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CONTENTS.

	<i>Page.</i>
PROFESSOR HARTMANN ON THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM ...	281
A DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF ISLAM ...	293
THE HOLY PROPHET'S INSTRUCTIONS TO HIS FOLLOWERS ...	295
THE PURPOSE OF LIFE ...	300
THE SOURCE OF THE QURAN... ..	302
A GRAND PROPHECY	303
NOTES AND COMMENTS	308

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

نُحْمَدُكَ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِكَ الْكَرِیْمِ

Professor Hartmann on the position of woman in Islam.

"Men shall have the pre-eminence above women, because of those advantages wherein God hath caused the one of them to excel the other, and for that which they expend of their substance in maintaining their wives. The honest women are obedient, careful in the absence of their husbands, because God hath of them been careful, but those whose perverseness ye shall be apprehensive of, admonish and remove them into separate apartments and chastise them:" but if they are obedient to you, then seek not occasion against them: verily God is High, Great. (iv, 38). Commenting on the above verse Prof. Hartmann writes to say in the July number of the *Moslem World*, "Besides this pronouncement upon woman's inferior position, there is not a word in praise of a loving, intimate relationship between husband and wife." I am quite at a loss to make out how Mr. Hartmann has jumped to the conclusion that the Holy Book of Islam does not say even a word in praise of a loving, intimate relationship between husband and wife, while it lays down with all possible emphasis and in clear unmistakable accents that real love and deep affection ought to govern the relation of husband and wife.

وَمِنْ آيٰتِهِ اَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ اَنْفُسِكُمْ اَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوْا اَلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ
مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً

"And one of His signs it is, that He hath created wives for you of your own species, that ye may get rest in their company,

and hath put love and tenderness between you. Herein truly are signs for those who reflect." (xxx, 20).

So says the Holy Book of Islam. Love and tenderness are the characteristics of their mutual dealings and behaviour. If Mr. Hartmann had taken the trouble of going through the pages of the Holy Quran, he would have seen without any difficulty that it bases the marriage contract on nothing whatsoever but mutual cordiality and reciprocal good will deep-seated, of course, in the fear of God. The very fact that, as the spirit, and even the letter none the less, demands, a Muslim has got to lead his life from the cradle to the grave under the guidance of religious teachings speaks a good deal for him. His own will comes to be subordinated entirely to the will of God embodied in His word. The very moment one surrenders himself to the yoke of divine will, his own will suffers a veritable death and he takes a new life in the will of God which manifests itself in a working form and becomes crystalized, as it were, into outward actions and deeds. A true Muslim, therefore, is the virtual image of God and the divine will permeates his life. When such a lover of God finds it laid down for him in the words of the Beloved that deep love and profound affection are to rule the domestic life of every pair, now is it possible that any untoward circumstances may crop up to violate the solemn contract of marriage in any way.

As regards Mr. Hartmann's reference to the inferior position of woman I should like to quote the very verse he has cited as his authority. "Men shall have the pre-eminence above women, because of those advantages wherein God hath caused the one of them to excell the other, and for that which they expend of their sustenance in maintaining their wives." It requires no keen insight to read between the lines. The pre-eminence of the husband does not cover the whole sphere of woman's life, but extends over a very limited scope. His pre-eminence is due to certain advantages which man is permitted to enjoy by nature to the exclusion of woman. Hence the limited superiority of man over the weaker sex is not at all arbitrary or in any respect against the laws of Nature, but it is, on the other hand, in perfect keeping with their natural dispositions. Let us here examine the



course of nature and see whether nature has allowed man to enjoy any sort of superiority over the opposite sex. A very cursory glance carries conviction to every mind that man is physically superior to woman. The mere fact that woman is styled by the pet term, the weaker vessel, is enough to show that woman occupies an inferior position in the physical kingdom. There should be no doubt about it; to deny this state of things is to dally with nature in self-delusion and play the fool with blindfolded sense of propriety. Everywhere throughout the known world woman is found to be a delicate creature not at all fit for hard extra-mural work which it is the hard lot of man to perform, and yet our critics continue to preach to us in highly pontifical vein that there exists perfect and all-round equality between man and woman. I do not wish to labour this point any more. The physical inferiority of woman is a world-wide truth and no sane head on human shoulders can afford to deny it. No discerning eye on the face of the Earth can fail to see this living fact. Mr. Hartmann would have certainly been justified in finding fault with the teaching of the Holy Book, if instead of upholding it had upset the order of nature. Woman is physically inferior to man and it is therefore in the fitness of things that in the work of life this physical inferiority of woman may be kept in view. Thus the Holy Quran alludes to the physical disparity of both the sexes simply to fix for them the part they have to play respectively. The part they, man and woman, have to play in the economy of domestic affairs must be in strict conformity to their physical conditions, otherwise the household management will go wrong in a moment and domestic tranquility will be seriously violated. Let the stronger sex take to the harder part and the weaker one to the lighter part of the work they both are called upon to do for the maintenance of themselves and their children.

Having proved that it is only in the physical side that the Holy Book of Islam has made a difference between man and woman in order to settle for them their several duties to each other and their progeny and not to make the husband lord it over the wife as our carping critics seem to think, I proceed to point out that in most other respects the Holy Book of Islam regards the husband and the wife as co-equals. The following

verse, I hope, will not fail to serve as an eye-opener to our critic Mr. Hartmann:—

“Truly the men who resign themselves to God, and the women who resign themselves to God, and the believing men and the believing women, and the devout men and the devout women, and the men of truth and the women of truth, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women, and the men who give alms and the women who give alms, and the men who fast and the women who fast, and the chaste men and the chaste women, and the men and the women who oft remember God: for them hath God prepared forgiveness and a rich recompense.” (xxxiii, 35.)

This single verse is quite enough to show that the Holy Quran keeps woman side by side with man in all the different departments of life and her inferior physical condition does not stand in her way of attaining to any excellence worth the name; all the doors of heavenly bliss are open to her no less than to her opposite sex. Both can find favour with God and win His pleasure and approbation on equal terms, men not enjoying any privileges not allowed to women. There are quite a large number of other verses defining equal chances of spiritual advancement both for man and woman.

With such an enviable position woman can not have reason to grudge her natural inferiority in physique which brings to her no disadvantage, or disgrace or degraded part, but only results in confining her activities to household affairs.

Thus we can quote chapter and verse to prove to the hilt that Islam has elevated the position of woman inasmuch as it has established her equality with man in the spiritual kingdom and has even safeguarded her against her physical weakness by assigning to both the sexes a fixed part to play in life so that both may stick to their own side of work. Islam has made husband and wife dependent upon each other, one cannot do without the other; the husband therefore can not have the audacity to assume a domineering attitude toward his wife without seriously infringing Islamic principles.

Further on after a little incoherent talk about the position

of woman held by Islamic law Mr. Hartmann spins a long yarn to assure the readers of the *Moslem World* of the ghastly picture of woman which he dares to ascribe to the Holy Quran. He writes:—

“ Having reached marriageable age a young woman is regarded as a weak-minded being with no will of her own, and her marriage lies in the hand of her guardian, her natural protector, her father, grandfather, or older brother, as the case may be. It is this guardian's duty to arrange for his ward's marriage, as it is the duty of every man who is of age to take a wife, be it only in order to escape from the temptation to punishable sin. Marriage is therefore the performance of a religious duty on the part of both the man who takes a wife and the man who arranges for it. In fulfilling this religious duty a contract is made whereby the bride passes over into the possession of her husband on the payment of a certain purchase price, or according to other authority, certain hire. The bride's participation in the contract is pure matter of form; the majority of jurists say she must be consulted, but all agree that silence or a smile mark her consent, and disagreement would be futile. From the Moslem standpoint it would at best testify to her weak-mindedness; in brief, woman has no choice of her husband. The whole affair is very quickly arranged. Some books of law mention a kind of promise (betrothal) but it is only a preliminary proceeding before the actual making of the contract. It is disputed point as to whether the bridegroom may himself see the bride and how much of her he may see; for the most part the inspection is made by female persons of confidence, There are no engagements in the Moslem world, no opportunities for personal intercourse before the decision to spend a whole long life together for better or for worse, and all because of barbarous custom, with not a religious foundation, namely the wearing of the veil.

“ The key note of woman's lot after marriage is the right of her husband to chastise her, combined with that more ominous right to divorce her out of caprice. This does not, of course, mean that there are no loving couples in Islam, but this spirit does give free reign to, and even encourage, the husband's presumption and brutality. And the wife is completely bound to her

husband ; she must in silence endure his every brutality because the Qurán itself gives the right to chastise her in the cases of perversity, a very elastic term, only in very few cases she can appeal to a judge to confirm her action for divorce or actually to pronounce a divorce."

I am really very sorry to say that Mr. Hartmann's harangue is a deliberate attempt at perversion of facts. He makes a number of statements, but has not cared to authenticate any of them by quoting authority from Islamic law. In fact his article is a catalogue of cruel misstatements wantonly attributed to Islamic teachings. The very first misstatement that tops the list is that a young woman is regarded as a weak-minded being with no will of her own, and her marriage lies in the hand of her guardian. If he had quoted the words of the Holy Qurán which had, according to him, justified such an idea, it would have been for me to meet his objection, but in the case before me, the only course open to me is to tell my critic in the face that it is sheerest ignorance to assert that in Islam a young woman is regarded as a weak-minded being with no will of her own.

Let us look at the reality. To preserve the moral fabric of the society against all avenues of vice Islam has forbidden needless intermingling of both sexes, only absolutely necessary and entirely unavoidable intercourse being permitted. It is therefore only in the fitness of things that a girl in her virgin coyness and maiden modesty cannot enter into this life-long contract single-handed unassisted by any body else. For the purpose of marriage she certainly stands in need of a sincere well-wisher who may extend to her a helping hand to afford her all possible facilities and place at her disposal all necessary means for the successful accomplishment of the business. To me this seems to be the most suitable procedure imaginable. She is of age and wants to be married. She cannot through natural shyness and feminine decency wander about in quest of a husband. If left to herself, poor fellow, she has to resort to the shameless but needful duty of making the best conceivable parade of her beauty and go about in full fineries and with her best face inviting suitors, to stand a chance of falling in with the most agreeable one. This is all in all a nasty business and no Moslem girl with even a grain of

modesty left in her can bear to undergo such an ordeal for the purpose of getting a husband to her liking. Islamic law has steered clear of all chances of tampering with the moral side of woman and therefore closed all doors of producing moral callousness in girls. When a girl attains to marriageable age, she is at liberty to choose the most suitable husband and her guardian is bound to help her over this arduous task. Real and sincere preceptor as the guardian is, she is not to make light of her counsel through indiscretion, his opinion must carry weight with her, but the guardian cannot deprive her of her individuality, the choice resting primarily with the girl herself. She is allowed by Islamic law to see her husband and *vice versa*, but as this cannot be done by her alone, the aid of the guardian is an indispensable necessity. My authority is the most authentic saying of the Holy Prophet reported by one of the most reliable of reporters, Abu Huraira:—"The Holy Prophet said that the widow should not be married until her permission has been obtained, nor a maiden until she gives her consent." (Bukharee.) This gives in a nutshell the Muslim usage for marriage. Marriage is not a dead weight forced upon her, but purely a matter of consent. We know of a marriage having been cancelled by the Prophet himself which was by mistake contracted against the willing consent of a Muslim lady.

If, however, a girl is too shy, she is too modest to announce her consent or dissent, all possible means to probe her opinion must be employed. Failing all that, as a last resort, her silence must of course be taken for the absence of any objection on her part. She is not precluded from declaring her opinion, but if she is too modest and shy and it has become impossible to know for certain her views, she cannot be allowed to lead a life of celibacy, she must be married. There being no help, her silence must be considered synonymous with her having nothing to say against the proposal.

It is now clear that marriage is purely a matter of personal choice between the husband and the wife and no undue intervention is permitted, but as the bride cannot learn all about the husband by herself on account of her limited intercourse with the male portion of the society, her hands must be strengthened by needful

assistance from her guardian who must simply play the helper and not by any means the arbitrary settler of the contract.

Mr. Hartmann talks again and again of books of law, but has taken good care not to cite even single quotation to support his views. He does not even mention the name of the book he has read. I can say with full confidence that Mr. Hartmann has not even dipped into a single book of Islamic law and his information consists in tangled gleanings from folklore or garbled reports of some Christian tale-tellers. In short, he has no first-hand knowledge of Islamic teachings; all his stock-in-trade of information is hearsay.

If the Muslim population of a country through long contact with a non-Moslem people has ceased to follow the teachings of Islam, those nominal Muslims are to blame and not the Islamic teachings themselves. I cannot afford to deny general decadence of Muslims observable on all sides, but I hasten to assure my readers that this decadence is the natural result of their departure from the teachings of the faith they profess. The glorious past of the Moslem nation has ever excited the wonder and admiration and even the envy of the non-Moslem world. The radical difference between the past and the present of the Moslem nation is the adherence to the Moslem usages. The past was characterised by staunch observance of Moslem rites and the present is marked by a general neglect of the Islamic ways of life. The Moslems have lost all love for religion and with it have lost all glory of the past. Islamic teachings are yet a shining star guiding all followers to the happiness of life here and hereafter, but for those who only profess and do not act there is no remedy. But there is no reason for despair. God has at last come to the help of his people. He has as usual sent down His messenger to draw people to the pure and elevating teachings of Islam and his call is being slowly but surely met with a hearty response from all sides; even in Europe and other Christian lands his disciples have begun to light the torch of heavenly guidance and spiritual wisdom.

Mr. Hartmann turns again and again to the right of chatisement given to the husband, but totally ignores the circumstances in which such a course is made permissible. There is no

gainsaying the truth that chastisement at times becomes a necessity in the administration of justice. If chastisement is to be resorted to by way of high-handedness and the innocence of a wife is being wronged for no other reason than the mad caprice of a demented husband, such chastisement is looked upon by Islam as the most horrible deed ever committed under God's sky, but chastisement is permitted as a step quite compatible with the attendant circumstances and is likely to produce desirable effect; it is the veriest blessing, the end justifying the means. It is allowed when there is no fault on the part of the husband and the wife has got so unduly perverse that all mild and gentle measures have completely failed; it is then that she is to be considered as worthy of a treatment meant for incorrigible offenders. If, in the case of extreme necessity, however, chastisement is believed to mend matters, it ought to be tolerated for the sake of the happy end it produces. I hope all wise men will agree to this.

As for Mr. Hartmann's objection that this sanction of chastisement encourages brutality on the part of the husband, it would have been worth notice if the sanction of chastisement had been given quite apart from the rest of the restrictions and limitations imposed upon man by the Holy Quran and the corresponding rights and privileges allowed to woman. The husband is enjoined to put up with his wife even though she may happen to turn out against her wishes. This he is asked to do for God's sake and is promised a rich reward in this very world. This may sound like a hollow promise to others, but to a Moslem who is meant to be living for God and not for his own self, this promise means much. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said:—

خيركم خيركم لامرأته

“Those of you are the best men who behave best towards their wives.” With such injunctions of the Holy Book and such commandments from the Holy Quran to guide control and regulate the connubial relations, it is impossible to give way to any sort of undue severity without seriously violating Islamic teachings.

Then again our critic has a great deal to say against divorce. Divorce is the general stumbling-block of all Christian writers

of Islam. Divorce is an extreme measure allowed only when all the rest of earthly means prove abortive and things come to such a pass that the pair cannot in any way pull on with each other and the tension has reached the breaking point. It is then and not till then that divorce becomes allowable as an extreme step. Caprice of the husband has little to do with divorce; it is the force of circumstances which becomes the ultimate determining element in the question of divorce. The matter of divorce is again based on the lines of the strictest justice. If in the case of the wife being absolutely incorrigible the husband can get rid of her, the wife also in the case of the husband getting implacable can obtain a divorce from him as a right. Thus both the husband and the wife are placed on the same level with each other, neither enjoying preferential treatment. Of course the wife's side is more secure because she can implore help from the lawful authority and can claim the unpaid part of the dowry at the time of divorce. In short, divorce is only an unpleasant necessity to which recourse is to be made in case of extreme urgency. Divorce question can be viewed from another stand point. Domestic tranquility and home happiness are among the chief aims of wedded life, but the strained relations of the pair permanently mar the home felicity, and constant ill-will having gone beyond the point of rectification become a standing menace to the household economy, the purpose of marriage is clearly defeated, the marriage contract losing its solemn character becomes practically null and void both in letter and spirit. To allow such a state of affairs to continue any longer is to do violence to human nature. One cannot unite where nature has got to separate. Let the parties part company and take to their own respective ways. The parties cannot lose sight of the well-known tradition of the Arabian Law giver :—

ابغض الحلال الى الله الطلاق

“Divorce is the most hateful of permissible things.” One cannot trifle with divorce, because this step, even though admissible, is not pleasing to God. Even a slight remissness in this respect is likely to incur the displeasure of God. Thus divorce is not an easy step as Mr. Hartmann seems to understand it, but one which bristles with so many difficulties and

is pitted with dread possibilities. The way to divorce is paved with thorny bushes and prickly shrubs which form impenetrable barrier but for one who is driven to desperation by repeated tosses of domestic embarrassment, the complete breakdown of connubial affections, and the snapping asunder of conjugal ties.

Another objection of Mr. Hartmann faces us in the following words :—

“ In fulfilling this religious duty, a contract is made whereby the bride passes over into the possession of her husband on the payment of a certain purchase price, or according to other authorities, certain hire.” I am really unable to understand how my friend has come to this unwarrantable conclusion. Islam confers on the wife an individuality quite independent of the husband. The Holy Quran says :—

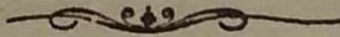
ولهن مثل الذي عليهن

“ Men owe duties to women just as the latter owe to the former.” This one, out of so many verses of the Holy Book, is sufficient to show that Islam does not deprive the woman of her independent self. She preserves under Islam all the rights and privileges which go to mark an unshackled self and untrammelled individuality. She can keep a property of her own, can carry on business of her own accord and in her own name, and can sue and be sued in a court of law. It is a clear perversion of Moslem law to reckon her among the chattels of the husband. Of course the mutual interdependence of the pair cannot be denied, but that serves to cement together the family relationship which would have otherwise remained loose and unwelded.

As to his silly reference to the marriage dowry I simply pity the poor comprehension of my learned professor. He likes to call it purchase price. Apparently he means nothing but the dowry which is fixed at the time of marriage and becomes payable to the wife and no body else after the parties come to have a conjugal knowledge of each other. The amount is meant to raise the pecuniary status of the wife whose duty it is to look after household affairs and not to make a living. When it is mainly for the husband to earn money, if no provision had been made for the woman, she would have got to

hang on the husband for every penny she needed. But Islam allows for the state of the woman and provides against her becoming quite impecunious. She has a right to claim the dowry and own it as her private property, the husband having no right to usurp it. What a nice balancing of positions. The social status of the wife in Islam is considerably higher than that assigned to her by all other faiths including Christianity.

Turning to Christian scriptures we meet with but awfully low status of woman. "Let her learn in all subjection" is the New Testament verdict. The meaning is plain and no amount of turning and twisting can make the plain words capable of any other significance. Subjection is the lot of the weaker sex. I shall be grateful to my learned friend and others of his views if they kindly point out to me the Bible text conferring on woman a position worthy of a rational being.



A Distinctive Feature of Islam.

لا يكلف الله ذنباً الا وسعها

“God does not burden a soul beyond its power.” (ii, 286). This is a well-known verse in the holy book of Islam. Though it is but a short sentence couched in every day familiar speech, yet it is comprehensive enough in its application. It covers all the varied and diversified activities of the religious man who strives to work out his salvation under the guidance of the Holy Quran. There are so many tests of a true religion, but by far the most important and significant is the one which comes home to us in strict conformity with the course of nature. If for instance a religion has the hardihood to demand from its adherents the realisation of any of the physical impossibilities or in any way puts a premium on unattainable absurdities, it cannot be allowed to pass for a true religion. Such a religion will have to be forthwith set aside as a horrible mockery. Looked at from this point of view, many a faith whose followers are making so much fuss about their lofty ideals and high ethics will at once dwindle into hopeless insignificance if not absolute nothingness. Religion is after all nothing but guidance directed toward the perfection of man. All the tenets and injunctions of a true faith therefore must needs be well within the compass of human powers and capacities. Nor can the fluctuating character of human faculties at the different stages of man's life and under the different influences of climate be forgotten. In short, in order to determine the truth or falsity of a religion, the most essential criterion which cannot but be satisfied at the very outset is to see whether or no the commandments and injunctions embodied therein fall in with the powers and capabilities of its followers. A religion surely stands or falls on this very point. This is, therefore, among the shortest cuts to the truth of a faith. Islam throws the gauntlet with all vividness and claims to be a perfect reflex of human nature. It enjoins upon its follower nothing which his powers and faculties may stand a chance of falling short of. In clear and explicit accents does God inform the readers of the Holy Book that God

does not burden any soul beyond its powers. This forms the keynote of all guidance. One need in vain rummage the pages of the Holy Book of Islam to find anything running counter to this expressed spirit of its teachings. Thus the practicability of the Quranic teachings is sealed for ever, and their mouldable character and elastic nature resting on a solid unshakable groundwork of perfect principles and basic fundamentals established beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Elsewhere God confirms the meaning of this verse.

ولقد يسرنا القرآن للذکر فهل من مدکر

“Easy now have we made the Quran for warning, but who receives the warning?” (li, 56), which is further corroborated by a number of other verses and the sayings of the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him). Hence it is that Islam has, since the very day of its inception, succeeded in meeting the changing conditions of the rolling time and the varying circumstances of this chameleonic world. It has never harrassed the mind of its follower by forcing upon him any inexplicable enigma. It has never preached the dogma of plural unity of God which baffles all arithmetical ways of solution and other means of human comprehension. It has never imposed upon its votary the theory of the co-eternity of matter and soul with God Himself and the revolting idea of the utter inability of the All-powerful, Omniscient God to add even an atom to the present mass of matter. It has never endeavoured to stupify its supporters by introducing the blasphemous idea that God is only a figment of foolish fancy and not a stern reality. On the other hand, it impresses upon its followers that a Muslim is essentially a practical being. Nothing is above demonstration. Even the belief in the existence of God, the veriest crux of religion, the weakest point in all other religions so far as demonstration is concerned, has not been left unattended to by the needful demonstration of the aptest character. A belief unaccompanied by any sort of convincing element is only a drag upon the understanding of man and serves as a patent instrument of blighting human wisdom. Islam leads the believer of God step by step to a stage where he enjoys personal communion with God and where the existence of God becomes to him as much a living fact as the meridian sun shedding its effulgence in full glory.

Without this power of demonstration religion is nothing short of grimace. Without such force of conviction it is little better than a toy serving no manly purpose beyond affording a favourable play ground for fooling about with no set object in view and no fixed ideal to strive after.

The Holy Prophet's Instructions to His Followers.*

1. *Kindness to the parents.*

Abdullah says, "I asked the Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him), which deed was most pleasing to God. He replied, offering the prayers in their times. I asked, Which comes next. He replied: Kindness to the parents. I asked, And which comes next. He replied "Serving the cause of Islam." He mentioned these deeds and if I had gone on asking, he would have gone on replying."

2. *Who was most deserving of kind treatment.*

Abu Huraira says, a man came to the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) and said, O Prophet of God, who deserves more than any other man to be treated by me with kindness? The Holy Prophet said: Thy mother. He asked, 'Who comes next.' The reply was, 'Thy mother.' He again repeated the question and again the reply was, 'Thy mother.' When he asked for the fourth time 'Who comes next,' the reply was 'Thy father.'

3. *Service of the parents.*

Abdulla b. Omar says, a man came to the Prophet of God, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, and said, "May I serve the cause of Islam?" The Prophet of God asked, "Have you parents." On receiving a reply in the affirmative, the Holy Prophet said "Then them do ye serve."

4. *Abusing the parents.*

Abdullah b. Omar says, "The Prophet God of said that the most heinous of the major sins was to curse the parents. On being asked how a person could curse his own parents, he replied that when a person abused the parents of another person, the latter retaliated by abusing the father and the mother of the former."

5. *Acceptance of prayer on account of kindness to parents.*

Ibn Omar reports the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) to have told the following story:

* *Vide* Bukharee, Chapter on Manners (٢٥١)

While three men were travelling, they were overtaken by rain, so they turned to a cave for refuge. While there, the mouth of the cave was closed by a huge stone rolling down from the mountain and thus the refugees became imprisoned in the cavern. Hereupon one of them said to his companions: 'See if you have done any good deed purely for God and then pray to Him to remove this stone for the sake of that deed.' So one of them prayed as follows: "O God, I had aged parents and young children and I used to tend goats for their sake. When I returned in the evening and milked the goats, I gave the milk first to my parents and then to my children. One evening I came late and found that both of my parents were asleep. I milked the goats as usual and came with the milk and stood over their heads, not liking to rouse them from sleep. The children were crying at my feet, but I would not give them milk before my parents. I continued to stand there with the cup in my hand and the children crying at my feet until it was morning. So, O God, if I did this to seek Thy pleasure, then make for us an opening through which we may see the sky." Hereupon God caused an opening to be made and they were able to see the heaven. The second said:—

"O God, I had a daughter of my uncle for whom I had a passion. I sought intercourse with her but she refused saying that I must first provide her with a thousand *dinars*. I procured for her the thousand *dinars*, but when I was at the point of realising my desire, she said "Fear God" and I withdrew from her at once. So, O God, if I did this to seek Thy pleasure, then remove from us the barrier that closes the entrance." Thereupon the opening became wider.

Then the third said: "O God, I employed a servant promising to pay him a part of the produce, but when I offered him his portion, he was not satisfied with it and went away without taking his due. I continued to sow his portion until I collected a large number of cattle as well as cowherds. He returned after some time and demanded his portion to be given over to him. I asked him to take the cattle and the cowherds. He thought I was jesting with him, but I told him that it was not so, and he went away with the cattle and the cowherds. O God, if I did

this to seek Thy pleasure, then remove this obstacle from our way." And the obstacle was removed.

6. Disobedience to parents one of the most heinous sins.

The Holy Prophet said: God has made it unlawful for you to disobey the parents, and to kill the daughters, and has represented as hateful vain talk begging and lavishness."

The Holy Prophet said: "Should I inform you of the most heinous sins?" The companions replied, "yes." He said, "The most heinous sins are: setting up other gods with God, disobedience to parents, and (the reporter says that the Holy Prophet was talking in a reclining posture, but when he came to the sin that follows, he sat up and began to say) beware of lying and bearing false witness, beware of lying and bearing false witness, beware of lying and bearing false witness" (the Holy Prophet went on repeating these words until it was thought that he would not become silent)

7. Kindness to one's kindred irrespective of creed.

Asma, daughter of Abu Bakr, says, her mother (who was an idolatress) came to her in the days of the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him). Asma came to the Holy Prophet to ask him whether she could do her some kindness. The Holy Prophet replied, 'Yes, show kindness to Thy mother.' Then was revealed the following verse of the Holy Quran:—"God doth not forbid you to deal with kindness and fairness towards those who have not made war upon you on account of your religion, or driven you forth from your homes: verily God loveth those who act with fairness." (ix, 8.)

Abu Sufian says that he was summoned by Heraclius in his presence and the Emperor asked him what the Prophet bade them do. He replied that he enjoined upon them prayer, charity, chastity and kindness to relations.

The Holy Prophet gave a silken garment to Omar. The latter said, "How should I wear it while thou hast prohibited the use of such garments?" The Holy Prophet replied: "I have not given it to you that you may wear it. You may sell it or give it to an infidel relation to wear." Omar thereupon sent it to a brother of his at Mecca who was still an unbeliever.

A man came to the Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, and said "O Prophet of God, what should I do that I may enter paradise." The Holy Prophet replied:—Worship God, without attributing to Him any partner, observe prayers, give the legal alms and do kindness to your relations."

"He who does not show kindness to his kindred," said the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him), "cannot enter paradise."

Abu Huraira says he heard the Holy Prophet saying: "If any of you wishes that God may give him an abundance of the necessaries of life, let him show kindness to his kindred." The Holy Prophet said, "When God had finished creation, the womb said, 'I seek Thy refuge from him who estranges himself from me' (*i.e.*, who spurns those who are related to him through the womb). God said: 'Will not it satisfy thee that I should be kind to him who is kind to thee and that I should spurn him who spurns thee?' 'Yes, O my Lord,' said the womb. 'Then I grant this to thee,' said the Lord." Then the Holy Prophet said, Read, if you like, the verse: "Would it then have happened that ye, if ye had been in authority, would have spread disorder in the land, and violated your ties of blood? These are they whom God hath cursed, and made deaf, and blinded their eye." (xlvi, 24.)

The Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, said, "*Rihm* (the womb) is a branch of *Rahman* (the Merciful) and God hath said that He will be kind to him who is kind to the womb (*i.e.*, the kindred) and that He will spurn him who spurns the womb."

Hakeem bin Hazaam said, "O Prophet of God, in the days of ignorance, I used to show kindness to the kindred, emancipate the slaves and bestow alms on the poor. Shall I be rewarded for these deeds." The Holy Prophet replied: "It was on account of these good deeds that God guided thee to Islam."

8. Kindness to one's daughters.

A woman with two daughters came to Ayesha, wife of the Holy Prophet, to ask for something. Ayesha found nothing in

her house except a single date, which she gave to her. The woman divided it between her two daughters, then rose and went away. When the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) came to his house, Ayesha told him what had happened. The Holy Prophet said, "If anybody has any daughters and then he brings them up with tenderness, they will shield him from the fire of hell."

9. *The Holy Prophet's kindness to children.*

Abu Qatada says, the Holy Prophet came one day in the mosque, carrying Amama, daughter of Abul As, on his shoulders. When he bowed in prayer, he put down the girl, and again took her up when he raised his head.

Abu Huraira says, 'The Prophet of God kissed Hasan, son of Ali. Thereupon Al-Aqra' said, 'I have ten children, but I have never kissed any of them.' The Holy Prophet looked at him and said, 'He who does not show mercy to others will have no mercy shown to him.'

The purpose of life.

Why was man created, is a question which seldom fails to cross the mind of a sane dweller of this planet. Yet this is a question which so few care to solve for themselves. Really it ought to be the first and the foremost concern of man to decide to the best of his knowledge and capability what part he is destined to play in the Cosmos. He can claim little or no superiority over irrational animals if he finds his activities confined to the enjoyment of life. If his self is to be buried with him in the grave or burnt away at the cremation ground, it is impossible to class him above the low plane of dumb animals. His case is rather worse. The former being endowed with no reason cannot be expected to effect any improvement upon their modes of living, they pass a life of tranquility and peace of mind in the absence of all vexatious heart-burning. Man with thinking and reasoning faculties is subject to continued anxiety about self-amelioration and perpetual worry with regard to the betterment of his social relations. With all this extra labour, which it is his lot to get through by hook or by crook, if there is no higher purpose in his life, he is much the worse for his fate which involves a good deal of toil without any additional benefit accruing. The irrational sons of mother earth have the good luck to pass an easy life with comparatively very little care about the necessaries of life, but he the so-called master piece of nature and the noblest of creatures has to retire into the grave without having served any high purpose. What a miserable lot! A careful peep into the nature of things brings the fact clearly to light that there is a purpose running through all the different species of the the living race. It stands to reason, therefore, that man has also a purpose in life, and that purpose of life must needs be consistent with his superior endowments. The power of discrimination and differentiation between good and evil vouchsafed to him by the Wise Heaven must be taken into consideration in determining the purpose which pervade his life. If his life is to end once for all with what we call death, he is surely on a level with his irrational neighbours, but there is nothing aimless and purposeless in nature, hence it is only right to think that for man a higher and a nobler

purpose of life is prescribed. Let every body therefore care to learn with all the force of conviction what constitutes his purpose of life. The Holy Quran of Islam cuts the gordian knot at the very start.

ما خلقت الجن والانس الا ليعبدون

"I have not created djinn and men but that they should worship Me." Worship of God is the be-all and the end-all of human existence. All our doings and actions must be in strict compliance with God's commandments. The very word Islam signifies the Supreme purpose for which a Muslim lives. God created man and He has created him for His own self. It is for the Creator that the creatures are meant. No creature can afford to live for himself without seriously outraging the right of the Creator. Only God can live for Himself for He does not owe His existence to anything else. He is self-existent. But it is highly arrogant on the part of a created being to think of living for himself. Man as a creature owes his existence to God and must in fairness live for God. It is therefore compatible with reason and commonsense that the purpose for which man has come into being is the worship of God which means living for God in complete obedience to His will and guidance.

The Source of the Quran.

Our Christian friends and other critics of our faith tell us every now and then that the Holy Quran is not an original book and that it is only a patchwork derived from different sources. Some of them have even taken the trouble of discovering and defining for us quite a number of sources from which this Holy Book of ours has been composed. We simply fail to see why they cannot find a more purposeful job for their leisure hours. Why should they be tiring themselves for nothing. It is no doubt a labour of love, but as the result brings in no appreciable fruits, all their research work ends in smoke. The time and money had better been spent elsewhere. Muslims are none the less attached to their Book. We would have been prepared in right earnest to attend to the colossal research work so kindly undertaken for us by our critics, if only they had showed to us that the fruit which the follower of the Holy Quran reaps by acting upon it can with equal ease be reaped by acting upon the books which are supposed to be the sources of Islam. We Muslims find that by adherence to the guidance of our Holy Book we can enjoy personal communion with God and can share of the bounties of paradise which is promised to the righteous by all revealed religions, but is not guaranteed by any. By faithful observance of the injunctions of the Holy Quran the enjoyments of heaven begin to foreshadow the life of the Muslim who feels that the heaven after death is nothing but an amplified continuation of the same he has begun to enjoy in this very world. Such is the Holy Book of Islam, and the source from which it is alleged to have been drawn must of course be characterised by the same attributes. It can scarcely be believed that the original and the duplicate may differ in their attributes. We have a right to require our critics to produce such followers of those books which according to them are the sources of Islamic teachings as enjoy personal communion with God. But we know for certain that the followers of all other religions have long ceased to claim such efficacy for their books. They are so foreign to this domain that they all hold that personal intercourse with high Heaven is an absolute impossibility.

Such being the case it is preposterous to think that the Quran with its power to raise its follower to the spiritual pitch of personal communion with God was derived from such sources as are entirely foreign to the spiritual realm.

A Grand Prophecy.

کشتیاں چلنی ہیں تا مہون کشتیاں

"Ships sail about so that there may be scuffles."

The ultimate object of every revealed religion is to win mankind over to the side of God. It has therefore been the first and foremost task of all the founders and upholders of a heavenly dispensation to give a clear and vivid conception of God and convince the world at large by all possible means that God does really exist and that mankind are answerable to Him for their words and deeds. Such a knowledge of divine existence is the key-note of all religions. All morality rests on this very knowledge. The deeper and surer the knowledge of divine existence is in the mind of man, the stronger and firmer is the moral texture. General decay of morality has ever been attended with the looseness of conviction about the existence of God. Whenever the followers of a religion exhibit signs of depravity, the only possible conclusion is that the hold of the belief in the existence of God has become enfeebled. As God is not a material being He cannot therefore be comprehended by human senses. Yet a strong conviction about His existence is absolutely essential for moral and spiritual edification. How can one come to have such a conviction is a question that is worth the asking. God has so mercifully placed at our disposal means that can bring about this needful conviction. Whenever a new heavenly dispensation is to be established on Earth, God chooses one of His creatures and purifies his life to such an extent that he becomes the ideal of manhood. Man is essentially God's, so he becomes entirely God's and God turns to him with His unbounded favours and endless grace. Such a one has the distinctive characteristic of enjoying personal communion with God, who talks to him and reveals to him knowledge of the unseen and the hidden future not known, nor even knowable, to any mortal. The word of God which such a chosen servant of God receives from Him often contains wonderful prophecies which are given out to the wide world beforehand, and when fulfilled, become the centre of attention carrying conviction into every healthy mind.

The world has witnessed countless repetitions of this phe-

nomenon. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and finally the great Prophet of Arabia were among the favoured few who had the unique fortune to be in the good books of God and uttered mighty prophecies the fulfilment of which won over quite a world to the side of God.

Whenever the conviction brought home by the mighty miracles and wonderful signs of one of these series tended to grow weak, another followed and renewed the conviction again. The Holy Prophet of Arabia was the last of this chain of independent prophets. He came at a time when the free intercourse by land and by sea made one universal system of human edification practicable. So he became the seal of the prophets; no fresh additions were needed by way of teachings. One single book of guidance and moral code was enough for the whole world. As there is nothing needless in nature, the final book of law was given, but the renewal of conviction could not be dispensed with, and had to be repeated every time there were signs of decadence. The present is also the time of unprecedented religious turpitude and unparalleled moral lethargy. Materialism is the order of the day and religion has come to be looked upon as the favourite pursuit of the uncultivated minds. The grip of religion is awfully feeble even in the professing circles. The name of religion is on the lips, but the spirit of it seldom exists in the heart. It is a common spectacle and none can dare deny it. So the needs of the time called for a fresh repetition of the usual phenomenon. Nature never fails to give things whenever and wherever they are needed. A reformer was urgently needed and one was sent in the fulness of time. He came and was designated by God as the Promised Messiah whose advent was foretold by all the great religions of the world. The time of his appearance as described in the revealed books of all living faiths, was to be marked by disasters and calamities of unusual character and magnitude. He had not long been in our midst when the world became the theatre of dreadful scenes of appalling consequences. Plague is working havoc with resistless fury. Earthquakes are occurring with such severity and frequency that life in towns especially in some hilly districts has become unsafe. Famine

has become a thing of everyday occurrence. The face of the earth can at several places be seen telling its own tale of the ravages of war, revolutions, and internecine feuds and bloodshed.

Unusual floods have well nigh repeated the memorable deluge of Noah's time.

In short, unheard of disasters and tribulations have poured down in ceaseless torrents which are yet steadily going on and no part of earth is immune from danger. The earth was yet red with the bloodshed in the Balkan Wars, when another war of far more dreadful nature and terrific consequences has broken out in Europe. The science-ridden age could not easily turn to what they considered a mockery but the powerful hand of God will forcibly bring them over to the side of religion. This is what the nature is doing all the world over to announce the appearance of one whose advent had been prophesied in all the revealed books of old. What did the Messenger himself do to make his person known to the slumbering world is a thing worth studying.

He proclaimed to the world to the utmost of his resources that he was commissioned for the regeneration of the world and that he was the promised one whose coming is described in all the revealed books. The voice was of course at first too dim and low to be heard amidst the loud rattle and vociferous fuss of the busy world and was well nigh drowned in the thunderous claptrap of the material world. He, thereupon, resorted to more effective means. He uttered a number of prophecies which baffled all human power of forethought. India was enjoying the normal state of health when he predicted the out-break of a deadly plague. He has even forewarned Europe and other Christian countries against a pestilence of a most destructive character. He prophesied the occurrence of unusual earthquakes. Among other things, he also prophesied in all clearness the outbreak of naval warfare in the world. The words that form the head-line of this article were revealed to him from On High and were given fullest possible publicity the very instant they were received.

"Ships sail about so that there may be scuffles" is the word of God. The prophecy does not allude to any ordinary sea-fight which takes place daily and is not at all worth notice. It refers to a war of unusually striking character that will force itself

upon the attention of the world. This revelation was received on 11th May, 1906, and made public then and there. It was made the subject of repeated reference in many a subsequent writing. As Europe is now on the verge of a dreadful war we take this opportunity to re-iterate the word of God and commend it to the careful attention of all Western thinkers. As the signs of a tremendous warfare are visible above the horizon, we cannot help referring once again to the word of God for the benefit of our readers. With Germany and Austria on one side and Russia, Great Britain and France on the other one need have no scruples as to the unequalled magnitude of the war operations which threaten to break the peaceful monotony of the world.

The Messenger of God spoke some years back of a calamity which was to befall the world in the near future and which was to involve death and destruction of astounding greatness. His description of the frightful occurrence is a metrical one and runs thus—

ای نشان ہے آنے والا آج سے کچھ دن کے بعد
 جس سے گردش کہا ٹیڈنگے دہات و شہر و صرغزار
 آئیگا قہر خدا سے خلق ہر اے انقلاب
 اے ہر منہ سے نہ یہ مولا کہ تا بانہ ازار
 ہک بیگ اے زلزلہ سے سخت جنبش کہا ٹیڈنگے
 کیا بشر اور کیا شجر اور کیا حجر اور کیا بھار
 اے جھپک میں یہ زمین مولا جا ٹیڈنگے زبیر زبیر
 فالیاں خون کی چلین گی جیسے آب و روہ بار
 رات جو رکھنے تھے پوشا کین ہر ذک یا سمن
 مہج کرہ سے گی انہیں مثلہ رخنان چنار
 موش آڑجا ٹیڈنگے انسان کے پرندوں کے حواس
 بھولینگے نفوس کو اپنے سب کبوتر اور ہزار
 ہر مسافر پر وہ سامت سخت ہے اور وہ گھڑی
 راہ کو بھولیں گی مولا کر مست رہے خود راہوار
 خون سے مردوں کے کو مسلمان کے آب روان
 مرغ مولا رینگے جیسے موشرا ب انجبار
 مضحل مولا جا ٹیڈنگے اس خوف سے سب جن وانس
 زار بھی مولا تو مولا اس گھڑی باہال زار
 اے نمونہ قہر کا مولا رہا رہا نی نشان
 آسمان حملے کر بگا کھینچ کر اپنی کٹار

ماں نہ کر جا دی سے انکا ر اے سفیر نا شناس
 اس پر ہے میری سچائی کا سبھی نہ ار رمدار
 وحی حق کی بات ہے ہو کر رہے گی بے خطا
 کچھ نہ نون کر مبر ہو کر منقی اور بر نہ بار

"Some time later on the world shall witness a sign which will shake towns, villages and meadows to the very foundations. The wrath of God shall change the face of earth and the naked shall not have time to tie his navel string.

An earthquake shall suddenly bring a terrible shaking over men, trees, stones and seas.

The earth shall turn upside down in the twinkling of an eye and streams of blood will flow like the water of a rivulet.

Those who had at night silver-white garments on, will find themselves soaked in blood at dawn.

Men shall lose their senses and birds their consciousness, and all pigeons and nightingales shall forget their warbling.

The time and the hour is very hard on every wayfarer who will miss the way in utter helplessness and total despair.

With the blood of the dead the streams of the mountains shall become red like red wine.

All men and spirits shall lose their presence of mind for fear and even the Tsar of Russia shall feel miserable at that moment.

That heavenly sign will be a specimen of God's wrath, heaven shall direct its charges against the world with its drawn dagger.

Don't deny this through impatience, O undiscerning youth, because on it rests the truth of my claim.

It proceeds from the revelation of God and shall certainly come to pass, but you must be patient for some time like the God-fearing."

This is a harrowing account of a future distress which is to fall humanity in the near or remote future. The description is of a complex character and its dire details are dreadful enough to cause a shudder and make one's hair stand on end. We cannot say whether it has anything to do with the first mentioned naval warfare, but the name of Russian Tsar attaches special interest to the predicted event. We commit the literal rendering of both the prophecies to the special consideration of our readers without any comment of our own. Our readers can easily interpret the wording of the Promised Messiah in the light of the events as they occur under their very eyes and testify to the truth of the prophecy according to their own way of looking at things.

Notes and Comments.

OUR LEADER'S MESSAGE TO THE VICEROY.

Soon after the announcement of the declaration of war by the British Government, on Germany, Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, second successor to Hazrat Mirza Gulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, sent the following message to His Excellency the Viceroy:—

“The entire Ahmadiyya community feel deeply concerned at the sudden commencement of war in Europe into which Great Britain finds herself involved, and pray to God to grant her victory at every step. I, as the head of the said movement, beg to assure your Excellency on behalf of my people of our whole-hearted loyalty and unquestioning readiness to render all possible services required of us by the British Government.”

The following reply to the above message was received by the head of the Ahmadiyya community:—

“The Viceroy sends the Ahmadiyya community warm thanks for their loyal messages.”

THE EUROPEAN WAR AND THE PROMISED MESSIAH.

In our last number we replied to an objection of the *Arya Patrika* against the prophecies of Jesus and Ahmad about wars, earthquakes, plagues and other disasters. The editor of the *Arya Patrika* said that as such events did occur every now and then, therefore no sane man would think seriously of predictions about such occurrences. We pointed out in our last issue that the Editor of the *Patrika* was labouring under a misunderstanding and that there were certain considerations which made the prophecies of Jesus and Ahmad about these events truly remarkable. One of the revelations of Ahmad, for instance, predicted “A shock of earthquake” and another said “The dwellings of men, both temporary and permanent, shall be levelled with the ground” and not long after these

revelations came the terrible shock of earthquake which literally in the twinkling of an eye turned the beautiful Kangra Valley into ruins and actually levelled the dwellings of men with the ground. Thus it was clear that the revelations of Ahmad referred to this earthquake and the prophecy was really remarkable. There had indeed been great earthquakes in other parts of the world in times past, but the Punjab had never been visited with such a disastrous earthquake.

After the earthquake of April 4, 1905, which fulfilled the above revelations of Ahmad, he received other revelations foretelling other disastrous earthquakes in diverse places, some of which were to be unprecedented in their severity. Now though our globe is not immune from earthquakes, as the editor of the *Patrika* rightly observes, yet terrible earthquakes do not come every day. If his prophecy had not been followed by extraordinary earthquakes, extraordinary both in their frequency and severity, we could have well ignored his prophecy. But such was not the case. We have had earthquakes which were not only extraordinarily numerous but also unusually terrible and therefore we cannot but accept his prophecy as true.

Similarly the editor of the *Patrika* said that a prophet who foretells wars must either be insincere or insane, for wars do occur sometimes. In reply to this objection too, we pointed out that if a prophecy about wars is followed by ordinary wars which have nothing unusual about them, then indeed the prophecy is not worth our serious attention, but if the prediction is followed by unusually frequent and extraordinarily bloody wars, then we cannot afford to ignore the prophecy. When we wrote the note referred to above, the rattling of swords had ceased to be heard for a time, the only war that was then raging in the world, *viz.*, the Mexican War, had been brought to an end by the resignation of President Huerta, but, as if to strengthen our position against the objectors of the *Patrika's* type, the war in Mexico had hardly ceased when another war broke out on the continent of Europe, which threatens to be far more terrible than any war that has been fought up to this day. Will the editor of the *Patrika* still doubt the truth of Ahmad?

IS CHRISTIANITY THE AUTHOR OF CIVILIZATION ?

Consulting history, we learn that the advent of Christianity has had no relation to progress except to check it. Christianity never did the Balkans any good, nor Mexico. Greece is not what she was before it was introduced. As has well been said, it reduced Ireland to a harp, Spain to a guitar, and Italy to a hand-organ. Its advent in Japan was reckoned a greater misfortune than a universal earthquake could have brought. In France it helped progress only by producing the Revolution, brought in part to overthrow the Roman Catholic church. Progress is not made in Russia except in opposition to the Christianity that was introduced into that country. Abyssinia has been Christian longer than England, and its people do not know the meaning of progress. A historian should know that there was high civilization and progress before Christianity was heard of, and this knowledge should make it impossible for him honestly to say that Christianity is the author of civilization.—*Truth Seeker*.

In a later issue, the *Truth Seeker* says: Christianity may well pray to be delivered from many of its ostensible friends. Rear-Admiral Alfred T. Mahan, retired, is the latest emulator of William J. Bryan in bidding for the applause of the unthinking by exaggerated eulogy of the popular creed. His testimony in behalf of Christianity runs as follows:—"I simply state the unchallengeable fact that, wherever is Christianity, there coincidentally is progress; and that where Christianity is not, there is coincident decadence until Christianity enters, and that then the movement is reversed, as to-day in China and India."

Aside from the question whether a noted militarist is the best judge of cultured and ethical progress, Admiral Mahan is guilty of the greatest illogicality in his interpretation of history. Christianity is, in one or other of its protean forms, the present nominal religion of the temporarily dominant nations of the day, with the exception of Japan, just as the worship of the gods of Olympus characterised the only progressive civilisation in the world some twenty-five centuries ago, and as the dominant and most progressive power of twenty centuries ago held mainly to

the Augustan creed. There was a still earlier day when it could truthfully be said that "wherever the worship of Osiris and Amon is, there is progress; elsewhere coincident decadence"..... This stupid ascription of the progress of the carriage to the fly sitting on the hub of the wheel is not to be excused on account of its antiquity as a means of special pleading on behalf of dogmas otherwise indefensible.

COLOUR DISTINCTION IN CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.

In a mosque, where the Muslims worship their Master, a peasant may stand beside a prince and a beggar may perform his adorations close to a millionaire. But such is not case with Christian churches. Among the Christians there are separate churches for the white and the black. The white are offended when a coloured person takes his seat beside them in the place of worship. An incident related in the *African Times and Orient Review* throws some light on the colour distinctions observed in the houses dedicated to the worship of Jesus the Christ. A correspondent writes to the above named journal:—

"The wife of our District Chairman was remonstrating with sidesman for conducting a native lady (wife of a Wesleyan minister—a minister who acted as the Chairman's deputy in that very church last year) to the mission pew where she (Mrs. Griffin), the Rev. Griffin and three other Europeans were sitting, and there was space available. She felt very much offended; and being unable to express her feelings, requested the senior society steward to warn his assistant against the recurrence of what seemed to her a highly reprehensible conduct on the part of a sidesman, who led a native lady to a pew white people were occupying. If this pew is indeed a mission pew, reserved for ministers and their families, wherein lies the blame of that man who led the wife of a native minister to a pew she is rightly entitled to occupy, if it is not to be inferred that the segregation infection has found its way even into Wesleyan Methodism exemplified through this action of the wife of our District Chairman."

FAILURE OF CHRISTIANITY IN CHINA.

The following dispatch from Fort Smith, in Arkansas, which we take from the *Evening Journal of Dallas, Texas*, contains testimonies that may be considered expert :—

“ In a bitter attack on what she said was immoral conduct on the part of missionaries and others sent to the Orient on a mission of humanity, Lura D. Garst, dean of the College of Missions of Indianapolis, told the convention of the Arkansas Christian churches to-day (June 10) that the missionary work in that country (China) was a failure.”

The missionary boards in America raise millions annually, ostensibly for use in Christianising the heathen. The fact that about two-thirds of the money is spent at home for administrative expenses and the salary of officers lessens to that extent the harm it could do abroad. So far as China is concerned, the efforts of the Christian missionaries to introduce their religion have led within the present year to the adoption of Confucianism as the official religion of the Celestial Republic. That is China's answer to the prayers and efforts of the evangelising Christian world.—*Truth Seeker.*

A CONFUCIAN ON CHRISTIANITY.

Dr. Wu Tingfang, former Chinese Minister to the United States, has embodied the results of his eight years of experience and observation in a fascinating book of description and criticism which bears the title of “ America through the Spectacles of an Oriental Diplomat.” Like many other observers, he notices the fact that Christian people take much less trouble to conform their conduct to the injunctions of their creed than do the followers of other creeds, which shows that Christianity exercises little influence on the inner life of man. Dr. Wu Tingfang says :—

“ I am sometimes almost tempted to say that Asia will have to civilize the West over again. I am not bitter or sarcastic, but I do contend that there are yet many things that the white have yet to learn from their coloured brethren. In India, in China and in Japan there are institutions which have a stability unknown outside Asia. Religion has apparently little influence on Western civilization ; it is the corner stone in all Asiatic civilizations.”

WHAT THE CATHOLICS THINK OF THE PROTESTANTS.

The following quotations from "the books blessed of the holy men" of the Catholic Church reveal the attitude of the Catholics towards the Protestants.

According to "Plain Talk About the Protestantism of To-day" by Mgr. Segur, published by T. B. Noonan and Co., Boston, and endorsed by the Most Rev. John J. Williams, archbishop of Boston, no Protestant can hope to get salvation.

It says on page 66 :—

"All Protestant sects acknowledge that salvation can be obtained in the Catholic Church. On the other hand, the Catholic Church has unceasingly protested that she is the only true church, and that it is necessary to belong to her in order to be a child of God."

Again on page 73 :—

"Protestantism, a pretended Christianity, without obedience to faith, without obedience to the authority of the church, without confession, without eucharist, without sacrifice, without works of penance, without practices of obligation, is condemned by that Gospel whose name it usurps, and is it not condemned by Jesus Christ, when the divine Master adds those terrible words: "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction."

The depth of Catholic hatred for Protestantism may be judged from the following quotation from the *Shepherds of the Valley* (endorsed by Archbishop Kenrick, July 7, 1853) :—

"Protestantism of every kind Catholicity inserts in her list of mortal sins; she endures it when and where she must; but she hates it and directs all her energies to effect its destruction."

THE CEYLON MUSLIM REVIEW.

We are glad to have received the first number of The Ceylon Muslim Review which has just been started by the Central Muslim Young Men's Association at Colombo. It contains a good deal of reading matter which is of special interest to the Moslem world. We accord our contemporary a sincere and hearty welcome and wish it every success. We hope it will be continued with undiminished zeal and increased enthusiasm, and every effort will be made to secure seemliness of print. The get-up of the Review is nice and paper used is of fine quality. It is a quarterly journal and the subscription is Re. 1 or 2s. a year in advance.

HOW MUCH EUROPE OWES TO ISLAM.

"Love of science, the study of Mathematics, the pursuit of medicine, the establishment of Universities and public libraries, these," said Mr. Adolphe Smith, F.C.S., at a recent meeting of the Anglo-Ottoman Society in the Council Chamber of Caxton Hall, London, "these we owe to the movement of the Moors and Saracens; and, later the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks started the wave of 'Renaissance.' The Renaissance, which rescued us from the Dark Ages, was prepared by the free spirit of enquiry brought into Europe by the enlightened Muslims of an earlier age."

CONGRESS OF RELIGIOUS UNITY.

For next cold weather an international "Congress of Religious Unity," is being organised on the model of the Chicago Parliament of Religions. A large number of delegates from America and Europe as well as Asiatic countries like China, Japan, Persia, will come to India and the representatives of the various communities here will meet them at four different centres, *viz.*, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Lahore. Rev. Charles W. Wendte, D. D., of Boston, is the General Secretary and Mr. Hem Chandra Sarcar, M.A., is the Secretary for the Indian Section. Among the Indian gentlemen taking prominent part in the congress is Sir R. G. Bhandarkar, Sir V. G. Chandavarkar, Mr. V. R. Shinde, Mr. S. N. Tagore, Justice Hossain Imam, Justice A. Chowdhury, Dr. Brojendra Nath Seal, Pandit S. N. Shastri, Swami Sarodananda, Dr. Robindra Nath Tagore, Hon. Dr. Devendraparsad Sarbadhikari, Mr. A. Rasul, Bar-at-Law, Principal Heramba Chandra Maitra, Babu Hirendra Nath Dutta, Rev. Promotho Lall Sen, Rev. C. F. Andrews, Principal R. Venkat Ratnam, Hon. Sir Protul Chandra Chatterjee, Major B. D. Bose, Principal T. L. Vaswani. The American and European delegates will, on their way, visit and hold meetings in London, Budapest, Constantinople, Athens, Cairo and Colombo. On the conclusion of the session in India the Congress will proceed to China and Japan where preparations are being made to hold sessions at Shanghai and Tokio.

THE SABBATH

"The Christian," observes A. S. Garretson in an article on 'The Sabbath' in *Reedy's Mirror*, "cannot reconcile his attitude with his profession. He accepts the God of the Jews, the Decalogue (Ten Commandments), the prophecies, the Bible as a whole, but weekly ignores the early injunction of his God, repudiates and violates the Fourth Commandment, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' Our Sunday is that of the Egyptian astrologers, made a legal holiday by the 'Constitution of Constantine,' long recognised as the *venerabilis dies solis* [venerable day of the sun—whence its name], and as such is without religious significance."

In adopting the Jewish God and the Jewish scriptures, Christians placed themselves under obedience to the command to keep Jewish Sabbath holy—a command that is twice repeated. For abstention from work on Sunday the Bible gives two reasons, both of them irrelevant. In Exodus xx, 11, the reason is that God "rested the seventh day"—an utterly unreasonable statement, for God can not be supposed to have become tired by creating heaven and Earth; and in Deuteronomy v, 15, that he brought the Jews out of the land of Egypt—which is of as little significance to any but Hebrews as the day of the Emancipation Proclamation is to the Jews.

Neither reason is really a true one. The Jews adopted the seventh day as a sabbath from the same cause that moved Christians to accept the first day—it was handed to them by pagan predecessors and neighbours. But the seventh has the sanction of Biblical writers, while the first has not, and Jesus kept the seventh when he kept any. The apostles knew nothing of the first-day sabbath, except (1 Cor. xvi, 1, 2) as a day recommended by Paul for taking up a collection.

Our baseless Christian Sabbath has even been "crystallized into law," and the law is used as the ground for decisions by courts affecting the relations of employers and their hands.

A man named Charles Deutermann, who owns large icehouses on the Hudson and employs many men, became obsessed with the notion that the law which forbids him to work his employees on Sunday, or on seven days of the week, is unconstitutional, and to

test its validity he had himself arrested, carrying his case to the State Supreme Court at White Plains. Judge Tompkins upheld the law as constitutional, and said in his opinion that "the state has power to preserve the repose and sanctity of the Sabbath day by forbidding labour and industrial and commercial pursuits on that day."

Observe the word used by the court—the "sanctity" of the day he calls the Sabbath. Now, beyond the fact that a secular state is without authority to distinguish one day from another in point of sanctity, Judge Tompkins cannot point to a single text in that source of all religious sanctions, the Bible, to indicate that the slightest sanctity attaches to the first day of the week, nor any authority whatever for applying to Sunday the Jewish word "sabbath."

Why do Christians accept the rest of the Old Testament and repudiate the Fourth Commandment? Why do they call Sunday a sabbath when it is not? Why do they call it a Christian holy day when it is pagan? Why do they not at least try to reconcile their attitude with their profession?—*Truth Seeker.*

STORIES OF THE INFANCY.

(Reproduced from the *Truth Seeker*, New York, with some alterations.)

The Flight into Egypt.

Matthew makes no mention of Nazareth previous to the birth of the babe, but he tells us that when Herod's wise men came to adore the infant they went on until they came down under a star. When these wise men had departed, an angel ordered Joseph to take his family and flee into Egypt. Rising up he fled to Egypt and there remained until the angel came down again and directed him to return, as Herod was dead and all was well. Joseph evidently believed the angel, for he started back to Jerusalem, fully believing that all was as represented.

But it just happened that as he was on his way back Joseph received human information that, although Herod was dead, the son was in power and the son was probably just as dangerous at

Herod had been. So, despite the assurances of the angel direct from heaven, Joseph chose to rely upon the human reports, and, being afraid to return, travelled to Judea so Jesus might be called a Nazarene.

But Luke tells us something entirely different. He tells us first that Mary and Joseph already lived in Nazareth and went from that town to Bethlehem to be enrolled, and in Bethlehem Jesus was born. According to the Jewish custom, Mary had to be "purified" after the event, and this operation required some days. As soon as the purification was over they took Jesus, the babe, direct to Jerusalem to "present him to the Lord." This ceremony being performed, they returned to Nazareth, and here Jesus "waxed strong" and his "parents went every year to Jerusalem." This travelling was continued yearly until Jesus had passed the twelve-year-old stage, the dangerous point, because it was on one of these trips to Jerusalem that they lost the twelve-year old Jesus and found him among the doctors in the temple.

If the family stayed in Nazareth and Jerusalem for at least twelve years, how could they possibly have fled into Egypt? Every hour they spent in Judea the babe was in danger of sudden death, for the outlaws of Herod and Herod's son were apparently always on his trail.

THE VEDIC RELIGION.

In the Punjab, a sect of the Hindus known as Arya Samaj, denounces idolatry and professes to follow the Vedic religion. When they are questioned as to the aim of their propaganda they declare it to be the propagation of the Vedic religion throughout the world. In Bengal, however, there has arisen another sect of Hindooism and this, too, like the Arya Samaj, describes the preaching of the Vedic religion throughout the world as its aim, but its conception of the Vedic religion is quite different from the Arya Samajic conception. According to Pundit Daya Nanda, founder of the Arya Samaj, the Vedas teach nothing but the unity of God and enjoin nothing but the worship of one God. Godamdhur Misra Din Pralapi, the organiser of the Bengal movement, however, thinks

otherwise. According to him, the Vedic religion cannot be propagated unless the king is worshipped as a god. An interesting ceremony was performed not long ago at Calcutta before the statue of Queen Victoria. The *Pioneer* of June 24, publishes the following telegraphic account of the ceremony. It says :—

“ Queen Victoria’s statue on the Maidan was entwined with garlands to-day (22nd June). This was the outcome of a rather remarkable movement which has been initiated in Calcutta for the worship of the King. As there is no statue of the King at Calcutta, the promoters of the movement selected Queen Victoria’s for the performance of their rite. About ten o’clock a group of Bengalis, in the yellow garb of Sanyasi, were observed before the statue. Two or three police constables stood by and watched the ceremony. A carpet was spread at the base of the statue and it was garlanded with jessamine wreaths. The chief participants in the ceremony numbered six or seven while a small knot of spectators took a keen interest in the proceedings.

“ It was ascertained that the organiser of the movement was one Godhamdhar Misra Din Pralapi, who was present with some disciples. Two of his disciples bore a banner giving the name of the mission founded by Godamdhhar Misra Din Pralapi and known as the Pralapi Mission. The aim of the mission, the founder stated to an enquirer, was to preach Vedic religion throughout the world, and the founder of the mission was of opinion that in India the adoration of the King was essential to the growth of that religion.

“ The ceremony was performed by permission of the Commissioner of Police. After the ceremony, leaflets containing Bengali odes and a sermon exhorting Hindus to worship the King if they desired peace were distributed among the spectators.”

It would be well if the followers of the Vedic religion in the Punjab and those in Bengal should, before embarking on the propagation of the Vedic religion, meet together and decide between themselves what that religion is. Two different missions with different conceptions of the Vedic faith would confuse rather than enlighten the world if both of them enter upon a propagation of what they call the Vedic religion.

The Babe in the Manger.

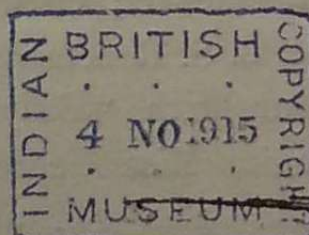
It may make no great difference in our belief, for we are usually willing to accept as truth anything that comes from the pulpit, but it does hurt just a little to have the impressions of childhood ruthlessly torn to shreds after we reach a fairly good old age. For instance, as innocent and trusting children, the story of the babe in the manger appealed beautifully to our feelings, as with swelling hearts we looked long and tenderly at the pictures of a young and pretty American Madonna laying her little American-faced infant in a real manger all surrounded by cows, colts and hens. When Christmas came around, we actually shed tears when we saw the real doll in the real manger with real straw scattered around and little wooden lambs gazing at the miracle.

Well, perhaps there was a babe in the manger in Bethlehem, for Luke says there was. Nevertheless, the pretty pictures and the real manger lose something of their lustre when we find another writer, Matthew, telling us that the great event took place in a dwelling house, in fact, when even the clergymen who go to the holy land always go direct to the very house where the Messiah is said to have come into this world and where Herod's emissaries went to find him. This may be a trifling matter, but wouldn't it be nice if those writers were to come back just for a day so we could ask a few childish questions?

A DEPLORABLE STATE OF THINGS.

Viewing the clerical landscape o'er this week, we observe in various quarters there is something doing. The keepers of the Lord's vineyard have not kept their own in all cases. One conspicuous transgressor, who has had the front page in the Chicago papers, is the golden voiced Homer Rodeheaver, choirmaster and another sort of master, perhaps, in the B. S. Redemption Works, "Rody," the singing evangelist, who tours with "Billy," is defendant in a \$50,000 breach of promise suit, Miss Georgia Jay, to whom he made love, being the plaintiff. The girl alleges that she is heartbroken and humiliated after admitting the hymn-singer to intimacies that no other man had. There is no child.

Case No. 2 is that of the Rev. Archie Douglass, mission worker and street preacher, brought from Colorado Springs to Pontiac, Mich., where he is well known, "charged with a serious offence against a 15-year-old girl of the latter city." The third case is a sad one. The Rev. B. H. Fulkerson, a Methodist minister late in charge of a pastorate at Eureka Springs, Ark., went on an evangelizing tour with sister Carey, who is also a soul-saver. He attempted suicide at Joplin, Mo., because the brethren got after him. Sister Carey is separated from her husband, and appears to have separated the Rev. Fulkerson from his wife. The Rev. Mr. Hickman, pastor of a Methodist church at Joplin, said of Fulkerson, who at last accounts was in a hospital, that "this is a startling example of what a man will do when he has gotten out from under the grace of God." There has been doubt whether the New Thoughtists could be called religious sect and their organization a church. They exhibit some of the stigmata of the real thing. Their pastor in this city, the Rev. Frank W. Sears, is sued for divorce by Mrs. Sears, who also preaches and is at this writing on his trial. Miss Pauline Langdon, with whom he has apparently domiciled at home and travelled abroad, is co-respondent, affinity, and soul-mate. The Rev. Dr. Sears contributes the thought that man-made marriage laws are not binding, and he does not recognize them, doing only that which is good in the eye of God. The Catholic priest of this week's combination is the Rev. Father John Kolodziejczik of Chicago, head of St. Anthony's Orphanage. His offence is against a little girl, an inmate of the orphanage, so-called, which is a fake. Municipal Judge Scully said, in holding the Catholic clergyman guilty: "This priest is worse than some of the burglars I have had in here." The theory excusing ministers when they go wrong is that they use so much of their strength in phrasing morality that they have none left for putting it in practice.—*Truth Seeker.*



THE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM.

Is an English translation of the paper written by the late Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, for the Great Religious Conference held at Lahore in December 1896. It contains two hundred pages of learned disquisitions on the following five subjects from a Muslim's point of view, *viz.*, (1) the physical, moral and spiritual conditions of man; (2) the state of man in the life after death; (3) the real object of man's existence and the means of its attainment; (4) the effect of actions in the present life and the life to come; and (5) the sources of Divine knowledge.

The paper contains an exposition of Islam, such as is not met with in any book hitherto published on Islam in any language. Even among the books written by the Promised Messiah, "The Teachings of Islam" occupies a unique position. It is in fact a comprehensive commentary of the Holy Quran, throwing on its teachings and doctrines a light such as was never shed before. Late Count Tolstoy expressed the following opinion on one of its parts:—"I approved very much two articles, How to get rid of 'Sin' and 'the Life to come.' The idea is very profound and very true." No English knowing Mussalman should be without a copy of this valuable book. The price of the book is Re. 1-4 or 1s. 6d. net, and it can be had from the Malager, "Review of Religions," Qadian, India, or Messrs. Luzac and Co., 46, Great Russel Street, London, W. C.

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