem in his heart of hearts thinks that the Shari'a is sufficient or ought to be made so, and that these man-made institutions are *kufir*, or unbelief. In either case morality becomes identified with law : on earth the punishment obliterates the crime : and in heaven, good and evil deeds are carefully computed, like credit and debit columns, some sins being " great," and others " little," and assessment being made according to value : as the balance inclines, so is the fate of the soul. No true Moslem, however, even if his balance is to the bad, will be condemned to the eternal fire, but only to the purgatorial flame for a season ; his " faith," provided it be intellectually genuine, saves him ; while they who are without that " faith " are without the one work the absence of which cannot be balanced by all other good works soever. The only inefficacious faith recognized by Islam is that which is outwardly professed, but definitely denied in

the heart of the professor. This hypocrite is not reckoned a Moslem at all.

It will thus be seen that Mohammedanism in its whole tendency opposes statute to principle; isolated acts to attitude of soul. We need not elaborate the ethical results that flow naturally from this attitude of mind. The New Testament is the text-book for such a study. Yet we know how a strict enumeration of the obligations and conditions of almsgiving will not tend to produce liberality; how a clearly defined marriage-law will not produce purity; how a complicated code will not produce justice; how individual prohibitions, like that against wine for example, will not produce temperance; nor that against the taking of interest, cure the spirit of greed; and how all taken together will not produce the spirit needed. Life and spirit alone can beget life and spirit.

The mystics, to return to them once more and for the last time, have, from the peculiar standpoint which we have already dwelt upon, worked out a far more ethical ethic: which again and again reminds us of Christianity—and not unnaturally considering that it is to Christianity that its roots go back. With the saints of Islam love for these divine “excellencies” and love for Allah went hand in hand. For them therefore the dispensation of Spirit was in principle present. The supplement was an unconscious protest against the main tendency.

But it is the *tendency* we are studying, and the claim of two religions to be the Universal Religion for the human spirit, whether we compare their respective *origins*, or their *best developments*. Can a religion of Ordinances and an ordinance-giving Ruler be the last and latest word of God to man, the universal religion for the human race ?

Islam, then, is not merely a personal religion ; nor on the other hand is it merely a political system. But much more is it, like Brahmanism and some other faiths, a great social system, woven into a texture, compacted into a fabric, which covers the whole life of an individual from the cradle to the grave. According to that system his parents were married ; according to it he is born and reared ; circumcised ; educated (if he is educated) at village school, perhaps in village mosque ; studies at collegiate mosque in Cairo or Damascus or Lucknow ; grows up, marries, has children, divorces ; lives his domestic life, conducts his business ; settles his disputes at the Cadi's court ;<sup>1</sup> is punished if he offends ; thinks, acts, prays, fasts, reads, studies, philosophizes—for the vast literature of Islam is sufficient to monopolize his attention and limit his horizon all his days—makes his will, and disposes of his property ; dies, is buried, and is prayed for (it may be) in his little domed tomb-mosque, for ages and ages,<sup>2</sup> until . . .

<sup>1</sup> In so far as that court has not been encroached on by civil "unauthorized" ones.

<sup>2</sup> If he leaves a sufficient sum, the interest of which may be expended on this purpose.

Until what? To the natural understanding it seems utterly impossible that that *until* shall ever have an ending "until He come." But the eye of faith has also its vision, and the prophecy on the Church-Mosque of Damascus still stands.

Our survey is finished: it cannot however be hoped that any such survey shall commend itself to all as completely just, or as giving a complete and a fair impression of the system itself. We therefore close with one observation that will hardly fail to command assent, even of the Moslem reader who may chance to read these pages: Islam and Christianity are incompatible; they are different in ethos, in aim, in scope, in sympathy. Islam is the later born. If then it is not, as it claims, a definite advance on Christianity, or rather a correction of the latter's corruption, then it is as definitely retrograde. If, in its very constitution, it is unfitted to be the universal religion, because only a religion in which Spirit is supreme and fundamental, and rite definitely subordinate to Spirit, can be universal, *then* the religion of Christ is the universal religion. **BUT** if so, then that religion, as preached to the Mohammedan, must indeed be a religion of Spirit, of the Spirit of Jesus. We have nothing else to give him. Most futile, most disappointing, and most foolish of all quests would be that which were only to seek to substitute for one ritual another, for one system another system, for devotion to one series of ordinances another series. Christianity has always cut its

most pitiful figure when seen trying to meet Islam with Islam's weapons, or competing with it on its own ground. Nothing but the Spirit can bind and free Islam. Let the Church that does not believe in the Holy Ghost save herself the trouble of attempting the conversion of Islam. The Spirit of the Father in Jesus Christ—we have nothing else to give Islam: no, NOTHING! We owe to that great host that follows the great Mohammed the realization, final and definitive, that *the Spirit of Jesus is the only asset of the Church.*

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## CHAPTER V

### HOW WORKS IT ?

HAVING seen what this Islam *is*, it is natural to ask : What does it *do* ? How does it *work* in the lands to which, as we have seen, it has succeeded in spreading ?

Now this is a subject which, in the nature of it, is by no means an easy one. Why it is not easy may best be realized by imagining a counter-question : How does the *Christian* religion work in the countries to which Christianity has spread ? Immediately difficulties would arise as to whether this or that form of Christianity was really Christian at all, and if it was not, or if it was seriously divergent from the religion of Christ's Spirit, whether its results could fairly be taken as typical. Or again, there would be controversies as to whether certain effects observed in Christian countries were attributable to religion or to other causes, or yet again to Christianity *indirectly*, rather than directly.

In the face of such difficulties the lover of exact truth might almost decline to undertake the task, so difficult is it to disentangle social causes and effects, so easy is it to make disingenuous generalizations, so easy to prove to one who is already con-

vinced what he *wants* to be proved, so difficult to demonstrate the same thing to one who is indifferent or hostile. It is common in the East to come across attacks on Christianity, in which all the defects and failures of the civilization of Christendom are attributed to the Christian religion, and all its successes to secular causes. Equally inevitably, the backwardness of Islamic countries is attributed to secular causes, and all the good to be found in the world of Islam, past or present, to the religion itself.

On the whole, however, it is more feasible to learn the effect of Islam than of most other religions : Islam is not merely a religion, but is also—and this is one of its own proudest boasts—a great social system. As we have seen, the religious, political, and social elements are literally one and inseparable. In countries, therefore, where Islam is supreme, it is fairly just to attribute observed results, on the whole, to Islam itself as cause. In other words, in the world of Islam religion does work directly.

Now as much in this chapter must perforce be critical, let us begin by gladly acknowledging that a religion which, as we have seen, has retained so much that is true in its theology, can and does bring forth ethical fruits that are good. A steady world-view ; patience and resignation ; respect for parents and the aged ; love of children ; benevolence to the poor and infirm and insane ; kindness to domestic slaves and to beasts ; fidelity to a rule of duty : these and other virtues when found

may fairly be credited to Islam; and for their absence, if they are not found, Islam could not fairly be blamed. *Whatever* things are of good report, and if there be *any* praise, we are to think of these things.

This gladly premised, it remains to ask—Is Islam capable of scaling the heights and sounding the depths of human goodness? In its personal morality as in its civilization is not its good the fatal enemy of both better and best? Is it not directly responsible for some great evils among men, some great obstacles that prevent them from attaining or even seeing their highest good and their deepest happiness? And therefore, can civilization, can humanity afford to give the mandate to ISLAM?

In passing to our detailed survey, which is to give us some material for answering these questions, we shall first glance at the chief Mohammedan countries; and, secondly, discuss more generally Mohammedan personal and social morality.

## I

If Islam were to be judged by the moral and social state of Arabia, the country of its birth, the land where it has had sole, exclusive, and all-inclusive sway, it would indeed stand condemned. Not even the Moslem can take any pride in the state of the Arabian Peninsula, and the Hejâz, with the Holy Cities of Mecca and El Medîna in par-

ticular. Unenlightened, backward, semi-barbarous, infested with bandits, the land as a whole presents the picture of a country lamentably low in the social scale. And if it be said that Arabia is isolated and has not had the advantage of being in the main current of world-civilization, the reply must be, "By whom, and wherefore was it so isolated?" Has it not been most carefully and deliberately isolated by the express decree of Mohammed himself, faithfully and enthusiastically obeyed by his followers? So that to this day a Christian is in danger of his life if he travels in the country, and will certainly forfeit it if he is found in Mecca or Medina.

Arabia (until the eyes of Europe upon her began to compel her to be careful!) was still a centre of the slave trade in very recent times. The attitude of Islam to slavery is a very good example of how that religion, in prescribing humanitarian regulations for the conduct of a bad business, necessarily recognizes the custom, and recognizing, permits it, and permitting virtually commands it, at least in the sense of making its absolute prohibition illegal and impious. Slavery may and has been mitigated in its working by the prescriptions of the Korân: but it never can be finally repudiated by Mohammedans, for the sacred law allows it, and so sanctions it for ever.

The theory of the Jihâd, too, gives an all too easy sanction to slave-raiding to those in search of it. There is no doubt that the scoundrels who

raid the tribes in the interior of Africa justify themselves on Mohammedan principles. "Are not these tribes idolaters?" They are. "Does not the Korân command incessant war against all idolaters?" It does. "And did it make in their favour any of the merciful reservations that were made in favour of Christians and Jews?" It did not. "And are not our raids war?" They are. "And did not the Prophet and the Companions now slay, now enslave the heathen men acquired by their right hand, and make slave-concubines of the women?" They did. "And may we not imitate them?" It is a privilege, nay a merit.

Wherever there is a demand there is a supply. Left to itself the religious world of Islam would have demanded *and supplied* slaves till the crack of doom.

And so the last link in the above chain of logic is the slave-markets that exist all over the Moslem world — except where European influence makes them impossible. Read what the unimpeachable Doughty says of Jiddah, the port of Mecca.

Jiddah is the staple town of African slavery for the Turkish Empire; Jiddah, where are Frankish consuls. But you shall find these worthies in the pallid solitude of their palaces, affecting the simplicity of new-born babes; they will tell you they were not aware of it! . . . But I say again in your ingenuous ears, Jiddah is the staple town of the Turkish slavery, or all the Moslems are liars. . . . I told them we had a treaty with the Sultan to suppress slavery. "Dog," cries the fellow, "thou liar! — are

there not thousands of slaves at Jiddah that every day are bought and sold ? ”<sup>1</sup>

It is the one grudge of the pious Mohammedan chiefs and mullahs against the Nigerian Government that it has stopped their trade in African slaves.

Every year the pilgrimage<sup>2</sup> flows through Arabia converging on the favoured city of Mecca. It is one of the strongest bonds of union among Moslems, and has great influence in spreading missionary zeal. Thousands of zealous Moslems, from all over the House of Islam, throng to this holy spot, the magnetic centre of the Mohammedan world. The pilgrim is, however, lucky if he only loses his money, in a town where through filth and disease he may lose his life, or through the immorality that is shamelessly and openly practised he may lose his soul. Many a Moslem has left the holy city sick at heart !

Read the following account of the Moslem Hadji Khan, of the slave market at Mecca in 1902—an open slave market near the House of God itself :—

Go there and see for yourself the condition of the human chattels you purchase. You will find them, thanks to the vigilance of British cruisers, less numerous and consequently more expensive than they were in former years ; but there they are, flung pell-mell in the open square. . . . The dealer standing by, cried out : “ Come and buy ; the first-fruits of the season, delicate, fresh, and green ; come and buy, strong and useful, faithful and

<sup>1</sup> *Arabia Deserta*, vol. ii., last chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Zwemer's *Islam*, pp. 109-113.

<sup>3</sup> Hadji Khan, *With the Pilgrims to Mecca*.

honest. Come and buy." The day of sacrifice was past, and the richer pilgrims in their brightest robes gathered around. One among them singled out the girl. They entered a booth together. The mother was left behind. One word she uttered, or was it a moan of inarticulate grief? Soon after the girl came back. And the dealer, when the bargain was over, said to the purchaser: "I sell you this property of mine, the female slave Narcissus, for the sum of forty pounds." Thus the bargain was clinched. . . . Men slaves could be bought for sums varying from fifteen pounds to forty pounds. The children in arms were sold with their mothers, an act of mercy; but those that could feed themselves had to take their chance. . . .

Such was the holy city but yesterday.

So bad had the condition of Arabia, and Mecca in particular, become in the eighteenth century, that a strong puritan revival took place under the leadership of Mohammed Abdul Wahhâb, called the Wahhâbi movement. It strove to introduce education, reform morals, and cut away superstitions that had been added to the faith. And for some time real progress was made. But very soon everything slipped back.

## II

That secular causes profoundly affect the moral and social life of every nation, whether its established religion be Christianity or Islam, we must, of course, amply recognize. We should therefore expect to find a higher and more developed life in countries like Egypt and Turkey, which are more

on the world's highway, and can give and take more generously in the free exchange of ideas and material improvements.

Syria, Irâk, and Egypt have been Mohammedan countries from the first. Syria under the Omayyads, Egypt under the Fâtimides and the early Mamlûkes, Irâk under the Abbassides, the Omayyad kingdom of Cordova in the West, were brilliantly distinguished as centres of light and learning. Science and letters flourished, and a high degree of receptivity was displayed in the readiness to profit by non-Islamic learning, such as that of the Greeks. The Saracens, moreover, were deemed polite, chivalrous, just: humanitarian ideas can assuredly be traced in the establishment of free schools and free hospitals, and even lunatic asylums, the buildings of which stand in Cairo, for example, to this day. For some centuries Islam was the chief *intellectual* light-bearer—one had almost said the only one—for Europe and Western Asia. Further, as might be expected in lands where Islam has always been on the top, the Mohammedans of Turkey and the Levant in general are characterized by manliness, self-respect, and dignity: qualities, however, which easily pass into arrogance, and into fierceness and cruelty when their dominance is threatened.

At the same time the present condition of these countries, the inner circle of Islam, round the core Arabia, gives ground for the conviction that Islam has not within itself the power of constant advance.

It can hardly be due to accident, or to mere secular mischance, that the light once held up by Islam should have been quenched in these lands, and that not only in political power and scientific attainment, but even in literature itself, Islam has for centuries been living on the memory of past glories.

We have noted in the first place the conspicuous and fatal failure of the Moslem political system to evolve in a constitutional direction, or to give the least training to its peoples in self-government. A blighting autocracy has been the invariable rule, with its accompaniment of parasites, favourites, sycophants; oppression, mal-administration, embezzlement, and baksheesh, from Sultan at the top to the meanest official at the bottom of the administrative ladder. And thus the whole Moslem East has sunk back to where it is to-day.

It is true everywhere that politics show human nature at its very weakest; Christianity itself has not been able to do more than partially purify political life by contributing to it lives which individually are possessed by the ideal of Christ. Yet belief does react on life. Is it therefore wonderful if the Moslem conception of Allah has tended to make Islamic rulers unable to connect authority with duty and to dissociate it from irresponsible power, leading to oppression? At a debate in Cairo, one young student boldly said that the autocratic ideals of the East were the result of its monarchic theology—intending to

defend both by saying so. He was taken to task by some Russian Moslems, who maintained that the earliest political ideal of Islam was constitutional. And this is a favourite thesis to-day. But where do other religionists figure in the "constitution?"

<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable that in the recent revival which seems to have touched the whole Orient, Turkey has been successful in claiming a constitution, while Persia and Egypt are agitating for that privilege. This state of things, however, has not come about by the growth of the idea of civil liberty, so much as in imitation of other countries. It remains to be seen how soon the reformers will realize the account that must sooner or later be settled up between real civil and religious liberty and Mohammedan sacred law or "Shari'a," which figured so ominously in the counter-revolution at Constantinople in April 1909, and which may thus figure again and yet again. It remains to be seen whether nationalism is really possible in Islam—that is to say, whether the *zimmi* (Christian or Jewish subject) can ever be really accorded equal rights with the Moslem in Moslem states; whether the habit of freedom can be taught; and whether the root of the whole social evil, the inferior position of women, can be touched, while a belief in the Korân remains. While the great drama is being worked

<sup>1</sup> The following paragraph, written in 1909, has been left untouched in 1919: the intervening decade supplies the best commentary on its contents.

out, it is premature and unfair to speak, yet a doubt may be expressed. At all events the world of Islam to-day feels it has not yet played its last card: it desires to vindicate itself by trying to assimilate the modern ideas which it perforce recognizes as true.<sup>1</sup>

But apart from the problematic future, we have the historical past: by the confession of the entire Moslem world itself, nothing could have been more deplorable from every point of view, moral, social, intellectual, political, and even religious, than the state of all Moslem lands before the reform movement from the West agitated them. This was freely admitted at a Moslem Conference held some years ago at Mecca. It has been again admitted by a Slavonic Moslem, Dr Gisprinski, who in 1908 was summoning a Pan-Islamic Conference to meet at Cairo, with the express object of turning the Pan-Islamic movement into entirely ethical channels, and using it to promote the moral, social, and spiritual regeneration of Islam. (It has not met yet.) Is this confessed failure, then, due to Islam, or is it not? All that can be said is that Islam had practically had an absolute monopoly of influence where that state of things had been brought about; and that the impulse towards change in no case sprang—apparently could not have sprung—from any purely Islamic source. These are, at least, two solid facts. The

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Professor Margoliouth's paper, *Pan-Anglican Congress Report*, 1908, D. 4 (g).

“movements” that spring from purely Islamic sources are typified by names like Abdul Wahhâb, the Mahdi, El Senûssi. . . . And these movements are movements—backwards.

Morocco on the extreme west is as strong a witness for Islam as Arabia in the east, for here also Islam has had the exclusive and all-inclusive right of influence. And the same may be said for Tripoli, in the Barbary States. Between these two states lie Tunis and Algiers, both of them governed by France.<sup>1</sup> It must be confessed that in none of these four countries does one gain the impression that Islam can save a nation, or raise up a modern civilization. The Mohammedanism of all four lands is of the straitest and most orthodox description. No attempt has been made to water down the Korân, the Traditions, or the Canon Law. These are followed with remarkable fidelity and literalness. And the result we see. Morocco remained in a state of permanent semi-anarchy, until a European power took over its government; too fanatical to allow the entry of light and education, too weak to evolve self-government, yet too strong in lawlessness to set up or maintain an effective autocracy. Ninety per cent of the people are illiterate; polygamy, divorce, slavery, concubinage, seclusion of women, and immorality are all described as “common” or “general.” Material progress there is “none.”

<sup>1</sup> Tunis bears to France the relation of Egypt to Britain; Algiers, that of India.

## III

Since Indian Mohammedanism came very largely from and through Afghanistan, a glance may be taken at that country before turning to India. Dr Pennell's book, *Among the Wild Tribes of the Afghan Frontier*,<sup>1</sup> describes in a wonderful way what Mohammedanism means in this country. The religious fervour of the Afghans is evident to all who are at all acquainted with them, whether in their mountain homes, or travelling in India. The mullahs have a great influence on the life of the people, though it has been truly said that there is no priesthood in Islam. There is no act of worship and no religious rite, which may not in the absence of a mullah be equally well performed by any pious layman; on the other hand the power of the mullahs sometimes appears greater than that of the throne itself. For one thing knowledge has been almost limited to the priestly class; for another, the Afghan is a Mohammedan to the backbone, so that the mullahs become the embodiment of all that is most national and sacred. They too are the ultimate dispensers of justice, and the only two legal appeals in Afghanistan are, one to the theological law as laid down by Mohammed and interpreted by the mullahs, the other to the autocracy of the throne, and even the absolute Amir would hesitate to give an order at variance

<sup>1</sup> See especially Chap. IX.

with that of the leading mullahs. Afghanistan then is a Mohammedan country. Does it, any more than Morocco or Arabia or Turkey, encourage the wish to see the future of the world entrusted to Islam ?

The conditions in India being more complex, the drawing of conclusions becomes more precarious. In recent times there has unquestionably been a great improvement in some parts of Indian Moslem society.

The fact, however, remains that the condition of Moslems in India, apart from these reforming movements, is described by competent observers in very much the same terms as in the countries we have already surveyed. At the last census 95 per cent<sup>1</sup> were still illiterate ; and nowhere in all India was more unenlightened and heartless opposition shown to the humane and merciful plague regulations than by Mohammedans, headed and directed by the mullahs. So that before we come to discuss Indian reform movements, it must be very distinctly understood that such movements affect only a very small *fraction of the Moslem community*.

On the other hand, just as we noted in our survey of Turkey and Far-Western Islam, so in India there is testimony that the religion seems to give there a force of character and *moral* that often makes its adherents worthy of admiration as men, and very strong when converted to Christ. There

<sup>1</sup> Of the women 99½ per cent.

is clearly that in Islam which makes for strength and for steadfastness.

So great was the opposition of the mullahs and their people to the educational system established by the British, that the whole community speedily fell decidedly behind that of the Hindus in knowledge, enlightenment, and consequently in influence. A natural reaction followed, initiated and headed by Sir Seyyid Ahmad. Born in 1817, this man had opportunities all his life of observing and studying western thought, life, and manners; and on his return from a visit to England at the age of fifty-three, he set himself to reform his fellow religionists in India. He energetically opposed fatalism, preached the doctrine of "God helps those who help themselves," enthusiastically promoted education, founded a liberal college at Aligarh, which was to be English except in religion, and in 1886 set on foot an annual Educational Conference for the Moslems of India. "Leave us our God. In all else make us English," were the words of a well-known Moslem author to a Principal of Aligarh College. Great success has attended these vigorous measures; the Moslems are making up the ground lost in the race with the Hindus, and the results produced by the college appear to be excellent. Moreover, the very fact that Mohammedans are in a minority in India has made them favourable to the English, and has thus tended to blunt and soften the usual qualities of intolerance, pride, and fanaticism, and to en-



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courage the more humane characteristics of loyalty and goodwill. Thus has been produced an altogether more sympathetic quality of character than we meet with anywhere else in the House of Islam.

Before leaving the East, let us glance at the effect of Islam on the East Indian Islands, where its spread has been so unmilitary and legitimate. Mohammedanism has, in the case of these islanders, brought them out of isolation. Trade and the pilgrimage have brought them into some sort of connection with the outside world; Islam has opened to them careers in other lands; it has enabled them to emigrate with some success. On the whole, however, the religion has appeared to make comparatively little difference one way or the other. It has, it is true, stopped cannibalism in Sumatra; but it has distinctly lowered the position of women by its sex regulations. The returned Meccan pilgrims are particularly given to indulge in divorces. Sooner or later these defects must more than neutralize any improvements introduced, and we may be indeed thankful that side by side with this downward tendency there is the upward tendency of a strong and increasing Christian missionary Church.

The material for studying the effect of Islam upon China can hardly be said to exist. But as far as can be made out the results are very neutral: that is to say, the Chinese Moslems owe much more to their Confucian Chinese environment

than to their somewhat vague uninformed Mohammedanism. They fall in with the custom of the country much more than in other lands, probably because of the terrible massacres of Mohammedans which have taken place from time to time, when any attempt has been made by the Moslems to stand out against Chinese ways.

#### IV

We have already seen what enormous tracts of country, what millions of people, how many races, nations, and tribes are embraced under negro Islam. Nevertheless a striking unity marks the accounts of those who, from Sierra Leone to Zanzibar, describe to us the effect of Islam on the negro. Everywhere one finds that a rise is spoken of up to a certain level; a dead stop at that level—a low one after all; a hardening; and then the inner deterioration that comes to those who, contented with a low ideal, become the enemies of a higher one. Moreover, unimpeachable evidence shows that the popular Islam which alone obtains in East and West Africa secures the preservation of many of the worse elements of the old heathenism. Thus the itinerant Moslem mullah in West Africa, so far from being a preacher or teacher, confines himself almost entirely to selling written charms which, sewn up in little leather bags, are eagerly bought by the pagans as being more portable and

convenient than their own fetishes. In this way the old superstitions, with the powerful sanction of the new religion, are more firmly bound about the necks of the people. The mediocre and stationary character of African Islam is thus explained.

In regard to the supposed contrast between Mohammedan and pagan tribes, the observation of chance travellers, mechanically reproduced by literary gentlemen who have not visited Africa, is often deceived and deceiving. The passage in Arnold's *Preaching of Islam*, for example, which draws a moving contrast between the degraded coastal ("heathen") natives, and the fine ("Mohammedan") natives of the hinterland, is entirely beside the mark. For the difference is not between heathens and Mohammedans, but between the degraded types of the swamp (and gin) belt, and the fine types (*heathen as well as Mohammedan*) of the hinterland. These heathen *also* are clean, self-respecting and virile.

Among the finer types of heathen it is more than doubtful whether Islam makes any valuable moral contribution. Politically no doubt the Moslem communities are more advanced, with at least some form for the administration of justice other than the whim of king or chief. But morally the heathens are admitted to be far cleaner and better than the Mohammedans—at least in Northern Nigeria, where Mohammedan and pagan communities exist side by side. It is difficult to see where "the moral uplift" of Islam comes in when—as in certain

Fulani songs—the three deadly sins which are branded as being specially hateful to God and assured of hell-fire are the drinking of beer, the plaiting of artificial hair by women with their own, and the bequeathing of property to sisters' sons! Take polygamy again: it exists to a small extent among the pagans, but divorce is very rare, and adultery strongly repressed. Among the Mohammedans, on the contrary, polygamy, divorce, and licentiousness go hand in hand; and venereal diseases are so rampant that the population is stationary if not receding.<sup>1</sup> The opening up of the whole country to the Moslem trader, due to the *Pax Britannica*, is a menace to the health of the pagan communities, as wherever the trader goes he carries syphilis with him.<sup>2</sup>

Is it for the sake of this sort of thing that we are asked by writers like Dr Blyden, Canon Isaac Taylor, and Mr T. W. Arnold to praise Islam as the religion

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Annual Report for 1912 of Sanitary Officer for Northern Nigeria, p. 59. "Venereal diseases, *pagan areas excepted*, are deplorably common everywhere." [Italics interpolated.]

<sup>2</sup> "The better class natives do not need to be told that those affections (venereal diseases) follow the track of the trader: they have long known it; and many of them agree that on this account it is wise to make markets and caravansaries extramural.

"Anyone can see the wisdom of forbidding a sufferer from small-pox to enter a town; and, at the worst, small-pox only kills or maims! But the trader, who as often as not carries with him venereal disease like a concealed weapon, more often than not is permitted to enter a strange town without opposition, and to spread living death, personal and hereditary among sinful and innocent."—*Ibid.* for year 1913.

which is suited to African nature? Is it for *this* that Christian missions are to be discouraged? Shall we consign negro Africa to an unprogressive and even retrograde system, and discourage the effort to give it that which will never let it rest from aiming higher, namely, the religion of the Son of Man? Such a policy is only storing up greater dangers, both moral and political, a little way ahead. Is not the manifest call rather to push ahead with a doubled energy in order to save these fine tribes *from*, not *for*, Islam?

Of course, were negroes utterly incapable of rising to anything higher than the mediocre-to-low ideal of African Islam, it might be argued that the danger lies in troubling them with what is too elevated and idealistic for them. But it has been proved time and again that this is not the case. We remember Tuskegee and Hampton. . . . Can a Mohammedan Tuskegee or Hampton be so much as conceived?

## V

How has Islam worked out morally and socially? What we have already said, of course, bears on this subject in ways that are obvious—for corrupt political and social conditions can only produce a low general morality.

The thing which above all others affects our judgment of the religion of Islam is the hard fact regarding the position of women.

The matter of the family is fundamental, and with this is bound up the question of the position accorded to women. And here, the responsibility of Islam for the state of woman, and the degradation of family life, is a matter about which there can be no doubt, for it goes directly back to the Korânic laws of marriage, divorce, polygamy, and concubinage, and the consequent view of womanhood encouraged, nay necessitated, thereby; a view decidedly reinforced by the Traditions of the Prophet taken in their whole sweep. It is perfectly true, as apologists for Islam in Cairo and elsewhere are never tired of pointing out, that in one or two respects—*e.g.* the matter of giving women power over their own property—the precept of the Korân gave them a status which the legislation of the West has only by very slow degrees accorded them. But of what use is it for a woman to possess her property if she cannot possess her soul, if she *herself* is a possession? In a recent Egyptian law-suit about a female convert to Christianity, it was ruled by a Moslem court—and there was no court in Egypt competent to dispute the decision—that no unmarried woman has the right to choose where she will live until she reaches extreme old age. On these grounds the woman was handed back to her guardian, a brother. Her religious opinions and every other consideration were totally disregarded in the proceedings and the judgment, and she was taken back to a dark and uncertain fate in her home in Syria.

She was a chattel in the hand of her brother, and had she been married she would have been the same in the hand of her husband. And so stands the law, part of the Mohammedan law, in the British Protectorate of Egypt until this day. How much more elsewhere ! As the following quotation from al Ghazzâli, the greatest of all Mohammedan doctors, makes finally clear :—" Marriage is a kind of slavery, for the wife becomes the slave of her husband, and it is her duty absolutely to obey him in everything he requires of her except in what is contrary to the laws of Islam." <sup>1</sup> In other words she is considered a minor for practically her whole term of life.

Similarly, woman is secluded, especially in the upper classes. Up to the time of Mohammed the Arabian woman enjoyed a great deal of social freedom ; her relationship with the other sex was healthier and franker than it has ever been since. The occasion of the Korânic fatal texts, which have fixed the fates of so many millions of women ever since, was nothing more than the annoyance of the Prophet when his domestic privacy had been slightly disturbed ; <sup>2</sup> just as the occasion for the ordinance which makes legal evidence on a charge of adultery practically unprocurable was another event in his purely personal and domestic history. As for woman herself, she more than acquiesces

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Zwemer, *Islam*, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> Sura 33 : Sale's note. See also Sura 24. These passages are quoted in Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, pp 282, 3.

in the position assigned to her. The strictness of her imprisonment indeed is taken by her as the measure of her husband's love and care. She becomes void of interests and ambitions. It is not, it cannot be, from *her* side that her emancipation will come.

In Egypt and in certain other lands, there have been recent signs of a movement directed towards this emancipation. For example, the late Kâsim Bey Amîn strove with might and main for the modernization of Islamic sentiment with regard to women. His attempt was all against the stream, and ended in failure. A writer of the free, younger generation of journalists, in an imaginary dialogue between the shades of Kâsim Amîn and another dead reformer, the late Sheikh Mohammed Abdu, could only represent the one as sadly giving, the other as sadly accepting blame for having striven unwisely and prematurely. One of the causes of the counter-revolution in Constantinople (April 1909) was the suspicion that the traditional treatment of women in these respects was being tampered with by the reformers.

But the *causes* that dictated these ordinances about women go down far deeper than the mere occasions in the life of the Prophet already alluded to.<sup>1</sup> For the whole tendency of polygamy, slave concubinage, and unlimited divorce is to create an unhealthy and suspicious atmosphere, which

<sup>1</sup> See Sura 24, the Ayesha incident, and Sale's notes; and Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, pp. 283, 285, and Notes.

necessitates the seclusion of the supposed creators of it. In Cairo, as all over the Moslem world, one walks under the tall, featureless walls that enclose the houses of the Moslem gentry, the windows of which houses all look *inwards* into the court—not one outwards. . . . The male visitor to such a house never passes beyond the outer court, or at most the ground-floor salon. . . . The most distant allusion to the mysterious inhabitants of the upper region would be considered intolerable. If a schoolmaster has to allude to the mother of a boy in talking to him, he will say “the Family,” or “the Household,” not “your mother.” Why this permanently strained and unhealthy feeling? Here is the answer: that the marriage-bond is at the discretion of the husband to hold or break, and that any man can, therefore, look upon any married woman (relatives excepted) as within his reach by marriage; and that every married woman can feel (like Zainab, whom Ali divorced that she might wed Mohammed), that she may become the lawful wife of any other man who can persuade her husband to pronounce a divorce.<sup>1</sup>

These and other regulations then, on this most vital of all subjects, are the definite ordinance of the Korân. Apart from the particular evils, which will be abundantly illustrated in what follows, there is this general, all-pervading one: those regulations are a continually intruded emphasis of that aspect of the relation of the sexes which

<sup>1</sup> Muir, *loc. cit.*

of all others needs no emphasizing. Man forces on himself—and on her—just the view of woman least calculated to raise her in his eyes, and she, finding herself so regarded, acquiesces in his judgment. The words and life of Mohammed himself have tended to fix this opinion of womanhood: "Woman was made from a crooked rib," he said, "and if you try to bend it straight, it will break." And yet the modernists unctuously profess that this attitude is due to the reverent worship of woman, whereby she becomes "almost sacred" in the eyes of man!

With regard to slave-concubinage, the times are not favourable to its extensive practice in some parts of the House of Islam. In Turkey and elsewhere it is still common enough.

Bishop Steere<sup>1</sup> writes in 1880 concerning a part of Mohammedan Africa which was then left to itself, but his words still apply, where the same conditions obtain:

I have often heard before that Mohammedanism had a more practical influence than Christianity, because there were no immoral women in the streets as in London. . . . The streets are empty of these women because the houses are full of them, and there is no scandal because there is no shame. . . . A man may go to the houses where women are kept for sale . . . buy as many as he likes, and need not keep one of them an hour longer than he pleases. . . . These women have no choice or hope of escape. They have been taken as young girls, not unfrequently taken by force out of a Christian home, and whipped and starved

<sup>1</sup> R. M. Heanley, *A Memoir of Edward Steere*, pp. 316-8.

into learning their lesson. . . . If a woman . . . bear to one of her masters a son whom he will acknowledge, she may hope to be pensioned off for life. On the other hand she may at any time be maimed for life, or tortured to death, and no one will take any notice, or so much as ask why. . . . This is the kind of slavery which English officials are recommended not to interfere with. . . . The result of the Mohammedan system seems to me to be a hopeless depravation of the standard of *men's* thoughts.

Polygamy and divorce go together, for unlimited right of divorce establishes a virtually unlimited polygamy—the only limitation being that a man may not have more than four wives *at once*. Very real and very terrible are the woes that follow necessarily from the Koranic ordinances in this respect, woes that therefore have the sanction of sacred law, for all time. Divided families, favouritism, heart-burnings, jealousies, separation from children, despair, cruel injustices, ruination to the character of the man, the life of the woman—such are the bitter fruits of the tree planted by Mohammed in the name of Allah. A man may and does divorce his wife without cause, save his own disappointment or whim, immediately after marriage—or even worse, after many years of married life. Every divorce means a blow to the woman's self-respect, a diminution of her market-value, a cruel separation in many cases from her children. . . . In a tram-car in Cairo the other day, an Egyptian woman chatted with an English fellow-passenger. She was going down quite as a matter of course to take her divorced

daughter from her ex-husband's house back to her own! Oh sordid ending! and very simply she remarked, "Our Moslem customs are 'like pitch'" (*i.e.* as bad as they can be). The testimony was all the more effective because so artless. She said "*customs*," but she meant—and knew not she meant—religious law, never, never to be abrogated, while Islam itself and the Korân stand.

Comparatively few indeed are the marriages even in civilized Egypt that do not end in divorce! "There are many men in Egypt," says Lane, "who in the course of ten years have married as many as twenty, thirty, or even more wives." And to this day it is terribly common. One of the ways in which this system works is the duplicity it often encourages in the wife of the moment, stinting and cheating her husband in the household expenses in every possible way, against the day when she shall have to shift for herself. In this process her family ably second her. But why multiply details as to how such a system works out? <sup>1</sup>

The existence of a clear command and direction is a potent thing with a Mohammedan. The Moslem merchant is not much troubled, one imagines, by questions of "trade and morality," but will often renounce the interest paid on his deposit at the bank, in obedience to the Korânic command denouncing usury, a term which he

<sup>1</sup> It will be enough to read Lane's account, *Modern Egyptians*, Chap. vi.

takes to cover all interest. On the other hand legitimate economic development is thereby greatly hindered. In the same way, the humane directions of the Korân and the Traditions make many Moslems kind to animals; the flat prohibition of all liquor has made greatly for sobriety; and the condemnation of games of chance has checked gambling. Less favourable features are the diffused sensuality that seems literally to permeate society; the utter want of mutual trust and real co-operation; the all-prevailing religiosity backed by the slenderest ethical achievement. It is incredible, were it not a fact, how the typical erotic literature of Islam—sensual to the verge of pornography—begins as a matter of course with the time-honoured invocation of Allah and prayers “upon” the Apostle of Allah: an Ovid's *Ars Amoris* with a pious preface and conclusion! Not that way, God knows, lies the solution of the sex problem. Is it wonderful, then, that Lane and many others have remarked how religiosity and immorality can co-exist, often without exciting the slightest remark or the least sense of incongruity? He cites a poem, which he once read, in which an immoral intrigue is rapturously described (with the definite intent of its stimulating an enraptured audience), and the narration is followed, without change of voice or tone, by a perfectly general request for the forgiveness of Allah and the mediation of the Prophet. The Sheikh to whom he showed it, worthy man, could see nothing in the

least wrong . . . was not the order of things most logical? transgressions committed first, pardon requested second? Contrast that poem which Lane heard with the fifty-first psalm . . . !

Finally, we are bound to ask ourselves what there is to be hoped for from *reform movements within Islam*.

In studying Islam in India we found a real, though cautiously expressed, revolt against this whole system, based on a revolt against its underlying conceptions. It there takes the form of reading into original Islam an opposite intention, an opposite "spirit." According to these reformers, the "spirit of Islam" and of the Korân text was to accord to woman a sort of chivalrous, awed devotion, by surrounding her with an element of mystery (!) : to *discourage* polygamy, by limiting it : and so forth. The method is not in itself a bad one—the Lord Jesus Christ Himself<sup>1</sup> employed it in explaining the Mosaic law. But, unfortunately, the one thing Mohammed himself made for ever impossible was the advent of any Greater One to construe and perfect his law. For himself he claimed to be the final Prophet—for his law he claimed absolute finality. That claim has been endorsed by his followers. Can it ever be explained away?

Abdul Wahhâb, El Mahdi, and El Senûssi would not have the Moslem customs changed as regards women. If it is objected that they were only

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. xix. 8.

barbarians, what shall we say of the enlightened Sheikh Mohammed Abdu, the Egyptian reformer, the praised of Lord Cromer? Probably the secret personal convictions of this man were identical with those of Indian reformers who desire to raise the status of women; but in cutting at tradition and traditionalism, he ended by merely suggesting to his followers a more servile adherence to the Korân. And thus it comes about that one of these followers enthusiastically told the writer recently that he favoured a return to the Korânic precept of cutting off a hand for theft; while another—in a book which was intended to be a sort of manifesto of Reformed Islam—defends the Moslem law of polygamy, because a man's heart has room for more than one wife just as it has for more than one sister; and that of divorce, because the fear of divorce ever hanging over the wife will make her diligent to please her husband, and so love will be begotten and maintained! while, moreover, the natural instincts of men may require more than one woman! The important point to remember is that this sort of thinking emanates from two of the younger school, trained with the highest modern education that the Egypt of to-day can give, followers of the most celebrated "liberal" that Egypt has yet produced. It simply means that in the last resort, the whole system, *having been sanctioned in the Korân, has invariably to be defended by arguments as the best possible one.*

We have already seen that Islamic reform movements reduce themselves to two strongly contrasted types, of which one has its eye always on the *past*—and has been endemic in Islam from the first; the other has its eye always on the *West*—and would probably never have existed except in response to the influence of a non-Islamic civilization. Thus the difference between the two is that between the puritan and the modernist. Both appeal from the accretions of later ages back to the Korân: but the puritans add “*and the Practice of the Prophet*” (as embodied in the Traditions), while the modernists, aware that these are untrustworthy, try to test everything by the Korân alone. Then again the puritan interprets his authorities with the crassest of literalism. For him all world-progress is nought: his ideal is the first twenty years of Islam, and to this ideal, if he were allowed, he would bend the world, though it should break in his hands. Obviously nothing is to be hoped from *him*. The modernist, with his eye on Christianity and the West—for not even the Mohammedan has been quite able to escape from the Jesus of the Gospels—will do his best to rationalize the Korân when his sensitiveness feels a collision between its Arabian ethics and the universal ethic of Jesus. Objectionable elements in the Korân, such as the veil, polygamy, divorce, the Jihâd, the treatment of unbelievers after defeat, etc. can be explained away—“they were occasional, not eternal commands; look deeper into them

and you shall see that in reality the *freedom* of women, *monogamy*, and the *permanence* of marriage were intended." . . . We criticized this method on page 166, and on the next page showed that in Egypt at least the modernists when driven into a corner are always bound to defend the prescriptions of the Book as ideally best. Has this school a future? Administrators like Lord Cromer and practical Islamologists like Snouck Hurgronje have seen in it the one hope for Islam to-day and in the days to come. Each student must consider the question for himself: and let him carefully note, in addition, that it is *this* school which alone shows "missionary" enthusiasm for Islam in Europe; which has already had "missionary" successes in England and France; and which expects that the collapse of Mohammedan temporal power in the war will augment, not diminish these successes. For the rest one thing is certain: this school never has had and never will have the smallest success with Mohammedans save when and where Christian culture has begun to work.

And with this we close our survey. It has been an honest attempt to set forth the present state of the House of Islam, and as far as possible to trace characteristic effects to inherent causes. There has been much that was brilliant in the Mohammedan civilization of the past, much that we can admire in that of to-day. And yet, in all honesty, can we, when we scrutinize its total record, when we discern its tendencies, checking our conclusions

by observed results, say that humanity's future lies with Islam, even in Mohammedan lands?

We cannot say this. At the end of the avenue, whether theologically, ethically, or socially, there is a blank wall.

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## CHAPTER VI

### HOW SAVE IT ?

#### (I) *The Past*

THRICE have we already traversed the vast Moham-  
medan world, the House of Islam. Each time  
it has been with a somewhat different intent, and  
from a somewhat different starting-point. Has its  
bewildering extent and diversity begun to shape  
itself to our mind as a *whole* ? And if so, have we  
then begun to realize that this whole constitutes  
a distinguishable but tremendous problem ?

Three more voyages still remain for us to make  
before our task is done, corresponding to the three  
we have already completed. For hitherto we have  
been moving wholly under the Crescent. But from  
now "the Cross is in the Field." The gigantic  
problem has shaped itself, and the question before  
us is, "How is that Cross to be given the victory ?  
How is He to be lifted up and draw all these unto  
Him ? Islam—How save it ?" These first five  
chapters have not done their work unless they  
leave us exclaiming with salutary despair, "IM-  
POSSIBLE !" The next three will be failures unless  
we close them calmly saying, "POSSIBLE."

And the three voyages of discovery of the past

compared with the three missionary journeys that await us, have a symmetry which is significant. In Chapter III. we reviewed the deeds of Islam in the past—how it came to its present position in these great lands; in this chapter we shall review the deeds of Christ's Church in the *past*, and how it came to its present position in these same lands. In Chapter V. we surveyed the *present*—how Islam works to-day in the House of Islam; in Chapter VII. we shall also study the *present*—how the Church of Christ is working to-day in that House. And then the last chapter shall give its reply to the first—the first vision of the extent of the need shall be met by a last vision of the need answered, as we look forward to the time when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever."

## I

How does Christianity compare with Islam? Instead of the steady, ordered, rapid, and resistless march of the latter, we have a history of effort that was first feeble to the point of non-existence, then mistaken, individual, and fitful; often, indeed, and for long, utterly eclipsed; and that only in recent times has shown signs of stability, and unity, and purpose. We have seen the weak and degenerate state of the Church of both East and

West at the time of the rising of the Crescent. The extraordinary successes of the "Saracens" seemed utterly to paralyse the missionary spirit of the Church. At that time there *was* missionary spirit in the West, for did not the centuries from that of the Higua onwards see the evangelization of the whole of Northern Europe, a work that bears a roll of missionary names as great as the greatest—St Aidan of Lindisfarne (died 651), St Augustine, Boniface, the Apostle of Germany (715-755), Anskar, often known as the Apostle of the North (ninth century), and a host of less well-known men ?

Nevertheless it was not to the Saracens that these men went. For whatever reason, the fact remains that until Henry Martyn landed in India in 1806, the history of the effort of Christendom for the saving of Islam is represented by just one or two heroic but isolated names.

In the century after Mohammed, John Damascene,<sup>1</sup> who held high office under the Saracen Caliph of Damascus, at least studied Islam and attacked it in his writings. A section of a larger work by him is on "the superstition of the Ishmaelites," and there are also remaining two short dialogues or disputations between a Christian and a Saracen. Such disputations are going on still to-day.

John Damascene and Al Kindy,<sup>2</sup> though their

<sup>1</sup> Best known to the non-theologian by his popular hymn, "Those eternal bowers," translated from his Greek.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Apology of Al Kindy* written (c. 830) by the Christian

efforts were individual and unsupported, pointed the way to a method which even to-day needs many more to work it out—the patient study of Islam itself, its language, literature and thought, and the publication of works, apologetic and aggressive, calculated to win its followers.

The centuries passed. In the twelfth, Christendom made its greatest effort—the Crusades. The Crusaders came against Islam with the sword, but not with the sword of the Spirit; with the Cross on their shields, but not dominating their souls. Rivers of blood flowed, prodigies of valour were displayed, but what was effected? It may be that the Crusaders had their place in the providential scheme—occupying the attention of the Moslems while Europe was very slowly passing from weakness to strength, very slowly becoming conscious of herself. But from a religious point of view the result was yet further to embitter the relation between Christian and Moslem, and to obscure the true spiritual issue that the Moslem problem really presented and presents. Church and State were one, and the strong arm of Cæsar was wielding his sword on behalf of the Church, while she on her part but feebly used the sword of the Spirit.

Yet in those very days some few isolated in-

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friend of "a man of Hâshimite descent and of Abbaside lineage, nearly related to the Caliph." The Apologist is, of course, quite a different person from the Mohammedan philosopher of that name.

dividuals perceived that Islam could not be cured by any remedy so homœopathic as force. Petrus Venerabilis, the Benedictine Abbot of Clugny (d. 1157), studied Islam with sympathy and scholarship. He was the first to translate the Korân into any European language, and he pleaded for the translation of Scripture into Arabic. He wrote controversial books, and declared his regret that he could not contend in person against Islam. He urged that Christianity *must* for its own life "defend itself against Mohammedan attacks and win Moslems by our proof of the truth." Another word of his:—"Whether Mohammed's error is denounced as heresy, or as pagan, or heathen, we must oppose it by our pens, we must oppose it by our deeds." He condemns the Crusades as a failure, and in the very spirit of Raymund Lull said: "I come to win the Moslem not as people oft do with arms, but with words: not by force, but by reason: not in hatred, but in love." These are brave and great sayings.

St Francis of Assisi, too, through the Spirit of Christ that was in him, yearned after the Saracen who knew not his Lord. It sounds more like the romance of one of his own miracles than sober missionary reality to read how in 1219 he suddenly broke away from his marvellous work in Italy, and sailed to Egypt, and met there the Sultan of Egypt, El Kâmil—face to face. A contemporary notice of this spiritual exploit is given in a letter by a Crusader:—

“ Having come into our army he has not been afraid in his zeal for the faith to go to that of our enemies. For days together he announced the Word of God to the Saracens, but with little success ; then the Sultan, King of Egypt, asked him in secret to entreat God to reveal to him by some miracle which is the best religion.”

## II

Raymund Lull is the real miracle of mediæval Christendom in relation to Islam. A missionary after the order of Melchizedek—without ancestry—alas! without posterity. Without forerunner before him, or support during his life, or followers to carry on his work or work out his glowing ideas, he resembles a brilliant meteor that flashes through the midnight sky, only to emphasize the darkness that preceded, the darkness that immediately followed.

Lull was born in the island of Majorca in 1235, and grew up under the shadow of the disappointment and depression of the failure of the first Crusades. Nor was the fact that his father had helped in the victorious movement against the Saracens in the West calculated to sweeten the family feeling in regard to them. The first thirty years of Lull's life were passed in the island of his birth, and in Spain at the court of James II., King of Aragon. His history strongly reminds us of Francis of Assisi and of Zinzendorf. Each of them was popular in the world, a lover of pleasure

rather than a lover of God. . . . And then to each of them came in youth the appealing vision of the Crucified, and each of them was obedient to the heavenly vision, and bore on the whole of his remaining life the stigmata of His Cross. Raymund Lull had everything this world could give him : brilliant, versatile, splendidly successful ; knight, poet, musician, scholar, philosopher, nobleman, courtier, gallant ; what lacked he yet ? The answer came when, in the midst of composing a love-ballad, troubadour-like, he saw a vision of Christ Crucified, thrice repeated. Henceforth he renounced his careless, sensual life, and dedicated those nobler powers of which that life had all along been unworthy. Henceforth his motto became, " He that loves not, lives not, and he that lives by the Life cannot die." This, then, is the first thing that distinguishes Lull from many of his time—his religion was a passionate personal faith, inwrought in him by a direct personal conversion through the Spirit of Christ.

From now onward his actions have a quality and are wrought on a scale that are almost incredible. He began by a period of retirement and solitary study that lasted nine years ! That, perhaps, was quite in keeping with his time : but the resolution formed then takes him out of his time altogether and sets him, in reality, alongside of Henry Martyn more than half a millennium later. It was the resolution to dedicate his life to the evangelization of Islam.

Did we half say that Francis of Assisi's going to Egypt and facing its Sultan at Damietta was a pious extravaganza, profitless, hair-brained? How we judge by immediate results! But occasionally God makes visible for a moment the unseen substratum of moral cause and effect, and opens our blind eyes that they may see. For behold, it was that extravaganza, as beautiful, sad, and simple as a child's, which when recounted by a Franciscan monk to Raymund Lull inspired the young Majorcan nobleman with *the decision to be a missionary to Islam!* Is the chain of this apostolic succession terminated? Or is the recounting of Lull's life once more to cause his isolated life-deed to bring forth, at last, its late fruit?

Lull's decision was unheard of, undreamed of. The Saracens were loathed as the conquerors in the East, hated as the partially vanquished in the West. The attitude of the whole Church towards Islam then was the attitude of a great part of the Church towards Islam to-day—"Let it alone." And Lull's first claim to undying memory is that alone and unaided, this son of the Crusades formulated the duty of the Church towards Islam, with a clearness that is absolutely unsurpassable, thus:—

"I see many knights going to the Holy Land beyond the seas, and thinking that they can acquire it by force of arms: but in the end all are destroyed before they attain that which they think to have. Whence it seems to me that the conquest of the Holy Land ought not to be

attempted except in *the way in which Thou and Thine Apostles acquired it, namely, by love and prayers and the pouring out of tears and blood.*"

This one sentence is enough to place Lull in the front of the greatest missionary-saints the world has ever seen.

"Language study" has a familiar ring to the modern missionary. Lull set an unsurpassed standard in the matter of language study. *Then* there were no grammars, dictionaries, ready-made language teachers, and the rest; what should he do? He was driven to purchase a Moslem slave (he must have been a highly educated one), and with his aid studied the Arabic language—for nine years!

During these nine years he was also engaged on one of the most celebrated works of mediæval philosophy—for which, indeed, in some quarters his name is alone known, in its latinized form of Lully (*Lullius*). It is, in fact, one of the many pathetic things about this great hero that to this day in the philosophical schools of Oxford, Cambridge, and the Continent, his name is merely connected with an exploded system of scholastic philosophy. And the pathos is increased when one learns the reason for which he composed that work. It was wholly and entirely a means of forwarding the one end of his whole life—the convincing of the Moslems of Christian truth. Like Bacon's *Novum Organum*, Lull's *Ars Major* was to be an infallible key—not, however, to the truths

of nature, but to the truths of God. To-day the book is dead, dead with the whole scholastic system which gave it birth: in its day, however, it may well have served its definite purpose, for the philosophical thought of Islam in those days was as scholastic and Aristotelian as that of Christendom. Nevertheless to us there is an eternal lesson to be learned from the writer of *Ars Major*—that the presentation of Christian truth and the cause of missions in general, and missions to Moslems in particular, are worthy of the highest talent, and the highest creative effort that our educational system can produce. We learn, too, what is hardly sufficiently recognized to-day, that home work and foreign work are one, and that in the domain of theological research itself the impact of one on the other ought to lead to creative work. For *Ars Major* was not composed for Moslem missions alone, but for the whole Church, a system by which every thinking man might arrive at the truth. When *Ars Major* was finished, Lull began to lecture on it in public. His aim was two-fold — to strengthen the “home Church” in itself, and to awaken it to the duty and possibility of Moslem evangelization. The latter idea became a passion with him. Forerunner of those who, from Charles Simeon to our own day, have seen the importance of winning the Universities, he persuaded the King to found and endow a monastery which should be simply a missionary college. He tried to organize other missionary colleges in different parts of the

country. He lectured at the Universities, he interviewed Kings and church leaders, and stood before church councils and assemblies, and was not ashamed. For his object was, in his own words, "to gain over the shepherds of the Church and the princes of Europe." He went to the highest in the Church; he appealed to the Pope to help the foreign missionary movement. But the great man was not worthy; and the leaders of the Church had more "important" things to do. How do those "important" things look to-day?

But Lull's whole soul was in the idea. He says:—

"I had a wife and children; I was tolerably rich; I led a secular life. All these things I cheerfully resigned for the sake of promoting the common good, and diffusing abroad the common faith. I learned Arabic. I have several times gone abroad to preach the Gospel to the Saracens. I have for the sake of the faith been cast into prison and scourged. *I have laboured for forty-five years to gain over the shepherds of the Church, and the princes of Europe, to the common good of Christendom.* Now I am old and poor, but still I am intent on the same object. I will persevere in it till death, if the Lord permits it."

And then the wonderful insight of his plans for the curriculum of these colleges! It included, of course, a thorough training in theology: but not only so, in philosophy also, in Arabic language and literature, and in the *geography of missions*. The very germ of the present missionary study scheme is in this last idea. He wrote, and his words could not be improved on to-day:—

“ Knowledge of the regions of the world is strongly necessary for the republic of believers and the conversion of unbelievers, and for withstanding infidels and anti-christs. The man unacquainted with geography is ignorant where he walks or whither he leads. Whether he attempts the conversion of infidels, or works for other interests of the Church, it is indispensable that he know the religion and environment of all nations.”

Yet the man was alone ! His inspired suggestions were not taken up ; his appeals, with all their character of intrinsic greatness, were unheeded. Hear him once more. The words have the ring of an Augustine—nay, is there not something in them greater than even Augustine ?

“ I find scarcely anyone, O Lord, who out of love to Thee is ready to suffer martyrdom, as Thou hast suffered for us. It appears to me agreeable to reason, if an ordinance to that effect could be obtained, that Thy monks should learn various languages, that they might be able to go out and surrender their lives in love to Thee. . . . O Lord of Glory, if that blessed day should ever be, in which I might see Thy holy monks so influenced by zeal to glorify Thee, as to go to foreign lands in order to testify of Thy holy ministry, of Thy blessed Incarnation, and of Thy bitter sufferings, that would be a glorious day, a day in which that flow of devotion would return with which the holy apostles met death for their Lord Jesus Christ.”

Nobly did he make good his word. At the age of *seventy-five*, after returning from terrible labours in North Africa, he actually “ conceived the idea of founding an order of spiritual knights who should be ready to preach to the Saracens, and so

recover the tomb of Christ by a crusade of love.”<sup>1</sup> This at a time when the Pope and Councils of the Church were trying to work up another Crusade of the old type ! Yet some religious Genoese noblemen and ladies of rank had offered to contribute 30,000 guilders for the enterprise, and one word of encouragement from Pope Clement V. or the General Council of Paris, might have set on foot a spiritual and missionary movement, a Roman Church Missionary Society, with incalculable results. But that word was not spoken. For the thousandth time the first things were put last and the last first. The leaders of the Church did not lead—nor even follow ; and the dauntless old man, now in his seventy-ninth year, *went back* to North Africa, disdaining the idea of rest or retirement, to win there a martyr’s crown. But this is anticipating.

It is among the many marks of Lull’s first-rate greatness that his mighty purpose never flagged, not even under the depression of ill-success, want of support, nor increasing years. How many men are capable of starting an arduous quest at four years less than sixty ? Yet it was at this age that Lull calmly determined to teach by his example what the Church refused to learn from his precept, and to drive home the duty of missionary effort by sailing for Moslem North Africa. And that in the very year of the fall of Acre, which rang the death-knell of Christian authority in Palestine,

<sup>1</sup> S. M. Zwemer, *Raymund Lull*, p. 76

and must have sent a thrill of fierce, intolerant exultation mingled with hate and contempt through the whole of the Moslem world! He set out *alone*, with the eyes of all Genoa curiously fixed upon him. He was like the man who, having constructed an elaborate flying machine, came to the day when he had before all men to adventure his life in it himself. Then it was that the thought of the dreadful life and perhaps death that awaited him in Africa drowned every other consideration. . . . He faltered! and his ship sailed without its passenger. . . . Knowing what Lull was, we get the most thrilling insight through this one simple fact into the awful nature of the task this man had set himself, and into that man's own heart. The agony of his soul oppressed his body, out of measure, even unto death, so much so that his friends carried him away from a second ship in which he had embarked, certain that his life could not last out the voyage. News of yet a third ship was brought, and he finally determined to push forward. From that moment he tells us he "was a new man." Peace came to his agonized spirit, and, with it, health to his body. The ship sailed, and Lull was aboard.

In Tunis for two years he disputed, made and shepherded converts, was imprisoned, sentenced to death, and finally banished. In Majorca and Cyprus he preached to Jews as well as Moslems, in Armenia for a year he laboured among the Nestorians. Returning to North Africa, at Bugia



*Offering prayer to the Wali*  
(See page 130)



*Alzhar Sheikh tying something to door in devotion  
to spirit of Walt behind door*

in Algeria he disputed for a year and a half, again made a circle of converts, and again was thrown into a dungeon, and plied, this time, with worldly temptations for six months and urged to apostatize. Finally he was deported with ignominy, and shipwrecked on the coast of Italy. Last of all, when he saw that he had done all, and that henceforth there was only left for him the departing from this life, he returned to Bugia, where he encouraged his converts for one whole year in seclusion, finally coming boldly forth, the old hero of eighty years of age ! He faced the raging mob with the world behind his back, and his face as of a man who pleads with souls, till they dragged him, like Stephen, outside the city wall, and there stoned him to death. He had fought the good fight, he had finished his course, he had kept the faith, he had gained the martyr's crown. Who follows in his train ?

We have seen how supremely great Lull was in respect of his missionary *ideals*. In two respects was he also supremely great in respect of his *methods*, judged by the most modern standard : in the use of the hardest and most exacting method of all, controversy, both private *and* public ; and in his manner of presenting the truth. In regard to the first, prophetic fire and love must have been joined to the supreme ability given by absolute command of language and subject, for we know that, like Pfander in the Punjab, he made converts by his disputations. In regard to the second

point, though he did not neglect the comparatively easy task of criticizing the prophet of Islam, he concentrated all his religious, theological, and philosophical acumen on showing the hopeless inadequacy of its conception of God. And his negative criticism is accompanied by a glowing positive teaching on the philosophy of distinctively Christian truth, which is expounded with a vitality and vigour that raise a doubt whether even now missionary thought itself has quite absorbed all that is contained in it.

In an age when the Moslem was hated and fought with, he loved him and sought to win him. In an age when the Jew was spit upon, he, as though the former task were not big enough for his great heart, preached to him and strove to gain him. In an age of strife when the Spirit of Christ and of love was little experienced, this man lived a life which was one long martyrdom of service for men in the power of the love of the Father and of the Spirit of His Son.

The glorious Company of the Apostles praise Thee,  
The goodly Fellowship of the Prophets praise Thee,  
The Noble Army of Martyrs praise Thee,

of whom this man was of the greatest.

Lull was martyred in 1315. The meteor disappeared, the night remained.

## III

Until the dawn of the modern movement in the eighteenth century, the greatest heroes of foreign missions in the interval were undoubtedly the Jesuits, whose deeds and terrible sufferings for the cause are all too little known or recognized or praised. Their great and typical representative missionary is Francis Xavier. And it makes one realize how utterly this vast problem has been neglected when we find ourselves obliged, after Xavier, to make another leap, this time of two hundred years. This brings us to the third great name—for learning, intensity, and burning faith and love, worthy to stand beside the other two—Henry Martyn. With him the modern enterprise really begins—the others were but voices in the wilderness ; but after Martyn, the work, which he laid down in death at the age of thirty-one, was soon caught up by Pfander and others, and since then it has been carried on uninterruptedly with slowly increasing momentum. Martyn's life, except in respect of its shortness, reminds us indeed at every point of his great predecessor Lull.

In the next decade the work was carried forward, though still by almost isolated individuals, Pfander in India, Wolff in Persia, Lovat and others in Egypt ; in 1820, too, Sumatra was reached.

Pfander was a German-Swiss, who worked in Persia for twelve years, in India at Agra and

Peshawar, and later in Constantinople. He died after forty years of service. He was the first whom circumstances enabled to write, print, and circulate a standard controversial work—*Mizan-ul-Hakk (The Balance of Truth)*. It was written in German expressly for publication, and expressly to suit the minds of Mohammedans: by himself or by others it has been translated into nearly every language in which mission work among Moslems is done. Its effect has been very great indeed; it has been answered and counter-answered; it has been used to win souls; to this day it is a standard work. It has proved the first of a whole great literature, which every year is multiplying and increasing in volume and range for the winning of Moslems to Christ.

Pfander possessed the three great requisites for public controversy—absolute command of the subject; absolute command of the language-idiom, the thought-idiom, and the manner-idiom of the people with whom he spoke; and absolute command of himself. His memorable public controversy at Agra, at which Thomas Valpy French (afterwards Bishop) was also present, will never be forgotten. Both sides claimed the victory of course, but two of the ablest of the Sheikhs on the Moslem side afterwards came out for Christ—names ever memorable in Moslem missionary annals, Imâd-ud-dîn and Safdar Ali.

During the forty years, 1825-1865, the cause of Moslem missions had expanded, under the stress

of the great nineteenth century missionary revival, far beyond the limits actually indicated by Pfander's career. Dutch missions had spread to the *East Indies*,<sup>1</sup> especially Java and Sumatra. The great and wonderful expansion of Chinese missions in the period has, at least, brought the Church face to face with Islam in *China*, and Moslems will increasingly be affected by the impact of the Gospel on the whole length and breadth of that country. In *India*, Bishop Valpy French (died at Muscat in the Persian Gulf in 1891) and many others were carrying on and developing the work of Pfander; for example the S.P.G. began that work in Delhi, which, when later reinforced by the Cambridge Mission, has become one of the greatest of Moslem mission enterprises. In *Persia* there were witnesses for Christ, missionaries of the American Board, though direct work among Moslems was for the most part begun after this period. In the *Turkish Empire*—Constantinople, Asia Minor, Armenia, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt—much Christian work was undertaken in this period, chiefly by American Presbyterian Societies, though direct and open mission work for Moslems was not yet possible—is even now not yet possible in some places. In *West Africa* the C.M.S. missions were already, in Sierra Leone and Nigeria, coming into touch with the outposts of Islam—then, alas! much more insignificant and with the main post much further away than is the case now. Lastly, in

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter VII.

*East Africa* the pioneer work of Krapf, with his scheme of a chain of mission-stations from east to west, and the firm planting of the Universities' Mission, the C.M.S., and the Scottish missions further south were an earnest that Islam in East, and East Central, Africa would not be unopposed.

Lull martyred as he knocks at the gate of North Africa; Xavier dying as he cries on China to open her iron doors; Henry Martyn dying in solitude at Tokat; Valpy French dying in his lonely house at Muscat—which is the greater hero? Who follows in their train?

#### IV

The tender shoot of the thirteenth century has become a great tree in the nineteenth; it is manifestly impossible to follow all its ramifications in detail.

We can only summarize the spread of Moslem missions in late years. *Arabia* has been "occupied" by Scottish Presbyterian, American Presbyterian, and Danish missions. In *Irâk* there are mission-stations at Baghdad and Mosul. Looking east to Persia and beyond, we find with joy and gratitude to God *Persia* occupied (C.M.S. to the south, American Presbyterian to the north); in *Turkestan* a courageous Swedish mission influencing the important centres of Bokhara, Kashgar, Yarkand, and Khotan near the borders of Tibet.

In *Russia*, both European and Asiatic, no *protestant* missions are permitted. But the Greek Orthodox Church—chiefly owing to the magnificent pioneer work of Ilminsky (died 1891) one of the greatest of modern mission-workers—is doing a work that signally merits the support of all who know how to pray. A Greek Orthodox Missionary Society, with headquarters at Moscow, and a budget of £32 000, supports several missions, notably in West Siberia (Omsk, Tobolsk, and the Altai country), and in Orenburg in European Russia. In other provinces inhabited by Moslems there are missionary committees and missionaries. At Kazan, the great centre of Russian Islam, there are two training centres for missionaries to Mohammedans. In 1908 there were forty-eight conversions to Christianity throughout Russia—and these not of the old forced or semi-forced description. Such spurious conversions have now ceased, and the thousands made previously to 1905 speedily lapsed when religious liberty was proclaimed in that year. For the rest, Russian missionary effort is chiefly directed (1) to the saving of the heathen aboriginal tribes from Islamization by evangelizing them effectively; (2) to the prevention of the perversion of the *nominally* Christianized Tartar tribes to Islam, by teaching them and grounding them in their faith. These efforts have been attended with a very great measure of success *where the work has been undertaken in time*. But for Ilminsky, in short, all

nominal Christians would by now have Islamized, the aborigines would have fallen to Islam, and there would be no conversions from Islam to Christianity. Can we not do more to support the Russian Church in this great and vitally necessary work?

In *Egypt* an extension and intensification of work has taken place among Moslems concurrently with the era of freedom after the fall of Ismail. Westwards, what of *North Africa*? In 1880 the first steps were taken to found that courageous and devoted society the North African Mission. "At that time there was not a single (Protestant) missionary between Alexandria and the Atlantic coast of Morocco, nor southwards from the Mediterranean almost to the Niger and the Congo." Now there are eighteen stations all the way along that long historic shore, in Egypt, Tripoli, Tunis, Algiers, Morocco.<sup>1</sup> But it is impossible to report progress in the work of *Sudan* evangelization which before the war was being approached from Nigeria, and from Assuan and Omdurman in the Nile valley. The war has put many things back here as elsewhere. All along *West Africa* from Senegambia to the Niger the African Church is steadying itself to stay, by God's grace, the flood of Islam from the north. In *East Africa*<sup>2</sup> the tale is the same.

We have travelled through the centuries of the

<sup>1</sup> There are some other smaller societies in Morocco.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter III.

past, we have arrived at our own time. It remains now to examine more closely the forces, the methods, the results which are reported to-day from these scenes of work, and in a final chapter, gathering the threads together, to see a vision of the future, to see how the Spirit of Jesus may be given to clothe Himself with men so that the task may be finished, and the rebuke of Islam pass away.

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## CHAPTER VII

### HOW SAVE IT ?

#### (2) *The Evangelization of Islam—To-day*

LOOKING back at the rapid sketch in our last chapter, one feels perhaps that it inevitably suggested a too favourable idea of the adequacy of missionary effort to the world of Islam, and of the recognition by the Church of Christ of the particular character and the supreme necessity of the task of evangelizing that world.

In truth the goal is sensibly nearer than one hundred years ago, when Henry Martyn, chaplain of the East India Company, was putting the last finishing touches to the translation of the New Testament into Hindustani. And yet, in equal truth, the Church of Christ is hardly now awake. It is only just beginning to be easy to stir up "interest" in Moslem missions. "Uganda is so much more *romantic*," "Japan and China are so much more *promising*." "Do not Mohammedans worship One God?" "Is it really possible to convert Mohammedans?" "I thought Islam was quite a *half-way-house* to Christianity!" "Very good religion for those people!" "Mussulmen, very fanatical set: why don't you go to the heathen

tribes? " . . . These voices, which come to the mind's ear with so familiar a ring, and so touching a tone of discovery and conviction, illustrate what is still very largely the attitude of the Church of Christ, nay, of many who support foreign missions, to the problem which Raymund Lull thought was the grand problem of the Church. " One might suppose," says Dr Zwemer, who has done so much to challenge this attitude, " that the Church thought her great commission to evangelize the world did not apply to Moslems."

And even those who are working among Moslems have not as a rule fully realized their need of special training, special knowledge, co-operation, and specialization. Not until April 1906 was the *first* general Mohammedan Missionary Conference held. In October of the same year it was said at a meeting of the American Board, a society which for decades has had scores of missionaries in Moslem lands in the East, " This is the first time that the question of missionary work for Moslems has been openly discussed upon the platform of the American Board."

We may then let the facts of the last chapter and of the present one have on us their full effects of encouragement and stimulus, inasmuch as they do indeed shatter every one of the vague objections urged by the voices we heard a moment ago, and warrant the belief that God is calling His Church in this matter to a step which may lead to unparalleled opportunities and successes in the near future.

It will not be possible to describe the work that has been initiated in the several countries. It will not be possible, and it would not be particularly instructive, to make even a statistical statement of all the lands in which Mohammedans are being evangelized, and the missions which are working there. The plan of this chapter must be rather, first, to take a general glance at the successes, or the apparent non-successes, of the existing missions ; and, secondly, to describe the chief methods that are most generally employed.

## I

It was formerly believed, and the belief is *still* so common that it almost seems universal, that the conversion of Mohammedans is impossible. As we shall see this has been hundreds, nay thousands of times proved false. None the less, it remains true that it is very difficult : that some soils after decades of working seem entirely stony and sterile : that everywhere, save in the Dutch East Indies, it is a case of the painful conversion of units, and not of tribes or villages—even the coming over of a family is rare. Where governmental opposition is strong, and the life of a man insecure or forfeit through his conversion, open confession of Christianity has been very rare, and the missions in such lands have often tended to concentrate upon general institutional work so as to loosen the soil, or upon work among the oriental Christians of the land.

This was notably the case in Egypt before the British occupation, and in all parts of the Turkish Empire before the war. In such countries there is good reason to believe that there were many secret believers : one heard of them in Palestine, in Syria, and even in Turkey proper : nay, one not infrequently met them. In some cases they escaped from their country and were baptized in Egypt or elsewhere. We should pray that among the results of the war may be the opening up of these lands to the free preaching of the Way, the manifestation of those who have secretly believed, and freedom for all to follow the dictates of conscience.

Very roughly speaking, converts from Moham-medanism have been reckoned by thousands in the Dutch East Indies, by hundreds in India (especially has the work been successful in the Punjab), by tens in Persia, Egypt, and Africa, and by units elsewhere. Nowhere, we believe, has the work been entirely barren of visible result. A Kamil Abdul Messiah<sup>1</sup> is a constant reminder to us, when we are thinking of particularly unpromising soils, that out of them may suddenly blossom some particularly beautiful flower. The biography of Pennell of Bannu amply confirms the conviction, and shows that even Afghanistan, like Syria, has yielded recruits for the noble army of martyrs. And if it be said that no *learned* man among the

<sup>1</sup> See *The Setting of the Crescent and the Rising of the Cross*. H. H. Jessup. Philadelphia, 1899.

Mohammedans has ever come out for Christ, Imâd-ud-dîn<sup>1</sup> in India, and Makhail Mansur<sup>2</sup> in Egypt refute the assertion, to mention only two. The Rev. Ahmad Shah has written a valuable concordance of the Korân; the Rev. Ali Bakhsh is a Canon in the Anglican Church; the Rev. Sirâju'd Dîn is one of the eight contributors to the missionary volume reprinted from the *International Review of Missions* entitled *The Vital Forces of Christianity and Islam*, and his essay is particularly worth while studying as throwing light on the subject of our present study by one who was once a Moslem and is now a Christian. Broadly speaking, in settled lands like India and Egypt, if definite results are expected, worked for and prepared for, they come. The difficulty is not in the evangelizing, nor even so much in the converting: the real difficulty is in the training and growth of the soul after conversion: for the pressure of adverse circumstances is terrible in its persistency and severity; and the soil in which the replanting has to take place may be uncongenial or unnourishing: two factors which sometimes cause great disappointment to, and in, the convert.

So little is known by even enthusiasts for missions about the work of the Dutch Missions in their Mohammedan possessions in the East Indies, and so unique is the encouragement afforded by a study

<sup>1</sup> See *Mohammedan Converts to Christianity in India*. Rev. Imâd-ud-dîn. C.M.S. 1d.

<sup>2</sup> See article in *The Moslem World*. January 1919.

of that work, that a special word about it will be encouraging to faith, which a book like the present one inevitably subjects to so severe a trial. In the East Indian Archipelago, especially in Java and Sumatra, the following outstanding facts strike us.

(1) The Missions are favoured by the Government in the sense that they are not disfavoured, feared, thwarted, or discriminated against.

(2) They have done, concurrently with direct work among Islam, the important work of saving that which remains. In Sumatra, strong missionary work is being done among the heathen Battaks of the North who have sturdily resisted Islam, and 62,000 of these have been baptized and organized into regular congregations !

(3) Missions have done a most successful direct work among the Moslems themselves. Free and unflinching methods have been pursued, and the result will astonish the reader, hitherto accustomed to hear of conversions in units or at most tens : —6,500 converts have been baptized, with 1,150 catechumens !

These people, moreover, have already furnished the Church with many an efficient worker and preacher. And the total result is that the prestige of Christianity is great and real, and a strong trend towards it is observable. For once the tables are turned, the social drift is *from* Islam. We read —and how significant is the fact to those who know Islam in Africa !—that “ in the case of marriages

it is *very usual for the Mohammedan party to accept Christianity!*"

These are grand results, and even greater are those reported from Java, where by preaching, the sale of Scriptures, and medical work, eighteen thousand Mohammedans now living have been won over to Christianity, many of them at great cost and under severe persecution. The conversions *from* Islam number three hundred or four hundred annually, and conversions *to* Islam are rare.

## II

St Paul, after discoursing of "gifts" went on to tell of a more excellent way, that of Love. "Gifts" have become "methods" in these days of ours: but the more excellent way "abides." And it will be well therefore to place in the very forefront of our study of methods some words concerning the method of methods—never more necessary, just because never more difficult, than in work among Mohammedans. They were written from one of the more "stony places" of the field of Mohammedan evangelization.<sup>1</sup>

"The work of the Christian amongst this people is very difficult indeed. And after fifteen years of work amongst them, it seems true that the only way to win them is by personal influence—the influence of men and women filled with the Holy Ghost—the power of the Holy Ghost in the

<sup>1</sup> By Mr W. Reid, Tripoli, North Africa. Compare the remarkable essay by D. Crawford in the volume already cited—*The Vital Forces of Christianity and Islam.*

personal life and character of the missionary. And in order to exercise this power he needs to get into close contact with the people. But here lies the difficulty of the situation. The problem of work amongst Moslems in North Africa is how to get really close to them.

“The great obstacle is what is commonly called ‘fanaticism,’ that high wall of suspicion, proud exclusiveness and hate that Islam has built up round its followers, to keep them in, and to keep the missionary out—a wall that, alas! too often proves unscalable and impregnable. Men have laboured for years in the same city and yet could not count a couple of friends.

“It is difficult to love a Moslem because he is not very lovable, and because he usually resents a too near approach to him, until in some way his confidence has been won.

“When acts of kindness and love are done to him he is sure to suspect that I am doing it, not for his sake and because of simple disinterested love, but for some reason of self-interest known perhaps only to myself. He does not know such love, and cannot believe his eyes when he sees what looks like it in another. He thinks I have come to heap up merit to balance an old account of evil doing. I am well paid for it. At best I am doing it in order to win him from Mohammed to Jesus Christ, and even this is perceived to be an interested motive. I do not love him for himself, or as a fellow human, just as he is in his need of help. No, I want to win him to Jesus, and if it were not for that ulterior purpose I should not put myself out of the way to help him.

“ . . . Continuance in loving, patient, helpful sympathy will find a way—for there always is a way—through the high wall of fanaticism to the heart of even a Moslem. Once show him that I love him for his own sake, and that I am glad to help him apart entirely from whether he believes my message or not, and the chord of love that is still to be found in the heart of the lowest will respond. . . .

“How is this to be done? Thank God it is being done here and there by medical missions and schools and by the

work of trained nurses. But only the fringe of the population is touched. . . .

"In the past there has been too much preaching and too little practice of positive Christianity. . . .

"A fact I have found most encouraging is that most Moslems know goodness when they see it. They know and acknowledge that there is little goodness amongst themselves, and when they see it in the life of the missionary they recognize it and acknowledge it fully and frankly. If this life is accompanied by patient loving labour on their behalf, their praise is usually expressed in terms that are absolutely contrary to all they have been taught as to the future condition of those who do not believe in Mohammed."

I. *Direct Evangelization.* It would be the greatest mistake to think that all work among Moslems must be institutional. On the contrary the most notable results, after all has been said, have come from the direct ministration of the word, whether to assemblies or individually. In the nearer east too it is important and most encouraging to remember that sometimes the enquirer who comes to the missionary asking for instruction or baptism has been first led to the Master by or through the oriental Christians among whom he has lived: a fact that should encourage the faith and hope that the evangelization of the Moslem East shall one day come through the churches of the soil. And in any case, by far the most effective work is, and must always be, that of the oriental catechists, Biblewomen, and other workers, who know the lives and mind and language of the people, and who do not meet the prejudice attaching to foreigners. Obviously therefore the method of

“direct evangelization” will above all others involve, further, the consecration of lives and time to the training of these oriental preachers and witnesses. We have here, then, indicated to us possibilities of service for men and women endowed with two different gifts, the evangelistic gift and that of teaching and training.

It is the exception rather than the rule to find open-air preaching in the *towns* possible. In most countries such work is carried on by means of preaching-halls, and by personal visitation in house or shop or office. But even in such countries it is generally possible to gather little circles or groups of hearers in villages, or in the fields or by the wayside. Your true evangelist is never at a loss for an opportunity. In town or country, or on travel by rail or water you still find the fishers of men plying their ancient craft. The Mohammedan field does not differ from the rest of the field which is the world, except that the worker in it must be endowed with a very special measure of faith, hope, and charity, of initiative and pertinacity, with just a touch of pugnacity thereto—a quality which need not in the least clash with that emphasized so strongly on p. 200; which, on the contrary, the Mohammedans, a pertinacious and pugnacious folk, fully understand, respect, and rather enjoy.

Direct evangelization includes public discussion and disputing; discussion and disputing with individuals; and preaching. The first method was

formerly very commonly used in India : Pfander, as we have seen, was a giant at that warfare, and notable converts resulted from it. It needs special temperament combined with the highest conceivable training, linguistically, in the literature of Islam, and in the principal Mohammedan objections : for in all the broad mission-field there is no harder or more exacting task than this. Moreover many deny its utility, for Mohammedans are very hot and often violent in discussion, and scenes are continually taking place which tend to throw back the work in other directions. Also, it is urged, the convert begotten of controversy is apt to be born in its image—disputatious rather than spiritual ; apt to hammer rather than to woo and win. There is truth in these contentions, and yet, perhaps at certain times and by some exceptional men it can be done. But it needs a *double*, not a half, portion of the Spirit of Jesus.

And the same may be said of the disputations which purely individual work will surely involve, for a Mohammedan when he comes nearly always comes to contend, and merely to win contact it is often necessary to meet him on the ground he chooses. After all it is grace that wins, whatever be the nominal result of the disputation. So that for all such work—and equally for the straightforward preaching involving but little apologetic and no attack—what is needed is first Christian *quality*, and secondly that intimate knowledge of the subject which can only be given by special

training and continual study. Even to preach non-controversially—how much more in the atmosphere of conflict!—and to uneducated Moslems—how much more to educated!—the preacher must be intimate with the beliefs and ideas and thought-habits of his hearers: otherwise his address will possess as little personal appeal as though it had been composed in Mars. Imagine a Chinaman, expounding with Chinese accent in indifferent English the doctrines of Taoism, from the exclusive point of view of the people of Shen-si, to an audience of British Britons at Hyde Park Corner!

The following history of a soul illustrates much that has been said in the preceding paragraphs. We see the occasional success of the controversial method to secure contact; how it was the argument of life, not the arguments of the tongue that prevailed; the usefulness and necessity of special training; the possibility of the conversion of even one of the Rabbi class, while still sitting at the very feet of his Gamaliel.

But let us see him first in his setting, the Azhar University-Mosque in Cairo. It is a wonderful institution. Far the oldest of all mediæval universities, it is the only one which has remained, and remains, mediæval in its curriculum, its methods, its whole aspect. A great court, glowing with sunlight, with a shady many-pillared portico on the far side . . . in the court groups of students in turbans and robes squat singly or in little groups, studying and (which to them is the same)

memorizing ; or chatting, and perchance making their morning meal. . . . In the portico they sit in circles, great or small, " at the feet of " their Sheikhs—the Rabbis of Islam—who themselves squat on low daïs-seats and discuss the grammar, language, interpretation, and legal teaching of the Korân. (Thus sat a young student from Tarsus named Saul, in the Azhar of his day, at the feet of Sheikh Gamaliel—in the same posture, hearing discourses according to the same method upon just such subjects) . . . . There you see black Sudanese from Hausaland or the Gambia River, from Timbuktu and the Upper Niger ; brownly-yellow-skinned Maghrabis from Morocco and the West ; fair, pink-and-white Turks from Stamboul ; almond-eyed Mongoloids from far Russian Siberia and Turkestan, and many more. They return your laugh and jest as you speak to them in Arabic : they enquire where you live : they say they will have the honour of visiting your Presence, if God will. . . . They are not, however, so complaisant when they come in numbers thirsting for the wordy fray, and the religious passions rise, and eyes burn fiercely, and the hot Arabic streams forth in the eternal disputation. . . . In the memory of living men no Christians could so much as enter that place ; now they enter unmolested. Students and ex-students have been converted to Christ, and not a few students have, as they paced or sat apart, studied there, not the Korân, but the Injîl Yasû' al Masîh (Gospel of Jesus Christ). . . . And even

from those turbulent meetings for disputation, so often breaking up in disorder, fruit has been gathered. Hear now the story to which we have made allusion. It is told by Paul himself.

“ I was born at Jerusalem, and my father is one of the teachers in the Haram—that sacred Temple-area close by the spot where Abraham offered up his son Isaac, and not far from where the Saviour offered Himself, a better sacrifice for the salvation of the world. My father is also one of the editors of the official newspaper of the Moslem authorities at Jerusalem. At the age of seven I began my studies at school. But they consisted in the study of the Korân instead of the Bible, and the laws of Mohammed instead of the laws of Moses. I afterwards went for a period to a mission school, where the Bible was taught. One day, when still a boy, I found accidentally on a shelf in our house a Christian book called ‘ Sweet First-fruits.’<sup>1</sup> Where and how my father became possessed of this book I cannot say, for it is a book forbidden throughout the Turkish Empire. This book I read and re-read from beginning to end, and by it I became acquainted with the principles of Christianity. In this book I found the passages of the Korân examined, which speak of the Old and New Testaments and of Jesus Christ, and I saw how our commentators had perverted their meaning. In the Korân it is said, ‘ We have sent down upon men the books of the New and Old Testaments.’ It follows that these Books must contain true words, and were meant as our inspired guide ; but the commentators say that the Jews have so altered the text that it cannot be trusted. The Korân says of Jesus Christ that ‘ God sent Him into the world as His Word and His Spirit,’ and the plain meaning is that Jesus is the Word, and that God, the Word, and the Spirit are One, as in the teaching of St John ; but our commentators

<sup>1</sup> Published by the Religious Tract Society in English.

say that by Word and Spirit only expression and breath are meant, and that Jesus was created as well as born, and is not the only begotten Son of the Father. The study of this book caused me to ask my father many questions, but instead of answering them he used to beat me, to prevent me from talking on such subjects.

"After ten years' study in the Haram, the Moslem College in the Temple-area at Jerusalem, whither I went after leaving school, I was sent to the El Azhar University at Cairo, the most important school of Moslem theology in the world. Five times a day I heard the call to prayer, 'There is no God but the One God. Come to prayer.' One day as I was walking in the direction of the great bridge, I saw a notice which attracted my attention: 'This is the house of the English clergy for the discussion of religious and moral questions.' So I said to myself, 'This is just what I want.' So I entered the reception room, and began to talk with the catechist about the missionaries. Soon Mr Thornton came in. After the usual salutations he began to talk to me, and asked me to attend the meeting in the evening. This I did. The subject that evening was: 'Which was the true sacrifice, that of Isaac (as in the Bible), or that of Ishmael (as is implied in the Korân)?' I got up and told Mr Thornton that he did not know what he was talking about, as I was sure it was Ishmael, not Isaac, who was offered by Abraham. After the close of the meeting, tracts were given to me, but I was so angry that I tore them up, as being the words of unbelievers. One evening I even brought twenty students with me from El Azhar on purpose to break up the meeting. I remember the subject that evening was 'The Crucifixion of Christ.' Now, the Moslems do not believe that Jesus was ever really crucified, so I stopped the speaker, and called out to all true believers to rise up and protest.

"Still, one thing seemed strange to me. I was treating the missionaries with hatred and insult, but the missionaries never ceased to treat me with courtesy, and even love. So I saw that whereas Islam teaches us to return hate with

hate, Christianity, on the contrary, teaches men to love their enemies, and to treat them courteously.

“ So then I began to change my conduct. I came to the meetings week by week, but no longer to oppose, but to listen. I took the tracts and read them diligently, and fixed my attention upon three principal points—the origin of Islam, the meaning of the mission of Mohammed, and the nature of the inspiration of the Korân. As I read the Christian tracts, and especially the monthly magazine, called the *Orient and Occident*, published by the missionaries in Cairo, the beams of Christian light began to reach my soul.

“ Then Mr Thornton, as if he understood my malady and the medicine required for it, put the Bible into my hands. God gave me a right understanding of the Gospel. I saw revealed the love of God towards man, our need of reconciliation with God, the need of the sufferings of Christ to redeem mankind, and the truth of the Christian teaching in the New Testament, and I asked Mr Thornton for regular Bible instruction.

“ After two weeks’ instruction I was entirely convinced of the truth of Christianity. But I had now been four years at El Azhar, and my father wished me to go to Constantinople in order to study law with a view to ultimately becoming a Moslem judge. I did not wish to go, because I knew I should not be able to show that I was a Christian ; yet if I did not go, all my worldly prospects for the future would be ruined, and my father would be made angry, and I should have to live as an exile in foreign lands. After a long struggle within me, as I pondered these things upon my bed, I fell asleep, and while asleep a voice came to me saying : ‘ Rise up. Light is on thy path. Be not afraid, for I am with thee.’ This happened three times.

“ In the morning I went at once to Mr Thornton to tell him what had happened. When he was convinced that all I said was true, he received me into the mission compound, and the doctors gave me a room under their house. The same afternoon I wrote to my father to tell him where

I was, and on 7th October 1905, I applied to the proper quarters to have my name legally inscribed as a Christian. The following day Mr Thornton publicly received me as a catechumen in the Old Cairo Church, and after a few months of instruction and trial he baptized me by the name of Bûlus (Paul) instead of my former name of Mahmûd. But before I was baptized my father wrote frequently from Jerusalem to dissuade me from being a Christian, and ultimately came himself to Cairo to bring me back. He had several interviews with me in Mr Thornton's house, and offered me half his fortune if I would renounce Christianity and return home with him. When his entreaties were in vain my father appealed to Lord Cromer. I had to appear before his Lordship, who told me that my father was very angry with me, but that I was old enough to profess what religion I preferred, as Egypt was now a free country. I told Lord Cromer that I did not wish to go to Syria until it was a free country, and thereupon he made me sign a document to that effect in his presence, and that of other witnesses to my signature. The Prime Minister of Egypt and the Minister of Foreign Affairs were present during the interview, and witnessed my confession. I thank God for giving me strength to remain firm. He has given me another father in Mr Thornton in place of my own father whom I have lost, and he has promised me treasure in Heaven in place of the earthly possessions which would have been mine; and now I feel and know that God is near me, in a way I never knew before. Pray for me. Peace be with you."

2. *Medical.* This is an indispensable method, specially in regions where prejudice and fanaticism are intense. The medical mission is one continuous object-lesson in Christianity, the religion of service, humanity and love. By it Christ is manifested to multitudes from whom He would otherwise have been impenetrably veiled. Within the medical

mission "direct evangelization" is always going on, even in regions where otherwise it is almost impossible. Consider too what a centre for the diffusion of light and life a medical mission is. For example, to one such hospital (that of the C.M.S. in Old Cairo) came in one year nearly 11,150 patients, each of whom stayed an average of 14 days in the hospital, for the figure is exclusive of the far larger number of out-patients. Now from where did those 11,150 men and women come? Most of them came from the provinces round Cairo and others from the remoter provinces all the way from Assuan to Alexandria—a clear thousand miles. That hospital is not therefore at Old Cairo: it is in nearly ten thousand centres of Egyptian life! at every one of which a worker from the hospital, if he visited that place, would be welcomed as an old friend.

In many purely Mohammedan villages some mission hospital is regarded as almost communal property: it is "*our* hospital," no villager would dream of going elsewhere; he will take a journey and pass on the way a Government hospital or two in order to be treated at a mission institution—where he knows he will daily have the message and claims of Christ presented to him. The late Lord Kitchener when visiting a mission hospital and chatting with this or that patient found one who, he knew, must have passed at least two public hospitals in order to get where he was, and curious to know the reason for this asked the man why he had not

gone to the nearer institution. "Our hospital is better," answered the village-man. "But the hospital at —— is also an excellent one." "Here is better," replied the stolid one. "Well, what's the matter with the one at ——?" To which the final reply was, "The work here is clean!" He was not manifesting an unsuspected enthusiasm for asepsis; he had rather in his mind the care put into the details of the work; the Christian humanity; the atmosphere of free service; the absence of the baksheesh system (baksheesh only means tipping—done in advance) which accompanies most things in the East. Here then are magnificent opportunities (the merely professional opportunities for the nurse or keen practitioner of both sexes are inconceivable) for whoso desires to use his gift in the free service of his generation, and in lands where he is really needed.

In recent years one biography, which surely will become a classic, has given a striking account of what a medical missionary to hardest-shell Mohammedans may achieve, and may be: the biography of Dr Pennell of Bannu. And Pennell did not stand, and does not stand alone. Take for example the life and work of Sterling of Gaza—the centre of a bigotedly Mohammedan district in South Palestine. There for 21 years he worked, doctor, evangelist, clergyman. Day by day, in addition to his medical duties, he might be seen testifying to the Gospel of Christ before Mohammedan audiences, both learned and unlearned,

so that in all that wide area the Christian man of God was known, respected, and loved. Only when the war came was he compelled to quit his post. And he died within sight of his city shortly before the armies of good hope entered it in 1917, just when we were saying that he was about to gather the fruits of his labours. And herein is that saying true "one laboureth and another reapeth."

3. *Literary.* The printed word penetrates where the spoken word cannot and does not. Like the wind-blown seed or pollen it is wafted on many a breeze to the most distant, secluded, and unlikely spots, where it may find some unsuspected soil and bring forth unexpected fruit. This applies both to the Scriptures and to Christian literature of all sorts, evangelistic, devotional, expository, apologetic, controversial. One good mission press will not only effect the permeation of the whole country in which it is with Christian literature, but sends its wares by land and ocean routes to many far-off countries and peoples. The Nile Mission Press, to take a press which was started recently with the express purpose of evangelizing *Moslems* by means of the printed page, has been particularly successful in getting its Arabic publications into other lands. Before the Great War nearly forty Moslem lands were being more or less penetrated in this way. Scores of parcels (in a single day) have gone up the Persian Gulf, and not a few to the Moslems in South America. A still more remarkable case is

that of China, to the utmost bounds of which the N.M.P. books go; in fact, a most promising field of service for Moslems (in Kansu) is being sown with Arabic literary seed from Cairo. How inspiring to reflect that the Arabic writers in Cairo are preaching the Gospel in Kansu (at present nine weeks' journey by the quickest mail)!

Here clearly are opportunities for men and women with the literary gift—or with the business and organizing gift, for without *distribution* the *production* of literature avails nothing; Christian bookselling is as important as Christian publishing. And by Christian literature should be understood also all manner of good general literature, in which Mohammedan mission-lands are painfully deficient,—stories, biographies, popular, scientific, etc. To the boys and girls, and the adolescence generally, of these countries this need is not merely secondary: it is imperative. "What shall I do?" exclaimed one headmaster lately, "I am nearly in despair. I give these boys the taste for reading and then I have nothing to give them to read. There is almost nothing between religious literature on the one hand and the erotic literature of the native press on the other. They will get no good from the latter, and they cannot always be reading the former." The words open up avenues for service which perhaps are rarely or never given a thought: for those who can write, for those who can edit: for men and women with the imaginative or the journalistic gift. Is it not well seen that in the

Moslem mission-field, too, there are diversities of gifts, and the one Spirit of Jesus ?

4. *Educational.* This word opens up again great avenues and vistas. In Mohammedan lands, taking them all together, there is everything from the kindergarten to the degree-giving college. In the lands of the old Mohammedan civilizations, especially those which the war has opened up, higher education is specially important. In 1911 the writer was conversing with a particularly suspicious Mohammedan Sheikh in Aleppo, that great ancient, but now greater modern metropolis of the east. He was deploring the lack of a secondary school, based on moral and religious principle, to which he could send his son, an unsatisfactory youth of sixteen. And then—"Why do not the Americans start here a school such as the one they have at Sidon ?" was his astonishing question. Specially important is higher educational work in lands where European influences have reached an advanced stage. India has proved this. And if anyone doubts whether he can render best service in a mission or a Government institution, testimony comes every now and then from the highest and most unexpected quarters that it is the *mission* school that offers the greatest scope. And for this simple reason. At the Government school, whether it is run as in Egypt on Mohammedan lines, or as in India with dead neutrality, a master cannot really be giving his whole self to the boys, however hard he slaves at his work. The more

he is a Christian, the more he must be withholding his *best* from his pupils. And this very often causes a continual and increasing sense of dissatisfaction and disappointment. Precisely the same applies to Government girls' schools and the quality of the opportunity they afford to women from the west. Not so with the missionary. Within his own school he is as free as air. He can and does give *all* his self, all his time, all his interest to his work and to his boys. The difference in atmosphere may be imagined; in moral result; in welding of mutually hostile elements in the "communal spirit" of the school, which is really informed by the Spirit of Jesus, though the pupils know it not. All of which applies equally to mission girls' schools. This is not simply the testimony of missionaries. It is testimony coming from highest officials in the Ministries of Education, and from men and women actually engaged in teaching in Government institutions, that declares that *greatest* is the opportunity for the profoundest and the highest work in *mission* schools and colleges. This implies of course that the institutions shall be the best possible of their kind, and generously staffed, and that we are in earnest about educational work. And more and more this is coming to be the case. What a radiator of light and heat could one such school be, with its pupils drawn from far and near in some Moslem land!

5. *Oriental Churches.* But lest we be wise in our own conceits, we must re-assert what has already



INTERIOR OF EL AZHAR UNIVERSITY, CAIRO

been said, that not the foreign missionaries but the Christians of the soil and of the land are to be the evangelizers of Islam, whether Eastern-church, Reformed, or converts from Mohammedanism. And the best work that the missions from the West can do is to recognize this fact and plan accordingly. Whether the inspiring and fortifying of the progressive and spiritual elements in the old oriental churches of the Near East, or the frank creation of reformed and separate bodies is the best method, cannot be discussed here. In the providence of God both have had their task : in the providence of circumstance neither, probably, has been avoidable. But, since the old oriental churches will always be far the more numerous, and since their historical and traditional roots go down deepest into the soil, it becomes increasingly important to watch, help, and foster the efforts of their younger members after spiritual progress and reform. And here, too, comes in the importance of institutional work. With the general opening out which has been brought about by the war, club-work, like that organized by the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. and the Student Movement for both sexes, will become increasingly possible and important.<sup>1</sup> Now is the time for Christian college men and women to show what a generation of Christian effort in the colleges of the west has done for them, and that

<sup>1</sup> Mission work has touched very little the classes educated on western lines in the east. It is possible that almost only thus can they be reached.

they are able to come forward in the Spirit of Jesus, and show the young manhood and womanhood of the east how captivity may be led captive, through that Spirit ; how the utterly impossible may become possible, and the oriental churches which failed thirteen centuries ago, and whose failure has been for these thirteen hundred years rebuked by Islam, may succeed at last—may conquer, not by recovered mastery (certain to be abused), but by the recovered dynamic of the Spirit of the Christ of God.

### III

The problem, however, is not simply a problem of converting, of winning *back*. It is in Africa, and to a large extent in Russian Asia also, a problem of *preventing*.

The following, from West Africa, brings vividly to our notice the contest of Islam for the heathen tribes :

“ All to the north and east and mostly west of us is won to Islam : the south is occupied by pagans, wholly hostile to Islam, and hating it with a deadly hatred : further south again, among the great Nupe and Yoruba peoples, it is making rapid strides. . . . The most of the propaganda is done by traders : it is very superficial at first, but in a second and third generation it will become an intelligent power according to the capability of each people, probably nowhere so great as among the Hausas themselves.

“ Of course the principal thing needed is a native agency. The Government has brought *Mohammedans* from *India* as clerks, artificers, blacksmiths ; we ought to bring

Christians from India and Egypt to these countries. I am convinced that the value of a converted Mohammedan from Egypt in this country, if he could live humbly and simply, would be revolutionary. Here converted heathens to Islam win more converts than others."

So arises the great problem of building up the African Christian Churches.

" Missions will scarcely be able to prevent the entrance of Islam among a single tribe, much less into large districts. Islam is spreading with the certainty and irresistibility of a rising tide. The only question is if it will still be possible for missions to organize Christian Churches like breakwaters, able to resist the flood, and outweather it, or whether everything will be carried away headlong."<sup>1</sup>

The following, by the Rev. J. L. Macintyre<sup>2</sup> of Nigeria, brings the noise and dust of this tremendous conflict more nearly home to our hearts and imaginations than a dozen essays written by theorists at home :—

" I beg to lay before you the following proposals with regard to an organized effort to combat the advance of Islam in West Africa, and in Nigeria especially.

". . . As *ignorance* is the greatest stronghold of Mohammedanism, so *education* is the Church's greatest weapon in meeting it.

" (1) Beginning with *literature*, efforts should be made to produce vernacular literature dealing with the Mohammedan controversy. There is a large amount of such already published in India and in Egypt. Gradually these could be translated into the different vernaculars, and

<sup>1</sup> Pastor Würz, Secretary of the Basel Mission.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Western Equatorial Diocesan Magazine*, Nov. 1908.

thus the weapons already forged in warfare with Islam elsewhere would at once become available in West Africa.

" (2) In all Mission Schools *definite instruction* should be given on the errors of Islam, and the pupils forearmed. As Mohammedanism claims to be a larger revelation, and to supersede Christianity, it is imperative that this bold challenge should be met, and not passed over in silence, and that every mission pupil should learn not only the Christian truths, but also their position with regard to attacks on those truths.

" (3) Special efforts should be made to encourage the *systematic study* of this question by all workers, both clergy and laymen, as too often they are not well equipped to meet the current objections to Christianity put into the minds of their hearers, which objections may at any time become dominant.

" (4) *Evangelistic effort* ought to be more used among Mohammedans. . . . Special meetings ought to be held for Mohammedans, and every means used to find out what sort of address or what form of meeting specially appeals to them. Preachers will need to be specially trained for this work.

" (5) Special efforts should be made to *occupy* strong *Mohammedan centres*, as it is from these centres that the Mohammedan influence on the pagan districts is exercised. . . .

" (6) An itinerant order of (native) *preachers*, to go about in something the same way as Mohammedan *malams* go about from village to village, would be a great means of extending the Kingdom. The men would need to be specially trained, and would then be given as free a hand as possible, going about in a certain district, and staying in the villages for a week or a month, and endeavouring to get some place or building set apart for Christian worship. The ordinary visit of the missionary on his itineration is too soon forgotten, while the itinerant missionary free to stay in the place for a month, if need be, would be able to

reap some of the fruit, and leave a permanent instead of a transient impression."

The problems in East Africa are to a large extent the same as those already mentioned. The barrier Churches in Uganda and around Lake Nyassa are breakwaters in the flood of Islam—they need strengthening all along the line.

As the task gradually comes into focus in all its extent and all its difficulty, the word rises to heart and lips, "Impossible!" But the word itself brings up the answer that refutes it:—

" With God nothing is impossible.  
Nothing shall be impossible to you."

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## CHAPTER VIII

### HOW SAVE IT ?

#### (3) *The Impossible-Possible Problem, and the Spirit of Jesus*

THE reader has surely gathered, in the course of studying the preceding pages, the reality, the paramount seriousness, and inevitableness, of the problem of ISLAM to the Christian Church. He has also probably wondered, with whatsoever he is capable of wonderment, at the fact that it is, nevertheless, *this* problem, which of all others has been repudiated, blinked at, and shirked by the Church of Christ. It is idle to speculate on the ultimate reason for both the existence of the problem and the behaviour of Christendom in the face of it. It is also unnecessary to recapitulate the medley of reasons which have been, and are still, advanced in favour of the very facile policy of *laissez-faire* : it is palpable that the worst of these are the offspring of no-faith in Christianity, dislike of trouble, or secret cowardice ; and that even the best of them would not stand for a moment when intellect, heart, and spirit have been honestly submitted to the spirit or the letter of the New Testament, of Christianity, of Christ. Already we have mentioned those

reasons with their varying degrees of sincerity. But there is yet one—it may, or may not, be the sincerest of them all—which has not been mentioned; one voice that is always with us—the voice of him who says, “I allow all you say—but—the Time has not come”! Often that voice belongs to one to whom “the Time” is as a horizon that ever retreats; it never does “come,” nor is there in fact desire that it should ever come. But this voice sometimes belongs to those who only need the encouragement given by information and by knowledge to be turned into sane enthusiasts who know that the Time *has* come, and that the day of action, as of salvation, is To-day.

Whether then for such, or for ourselves, this book, and more particularly this chapter, is written. Action is such an enormously responsible and serious thing that it is no wonder if a man refuses to be committed to it unless intellect, heart and spirit have been convinced, and are at rest.

It would seem a strange way of stimulating action, to mass and to focus the facts which cow and discourage it. Nevertheless that is what we are about to do. It is written :

What king, as he goeth to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand ?

We are now going to take careful and deliberate stock of that twenty thousand. But was this

stock-taking intended by the divine Commander to discourage action? Surely, to call it out; to awaken dormant energies, unsuspected heroisms; to inspire shame of that so miserable army of ten thousand, and thus to urge the calling out of the infinite resources and unknown reserves which are available to reinforce it.

## I

*“Islam is the only one of the great religions to come after Christianity; the only one that definitely claims to correct, complete and supersede Christianity; the only one that categorically denies the truth of Christianity; the only one that has in the past signally defeated Christianity; the only one that seriously disputes the world with Christianity; the only one which, in several parts of the world, is to-day forestalling and gaining on Christianity.”*

These words, taken from a recent summary of the problem and the rebuke of Islam, sum up the main reason why Islam is a *unique* problem to the Christian Church; unique in its urgency, unique in its difficulty. It cannot be treated like any other; it baffles more than any other, for it is more difficult to concede to it what is gladly conceded to other religions that appeared before Christ, that they in some sort prepared and prepare the way for Him. How can that which denies the whole essential and particular content of His message be said to prepare

for Him, or to be a half-way house to His Kingdom ? For that is what Islam does. Other religions know nothing of Christianity ; one and all they came before it and speak of it neither good nor evil. But the whole theory of Islam is that it, the latest-sent of all religions, does not so much *abrogate* Christianity and its Book, as specifically and categorically deny both as wilful corruption and lies. Point by point, *that which is particular* in the content of Christianity, steeped through and through with the tenderness of the love of God, is negated with abhorrence by Islam :— the Fatherhood of God ; the Sonship and Incarnation of Jesus Christ ; the Divinity of the Holy Ghost ; the death of Christ and all that it means, whether ethically—of love, infinite tenderness, infinite self-sacrifice ; or spiritually—of sin condemned, and sin forgiven ; the Resurrection of Christ on the third day ; His glorification with the Father with the glory which He had with Him before the world was—each several truth of these truths is a blasphemy in the eyes of every Moslem, a lie which Islam came expressly to blast, taught by a Book which the Korân came expressly to replace.

It is easier to convince a man of that of which he knows nothing in particular, than of that which he firmly believes to be definitely false. Add to this, that Islam actually succeeded in displacing, humbling, and destroying that which bore the name of Christianity in many lands ; and so Moslems became yet further convinced of the weakness and ignorance of Christians, and of their disfavour with

God. The rise of the Christian nations has done nothing to dispel this, for Islam puts that down to anything but their religion. It therefore burns with a two-fold desire to revenge its own humiliation on the unbelieving nations whose yoke is on its neck, and to vindicate its own still unfulfilled claims to universality and supreme victory.

To universality: for with the possible exception of Buddhism, no other great non-Christian religion seriously cares whether it becomes universal or not. Some indeed expressly repudiate universality. Islam alone claims it, and actively and ceaselessly works to make good its claim. Do we need any more words as to the inevitableness of the problem of Islam? But as to its seriousness? Back to that Church-Mosque at Damascus whence we took our start! See where a Cross once stood, and where there stands a Crescent to-day! That sight stands for, and typifies, what every Moslem sees inwardly, and believes he has the right to see actually, when he looks at the Cross on every continental cathedral spire, every English minster rising from the sweet silent close, every village church, from whose belfry-tower the chimes come like a benediction over the hamlet nestling at its feet, and the meadow-lands smiling in the sunlight beyond. . . .

So much for the problem's *inevitableness*: so much for its *seriousness*. But this is not all. What has been told does not tell yet half the *difficulty*.

We have to remember that the Moslem knows that his religion arose in the full light of historic

day. His intellect goes back to, and rests on, the undoubted historic fact of Mohammed, the Arabian Prophet who was given a Book from heaven, the authenticity of which none denies, the strangeness of which, as coming from Mohammed, none questions. Here are phenomena, universally admitted, which seem to him a conclusive proof of divine action. The very absence of miracle is becoming a matter of boast to him. Monsieur So-and-so is telling him that Islam is the only rational religion that does not ascribe to its founder an irrational miracle—it only claims the rational miracle of the Koràn itself. And so forth. All this gives the Moslem hard ground on which to plant his feet in denying and rejecting any other faith, and adds to the strength with which he cleaves to his own.

Nor is this all, nor nearly all. Add to this the simplicity and the rigid definiteness of the creed to which the Moslem invites the world's adherence. Islam simplifies with a vengeance! "*There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is the Apostle of Allah*"; a child can learn it in a moment, and to its vigorous negative exclusion, and simple universal assertion, a meaning can be instantly attached. It seems to require no explaining, no elaboration; it can never be forgotten; the densest intellect can hold on to it; and to it moreover an infinite virtue and value has been solemnly attached. The Moslem has as little demand made on his intellect as on his moral faculty: his is the ideal religion for "the plain man," "the man in the street"—those familiar

mental lusting of the human heart, is irresistibly attractive. They flock into it, and it is content to let them flock in by the thousand, no question asked, no scrutiny prescribed in regard to motives. . . . *Motives!* that is for Allah to judge, not man. For Mohammed emphatically forbade the rejection of *any* man who professed Islam by repeating the Kalima (the "Word," *i.e.* Creed); and Islam has joyously followed his lead—much *it* cares for the state of soul of him who makes his profession! Are not his children certain to be Moslem to the core? And so Islam spreads and spreads. Against a propaganda such as this, what chance has a religion which demands the surrender of the whole man, the subordination of flesh to spirit by the branding of the former with the slave-mark of the Cross; which searches for the "one" sheep—for individual souls; which insists on the importance of *principle*, the duty of loving the *spirit* of the commandment of Jesus? No wonder Moslems boast, all over the Moslem world, of the religion which spreads with so divine a spontaneity, and point with contemptuous pity to the painful efforts of Christianity, the portentous outpouring of energy on the part of its devoted agents, with the pitifully incommensurate results. As one Moslem writer in Cairo put it, speaking more truly than he knew, "Christianity opposes, Islam follows, the current of human nature."

But this is not all. Not only is a simple moral standard demanded from the proselyte, but an equally simple standard is allowed to the proselytizer.

What is the moral standard, do we suppose, of the Arab traders and ex-slavers, the Sudanese mallams, who spread the faith in West and East Africa? It may be good, indifferent, or downright bad—yet in each case alike the man may be a highly successful worker for Islam. Where little is expected, there is no disappointment. So we get the strange fact that bad men may be fervent professors of Islam—tyrants, bullies, liars, fornicators, men of blood, but fanatics for the religion of Allah and his Prophet, consigning heartily to *Jehannam* all others—such men may be and are real promoters of Islam. We may admit, and earnestly lay to heart the admission, that those men at least are willing to receive into fraternity the wretches they have wronged, or still wrong. It may be at bottom a tremendous proof of the divinity of Christianity that the “Christian” trader, living in sin, is not and cannot be an advertisement of his religion, and that moreover he neither calls himself a Christian, nor cares if he be known as such or not. The fact remains that Islam can, and does, use instruments which Christianity must deliberately and necessarily refuse. What shall we call such a contest as this? One is tempted, again and again, to turn away with a groan, as the French general did when he surveyed what was essayed at Balaklava—“It is magnificent, but it is not *la guerre*.”

Yet even this is not all. This is not the only point in which our Christian propagandism seems positively to defeat itself by its high standard: we

have not yet considered the simplicity of *their* culture and race problems, the complexity of *ours*. Christian culture—in the high sense that includes character—is a thing of long growth, with roots far back in the past, and deep down in Christ, who is the Truth, not only in religion, but in knowledge and in art as well. He who has that culture cannot if he would, should not if he could, divest himself of it. And yet how often and how often the messenger of Christ feels it a veritable barrier between himself and those to whom he comes. The very thought that there are whole realms of soul-life which he cannot impart to these people, into which they can never enter, is, more than he realizes perhaps, a discouragement to him ; more than they realize, an obstacle to them. A gulf seems fixed—can it indeed be crossed, or narrowed ? Thus it is that the very complexity of European culture at its simplest—the glorious successes that its centuries have won—seem often to be solely a hindrance in the field of missionary action. Body and mind, and not soul only, demand in fact a minimum which, as the missionary almost in despair observes, seems to place him in a different class from the people with whom he longs to show his unity in the Christ. What chance then has Christianity against those whose religion brings a culture that is the simplest and most superficial thing imaginable, so that it seems to the savage just so superior that it must be coveted, and not so superior that it must be despaired of ? Does even the effect produced by

the self-emptying of the Christian after the fashion of his Lord, counteract these things? Can that renunciation ever be complete enough to be so much as noticed by the very people whose attention it is supposed to arrest?

Enough!—yet there is more. For at the heels of this simplification of the culture-problem comes a weightier matter still, a more grievous handicap than any yet mentioned—the simplicity of the *race* problem for Islam; its complexity for Christendom. It is not mere pride and prejudice that have forbidden the mixing of white with black or brown or yellow. It is gravely to be considered whether nature herself—and God is behind nature—has in the past blessed the banns in such mixtures, or will do so in the future. Is this a small matter in relation to the subject of our enquiry? Consider! Why is it that the Moslem occupation of a country has always meant the gradual and unimpeded Islamizing of its people, whereas the occupation of an African or Asiatic country by a Christian European nation, so far from having a corresponding effect, seems to have the very reverse? We hear it wondered at that ‘*even*’ the prestige of Christian conquerors is insufficient to recommend their religion. “*Even!*” It is that very prestige that damns it, because those conquerors are conquerors *who will not mix with their conquered*. There is no mingling of families, there are separate castes. And separate castes have separate gods. A father can with ease impose his religion on his family throughout the east, but

those who remain outside the family life (which is the social life) of the people they rule, will be indeed *outsiders*, and their religion will be indeed foreign. And how deep is the loathing of a nation for a foreign religion : it is the religion of their eternally foreign conquerors ! Here too, then, Christianity has all the handicap against it, for this very thing is Islam's strength. No law has seemed to forbid the mingling of Arab and other Moslem races with whatsoever nations they settled amongst. Syria, Persia, Egypt, North Africa, Negro Africa, Mongol Asia, India, Malaysia, all tell the same tale : the Moslem host enters ; the conquest is made ; the conquerors assume all the posts of government, *and fill their harems with the women of the land.* (A Moslem may marry an " unbelieving woman," but not *vice versa*. Notice the deep world-wisdom of this rule.) In one generation, under these circumstances, the sore of conquest has probably been forgotten, and once " thy people are my people " is realized, " thy God is my God " follows. Thus was it when the first Moslems conquered Persia, Syria, and Egypt ; thus was it when Moguls conquered India ; and Fulahs the Sudan. Thus is it not with Christians. Consequently the religion of Moslems spreads like a natural product, and with the greatest celerity ; while the religion of the Christians has against it, and most of all in the lands where Christians rule, the whole force of that hatred which is entertained by those who feel the stigma of inferiority to be

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hourly obtruded through the conqueror's veto against intermarriage with their race.

And as if this were not enough, Christianity, the more it realizes the meaning and the character of the Kingdom of Christ, becomes the more scrupulous in disclaiming the interest and the aid of the state, as such, in prosecuting the work of its King. No doubt it was not always so. But now in propaganda in Moslem or heathen lands, Christians often have the rulers of their own creed against them, or in armed neutrality; only rarely in anything like earnest sympathy. How shall so scrupulous a religion contest for the world with Islam, which identifies religion and state-craft in a theocracy where all law is religious law? Christianity has abjured the methods of physical conquest, and encourages the rulers of state neither to make difference between man and man, nor to discriminate against anyone for changing his religious faith. When supreme in any realm, Islam has at its disposal, and without scruple uses, the whole machinery of the state, by rewarding those who profess it or turn to it, and by loading with an hourly sense of inferiority and contempt those who refuse to conform to it. It makes death the portion of the man who abandons it, and the portion of the woman imprisonment till she recant, or till death steps in to end her misery. Such is Islamic canon-law to-day, and it should be distinctly understood that every inroad made by civil law into canon-law is made in Islam's despite. Whether canon-law can, or cannot, be enforced,

such is the spirit of Islam, the spirit that animates all Mohammedans against those who preach in their midst another religion than their own.

Were ever souls in this humour wooed ? Were ever souls in this humour won ? Were ever such odds as these ? How colossal seems the sheer mass, how irresistible the momentum, of this league of nature, the world, and the flesh ! What avails *spirit* against such forces as these ? Why must we for ever renounce all the favourable conditions, giving, like the Scottish King at Flodden, *all* the advantages to the opponent ? Why must we strive always up the hill, with the sun for ever in our eyes, the wind and rain for ever driving in our faces ; ever, ever conceding, never, never receiving, the handicap and the odds ?

So, in effect, argued the Ten. But the wisdom, as well as the courage, was found with the Two, with Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunnch. If Islam's forces are indeed nature, the world, and the flesh, then Islam has left to us one weapon, in taking away all the others—it has abandoned to us the sword of *the Spirit*. The Two considered that as enough. "Their defence is removed from over them, and the Lord is with us : fear them not." The Spirit of Jesus is the only asset of the Church.

## II

Thus we say in faith, *Nil desperandum Christo duce*. And, turning to the work itself, we encounter many facts that bear out this supreme encouragement of the invincibility of the Christ.

By far the greater part of the Mohammedan world is perfectly open to missionary work. Practically the whole of Asiatic Islam, except parts of Afghanistan and of the peninsula of Arabia, receives, or would receive, the messengers of Christ's Gospel: and the same may be said of African Islam, with the exception of a part of the Sudan. And these exceptions—how soon may they not cease to be exceptions? At any moment a turn in the political wheel, some daring and original individual exploit, may open up these countries also. But is the Church proving her willingness and ability to enter even the doors that are open to-day?

Again, most of the important strategic centres are occupied by at least some representatives of the Gospel. Mecca and Timbuktu on the Niger are perhaps the most important exceptions, but is it not wonderful to think that such great spiritual or social centres as Constantinople, Damascus, Beyrout, Jerusalem, Cairo, Zanzibar, Baghdad, Ispahan, Bokhara, Lahore, Delhi and other great Indian Moslem centres, are also centres of work carried on in the name of Christ.<sup>1</sup> Every one of these centres

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Zwemer's *Islam*, p. 215.

needs strengthening to an indefinite extent ; but the fact remains, they are occupied.

Again, the language problem is not so insuperable a one as some other missionary language problems. The languages spoken by Moslems are relatively few, and the Bible has been translated, in whole or in part, into nearly all of them. "The Beyrout press alone has issued over a million volumes of the Arabic Scriptures since it was founded ; the demand for the Bible in Persia, Arabia, Egypt, and the Turkish Empire is phenomenal." The Arabic tongue, itself spoken by over 45,000,000 Moham-medans, is read by many more ; and if the Moham-medan revival results in increased study of Arabic all over the Moslem world, that will only give increased prestige and opportunities of circulation to the Bible itself, and to other Christian books, *in Arabic*. Well might D. M. Thornton be an enthusiast for harnessing the Arabic tongue, turning that own weapon of Islam against Islam's own bosom. Dr Zwemer tables twenty main Moslem languages, or twenty-eight, counting dialects, into which the Bible has been already translated in whole or in part. The Korán on the contrary is rarely translated ; and when it is, it sometimes merely loses its prestige in the process. We have seen, too, how a growing body of literature, in the tongues most spoken by Moslems, is gradually getting into their hands in all parts of the House of Islam. The seed is indeed being sown ; who knows what is germinating silently underground ?

Add to this the hundreds of thousands of Moslem hearts, which are touched and disarmed every year by the ministries of Christian hearts and Christian hands in school, hospital, and dispensary all over the House of Islam ; and the many who in book-depot, or bazaar, or preaching-room listen quietly to the doctrine of Jesus quite apart from such ministries of teaching or of healing. What might it not be if a new anointing of the Spirit of Christ were given to-day, like that of Pentecost, to all these ministrants, giving to their every word and action a grace that were itself an argument not to be resisted or gainsaid ? Why should we not expect, in answer to our prayers, the anointing of Mohanmedan converts with the fullness of that Spirit, to be as prophets to their own people ? Dr Pennell says, after speaking of an Afghan Moslem convert, Abdul Karim, martyred because he would not deny Christ, that a public acknowledgment of Christianity in Afghanistan would mean death, and probably a cruel death. " At the same time I believe that the Church in Afghanistan will not be established till there have been many such martyrs, who will seal their faith with their blood. When the news of the death of Abdul Karim reached Bannu, more than one of our Afghan Christians offered to go over into Afghanistan and take his place, as herald of the Cross, and bear the consequences, but I pointed out to them that the time was not yet." Is the time perhaps near at hand ? More and more prayer is needed for the outpouring

of the Spirit on all converts from Islam that they may be used of God as apostles for the evangelization of their own kindred and their own people.

And then we have the actual results ; those thousands in Malaysia and India ; those groups wherever honest and courageous work has been done. Is not the earnest sufficient ? Does it not sufficiently shatter the continual contention that " to convert a Mohammedan is impossible " ? We have, too, on every side the testimony to their quality when won—what brighter stars have there been among oriental converts than the old man, Imâd - ud - dîn of India, the young man, Kamil Abdul Messiah of Syria ? What was possible in the past is possible in the future—nay, on a greater and continually increasing scale—not only possible, but certain, if only the Church is worthy of her calling and her Lord.

For verily great names have led the way to the saving of Islam, men of faith who even at times when all, *all* was against them, looked neither to the left nor to the right, but went straight forward ; for they endured, as seeing Him who is invisible. Francis of Assisi, Raymund Lull, Francis Xavier, Henry Martyn, Karl Pfander, Valpy French, Ian Keith-Falconer, Douglas Thornton—these are names of right noble men who have passed to their everlasting reward—these, with living names that might be added to theirs, challenge us to accomplish even more than they accomplished, by

just as much as our opportunities and means are greater than theirs, while the Spirit of Jesus was not more theirs than ours. And, indeed, it does correct and dispel the blank misgiving which besets us when we see what remains to be accomplished, and the mountainous obstacles in the way, to look back only a hundred years and see the marvellous progress that has been made. We climb the mountain-side with painful steps and slow, the summit seems so far—it is not until we look back and down that we see how much has been accomplished.

#### CONCLUSION

What then will it not be when the Church as a whole has realized that she exists to evangelize the world? When by God's voice in sermon, address, organization, missionary study in church and college, the whole Church realizes that every true member is responsible for world evangelization, and that every Christian who goes abroad in any capacity is a foreign missionary? When the hint given us by Islam is spiritually fulfilled, and Church members, whether they be administrators, or soldiers, or merchants, or mechanics, or clerks, are "dismissed" to their spheres of work to make them into spheres of service, places where, directly or indirectly, they will do all they can, be it little or be it much, to forward the conscious end, shared by them with

the whole Church, of "making Jesus King"<sup>1</sup> over all, and, though "Islam defies your King,"<sup>2</sup> King over Islam ?

Yet more, Look Upward.

For in the long last, the Spirit is mightier than the flesh, as God is mightier than man. The stone which the builders rejected shall become the headstone of the corner. The Spirit of Jesus has been deliberately left by Islam to the Church, and so even He whom the warriors have rejected shall be the chosen Leader and Power of that Church. There is no other. Yet do we know what we ask ? It means that we are claiming a right to have it said to us, "*Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.*" For verily the bare contemplation of this problem of Islam is, until death relieves our watch, an abiding on the mountain-top of Temptation with the Lord. Even while we wrote or read this chapter, were we not in spirit there ? Nay, is there on earth anything which so nearly as the contemplation of the problem and reproach of Islam reproduces for us the situation that faced the Redeemer on that Mount ? He, too, was shown a whole world of men in a moment of time, as we have been shown : He, too, saw with piercing clearness, as we have seen, the monstrous dead-weight of the natural forces of world and flesh which by mere *vis*

<sup>1</sup> Motto cabled to S.V.M.U. Conference at Liverpool, 1896, by the Scandinavian Student Christian Movement.

<sup>2</sup> Motto cabled by Cairo Student Volunteers to the London Conference, 1900.

*inertia* or sheer brute power threatened to overwhelm His whole work : He, too, knew what it was to feel that these advantages must be ever conceded, never claimed—even when, cruelly tantalizing, they were lying ready to hand : He, too, knew what it was to fall back on the *Spirit*, to realize and to confess that *only* by what seemed like weakness must all that strength be met, *only* by the foolishness of the Message, *only* by the scandal of the Cross : He knew what it cost to confess deliberately that “ the weakness of God is stronger than men,” and “ the foolishness of God is wiser than men.” He knew all this : He made the choice : He chose Spirit-power, and rejected all else. By *that* He chose to save the world with all its forces, cost what it might.

So, then, Islam is the greatest call the Church ever has had, or will have, to look to Him who is invisible—to come to an understanding and realization of the meaning of CHRIST. In a score of ways, the Rebuke of Islam that rebukes us day by day, calls us back to explore His forgotten secrets, and to realize what He in Himself is. Most of all it calls us to a closer association with Christ Himself—to that continuance with Him in His temptations—to learn *what* is the Kingdom of God, *Who* is the Spirit of Jesus. If this be so, is Islam itself too great a price to have had to pay for the lesson ? And if the Church is brought truly to learn this lesson, she will face the Rebuke of Islam, with shame and sorrow indeed, but without dismay, for she will, in so learning, learn also the secret of Christ's

Victory, and will prove in herself the power of His Risen Life. When the SPIRIT OF JESUS is set free to work, the issue is assured.

And so we come back in thought to that Church-Mosque at Damascus, from which we took our start, and read again that inscription which is both instruction and pledge :

THY KINGDOM, O CHRIST, IS A KINGDOM OF  
ALL AGES

It is a prophecy that was unconsciously endorsed by that old Sheikh of the College-Mosque of Bokhara who said to one who had caused him to read the Book of the Christians : " I am convinced that Jesus Christ will conquer Mohammed. There is no doubt about it, because Christ is King in Heaven and on the earth, and His Kingdom fills Heaven and will soon fill the earth."

So be it.

And now let us go hence.

# STATISTICAL APPENDIX

## MOSLEM POPULATION OF THE WORLD (1914<sup>1</sup>)

<u>Asia—</u>	Total Population	Mohammedan Population
India . . . . .	308,965,933	65,955,886
Dutch East Indies . . . . .	38,216,979	35,308,996
Russian Empire (including Bok- hara and Khiva) . . . . .	167,003,400	20,000,000
Turkey in Asia . . . . .	19,705,200	12,278,800
Chinese Empire . . . . .	427,135,305	8,421,000 <sup>2</sup>
Afghanistan . . . . .	5,900,000	5,000,000
Persia . . . . .	5,000,000	4,500,000
Arabia . . . . .	2,500,000	2,500,000
Ceylon . . . . .	4,105,535	276,361
Rest of Asia . . . . .	—	2,449,067
<i>Total for Asia</i>	—	<u>156,690,110</u>
 <u>Africa—</u>		
Egypt . . . . .	11,287,359	10,269,445
Rest of Africa . . . . .	—	31,769,904
<i>Total for Africa</i>	—	<u>42,039,349</u>
 <u>Europe—</u>		
Turkey in Europe . . . . .	2,000,000	1,000,000
Balkan States . . . . .	17,000,000	699,637
Great Britain . . . . .	45,369,090	1,000
Rest of Europe (not including Russia) . . . . .	—	673,039
<i>Total for Europe (not including Russia)</i>	—	<u>2,373,676</u>
 <u>America</u>		 <u>174,061</u>
 <u>Australia</u>		 <u>10,500</u>
 <b>TOTAL FOR MOHAMMEDAN WORLD, <u>201,296,696</u></b>		

<sup>1</sup> The above figures have been taken from the Statistical Survey by Professor Westermann and Rev. S. M. Zwemer, D.D., given in *The Moslem World*, April 1914. It is not possible at the time of going to press to obtain post-war statistics of Moslem populations.—W. H. T. G.

<sup>2</sup> A census in 1918 points to the Moslem population in China being considerably larger than this.

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