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# Glimpses from the Life of the Holy Prophet Mohammad

A collection of Essays written by Muslim and non-Muslim, British and non-British writers, dealing with various aspects of the Life of the Holy Prophet, at the request of the Editor, *Islamic Review* in honour of the Prophet's Birthday, celebrated at Hotel Cecil London, on 6th January, 1917, meiodim, an extract (translated in English) from *the* writings of Imam Ghizalee on *the* Morals and Manners of the Poophet, culled from Bhokhasee,

By

**KHWAJA KAMALUDDIN**

Editor, *Islamic Review*.

1917

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*Chief Secretary to Her Highness the Ruler of Bhopal (India)*



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## PRAYER<sup>1</sup>

*O ALLAH! O CREATOR AND RULER OF THE UNIVERSE, Thou art the Cherisher of all nations, the Sustained of all ages, and the Nourisher of all times. We thank Thee for Thy Universal Providence, which knows no distinction between black and white, and for Thy boundless bounties, which make no difference between a race and a race. All praise and glory are due to Thee, O Gracious Lord, Thy Grace equally encompasses all, if Thy blessing in the form of the sun and the other manifestations of Nature so essential for existences reaches everywhere, so has been Thy spiritual dispensation impartially open to all. Thou hast raised prophets in every nation, and Thou hast revealed Thy will everywhere. There were those days, O Lord, when under Thy will Thy seas and Thy mountains kept us, Thy servants, separate from each other, but Thou hast neglected none even then, physically or spiritually. Every nation was given her own prophet, and every age saw its own warner.*

*But, O Lord of the East and the Lord of the West, if Thy High Will hath now been pleased to remove all those barriers, natural or artificial, which separated distant members of Thy great human family from each other; if Thou hast been pleased to knit the various units of humanity into one big household; if Thou hast been pleased to create means of mutual intercourse and communication whereby a resident of a country has become a citizen of the world, bring them, O Lord, all Thy votaries, under one tabernacle. May we all pray then in one mosque. May we build one Church with the universe as its parish. May we have one religion, one book, to destroy all these wranglings, divisions, and differences. May we accept all Thy messengers as our own guides, and make no distinction between the one and the other. O Extinguisher of old things and Creator of new things, enlighten*

<sup>1</sup> Recited by Kh. Kamal ud-Din on the Prophet's Birthday Celebration, at the Hotel Cecil.

*Thy creatures of Thy high intention, which was pleased to remove almost all the sacred books of the days past from the memory and possession of those to whose ancestors they were first revealed, and to keep Thy last Book intact We thank Thee, O Source of all our knowledge, in giving us the Qur-dn. If we badly miss the original book of Moses, the original gospel of Jesus, and the books of all other prophets of the world, we thank Thee for the last of Thy Books, which recapitulates and reproduces what was necessary in them all. We badly want the life-record of those Thy servants whom Thou didst raise in past days for our edification, and we regret the error of those before us for their not leaving us genuine accounts of what they saw or heard of those inspired by Thee for our guidance. It might have been a treasure of light and guidance to us, but we thank Thee, O Preserver of all, with our soul and heart, for preserving us a complete record of the life of Thy Last Prophet, Muhammad, in most brilliant colour.*

*Guide us, O Lord, in Thy right and straight path, the path of those to whom Thou hast been gracious, and not the path of those with whom Thou art angry or of those led astray. Amen.*

# Glimpses from the Lite

## of

# The Holy Prophet Muhammad

*P~ We {God} have not sent thee (Muhammad) otherwise than mercy unto all creatures"—THE QUK-AN, 2 . 107.*

*" Blessed be He who sent down 'Alfurkean' (illumination) on His servant, that to all creatures he may be a warner."—THE QURAN 25 . 1.*

IF the world ever needed a prophet it was at the time when Muhammad made his appearance, when the laws of God were being violated and the limits and bounds put by Him were being transgressed simultaneously on the whole surface of the earth. Every gross degradation of humanity has always seen' the appearance of a prophet, so when the whole horizon of the world had become darkened under the dense clouds of infidelity, dishonesty and unchastity, the Great Prophet came in Arabia. It was a time when every country and each nation had seen complete depravity; so much so that sin was not regarded as sin in many cases, but as an act of virtue. The statement may startle many, but it is truth, and a reference to the Church history of the mediaeval days in Europe and of the Puranic ages in India, as well as the Muzdic history of Persia, will verify our remarks. Human society at that period of human history had sunk to its lowest ebb, spiritually as well as morally. And "as in Nature light always follows darkness and rain comes after drought," so this wretched state of things then obtaining in the four corners of the world in the fifth century of the Christian era called either for the appearance of several prophets in several countries or the advent of one masterly mind who should come to restore universally the religion of God in its perfect form. Different nations before Muhammad had been ^iven different books, but the books could not remain free from human alloy; the will of God revealed to man had become

## 2 GLIMPSES FROM LIFE OF THE PROPHET

obscure, and diversity of opinion cropped up everywhere, even in most essential principles of religion. The Qur-an refers to this state of things in the following verse, *where* it refers to the necessity of the Quranic revelation •—

(All) *people are a single nation, so Allah raised prophets as bearers of good news and as warners, and He revealed with them the book with truth, that it might judge between people in that in which they differed, and none but the very people who were given it differed about it after clear arguments had t onie to them revolting among themselves, so Allah has guided by His zvilf those who believe the truth about which they differed, and Allah guides whom He pleases to the right path "* (The Cow, 213). In commenting upon this verse Maulvi Muhammad AH writes in his English translation of the Qur-An —

"The first part of the verse states the universal law according to which Allah raised prophets among all nations, because all the nations are a single people, and therefore it could not be that prophets should be raised in one nation and not in another. With every one of these prophets, we are then told, a book was revealed, so that it might point out the right way to the various contending parties that existed before the advent of that Prophet. But as time passed, the very people to whom the book was given so that they might follow it went against it. Thus, though a prophet had been raised in every nation, yet every nation had forsaken the right way and acted against the very direction which had been given to it, so difference again arose which necessitated the advent of another prophet. Hence it was necessary to raise a prophet who should show the right way to all nations. If a prophet was needed by every nation to settle its own differences one was surely now needed to settle the differences of the various nations, for the truth which had been shown to different prophets had again become obscured. Thus among the different national religions of the world Islam occupies the position of an international religion "

The logic in the above is obvious. It seems to me quite clear and convincing. The Divine dispensation has always deemed it necessary to enlighten man of the high will of God, and of the index of His heart. And it was done before Islam came by such books as the Old and New Testament, but all those books which were revealed before Muhammad became obscure and unauthenticated, so there was a genuine need of another revelation. Besides, the world was on the move to bring the distantly located units of humanity into one cosmopolitan body, and therefore a book was needed to accumulate all the past truths purified from human alloy, a prophet was

needed to mirror the life of all other prophets. Hence the Qur-an came, and the Prophet Muhammad came, one as the Final Testament or Gospel, the other as the seal and the last of the Prophets.

### THE ULTIMATE PROPHET

But why the last? A full reply to it demands an extent which the present space at my disposal hardly allows. But I may take here one aspect of the question. Let us consider the primary object for which the mantle of prophethood falls on the shoulders of a chosen one. He does not come for any personal aggrandizement nor to become an object of worship and to take the place of the Deity. He brings a message from God to man for the guidance of the latter, and elucidates It through his actions. He receives precepts from Heaven and translates them into action through his own example. He is the first to obey the laws revealed to him from Above and leads others to follow him in doing the same. Thus the words of God and the actions of a prophet in the way of illustration help others to pursue the path of guidance, and if they are preserved in their original integrity and transmitted to us in their genuine colours, there lies no necessity of having a new revelation or a new prophet. But the fact was that whatever had come from God before the advent of Muhammad saw corruption and human interpolation. The records of the lives of the pre-Islamic religious teachers themselves are enveloped in mystery. They are more of the character of a myth than of history. In fact, we know very little of their life. Hence the need of the Qur-an and the Holy Prophet. And if the Qur-an is just the same as it was in the days of the Prophet and the record of the acts and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad himself is unexceptionally complete, faithful, and correct, are we still in need of any other prophet or any new revelation from God? Hence the Qur-an, the last Book of God and Muhammad, the last of the prophets. It is more on account of the finality of the Law and guidance given in the last message of God than the personality of the holy messenger which makes him the Ultimate Prophet. When the Holy Qur-an faithfully represents the will of the Most High and contains everything necessary to meet our moral and spiritual requirements, a new revelation would be a useless repetition and a redundancy.

## 4 GLIMPSES FROM LIFE OF THE PROPHET

### THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PROPHET.

By MAULVI MUHAMMAD ALI, M.A., LL.B.

THAT Muhammad was the only prophet who could see his mission fulfilled in his own lifetime is a simple historical truth ; The chief characteristic of the *Holy Book revealed to him which no other book can claim is the wonderful transformation which it brought about*, and it is to this characteristic also that it lays claim in the very commencement when it says: "This Book, there *is* no doubt in it, is a guide against evil." That the transformation wrought by it is unparalleled in the history of the world is admitted on all hands, for if the Holy Prophet was "the most successful of all prophets and religious personalities," ' this success was due to no other cause than the Qur-an. Its injunctions swept off the most deep-rooted evils like idolatry and drunkenness, and left no trace of them in the Arabian peninsula, welded the warring elements of the Arabian society into one nation, and made an ignorant people the foremost torchbearers of knowledge and of science. Besides, every word of the Qur-an gives expression to Divine majesty and glory in a manner which is not approached by any other sacred book ; and hence the challenge of the Holy Qur-an remains unanswered to this day.

The whole human race, leave apart Arab, was at its lowest moral ebb when the Qur-an was revealed. Clouds of darkness and ignorance overhung the horizon of the earth. Libertinism was the order of the day; so much so that wickedness of the blackest dye was taken in some countries as an act of merit in the eye of God. In four corners of the world all laws of God had been violated and Divine limits transgressed. And the Arabs were the most wicked people that the earth of God had ever seen. They not only committed wrongs of the worst type, but they exulted in doing so and were great boasters of it. That was an age of the best poetry in Arabia. They used to meet in their fairs and festivals and vie with each other in their power of making poetry; they produced and read the finest specimen of their composition, and it often contained narrations of their villainous deeds. A people of this sort! and within less than a quarter of a century transformed into a nation of God-fearing men of piety and righteousness, keeping all the

\* See *Encyclopedia Britannica*, eleventh edition ; art. " Koran. "—ED»

## GLIMPSES FROM LIFE OF THE PROPHET 5

commandments of God and respecting all the laws of society. The most ignorant of the world became torchbearers of knowledge and learning to the then benighted world. Those who kept the weaker sex at the lowest stage of degradation became the first champions of female rights, and infused into the world such a chivalrous spirit as was unknown before. And this all within the shortest space of time! History fails to refer to other regeneration like what was effected by Muhammad. May the choicest blessings of God be on him !

### SPIRITUALITY SECRET OF SUCCESS

This success, so unique in its kind and so unparalleled in history, only speaks of that highest stage of spirituality which the Sacred Prophet had attained. No reform in any community can possibly be worked out unless its members entertain some regard for the reformer and are willing to obey him. But no worldly riches or power, nor even any amount of one's working miracle, can inspire others with that love, respect, and obedience which always follow an advanced spirituality. The words of Muhammad were not the dictates of a potentate. Nay, he disavowed always possession of things which might influence others in his favour. In the words of the Qur-an he would say often and often : " I say not to you, ' In my possession are the treasures of God'; neither do I say to you, ' Verily I am an angel'; only what is revealed to me do I follow." But still he commanded submission and homage unimaginable. In fact his words were the words of the beloved, to be respected and cared for by the lover. And if so is the mental attitude of the people towards their teacher, no wonder he is " the most successful among all other religious personalities" in working out reforms. But one should first reach the height of the ladder of spirituality before he aspires to that success. Jesus might convert water into wine, but he could not convert the nature of his disciples into what he desired them to be. He wished they could possess a grain of faith. And so it proved when the trial came. One mostly trusted betrayed him. If others deserted him, the one given the keys of heaven cursed and disowned him. Call them what you will, "infirm in faith" or "weak in spirituality," but the fact remains the same. It does reflect on the weakness of the teacher's spiritual influence. He seems to lack that " alchemy "

## 6 GLIMPSES FROM LIFE OF THE PROPHET

which converts a base metal into shining gold. The followers of Moses also would not care much for their liberator. They would not listen to him on his way to the Promised Land. But the holy companion of the Sacred Prophet would always say: "Like the companions of Moses, we will not say: (O Moses) 'Go thou and thy Lord and fight/ but we will fight on your right and left, in your front and on your back.'" And these were not mere lip expressions. Invariably they were put to hardest trials, and their words proved always to be true. The following unparalleled piece of bravery and fidelity of the Prophet's companions, so ably portrayed by Maulvi Sadr-ud-Din of the ISLAMIC REVIEW, we also read in Bukhari, Zurkani, Ibn Husham, and Sir William Muir.

### A HUMAN FORTRESS

"It was in the battlefield of Ohud, in one of his defensive wars, when the Holy Prophet Muhammad, being hard pressed by the forces of the enemy, fell down in a pit and fainted.

"He had received over eighty wounds: two of the rings of his helmet had run into his cheek, his face weltered in blood, and a blow at his teeth made one of them fly away. The enemy was marching on and sending volleys of arrows, and the life of the Prophet was in danger. He being senseless and no breastwork to defend him against the enemy, disappointment and despair were staring him in the face, but the self-devotion and fidelity to their master, the unprecedented characteristic of the followers of the Holy Prophet, warded off the dire consequences of the situation. Abu-Bekr, the first successor after the Prophet, was the first to see the danger, and was foremost in offering ready help, which example was at once followed by Ali, Talha, Zuber, Abu Ubaidah, Abu Dujana, and many others. The Prophet was in the pit, and a sure mark for the enemy. The fight being hand to hand, and the place being even and plain, the only fortification which could save the leader at the moment was a living wall of the human beings, which, however, was not wanting. They fortified the pit and exposed themselves to the coming volleys. The human fortress gave a brave defiance. Talha strained two or three bows, and received thirty-five wounds in the endeavour to shoot back the pressing enemy, and proclaimed that no blow will reach the sacred body of the Prophet but through his own chest, and

## GLIMPSES FROM LIFE OF THE PROPHET 7

boesought his esteemed Leader to refrain from raising his head, and thus obviate the danger of any shot striking at him. <sup>^btt</sup> t)ujana was afraid, lest the weak flesh in him should overcome his faithful love for his master, he therefore turned his back to the enemy and inclined over the Brophet. The other constituents of the living fortification made an impenetrable wall against the shots of the enemy. They fell dead one after the other, but their vacant places were filled up by others equally devoted. Ibn Comina, from the ranks of the enemy, came forward with the sword, but it was barely ward|^i off his head by the naked hand of Talha, whose fingers were disabled for life thereby.

" There were no hospital assistants or the sisters of charity to nurse the Holy wounded, but love and devotion made up the deficiency. Abu Ubaidah applied his own teeth to extract the rings of helmet firmly embedejed in the cheek of Muhammad, and had to lose his own two teeth before he succeeded in his endeavour. Water could not be found at that moment to wash the body and face of the Prophet besmeared with' blood, but many a human tongue came forward to lick it off. Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet, with Saffian and other renowned ladies, were busily engdged staunching the blood and nursing his wounds. But it was Umi Nasibah, daughter of Kab, whose desperate spirit greatly contributed to win the day. She wielded her sword and drew her bow with the object of defending the Holy Person that lay in the pit. Other ladies like Umi Slaim, Umi Saleet, Aysha, and others caught her enthusiasm, and accoidm^ly made an onslaught on the enemy, while nursing the wounded.

" One of the young children was commanded by his mother to arm himself with a sword and dash upon the enemy to defend the Prophet."

The above very highly speaks of the teacher and the taught—an instance the like of which can be boasted by chronicles. The followers of Muhammad proved true to their professions which they used to sing proudly as their war-cry:—

*" We are that very people that have pledged themselves to*

## 8 GLIMPSES FROM LIFE OF THE PROPHET

*Muhammad to fight in defence of their faith throughout their-lives*

The spirit infused by the Prophet did not only find its exhibition in the exchange of arms, but it enabled "the sons of the desert" also to face courageously the most formidable of the foes that a man has to grapple with—his own corrupt nature and evil habits. History fails to refer to a single instance where a reformer met such an implicit allegiance to his precepts from the people he wished to reform, especially in the matter of eradicating their molrdeeply rooted evils. "Drink" was one of their evils. No Bacchanalian orgies elsewhere could surpass the Arab indulgence of alcohol in those days. Their daily meals were three, but they worshipped Bacchus five times a day. But when the time came for the Prophet to introduce into them total abstinence, the streets of Medina were overflowing with the detestable contents of the wine-barrels, which were emptied at the one magic word of the Prophet.

No appeal from the brain power of the nation to the Cabinet to stop liquor traffic—and that only for a short period—was needed. One word from the master-mind, and the five times fixed for the worship of Bacchus were converted into the five times of Allah's worship in Islam. Such radical\* revolutions in the morals of people cannot be worked out without one's being at the climax of spirituality—and so was Muhammad. After all, the whole prime of manhood spent in retirement in the Cave of Heera could not remain without bringing its fruits. Though they were the early days of his marriage, Muhammad would often retire to that cave and spend month after month there in divine contemplation. There the angel of God appeared to him and brought him the first message.

His duties increased with his ministry, but nothing could keep him back from his communion with God, his days in action, but his nights in long prayers. Even in the busy life of Medina one could see his feet swelling as for nights he was on them in the presence of God, and thus continued till he left the world. \_\_\_\_\_

" THAT person is wise and sensible who subdues his carnal desires and hopes for rewards; and he who follows his lustful appetites, and with all this asks God's forgiveness, is an Ignorant, man."—THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD.

AN IDEAL REPRESENTATIVE AND GUIDE  
OF HUMANITY

"A noble pattern had ye in Gods Apostle."—THE QUR-AN 33 : 2 i.

"For thou (Mithammad) art of a noble nature!"—Ibid. 68 : 5.

"Say : If ye love God, then follow me (Mufmmmad)."—Ibid. 3 : 29.

"Religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this Man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity"—RENAK.

So Renan remarked when speaking of Jesus. Renan, with all his rationalistic attainments, was no proof against his early predilection. A calm and unprejudiced consideration of what we read in the Bible as to the life of Jesus, in the light of what is necessary to constitute human society, will convince our readers that the remark of Renan was not free from short-sightedness. He should have known that there were various walks of life most necessary for the superstructure of human society where Christ, as reported in the evangelical record, could not be a guide. A king on the throne, a judge on the bench, a statesman in his cabinet, and a general in the field are as necessary units of human society as a teacher of morality; and God was also not unwise in raising patriarchs like David, Solomon, Joseph, and Joshua, who acted respectively as a king, a judge, a minister of state, and a general. They were human beings, and possibly committed errors in the performance of such duties. But if God had to come as the "ideal representative and guide of humanity," as it is said He did in the person of Jesus, we could have been more benefited if God had appeared as a king or a statesman. He could have left better rules for the guidance of Christian kings and statesmen in Europe, and the world would have been saved this terrible conflagration into which it has been thrown under ambition and self-assertiveness. Christendom wanted a God in the person of a general and an emperor rather than in a "Prince of peace," to guide Christian nations in their recent slaughter of humanity. He could have taught them morals of war. Perhaps His precepts and action in this respect might have proved a better check in this war to all that has created in Europe "a long and sombre procession of cruelty and suffering and a most deplorable and tragic spectacle of bloodshed and distress."

Perhaps Jesus did not come for the kingdom of this world. But if the civic and economic policy of the world necessitated

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the existence of some kind of kingdom and the enforcement of mutual rights and obligations between man and man, the only-basis of a commonwealth, renders some sort of government indispensable; and if no sooner man emerges out of the primitive state of nature' than at once knowledge of individual property rushes to his mind, and its security, together with the safety of his own life, brings home to him the necessity of some sovereign political authority, though in a rudimentary form, should we look to the Mount of Olives for an "ideal representative arid guide of humanity/" as Renan says, or to the Mount of F'aran to find a king, a statesman, a lawgiver, and a general in the person of the Prophet Muhammad ?

Does not the conduct of the latter's followers in the present war justify the remarks ? especially in view of the strong contrast between the exhibition of the worst type of brutality by some Christians and the doings of the Turks—the followers of the Warrior Prophet—who have been spoken of by the English Press as "clean fighters and gentlemen."

Christ apparently was no example in the higher walks of life, but I wish he could be of help to us in our ordinary life. Is not our domestic life an essential and important item in the programme of our life ? Are not many houses in these days scenes of unhappiness, misery, and discord ; and does not this deplorable state result from want of those sweet [relationships](#) between husband and wife which make the matrimonial bond a heavenly tie ? Is not the very word "home" a treasure of dearest associations, and are not these things growing extinct *day* by *day* in most of the houses of to-day ? Was not woman created to be a helpmeet to man, and are they not intended to live as husband and wife, on the happy or unpleasant mutual relations between whom a home becomes a heaven or a hell ? If these are realities of life and are to a great extent responsible for our happiness or misery, are we not in urgent need of a guide to regulate our domestic daily life? It is a matter of regret that the son of Mary, on account of his ministry being cut short so soon, could not avail himself of an opportunity to have an earthly connection with some woman as husband and wife, and we are again constrained to turn our eyes to some other quarters for "a guide of humanity." Jesus, of course, had a mother, but perhaps the mystic side of his nature comes in the way, and a son in a Christian home has nothing to learn from

Jesus in home morals. The holy Virgin could with complacency of mind hear her son call her "woman." Perhaps she saw in him something different from herself; but an average Englishwoman would not like to be addressed thus.

### WRONG CONCEPTION OF SPIRITUALITY

But Jesus was not for the world ; he came only for something spiritual—some of our readers will think so when reading the above. I wish one could disillusionize such friends of their wrong conception of spirituality. With them, perhaps, spirituality means effacement of all our social concerns and disregard of mundane duties. But Jesus was not a recluse, after all. He was a man of action as well. To fast and to see visions, to pray away the midnight hours and to talk with God through the night watches, as Cardinal Newman wrongly thinks, is not the whole spirituality. "The weekday side of our life," in the words of J.R. Miller, D.D., "has a great deal more to do with the spiritual life, with the building of our character, with our growth in grace, than many of us think. On the other hand, no day can be made beautiful whose secular side is not so full and complete as its religious side." But what else is religious side ; where lies the dividing line between the religious and the secular, when you lead a life of purity and chastity, of charity and benevolence in all its walks ? Are not our physical conditions closely connected with our moral and spiritual? Even our drinking and eating play a great part in the world of our moral and spiritual conditions. Jesus himself made no difference between what is called a secular and a religious life. It was, however, for Muhammad to bring so clearly home to the world that every act of a person "has a religious bearing, a religious significance, his whole life from the cradle to the grave is one series of religious performances. There is no sharp dividing line between religion and politics. There is no such thing as 'Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and unto God what is God's.' Caesar is but a representative of God, and obedience to him is obedience to God. Not only had he "to regulate the ritual, frame religious ordinances, direct the worship of his followers, but he had also to guide their political destiny."<sup>1</sup> And was Jesus a recluse, or a man of action ? His life was one both of prayer and action. His nights he passed in communing

<sup>1</sup> S. Khuda Buksh, *Journal of the Moslem Institute, Calcutta.*

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with God ; his mornings found him doing all sorts of good offices to those in need and distress. He was none the less spiritual when he was in the company of the publicans and tax-collectors. Did not his spiritual powers find their exhibition when he was participating in a marriage ceremony ? And if the weekday side of his life was quite consistent with his spirituality, Jesus could not have become less spiritual if he had been raised as a king or a potentate.

### SPIRITUALITY IN DAILY LIFE.

And if spirituality consists chiefly in doing something to advance real human happiness by precept and example, a king, if also advanced in spirituality, can do more to further human happiness than a discarded recluse. Humility of mind and meekness in deportment, the two among several other essentials of spirituality, when exhibited by those who can afford to do otherwise, add charms to their owner. They are taken as a good moral object-lesson and act as a magic wand converting every haughty, stiff-necked into a gentle and humble creature. But when these high morals find their manifestation in one humble in position, they only invite effrontery and rebuke and excite jeer and jest. They are not taken as good morals of their owner, but as a necessary outcome of his low social status.

And in this respect Muhammad is the only glorious illustration of true spirituality.

Once an orphan, again a persecuted citizen, again one flying for his life, and then a spiritual and temporal chief But could this taste of power "change his method of living ? Did he surround himself with the pomp of power ? Did he keep a retinue or bodyguard, or did he indulge in any one of those outward manifestations of earthly glory in which the monarchs of the earth, ancient and modern, have loved to clothe themselves ? Did he amass wealth or leave a large fortune behind ? In fact, in no one single respect did he change. Power, notwithstanding, and stupendous power too, for he exercised a power which the greatest of monarchs might have envied, he remained to the last simple, unostentatious, free from pride, living for his flock and living with them with a self-effacement and a self-sacrifice rarely to be seen in life."<sup>1</sup> Here is the *great potentate*, but "*poor in spirit* Here is the great builder of temporal and religious power.,

<sup>1</sup> S. Khuda Bukhsh, *ibid*.

but meek, merciful, and pure in heart, who inherited "the earth but did hunger and thirst after righteousness." In his case, lip-words became reality and actions. This is real spirituality, which remains, unflinching and unscathed, even in affluence and prosperity. One who is meek and humble in poverty and adversity has nothing to lose if he chooses to be so; but he has still to put his spirituality to test if he dips deep into the well of riches and power and remains unaffected. I will refer here to the tribute paid by Dr. Gustave Weil to Muhammad :—

"Muhammad set a shining example to his people. His character was pure and stainless. His dress, his food, they were characterized by a rare simplicity. So unpretentious was he that he would receive from his companions no special mark of reverence, nor would he accept any service from his slave which he could do himself. Often and often was he seen in the market purchasing provisions ; often and often was he seen mending his clothes in his room, or milking a goat in his courtyard. He was accessible to all and at all times. He visited the sick and was full of sympathy for all. Unlimited was his benevolence and generosity, and so was his anxious care for the welfare of the community. Despite innumerable presents which from all quarters unceasingly poured in for him, he left very little behind, and even that he regarded as state property."

### MAGNANIMITY OF THE PROPHET

By S. KHUDA BUKHSH of Patna

TAKE, again, his triumphal entry into Mecca. What a glorious instance of forbearance ? Arabia lay prostrate at his feet and Mecca, the stronghold of opposition, was entirely at his mercy. Did he then show a spirit of revenge ? And could he not, if he had so willed, have cut off the head of every one there, those implacable enemies of his who gave him no quarter, who forced him to leave his native land to seek shelter, who held him up to scorn and ridicule, who persecuted him with a rancour and bitterness which was at once cruel and unreasonable ?

But the personal element never entered into his actions at all. He rejected every token of personal homage and declined all regal authority, and when the haughty chiefs of the Quarish appeared before him he asked—

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" What can you expect at my hands ?"

" Mercy, O generous brother."

" Be it so, you are free."

His simplicity, his humanity, his frugality, his forbearance,, his earnestness, his steadfastness, his firmness in adversity, his meekness in power, his humility in greatness, his anxious care for animals, his passionate love for children, his unbending sense of fairness and justice!—Is there another instance in the history of the world where we have the assemblage of all these virtues woven into one character ?

After centuries of perversion of facts and suppression of truth, the figure of Muhammad stands aloft to-day compelling the admiration and commanding the reverence of the non-Muslim world. He is no longer an impostor, but a great reformer. He is no longer a neurotic patient suffering from epilepsy, but a man of tremendous character and unbending will. He is no longer a self-seeking despot, ministering to his own selfish ends, but a beneficent ruler shedding light and love around him. He is no longer an opportunist, but a Prophet with a fixed purpose, undeviating in his constancy. All this Europe has now acknowledged, and acknowledged freely. We have the appreciative works of Higgins, Davenport, Bosworth, Smith, and Carlyle in English, of Krehl and Grimme in German ; the monumental work of Caetini in Italian. There are others besides, scholarly works, but they are not altogether free from those prejudices which at one time constituted the stock-in-trade of Christendom. (*Journal of the Moslem Institute, Calcutta.*)

### " SERMON ON THE MOUNT" NO GUIDE TO HUMANITY

The deeper I go into the question, the more doubtful I become as to the correctness of Renan's remark given above. The morality taught by Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount never found favour even with his immediate followers. The precepts in the sermon may be taken as an idealism, but the world for the last two thousand years could not see its way to bring them into practice\* Even the devout workers of his mission find themselves often unfit to work out these idealistic principles of ethics, and are only waiting for the second advent of Christ

when the Kingdom of Heaven shall come to restore peace, amity, and love, and man, becoming circumcised of all stern but otherwise manly passions, will be in a more suitable disposition to act upon them. We may accept this apologetic exposition; but what about the stern side of our character, which, dangerous as it seemingly appears to peace, is also an essential factor in maintaining the same? Jesus may guide us in the exercise of our tender, passive moral qualities, but happiness to human society greatly depends also upon the exercise of the stern ones when properly balanced—anger, hatred, and we may add to them vengeance also • their exercise is necessary to keep life and property secure. One may brand them as lower passions; but is it not only an act of godliness if we hate falsehood, if we are angry with anything cruel or wrong, and if a culprit is brought to book and society is avenged in the interest of public safety? These passions have their right use, and it is only in their degenerate use that they become bestial. On the other hand, they become higher morality when they are put to their proper use. To say these stern passions are undesirable is simply to find fault with the Supreme Wisdom. Are not hatred and anger relatives? Do they not affect the trend of human affairs? And if man is born after the image of God, all the moral qualities, tender or stern, observable in him must be divine moral attributes in man, and they cannot be dispensed with. Do we not observe them in the working of dumb nature, the best index of divine character; do we not read of them in the Bible as attributes of God?—and if we exercise them we simply go after God. These passions no doubt require regulation and training, and it is in the life of a perfect man in whom God is claimed to have been revealed that we look for the right use of such passions. Is not the get-your-both-cheeks-struck morality sufficient, if adopted, to destroy those stern morals which are divine, and to render our life and property insecure? Is not the resist-not-evil principle of life a premium to cruelty and rowdyism? This kind of morality seems to be too high-flown to be practised, and will remain so till the day of judgment. But can the Teacher of the Sermon on the Mount under these conditions claim to be a perfect model of humanity and an ideal representative of mankind, as Rcnarv makes him to be? But leaving apart anger, hatred, and vengeance, there are other moral attributes beside those claimed as-

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Christian morals observable in us. Modesty, meekness, and patience do not exhaust the long list of human morals. Bravery, justice, chivalry, generosity, self-confidence, and many other noble qualities—they did hardly find their exhibition in actions in the record of Jesus. To take the most favourable view of the case, Jesus, a raised Divine Messenger, possessed them potentially; but they remained in abeyance, and did not see their revelation in him, as he did not get the occasion necessary for the manifestation of these morals.

### MUHAMMAD—A PERFECT SPECIMEN IN PRACTICE

A possible potentiality is no proof of actuality, and negative virtues are no virtues, especially in teachers of morality. They cost nothing, and are no help to one who needs a specimen in practice. You may read homilies of forgiveness and sermons of meekness, but lip-teachings are no proof of their possession by you. Words converted into actions only can justify our claims to possession. How can you teach lessons of patience and meekness if you never happened to face the hardest trials of life as Jesus did? What a marvellous thing to find the Holy Teacher of Islam as just up to our demand. From orphanage to kingship Muhammad passed through different stages of life. Events of diverse nature arose in his life which demanded manifestation of various characters. At every step he was weighed, but was never found wanting. We need a perfect model up to our needs in several walks of life, and the life of the Sacred Prophet eloquently promises it in itself. A king, a statesman, a warrior, a general, a lawgiver, a judge, a tradesman, a friend, a father, a son, a husband, a neighbour—all these characters are mirrored in most beautiful colours in the life of the Prophet; and it is not through his sermons and teachings that we have to make estimation of him and to learn morals from him, but through actions and deeds.

### MUHAMMAD—A TEACHER THROUGH ACTION.

And in this lies the superiority of the Great Prophet over the other prophets of the world. They leave us legacies of -words, though of wisdom and guidance; but for their transla-

## GLIMPSES FROM LIFE OF THE PROPHET 17

tion into actions we look in vain in the account of these teachers' lives. Teachings put into practice by the teacher himself is our need. It will help us to appreciate them and guide us to act upon them. But, unfortunately, what we know of these teachers is too meagre to guarantee it. They are not even historic.

### THE HISTORIC PROPHET.

They are enshrouded in obscurity. Their life imp<sup>^</sup>c something strange and antique. They speak like oracles, and even the few words reported to have escaped from their lips hardly enable us to have an insight into their character. The Prophet Muhammad, on the other hand, is more historic than Caesar and Alexander the Great. His life is just like a mirror before us where different characters of high-mindedness, generosity, bravery, patience, meekness, forgiveness, and other necessary constituents of humanity reflect in most brilliant colours. The life of the Prophet is an eloquent commentary of the sacred Book. Every virtue recommended or any vice enjoined against in the Qur-an, and the same you will find illustrated *in* the actions of the Prophet. The importance of it can hardly be exaggerated. Without it we are unable to appreciate one's teaching and we give it up as hopeless, but for our regard for the teacher we sometimes call it as something ideal, which really means an impracticability. "'Love your enemy' did not pass beyond the domain of dream in Christianity, but Muhammad—peace be upon him!—has shown us how love for the enemy may be shown in practice. Only a practical benefactor of humanity like Muhammad could say: "For the love of Allah give away your wealth in freeing those enemies whom you have captured in war." So was enjoined in the Qur-an, and so in every case Muhammad acted upon the injunction, and the Muslim conquerors in the footsteps of their Master always spent their wealth in freeing their captives." <sup>1</sup> Similarly everything in the Qur-an found its practical illustration in the life of the Teacher. His life was eventful, and furnished him occasions to manifest what was noble and good in him. It is due to the extreme opulence of the life of the Prophet in practical demonstration of all the many virtues that we recognize in him the most perfect figure in the history of **man**.

Muhammad Ali, M.A.: the Translation of the Qur-an.

## 18 GLIMPSES FROM LIFE OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD IN ADVERSITY

IN fact, one who could not experience change in the circumstances of his life cannot afford to be a perfect model for others' imitation. Every moral quality requires given conditions, and unless they are present one cannot be rightly accredited with it. Adversity and prosperity are necessary to give revelation to different moralities. Trial gives man a character, but success brings forth his nobility of mind if he possesses it. In fact, humanity is not only softness of heart. It consists of various morals, tender and stern, and they need variety of conditions for their development. If some find manifestation in penury, others demand affluence for perfection. Very few guides of humanity were given an occasion to taste both. But Muhammad, to act as a perfect model for humanity, had to pass through every phase of life. If prosperity brings forth his generosity, his forgivingness, and his high-mindedness, his adversity gives him an occasion to exhibit his patience, fortitude, and his trust in God.

### MUHAMMAD'S TRUST IN GOD

By AL QIDWAI

The hardships which Muhammad (peace be on him!) had to bear in his early mission were as severe as severe could be. History has recorded several instances of such men, who have been pioneers in any walk of life, having been ill-treated by their compatriots ; but the persecution of Muhammad, when he called his idolatrous people, who were steeped in almost all the known vices and immoralities, to one God and to ethical and moral grandeur and purity, was unsurpassingly terrible.

He and his faithful wife Khadijah and but few other followers bore the brunt of the persecution for years. Muhammad, before the proclamation of his mission, was called *Al-atnin* the Trusty; but simply because he invited his people to the worship of One God his countrymen began to despise him, and tortured his few followers, whom he had to send away from Arabia. He himself went away to Taif in the hope of meeting better treatment at the hands of the people there, but they welcomed him with stones, and with bruises all over his body he returned. While on his way back he lay

down under the shade of a tree and fell asleep, when one of his persecutors came up, and taking up his sword in his hand, woke him up. "Who will save thee now, O Muhammad, from my hands?"<sup>1</sup> Without an instant's hesitation Muhammad's reply was, "My God." The enemy was at once awed by this daring answer, and feeling nervous dropped the sword, which Muhammad instantaneously took up and cried, "Who will save thee now?" Poor man—he thought he had no God to save him, so he sought mercy at the hands of Muhammad. But Muhammad was not the man to allow any self-idolization. He raised up the fallen man, and said, "The same God who saved me from thy hands will save thee." The man became a Muslim—resigned to the will of God—and Muhammad's trust in God was rewarded.

However, in Mecca the persecution of Muhammad was ruthless. For three long years he, with his few followers, was completely ostracized in his own land, and at last his life was seriously imperilled. Fortunately, through his spiritual power he came to know the designs of his enemies just early enough to leave his house before they reached it with the intention of killing him. He had one solitary companion with him when he was flying to Medina pursued by his bloodthirsty enemies. He and his companion hid themselves in a cave. While there his companion heard the footsteps of the enemies who were *in* search of them. His companion was not like the apostles of another prophet who never cared for their master when he was in danger, in spite of his solicitations. Abu-Bekr knew that it was only the life of Muhammad that was in danger—not his. But he loved Muhammad more than he loved himself; so he became anxious when he heard the footsteps of the enemies. "We are only two, and the enemies are a large number," said he in the cave. What did Muhammad say at that time of danger, when his life was at stake? Did the cry of *Eli, eli, lama sabachthanil* ("O God, O God, why hast Thou forsaken me?") escape from his lips? Did the idea for a moment cross his mind that God, his God, the Cherisher of all the worlds, for Whose sake and Whose sake alone he was persecuted, for Whose sake and Whose sake alone he was leaving his hearth and home and was flying to a strange place to proclaim His Majesty and His Unity, had forsaken him? It must not be forgotten that by his proclamation of the Oneness of God Muhammad had lost his

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position, his popularity. Muhammad was by birth an aristocrat. Blue blood ran in his veins. He was personally, too, very popular. But since he had heard the call of his Creator, and invited his brethren to that call, he had lost all—his very life was threatened, so perilously threatened. His solitary companion in the cave, the venerable Abu-Bekr, was anxious. The anxious words "We are only two" came to his lips. "No," said Muhammad emphatically, "*La tahzan, inallah ma'ana*" ("Do not get disheartened, God is with us"). God was always with Muhammad. In the flash of lightning, in the peal of thunder, in his travels, in his bed, in his anxious moments, in his hours of happiness and delight, always and everywhere—Muhammad saw the glory of God. His God, omnipresent and omniscient, helpful and loving God, was always with him. There has never breathed a soul on the face of this earth who had so much confidence in God as had Muhammad. May peace be on his soul, and may those who follow him have the help of God always and everywhere with them

### MUHAMMAD AND JESUS BOTH PRAYING FOR THEIR ENEMIES

The event referred to by Mr. Qidwai in the above occasioned a prayer which in a way resembles that said by Jesus while on the cross. Taif was a place at some distance from Mecca. Muhammad preached there against idolatry. The idolaters drove him out of the city. The rabble and the slaves followed, hooting and pelting him with stones until the evening. Wounded and bleeding, footsore and weary, he betook himself to prayer. And the following words found utterance in a moment of deep distress and affliction: "*O Lord, I make my complaint to Thee, Out of my feebleness and the vanity of my wishes I am insignificant in the sight of men; O Thou Most Merciful! Lord of the weak, Thou art my Lord. Forsake me not. Leave me not a prey to strangers nor to my enemies. If Thou art not offended, I am safe. I seek refuge in the light of Thy countenance, by which all darkness is dispelled and peace cometh in the near and hereafter. Solve Thou my difficulties as it pleaseth Thee. Guide them in the right path, for they do not know what they do*"

Noble words and worthy of the noble speaker. Conscious of the insignificance he has been reduced to, and yet suchi

-splendid reliance on God. " I f Thou art not offended I am **safe.**" How hopeful in his trials—not the slightest tinge of despondency, no complaint, *no doubt as to his being forsaken* by God. " Solve Thou my difficulties as it pleaseth Thee"—another noble -expression, eloquent enough to enlighten a narrow-minded Church missionary who ignorantly harps on the uniqueness of " Thy will and not mine." The concluding portion of the above\* quoted prayer is similar to that of Jesus, and yet they differ from each other in the main point,

*"Forgive them for they know not what they do"*—Jesus.

*" Guide them in the right path, for they know not what they do "*—Muhammad.

Words suiting the circumstances of the speakers respectively, and coming events proved their truth. Jesus had no chance of gaining that power over his enemies in his lifetime which could enable him to show his magnanimity of soul in the form of forgiveness. He implores God to " forgive them." Muhammad had to reach that climax ; he had to forgive them himself. It was so within the knowledge of God. Besides, the words inspired on the lips of the latter are more comprehensive. They go further and include *forgiveness* in them. Forgiveness is only for the things past; guidance to righteousness is for the past as well as for the future, as no one can tread the path of righteousness with his past sins unforgiven. So the Holy Prophet not only implores for the forgiveness of past deeds but for their future righteousness as well. The words were prophetic, and proved to be so. Muhammad came to his full power, and his oppressors whenever they came to him received treatment of unparalleled kindness.

## MUHAMMAD IN POWER

### THREE REQUISITES OF FORGIVENESS

FEW persons remember their days of adversity when they come to power. But a serene and noble mind is an ajdamantine proof against all the vicissitudes of time. In his case change-means newness of circumstance to bring forth such other noble qualities as could not be exhibited in his former state. No virtue is without its own phase and character. It demands circumstances peculiar to it for its revelation, without which no

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one can claim to possess it Forgiveness, for instance, can be shown only by one who undergoes three stages of life. Firstly^ he has been in affliction and helplessly persecuted by his enemies. Secondly, he has come to full power, and his enemies are at his mercy; and lastly, they come to receive judgment for their tyranny at his hand, but they are forgiven and not punished. *How can one be accredited with mercy who never had any one at his mercy?* and forgiveness, like mercy, can only be shown by those who by change of circumstances find their persecutors helpless and at their mercy. With splendid meekness Jesus bore all the derisions of the Israelites, and showed marvellous patience in the hardest trials of life which he suffered as a martyr to the truth, and how noble of him to say while on the cross, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*" Jesus could not do more than that. But Muhammad had to forgive his enemies himself. For full thirteen years he remained subject to a long series of persecutions of variegated nature. He was tortured physically and mentally, but he was always prayerful for the welfare of his foes.

### MUHAMMAD AND NOT JESUS COULD SHOW FORGIVENESS.

It has just been remarked that the moral quality of forgiveness demands three conditions precedent for its manifestation. These conditions must be fulfilled before one can lay claim to possess this noble attribute. Jesus was persecuted, but the other two conditions remained lacking *in* his life. It was at the hand of the Prophet of Islam where *forgiveness* found its right use and occasion, when the "Lord on high with His ten thousand saints" reached the gates of the "Ancient House" in the person of Muhammad. The old writings were fulfilled, and the one who had fled from Mecca persecuted and tortured came back victorious. The enemies of the Prophet in Mecca had subjected him and his followers for thirteen years to a long course of trials and hardships which surpassed in intensity and quantity the hardest trials in others' lives. His enemies fell and found themselves at the absolute-mercy of their persecuted victim. They deserved every imaginable punishment to be devised by human ingenuity, and to bring them to it was simply to meet the ends of justice and equity. Muhammad would have been quite justified if he had punished them as severely as Joshua, Rurhundra, and Krishna,

did **when** victorious over their enemies; but the great Divine moral attribute would have remained in abeyance for ever. God raised various prophets from time to time, and His various characters were revealed in them. Muhammad was the last of the race, and all those Divine moral attributes which were still undeveloped in man found their proper epiphany in him. Forgiveness, being one of them, had its own occasion as well as its use. It found no occasion in the lifetime of Jesus, and if others had it, they did not utilize it. But Muhammad had the rare occasion and did not fail to use it. His enemies, when utterly fallen, entreated him to treat them as a noble-minded person would do. The appeal was most opportune, and made to the right man, and was readily accepted. Thus Mecca fell without a single drop of human blood being shed—an event unparalleled in history.

### **A CAPTIVE CHRISTIAN LADY AND 'MUHAMMAD**

By M. SADR-UD-DIN

Muhammad was compelled to wage wars, but never a sword was drawn but as a last resort to defend human life and secure safety to it. These battles proved useful in one way: they furnished occasions for the revelation of that nobility of character in Muhammad which cannot be exhibited without them. That noble treatment which the defeated received at the hand of the Prophet worked wonders. Never a suppliant came but he got more than he deserved or desired. After the defeat of the Clan Tay of Yamen (Arabia), a band of Christian women was brought before the Prophet among the prisoners, led by Safana, the daughter of a widely famed Christian philanthropist known as Hatam. When the Prophet came to know of her lineage, he showed her every respect. He informed her that the generosity of her father called for the tender treatment of his daughter. "God loves those that are kind to His creatures"—so said the Prophet to the lady—"and Islam aims at inculcating the higher virtues, and consequently it must recognize them wherever they exist." So saying, the Prophet released Safana. But the daughter of Hatam was worthy of her father. Emboldened by the saintly appearance and kind treatment of her liberator, her self-sacrificing spirit came to the rescue of her fellow-prisoners;

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she refused to accept the favour if the other prisoners of her sex were to remain state prisoners. But her self-abnegation could not go unrewarded, especially at the hands of Muhammad, who always proved more than a match for the nobleness shown by others; and so the Christian lady had to invoke a long prayer upon the head of her noble deliverer, when she found all her companions liberated at her intercession. The whole company were given leave very soon, and they were dispatched to their town under a trustworthy escort.

### ISLAM NEVER ENFORCED THROUGH THE SWORD.

The life of the Prophet is full of such events. If the sword was drawn to force others to conversion, why were the prisoners released at the end of each war and allowed to go to their home without being converted to Islam? Can any person refer to a single conversion which was secured through compulsion?

## MUHAMMAD A REAL WARRIOR

To wage war in defence of life and property was a duty, and cannot be treated as a crusade. His amazing, untiring zeal to stamp out idolatry from his country and to enforce there other reforms roused terrible opposition against the founder of Islam. No Arab tribe was without its idols, and to vindicate and protect the honour of their image-god every clan rose in war. This occurred when the Prophet was at Medina. Invaded on all sides by his enemies, he had every now and then to take the field or to send men to meet aggression. Sometimes victorious, sometimes defeated, every incident created an appropriate occasion for the noble Prophet to manifest different phases of his grand character. *One has simply to digest and codify them, and the world will find in them laws and rules of war more humane and appropriate than could ever be imagined by the promoters of the Hague Conference.* Besides, laws coming from one believed to be a Messenger of God can command respect and obedience which can never be claimed by man-made laws. That we do stand in need of some laws with religious authority about them that should regulate war in case it should occur, cannot be denied in the face of what we bitterly experience every day in the present war. Could the convention at Geneva and the conference of The Hague secure

any respect for their ordinance even from their very promulgators in their belligerent capacity? The laws were humane in their treatment of war prisoners. They protected the civil population of the enemy. But when the mad dogs of the war were unchained, all such ordinances were shelved into oblivion. The German could not have done what Cardinal Mercier styles as slave-raids had Germany taken her ethics from the founder of her religion, who could have waged wars like Muhammad and dealt with the war captives as well as civil population of the enemy. The German General Staff must have before them directions like the following, which Caliph Abu-Bekr, the successor of Muhammad, gave to the Muslims when they left Medina for the conquest of Syria:—

#### MUSLIM ETHICS OF WAR

" When you meet your enemies in the fight, comport yourself as befits good Muslims, and remember to prove yourselves the true descendants of Ishmail. In the order and disposition of the host, and in all battles, be careful to follow your banners boldly, and be ever obedient to your leaders. Never yield to, or turn your backs on, your enemies; it is for the cause of good that you fight. You are incited by no less noble a desire than His glory; therefore, fear not to enter into the fight nor let the numbers of your foes alarm you even though excessive. If God should give you the victory, *don't abuse your advantages, and beware how you stain your swords in the blood of him who yields; neither touch ye the children, the women, nor the infirm old men whom ye may find among your enemies. In your progress through the enemy's land cut down no palms, or other fruit trees; destroy not the products of the earth ; ravage no fields ; burn no dwellings; from the stotes of your enemies take only what you need for your wants.* Let no destruction be made without necessity, but occupy the city of the enemy ; and if there be any that may serve as an asylum to your adversaries them do you destroy. Treat the prisoners and him who renders himself to your mercy with pity, as God shall do to you in your need ; but trample down the proud and rebellious, nor fail to crush all who have broken the conditions imposed on them. Let there be no perfidy nor falsehood in your treaties with your enemies ; be faithful in all things, proving yourself ever upright and noble, and maintaining your word and promise truly- *Do not disturb the quiet of the monk or hermit and destroy not their abodes, but inflict the rigour of death upon all who shall refuse the conditions you may impose upon them.*" (DR. ABDUL MAJID, *The Law Quarterly Review*, 1908.)

The italics are ours. That the injunctions have always been carried to the letter is an admitted fact. Read the above and think what a world of devastation and vandalism we find in Europe to the contrary. Is not Islam the proverbial enemy of idolatry and the notorious killer of all sorts of polytheistic tendencies? Yet thousands of temples, pagodas, and shrines ^consecrated to gods, goddesses, and demigods, teeming with

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**valuable** golden and marble images and idols, have survived **the** most successful Muslim invasion and rule in India. Could you show a single instance in the whole Muslim history where the house of God, no matter belonging to whatever denomination or creed, met the fate which the Rheims Cathedral and a house of God in Louvain has seen in these days? The reason is not difficult to find out. Man-made laws cannot command everlasting respect, treaties are made to serve the time, and they are more honoured in the breach than in their observance, if they are not convenient. But when an ordinance receives religious authority about it, or comes from a founder of a religion, its violation excites public censure. It is not a breach of a word of honour, but a sin, a sacrilege, and a blasphemy, and a student of psychology can easily comprehend the difference between the binding force of the two. " Tariq, the first invader of Spain, commanded that no offence should be offered to the peaceable and unarmed inhabitants ; that only those who bore arms should be attacked ; and that plunder should be confined to the field of battle and to towns carried by assault."<sup>x</sup> Even in these degenerate days of modern civilization, the followers of Muhammad could follow their Master.

### A SPLENDID ILLUSTRATION OF MUSLIM WAR-ETHICS IN ADRIANOPLE.

It was in the siege of Adrianople by the Bulgars in the Balkan<sup>^</sup> War, when the besieged fell short of provisions. Under the Muslim martial laws every resident of the citadel was compelled to part with the extra provisions he had in store for the benefit of the rest. Muslim and non-Muslim had to do the same. But when the news reached the ears of the Shaikul-Islam (the Muslim High Priest) he admonished Shukri Pasha, the famous defender of Adrianople, to annul the order in case of the non-Muslim portion of the population, as it was against the war-ethics pronounced by the Warrior Prophet. The mandate, though entailing great privation to the Muslims in Adrianople, **was** implicitly obeyed, as it had a most sanctified authority of religion at its back.

<sup>1</sup> Syed Abdul Majid, LL.D., in *The Law Quarterly Review*, 1903.

## JESUS PREACHED AND ANTICIPATED WAR

That war was the permanent curse or necessary asset to humanity, take it as you may, was not unknown even to Jesus. \*'Think not that I came to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword.' How prophetic Jesus was when he said: "I am come to send fire on the earth." His followers did what he himself could not do, and fire in its different forms in the hands of the Christians became a scourge to humanity. No doubt Jesus in some other mood also said: "Love your enemies and do good to them that hate you," and all the Church ingenuity and eloquence has been a simple waste in her efforts to reconcile the above two expressions of his mind. Had Jesus been given a chance to appear as warrior, though he anticipated so, as appears from his record, we could have read his mind through his actions, as in the case of Muhammad. If war is a legacy of man, and he has to make resort to it now and then, a teacher coming from God to act as a model for our guidance cannot claim perfection unless he himself has waged war, and through his example shown us the occasion, the use, and the ethics of war. We do not only read the following in the Qur-an and his sayings, better than which one cannot imagine as laws of war, but we find an eloquent commentary on them in the actions of the Holy Prophet:—

*"A<sup>1</sup> sanction is given forth to those who, because they have suffered outrages, have taken up arms; and verily God is well able to succour them. Those who have been driven forth from their homes wrongfully, only because they say 'Our Lord is the God,' And if God had not repelled some men by others, cloisters and churches and oratories and mosques, wherein the name of God is ever commemorated, would surely have been destroyed (22:39). And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight with you, and do not exceed the limits. Surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits. And kill them<sup>2</sup> wherever you find them and drive them out from whence they drove you, and persecution is*

<sup>1</sup> This verse is the earliest revelation regarding the permission to fight and wage war.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>" To kill the enemy wherever one finds him is nothing strange when a state of war exists, and yet the critics of Islam draw the most grotesque conclusions from these simple words. The verse, read together with the first, runs thus: *'And fight unth those who are fighting with you and kill them wherever you find them.'* Do the civilized nations fight with each other to spare their enemies?—  
MUHAMMAD ALI, the Translation of the Qur-an.

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*severer than slaughter ; and do not fight with them at the Sacred Mosque until they fight with you in it, then slay them; such is the recompense of the unbelievers. But if they desist, then surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. And fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion should be only for all. But if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressor "* (2:190-193).

" From the above it may be concluded that fighting was permitted as a measure of self-defence and to put a stop to religious persecution. The enemy had first taken up arms with the object of extirpating Islam, and to repel them resort to arms was made. Hence the first restriction to which the fighting is made subject is that the Muslims should fight only against those " who are fighting with you." This restriction further shows that women, children, and old men who could not take up arms were not to be molested. A similar exception was also made in favour of monks and hermits and the civil population."<sup>1</sup> Whenever an expedition was sent against an enemy the Prophet used to say: "*March in the name of God and by His aid, and by the religion of the Prophet. Do not kill an old man, who is not able to fight, nor young children nor women.*" Again, the Prophet said to his **General Khalid**: "*Do not kill any woman, do not kill any labourer.*" The second restriction is that the Muslims should not exceed the limits of the necessity of war. Fighting for the propagation of the faith is not once mentioned in the whole of the Qur-an, and it should be noted that it is this *defensive fighting which is called fighting in the way of Allah*. To establish religious freedom, no matter in respect of what creed or persuasion, " cloisters and churches, oratories and mosques," all have equal claim on Muslim arms for defence. The excuses for which wars are undertaken in civilized countries had long existed in the days of the Prophet, but the Muslims were not allowed to fight until the very existence of Islam was in danger.

If war is as old as man, and sacred and lay history are full of belligerent events, we need some ethics of war to regulate our doings when hostilities are resumed. A warrior-prophet is needed, who by his presence on the battlefields, by his actions and sayings in military exploits, by his precepts and

<sup>1</sup> **Maulvi Muhammad Ali** : the Translation of the Qur-an

## GLIMPSES FROM LIFE OF THE PROPHET 29

examples under contingencies of war, has left us lessons and directions to follow; and that was Muhammad.

### MUHAMMAD AS A SOLDIER

Those were the days of bravery and dauntless martial spirit, - especially in Arabia, when the Holy Prophet made his appearance. Even the female section of the Arabs were so dauntless as to accompany their husbands when they went to war. To speak of bravery and courage in these belligerent days of ours is to relate stories of bygone ages. The undaunted spirit of gallantry and intrepidity is not much in requisition when the two combatants have to stand against each other at a distance of many miles apart and cannons have to decide the events of war. It is not your courageous spirit, but your purse, which brings you victory. But the days of the Prophet were different. Prowess and valour were all in all for that nation of wild and warlike people. It was to humanize them, and through them the whole world, and not to circumscribe their bravery and martial spirit, that the Prophet was raised in Arabia. His mission was to regulate, and not to thwart, nature and its gifts.

The Prophet of Islam was quite up to the high ideals of his time; he evinced a manly spirit, braving all dangers for himself and always occupying the most conspicuous position in the first and foremost ranks of his forces. On one occasion, in the battle of Honein, when the Muslim army could not stand their ground and began to retreat, the undaunted courage and self-confidence of Muhammad changed the whole scene. Single-handed the Prophet spurred his mule right towards the host of the enemy with the following words on his lips: "I am the Prophet, and there is no untruth in it; I am the grandson of Muttalib." This gave fresh courage to the Muslims, who recovered themselves; and this changed the events of the war.

Can a man of selfish motives ever dare perform such tasks? Such a wonderful demonstration of indomitable and intrepid courage on the part of the Divine Claimant to which the veterans of the Arab clans stood eye-witness, and which was attended with brilliant success, not only broke the martial power of the Arabs, but conquered their hearts.

Eurdpe is in arms. Is she to be guided at this juncture by the Holy Prophet or by the Blessed Son of Mary?

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A brave soldier, a dauntless veteran, and yet so meek, so loving and so kind in his dealing, not only in his family circle but with every one coming in contact with him. Study any phase of his life, domestic, private or public, and you are sure to be impressed with the highest type of tenderness.

KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN.

## THE TENDERNESS OF THE PROPHET

By S. H. LEEDER, Author of "The Desert Gateway/" "Veiled Mysteries of Egypt," etc.

I LIKE to dwell on the traits of tenderness in the character of Muhammad, the great Prophet of Islam, chiefly because that phase of him has been lost sight of, if indeed it was ever known, in the West. Much is heard of the Sword of Islam ; the heroic side of this great life has received something like justice from one great historian, Gibbon, and has inspired the rhapsodies of Carlyle. These writers did great service to the cause of Truth by giving pause to the flood of abuse, till then unchecked, by which Christian writers thought to serve their cause against a power they had been taught to hate.

During recent years there have arisen serious misgivings in the minds of intelligent Western writers as to how far and how grossly the world has been misled on the subject of the fanaticism of Islam, the formalism of its worship, and the alleged sensualism of its teaching; though little impression has, I fear, been made on the mass of ignorance and the prejudice still prevailing.

But who of Christian writers has paused to contemplate the abundant evidence there is of the fact that the Prophet was a man of tenderness of heart, gentle with the weak and suffering, compassionate and very pitiful to the poor, a man recognized by all children as a playmate over whom they ruled with no sign of fear. It is said of his grandchildren, the world-respected martyrs Hassan and Hosain, that they climbed all over him and pulled his beard to tease him, with never a reproof. He told them amusing stories ; he was often seen lying on the floor **with** the infants on and about him, while he played in their games with their toys. He stopped children in the streets *with*

affectionate word and gesture. The taciturnity which marked his intercourse with grown-up people ever gave way to his gentle affection for the young. There is a beautiful description of him going to the smoky hut of a woman, a blacksmith's wife, who had charge of a dying child. He nursed the little invalid for many hours, and in the end it died upon his breast.

It is strange to reflect that this tenderness of Muhammad led him to that arrangement of his household which has brought upon his memory the cruellest libel of which Western judgment is guilty. During all the early years of his married life he lived alone with Khadijah, as true and devoted a helpmate as man has ever known—a more perfect union is not recorded of any man of genius. When he was depressed about his spiritual state Khadijah constantly said to him, "Thou art of a good life." When he was getting on in years, and was widowed, it was tender compassion that led him to throw "the cloak of marriage" over certain poor women, saving them—one from a return to idolatry, others from poverty and neglect. In the case of Zeinab (who was hopelessly ill at the time and died soon after) the marriage was to set right a point of law. I know of cases in the East to-day where his followers have given a like protection to poor women, with no thought of any gratification of self. It would be as just to vilify the character of our own Samuel Johnson because of the poor female souls he harboured out of the kindness of his rugged but tender old heart, as to speak of sensualism in such a connection.

All the people of the Islamic East are kind to the blind; question them, and at once they tell you that one of the first lessons from the Prophet's life was his consideration for those who had lost their sight. Muhammad suffered remorse for many years because he once frowned at the importunity of a blind man.

To his inferiors the Prophet was ever indulgent. He once had an awkward little page, but he would not allow him to be scolded. A servant, Anas, declared: "Ten years was I about the Prophet, and he never said as much as 'Uff' to me." He regularly visited the sick, and he taught his followers by his own example that beautiful Eastern custom of turning to follow any bier he might meet, and even to help carry it, if only for a few yards, as a sign of sympathy. I once saw a pitiful little procession going to the burial of a babe, which the father

earned in his arms. Several men at different points stopped the man and, with tears in their eyes, silently held out their arms to relieve him of his sad burden for a short distance. All they could say to me in explanation was, "The Prophet, on whom be blessings and peace, he would have done it!" He never first withdrew his hand out of another's palm, and turned not before the other had turned. If a slave invited him to a meal, he would accept with a gentle grace.

In numbers of villages scattered all over the Eastern world you will find a bench, often protected from rain and sun, by the side of the mosque door. Here poor wayfarers gather as a sign that they are in need, and as men visit the mosque they invite "the sitters on the bench," as they are called, to eat with them that day, or, failing that, they give them alms to pay for food. This good custom, like most others, is founded on the tradition that tells of the Prophet's tenderness for the poor. When he went in to his meals he nearly always called some such folk to join him.

What I have written does but indicate—and that only partially—one side of this great character. It may well serve to show why all men who had intimate dealings with the Prophet venerated and loved him. Some day, perhaps, when a love of truth shines clear enough to dispel the prejudice of the ages, Western writers will carry the study of the life of Muhammad past the point where they now allow his name to stand as a great figure in history, and will give him his just place in the golden book of humanity.

#### MUHAMMAD AS A HUSBAND

In the religious history of the world there is no person who has done so much to elevate the position of the fair sex as Muhammad. He gave them rights when they had none. He taught man to respect woman, which never was man taught before. He made the woman sex almost sacred. Woman was always a weaker sex. In uncivilized countries, and even in civilized countries then—i.e. over thirteen hundred years ago—she was by herself absolutely helpless. She could not live without a protector—a man—a father, a brother, or a husband. She was ill-treated by all. Muhammad protected her from all. He saved her from being buried alive as a daughter—little innocent

child\* He gave her rights of inheritance even as a sister. He protected her rights when she was a wife from being usurped by her husband. Muhammad never preached what he himself did not practise. He was a model father ; he was a model husband. His first wife was his senior by fifteen years; she was forty while Muhammad himself was only twenty-five. A woman of forty in the East is considered very old, but Muhammad remained fondly devoted to his wife until her very death, which took place twenty-seven years after their marriage ; and that devotion is truly represented in the words of Prof. T. W. Arnold, " one of the most beautiful pictures of a perfect wedded life that history gives us." When the call came to Muhammad from above, he came as a faithful husband direct to Khadijah and sought her advice. Khadijah—his close companion who knew him as nobody else knew him—from whom Muhammad could not conceal anything even if he had desired to do so, gave him a certificate in these words: " Joyful tidings do you bring. By him in whose hand is the soul of Khadijah, I will henceforth regard you as the Prophet. Allah will not suffer you to be dejected. Have you not been loving to your kinsfolk, kind to your neighbours, charitable to the poor, hospitable to the stranger, faithful to your word, and ever a defender of truth ?"

Well did Muhammad deserve this certificate from the hands of his wife. He was true to his wife all his life, and even when she was dead he never forgot her. Her memory was ever green to him. He cherished even those people who were liked or who associated with Khadijah. Once after the death of Khadijah a woman came to his wife Ayesha. Muhammad saw her and showed her uncommonly great respect. When she was gone Ayesha asked Muhammad the reason for showing that particular respect to that woman. Muhammad said, " I showed her so much respect because she used to come to Khadijah."

When Khadijah died, Muhammad's most faithful friend Abu-Bekr asked him to marry his little daughter Ayesha; and Muhammad, out of regard to his friend and companion who had borne with him many a hardship, could not refuse: so young and beautiful Ayesha was first betrothed and then married to the Prophet. Yet he never forgot his late wife Khadijah, and always used to remember her with affectionate memory. One day, as he was thus cherishing the memory, like a devoted husband, of his deceased wife, the new wife, young and pretty

as she was, felt a little jealous and said to Muhammad, " Was she not old, and has not Allah given you a better one in her place?" "No," replied Muhammad, "there never can be a better! She believed in me when others ridiculed me, she helped me when I was persecuted by the world," (Abulfeda).

Khadijah has been placed in the ranks of the four perfect women—(1) The sister of Moses, (2) The mother of Jesus, (3) Khadijah, and (4) Fatimah, the beloved daughter of the Prophet.

As a husband Muhammad was fond of Ayesha as well. Al-Ghazzali writes: " The Prophet himself, when he found the weight of his revelations press too heavily upon him, touched his wife Ayesha and said, ' Speak to me, O Ayesha, speak to me!' This he did that from that familiar human touch he might receive comfort and strength." Muhammad used to take part in his wife's recreations and amusements, and did not check them. On one occasion he ran races with Ayesha to humour her, and on another he held her up in his arms that she might look at some performing negroes.

Muhammad taught others, by preaching as well as by example, to be good husbands. When his freed bondman Zaid, whom he treated very affectionately like a son to raise the status of slaves in society and to whom he got one of his own distant relatives married, wanted to divorce his wife, the Prophet made several efforts to reconcile the two; and ultimately, when his attempts failed and he found that he could not leave Zainab alone to be looked down on in society after having got her married to a person who was once a slave, he married her himself and treated her with husbandly devotion, thus re-establishing her social position and impressing upon Zaid how wrong it was of him not to put up with his wife—a lady who was fit to become the wife of the Prophet. Muhammad's sayings giving us some idea of what sort of husband he was are as follows:

" To give one's wife the money she requires *is* more important than to give alms."

" He who deserts his wife and children is like a runaway slave ; till he returns to them none of his fasts or prayers will be accepted by Allah."

" He who bears the ill-humour of his wife patiently will earn as much merit as Job did by the patient endurance of his trials."

"When husband and wife eat together Allah sends his blessings upon them, and the angels pray for them."

On his death-bed also the Prophet was heard to say "Continue in prayer and treat your wives well, for they are dependent upon you." (Al-Qidwai.)

## THE PROPHETS GRATITUDE

By MARMADUKE PICKTHALL

A VERY learned English Orientalist has confessed that, from his lifelong study of the early history of Islam, he has derived so great a personal admiration and affection for the character of the Prophet that he is not quite certain whether his view of the religion can be called unbiased, seeing that he has this strong affection for its founder. Others besides the learned man in question have the same experience, and it is a pity that so few have made the same confession, which is needed to dispel those calumnies, born of the ignorant fanaticism of a darker age, which still pass current with some people for religious truth. This love and admiration which results in candid minds from a close study of the Prophet's life and sayings, is the more remarkable, because during the later years of his mission the character and conduct of the man Muhammad were subjected to the fiercest light of public criticism—the light that beats upon a throne. Unlike all other prophets, whose proper likeness is concealed from us in mists of reverence, Muhammad is a clear historical character, the minutest details of whose conduct and demeanour are recorded for us by his own contemporaries. It is indeed wonderful how little his detractors find to use against him in this mass of evidence. That he once, for a moment, wavered in his sacred purpose, making a concession to the idolaters, which he revoked almost immediately; that he said an angel spoke to him continually (which, seeing he was not a Christian, proves him an impostor!); that he was ignorant of certain facts of modern science, and spoke the language of his people and his age: that is really all that it amounts to in the way of adverse criticism.

If, for argument's sake, any charge \* against him were ever established, what would that prove? Merely that the

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Prophet (whom God bless) was human like the rest of us. He never claimed to be otherwise. It is a common and an ancient error of the Christians to imagine that Muslims worship Muhammad or ascribe to him a mystical divinity like that which the Churches have ascribed to Jesus Christ. And on that ground they dismiss the most honest of men as an impostor. He would have been one had he pretended he was God. But he did not. It was, indeed, the error against which he most vehemently inveighed, regarding it as an affront to the eternal Majesty, an anthropomorphic invention of the minds of men. Muhammad is "the messenger *and servant* of God," "the first of believers," the leader in the way of salvation, setting the example in obedience to the law which was revealed through him, one of the humblest worshippers of all those millions who obeyed and still obey that law.

When Ibrahim, the son of his old age, died at the age of eighteen months, on the same day there was an eclipse of the sun, and the people said:—

"It is eclipsed because of the death of Ibrahim." The Prophet said: "The sun and the moon are two signs of the signs of God. They are not eclipsed on account of the death or life of any one."

وفي ذلك اليوم انكسفت الشمس فقال  
الناس انما انكسفت لموت ابراهيم  
قال معلم ان الشمس والقمر آياتان من  
آيات الله تعالى لا ينكسفان لموت  
احد ولا لحياة

Are those the words of an impostor? The symptoms of imposture are well known, and they are altogether absent from the records of the Prophet's life.

Some hostile writers have declared that visions of the kind he saw denote a sickness of the brain. Well, those who see visions owing to a sickness of the brain, and continue in that state, become ecstatic or insane. Muhammad, on the contrary, was as sane and practical in the last days of his life as he had been when he first received his mission; the burden of his teaching, the burden of his message was the same; his simplicity of life, his piety, remained unaltered. And this becomes the more noteworthy when we consider that in the last years of his life he was a mighty potentate, whose will was law, well

## THE PROPHET'S GRATITUDE

able, if he wished, {to gratify his every whim. To the last he was a pious Muslim, simple in his habits, regular in prayer, vigorous and far-seeing in affairs of state, gentle and forgiving in his private intercourse with men, a loyal friend, a noble enemy, faithful in all things that he undertook. His followers were bound to him by the ties of love, not fear.

"Ten years," said Anas, his servant, "was I about the Prophet, and he never said so much as 'Uff' to me."

He forgave the woman who prepared for him a poisoned meal, giving him thereby a painful illness which eventually caused his death. He forgave the ghoulish and ferocious Hind, the wife of Abu Sufian, who devoured the liver of his uncle Hamzah on the field of Ohod ; he forgave men and women who had maligned or betrayed him. Only for the welfare of the Muslim commonwealth was he severe in punishment—never on his personal account. Muhammad was full of virtues. But what has charmed me most among the virtues of Muhammad is his gratitude—a very rare ingredient in the constitution of great men.

In his youth, as everybody knows, he was not financially well off until he married Khadijah, a wealthy widow some fifteen years older than himself. For twenty-seven years, until she died, this lady was his only wife and his elect companion.

"The messenger of God (God bless him) loved her (Khadijah) with a strong devotion. Before their marriage he used to travel to Bosrah on her business with her slave Meysarah. Afterwards he spent her money in the cause of God. And he continued to remember her with deep affection after her decease, till Ayesah"—a young girl, the daughter of his best friend, Abu-Bekr, whom the Prophet married on the death of Khadijah—"grew jealous. And she said: 'O messenger

كان يجازي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بما شئنا  
 وكان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم سافر لتجارته  
 مع عبد عامسره الى مدينة بصرى  
 قبل ان يدخل بها والنعمة مال  
 بسبيل الله بعد ان تزوجها ولم ينزل  
 يذكرها بعد وفاتها بخبر حيا فذمت  
 عائشة الغيرة فقالت يا رسول  
 الله اني

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of God, what was she but an old woman? God has given thee a better in her stead.' He answered: 'No, by Allah ! He has not given me a better in her stead. She believed in me when men denied my mission; she gave me all her wealth to spend when men restrained me; so kind and generous was she to me.' Ayesah said: 'I will never speak of her again save with respect.'"

صلح معي الامحوزة فوضت الله  
خير منها فقال لا والله ما عوضني الله  
خير من امنت بي والناس كذوبون  
و بذلت مال ما دوني والناس مشون  
فانزلها كانت كريمة قالت ما تشتريني  
الله عنائي كما اذكرها الا بخير-

And again:—

" Abu Hureyrah relates : Gabriel came to the Prophet (may God bless him), saying : O messenger of God, this Khadijah presented to thee as it were a vessel full of food and drink; for what she gave to thee announce to her Peace from her Lord and inform her that a house of silver is prepared for her in that garden where toil and trouble are not."

روى ابو هريرة رضي الله عنه قال ان  
جبريل النبي صلعم فقال يا رسول الله  
هذه خير كعبة قد اتمت باجاق فيه ارام  
علم و شراب فاذا حى اتت فاقراء  
عليها السلام من رسا ونى و بشرها بيتا  
في الجنة من فضة لا ذهب ولا لآلئ

Do not these traditions breathe true warmth of love and gratitude? I commend them to all those who still imagine that the Prophet of Islam degraded women and despised them, or regarded them as soulless. Why, he described his daughter Fatimah upon her wedding morn as "accompanied by troops of angels on the right hand and the left"—a lovely image of triumphant girlhood, but hardly that which would apply to an inferior creature, one without a soul. But I digress.

There is another fine expression of the Prophet's gratitude, which I can never read without a thrill.

The Ansar, the Muslims of Medinah, had received the Prophet gladly on his flight from Mecca, giving him not only a

**refuge** but also a kingdom, and welcoming the Muhajerin (the other fugitive believers) in their homes as brethren. There remained in Mecca only the idolaters, who waged relentless war upon the Muslims for some years. Then Mecca fell, and some of these relentless enemies embraced Islam through fear, and hypocritically. Soon after the conquest of Mecca, on one occasion the *Ansars* thought that more favour had been shown to Meccans, and grumbled. When the Prophet heard of their complaints he ordered them to assemble before him, and said :—

"O Ansar, I have learnt what you say one to another. When I came among you, you were wandering in darkness, and the Lord guided you aright; you were suffering, and He made you happy; there was enmity among yourselves, and He has filled your hearts with brotherly love and peace. Was it not so ? Tell me !"

The men, with hanging heads, ashamed, replied : " In truth it is as thou sayest; to the Lord and His apostle belong mercy and benevolence."

As quick as lightning came the Prophet's cry :—

<sup>41</sup> No, by the Lord! You might have answered, and answered truly, for I myself would have borne witness to its truth, thus: 'Thou earnest to us rejected, and we believed in thee; thou earnest as a helpless fugitive, and we assisted thee; poor and an outcast, and we gave thee an asylum ; comfortless, and we consoled thee!' O Ansar, why disturb your hearts about the things of this life ? Are you not content that others should obtain the flocks and camels while you go back to your homes with me in your midst? By Him who holds my life in His hands, I will never forsake you. If all mankind went one way, and the Ansar went another, I would join the Ansar. The Lord be favourable unto them and bless them, and their children, and their children's children."

That is the royal charter of Medina, endearing it above all other cities to the Muslim's heart. How could they fail to love a man who spoke like that?

"GOD is not merciful to him who is not so to mankind. They will enter the Blissful Abode who have a true, pure, and merciful heart. He who is not kind to God's creatures and to his own children, God will not be kind to him."—PROPHET MUHAMMAD.

# MUHAMMAD AS SOCIAL REFORMER

By J. PARKINSON

THE average European, when he reads the heading of this article, will probably shrug his shoulders and smile with self-satisfaction, thinking that between the man Muhammad and the term Socialist there is no connecting link. Yet the social, let me say Socialist, reforms taught by the Prophet and introduced by him in his legislation permeate the entire body politic of Islam. While the universal spirit of expansion inherited by the race may have carried the Muslim to the Pyrenees in the West and the Indus and Oxus in the East in martial splendour and conquering zeal, it was the Socialist essence and energy, of Islamic legislation that built up and maintained the mighty fabric of Saracenic civilization, and made it supreme over all existing and pre-existing empires, making Granada the Queen City of the West, Bagdad the Pride of the East, Damascus the Pearl of the Desert, and Cordova the greatest Glory of the World. To elevate a people, to raise them socially and mentally and in economics and politics, to make them true students of science and art and literature, you must first elevate them morally, giving them an appreciation of morals before the other modes of thought are set in motion. So the earliest social reforms of the Prophet were moral reforms. In fact, his whole teaching is particularly moral, strong, ethically and spiritually—the foundation on which all legislation ought to be built.

The State is a mass of individuals, and to raise the State to the highest point of development sought for, you must raise the individual. Spiritual progress lies at the root of all material progress. They both react the one on the other ; sometimes one may be ahead, sometimes the other. But progress spiritually is the mainspring of the total machinery of the State, and is the real measuring-rod of progress and civilization.

So the Prophet introduced the grand ideal of Islamic Brotherhood, binding Muslim to Muslim and State to State. It may be said that Jesus also, and others as well, taught disciples an ideal of brotherhood. Yes, *disciples*. Muhammad was wider and nobler than disciples, and in his sweep embraced

not only Muslims but all humanity. One God, one people ; the Creator—His creation.

" Whether a Believer, a Jew, a Christian, or a Sabean, he "who believes in God, the Last Day, and *acts aright*, his reward is with his God, he should neither fear nor be grieved."

His ideal was a brotherhood of the whole of humanity, binding man to man and nation to nation. The doctrine that each man will be judged by *his works* was a decided advance on the early doctrines that the gods could be propitiated by sacrifice or by mere belief in the efficacy of a sacrifice, either animal, human, or divine. His salvation depended on his labours, on his acts and thoughts.

#### THE EXPANSIVENESS OF ISLAM

and its attitude towards other creeds was a new note in the history of religion, save perhaps in the case of the Buddha, who went a good length towards such a goal. It heralded liberty of conscience for all. " Let there be no violence in religion."

" I T IS YOURS ONLY TO PREACH."

Brought in toleration of the opinions of others, and complete freedom of worship according to the person's inclinations or beliefs. So far as the Muslim was concerned it put an end for ever to the doctrine that there was one standard of morals for the individual and another standard for the nation or the State. The State would henceforth be judged by the same measuring-rod that judged the acts of the individual. A State could not make progress—would, indeed, be subject to disintegration—unless internally, as between each person, justice was impartially administered. It is to the credit of the Prophet of Islam that he provided a system by which injustice might be detected and judged, whether perpetrated by rich or poor, high or low.

#### WOMAN.

Woman was elevated to a status she had never enjoyed previously, either in the East or the West. Her rights were safeguarded by the law, and her husband had no claim on the fruits of her labour or on her property, while as wife she held certain legal claims on her husband he could not repudiate and

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none might take from her. Slavery was not abolished; but the social position of the slave was entirely changed that he became practically one of the family. The laws governing his condition were so framed that had the Muslims themselves acted up to them slavery would have been a thing of the past in the lands of Islam centuries ago. I may say here that a man can only be made a slave by a Muslim when he is taken prisoner in war, and not even then if he can pay a ransom, or if the nation to which he belongs can pay an indemnity. Another valuable social reformation was the abolishing of all forms of gambling, one of the curses of present-day Christendom, another the total prohibition of strong drink, the most degrading and destructive habit of the West ; evils that for generations have been enervating and debauching the manhood and womanhood of Europe. No religion save Islam has ever attempted their abolition. Two aspects of the Prophet's teaching ought to appeal to every modern Socialist. The first his forbidding

### USURY.

The hoarding up of money so as to lay it out at interest and live on it without labour was interdicted. Every Muslim must work for his own sustenance. Such a law made for the more equal distribution of wealth. It saved the many from becoming paupers and the few millionaires. The Khalifa Umar so far recognized this teaching of his master that he refused to keep a surplus in the State Treasury, and distributed what was over every Friday to the people according to their needs. The second aspect: The Prophet forbade "cornering," the creation of a monopoly in any of the food-stuffs of the people by which prices might be raised and the poorer portion suffer. The introduction of some of the laws of Islam in the British Isles at the present time would relieve the cares of many a housewife.

### THE POLITICAL ASPECT OF ISLAM

never seems to have been clearly grasped by the great mass of Europeans. Politically Islam is a Brotherhood, and therefore a Democracy. The meanest subject of a Muslim State has the same right to be heard on a question affecting the State or the religion as the ruler of the State himself.

## MUHAMMAD AS SOCIAL REFORMER

### UNDER ISLAM ALL ARE EQUAL.

The Prophet left no hard-and-fast rule as to the title of the supreme head of a Muslim State, or as to whether that head was to be one man or a body of men. That point was in the hands of the people themselves; the ijma or agreement of the Muslims. They could appoint a King, a Sultan, a President, or a Council. But no matter which was appointed the governor or governing body was only there to see that the laws formulated by the Prophet were carried out, and that any fresh laws of detail in State management introduced were in conformity with the general principles enunciated by the great lawgiver. It was the duty of the head to safeguard the interests of the State internally and externally according to the laws of Islam. The head of a Muslim State is merely administrative and executive. No Khalifa or Governor was at liberty to act contrary to the decision of a court of justice. Tribunals of justice were independent; and rich and poor alike, Sultan and servant were tried equally by the Kadi (chief judge), a pauper on application to the judge having the power to call the King to account. Even in England until lately the landowning (county) families looked on labour as demeaning; the idea still remains, but has become less noticeable, disappearing gradually before the sheer economic, political, and social pressure of capitalism. On the other hand,

### MUHAMMAD ENNOBLED LABOUR,

and raised it to the highest standing. He was a worker himself; so were his earliest and most enthusiastic converts. Land in Muslim countries has always been the most important asset from which revenue was obtainable. All land was the property of the State, and was only leased out to individuals at an unsettled tax. The tax varied according to the conditions, the ideal being never to overtax so as to pauperize, or make life a burden. If the law was carried out no great landowning or capitalist class could arise. The division of a person's estate after death was fixed by law; all relations within a certain degree were provided for, so there could be no vast accumulation of land or capital in one person or the elder branch of a family. The old and the infirm were the care of the State, and the State was bound to provide for them. "Old age pensions" are centuries old in Islam.

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In the face of those facts, on the question of what attitude the Prophet is likely to have taken up in regard to the social problems of the present, we need not speculate. If the doctrines\* he taught had been obeyed by all, there would not have arisen a war of classes, no pauperization would have been possible, no deadweight of capitalism would have arisen to crush the whole social fabric, no monopoly could have been created. Such was the far-seeing, far-reaching legislation of that one man who set Arabia on fire with the light of his genius and the energy of his divine inspiration.

### MUHAMMAD AND LEARNING

By Professor N. STEPHEN

• Seek Knowledge, from the cradle to the grave."—MUHAMMAD.

I AM not much of a hero worshipper, for I have always thought more of a man's work and teaching than his personality: which is always the least permanent part of him, and must quickly pass away and be forgotten, or, after a time, be idealized by his admirers and traduced by his enemies, till the picture left is at best a doubtful copy of the original.

But a man's work, his words and teaching, live after him, and, if he be a man of mark, stand as his mark on history and posterity, to influence for good or evil many thousands of his fellow-men. Such a man undoubtedly was Muhammad—a great man, and intellectually a strong man, whose example and influence brought about reforms which, in the circumstances surrounding him, were little less than miraculous.

He was not perhaps a learned man, but I think a man with more knowledge and greater refinement than is usually ascribed to him. I am led to this conclusion by the fact that—

"The tribe of Bani Koraish, and especially that branch of it called the Bani Saad, among whom the Prophet spent his childhood, were renowned throughout Arabia for the purity and eloquence of their language."<sup>1</sup>

And Sir William Muir (not a very friendly biographer) says: "His speech was formed upon one of the purest models of the beautiful language of the peninsula."

<sup>1</sup> See "The Birth and Childhood of Muhammad," by Syed Ahmed Khan Bahador. Trubnew, London, 1870.

Such environment could not fail to make him a man of **some** refinement and good taste; and no doubt it was this which enabled him to attract to himself men much more learned than he.

Another evidence of his love of " Light and Learning " (or shall I say of knowledge ?—for with all respect to those more learned on this point, I think knowledge would often convey a truer conception of his meaning than learning does) is to be found in his desire at all times to get to the cause of things for himself, and his habit of retiring to think over things and questions in solitude, remaining there until satisfied that by reason, or, as he sometimes said, by inspiration, he had arrived at a solution of his problem.

I am not going to dwell on his life history, being well aware that at this late date, and with so many biographies all more or less contradictory, it is difficult to arrive at anything like exact knowledge. So leaving that point to better informed and more able writers, I shall content myself with some of his most authentic sayings on which to hang a few conclusions, believing that a man's sayings are in the main a fair index to his mind. He says:—

" The ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the martyr " <sup>1</sup>

Here is evidence of his fearless and open speech : for this certainly was a bold thing to say, considering that at the time, and for some centuries after, most religious bodies, heathen and Christian, kept all learning jealously under guard ; making it the prerogative of the priestly or ruling class, and even making penal laws to prevent the teaching of the common (!) people, and committing to prison all who made blasphemous (so-called) remarks as to martyrs; and beyond this, in their dread of learning, consigned to the flames the priceless libraries collected by past generations, inflicting on the world a loss so great as to be inconceivable, an injury which can never be compensated, an act of vandalism which will for ever be a black page in history, a disgrace and dishonour to the people and still more to the Church which approved such an act.

Compare this attempt to keep the masses in ignorance with the teaching of Muhammad, who says:—

<sup>1</sup> All quotations, unless otherwise stated, are from Muhammad.—N. S.

" The acquisition of knowledge is A DUTY incumbent on every Muslim, *male and female.*"<sup>1</sup>

Surely a great saying and an honour to himself and his faith, and equally great as a contrast to the methods of his opponents.

Incidentally note in passing this sidelight on his attitude to women: it is the duty of male and female alike. What an answer to those who say he taught that woman has neither soul nor intellect! Mark also the broadmindedness of this view. He would open the book of knowledge *to all*—male or female, rich or poor, common or select; it was not only their right, it was *a duty* incumbent on all to learn all they could, to make the best of themselves, which they could never do while in ignorance.

I once heard it argued that Muhammad did not know how dangerous and far-reaching the results might be, and that it might just as often be a power for evil as for good. I entirely disagree with both statements. Regarding the latter, I do not believe that learning is AS OFTEN powerful for evil; on the contrary, I am sure its tendency is always toward good, though it may be, and often is, diverted to evil.

That Muhammad fully realized how far-reaching knowledge is, is clear, for he says :

" He dieth not, who takes to learning."

A man's life on earth might, nay must, be short, but his learning lives after him, and the end of its influence none can see. That he had not lost sight of its possible danger is equally clear from this:

" The worst of men is a bad learned man, and a good learned man is the best."

Here he indicates the increased power of the learned man both for good and evil; but so sure is he that the balance will always tend to good, that he says:

"To listen to the words of the learned and to instil into others the lessons of science is better than religious exercises."

<sup>1</sup>The italics are mine,—N. S.

Make no mistake though; he does not say it is to take the place of religious exercises—in fact I think this saying points more at those who shut themselves up (i.e. monks, hermits, etc.) and refuse to take their share in the battle of life.

How may we visualize the value of learning? Can you realize this? The ignorant man may EXIST, he never really LIVES; his limitations are so great he is like one shut up in a cell, the four walls of which form the boundary of his world; but even a little learning may make the cell a palace, while much will make it almost a paradise.

I know it is not easy to climb the ladder, for, as Ruskin says, "It takes a great deal of time to get a little deal of learning," But let none be discouraged; there are many kinds of learning besides that in books—in fact there are many *book scholars* who know very little, and many learned men who *know little of books*. The greatest botanist I ever knew could not read, but he could give you the name and life of every herb and flower and tree within miles of his cottage, and men with many letters after their names came from long distances to consult Old John on some doubtful point. Similarly, one of the best ornithologists I ever knew had a library consisting of two volumes, seldom opened, but he knew all there was to be known of every bird in the British Isles. So if you cannot get scholarship, get knowledge—they are not quite the same, you see; learn nature, and more than all learn your fellow-man. No knowledge is ever wasted, if you will but use it; therefore—

"Acquire knowledge; it enables the possessor to distinguish right from wrong; it lights the way to heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude, our companion when friendless; it guides us to happiness; it sustains us in misery; it is an ornament among friends, and an armour against enemies."

THE illiterate Prophet says the following as to knowledge and learning:—

Acquire knowledge. It enables its possessor to distinguish right from wrong. It lights the way to heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude; our companion

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when friendless, it guides us to happiness; it sustains us in misery; it is an ornament amongst friends, and an armour against enemies.

Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave.

Go in the search of knowledge even into China (a very distant place).

The desire of knowledge is a divine commandment for every Muslim ; and to instruct in knowledge those who are unworthy of it is like putting pearls, jewels, and gold on the necks of swine.

With knowledge man rises to the heights of goodness and to a noble position, associates with monarchs in this world, and attains to the perfection of happiness in the next.

Excessive knowledge is better than excessive praying. . . . It is better to teach knowledge one hour in the night than to pray the whole night.

That person who shall die while he is studying knowledge in order to revive the knowledge of religion, will be only one degree inferior to the prophet.

Whoso honoureth the learned honours me.

One learned man is harder on the devil than a thousand ignorant worshippers.

That person who shall pursue the path of knowledge, God will direct him to the path of paradise; and verily the superiority of a learned man over an ignorant worshipper is like that of the full moon over all the stars.

Who are the learned? Those who practise what they **know.**

The knowledge from which no benefit is derived is like a treasure from which no charity is bestowed in the way of **the Lord.**

## THE PROPHET'S LETTERS

# PROPHET'S LETTERS TO HIS CONTEMPORANEOUS POTENTATES

By MAULVI MUHAMMAD ALI, M.A., LL.B.

THAT the divine message of the Holy Prophet Muhammad was universal and not confined to any particular country or tribe, as in the case of all the other prophets of the world, including Jesus, appears from those letters which he wrote to all the rulers of the neighbouring countries. After the truce of Hudaibiah, which took place at the end of 6 A.H., messengers were sent to the royal courts of Syria, Persia, Egypt, and Abyssinia. These monarchs were invited to give adhesion to Islam. The kings of various provinces of Arabia also received similar envoys from the Prophet. Munzar, king of Yaman, was one of them. These letters have been mentioned in the authentic books of the traditions of the Prophet. They also speak of the treatment which the messages and the messengers received in the different royal courts. Bukharee relates of the letter which Dahyah Kalbi, a companion of the Prophet, was commissioned to carry to the governor of Bassrah, who sent it to Heraclius in Syria. The letter was read by the said monarch in the presence of his courtiers and the bishops of the empire when he was at Jerusalem. Heraclius at first proposed to them that they should embrace the religion of the Prophet, but when he found that the chiefs and the bishops were strongly against his proposal, he retracted his words and said that he only intended to test their belief in their ancestors' faith. Chosroes Pervez, the king of Persia, tore the letter of the Prophet in the presence of the messenger with a knife which the king happened to have in his hand when the letter was read to him. On learning this, the Prophet prayed to God that the empire of Chosroes might be shattered. The words were prophetic, and the prayer of Muhammad could not remain without having its effect witnessed by the world. In connection with this event, the historians also relate the murder of Chosroes by his own son Sheroyah, who used the same said knife in his patricidal act. Chosroes in return sent his reply in the form of an ultimatum to the Prophet, asking him for

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an immediate surrender to the religion and court of Persia. The messengers reached Medinah at sunset and were presented to the Prophet, who received the message calmly, asking them to wait for reply till the break of day. Next morning, to their great surprise and discomfiture, they were told that God, on the reference of their message to Him by Muhammad, had revealed to him that Chosroes had been stabbed to death by his own son on that very night, and so it was the case, as we find in authentic accounts. But most of the letters of the Prophet were received with great honour, and one of them, to Maqauqis, the king of Egypt, is expressly mentioned in the books of traditions as having been preserved in the royal treasury. The king placed it in an ivory casket, which he sealed and made over to his treasurer. Zurquani, the well-known commentator of the *Mawahib-i-Ludunniyyah*, gives full particulars about it. The bearer of the letter was Hatib, son of Ali Bala'at. He explained to Maqauqis the mission of the Prophet, who, he said, had come to fulfil the prophecy<sup>1</sup> of Jesus as to the appearance of another prophet, and as it was necessary for the Jews to accept Jesus when he made his appearance, though they had holy writs in their hands, so it was necessary for both the Jews and the Christians to accept the prophesied prophet, who appeared in the person of Muhammad. Maqauqis, after reading the letter, said to Hatib, the messenger, that he did not find Muhammad enjoining aught which he should abstain from, or prohibiting aught that was desirable; that he did not consider him a magician or as one in error, nor did he find him a soothsayer or a liar, but that he found in him the signs of prophethood.

It is remarkable that the letter to Maqauqis has clearly been mentioned in all the books of the traditions as having been safely preserved. It is this letter<sup>3</sup> that was discovered in the year 1858 by some French travellers at a convent in Upper Egypt, from which it was then removed to Constantinople to the Ottoman custody. It has been declared to be genuine by Dr. P. Badger. At the top of p. 51 is given in the right-hand column the text of the sacred document as deciphered by

<sup>1</sup> St. John xvi. 7-9.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> The facsimile of the original has been given in the frontispiece of the January number of 1917.—£0.

## THE PROPHETS LETTERS

Dr. Badger and in the left-hand column the text of the letter to Maqauqis as given in a tradition in the *Mawahib-i-Ludunniyyah*.

<p>بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ عَبْدِ اللّٰهِ وَرَسُولِهِ الْاَلِیِّ الْمَقْرُوْسِ عَظِیْمِ الْقَبْطِ سَلَامٌ عَلٰی مَنْ اَتٰبَع الْهُدٰی اِمَّا بَعْدَ فَا نِیْ اِدْ عَوٰك بِدْ اَعِیَّةِ الْاِسْلَامِ اِسْلَمَ تَسْلَمُ یُوْتٰك اللّٰهُ اَجْرًا مَرْتِیْنِ فَا نِ تَوَلِیْت فَعَلِیْكَ اَنْتُمْ الْقَبْطُ یَا اَهْلَ الْكُتٰبِ تَعَالَوْا اِلٰی كَلِمَةٍ سَوَادٍ بَیْنِنَا وَبَیْنَكُمْ اَلَّا نَعْبُدُ اِلَّا اللّٰهَ وَلَا نَشْرِكُ بِهٖ شَیْئًا وَلَا یَتَّخِذُ بَعْضُنَا اَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ فَا نِ تَوَلَّوْا فِقْرًا لِّوَا اَشْهَدُ وَا بَا نَا مُسْلِمُوْنَ*</p>	<p>بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ عَبْدِ اللّٰهِ وَرَسُولِهِ الْاَلِیِّ الْمَقْرُوْسِ عَظِیْمِ الْقَبْطِ سَلَامٌ عَلٰی مَنْ اَتٰبَع الْهُدٰی اِمَّا بَعْدَ فَا نِیْ اِدْ عَوٰك بِدْ اَعِیَّةِ الْاِسْلَامِ اِسْلَمَ تَسْلَمُ یُوْتٰك اللّٰهُ اَجْرًا مَرْتِیْنِ فَا نِ تَوَلِیْت فَعَلِیْكَ اَنْتُمْ الْقَبْطُ یَا اَهْلَ الْكُتٰبِ تَعَالَوْا اِلٰی كَلِمَةٍ سَوَادٍ بَیْنِنَا وَبَیْنَكُمْ اَلَّا نَعْبُدُ اِلَّا اللّٰهَ وَلَا نَشْرِكُ بِهٖ شَیْئًا وَلَا یَتَّخِذُ بَعْضُنَا اَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ فَا نِ تَوَلَّوْا فِقْرًا لِّوَا اَشْهَدُ وَا بَا نَا مُسْلِمُوْنَ*</p>
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NOTE.—We find express mention of the seal, as well as of the letter being sealed, in the traditions.



There is hardly any difference worth the name in the two. The word *Duadiyyah* in the document now discovered stands for the word *Ddiyyah* in the tradition, while the rest of the two is the same. But both the words give the same meaning. Most probably the error lies in deciphering the document. The translation of the two is absolutely identical, which I give below:—

" In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. From Muhammad the servant of God and His Apostle to Maqauqis, the Chief of the Copts. Peace be upon him who follows true guidance. After this I invite thee to accept Islam: Become a Muslim and thou wilt be saved: God will grant thee a double reward. But if thou turn back, then on thee will be the sin of the Copts. O people of the Book! Come to a word laid down plainly between us and you, that  
\* we will not worship aught but God, and then we will join no

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other God with Him, nor take each other for lords rather than God. But if they turn back, then say: Bear witness that we are Muslims."



The seal to be read from below upwards.

The discovery of this document is an unimpeachable testimony to the truth of all those traditions which tell us that the Holy Prophet wrote letters to the potentates.

The letter written to Heraclius, as reported in Bukharee, seems to have been written nearly in the same wording. Its translation is as follows:—

" In the Name of God, the most Merciful, the Compassionate. From Muhammad, the servant of God and His Apostle, to *Herqal*, the Chief of *Rtim*. Peace be upon him who follows true guidance. After this I invite thee to accept Islam : Become a Muslim and thou wilt be saved : God will grant thee a double reward. But if thou turn back, then on thee will be the sin of *Yarses* (i.e. thy subject). O people of the Book! Come to a word laid down plainly between us and you, that we will not worship aught but God, and that we will join no other God with Him, nor take each other for lords rather than God. But if they turn back, then say: Bear witness that we are Muslims."

The only difference between the above and the one discovered is that in the former the letter is " To Heraclius, the Chief of the Roman Empire," while in the latter it is "to Maqauqis, the King of Egypt." And further, while Heraclius is warned of the sin of the " *Yarisis*" i.e. his subjects, Maqauqis is warned that in the case of his rejection of the message the sin of the " Copts " will be on his head. The difference arose from the necessity of addressing the letters to the rulers of two different countries. The letter addressed to Munzar, ruler of Yaman, as I am told by the Editor of THE ISLAMIC REVIEW, has also been preserved. The original was shown to Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din by the present head of the Ayyobi family<sup>1</sup> at Damascus, where the former went in September 1914 in search of

<sup>1</sup> The descendants of Slahuddin Ayyobi, the great Saladin of the Crusade fame.—ED.

the ancient MSS. of the Qur-an belonging to the early centuries of the Muslim era, in order to refute the baseless charges of Dr. Mangana. The Khwaja had in his possession a facsimile copy of the letter to Maqauqis, and on examination he not only found that the substance of both the letters was the same, with the only difference arising from the necessity of addressing the two letters to two different rulers, but that both the letters seemed to come from the same handwriting and in the same character. The letter to Munzar has also been mentioned in the books of our Prophet's traditions. This wonderful preservation of the exact words of the letters, which the discovery of their original in Egypt and Syria proves, shows clearly that the reporters of the said traditions generally reported, not only the subject-matter in their own words, but the very words they heard.

**ADDRESS BY  
MR. MARMADUKE PICKTHALL ON  
THE PROPHETS BIRTHDAY  
ON THE 6th JANUARY, AT THE HOTEL CECIL**

BRETHREN,—The Prophet Muhammad is a historical character. There is no doubt but that he really existed; and the things that I am going to relate are facts of history.

Muhammad, son of Abdullah, son of Abdu'l-Mutallib, of the tribe of the Kureysh, was an Arab, a native of Mecca, and his parents were idolaters. His father died a few days before his birth. Though of good family he was left poor, and when he came to man's estate he found employment in the service of a wealthy widow named Khadijah. On her business he travelled into Syria, and even further, in charge of trains of camels bearing merchandise. In these journeys he no doubt fell in with Jews and Christians more enlightened than the Jews and Christians he had known at home in Mecca. No doubt he pondered much upon the subject of religion, and inquired especially about the faith of Abraham, because the Meccans claimed Abraham for their father and the founder of their temple, which was still called Beytu'llah (the house of Allah or the One God), although the objects chiefly worshipped there were a multitude of idols, which they called the daughters of

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God and intercessors. No doubt the young Muhammad thought upon this subject, and early came to the perception that the Eternal Mystery is One and indefinable in human terms; that the Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus—had proclaimed this truth to men; and that wherever God had been defined in human terms or represented as a number of deities, that was the result of human error and misguidance. These subsidiary mysteries were in the interests of priests and rabbis, a means of mystification and extortion whereby they made themselves the jealous guardians of the Source of Spiritual Life, which should be free to all. To the evil influence of these inventions Muhammad attributed all the senseless bloodshed, cruel rites and superstitions, all the disgusting orgies, which disgraced his people.

One can only conjecture that Muhammad thought in this way, for we have no access to his thoughts in those days, and the record of his early life is meagre and obscured by legends. We know that the rich widow, his employer, married him, her servant; that their married life was radiantly happy, despite the fact that she was fourteen years his senior; that this marriage raised him to a good position in the city; that it was his custom to withdraw into the desert for a month of every year for meditation, and that his conduct earned for him the surname Al-Amtn (the trustworthy). And really we know very little more until he reached the age of forty.

Then he had a vision. He was in the desert place of his retirement; it was night; he was entranced. He saw a strange light in the sky, and heard a voice commanding him to cry aloud in warning to mankind.

What were his feelings on the occasion? Not those of a man who wished to be a Prophet; not those of an impostor, certainly! When he awoke out of his trance, with the words which had been spoken to him graven, as it were, upon his heart, still trembling, he went home to Khadijah and cried: "Cover me with cloth! Cover me with cloth!" And they covered him as he desired. And when the fear left him he spoke to Khadtjah and told her what had happened. And he said: "I am afraid for my life."

Khadtjah replied:—

"God is my protection, O abu'l-Casim. He will surely not let such a thing befall thee; for thou speakest the truth,

thou dost not return evil for evil, thou keepest faith, art of a good life and kind to thy relations and friends. And thou art not a babbler in the market-place. What has happened to thee? Hast thou seen anything terrible?"

She urged him to be glad instead of sorrowful, for she believed with all her heart that he was called to be the Prophet of his people.

Then she took him to her cousin Waraka, an old, blind man, who "knew the Scriptures of the Jews and Christians," and he said:—

"I swear by Him in whose hand is the life of Waraka that God has chosen thee to be the Prophet of this people. The Namusu'l-akbar—the message from on high—has come to thee. They will call thee liar, they will persecute thee, they will banish thee, they will fight against thee. Ah, that I could live till those days! I would fight for thee."

Waraka died soon after, and there was a long period during which the Prophet, working for the cause of God and conscious of his mission, longed for the heavenly voice to speak again.

At length it came; the blessed vision was again vouchsafed to him, and for the remainder of his days it counselled him, with the result which the world knows as the Qur-an, the miracle to which Muhammad himself so often appealed as proof of his divine mission. And a miracle, indeed, it seems, for the Prophet, though cultured, was illiterate, and there is no reasonable room for doubt that a large part, at any rate, of that strange flood of eloquence, so purely sane, came to him in states of trance. The book is like no other book on earth. Explanations of the mystery of its existence have been suggested by the sceptical, but none explains it. It remains a wonder of the world.

From the moment when he realized his mission Muhammad lost all thought of his own private interests. Thenceforth he was the messenger and slave of God. No other man in the whole history of the world, however mighty his enthusiasm for a cause, has ever served that cause more single-heartedly than did the Arab Prophet. In the hour of triumph as in that of adversity, he was the faithful slave of the Most High, doing his Master's work without a taint of private motives.

The first thirteen years of his mission were \_\_\_\_\_  
tion and distress. The progress of the

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Prophet suffered. Then came the Hijrah jbr Flight, the date from which the Muslims start their calendar. Muhammad, escaping from the daggers of the men of Mecca who had planned to murder him, fled, the last but one of all the Muslims, to Medinah, where the people hailed him as their ruler. He had now a little kingdom and an army. He was fifty-two. In the ten years remaining of his life he succeeded in reforming all Arabia; he destroyed idolatry, raised women from the utmost degradation to an honoured and assured position, abolished senseless bloodshed, made strict rules for war, and for the first time in the history of the world made universal brotherhood a principle and fact of common law.

Some people would persuade us that all this was accomplished by the sword alone—by violence. That is impossible. The works of violence are never permanent. The Prophet's work—God's work, he would correct me—endures until this present hour. The personal love with which his followers, in their ever-growing multitude, revered the Prophet suggests no thought of violence. The Muslims only fought in self-defence or for the punishment of treachery and wrong; and Muhammad's rules of war were far more merciful than any known to men before his time.

The Prophet was not pitiless nor] overbearing. He was no mad fanatic, cruel through excess of zeal. Indeed there never stepped upon this earth a kinder man, nor one more sensible. Innumerable are the instances of his forgiveness. He forgave the Jewess who prepared for him a poisoned meal, from which one of his companions died {and he himself derived a painful illness which eventually caused his death. He forgave the man who, by an act of brutal rudeness, killed his daughter. He forgave Hind, the wife of Abu Sufian, who devoured the flesh of true believers on the field of Ohod like a ghou, when she declared repentance. He forgave the men of Mecca, his most cruel persecutors. He forgave, so far as I know, every one who ever wronged him personally. He never struck a human being in his life.

No, it was not by the sword alone Islam prevailed. The Prophet's cry to men was: God is One, the Merciful, the Friend of all who trust in Him and do good works. Use your minds which have been givert you for judgment. Forsake

your superstitions and abominations and do right. All who believe are brothers, whether slave or free. Cast down your idols, leave your lying priests: God the Most High is One and altogether indescribable, accessible to all who truly turn to Him. This is the faith of Abraham and Jesus and all the Prophets since the world began. Trust in God and He will lead you out of darkness into light.

It was the light of human progress and emancipation—the light of free intelligence uplifted towards communion with the universal, all-creative Mind—divine light, truly—which led men in their thousands to embrace Islam. The priests and sooth-sayers, the vulgar-minded and ambitious rulers, were alarmed. They tried to crush the movement by the force of arms. The Muslims fought against them, were victorious, and each fresh victory brought crowds of willing converts, won over by the unexpected mercy of the conquerors.

Now, I could speak to you at any length about the Prophet's charm of character, his mercy, his gratitude to those who loved and helped him, his forgiving spirit, his sweet manners, patience, wisdom. My mind is full of all these things, for, from my reading, I have come to love him as one loves a friend. But supposing he were present in this room to-day, I know that he would be ashamed and grieved to hear such praises. His only pride was in the service of his Lord. He had no personal ambition and no self-conceit. He would say: "I was a man much like another. Praise God Who guided me and raised me in His service." So, in the spirit of his life and teaching, I leave the charm and virtues of his private character and dwell on his fidelity, his self-surrender. Though he rose to be, in fact, the Emperor of all Arabia, he never made himself a potentate. His position was that of the Imam before the congregation, foremost in obedience to the law which he himself announced. In the plenitude of his power he scorned those personal advantages which for most men are the charm and use of power. It was possible for him to gratify his every wish, to surround himself with pomp and luxury, to heap up riches. The people were prepared to worship him. Think of the temptations to a man of common mould. He never even saw them. He remained the faithful messenger and servant, bent only on obedience to his Lord's commands. He claimed the honour of a deputy, and nothing more.

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Much has been made by his traducers of the fact that he did exact some measure of reverence from his people, that he did claim certain privileges. You have only to read in the Qur-an the injunction to the Muslims not to raise their voices loud in conversation with the Prophet, and not to throng his house unless invited, to realize how unassuming was the state he kept. That he allowed himself to have any number of wives while his followers might have but four at most has been produced as evidence of self-indulgence. That is most unfair. If he had announced his special privilege to, have more wives than four and then proceeded to avail himself of that privilege, the charge might lie. As a matter of fact, the Prophet had already burdened himself with the charge of a number of women, mostly widows, left in need, when he was inspired to bid the Muslims marry only four at most. A relief was thus accorded to his followers which he himself, as head of the community, having the care of all its widows and the conduct of its policy, could not enjoy. He was not the sensualist portrayed by Christian writers of a bygone day. He was a man with all the passions of a man, a man of wonderful virility; yet for twenty-five years of his life—throughout his prime of manhood—he had one wife only, Khadjah, to whom he was devoted, although she was a great deal older than he was, and he remained devoted to her memory.

When Ayeshah, a young girl, the daughter of his closest friend, whom the Prophet married after the death of Khadijah, said to him coaxingly:—

"What was she but an old woman? God has given thee a better in her stead," Muhammad answered:—

"No, by Allah! God has not given me a better in her stead. She believed in me when men derided. She gave me all her wealth to spend when men opposed me. So kind and generous was she to me."

Ayeshah, frightened at his vehemence, murmured, "I will never speak of her again but with respect."

The story comes from Ayeshah herself.

When Khadijah died, the Prophet was fifty-one. His numerous later marriages, with perhaps two exceptions, were acts of charity or policy.

The privileges which he claimed, as head of the Muslim State, if you look into them, are really either cares of state or common

courtesy. He was accessible to small and great, was hospitable, charitable, generous—within the limit of his means, for he was never rich. The public income he expended for the public good. Authority he held not as a weapon of ambition, but a sacred trust to benefit mankind. He restrained the people from regarding him with too great reverence, and frequently rebuked their superstition. On the day when little Ibrahim, the son of his old age, died, an occasion of great grief to all the Muslims, there happened to be an eclipse of the sun. What an opportunity for an impostor or for one puffed up with spiritual pride! The people were all saying, "It is for the death of Ibrahim." Muhammad chid them for their foolishness. He said: "The sun and the moon are two signs of the signs of God. They are not eclipsed on account of the life or death of any one." Again and again he told them he was nothing but a man, deserving honour only as God's messenger. It was owing to this perfect self-surrender—which is the meaning of Islam—that when he spoke to the assembled tribes from Mount Arafat on the occasion of his "farewell pilgrimage" to Mecca, and saw the wonderful devotion and enthusiasm of those thousands who, but a few months or years before, had all been conscienceless idolaters, the Prophet was able to exclaim:—

"O Lord, I have delivered my message, and my errand is accomplished."

The multitude below made answer with one voice:—

"Aye, that thou hast!"

The Prophet said: "O Lord, I beseech Thee, bear Thou witness to it."

The faithful servant had performed his task.

No man ever served humanity as this man did, whose sole aim was to serve God. And his example shows us that to serve God truly is to serve humanity. Personal ambition, national ambition, tribal jealousy—all the passions which compose what we call patriotism—he abjured as criminal. Instead he preached the brotherhood of all believers.

## MUHAMMAD A TOWERING PERSONALITY

Presidential speech made by Mr. A. Yusuf Ali, (retired) I.C.S., at the celebration of the Birthday of the Prophet at Hotel Cecil, 6th January 1917.—ED.

IF we were celebrating the birthday of a personal friend we might have before our minds three different aspects. We might contemplate another milestone passed on the dreary way of "slow-footed Time"; we might dwell with loving care on the charm and worth of our friend's personality; and we might recall with affection and gratitude all that that personality meant to us in our lives. Muhammad was a towering personality in the world's history; and yet, as the sublimest is often the most accessible to the humblest, we feel as if we had in him a close associate and friend. On the anniversary of his birthday, therefore, we could with profit address ourselves to all the three aspects of the celebration of a friend's anniversary.

Thirteen hundred—aye, many more than thirteen hundred—years had passed in the procession of history since that noble life came into being on earth. What changes, what developments—of triumph and disaster, of glory and shame—had come to pass since then! Divided Arabia, despised Arabia, was united into a Power that commanded respect for its manly vigour, intellectual catholicity, and moral steadfastness. Corrupt Byzantium was swept away; the pride of Persia and the mystery of Egypt gave place to a simple, open, straightforward way of life that added a fresh chapter to the evolution of humanity. Fragments of Greek and Roman civilization and of the civilization of the Mediterranean, the Nile, the Euphrates, the Ganges, and the Oxus, and even of the distant Yangtse, were welded together into a compact and living system of thought which triumphed because it worked on realities and was true to itself. The foundations of modern science, art, and industry were laid, because respect for tradition was qualified by the spirit of research. When these living forces ceased to work, the dead mass showed signs of toppling over. Jerusalem was not only in Palestine; God can raise up "seed unto Abraham" even among the Gentiles. But it was something to have planted the spirit of brotherhood among the nations, and that spirit was exemplified even to-day on the five continents.

## MUHAMMAD'S TOWERING PERSONALITY 6t

Mr. Pickthall has given a vivid picture of the Prophet's personality. Through all the phases of his life he showed an example of living faith, unflinching courage, and uniform gentleness and kindness. Whether we see him as the orphan boy who was respected by his relatives ; or as the honest merchant who dealt with scrupulous faith both in his relation to his employer and in his relation to those with whom he did business; or as the mystic who communed with nature and the spirit of man ; or as the devoted and unselfish householder, the husband of the Lady Khadijah; or as the persecuted Reformer cast out by his city of Mecca and welcomed by another city, which cherishes his tomb to this day ; or as the fearless Preacher and Warner, who spoke out of the gifts of his inspiration, and spared neither himself nor his friends; or as the Prince who lived as the lowliest of those whom he led, the leader who based his claim to a hearing on the test of service; or as the organizer of victory, the founder of a State, the new Jerusalem of men's dreams ; or as the old Sage, who to the last days of his ministry refused to be elevated above the dust of the crowd whom he taught as a Brother among brothers—in all these aspects we find his life full of meaning and profitable instruction.

But how do we translate all these precious gifts into our everyday lives ? Unless we do so, they are without meaning as far as we are concerned. We should be unworthy of them if we do not use them to make other people's lives brighter and happier. Do we act on the principles of brotherhood which we profess ? Are we gentle to an erring brother ? Or helpful to one in distress ? Or brave in affliction ? Or steadfast under temptation ? Or trustworthy in the hour of danger ? Or united in the unselfish pursuit of noble ends ? We have to put these questions to ourselves, and let our hearts overflow with gratitude, because in spite of our unworthiness we had a Guide and Apostle who can show us the way and give us the message of Truth. In sober earnestness we must rejoice in the gifts of his personality, and be glad that we are heirs to his teaching.

## MUHAMMAD :

### A RATIONAL TEACHER AND PROPHET

By MUHAMMAD ASHRAF (an English Muslim)

BEING a student for the last thirty years of Christianity as expounded in its numerous creeds, I sought to harmonize my reasoning faculties with its doctrines, but I found to my despair that the most valuable gift of God to man—his developed and evolved power of reasoning and intellect—was considered to be the greatest enemy of Christian doctrines. My priests, pastors, and ministers gave me plainly to understand that unless I reduced my thinking and reasoning capabilities to that of an infant I should be "damned" in attempting to discriminate in religious matters. Reason had no place in the so-called Christian theology. What was wanted was faith—blind, ignorant, almost stupid faith. My mind revolted against such blasphemy. For God to condemn Reason—to punish us for our ancestor's love of knowledge and of their partaking the fruits of the "tree of knowledge"—was to my mind an insult to Himself and to the reason evolved in us. It was just as if man was forbidden to use his eyesight in his everyday life.

My mind hankered after a religion which would encourage rational scrutiny, would have reasonable and practical ethics—a religion that would have withstood the ravages of time and could be as pure and unalloyed to-day as it was when it came down to guide humanity—a religion that had no mystery to act as a drug upon my intellect, no priest to place himself between me and my loving Maker—a religion that would not rest salvation on mere belief, but on good acts—a religion which would be in harmony with Nature—my own nature as well as that of the whole world. Where was such a religion to be found? I was taught that the only religion worth the name, the only religion which could be adopted by civilized people, was Christianity. The followers of other religions were heathens. Islam I found to be the most reviled religion; and now I know the reason why our priests and parsons do not like their "sheep" to come across to Islam—the religion preached by Muhammad. They are afraid of Islam because it satisfies the cravings and promptings of a sane, sober, and sound heart and brain both. The life of Muhammad as well as his teachings are free from every mystery. Fullest possible glare of reasoning

has been thrown upon them. Muhammad is a historic figure. He lived the life which man lives. He never allowed any mystery to be attached to himself. He proclaimed at the top of his voice that he was a man—a plain warner. The same miracles have been attributed to him of curing the deaf and blind, etc., which have been attributed to Jesus Christ—but he never himself encouraged them. On the other hand, the Qur-an has boldly announced that wonder-working can be no criterion of the truth of any teachings. When Muhammad's only male child died there was a solar eclipse. His followers were ready to believe that even the sun was mourning the loss of the Prophet's son. But Muhammad instantly rebuked the idea. He never encouraged superstition. There is no miraculous transmutation, no vicarious atonement, in Islam. There is no puzzle like that of "Three in one and one in three." Nor was Muhammad ever dogmatic in his teachings. The Qur-an is the only religious book which has appealed to our understanding and reasoning to convince us of its principles. The noblest and greatest theme of the Qur-an is the Unity of God—it has convincingly brought arguments to uphold that theme and to impress it upon our minds. Evidences have been produced of the Oneness of God, of His supreme rule and power, love, mercy, etc., not from miracles but from natural phenomena. How different it is from other religions—specially Christianity. John Davenport has accurately gauged the difference between Christianity and Islam.

"It must be borne in mind," he writes, "that whereas the hold the former has over its professors is naturally referred by them to its dogmas, thus causing religion and morals to be regarded as distinct from each other; in the latter it is, on the contrary, not the dogmatic, but the practical portion which has influenced the moral, social, legal, and political ideas and circumstances of its believers. So that, to the Muhammadan mind, patriotism, legality, tradition, constitution, right, are all included in that one word—Islam. . . . The religion thus established by the Qur-an is a stern and severe Monotheism : it has nothing abstract and indistinct in its primary notion of the Godhead. Allah, so far from being a mere philosophic first cause regulating the universe by established laws, while itself stands aloof in unapproachable majesty, is an ever-present, ever-working energy. It is a religion, moreover, stripped of all controversy, and which, proposing no mystery to offer violence to reason, restricts the imagination of men to the being satisfied with a plain, invariable worship, notwithstanding the fiery passions and blind zeal that so often transported them beyond themselves. Lastly, it is a religion from which all worship of saints and martyrs, relics and images, all mystery and metaphysical subtlety, all monastic seclusion and enthusiastic penance is banished; and which bears internal proofs of having been the result of long and

deep meditation upon the nature of things, upon the state and condition of the nations of the world at that time, and upon the reconciliation of the objects of religion with those of reason."

## THE SPIRITUAL ASPECT OF THE LIFE OF MUHAMMAD

By AL-VARISI

IT is not far from truth to say that when Muhammad came there was no real spirituality left in the world. Even the first stage of spiritual evolution—ethical and moral evolution—was at its lowest. The teachings of the great spiritualists of India had become absolutely distorted. Even Buddhistic spiritualism had been degraded into a sort of atheistic humanism. Judaic spirituality had also been misunderstood, and the spirituality of Jesus had degenerated into grossest Trinitarianism, including a deified man. The Arab life itself was very much near the animal life. It is undeniable that here and there in the world there must have been individuals living in caves or monasteries who had cut themselves off altogether from their fellow-beings and from all their affairs, engrossed in self-evolution and self-edification ; but spirituality as a universal means of elevating humanity—a human consciousness of its original soul, whence it came and where it went—was unknown when Muhammad came. Some true souls in Arabia itself had got sick of the gross idolatry, and their souls tried to soar aloft to the One and Only Real Existence. But the way to reach that goal was lost. Muhammad was born among idolatrous Arabs, where even God, the Spirit of all spirits, was represented by 360 idols. But Muhammad himself had a pure soul. Even when his people were steeped in vices and immoralities of the worst type he was straight. He was the Al-Amin, the Trusty. His soul could not be satisfied with its environments. What am I? What is this mysterious and unfathomable thing called the universe? What is life? What is death? Who is the author, sustainer, and cherisher of all that exists? What is man? What relation has he with his Creator? The sun, the moon, the elements, what are they? Are they really gods? Such were the questions put by Muhammad's inner self to himself. Who was to answer them? Carlyle says that the grim rocks of Hira, of Mount Sinai, the stern, sandy solitude answered not. The great heaven, rolling silently overhead, with its bright glancing

stars, answered not. There was no answer, says Carlyle. Yes, there was no answer I also repeat. Even the oracles of India, of China, of Palestine, of Nazareth answered not. The spirit of Krishna, of Buddha, of Moses, of Jesus may have sent a telepathic answer to the spirit of Muhammad, but to all outward appearance there was no medium, no answer. Even the spirits of the great departed had become voiceless, speechless. They seemed to have become indifferent to the world. The only answer to these and thousands of other questions like these came from Muhammad himself. Carlyle beautifully puts it, "The man's own soul, and what of God's inspiration dwelt there, had to answer." Yes, it was only the spiritual self of Muhammad that solved all the problems which his thinking and inquisitive soul put to him. Muhammad had prepared his soul by years of exercise, introspection, and communion to give the answer. For years after his marriage he used to go to a cave on Mount Hira, sometimes with his faithful wife, sometimes all by himself. There he engaged himself in meditation and in communion. Solitude, at that time of his life, had become a passion to him. He was engaged in the study of self—in the conquest over his physical body, his human sentiments. He used to spend night after night in that solitary cave far away from all the turmoils of the world. He was a recluse. He began to see visions. He began even to hear voices—voices from mouths his eyes could not see. The great unseen was revealed to him. He could read the Book of Nature. That illiterate man became the most learned of the Book of Nature; as if the very stones spoke to him, as if the very trees invited him to take up the great task of restoring spirituality to humanity. The whole nature, as it were, called him forth to crush materialism, to break the idols and images, to abolish man-worship and to teach man to know himself, and thus to know God. Muhammad in that case was one with his Maker—the all-pervading, omnipresent, omnipotent God.

Ghazzali says, "The aim of moral discipline is to purify the heart from the lust of passion and resentment, till, like a clear mirror, it reflects the Light of God." The Light of God was fully and completely reflected in the soul of Muhammad. He had reached the stage of self-elevation when duality becomes non-existent and only One remains. The Qur-dn says, "Allah is the Light of the Heaven and the Earth." That Light, and,

that Light alone, reflected in the soul of Muhammad. In all the gifts of Nature, in every relation of life, in the rising moon, in the setting sun, he saw the hand of God—the One and only God—the One and only Spirit that rules over and pervades the whole universe. And in the words of the Qur-an his prayers and supplications, his life and death, were all for none but the One Cherisher of the Worlds.

Muhammad, by meditation and prayer, by cutting himself away from the affairs of the world, had realized the craving of his soul. "We have stripped the veil from off thee and thy sight to-day is keen," says Al-Quran. The veil had fallen from the eyes of Muhammad. He had become conscious that the human soul is from God, for God, and returning to God. *Inna lillah wa inna illaihi rajiun* (Al-Quran).

No formal prayers had been instituted then, no month of fasting was fixed then. The Law of Islam itself had not been promulgated. The SHARIAT was unknown. But Muhammad had reached to that stage of spiritual evolution that his soul had acquired a full knowledge of God.

Al-Ghazzali says that any one who will look into the matter will see that happiness is necessarily linked with the knowledge of God. Each faculty of ours delights in that for which it was created: lust delights in accomplishing desire, anger in taking vengeance, the eye in seeing beautiful objects, and the ear in hearing beautiful sounds. The highest function of the soul of man is the perception of truth; in this accordingly it finds its special delight.

Muhammad had acquired happiness. His soul had realized the Truth for itself. But that alone did not satisfy him. He was not selfish; he was not egoistic. Self-elevation alone could not satisfy him. He was destined for a higher position. His heart bled for his people—nay, for the whole human race, for all his fellow-beings all over the world. When the evolution of his spirituality had reached a high stage by self-abnegation and self-surrender he was chosen by God—the All-Wise, the All-Merciful—to be His messenger to His people of the Message of Islam—resignation to the will of God. He was the first Muslim in the strictest sense of the word, and by the complete surrender of himself to his Maker he became His beloved, His chosen man to take His final message to humanity, to be a torch-bearer of Eternal Light. Moses and Jesus and others

had been chosen before when they had evolved their spirituality. But their spiritual power was perhaps not so highly developed as to be chosen for the task of world-regeneration. Moses and Jesus both came only to Israelites. Non-Israelites were nothing but "dogs" in the eyes of Jesus. Muhammad was chosen to be world-teacher. He was designated to be the Mercy of the Worlds—

, *Wa ma arsalnak ilia rahmatan lilalamin.*

And so one night—the night which has been called *Latlatul Qadr*—the night of power and excellence, when the whole creation is in a worshipful mood—in the middle of that night the call came. Muhammad heard a voice mightier and clearer than he had ever heard before, "surging like the waves of the ocean," asking him to "Read"—read the Book of Nature. Twice the voice called, and twice Muhammad said that he was illiterate. "Read!" called out the voice for the third time, and Muhammad then realized that he could no more evade. "What shall I read?" he inquired. "Read in the name of thy Lord who hath created . . ."—and Muhammad answered the call. He repeated what he was told to read. When he woke from his trance the medium had disappeared, but he felt as if the words that were spoken to his soul had been written in his heart. However, at first this highest reward, this culminating result of his spiritual evolution and elevation weighed so much upon him that he came trembling to his bosom friend—his own wife—Khadijah-tul-Kubra, and related to her what had happened. Khadijah, who knew Muhammad as closely as nobody else could know, who knew his spiritual exercises, who had seen him in communion with God in the same cave where the call had at last come, said, "Rejoice, and be of good cheer. He in whose hands is Khadijah's life is my witness that thou wilt be the Prophet of the people." And so it was. Thenceforward Muhammad was the mouthpiece of God, not only to one people for one time, but to all people for all time.

With his call to the Prophethood Muhammad could no more take to the life of a recluse. He was commissioned by God to set the best example to humanity—an example which every human being could follow—an example which would be in harmony with the purpose of the creation of the universe, where every thing obeys the Law—where every "effect" has a

" cause "—where even the very soul has to live In a body, where even the " prince of peace" had to proclaim," I came not to send peace, but a sword. I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against her mother " (Matt x. 35, 36).

' Muhammad as a Prophet had to establish morality, elevate social conditions, and improve human life in all respects, in every phase. He was a Universal Prophet; even the political and constitutional dreams of Socrates and Plato had to be realized through him. He had to defend the cause of Truth even at the risk of his life. He had to legislate. He had even to be a soldier, a monarch, the general of an army, the president of a commonwealth. But never for one minute did he allow his soul to be left alone. No day and no night passed without his holding his communion with his God.

His followers presented themselves five times a day before their Maker, but his own soul did not feel satisfied even with that. His feet would get swollen by his standing in his nocturnal prayers when the rest of the world—his own faithful followers—enjoyed calm sleep. Prayer he found to be the best spiritual medium, and he used it to its fullest extent for the achievement of even his prophetic mission. And how could an ordinary man represent the Almighty and Omniscient, the Merciful and the Majestic, the Loving and yet the Requiring God, to Whom belongs the kingdom of heaven and earth, to Whom submits the whole universe, if he had not divine spiritual power within? Muhammad's spiritual power was unapproached by any other man, by any other prophet—neither by Moses, nor by Jesus, nor even by those ancient master spiritualists like Buddha and Krishna. Muhammad did not only enact legislations revealed to him, but by his spiritual power subjected the whole people to his own will, and thus secured their implicit obedience to these laws. Up to this day at least one-fourth of the population of the whole globe abstains from alcohol simply because Muhammad during his lifetime willed it.

Hafiz, that mighty spiritualist whose Divan to-day is a storehouse of noble inspirations, has beautifully said :

*Mara ba khiyale tu chi perwahe skarab ast*

*Khum go sarey khud geer hi khum kkana kharab ast.*

Since the time that Muhammad undertook his prophetic

mission he had to suppress those spiritual powers in which he indulged for his own personal edification, so that he might not be misunderstood as were the prophets of yore. He was very jealous to lay any such example which would go against his mission work—which would encourage any superstition, any indolence, any neglect or indifference to duty—which would sin in any respect against the sublime Unity of God—which would raise anybody equal to Him—in power, in knowledge, or in any respect. But those who assert that Muhammad could not prophesy and had no spiritual power to cure the sick, etc., are ignorant, shamefully ignorant, of his life history, or of that everliving book the Qur-an, which was revealed to him, and which in itself is the most remarkable proof of Muhammad's spirituality and inspiration.

If all the literature that was written before Muhammad on spiritualism was collected on one side, and that written after Muhammad by his followers on the other, the latter will be not only much larger in quantity but also better in quality.

Muhammad combined in his ideal of spirituality DUTY with LOVE.

#### LESSONS OF DUTY.

The Qur-an says, "No soul shall labour but for itself, and no burdened one shall bear another's burden."

"Be good to parents, and to the kindred, and to orphans, and to the poor, and to the neighbour, whether kinsman or new-comer, and to a fellow-traveller, and to the wayfarer, and to those whom your right hands possess."

"Give just measure, and be not defrauders; and weigh with an equal balance; and diminish not unto men ought of their matters, neither commit violence in the earth, acting corruptly," etc.

The moral code of Islam is complete, in which the duty of man is clearly laid down before him.

#### LOVE OF GOD.

But the part that love plays in the religion of Islam is also highly appreciable. Lord Muhammad said, "I would not value having the whole wealth of the world in the place of this revelation, 'Say: (O Muhammad!) O My servants who have oppressed your own souls, despair not of the mercy of God/ A man said, \* What is the condition of him who hath associated

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others with God?' Lord Muhammad remained silent; after that he said, 'Know that him also God forgiveth; but on repentance,' "

' " My mercy encompasseth all," says the Qur-an.

" And when My servants ask thee concerning Me, then will I be nigh unto them. I will answer the cry of him that crieth when he crieth unto Me: but let them hearken unto Me, and believe in Me, that they may proceed aright."

" Is not He who answereth the oppressed when they cry to Him and taketh off their ills, and maketh you to succeed your sires on the earth? What! a god with Allah? How few bear these things in mind.

<sup>M</sup> Pray to Me, and I will hearken."

" And when they who believe in Our signs come to thee (Muhammad) say: 'Peace be upon you! Your Lord hath laid down for Himself a law of mercy; so that if any one of you commit a fault through ignorance, and afterwards turn and amend, He surely will be generous, merciful.' "

The effect of the spiritual life and teachings of Muhammad on his companions made them models of human perfection. The Quran has preserved contemporary records of their virtues thus :—

" And the servants of God of Mercy are they who walk upon the earth softly; and when the ignorant address them, they reply, 'Peace !' They that pass the night in the worship of their Lord prostrate and standing, and that say, 'O our Lord, turn away from us the torment of Hell for its torment is endless: it is indeed an ill abode and resting place!' Those who when they spend are neither lavish nor niggard, but keep the mean :—Those who call no other 'gods with God, nor slay whom God hath forbidden to be slain, except for a just cause, and who commit not fornication (for he who doth this shall receive punishment)."

" Who fulfil their pledge to God, and break not their compact. And who join together what God hath bidden to be joined, and who fear their Lord, and dread an ill reckoning; And who, from desire to see the face of their Lord, are constant amid trials, and observe prayer and give alms, in secret and openly, out of what we have bestowed upon them, and turn aside evil by good: for them is the recompense of that abode, gardens of Eden—into which they shall enter together with the just of their

fathers and their wives and their descendants: and the angels shall go in unto them at every portal saying: \* Peace be with you because ye have endured all things! Charming the recompense of their abode."

To the modern spiritualists the following verse of the Qur-an may be of interest:—

" And say not of those who are slain on God's path that they are dead ; nay, they are living, only you do not know."

#### SOME SPIRITUALISTIC INCIDENTS.

When Muhammad's uncle, Jaafar, was killed, he was seen in a vision flying in the paradise, and since that time the appellation of Tayyar, the flier, was added to his name.

In a battle, which has been called the battle of the Ditch, when digging a trench, the spade fell on a stone and a spark came out. Muhammad said to his companions that in that spark he saw the empires of Kaiser and Kisra that were soon to come under the banner of Islam.

This prophetic vision of Muhammad was fully realized after his death, when his followers conquered the domains of Kaiser and Kisra both.

There was a rough child of Arabia named *Suraqak*. Muhammad once said, " I am seeing the gold bangles of Kisra on your wrists."

When Persia was conquered during the time of the second successor of Muhammad, Omar, he deliberately asked Suraqah to put on the Persian monarch's bangles, and thus was fulfilled again the prophecy of Muhammad.

One day Muhammad's camel was lost. People searched for it but could not find it. An unbeliever came and said: " You, Muhammad, pretend to be a prophet. When you cannot know where is your camel, how can you tell people about the after life or the next world ? "

Muhammad smiled and said : " I have been commissioned to guide people on the path of rectitude and piety and reason. I have come to lay down the law, not to break it; therefore I have to keep my spiritual powers suppressed. But now that you challenge me, I tell you to go to such and such a place, in such and such a tree the nose string of my camel has got entangled." The man went and fetched it from that very place, and became a believer.

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A FEW PROPHETIC VERSES OF THE QUR-AN.

The Qur-in itself Is full of predictions which were fully realized in due time.

(i) " The Greeks have been overcome in the nearest part of the land ; but after their defeat, they shall overcome *the others in their turn* within a few years. Unto God *belongeth* the disposal of *this matter*, both for what is past, and for what is to come; and on that day shall the believers rejoice in the success granted by God; for He granteth success unto whom He pleaseth and He *is* the mighty, and the merciful. *This is* the promise of God, God will not act contrary to His promise; but the greater part of men know not" [N.B.—The word "few" in the expression within a few years, is a translation of Arabic " Bid " which means " from three to nine."]

The Persians as is well known were the worshippers of fire and the Greeks were Christians. When therefore the news of the victory of the Persians over the Greeks was first heard in Mecca, the idolaters of Mecca became elated; and they began to speak to the followers of Muhammad that as the Persians defeated Christians with their own scriptures, *so* would they overcome them though they had Qur-an—their guide of faith. It was at this occasion that the above verse descended, whereupon *Abubakar* spoke to the idolaters that they were doomed to be disappointed. " In the name of God I tell you, Greeks will again conquer the Persians." Then *Ubaya*, son of *Khalaf*, the leader of the opponents, said that he was a liar and challenged him to fix a limit and lay a wager. The limit was to be three years, and a wager of ten camels was laid and security was given. *Abubakar* then came to Prophet Muhammad, and told him all that had happened. Then Muhammad explained to him that the word "*Bid*" meant from three to nine, and therefore advised him to ask for an extension of limit even at a higher wager than ten camels. The limit was then prolonged to nine years and the wager was raised to a hundred camels. Before the time elapsed *Ubaya*, son of *Khalaf*, died of a wound he had received at *Ohod*. The Greeks triumphed over the Persians in the seventh year of their first defeat *Abubakar* got the camels from the heirs of *Ubaya* and brought them to Prophet Muhammad, who asked him to give away in alms.

(2) " Verily he who hath given thee the Qur-an for *a rule of faith and practice*, will certainly bring thee back home unto Mecca," and it so happened.

## SPIRITUAL LIFE OP MUHAMMAD

(3) " We have surely sent down the Qur-an; and we will certainly preserve the same *from corruption?* is a prophecy which has been literally fulfilled.

### SOME SPIRITUAL SAYINGS OF MUHAMMAD.

Some of the sayings of the Prophet have the highest spiritual value ; as for example—

" God saith, ' I am near the hope of whoso putteth it in Me; and I am with him, and near him, when he remembereth Me.' "

"God saith, 'Whoso doth one good act, for him are ten rewards ; and I also give more to whomever I will; and whoso doth an ill, its retaliation is equal to it, or I forgive him ; and whoso seeketh to approach Me one span, I seek to approach one cubit; and whoso seeketh to approach Me one cubit, I seek to approach him two fathoms ; and whoso walketh towards Me, I run towards him; and who cometh before Me with the earth full of sins, and believeth solely in Me, him I come before with a front of forgiveness like that.' "

" God saith, 'The person I hold as a beloved, I am his hearing by which he heareth, and I am his sight by which he seeth, and I am his hands by which he holdeth, and I am his feet by which he walketh.' "

" God saith, 'O Man! only follow thou My laws, and thou shalt become like unto Me, and then say, "Be" and behold, It is.' "

### SOME VERSES OF THE QUR-AN WHICH HAVE A MYSTIC INTERPRETATION.

The following verses of the Qur-an also require deeper study :—

(1) And seek strength from Prayer and Patience. These are difficult but to those who are humble and believe that they will meet their Lord and are returning to him.

(2) And to him (man) We (Allah) are nearer than jugular vein.

(3) And He (Allah) is with you wherever you be.

(4) O thou soul that art at rest, return to thy Lord, thou being pleased with Him and He with thee;

(5) And We (Allah) are nearer to him than you ; but you do not see us.

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(6) And to Allah belongs the East and the West; therefore, to whichever direction you turn yourself there is the face of Allah.

(7) He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden.

(8) Every one knoweth His prayer and His praise.

(9) Verily they who swear fealty to you (Muhammad) swear fealty to Allah. The Hand of Allah is over their hands.

(10) When I (Allah) have formed the body (of man) and breathed into it My soul, prostrate yourselves (angels) before it.

Hafiz has beautifully interpreted this last verse of the Qur-an thus:—

*Ta nafakto fee he min ruhee shuneedam shud yaqeen  
Ma si dne way am wo 00 zi dne maast.*

(" When I heard that God had breathed His soul into me I came to know.

I am His and He is mine.")

And in praise of Muhammad's spiritual beauty Hafiz sweetly sings thus:—

" The angels when they prostrated before Adam meant to do homage to thee (O Muhammad),  
Because they saw in thy beauty something above human beauty."

### GHAZZALI'S DESCRIPTION OF SPIRITUAL POWER.

Al-Ghazzali says:—

" Nor is it only by reason of knowledge acquired and intuitive that the soul of man holds the first rank among created things, but also by reason of power. Just as angels preside over the elements, so does the soul rule the members of the body. Those souls which attain a special degree of power not only rule their own body but those of others also. If they wish a sick man to recover he recovers, or a person in health to fall ill he becomes ill, or if they will the presence of a person he comes to them. According as the effects produced by these powerful souls are good or bad they are termed miracles or sorceries. These souls differ from common folk in three ways: (1) What others only see in dreams they see in their waking moments.

(2) While others' wills only affect their own bodies, these, by will-power, can move bodies extraneous to themselves. (3) The knowledge which others acquire by laborious learning comes to them by intuition."

## SPIRITUAL HEALING.

Muhammad's companions have related:—

" When any one of us was sick the Messenger of God used to rub his hands upon the sick person's body saying, 'O Lord of mankind! take away this pain, and give health; for thou art the giver of health: there is no health but thine, that health which leaveth no sickness.'

" When any person complained of being out of order, or having a wound, or sore, the Rasul used to moisten his finger, and put it upon the earth, after which he would apply it to the painful part and rub it, saying, 'In the name of God; we have done this in order to restore the sick to health, by the permission of our Lord.'"

It has been said that once there was a great drought in the country. People came to Muhammad and asked him to make it rain. He prayed and the rain began to fall. But it fell too much and the people's houses began to fall. They came again and asked Muhammad to stop it. He again prayed, and it stopped. People were wonder-struck. But Muhammad warned them that he was only a man. It was God who was All powerful.

## MAIRAJ (ASCENSION).

An incident is related of the early Prophetic life of Muhammad. It is called *Mairaj* (Ascension). Some Muslims believe that on one night Muhammad ascended to heaven in his physical body. There are some who say that the ascension was in vision—i.e. spiritual.

## THE WAHEE (INSPIRATION).

After the first revelation or *Wahee* to the Holy Prophet, the angel Gabriel became the medium for successive revelations which continued till a little before the death of the Prophet. Sometimes the *Wahee* used to come while Muhammad was *in* a sort of trance. He heard first a jingling sound, then the revelation clearly and distinctly which was impressed upon his mind. When it was completed he used to call his amanuensis Zaid

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to write down the whole of the revelation word for word as it was revealed to him. The Holy Qur-an is thus, the whole of it, a revelation from Above. It is really and truly the word of God as heard by Muhammad through his prophetic spirituality. It is the greatest and most permanent miracle the world ever saw. It is the greatest spiritual triumph of all times. An illiterate man like Muhammad was the human medium of the Great Spirit to promulgate His Law in this world. It has been miraculously preserved for over thirteen hundred years absolutely intact—word for word—letter for letter, and is today the spiritual, moral, social, intellectual, military, civil, criminal, and yet religious code of life of one-fourth of the whole human race. It still continues the challenge—

*Fatu bi suratim mm misliJue.*

Bring one chapter like that if you can. Illiterate Muhammad became the medium of a Book, on reading which the best Arabic LITTERATEURS shouted out—"This is nothing but an open magic."

How great must have been the spiritualism of Muhammad to have been selected to be the medium for such a mighty and comprehensive revelation—for such a glorious religion which, and which alone, can satisfy the advancing reason and the developed conscience of humanity !

May peace of God be upon Muhammad, and may His help be vouchsafed to Islam and Muslims !

## THE LAW OF RETRIBUTION

MOSES, JESUS, AND MUHAMMAD

FROM the very beginning of his race man has evinced disposition to criminal liability, and no branch of mankind has been without its Cain. Our mutual dependence interweaves human society, but our struggle for existence, exercised at the expense of others, shatters its very fabric. Had Nature been so generous to us as it has been in lavishing its bounties on dumb creatures in some respects, much of the criminality had disappeared. To save them from heat and cold lower animals are given comfortable skins ; while, to protect us against the inclemency of weather, we have to look to others' labour. So it fares with our other hungers and thirsts. We cannot kill behest of our cravings. We must

satisfy them, but we cannot do so without others' help. Mutual co-operation is the backbone of human society, and the principle of "give and take," guided with prudence and good conscience, can only guarantee us perfect order and happiness. But selfishness takes the better of us. We try to exact from others as much as possible, and give in return as little as acceptable. This often creates unpleasantness, and even excites resentment, which, when exercised beyond legitimate limits, leads to aggressiveness and criminality and endangers peace and tranquillity. But we wish to avoid it while we do not give up our selfish desire ; we want to rob others without being detected, and we stoop to clandestine ways. Our culpable propensities find new activities for their plans, and give shape to theft, pilfering, cheating, and swindling.

" Respect your neighbour" and " Do unto others as you would they should do unto you " could suppress all our criminal predilection, but, thick-skinned as many of us are, we need some drastic measures to invite our observance of these golden rules. This necessitates criminal legislation, and brings forth penal laws into existence. In fact, no human institution can claim perfection for it without providing some penal measures for securing safety to property and life, as without it there will be no order, but a sort of chaos will become engendered which will sap the very life of society and bring forth misery. Some sort of criminal law is therefore a necessity; and religion, if it came from God to secure to us peace and happiness, would be an utter failure if it made no such provision. Rules of morality and virtue, taught and enjoined upon for observance, but with no stringent measures to check their infringement, are only dead letters; and fear of punishment after death, even up to eternity, has not often proved to be an effective check against criminality. The God of Moses, after giving His Commandments for the guidance of the house of Israel, had to provide " Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot"

#### THE LAW OF MOSES AND ITS ANNULMENT BY JESUS.

The importance of this Law of Retribution to human society cannot be too much exaggerated. It supplied a good basis to coming legislation of various nations and civilizations. But it was not without its defect. It was too drastic to allow leniency in cases of possible reformation of the first offenders.

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The law of mercy was also needed, which they say was given by Jesus. But the law of the Mount of Olives seems to nullify the law of the Mount of Sinai. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," is not an amendment, but annulment. It repeats the whole law of retribution. Nothing could be more desirable than this, had the advent of Jesus put an end to criminality. But if it survived the crucifixion, we should better go to the law of Moses than that of Jesus.

The whole difficulty lies in realizing the ministry of Jesus and his real mission as a promulgator of such laws. If Jesus be given his true position, and it will be that which he himself professes and claims, he stands redeemed of his paradoxical situation and the unpractical nature of his teachings explained. He did not come, as it is believed, to take the burden of others on his shoulders, therefore giving license to violence by preaching "Resist not evil." He was not a prophet to other nations, as he himself stated, but he was raised to reform the house of Jacob. He came to improve the morals of the Israelites and expose the hollowness of others who posed as the only expounders of Mosaic law. It had been abused, and Jesus came to explain it.

### ANNULMENT EXPLAINED.

To understand the whole situation which called forth these two contradictory laws from two persons claiming to have been inspired by the same Divine source, one must refer to those circumstances which were responsible for bringing the law of Moses into existence. The "children of bondage" required emancipation physically as well as morally. Through the bondage of many generations under the rule of various Pharaohs, the Israelites had lost all manly morals, and had become dejected and cowardly. Crossing the Red Sea could liberate them from the yoke of Egyptian kings, but it could not liberate them from the slavery of servile habits. To make a martial race of these sons of bondage, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," was the only code of life suited to redeem their enervated spirits. The said law therefore worked well, and succeeded in turning children of bondage into a race of

## THE LAW OF RETRIBUTION

rulers and conquerors. Then came abuse. They forgot the spirit and began to worship the letter. They left the kernel and went after the husk. They insisted scrupulously on the literal observance of the law of vengeance, and in course of time they became a personification of vengeance. Their hatred, when aroused, knew no bounds. Thus they fell morally, and with it came their worldly downfall. They were again humbled under a foreign yoke, and needed a redeemer. The promised Messiah came, and brought them a code of regeneration. Their previous history was a good lesson to them. If their previous emancipation consisted really in the observance of the law, the subsequent situation should also follow the law. If the law of vengeance came to regenerate them when they were slaves to unmanly habits and was a necessary preliminary to making them rulers and conquerors, the law of mercy was indispensable as well to redeem them from being victims of anger and hatred before they could be restored to their lost supremacy. The law preached by Jesus may appear to us impracticable and not consonant with the polity and commonweal of the world in general, but it was a gospel to and could save those who had been slaves to hatred and anger. The law of Jesus thus had its particular use, and so had the law of Moses. They were given under peculiar circumstances, and were meant to serve special purposes. Conditions similar to those in the lives of these divine personages, if again in existence, will justify a resort to them, but to claim for them universal application in all times and places is a mistake of no little magnitude. The conditions of the day are so changed, that we can follow them if necessary only in spirit and not in letter.

It is, however, worthy of note that the law of Moses has remained always in requisition. No legislation could dispense with it. The law of retribution, in fact, brought magistracy into existence, but the law of mercy remained always ignored. No penal code of any country made any provision based on the spirit of the law of Jesus. But it is indispensable also in proper administration of civil justice. There are certain criminal propensities which evince their existence in us even before we reach an age of discretion. Stealing is one of them. Besides, punishment very seldom effects reform. Penal servitude sends back more gaol-birds than reclaimed delinquents. Would it not be more desirable to devise some

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good scheme for reclaiming first committers of ordinary offences than to make them callous through punishment? Such legislation will create wholesome effect and produce good citizens. Mosaic law welded with the law of Jesus, with some modification, will produce a very happy result. No offence, no doubt, in the interest of peace and good order, should remain unpunished; but in certain offences, if a first offender of tender age and of good antecedents is given the chance of reform instead of being punished, the society will be the gainer and the ends of justice will be better served. And it is a matter of great rejoicing to note that the world, after all, has seen the necessity of such legislation. Almost all civilized nations have made some sort of amendments. Reformatory schools have been opened to substitute gaols, and in certain countries such culprits are released, on security for good behaviour, for a period enough to kill their evil propensities. The law of Moses was too severe, and the law of Jesus, though suiting the conditions of his own age, had become an impracticability. We could only observe it in its spirit, and that only under the condition of reclamation. If there was no prospect of reform, the law of Jesus was no good. It was the Holy Prophet Muhammad to whom the secret of this happy legislation was revealed centuries before the world jurists could think of it, as we read in the Qur-an the following:—"Let the recompense of evil be only a like evil; but he who forgiveth and reforms shall be rewarded by God himself; for He loveth not those who act unjustly" (42 : 38). The verse upholds Mosaic law and supports the law of Jesus, but under condition, and lays down clearly a salubrious foundation of useful legislation of penal laws.

## IMAM GHIZALI ON MANNERS AND MORALS OF THE PROPHET

OF all other men the Prophet was the meekest, the bravest, the gentlest, the chastest, and the most charitable,<sup>8</sup> who never kept any money or coin at night, and if there remained anything and none could be met with to receive it and suddenly it became dark, he would not then come home till he should have bestowed it upon some needy poor. Whatever God gave him he out of it took only what was necessary for his expenses, and that also the cheapest and most easily obtainable, viz. date and barley, and the rest he gave away in God's way, whosoever asked anything from him he would give it to him. He would then give out of his yearly provisions as well, giving preference to the wants of the beggars over his own, and if before the year ended and he happened to have nothing left he would mend his own shoes, and serve his own household, and help his chaste wives in preparing food. He was the most modest of all men, so much so that he would not deign to see any face. He accepted alike the invitation of free men and slaves. He would accept the presents, be it a sip of milk or a leg of hare ; he would exchange presents. He would partake of a present, but would never eat of an offering (*sadqa*). Never would he reject the invitation of a bondswoman or a poor man, but would go with his host. He would be zealously wrathful for his God's sake but never to satisfy his own self. The truth

<sup>1</sup> Extracts from "Manneis and Moials of the Prophet," published by the Muhammadan Tract and Book Depot, Punjab, Lahore. The translation is literal and we have advisedly left it as it is.—ED

<sup>2</sup> That these are not the utterances of a zealot, but are the outpomings of a matured and highly cultured judgment, will appear from Dr. August Tholtick's opinion of Ghizah, who himself is one of the best theologians that the West saw, and which runs as follows :—" This man, if ever any have deserved the name, was truly a divine/ and he may be justly placed on a level with Ongen, so remarkable was he for learning and ingenuity, and gifted with such a rare faculty for the skilful and worthy exposition of doctrine. All that is good, noble, and sublime that his great soul had compassed he bestowed upon Muhammadanism, and he adorned the doctrines of the Koran with so much piety and learning that, in the form given them by him, they seem, in my opinion, worthy the assent of Christians. Whatsoever was most excellent in the philosophy of Aristotle or in the Sufic mysticism he discreetly adapted to the Muhammadan theology; from every school he sought the means of shedding light and honour upon religion ; while his sincere piety and lofty conscientiousness imparted to all his writings a sacred majesty. He was the first of Muhammadan divines,"

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he would announce and support at the sacrifice of his own interests and those of his adherents. The infidels once offered to side with him to avenge themselves upon other infidels, but he would not accept their offer, saying he would not be helped by an infidel, although his followers were so few in number that even the addition of a single man was of some importance. He would bind to his stomach a stone for hunger. He would eat what he could have; he never rejected whatever came to him and was lawful; if he found dates without any bread, or roasted flesh, or bread of wheat or barley, or anything sweet such as honey or milk, without bread or green dates or melon, he would welcome it. He never had his fill of wheat bread for any three consecutive days in his whole life, not because he had lack of it or was niggardly, but simply to keep his carnal appetites under control. Wedding feasts he would accept, and visit the sick and accompany a funeral procession; he would go single among his enemies unguarded, and without the least show of pride excelled the rest in hospitality. He was eloquent without circumlocution, was the most cheerful in his looks. He was never embarrassed by mundane affairs. He would put on any garment he found, now a small woollen turban, now a Yaman sheet, now a jute headdress. His ring was of silver, put on the small finger of his right or left hand. He would mount what he got, sometimes a horse, a camel, a mule, a zebra, and sometimes he would walk barefoot without a cap, turban, or sheet, and would go to the farther end of Medina to see the sick. He liked perfume and disliked offensive smells. He would associate with hermits and would dine with indigents. He honoured the well-behaved and won the hearts of the people by befriending them. He recompensed the compassionate without giving preference to his near relations. He never oppressed any one, but pardoned those who apologized. He never uttered anything save truth, even when annoyed. He would smile, but never have a coarse laugh. Lawful games he would witness and would never disallow them. He would have a race with his familiar ones to see who outran the others. There were voices raised high before him, but he would suffer patiently. He had many she-camels and she-goats, whose milk he and his family folk would consume. He had male and female servants, whom he never outdid in food or dress. There never passed over him a time when he did not do something

important for God or for the benefit of his own soul. He went to the gardens of his adherents, never despised any poor or helpless person for his poverty, or feared any potentate for his riches, but would attribute both to the Divine Providence. God Almighty had concentrated in him the noblest morals and the most exalted principles. He was illiterate, unable to read or write, born in a benighted country among wild and ignorant people, to tend goats in a state of poverty and orphanage. But God the Great adorned him with the best of noble qualities, the highest morals and the most exalted habits, and taught him all that had passed and what was to be, all that was useful for future good and salvation, ail that people envied and was needful. May God help us so that we may follow the morals and practices of the Prophet in all things. Amen

### **THE MORAL AND SOCIAL HABITS OF THE PROPHET**

*{Culled from the holy traditions as compiled by Imam Bokharee.}*<sup>1</sup>

#### CLEMKNCY, SIMPLICITY, AND AFFABILITY.

Of the faithful whomsoever the Prophet admonished, for him he prayed to be shown mercy to. Never did he curse a woman or a servant, when a war was going on he was asked to curse his opponents, but he said he was sent to bless rather than curse. And whenever he was asked to curse the Muslims or infidels without distinction, he pronounced benediction instead of execration. He never raised his hand over any one but in a crusade in the name of God ; and when maltreated he never took revenge save when God was reviled. And when he had to choose between two alternatives he preferred the more feasible one, provided there was no vestige of sin in it or no relationship was infringed by such a procedure, for from both these he always kept himself aloof. And whenever any free person or slave, male or female, came up to him with any petition, he promptly offered to serve him. Anas records :— " by the Being who sent the Prophet with truth, in whatever displeased or annoyed him he never told me why I had done such a thing." The Prophet never cared for a bed ; if he got

<sup>1</sup> The compilation of the traditions of Imam Bokhaiee, the authenticity of which has never been impeached, consists of thirty parts, and we are glad to note that the ISLAMIC REVIEW staff has now undertake" to translate it into English.—ED

a bed ready he slept on it, and if there was no bedding he slept on the earth. His habit was first to greet him whom he met. And when anybody made him his proxy he would deliberate till the other party had departed of his own accord, and whoever caught his hand he would never withdraw till the other had not himself let it off; whenever he met any of his associates he shook hands with him first, and then put his own fingers in those of the other in a firm grip, whether sitting or standing. The name of God was ever on his tongue; when praying, if any person came to him he would shorten his prayers and ask his visitor if he had any business with him, and would resume his prayers after he had done with him. He usually sat with his calves erect, encircled by his hands. This sitting posture did not differ from that of his companions. He sat where he got a place to sit. When with his associates none ever saw him sit with stretched legs so as to lessen the space, but when there was ample room he would do so. He welcomed and entertained all who came to him, although they might not be of his blood; he would spread his blanket for them to sit upon. The pillow he reclined upon he would take from under himself and give it to the visitor, *if* he declined to take it, he would insist upon him to rest on it. Whoever loved him thought he was the most favoured of all the others, though he attended to his visitors according to their social position, notwithstanding his fellowship, conversation, audience, and company was a society of modesty, civility, and secrecy, as says God Almighty: "Of the mercy of God thou hast spoken to them in gentle terms; hadst thou been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from thee." To please them he would call his associates by their tribal appellations, and give a title of distinction to him who had none already, and the people would then call this man by the title so conferred upon him. The women that had issue or any offspring he would also give such a designation, and those who were issueless he called by their tribal titles. He would *give* titles to children, whose hearts were won in this manner. *He was the last to be angry and the first to be appeased. He was kind to all and generous and beneficent.* In his society there was never any noise, and when he left it he said, "Holiness to Thee, O God! and praise be to Thee! I testify that there is no God but **Thee!**"

## FORGIVENESS AND CONNIVANCE.

The Prophet pardoned those who hurt him, notwithstanding the latter being in his power. The Prophet was meek above all, and though he had power he was most bent to forgive the faults of others. Once some silver and gold chains were presented to him, but he distributed them\* among his attendants. Thereupon an Arab got up and said, "O Muhammad, certainly God ordained thee to dispense justice\* but I do not see thee do so." Upon which the Prophet said, "O wretch! who then will act justly with thee, if not I?" When he turned his back to be off, the Prophet ordered that he should be mildly brought back to him. Once Muhammad was in a battle, when the infidels perceived some negligence in the forces of Islam. Meanwhile an infidel came upon Muhammad with a naked sword and said to him, "Who can now deliver thee from my hand?" The Prophet said, "God Almighty." The narrator says the sword dropped down from the infidel's hands, and the Prophet picked it up and said to him, "Who can now rescue thee from me?" The infidel said, "You have made a captive, prove yourself superior to the other captors." Thereupon the Prophet told him to say, "I testify that there is no deity but God." He said he would not say that; but this, that he would never fight with him, nor go with him as an ally, nor befriend his opponents. The Prophet let him go free, and when he came to his own comrades he told them he had come to them from a set of the best of men. Anas says that a Jewess brought to him a goat surcharged with poison in the hope that he would eat some of it. The woman was brought to the presence of the Prophet, who asked her of the poison. She said she sought to kill him. He said God was not pleased to let her have her wish. The attendants said that if allowed they might kill her; he said to them "No." And once the Prophet distributed some money; one of the Nazarenes said that such a distribution had never been intended by God. Some one brought this to the notice of the Prophet; upon which his face reddened, and he said, "May God show mercy to my brother Moses, for he was oppressed more than this, but he bore it patiently." The Prophet used to say that none of them should speak anything to him concerning his companions, for he would like to go **to them with a clear bosom.**

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The Prophet had a thin skin, and his in and out was clear alike; his anger and cheerfulness could be judged from the expression of his face. He never said a thing which he thought would annoy any one. A certain person who had used yellow scent came to him. He disliked the scent but to the man he would not say anything. When he went away he told the people that it would be good if they asked him not to use that scent.

### BENEVOLENCE.

The Prophet was charitable and benevolent above all other men, and in the month of Ramazan<sup>1</sup> he was so generous that he left nothing which he would not *give* away. Ali, when describing the qualities of the Prophet, would say that he was open-handed above all others, he was broad-chested above the rest; that he was more truthful in his talk than all the others, that he fulfilled his promises more than others, that he was superior to others in soft manners; and that in family prestige he was the most exalted. He who saw him for the first time only was terrified, but if he became intimate the Prophet became his sole object of love. His biographer says that he never saw his like before, nor his match was there any afterwards. When one embraced Islam he never denied him what he asked for. A certain person once begged of him; he gave him goats and sheep so plentifully that they could fill the space between two hills. This man went back to his clansmen and asked them to become Muslims, as Muhammad gave alms like a man who was not afraid of starvation. Never was he asked for a thing which he did not give. There were brought to him ninety thousand drachms, which he put on a mattress and began to distribute, and did not send away any beggar disappointed, so much so that the entire amount was exhausted. A man came up to him and asked for something. He told him he had nothing with him, but he could take what he needed from some one else on nib credit, and that he would pay it back when he should get something. Umar Faruq upon this said, "O Messenger of Allah, God does not demand of thee anything over which thou hast no power." This offended him. The man then told him that he might continue spending, and the Master of the heavens would not see him poor. This made the Prophet smile and there was cheerfulness upon his counten-

<sup>1</sup> Muslim month of "fasting,"—ED.

## **GHIZALI ON MAIMERS OF THE PROPHET 87**

ance. And when the Prophet was retreating from **the battle of Honen**, the Arabs presented themselves and began to annoy him for charity, so far that he had to repair towards **a tree** of acacia, in which tree his sheet got entangled. He therefore waited, and then he asked them for his sheet, and said **that** if he had camels in number equal to those thorny trees he would divide them among the Arabs, and they would not then find him a miser or a coward.

### **BRAVERY AND MAGNANIMITY.**

Of all men Muhammad was the bravest and the most magnanimous. "In the battle of Badar," says Ali, "we sought the shelter of the Prophet, who was nearer to the enemy than we were, and was that day the hardest fighter of others." He also says that "in the heat of the battle, when both the armies came to a hand-to-hand fight, we came behind the Prophet, and thus none was nearer or closer to the hostile force than he." And he says that the Prophet was short and brief in his talks, and when he ordered a general assault he was in person ready and was above others more warlike. One above the others was considered a warrior who in the thick of the battle was closest to the Prophet, for he always was nearest the foe. When the infidels encircled him he dismounted his mule and said, "I am the apostle of God, I am a prophet, and I am the son of Abdulmatiab," and that there was seen none else more magnanimous than he.

### **HUMILITY OF MIND.**

Notwithstanding his exalted position, the Prophet was above all others meek and humble. He visited the sick and went with **a** funeral, and accepted a slave's invitation, and mended his own shoes and patched his own clothes, and when in his own house he would join his wives to work for their needs. His companions did no work for him, for they knew he disliked such **a** thing. When he passed by some boys he salaamed them. A person was brought to him, who got terrified and awed. On seeing him he said, "Be not\*afraid ;" he was not **a** king, **but** the son of a woman of the Koresh tribe who ate **dried** flesh. With his associates he was so **familiar as if he were** one of them, and a stranger could not make him out till **he** inquired about him, so his companions **besought him that he should sit in a place where he could be recognized by the**

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strangers, and consequently they got a raised platform of earth made for him to sit upon. And if any of his companions or of other people called him he would in answer say, "Here am I." And when in a gathering of the people they talked of judgment day, he would dilate upon that topic ; if of eating and drinking, he would speak of the same to them ; and if of the worldly matters, he would do the same, for he would be mild and meek with them. And when his companions recited a poetical couplet before him and made mention of their childhood and laughed, he smiled also, and never bade to refrain from anything but what was prohibited.

### CONVERSATION • CHEERFULNESS.

In his speech the Prophet was more eloquent and fluent than others. He was short and sweet in his talks. Whenever he talked he was laconic; his talk was arranged like a string of pearls. Aisha says the Prophet did not speak much, as you people do; he spoke a little, while you expand your expressions. His conversation was abbreviated above all others, and he could bring into a small compass whatever he liked. He used general terms, neither widening nor narrowing the meaning, and words like pearls in a string came one after another. During the conversation there were short breaks so that the hearers might be able to remember it. His voice was loud and the tone elegant above the rest. He was very taciturn, and never talked but when occasion demanded it. He never used a bad word, and he never uttered anything but truth in a state of irritation. He turned his back upon him who used foul language. If he was forced to use an unpleasant word he spoke it indirectly by way of a hint, and never overtly. In his presence none interrupted another in talk. He would give advice in a serious manner like a true wisher. He smiled and laughed more before his attendants, whose utterances took him aback and engaged more of his attention. Sometimes he laughed so much that his grinders could be seen.

### THE PROPHET AT HIS MEALS.

The Prophet ate what he found ready. That dish he liked above all of which numerous persons ate. And when the table<sup>k</sup> was spread and ready he would pray God. He often squatted at meals like a Muslim when praying, but his thigh answered

to his thigh and his foot to his foot, and he would say he was a creature, and lived by eating like other creatures and sat like them also. He would not take his dinner when hot, but would say it lacked blessing, and that God did not give us fire to eat, so let it be cooled. He would eat at his hand's length, with three fingers, and sometimes added the fourth also for support. Once Osman-bin-AfTan brought falooda (a pudding) to him, and when he had eaten of it he asked him, "Father of Abdulla, what is this?" Osman said, "My life on thee, my sire! We put honey and butter in a pot and cook it on fire, and adding wheat flour to them we keep stirring them with a spoon till it is cooked to the consistency you see." The Prophet then said, "It is a delicacy or sumptuous fare." The Prophet would eat the bread made of unsifted barley flour, and would eat green cucumber with green dates and salt of the green fruits; he liked grapes and meshmelons more than anything else. He would eat melons with bread and candy. Sometimes he would eat melon with green dates, and would eat with hands. One day while eating dates with his right hand, putting the stones in his left hand, a goat happened to come near him. He showed her the stones, and she ate them of his left hand, while he himself ate with his right till he had done with eating, when the goat went away. He often ate dates with water. He would now and then take a sip of milk and eat a date over it, and would then repeat drinking and eating good things at a time. He would eat *sarid* with meat and pumpkin, which he liked much. Aisha <sup>1</sup> says that Muhammad ordered her to put much pumpkin when cooking, as it strengthens a saddened heart. Of a goat he liked the forequarter, of the cubary objects the pumpkin, of the things used along with bread the vinegar, of the dates the grundates, of the vegetables he liked only two or three. He would not use raw onion, garlic, and *gundera*; and never did he despise a meal, but would eat it if he pleased or refused it *i*(he disliked it. When he finished his meals he would pray, thank and praise the Almighty God. When he ate bread and meat curry he would wash his hands well till they were perfectly clean, and would then wash his face with the water so left. He would drink water three times, and every time recite a blessing, "Bismillah"<sup>3</sup> in the beginning and "Alhamdulillah" 3

<sup>1</sup> The wife of the Prophet.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> In the name of God.

<sup>3</sup> Praise and thanks to God.

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after finishing. He would drink water slowly and not by large mouthfuls ; and sometimes he would finish his drink of water in one draught. He would not take breath in the bowl or cup of which he drank while he was drinking, but would breathe out of it when necessary. He never ordered his meals to be brought by his wives, nor wished them prepare any favourite dish, but ate what they gave him and accepted what was placed before him, drank what was brought to him. And sometimes he would fetch his dinner plates himself.

### PEN PORTRAIT OF THE HOLY PROPHET.

*{Hulyah Mubarak}*

The Prophet's size was neither too long nor too small or dwarfish. When he walked by himself people said he was short-statured, whereas when he walked with another he seemed taller than him. He would say that the medium height was the best.

His complexion was white without being wheatish or too white, the dephlogisticated colour is that pure white which is free from every mixture of yellow, red, or any other colour.

Some have described him as being ruddy, and for the sake of coincidence have said that the organs exposed to the air and sun, such as the face and the neck, the ears were reddish, and the parts covered with clothes, were pure white with redness. His hair was curly and not entirely hanging down, and neither too bushy or shaggy. When he combed them there was in them a wavy appearance, and they say his hair flowed down to his shoulder, and they often say they reached the lobes of his ears. He sometimes parted them into two locks, one on each side of the ear; sometimes he would comb his hair above his ears so that his neck could be seen there. In his beard and head there were only seventeen grey hairs, and never more than that. His face was more beautiful than that of others ; he who described his face always compared it with the full moon. And because his skin was fair, his anger and cheer could be made out from his countenance. And the people said of him that he was as described by his friend Sidiq-i-Akbar *in* the couplet below—

As there is no darkness in moon-lit night,  
So is Mustafa the well-wisher hright.

The forehead of the Prophet was wide and the eyebrows

## GHIZALI ON MANNERS OF THE PROPHET 91

thin and full, and between the eyebrows there was a silvery lustre. The eyes of the Prophet were large and expanded, and deep dark with a tint of redness ; his eyelashes were long and so thick that they looked as if they were about to meet. His nose was proportionately sloping lengthwise, and his teeth were a little interspaced, and when he laughed their brilliancy rivalled that of lightning. His lips were beautiful and fascinating. His cheeks were not light, but hard. His face was neither elongated nor circular, but was somewhat roundish. His beard was thick and he would not get it lopped, but allowed it to grow; he got his moustaches cropped. The neck of the Prophet was more beautiful than that of others , it was neither long nor short. The part of it exposed to the sun and air looked like an urn of silver besmeared with gold. His chest, free from all malice, was broad ; the flesh of none of its parts seemed prominent above that of the others. It was even and transparent and smooth. From the thorax to the navel there was a thin line of hair, and there were no hairs besides it. Both the shoulders of the Prophet were broad and thickly overgrown with hair. And his shoulders, ankles, and armpits were fleshy, and his back was broad, and near his right shoulder-blade was a mark like a seal, and in it there was a black mole somewhat yellowish, round which there were some thick hair. Both his hands and arms were fleshy, and his wrists long and his palms broad, and his hands and feet broad and expanded. His fingers were as if they were phalanges of silver His palm was soft like velvet and was full of scent like that of a perfumer. His thighs and calves of the legs were fleshy. His body was moderately stout, though in his old age his flesh was as muscular and sinewy as if he were newly born. His gait was firm, a step steadfast. In walking he leaned forward and put his steps close to each other. He would say that, compared with the others, he was more like Adam, and that in his morals and constitution he resembled his father Abraham.

### DRESS.

He would put on whatever clothing he got, be it a narrow cloth wrapper, a sheet, a chemise, or a headpiece. Green coloured clothing showed him to advantage; and his garment used generally to be of white colour, and he would say " Cover your living ones with this; for your dead ones make a coffin of it." In wars his vest was stuffed with cotton, but sometimes

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he used one without it. All his clothings reached a little above his knees, and he tied a wrapper above them all which dangled about the middle of the calves of his legs. His chemise was always buttoned, but sometimes in prayers he unbuttoned it, and sometimes when not praying. He had a large sheet of saffron colour which he wrapped round him and led the people with prayers. And he had a sheet with patches on it which he drew upon him, saying he was a creature and clad like other creatures. His Friday suit was a special one, different from those of the other days. Sometimes he had only a sheet wrapper on, both the extremities of which he tied and knotted between his shoulder-blades ; and which he sometimes used on funeral occasions as a priest. And when he was in his house he wrapped the sheet round, and throwing both its ends upon his shoulders, said his prayers. He would sometimes say his prayers with one extremity of the wrapper on self and the other on some of his wives. He had another sheet of a black colour, which he gave away to some one. His uncle asked him what he had done with the black sheet. He said he had given it away as a gift; upon which his uncle said he never saw anything like unto the sight presented by the dark colour of the sheet on the white colour of his body. Anas says he saw the Prophet leading them in the afternoon prayers with a small sheet the ends of which he knotted together. He fixed his seal to his letters. He wore caps with or without a turban. Sometimes he took off his cap and used it as a *sutra* and recited his prayers with his face towards it; and when he had no turban he would tie a bandage round his forehead. One of his turbans was called *sahab*, which he gifted away to AH. Whenever Ali came with it on his head the Prophet would say, " Ali came to you in the *sakab*." When he began to dress he commenced at his right hand, and would pray and praise God ; and when he began to undress himself he set out at his left hand. When he put a new dress on, his old one he gave away to some poor person. He had a leather cushion stuffed with the palm bark ; this cushion was about two yards in length, one yard and a span in breadth. He had a blanket which was at once folded and spread under him wherever he sat. He slept on a mattress, for he had no other bedding.

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