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Mosaic Pharaoh as having been cast ashore to be a sign and a warning to mankind. It is not our object to enter into these details here. We only want to show that Prophetic Revelation feeds, and is not fed by, the human intellect. It comes in only when human faculties have ceased to be of service to their possessors; when the voice of conscience is still; when reason is irretrievably lost in the fogs of passion. Revelation is an agency which Nature very sparingly employs and which is not called upon to undertake what man by his unaided efforts might well accomplish. *The bearer of revelation is the superman of his age; he chalks out untrodden paths and at every point of his contact with the world creates values beyond the ken of his fellow-men.* Can we say this of Ghulam Ahmad? Only the blind could fail to see the mimic prophet picking up the crumbs of Sir Syed's repast. The Syed held that

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Jesus Christ was dead and could not revisit the earth. He preached to the Indian Musalman that Jihad was not to be thought of under British rule. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad took up these propositions and passed them upon the world as divinely inspired. Let us grant that Sir Syed was quite right in his preaching and Ghulam Ahmad in re-echoing it. But that would only show the Mirza to be a prophet in borrowed plumes.

Having despatched Jesus, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad declared himself to be the Christ awaited by Muslims and Christians. He tried to draw a complete parallel between his own life and that of Jesus Christ. Both lived and worked under the greatest of imperial powers of their respective times. Jesus was a Roman and Ghulam Ahmad a British subject. The Mirza likened the Muslims of his time to the Jews of Christ's day. The Jews had Jesus condemned to the Cross,

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and the Muslims had Ghulam Ahmad tried by a British court for abetment of murder. Both escaped, the former from the Cross and the latter from the gallows. More than that. The followers of Ghulam Ahmad characterize their master's physiognomy as answering to the description of the Israelite Prophets.

This analogy can be shown to break down miserably. Jesus led a life of poverty and self-denial, while Ghulam Ahmad prided himself on the worldly riches that his prophethood had brought him. Jesus was a friend of the poor and the outcast and wanted to be considered as one of them, whereas Ghulam Ahmad was swollen with aristocratic pride and had unmingled contempt for the rif-raff. The Punjab Census Report (1901) spoke of Ghulam Ahmad as a *Maulvi* who started "with a special mission to the sweepers".* The Messiah could not take

* The writer of the report confused him with a cousin of his.

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this lying down. He submitted a memorial to the authorities protesting against being "associated with a very low class of society", and demanding excision of the defamatory passages that lacerated his own feelings and those of the "Raies, Jagirdars, respectable Government officials, Merchants, Pleaders, learned *Maulvis* and highly educated young men" among his followers.

Jesus condemned the self-righteous conceit and formalism of the Scribes and Pharisees. But Ghulam Ahmad's petition to the British Government shows him to be a man of the commonest clay who would not deign to rub shoulders with the *pariahs*. More than that. He fosters, blesses and defends the vanities of birth, riches and learning that Christ declared himself uncompromisingly against. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is not the like, but a travesty of Christ.

The followers of Ghulam Ahmad

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are anxious to make out as many points as they can of resemblance between Jesus and their own Messiah, regardless of the straws they snatch at. They urge that Christ was for rendering to Caesar the things that were Caesar's and that Ghulam Ahmad, too, was a law-abiding and tax-paying British subject. The history of Christ has yet to be written. While there is nothing on record to show that Jesus waged war against the Romans, there is ample evidence that he preached doctrines which no imperial power can contemplate with equanimity.

Christ was to all intents and purposes a leader of the masses, who visualized a kingdom under God. The Christian world is guilty of having tampered with the meaning of the term "Kingdom of God". It is believed that the Kingdom of God is not at all this-worldly and that it relates exclusively to the hereafter. The Kingdom of God came to be

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banished from this world to the next because kings and emperors wanted demarcation between their dominions and God's only to become undisputed masters of all they surveyed.

That explains why God's Kingdom was allowed to become a curiosity of the world to come instead of a living reality on our side of the grave. It is clear that the Prophet of Nazareth could not have spoken of the Kingdom of God in this restricted and mutilated sense of the term. The Christianity of to-day may put a false construction upon his words. But the Jews understood him and so did the Romans. They did laugh at the man who had not an arrow in his quiver and talked of founding an empire. But that they were certainly not ignorant of the potentialities of the Gospel, is amply borne out by the fact that the Roman magistrate allowed Jesus to be sent to the Cross, knowing full well that he

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was innocent. That he washed his hands of the blood of Christ, does not make him any the less responsible for the sentence he pronounced and, to all appearance, got executed. Christ, the man of God, who was for rendering to Caesar the things that were his was also for rendering to God what is His. He would not have hesitated to take away from Caesar what did not rightfully belong to him, and this implication of his teaching was not lost upon those whom it concerned.

Ghulam Ahmad, unlike Christ, is Caesar's own man. He burns a votary's incense at the altar of English imperialism. He knows the fate he would have met in a Muslim country. That is why he goes into raptures over the blessings of British rule. In a letter to Queen Victoria he tells her that it was her earthly justice that moved God in heaven to raise the Messiah from amongst her

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subjects. He beseeches the British to guard "the sapling of their own planting." These words have compromised his prophethood as well as those charged to defend it. There is a certain section of Muslims very near suspecting his prophethood to have been inspired and subsidized by the powers that be. The Ahmadis who carry on their propaganda in foreign lands are looked upon by the inhabitants of those countries as British spies. There is nothing to suggest that Ghulam Ahmad's prophethood had the English for its authors except his own utterance, which seems to have the force almost of a confession when he calls himself "the sapling of their own planting" or when he speaks of British justice as having been the mover of heaven with respect to his prophethood. It goes without saying that the Ahmadis conduct themselves in a manner that arouses the suspicion that

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blood other than those of his ancestors courses through the veins of Ghulam Ahmad's prophethood.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is at pains to make Islam into an appanage of British imperialism. He pretends to have rung the knell of Jihad, and repeatedly begs of the British to reward his lifelong service as their propagandist. His personality is the closet where Christ and Antichrist clandestinely meet, confabulate and conspire. They remain no longer opposed except for the sake of argument. It is always the Antichrist that is invoked to silence the batteries directed against the Christ. The reincarnation has done violence to the Messiah's nature; he follows the Antichrist like a train-bearer; and the Holy Ghost likewise registers the decrees of Antichrist.

We should not have felt called upon to dwell on the Anglophilous proclivities of Ghulam Ahmad, had he spoken as a

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private individual as so many Anglo-Muslim alliance enthusiasts are doing to-day. But he does not do that, and claims divine authority for every syllable that escapes his lips. God is no respecter of persons and empires. And His chosen ones address kings and emperors as Moses addressed Pharaoh or as Abraham confronted his idolatrous folks. The fiery ordeal from which prophethoods are known to have emerged without scathe is his pet abhorrence. The abusive epithets that he heaped upon his opponents, and the death and pestilence to which his prophecies habitually consigned his enemies, created a veritable scandal that aroused Government to the necessity of keeping the Messiah within manageable limits. The District Magistrate of Gurdaspur told him that he was going too far, and made him sign an agreement that he would no longer revile his enemies and that he would desist from publishing

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revelations predictive of anybody's death or ruin. If his revelations emanated from God, here was an opportunity to stand up for them and to part with life and all rather than have silence imposed upon his oracle. That he readily accepted the conditions dictated to him, shows that his prophethood was no more than lip-deep.

It is the way of prophets to hearten the righteous and warn the wicked. They carry on their work and deliver the message they are charged with. No persecution can daunt them; it only serves as an incentive to redouble their efforts. Their voice remains clear, firm and unstiffed, come what may. And when the world has finally refused to listen to them, when suasion has reached its limit, they appeal to the judgment of God, from which there is no escape. The Deluge came when Noah invoked God's judgment on his persecutors. The Pharaoh defied Moses,

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and his mummified remains tell their own story. It is nothing short of blasphemy to mention Ghulam Ahmad beside the great teachers of the world. Necessity alone could, perhaps, excuse us. Ghulam Ahmad's revelations found their exorciser in the District Magistrate. Peter's conduct in denying Jesus was far less dishonourable than the Messiah's who left his revelations in the lurch the moment the authorities frowned at them. He dealt his prophethood a deadlier blow than any of his enemies could have done, and committed moral and spiritual suicide. Need we any more pursue the parallel instituted by this Messiah between himself and Jesus Christ?

Ghulam Ahmad claimed in his capacity as Messiah that he had been sent to "smash the Cross" and extirpate the Antichrist. That was a challenge to Christendom and to its foremost representative in the East. He sought

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to mitigate the severity of his claim by interpreting Antichrist to be no other than Christian missionaries. The Antichrist was to be worsted in argument rather than on the field of battle. Wordy warfare with Christian missionaries was wholly to engage Christ in his second coming. The Mirza dare not suggest that Christian missions have their root in imperial expansion, that so long as imperialism endures its missionary adjuncts must remain, and that Antichrist cannot die while imperialism lives. The Messiah is all the wiser for his sojourn amongst the Jews of yore, and is determined not to reopen the fatal chapter of crucifixion. He blesses imperialism and curses its child. He swallows the camel and strains at the gnat.

Fifty years have passed since Ghulam Ahmad opened fire on Antichrist. Has he achieved the victory over the Cross which was the most trumpeted

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item on his programme? There can be no doubt as to the answer. The Qadianis allege that the Mirza has riddled the Cross with his shots.* That is the greatest falsehood ever uttered. The Cross has the world at its feet, and is perched on heights unknown to it in Mirza's time. Did not the Mirza himself publicly pray all his life that the whole world might come and remain under its sway till the Day of Judgment? The Cross with its big battalions has come to the rescue of the Messiah's prayer and has justified the confidence he reposed in it. The Mirza's war with Antichrist is a blind and a camouflage. The co-operation between the two is as close and unflinching as that between the blades that together constitute a pair of scissors.

* If words were bullets, Nietzsche must bear the palm.

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CHAPTER VI
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THE *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy* (Truth about Revelation) is the last of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's works in which he recounts the signs alleged to have been granted him by God. He claims that one who has read that book from title-page to colophon cannot fail to be convinced of his revelation being veracious. He enumerates his prophecies in support of his claim and tries to swell their number by repeating very many of them several times over. They dwell at length on his pecuniary gains, on the discomfiture of his enemies, and on his successes in the field of litigation. He prides himself on the unerring fulfilment of his prophecies, and is at pains to impart his own enthusiasm to his readers.

We shall select and examine some of his prophecies to see whether his claim

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can stand the test, the only test it admits of. But we cannot help feeling amused at the audacity with which he argues from his prophecies to his prophethood. It is true that prophethood prophesies but not that all prophesying is prophethood. Prophecies do not make one a prophet. They are not indicative, nor need they be suggestive, of spirituality in him who makes them. The Mirza's prophecies are the mainstay of his prophethood and he advances them with a bluff not unlike the card-sharper's. He seems to count on the future as if it were an accomplice in his designs. It would be interesting to see how he came to presume upon the unseen.

Modern Psychology, with its leanings primarily abnormal, has brought no more than the tyro's interest to bear upon the subject of dreams. The study of how far dreams are predictive of the future has yet to be undertaken. Materials exist,

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but no scientific use has yet been found for them. That dreams are nothing but mental waste, ill-assorted and purposeless, cannot stand scrutiny. It is undeniable that some of our dreams have as clear a perception of the future as memory has of the past. There are persons whose dreams habitually dwell on the future and come true. We have reasons to believe that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had second sight which went on getting myopic from ill-usage as years passed. His visions filled him with spiritual conceit, and their frequency served only to heighten it. He came to be obsessed with the thought that he was a seer. His dreams began increasingly to reflect this waking preoccupation of his and convinced him rather against his will that God had elected him to the apostolic office. That he did not give in without a struggle is evidenced by his persistent refusal to listen to his revelations which seemed intent on doing

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him all the honours due to a prophet. Had he restricted himself to the position that seeing visions and foretelling events did not suffice to equip one with prophethood, we would have had no quarrel with him. He himself admits that it is quite possible for a harlot to dream a predictive dream in the arms of her guilty partner. But egotism led him to make an exception on his own behalf and to claim divine origin not only for his dreams but also for his passing thoughts and whims. A prophet's wish, he would assure us, has the force of a prayer granted and his reveries are nothing short of inspired. Ghulam Ahmad over-reached himself, and his prophecies led to his and their own undoing.

We must not forget, while considering his prophecies, the lofty claims they are meant to uphold. Although Ghulam Ahmad protests, over and over again, that he is essentially one of the Prophet

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Muhammad's creatures and that his prophethood shines with the Prophet's lustre, he is not content with a subordinate, second-hand and shadowy prophethood. He claims at once a perfect equality with, and a decided superiority to, every other prophet. He says that no prophet had been given as many signs as were granted him. The Prophet worked three thousand miracles, while he (Ghulam Ahmad) had adduced three lakhs of signs in support of his own prophethood. "Let alone Jesus, the son of Mary, Ghulam Ahmad is by far his superior.....Had Jesus lived in my time, he could not have accomplished what I have.....Had God favoured Noah with the signs that he is fortifying me with, the Deluge would not have overtaken his people." None but Ghulam Ahmad or a mad man could urge such wild and impudent claims.

The reader is now invited to have a glimpse of the Messiah's exhibits. We

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shall let him recite his own story :

I

"It is God's custom towards me that He informs me, beforehand, through a revelation or a vision, of the moneys and presents that I am to get. And the signs of this sort would be a little over fifty thousand."

—*Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*, p. 233.

II

"Some mischievous people had reported to the British Government that my income consisted of thousands, suggesting that it was taxable. God revealed to me that their machinations would come to nothing, and so it came to pass."

—*Ibid.*, p. 216.

III

"I was brought up for trial in a case arising from non-observance on my part of a certain provision of the postal law, punishable with a fine of Rs. 500 or six months' imprisonment. To all

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appearance, there seemed no way out for me. I prayed and God communicated to me in a dream that the case would end in fiasco.....The case was accordingly dismissed on the very first hearing."

—*Ibid.*, p. 237.

IV

"It was revealed to me once that I was to get Rs. 21. This revelation was communicated to the Arya Samajists referred to many a time. I was given to understand in the revelation that the money would be received that very day. A certain patient Wazir Singh by name came that very day and paid me a rupee.* And then it occurred to me that I would get the remaining twenty rupees by post. A trusty person was sent to the Post Office. He returned with the intimation that the post had brought me Rs. 5 only from Dera Ghazi Khan, accompanied by a post-card.

* The Messiah here introduces himself as a consulting physician.

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"This piece of news perturbed me, for I had let the Aryas know that I was expecting Rs. 21. They knew that I had already received rupee one. The news from the Post Office disconcerted me beyond description..... and plunged me in utter despair. I read from the signs that the Aryas, who had been made aware of my prophecy felt inwardly pleased to have within their grasp an opportunity to belie me. I felt extremely worried. I was, then, inspired with the idea that Rs. 21 had arrived and that it was not to be doubted. I announced this, which provoked further ridicule, because it had been made public that Rs. 5 only had been received (in the Post Office). Chance led one of the Aryas to the Post Office, where the postal clerk told him on inquiry, or of his own accord, that Rs. 21 had been received and not Rs. 5 as had escaped his lips before. And there came along with the money a post-card from

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Babu Ilahi Bux, an accountant. The money reached me on September 8, 1883 the very day I had the revelation to the effect. To commemorate the blessed day and to make the Aryas bear witness to the fact, sweets worth a rupee were distributed among themso that they might remember the sign by reason of the sweets, if for no other."

—*Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*, p. 305.

V

"Once on a Railway journey to Ludhiana, I was inspired with the words, 'one half belongs to thee, the other to thy cousins.' The revelation foretold the death of Imam Bibi, one of my cousins, and the equal division of her landed property between myself and her other blood-relations. My companions were informed there and then of the revelation. It came to pass as predicted: the woman died. I got one-half of her property, and the remaining half went

to her other relations."

—*Nasul-ul-Masih*, p. 213.

VI

"There were two houses adjoining mine and they did not belong to me. I felt the necessity of extending my house because of its insufficient accommodation. It was shown me in a vision that the big platform on the neighbouring site would be replaced by an extensive courtyard. I saw the eastern part of that site pray for becoming a part of my house and the western say 'amen.' The revelation was announced to hundreds of my followers and advertised in the newspapers. Later on, I came in possession of both the houses by purchase as well as succession, and guest rooms replaced various parts of the houses in question. It was difficult for me to acquire these, and nobody could have foreseen that it would be so."

—*Ibid.*, p. 379.

VII

"Our livelihood and comfort entirely depended on my father's income which was very meagre. None of the outsiders knew me. I was an obscure person, living in oblivion in a wilderness like Qadian. Then God according to His promise made a world incline towards me and succoured me financially by (granting me) victory upon victory, which no words of mine can sufficiently thank Him for.

"Circumstanced as I was, I could have hardly expected my takings to amount to even rupees ten a month. But God Who raises up the humble from the dust and makes the proud kiss the dust came to my rescue, and I can say with certainty that I have received by now nearly three lakhs of rupees, and possibly more.

"Those inclined to doubt my statement might well refer to the Post Office registers for the last twenty years, to

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form an idea of the vast income to which a door has been opened during this period. My receipts have not been confined to postal money orders. Thousands of rupees have been presented me by visitors to Qadian; and currency notes are also sent me enclosed in envelopes." — *Ibid.*, pp. 211, 212.

VIII

"It was in March, 1905, that I was at my wit's end for money to provision my guest-house. Guests were pouring in, and money had made itself comparatively scarce..... I dreamt on the 5th of March that a person who appeared to be an angel came before me and rained money upon me. I asked him what his name was. He declined to tell his name. Pressed again, he said, 'My name is Tichi.' Tichi is a Punjabi word meaning comer-in-the-nick-of-time. The materialization of this dream was made possible by God in the form of

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postal money orders and direct receipts from individuals. The monetary gains amounted to thousands and excelled all expectations. Just a perusal of the Post Office registers from the 5th March, 1905 to the close of that year, in verification of my statement, will give an idea of the money received."

— *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*, p. 332.

IX

"My following includes respectable Government officials like Deputy Collectors, Extra Assistant Commissioners, Tehsildars..... and Raises, Jagirdars, educated F.A.'s, B.A.'s, M.A.'s and wealthy merchants of the Punjab and India. In short, all those possessing wisdom, knowledge, power and pelf, those holding offices under the Crown, Raises, Jagirdars, and those descended from nobles and saints, millions have joined and are joining this community."

— *Kitab-ul-Bariah*, p. 171.

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This is the stuff that Ghulam Ahmad's dreams are made of. It is on money that his attention is mostly riveted. It is money, its acquisition, that bulks larger than anything else in the realm of his achievements. That his hunger after money is insatiable is shown by the frequency with which he returns to the subject and by the enthusiasm with which he lingers over it. Money seems to make his prophethood go. God's Godhead comes chiefly to be exercised in His hourly messages to His beloved that money is leaving men's pockets to fill his. Ghulam Ahmad expects his followers to be regular in their monthly payments to him on pain of excommunication. The Messiah is undisguisedly impatient of those who keep in arrears. Defaulters for a period of three months are to be ostracized. The way the Mirza's mind works could be gauged by the conditions on which he made burial in the "Cemetery

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of Paradise" to depend. The first two requirements are as follows: "Whoever wishes to be buried in this cemetery must contribute his quota towards its maintenance. Only those are entitled to a burial place therein who bequeathe one-tenth of their belongings to the cause, to be utilized in the spread of Islam and the Quran." The third and last condition is that the candidate for burial in the Messiah's grave-yard must be a true Muslim.* The ability to pay weighs with Ghulam Ahmad more than true faith. He has no use for piety accompanied by an empty pocket. It is easier for a camel to pass through needle's eye than for a virtuous but penniless person to enter the Messiah's paradise. Ghulam Ahmad's utterance places rank above virtue. Whenever he speaks of converts to his cause, he gives the first place to his Raisas, Jagirdars and "educated F.A.'s,

*The Messiah and his household are privileged exemptees.

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B.A.'s, and M.A.'s." The ulema and saints come last. He gives prominence to the rich, who are, thus, easily drawn into the money-grubber's toils. The prophets have found their persecutors among the rich and their supporters among the poor. A prophet who peoples his heaven with the rich is a pretender.

His prophecies, the fulfilment of which is the Messiah's pride, admit of working the oracle. A prophecy promising him pots of money, advertized in his papers, or propagated by word of mouth, cannot fail to be responded to by his followers. That he will come into the landed property of a relative who is to die without issue, cannot reflect much credit on his inspiring angel. Nobody can despair of purchasing his neighbour's house in order to extend his own, so long as one is in cash. It is no miracle to evade the income-tax assessor, nor to predict and obtain acquittal in a British

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court guided by law and evidence. Are these the signs that his prophethood is so fussy about?

We shall now consider two of his most important prophecies, which the Mirza himself wanted to be understood as the measure of his truth or falsehood. He declared in unambiguous terms that his prophethood would stand or fall with these prophecies. The first of these concerns a lady Muhammadi Begum by name and not very distantly related to him; and the second pertains to Maulvi Sanaullah of Amritsar. The Mirza sought to espouse the former and vanquish the latter. We are to see how far he succeeded in these undertakings.

THE MESSIAH IN LOVE.

Muhammadi Begum's parents were both of them Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's first cousins. Her relatives, the Mirza tells us, were steeped in scepticism and unbelief. We cannot let this statement

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pass unchallenged. The average Punjab villager is ignorant and unsophisticated. He firmly sticks to the religion of his ancestors, and remains undisturbed by *isms* which lie beyond his ken. The relatives of Muhammadi Begum were hostile to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claim, and in that lay their unbelief. The Mirza says that they asked him for a sign, which the Mirza hastened to proffer with a vengeance. An occasion arose which seemed to give Mirza Ghulam Ahmad an advantage over Ahmad Beg, the father of Muhammadi Begum. Ahmad Beg's sister was the wife of Ghulam Ahmad's cousin Ghulam Hussain, who had disappeared twenty-five years back and had not since been heard of. Ghulam Hussain's landed property had then passed to his wife. Ahmad Beg obtained his sister's consent to the transfer of her land to his son. The transfer deed could not be valid unless

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Ghulam Ahmad, who was partly entitled to that property, agreed to it. Ahmad Beg begged of Ghulam Ahmad to sign the transfer deed. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad would have us believe that he was about to affix his signature to that deed, when suddenly an idea flashed on him. "I am in the habit of referring affairs of moment to God," says he, "and that was my reply to Ahmad Beg." God wanted the Mirza to ask for the hand of Ahmad Beg's daughter Muhammadi Begum as the price of his signature. The Mirza told Ahmad Beg that the match proposed in heaven would be a source of blessing to the bride's relatives. But if they did not agree to the proposal, the girl would come to a sad pass; the man she married would die within two years and a half of the marriage, and her father within three years of the same date. The Mirza started his overtures in 1886, and tried his utmost to win Ahmad Beg to consent.

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We translate some of the passages from his letters to the relatives of Muhammad Begum. Writing to one Mirza Ali Sher he says, "I have heard that the girl is going to be married a day or two after the 'Id, and that your family has a hand in the affair. You can well understand that those who participate in this wedding are the bitterest of my enemies, not only mine, they are the bitterest enemies of Islam. They want to ridicule me in the eyes of the Christians. They want to please the Hindus. They reck not of Allah and his religion. They are fully determined to humiliate me and black my face.....Am I a sweeper or a tanner that they feel ashamed of giving their daughter to me in marriage.....I have written them letters begging of them not to break with me....I have let them know that should they persist in the course they are pursuing and refuse to break off this engagement, then, as you

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wish it, my son, Fazl Ahmad, cannot keep your daughter, his wife, in wedlock. The day Muhammad Begum is married to anybody else, your daughter shall cease to be Fazl Ahmad's wife. If he does not do that, I will disown and disinherit him."

He once again addresses a piteous appeal to Ahmad Beg: "You are perhaps aware that my prophecy has gained wide publicity. I believe it is known to ten lakhs of men. A world has its gaze fixed upon it. And thousands of *padris* are maliciously—I had rather said foolishly—awaiting my discomfiture..... I beg of you to be instrumental in the fulfilment of this prophecy so that God's blessings may alight upon you. Nobody can quarrel with God. What is fixed in heaven cannot alter on earth....May God instil into your heart what He has inspired me with."

Mirza Sultan Ahmad could not

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reconcile himself to his father's senile craze, and he seems to have exerted himself to bring about the slip between the cup and the lip. Let us hear what Ghulam Ahmad has to say in this connection:

"My son, Sultan Ahmad, is doubly guilty. In the first place, he sought to oppose the religion of the Prophet and wanted opposition to triumph over it... secondly, he considered me, his father, the merest nonentity, and girded up his loins in opposition to me, and carried his opposition, by word and deed, to a point beyond which it could not go..... Therefore, I publicly declare that Sultan Ahmad stands disowned and disinherited, and his mother* divorced with effect from the date on which that girl (Muhammadi Begum) is married to anybody else. And his brother Fazl Ahmad shall fare no better, if he does

* The Messiah proved as good as his word.

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not part with his wife, who is a niece to Ahmed Beg."

Mirza Ahmed Beg refused to yoke his fifteen-year old daughter to the man who was past fifty and a chronic sufferer from debility. But the jilted lover did not lose hope. Muhammadi Begum's marriage with Sultan Muhammad was not considered by him to be the *finale*. He made bold to declare:

"I do not say that all is over. The affair is yet to progress. It will go on. It is a decree of fate, immutable and final. Its time will come..... you will see that I make this prophecy the measure of my truth or falsehood. It was God who inspired it."

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad spoke no less emphatically in the course of a statement before a court of law:

"It is a fact that the woman has not been married with me. But she will be married to me.....In this very court,

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things which are not from me but from God have been covered with ridicule. The time will come.....when all will hang their heads in shame.....That woman is still alive. She cannot but be joined with me in marriage. It is not merely a matter of hope but faith. It is God's decree and unalterable."

The prophecy regarding his marriage with Muhammadi Begum resolves itself into various parts. (1) Sultan Muhammad was to die within two years and a half of his marriage, (2) and his father-in-law, Mirza Ahmad Beg, within three years of that marriage. (3) The widow was, then, to be espoused by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. That Sultan Muhammad was mentioned first could only mean that he was to die first. There could be no point in giving Ahmad Beg the second place on the Messiah's death-roll and the longer of the two terms, if he was not to witness the death of his

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son-in-law, the widowhood of his daughter and die crest-fallen. Any other interpretation of the prophecy is not only unwarranted, but tantamount to an admission that Ghulam Ahmad's utterance lacks order as well as sense. The death of Ahmad Beg, six months after the marriage of his daughter, was hailed by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as the first fruit of his prophecy. The prophecy required Ahmad Beg to follow rather than precede his son-in-law to the grave. But his death occurring before its time set the prophecy at naught. Ghulam Ahmad had the effrontery to restate his prophecy in the light of that circumstance. Had he not predicted that Ahmad Beg would die within three years, and had not the prophecy already proved telling? The part relating to Sultan Muhammad was vital to the prophecy; he would indeed be an impostor if he went to the grave with the prophecy still on his

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hands. He counselled his enemies to wait and see. Let it be admitted here that the death of Ahmad Beg coming as it did close upon the prophecy must have made converts of some who had only vaguely heard the Mirza talk of Ahmad Beg's death a few months before and who little knew of the unflinching antecedents that were to mark its coming. We are told that the death of Ahmad Beg stunned his family, and they shuddered at what might follow. The fears of those over whom the Mirza's prophecy hung like the sword of Damocles were quite natural, though by no means justified or well-founded. We have yet to see how far the Mirza's prophecy was borne out by the events.

Sultan Muhammad, the husband of Muhammadi Begum, proved, however, to be a hard nut to crack. He proved as little amenable to the Mirza's threats as his father-in-law had been. Nothing

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could intimidate him into abandoning his wife to the Messiah's harem. He set the prophecy at defiance, and he did not die. The Mirza for a time contented himself with extending his term. But as the years grew upon him, and Sultan Muhammad continued to be intractable, he lost heart and hope, and explained away his prophecy. Sultan Muhammad had been spared, precisely because he had repented having checkmated the prophecy. But we cannot believe this. The only penance that he could have done was to divorce his wife and lead her by the halter to the Messiah's presence. Penitence does not lie in moping, sighing or shedding tears over the past. But it consists in dispossessing oneself of the material advantages that accrued to the sinner from the sin, and in making amends for the wrong. If Sultan Muhammad did not do that, and he certainly did not, he cannot be said to have repented

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for his sin.

Sultan Muhammad seems to have borne a charmed life, in view of the Mirza's imprecation upon it. He was a combatant during the Great War. Had a bullet struck him down, the followers of Ghulam Ahmad would have discerned in it the hand of God smiting the outlaw who crossed the Messiah's love. Sultan Muhammad, while on active service in France, received a wound that very nearly killed him. And he seems to have been providentially spared to be a living refutation of the prophecy that had designs upon his life, wife and all.

Much ingenuity has been wasted by Ghulam Ahmad's votaries to prove that his prophecy concerning Muhammad Begum has brought no disgrace upon its author. It is suggested that Sultan Muhammad's repentance warded off the death that stared him in the face. We have already shown the hollow nature of

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this plea. Hakim Nur-ud-Din who succeeded Ghulam Ahmad as head of the Ahmadiya community thought that the prophecy left room for marriage between a son, grandson or great-grandson of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and daughter, granddaughter, or great-granddaughter of Muhammad Begum. Maulvi Muhammad Ali, the head of the Lahore section of the Ahmadis, seems to offer an apology on behalf of his master. "It is a fact," he says, "that the Mirza had said that his marriage with Muhammad Begum would take place, and it is also a fact that it did not.....it is far from just to go on harping upon one prophecy to the neglect of others, the fulfilment of which is testified to by thousands.....In order to arrive at a correct conclusion it is necessary to see whether all the prophecies had come true or not." But Mirza Ghulam Ahmad would have none of it. He staked his prophethood on that issue.

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And we must take him at his word.

There is another interpretation put upon the Muhammadi Begum affair which shows both Ghulam Ahmad and his exponents in a ridiculous light. It is held that Ghulam Ahmad misunderstood his revelation. He took Muhammadi Begum for a particular girl, and therein lay his blunder. It is suggested that the Muhammadi Begum of Ghulam Ahmad's prophecy was not a proper but an attributive name signifying propagation of Islam. And who can deny, it is urged, that the Mirza was celestially wedded to this bride?

The Mirza would not have thanked the reader of this fantastic meaning into his prophecy, and would have denounced him for an infidel. The fact remains, whatever his followers may say to the contrary, that the Mirza was vehemently in love with Muhammadi Begum and that, his age and pursuits being considered

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positive disqualifications for the match, he thundered out curses in the name of heaven to frighten Ahmad Beg into submission and the girl into his arms.

THE MESSIAH AT WAR.

We shall now take up Ghulam Ahmad's prophecy concerning Maulvi Sanaullah. We shall again let him speak his mind. He wrote to Maulvi Sanaullah a year before his death:

"Your paper the *Ah-i-Hadis* has been vilifying and lampooning me since long. You have always called me there-in a cursed person, an impostor, Antichrist and a creator of discord. You represent me to the world as a liar, impostor and Antichrist.... I have suffered at your hands a great deal, and have borne it all patiently. But I see that I have been sent to this world to propagate Truth and that you are keeping the world away from me by spreading falsehood against me, and that you accuse and

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revile me in the strongest possible terms. If I am the liar and impostor that you often depict me in each issue of your paper, then I will perish in your lifetime; —because I know that a creator of discord and an impostor does not live long and that he perishes ignominiously, with his shame writ large under the eyes of the worst of his enemies. It is better that he should perish rather than lead men astray. And if I be not an impostor or a pretender, and if I be the Promised Messiah, exalted in communion with God, then I hope, by the grace of God, that you will not be spared the chastisement that God is wont to inflict upon those who repudiate (His signs). If you do not fall a prey to mortal diseases like plague and cholera, then, indeed, I am an impostor.

“This is not a prophecy that I have been revelationally authorised to make, but a prayer invoking God's judgment.

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And I pray God that if my claim to Messiah-hood is a fabrication, that if I am a creator of discord and an impostor, and that if I invent lies day and night, my death may come during Maulvi Sanallah's lifetime and that he and those of his group rejoice therein.....But if Maulvi Sanallah is wrong in slandering me, then I pray he may perish during my lifetime, not from human hands* but with fatal diseases like plague and cholera, unless he publicly recant the vile abuse that he has been considering a matter of duty to fling at me. Amen!

“I have suffered a great deal at his hands, and have borne it all patiently. But I now find that his foul utterance knows no limit. He considers me worse than thieves and robbers, whose existence is a menace to the world. He thinks me

*He relegates Maulvi Sanallah to a death out of the common run. That he should talk so lightly of perishing from human hands and view it as a lesser punishment reads curiously into his character.

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