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SISTER

RELIGIONS

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THE CENTRAL ISLAMIC SOCIETY
158 FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.



SISTER RELIGIONS'

THE first of the proposed series of lectures under the auspices of the Central Islamic Society was held at the Eustace Miles Restaurant, Charing Cross, on Friday, 6th October. Tea was also provided.

The lecturer was the Rt. Honourable Lord Headley, and the chair was occupied by Haji Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, supported by Prince Abdul Karim, the President of the Society. Syed Ehsan El Bakry (Egypt) and Mr. Khaja Ismail (Hyderabad) received the guests with the Hon. Secretary, Shaikh Mushir Hosain Kidwai of Gadia.

Among those present were:—Prince Abdul Karim of Sachchin (President), Haji Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din (Woking), in the chair; Rt. Honble. Lord Headley (lecturer), Rev. Maulvi Sadr-ud-Din, Mr. Pickthall (Buxted), Hon. Mr. Abbas Ali Baig (India Office), Mr. Yusuf Ali (Rtd. I.C.S.), Mr. and Mrs. Sez, Mr. and Mrs. Ahmed Varisi, Princess Ouroussoff (Russia), Viscount de Potier (France), Honble. Lady Seafeld, Honble. Lady Caroline Grant, Mr. Hassanally (Karachee), Mr. and Mrs. Dusé Mohamed, Syed Ehsan El Bakry (Egypt), Manza-
lovi Bey, Mr. Khaja Ismail (Hyderabad), Syed Erfan Ali (Calcutta), Mr. Kadirbhoy (Bombay), Dr. Anveruddin (Madras), Prof. and Madam Léon (Liverpool), Mr. and Mrs. Tremayne, Prof. Belsha (Bagdad), Mr. Wajidali Khan and Mr. Sarver Ali Kidvai (Rampur), Mr. and Mrs. Ismail, Mrs. Maurrissen (Belgium), Mr. Shauky V. Hussano (Egypt), Mr. Suleiman (Sudan), Mr. Abdul Qayum Malik (Aligarh), Mr. Belal Nur Ahmad (Jullunder), Mr. Grubb, Mr. and Mrs. Hope Nicholson, Mr. Sidney Muggerridge, Miss Judge, Mrs. Howell, Mrs. Smith, Mr. Qasim Howell (Woking), Mr. Nazir Ahmad (Punjab), Mrs. Taylor, Miss Symonds, Miss Oldland, Miss Timanun, Miss Sakina Potter, Mr. J. Nasilhek, Mrs. Athelstain Baldwin.

Mr. Edmund Russel, Mrs. Windham, Mrs. and Miss Ford, Mr. and Mrs. Hughes (French W. Africa), Mr. and Mrs. Clinton, Mr. Ghani, Miss Redington, Mrs. Paizer, Miss A. A. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Sait (Brighton), Mr. J. Wright Kirk, Shaikh Mushir Hosain Kidwai of Gadia, and others.

The lecture hall was overcrowded. The Earl of Clarendon, Sir Dunlop Smith, and others who could not attend because of previous engagements had sent letters of regret.

SHAIKH MUSHIR HOSAIN KIDWAI.

While opening the meeting, Shaikh Mushir Hosain Kidwai said :—

Ladies and Gentlemen, Sisters and Brothers,—Before formally introducing to you Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, our worthy chairman this afternoon, allow me to tell you something of the Society in response to whose invitation you have so kindly come. This association, which is now called the Central Islamic Society, was founded in 1886. It has several objects, as detailed in its circulars, but that object in furtherance of which this function has been arranged, is to remove the misconceptions of the people of this country in regard to Islam and Muslims. Islam has been terribly and maliciously maligned in this country. People here have been led to form fantastic and grotesque notions about Islam and Muslims. The majority of the people here do not know anything of Islam, and those who have come to know something, to them it has been most grossly misrepresented—misrepresented not only in its religious character but in every respect, social, moral, and even political. There are not many people in this country who know the fact that 400,000,000 people, spread almost all over the world, follow Islam. There are not many people in this country who know the fact that it is their duty to be conversant with the traditions and scruples of Mussulmans, as the number of Mussulmans in the British Empire itself is over 80,000,000, i.e. double the whole population of England. Not only the masses, but even responsible statesmen have sometimes shown culpable ignorance of and criminal indifference to the sentiments and susceptibilities of Mussulmans, and thus have done harm to the interests of the Empire. Even if they have sought information they have gone to wrong sources, which they knew were not independent or unbiased. The Central Islamic Society, which is an abso-

lutely independent organization, and which represents different parts of the Muslim world, is always ready to help everybody who cares to know anything about Islam or Muslims of any part of the world or on any affair. If any of you want any information, please drop a card to me at the Society's office, 158 Fleet Street E.C., and I will do my best to supply the information desired.

This Society is, as its very name implies, Islamic; i.e. its members are those who call themselves Muslims. But please do not think for a moment that it is an exclusive body. It is not exclusive: it is universal. Persons of every denomination are always welcome to all its functions, and can also join the Society as Associates. If a proof of this were wanted, this gathering itself can be cited, in which we can see people of different nationalities, colour, race, countries, and creeds sitting shoulder to shoulder with fraternal goodwill.

The motto of the Society is the Qur-ánic verse, "*Wa' tasémú bihablilah jamíán wa la tafarruqoo*," which means "All of you [the whole humanity] hold fast one cord, the cord of God, and do not make divisions." This Society could not be exclusive when it calls itself Islamic. Universality is one of the most unique characteristics of Islam. One God above and one nation below is the Ideal of Islam. This universality is not found even in those religions which are sisters of Islam and have blood ties with it. All of you know that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have come from a common stock, yet while the Jews say that Israelites alone are the Chosen People of God, while the Christians say that only those can get salvation who believe in the Saviourship of Christ, Islám proclaims:—

"Innal lazeena Amanu wal lazina Hadu, wal Nasara, wal Sabeina man amana billah wal yaumal akhirate wa 'amela salehan fa lahum ajrahum 'anda Rubbihim wa la kh'aufun 'alaihim wa la hum yehzinoon."

That is, whether a Muslim, a Jew, a Christian, or a Sabian, he who believes in God and acts aright will get his reward from his Lord, and fear and sorrow shall not overtake him. Islam is a practical religion, and it is not only in theory that it is universal but it has been practically also found to be the best, if not the only, agency to establish universal brother-

hood and to eradicate the prejudices of race, colour, and country. "*Kanan nas ummatan vahidatan*" ("Humanity forms one nation") is the verdict of Islam. So, ladies and gentlemen, our Islamic Society is the best medium you have to unite the East and the West, the best agency in these islands to remove the innate prejudices of colour and race and country. I think it is your duty to help us in this work of our Society. It is the duty of the people of this country, which is considered to be the hub of the world, this nation which has been gifted with a World-Empire, to conquer its insularity and to eradicate all those prejudices of colour and race which have got established in its mind and which divide man from man.

There are other lovable characteristics of Islam, and I will ask all of you who are in any way interested in the religion of Islam or in any religion, or even if you are not interested in any religion, to attend the lectures of our learned brother Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din (who has honoured us by taking the chair this afternoon), as his discourses will make you interested in religion, and also show you the way to the religion which satisfies human reason and conscience both. He has left his home, his family, his flourishing practice at the Bar, and come to this country with the sole object of enlightening the people about Islam and to direct their attention towards religion. His object is to check the ever-increasing tide of scepticism and atheism which is inundating this island and the whole of Europe. He delivers lectures regularly on Fridays at 1 p.m. at 39 Upper Bedford Place, London, W.C., and on Sundays at 3.15 p.m. at the Mosque, Woking, to which all are welcome.

RIGHT HONBLE. LORD HEADLEY.

Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, while introducing the lecturer, spoke of his sincerity and learning, and Lord Headley was greatly cheered when he rose to speak. He said that he would deliver only a short speech, as his brother Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, for whom he cherished highest respect and regard, was better fitted to do justice to the lecture on "Sister Religions," because he had devoted his whole life, as Mr. Kidwai had pointed out, to the study of religions.

Lord Headley said that he would take up the sister religions of Christianity and Islam. Judaism was also a

sister of Islam, but Moses was too far away in history. Islam recognized the divine messengership of all Prophets. Jesus Christ was respected by Musalmans as much as by Christians, so the religion of Christ could not be alien to Muslims. The religion of Christ was no other than Islam. It was only priests and clergymen who had changed the features of Christianity and thus made one sister look different from the other. It was priests who introduced Trinity and said one is three and three one. It was they who said man is born sinful. It was they who made celibacy and monasticism the rule of life. It was a pity that Jesus Christ did not marry Mary of Magdalene. That would have left no excuse for those of his followers who pretended that they followed the Great Master when they discouraged marriage.

Muhammad (may peace of God be upon his soul!) lived the life of a man. He got himself married. Yet he remained devoted to the holy cause of establishing and spreading Unity. The grossest charge of Christians against Muhammad was that he had more than one wife. It is true that he had more than one wife, but it is a great calumny to allege that he married for passion. His wives were all old (except one), and he followed the old patriarchal custom of Moses and David, etc., because he meant to unite the people of Arabia into one nation and to give poor helpless widows a home and his own protection. Different times, different countries had different social customs. The fundamental principles of Christianity were not much different from its sister religion of Islam. The Christian Lord's Prayer was very good. But the conception of Musalmans of Allah (God) the Almighty was very grand.

THE MUSLIM CONCEPTION OF THE ALMIGHTY.

Al-Qur-án said:—

God! There is no God but He—the Living, the Eternal; nor slumber seizeth Him nor sleep; His, whatsoever is in the Heavens and whatsoever is in the Earth! Who is he that can intercede with Him, but by His own permission? He knoweth what *hath been* before them and what *shall be* after them; yet naught of His knowledge shall they grasp, save what He willeth. His Throne reacheth over the Heavens and the Earth, and the upholding of both burdeneth Him not; and He is the High, the Great!

Let there be no compulsion in Religion. Now is the right way made distinct from error. Whoever therefore shall deny Thagout and believe in God—he will have taken hold of a strong handle that shall not be broken; and God is He who Heareth, Knoweth.

THE MUSLIM LORD'S PRAYER.

Praise be to God the Lord of all Creatures, the Most Merciful—the King of the Day of Judgment. Thee only do we worship and of Thee alone do we beg assistance: direct us in the right way, the way of those to whom Thou hast been gracious, not of those against whom Thou art incensed or those that go astray.

“Dear Father, Thou art very near, we feel Thy presence everywhere, In darkest night, in brightest day, to show the path—direct the way.”

EL-FAROOQ.

Lord Headley further said:—

I have the Muslims' conception of God Who is Eternal, Infinite, Omnipotent, Almighty, beyond all, above all, All-Merciful and Great beyond compare. This Almighty Being has made us in His Image, knowing all our weaknesses and all the failings with which He has endowed us. But by Christians I am asked to believe that because something goes a little wrong with the scheme of Creation—some evil gets in somewhere or somehow—HE the All-Powerful becomes so angry and so much upset that He kills His only Son *in order to propitiate Himself—The Great Author of all things.*

It has always reminded me of a petulant schoolgirl smashing the waxen face of her best doll because some of the sawdust comes out of one of the limbs. . . . It is grotesque, and I cannot contemplate the grotesque when thinking of my Father in Heaven.

The idea of propitiating an angry God by means of a cruel murder is a relic of the oldest forms of prehistoric religion, and is not worthy of serious consideration in these more enlightened days. If we earnestly try to follow in the footsteps of God's Holy Prophets, Moses, Christ Jesus, and Muhammad, surrender our wills to what we truly believe to be the will of God, and lose no opportunity of doing good to all our fellow-creatures, we shall not go very far wrong—and we shall be happy in the

thought that we are making an effort to do our duty to God and our duty to our neighbour. Can any Religion aim higher?

ISLAM is the Religion which has brought peace and happiness to millions, who need no priestcraft and no human assistance whatever to approach, with reverence and love, the Mercy-seat of God.

Why complicate with priestly devices that which is so plain—Man's right to direct communication with his Maker?

That Maker has never once failed me or others, who praise and love Him and beg His guidance.

Why approach Him *through* any of the Prophets, or through any priests or parsons, saints or virgins?

Surely we should all approach Him because He made us, and will always hear our prayers for guidance and increased wisdom and increased appreciation of His infinite mercy and infinite goodness to us. We should not pray for specific worldly advantages, but should never cease praying for guidance from on HIGH.

HAJI KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN.

Haji Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din then delivered the following speech :—

My Lord, Ladies and Gentlemen,—To a mind nurtured under Western theology, the appellation "Sister Religions" carries no meaning. He knows only two categories, Christian or Heathen, into which he divides the whole human race, and there can be no kindredship between these two. But if religion came to spiritually advance mankind, what about such nations of the days past who remained out of the pale of Christianity, through no fault of theirs, but simply from want of means to know or even hear of "the gospel of the blood"? Are they to be condemned? The Church in the West cannot give any other verdict, and yet they address God as "Father in Heaven." Should we take Him as father of the house of Jacob and their offshoots, or is He really Universal Father?—and if He is Father to the whole human race, could He reveal His holy will only to a particular class and neglect others? Has He been so partial in His other ways? One has simply to notice those grand Divine morals which found their epiphany in the universal providence. He made no invidious difference between different

peoples. His sustenance is not limited to a particular age or a particular country. He is the Sustainer of all people, the Lord of all Ages, the King of all places and countries, the Fountain Head of all graces, the Source of every power, physical or spiritual. He is the Nourisher of all that is created and the Supporter of all that exists. Divine grace encompasses the whole world and encircles all peoples and ages. The power and faculties which He granted to the ancient people of India were also given to the Arabs, the Japanese, the Europeans, and the Americans. For all the earth of God serves alike as a floor, and sky a universal canopy. For the sake of all, the sun, the moon, the stars give their light and perform such other functions as God has charged them with. All people alike derive benefit from air, water, fire, earth, and other things created by God, and all equally use the produce of the earth. These are the broad Divine morals exhibited to teach us a lesson that if no class of man has been denied benefits of these diverse manifestations of Nature, how can this equal and impartial Providence be disbelieved in matters of revelation, which in reality is the most essential factor in human edification, as the soul is much more valuable than our flesh? It is a misconception of Divine Providence under which the Church of Christianity *even now* labours in dividing the whole human race into Christians and heathens. But every other religion made the same mistake. Before the revelation of Al-Qur-án, the Book of Islam, every nation, while claiming Divine origin for its faith, denied the privilege to all other creeds. The last message of God came to Muhammad, which in the very first falsified this wrong conception of partial spiritual dispensation. The Qur-án, our Sacred Book, commences with the words of glorification and thanksgiving to Allah God, Who is the Creator and Nourisher of the whole universe. The words¹ used there are broad enough in their significance to refute the doctrine which sets limits to the universal spiritual dispensation of God. They teach us Muslims to believe the Divine origin of every other religion which claims to have come from God. If with Al-Qur-án I accept authenticated portions of the Bible as the Word of God, I regard the Gita and other holy scriptures of India as my joint

¹ *Al-hamdu-lillahe-rabbal-Aalameen.* All praise and glory are due to Allah, the Creator, the Nourisher, the Maintainer and Evolver (spiritually or physically) of all the worlds.

property with my Hindu brethren. If I accept Moses and Jesus as my own prophets, I cherish similar feelings for Krishna and Rama Chandra. They were all prophets of God, and they brought their respective religions from the same One God, and hence the appellation "Sister Religions." These words may be strange to some other ears; but a Muslim—and I may be allowed to say only a Muslim—appreciates and realizes the true significance of these words, and I am not wrong in saying so. Will any person enlighten me otherwise, and refer to me any other book which claims Divine source for its origin, and at the same time is so generous as to teach the following in the clearest terms as the Muslim Book of God does:—

"(The God-fearing are these) who believe in what hath been sent down to thee (Muhammad), and in *what hath been sent down before thee*" (2:3).

"Say, ye (Muslims): We believe in God, and that which hath been sent down to us and that which hath been sent down to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes; *and that which hath been given to Moses and to Jesus, and that which was given to all the prophets from their Lord. No difference do we make between any of them*: and to God are we resigned" (2:130).

"There was no nation but had its warner."

"Every nation had its Guide" (13:8).

"A Divine messenger was sent to every class of men" (Al-Qur-án).

"We have sent apostles to nations before thee" (16:65).

The above is a true gospel to establish universal Brotherhood of man under the universal Fatherhood of God. This noble doctrine, so lucidly taught in the above verses—and the Muslim Book of God abounds in such verses—infuses a spirit of equality and fraternity in mankind. It destroys that narrowness of mind which disintegrates the whole fabric of human society and separates brother from brother. How generous of the Qur-án to teach us the following peaceful course when we have to enter into controversies in religious matters with believers in other Books:—

"Dispute not, unless in kindly sort, with the people of the Book, save with such of them as have dealt wrongfully

with you : and say ye, *We believe in what hath been sent down to us and hath been sent down to you. Our God and your God is one, and to Him are we self-surrendered*" (29 : 45).

"Our God and your God is one." What a true aphorism which at once establishes two things: That all nations have received revelations, and that those revelations must converge towards a common goal. I have to accept what has been given to you by your Prophet, and you have to accept what has been revealed to our Prophet ; and if truth is one-sided, there can be no difference between the two. But unfortunately there is disparity and divergence even in basic principles. Some of the teachings are diametrically opposed to each other. As, for example, the question of sin. With Christians it is an heritage ; with Muslims it is an acquisition. Man is born in sin, has been taught by the Church of Christ ; while Islam teaches that every man at his birth brings an immaculate nature. Similarly we do find some principal differences in other great religions of the world. The reason is not difficult to find out. Want of efficient means in olden days to preserve sacred writings intact afforded occasions and opportunities for human interpolations and wrong interpretation. Besides, languages which were the medium of the conveyance of these ancient scriptures, being liable to constant changes, became obsolete and set up insurmountable hindrances in the way of coming generations to reach the spirit of the old letters. Memory, the only repository of these old books, could not retain them any longer when their language could not remain popular. Translations and interpretation were in need, and hence corruption. Original texts disappeared and went to oblivion. Additions and subtractions came into play, and almost every sacred book of the past became metamorphosed. Higher criticism on the Bible throws a flood of lustre on the subject. The first five books of the Old Testament, reported to have been written by Moses, are now found to have come from some other author. Solomon never composed those Songs, which in my humble opinion are simply derogatory to his holy name.

The first four books of the New Testament have shared the same fate. Their authenticity is questionable, and a portion of

it an invention.¹ The writings of the prophet Zoroaster are also not forthcoming, and whatever we have in our hand it is only hearsay tradition. The Three Baskets of the Buddhistic literature cannot be traced to Buddha. The genuineness of the Vedas is also not universally believed. Of all the sacred literature of the world, Al-Qur-án comes to make noble exception to this universal deplorable condition of the revealed Books. No one can impeach the genuineness of the Qur-án. The same words, without the least change, we read to-day as came from the lips of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. We, the Muslims, are always open to conviction; we are ready to accept any truth which has been revealed to others, as we have been enjoined to "believe in what hath been sent down to us and hath been sent down to you," as "our God and your God is one." But where should we go to find what "hath been sent down to you"? Scriptures in your hands, Divine, no doubt, in their origin, have not been able to keep their original integrity. You yourself admit it. Why be contented with what is adulterated? If for our physical nourishment we avoid things contaminated by human touch, how could a food to our soul which we know has been subjected to corruption satisfy us and meet our approval? And could not God make us a fresh supply? Are not so all His ways of Providence? A thing, when consumed or contaminated, comes in new supply to meet our need. Corn, vegetables, water, everything in the universe, fares the same course. And why not in the case of Divine revelation? Divine ways are unchangeable. As the Qur-án has rightly said, because all ancient Books from God became adulterated, God was pleased to substitute them with the Qur-án. In a word, all these religions of the world, which made their appearance in different parts of the world, came from the same one God and brought the same truth. But their original beauty and purity was marred, like all other things of God, through vicissitude of time, and the Qur-án came in more favourable times to preserve its integrity, and reproduced everything from the old Books that was necessary for our edification. We followers of sister religions belong to the same family of God, and let us say, with mutual confidence in each other, in the words of the Qur-án :—

¹ Elsewhere we quote an American rationalist, Mangasarian, on the subject.—Ed.

“We believe in what hath been sent down to us and hath been sent down to you. Our God and your God is one, to Him we are self-surrendered (Muslims).”

MR. ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI.

Mr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali was then called upon to take part in the discussion. His speech was remarkable in its elocution and eloquence, and was highly applauded.

He said that he came to listen and not to speak, but he could not disregard the chairman's call. He was glad to welcome Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din back after an extended tour among the Muslims of India. Never was the feeling of “sister religions” more necessary than it was at the present day. Sisterhood not only implied relationship, but also a sentiment. He would not say that sisters in a family never had a difference among themselves. But it was expected of them to show sympathy and understanding, and a loving-kindness which would make the burden of life easier.

The sisterhood of religions was meaningless unless it implied a brotherhood of mankind. That phrase “brotherhood” was on every one's lips. But we had to guard ourselves against the tendency to do only lip service to a phrase. The slaughter of mankind was at the present moment proceeding at the rate of thousands per day. Should we not uphold the banner of Brotherhood as the rallying point in the reconstruction of the new world that was coming?

Islam was a landmark in the history of mankind, because it laid its emphasis on the germinal ideas which mould our ultimate destiny. Little minds always dwell on the ephemeral and the accidental. What we had to do was to see that we fastened our attention on the great things that mattered. If we did so we should find that Islam stood for a number of ideals in life and practice, of which he (the speaker) would mention three.

First, there was the destruction of idols. There were three hundred and sixty of them at the Kaaba, which our Prophet destroyed. But this destruction was only a prelude and a symbol. There were more than 360 millions of idols in the moral world and in the world of ideas. We all have our public idols and our private idols. Each age has its own idols. Hundreds of them crumble to pieces, but thousands of them

are ready to take their places. ✓ The idols of Superior and Inferior Races, of Colour and Complexion, of Culture, of Physical Force, were running rampant, and people bent their knees and worshipped them. What were we doing to destroy these idols? They would need for their destruction the blood of countless martyrs.

Secondly, there was Privilege to be unseated—Proud Privilege that ever scorned the struggling soul. It took many different forms. One was sex privilege, that poisoned the life of the home at its very source. When the woman or the girl child was kept down, the process was demoralizing at the very heart of our life. In this matter our own sad lapses made critics jeer at Islam. ✓ But they forgot what Islam had done for the sex. ✓ It gave woman an equal status before the law. ✓ It gave the girl child protection from the barbarous practices of the "Age of Ignorance." In that age, when a man child was born there was rejoicing, but there was lamentation when the girl child was born, and she was exposed and quickly destroyed. One of our Prophet's most burning denunciations referred to this very evil.

Thirdly, there was to be an honest and fearless pursuit of truth. ✓ No mysteries, no high-sounding phrases, no self-tortures, no vicarious salvation. No priesthood—privileged or otherwise—was to stand between man and his Maker. We—men and women—were to press forward to discover the truth and to act on it. We were not to flinch and think: Where will this truth lead us? We were to place before ourselves the eternal ideals implanted in our souls by God. Those were to be our banners. We were to uphold them—in unity, strength, and brotherly and sisterly love.

HONBLE. MIRZA ABBAS ALI BAIG.

The Honble. Mirza Abbas Ali Baig was then called to the platform, and said that Christianity had come a good deal under the influence of pagan ideas in its very early history, otherwise there would not have been this difference in the features of two sisters (Christianity and Islam) which is noticeable now. Islam is very jealous on the point of the Unity of God. But Christianity has adopted the old pagan idea of Trinity, of immaculate conception, and of sonship of God. Christ himself was not responsible for those ideas.

He said that Lord Headley had said that Muhammad had married more than one wife, and from this people here might get a support of those misrepresentations which had been generally spread against Islam on the question of polygamy. He said people always forgot that polygamy was in no sense any special institution of Islam. There was no religion or civilization before Islam which adopted any practical steps to discourage polygamy or even to limit the number of wives.

It was one of the greatest triumphs of Islam to boldly take up the amelioration of the condition of women. Islam not only put a limit to the number of wives, but made a polygamous marriage permissible under such conditions as were not easy to secure. In fact Islam regulated marriage on such lines as were eventually meant to bring about monogamous ideas, and he was proud to say that Islam has achieved its object. The idea of monogamy has now taken root, and polygamy (either legitimate or illegitimate) is very rare in Muslim lands.

It was a mistake to think that Christianity condemned or even prohibited polygamous marriages. There is no such commandment in the Bible as, "Do not take more than one wife." It was Justinian who, under the guidance of an atheist, introduced the law of monogamy; but, in spite of that, the custom of polygamous marriage continued. The lecturer said that personally he was against polygamy; but there could be circumstances when polygamy would be a beneficial institution for society: as, for example, after this war some provision will have to be made to meet the situation of reduced manhood and relatively increased womanhood. It was only for such contingencies and circumstances that Islam had in its theological statutes a remedial measure in the form of polygamy. Polygamy was by no means an essentiality of Muslim life. It was more an exception than a rule.

People were very much interested in the speeches, and wanted the discussion to continue, but as it was getting late the meeting had to be closed soon.

PRINCE ABDUL KARIM OF SACHCHIN.

Prince Abdul Karim in a short and suitable speech thanked the lecturer for his lecture and for the interest he had taken in the Central Islamic Society. He said that it was only by meeting with one another that misconceptions could

be removed, and it was therefore that the Society was arranging such social functions as the one they were holding. He hoped that other functions would be arranged by the Society and thus misunderstandings removed. To remove misunderstandings and prejudices was one of the main objects of the Society, and it deserved every encouragement.

Prince Abdul Karim was supported by Mr. KADIRBHOY. Then SYED EHSAN EL BAKRY, in an eloquent speech, thanked the chairman, and was supported by Mr. DUSÉ MOHAMED.

After suitable replies from the lecturer and the chairman, an instructive and interesting meeting came to a close.

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"I have received and read with deep interest your book on *Islam and Socialism*, and am prompted to congratulate you most cordially for the excellent work you have done. I earnestly wish that a copy of it could be placed in the hands of every open-minded intelligent Christian in America. I will loan my copy to all who will read it. . . . Your book will come as a refreshing gleam of light thrown upon what has been considered a dark and puzzling subject."

Prof. Dr. E. MONTET, D.D., of Geneva University, writes :-

"I thank you heartily for sending me your book *Islam and Socialism*. I have read it with increasing interest. I was specially struck with two declarations of your book.

1. To us (Musalmans) Socialism means an organized, continuous and harmonious co-operation of individuals in all, with a view to securing universal well-being and general prosperity. It is right, and I think Islam is in a very near connexion with Socialism.

2. Musalmans of the world have a mission: to be an intermediate nation to unite the East and the West.

I hope to go later to India and to make acquaintance with you, perhaps in 1917."

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