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# THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS.

VOL. IV.)

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

## Slavery.

### 5. Concubinage.

To remove all misconception, I must state at the very outset that the term concubinage in its more generally received sense is not applicable to any institution sanctioned by the Islamic law. The primary significance of the word concubinage as given by Webster is "the cohabiting of a man and a woman who are not legally married," which is forbidden by the Holy Quran whether the woman be a free woman or a slave. It is true that the word concubinage is also used to denote a marriage with a woman of an inferior condition, in which sense the term is applicable to the Islamic institution which sanctioned marriage with slaves, but the ambiguity in the meaning of this word has given rise to much calumny against Islam, and it is, therefore, time that the use of this term concerning the Islamic institution to which it is applied should be altogether abandoned. One instance of calumny on this ground is to be met within a recently published article on Islam by Canon Sell who pretends to know much more about Islam than he actually does. He says: "The sanction given to unlimited concubinage was even a worse mistake. It is sometimes urged in its defence that the 'social evil' is less in Muslim lands than in others; but 'concubinage' does not materially differ from prostitution, and whilst the latter is strictly forbidden by the dominant religion of Europe, concubinage is as directly permitted by Islam."

The statement made by Mr. Sell is devoid of all truth. It involves four different assertions, *viz.*, that concubinage is permitted by Islam,



that it does not differ from prostitution, that Christianity is free of both these evils, and that the dominant religion of Europe prohibited concubinage as it was sanctioned by the law of Moses and as it prevailed among the Israelites. This last assertion though not made in words necessarily follows from the attack directed at Islam on account of its permission of "concubinage." I have not yet come across a single passage in the Gospels annulling the ancient Jewish law relating to concubinage. In fact, concubinage among the Jews was only a lower form of polygamy which was not only not disallowed by Christ, but was actually practised by the early Christians, and even Luther found it impossible in the sixteenth century to disallow it on the authority of the New Testament. Similarly slavery was never prohibited by Jesus and he left it to prevail in all its force among his followers. We have even direct evidence that concubinage, "which does not materially differ from prostitution" in the words of a Christian, was allowed in Christianity. In the article on Concubinage in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* we are told that "Du Cange observes that one may gather from several passages in the epistles of the popes that they anciently allowed of such connections. The seventeenth canon of the first council of Toledo (400 A.D.) declares that he who with a faithful wife keeps a concubine is excommunicated; but that if the concubine serve him as a wife, so that he has only one woman under the title of concubine, he shall not be rejected from communion. This applied not only to laymen, but to inferior priests who were then allowed to marry. The latter councils extend the name concubine to disreputable women not kept in the house." The practice alluded to in the last sentence which seems to have been allowed by the Christian Fathers was no doubt equivalent to prostitution, but Mr. Sell should blame his own predecessors for it and not the Muslim law which condemns all such practices as diabolic deeds.

Much stress is laid on the point that prostitution, if not concubinage, was directly forbidden by Christianity. On referring to the Bible, the only passages which directly forbid prostitution are to be met with in Lev. xxi: 29, and Deut. xxiii: 7, while the Gospels give one to understand that the publicans and harlots shall have precedence in the Kingdom of God over the Pharisees and the



Jewish priests. Assuming, however, that prostitution was prohibited by Jesus, because no prophet of God could have allowed such an horrible evil to prevail, the question is what did Christianity do to uproot this evil from among its adherents? A still more important question is, whether it has been successful in coping with the evil. As regards the first point, a Christian writer in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* observes: "The Church, however, was not severe upon prostitutes, to whom the altar was open upon repentance, and *some of the fathers explicitly recognised their trade as a necessary evil* (The *Italics* are mine—Ed., R. R.). Among them was St. Augustine . . . who saw that its suppression would stimulate more destructive forms of immorality. Gradually charity degenerated into patronage . . . . Before the middle ages the institutions and ministers of the church became a bye-word for vice. Charlemagne made an effort to suppress the prevailing disorder, but his private life was licentious, and his capitularies, which ordained the scourging of prostitutes and panders, were not inspired by any regard for morality." I do not deny that attempts were made to suppress the evil, but either like the effort of Charlemagne such efforts originated with men who themselves led immoral lives or they were too feeble to cope with the raging evil as they were not based on any wise principle. The same writer goes on to say: "In spite of such efforts, and of occasional spasms of severity by individual rulers, prostitution prevailed everywhere throughout the middle ages. It was not merely tolerated, but licensed and regulated by law. In London there was a row of brothels. . . . They were originally licensed by the Bishop of Winchester. . . . and subsequently sanctioned by Parliament. . . . . On the Continent much the same state of things prevailed during the same period. Prostitution was both protected and regulated, and in many cases it constituted a source of public revenue."

The present state of European countries is no better, so far as prostitution is concerned. In France the Criminal Law takes no cognizance of prostitution. By the German law prostitution is not forbidden, but women practising it without being registered are liable to arrest. The Austrian law forbids prostitution, but the police is empowered to tolerate it under conditions. The English law looks upon prostitution as a public nuisance, but the law in this respect is



a dead letter. "Under the English system the streets can be, and sometimes are, kept orderly in provincial towns by an energetic police; but in London the mass of prostitution is so great that the police seem totally unable to cope with it. Important thoroughfares and centres are frequented by large numbers of prostitutes in broad daylight, and choked by them at night." Equally uncared for is the letter of the law on the Continent, though there "the less obvious, but more pernicious nuisance of the brothel prevails to a far greater extent."

"The police everywhere complain of the amount of clandestine prostitution which they cannot control, and which always tends to increase, under the system, while the roll of inscribed women dwindles." And the writer comes at length to the conclusion: "There are no data for comparing the extent of profligacy at present existing in Western communities with that in other countries or in former times, but the unmentionable facts which come constantly to the knowledge of the *police des mœurs*, and less frequently to the ears of doctors and lawyers, leave no doubt that in intensity of vice the great centres of modern civilization have nothing whatever to learn from Corinth, Imperial Rome, ancient Egypt, or modern China. The classical obscenities dug up and relegated to museums are far surpassed by the photographic abominations prepared to-day in Paris or in Amsterdam. The gross perversion and abuse of the sexual instinct implied by these excesses may be a passing phase, but it is a phase which has always marked the decadence of great nations. It is undoubtedly accompanied by a general tendency towards increase of the volume of prostitution. . . . . The growth of prostitution has already left its marks on the marriage—and birth-rates of the most highly civilized Western communities."

This reference to the fearful prevalence of prostitution in Europe is not only meant as a reply to the undue praise of Christianity by Mr. Sell, but it also serves as a reply to his calumnious attack against Islam. He must rely either on the abstract teachings of Christianity which do not prohibit polygamy and concubinage, or if he refers us to general Christian practice in these respects, he cannot disown prostitution which has always prevailed among Christian nations. The growth of prostitution has been the necessary consequence of the prohibition of polygamy, and if prostitution was not recognised



or permitted in the early Christian Society, it is truer still that polygamy was not forbidden for a long time. As the one began to be looked upon with disfavour, the other became prevalent. It is some times urged that poverty is the chief cause of prostitution, but there is no truth in the statement. As the condition of the poor in all civilized nations is getting better, prostitution instead of decreasing is becoming more rampant. And the conclusion to which great thinkers have come is very disappointing. "Prostitution," says the same writer whom I have been quoting above, "appears to be inseparable from human society in large communities. . . . Nor have all the social and administrative resources of modern civilization availed to exercise an effective control. The elementary laws on which prostitution rests are stronger than the artificial codes imposed by moral teaching, conventional standards, or legislature; and attempts at repression only lead to a change of form, not of substance. It survives all treatment, and though it may co-exist with national vigour, its extravagant development is one of the signs of a rotten and decaying civilization." The remark that prostitution is inseparable from human society in large communities is not true. We would be doubting the goodness of God if we suppose that there is no remedy for the evil of prostitution. "There is no disease in the world," said the Holy Prophet Muhammad, "but there is also a remedy for it." And this word disease is used in the widest sense, as comprehending all physical, moral and spiritual diseases. And he proved the truth of this saying by uprooting all evils, even the most deep-rooted evils, such as prostitution, drunkenness and gambling, not only from Arabia where they raged at the time of his advent with the same force as they now rage in Europe and other Christian countries, but also from among his followers in other countries for many centuries. It is in Islam, therefore, that we meet with a society which remained free from the evil of prostitution for centuries, and it is the Islamic remedy which can uproot the evil that has baffled all human efforts. If there is any one among the Christians in whom true human sympathy rises above narrow prejudicial views fostered by an erroneous belief, let him reflect.

Marriage with female slaves, which is generally called concubinage, was a particular kind of matrimonial connection necessitated by the particular conditions of society at that time and stage. As



has been shown in the preceding articles, Islam enjoined a gradual emancipation of slaves and the clear tendency of its teachings was to abolish slavery altogether. If the later circumstances of Muslim society did not favor the growth of this tendency, the principle cannot be found fault with. At any rate, modern slavery is decidedly illegal according to the Islamic law and, therefore, if any form of concubinage prevails at present in any Muhammadan country, it is not based on that law. At the same time, concubinage as practised even now in some Muhammadan countries is certainly a form of marriage and quite opposed to prostitution and adultery. Mr. Sell, or the authority whom he quotes, has made a gross error, if he has not intentionally perverted the truth, in representing concubinage as identical with prostitution. Prostitution is defined as "offering the body to indiscriminate sexual intercourse for hire," while in concubinage there is neither promiscuous intercourse, nor does the woman submit to cohabitation for gain. To say, therefore, that modern Muhammadan concubinage does not materially differ from prostitution is a bare falsehood. Nor is it adultery, because even where a man having already a wife has a concubine, he is as a man having two wives. The issue of an adulterous connection does not inherit the father, but a concubine's issue under the current practice is co-heir with the wife's issue, if there is any, to the father's property. When the issue is recognised as legitimate by the law, the connection of the parents cannot be termed illegal. The man stands to the woman in the relation of a husband because her children from him are lawful heirs to him; the woman stands in the relation of wife to the man, because her cohabitation with any one besides him would amount to adultery on her part. Thus both parties are bound to each other in the relation husband and wife, and they have their respective liabilities and obligations. The utmost that can be said of this connection is that it is a low form of marriage in which the wife has not all the rights that accrue from marriage, and the marriage ceremony is not performed in the manner enjoined by the law, but still it is a marriage. The essential difference between an adulterous connection and a legal connection is that in the former the issue of the connection is not heir to the father while in the latter it is. Judging by this criterion, concubinage falls under the category of marriage. It is wrongly supposed to be equivalent to keeping a mistress which practice



is frequently resorted to in countries where polygamy is forbidden by law. The mistress has no rights, her issue does not inherit the father and the parties are not bound to each other by any connection except that which is produced by passion. But the concubine has not only here rights and a certain status, but the connection is further attended with all the advantages which result from a true marriage union. Such connections are even now permitted in some Christian countries, particularly in Germany, with this difference that whereas in Muhammadan countries the concubine has a certain status and her children have a full share in her husband's property, in Germany the children of such a connection take a third of the father's estate only in case he leaves no lawful children. Such is the concubinage at present practised in some Muhammadan countries, and it is easy to see that it differs from prostitution and adultery to the same extent as marriage does, its only distinction from marriage consisting in the low position of the wife and the informality of the marriage ceremony.

It has now to be seen what the actual Islamic law was in connection with marriages with slaves. Before the advent of Islam it was the practice in Arabia that slave girls were compelled to live by prostitution, the gain being taken by their masters. This practice was abolished by the Holy Quran, as the following verse shows  
 وَلَا تَكْرِهُوا فَتَيَا تِكُمْ عَلَى الْبِغَاءِ إِنْ أَرَادْنَ تُحَصِّنَا فَلْيَبِغُوا بَعْضُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا  
 "And do not compel your slave girls to prostitution if they desire to keep continent (or to be married) for the transitory gain of this world." (xxiv : 33). At the same time the Holy Quran enjoined the Muslims to marry their slaves, if they had any, whether male or female. Thus it says :  
 وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْأَيَامَىٰ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ  
 "And marry the single amongst you, and the righteous among your male and female slaves. If they be poor, God will enrich them of His grace" (xxiv : 32). Here we have a direct commandment for the marriage of slaves, both male and female. Though the slaves are repeatedly spoken of in the Holy Quran as a distinct class from the free population, yet in the matter of marriage, the barrier existing between the two classes was raised when intermarriage became necessary. The following cases are explicitly recorded in the Holy Quran. "Marry not idolatrous women



until they believe, for surely a believing slave girl is better than an idolatrous free woman even though she please you. And used not Muslim girls to idolatrous men, until they believe, for a believing slave is better than an idolater, even though he please you" (ii : 220). According to this verse, a Muslim slave girl must be preferred *in marriage* to an idolatrous free woman, and a Muslim slave to an idolatrous free man. Hence we have not only Muslim free men marrying slave girls, but also Muslim free women marrying slaves. The slave girls were not, therefore, taken as concubines, as mistresses are taken in England and other European countries, but they were taken in marriage and as wives, only their status in society was not the same as that of free women.

On another occasion, marriage with slave girls is permitted in still plainer words. This occurs in the chapter entitled *Women*. "And whoever of you is not rich enough to marry free believing women, (*i.e.*, has not the means to pay their dowry and defray their expenses which were very large in comparison with those of slaves), then let him marry out of your believing maidens that your right hands possess; God well knows your faith. You are sprung the one from the other, *i.e.*, the slaves are like yourselves human beings and there is no harm in intermarriages with them when necessary. Marry your slave girls then with the permission of their people, and give them a fair dower, but they should be chaste and free from fornication and not entertainers of lovers. If after marriage they commit adultery, then inflict upon them half the punishment inflicted (in such a case) upon free married women. This law is for him among you who is afraid of doing wrong, (*i.e.*, by remaining single) but if you abstain, it will be better for you" (iv : 29, 30). From these verses it is clear that a slave girl was not a concubine according to the Islamic law except in the sense that she had not the same status as a free woman. The condition that a slave girl should be married only in case that a man had not the means of marrying a free woman also shows that the only difference in the two cases was that it was easier to obtain wives of a lower rank. The expenses required to maintain a free wife were higher than in the case of slave girls. Adultery in their case was still punishable, though the punishment was less on account of the lowness of their position. In other respects the verses do not show any difference.



It does not appear from the Holy Quran, as has been supposed, that a master could co-habit with his female slaves at his will, *i.e.*, without the two being united as husband and wife. This inference has wrongly been deduced from the circumstance that the Holy Quran speaks of two classes of women with whom a man may co-habit, *viz.*, زواج and امهات which are translated respectively wives and slaves. The reason of this distinction has already been stated. The slaves were looked upon as quite a distinct class in society and intermarriages with them were not permitted in all cases. It was in exceptional cases only that free men could take slave girls as wives or that free women could take slaves as their husbands. The law on the first point has already been explained. It was, therefore, out of regard for the distinction in position and status that slave girls were spoken apart from wives of equal rank. The word *zauj* conveys an idea of equality along with the idea of being a wife or husband. It means in fact, 'a like,' 'a fellow,' or 'an associate,' but this equality was absent in slave girls and hence it was necessary to speak of them distinctly. The words امهات, *i.e.*, those whom your right hands possess, cannot be taken in their widest sense, for they include both male and female slaves. The form is no doubt general, but the context shows that a wide significance of the phrase is inadmissible. If therefore we are bound to place one limitation upon the significance of the phrase because the context demands it, there cannot be any objection to placing a second limitation which is required not only by the context, but also by other plain injunctions of the Holy Quran.

My contention is as follows. The Holy Quran made slaves lawful for a man, but this permission did not mean that a master could take any one of his female slaves as a concubine in the sense of a mistress. The permission only meant that it was lawful for free believing Muslims to take their wives out of female slaves whether the female slave whom a man wanted to take as his wife belonged to himself or to some one else. My reasons are as follows. The Holy Quran gave a direct and plain injunction to all believers that they should marry their righteous slaves, male as well as female (xxiv: 32). Now the assertion that a master could at his mere will co-habit with any one of his female slaves is plainly



contradicted by this injunction. When he was enjoined to give her away in marriage, he could not be permitted to co-habit with her. The statement that the mere possession of a female slave *ipso facto* gave the master the right to co-habit with her is contradictory to the statement that he was bound to marry her. But since the truth of the latter statement is clear from the injunction contained in xxiv: 32, it follows as a necessary consequence that the former statement is untrue. Again, the question is that when a master gave away his female slave in marriage to a free man or a slave, did he still retain the right of co-habiting with her? The answer must be in the positive if the statement that the possession of a female slave *ipso facto* gave the master the right to co-habit with her is true. But such an answer is condemned by the Holy Quran, for co-habitation on the part of a wife, whether she is a free woman or a slave girl, with any one else besides her husband is denounced as adultery and is punishable with a severe punishment.

The words *ما ملكت ايمانا هم* cannot, therefore, be taken in a broad sense, but they meant only such female slaves as had been taken as wives in accordance with the injunction contained in xxiv: 32, and according to the method pointed out in iv: 29, 30, all which verses have been quoted above. In the latter verses, moreover, we find that when a slave girl who had been taken in marriage co-habited with any one besides her husband, she was to be punished for adultery. It should also be borne in mind that the same phrase *ما ملكت ايمانا هم* which is used elsewhere in the Holy Quran is used in the verses where marriages with female slaves are spoken of. It is clear, therefore, that even married female slaves were designated as *ما ملكت ايمانا هم*. When the Holy Quran enjoined plainly that female slaves should be married and stated the conditions under which free men could take slave girls for wives, it is absurd to say that the law on this point was different from that explained in these verses. These verses contain a clear and definite law as to the conditions under which free men could intermarry with slave girls and there is nothing to show that the masters of the slaves were excluded from this general injunction. The words of the Holy Quran are "and whoever of you, &c.," and the address includes all the faithful whether they might or might not have a female slave with them. Had the Holy Quran wanted to make an exception in



favour of those who had a female slave, it should have said: "And whoever of you is not rich enough to marry free believing women (*i.e.*, to pay their dowry and to maintain them), *and does not possess even a female slave*, let him marry out of your believing maidens *such as his right hand does not possess* (not as we have in the verse, such as your right hands possess)." It can be easily seen from this that this verse does not exclude, or make any exception in favour of, such free men as might possess female slaves. The same commandment therefore applied to the masters of slaves as to other Muslims. It should be borne in mind that inability to marry a free woman did not imply inability to possess a slave.

A reference to the chapter *Al-Ahzab* makes this point clearer. In that chapter the Holy Quran speaks of the wives of the Holy prophet and in the course of its ordinances relating to him thus speaks of his followers: *خاتمة اى من دون المؤمنين قد علمنا ما فرضنا عليهم* — *في ازواجهم وما ملكت ايماهم* — "This ordinance is particularly for thee — it is not for the faithful; for as to them, We well know what We have ordained for them in regard to their wives (from among the free women) and those whom their right hands possess (*i.e.*, slave girls taken as wives)." (xxxiii: 50). This shows that the Holy Quran contains some ordinance which made it clear to the faithful when they might or might not take a free woman as a wife and when they might or might not take a slave girl as a wife. This latter ordinance is not found anywhere in the Holy Quran except in the 29th and 30th verses of the fourth chapter, already quoted. On all other occasions we are simply told that it is permitted to the faithful to take slave girls as wives but the circumstances under which they could do so are only related in these two verses, while the verse of the chapter *Al-Ahzab* quoted above, refers not to the permissions which are general in their nature but to some particular ordinance explaining circumstances under which the permission might be used. For here we have two kinds of ordinances, one ordinance relating to wives taken from among free women, and the other relating to those taken from among the slaves. Now as there is no doubt that the words *والذين هم لفروجهم حافظون الا على ازواجهم او ما ملكت ايماهم* "And those who control their desires save with their wives (from among the free women) or the slaves whom their right hands possess" do not contain any ordinance as to the taking of



wives, their number, the degrees within which marriage is prohibited and so on, it is equally certain that they do not contain any injunction, such as is implied by the verse of the chapter *Al-Ahzab*, with regard to female slaves. They in fact only prohibit adultery or co-habiting with any man or woman other than one's wife or husband, whether such wife or husband was taken from among the free people, the higher grade of society, or from among the slaves, the lower grade of society. They do not tell us which free women could be taken as wives and which not, which slave girls could be taken as wives and which not, and whether there were or were not any circumstances under which such unions might not be sought. These ordinances are contained with respect to free women in various verses of the chapter entitled *Women*, and with respect to female slaves in the 29th and 30th verses of the same chapter. The verse of the chapter *Al-Ahzab* which is under discussion, is therefore, a conclusive testimony that under no circumstances were the Muslims permitted to co-habit with slave girls except in cases recorded in the 29th and 30th verses of the chapter *Women*, that is to say, when a man had not the means to pay the dowry of and maintain a free wife, or when he could not on account of any other reason marry a free wife, and he feared that if he did not marry, he would fall into evil, he was then permitted to marry a female slave with the consent of her people by paying dowry.

One other occasion deserves to be noticed in connection with this point. In the beginning of the fourth chapter which is entitled the *Women* occurs the ordinance by which the Muslims are permitted to take when necessary more wives than one and the permission expressly mentions also the female slaves. The verse in question runs thus: *وان خفتم الا تقسطوا فى اليتامى فانكحوا ما طاب لكم من النساء؛ مثلنى وثلاث وربع فان خفتم الا تعدلوا فواحدة (وما ملكت ايمانكم* "And if you fear that you can not deal fairly with the orphans (whom you take as your wives), then of (other) women who seem good in your eyes marry two, three or four, but if you fear that you shall not act equitably, then marry only one or marry those whom your right hands possess." The word *انكحوا* (meaning marry) occurs only once in this verse, but it is understood in two places, viz., before the words *واحدة* (i.e., only one woman) and *ما ملكت ايمانكم* (i.e., those



whom your right hands possess). The verb is not mentioned in both these places and accordingly the previous verb must be taken as understood. No other verb occurs in the whole of this verse or even in the previous verses which can be taken as understood in either of these places. At any rate it is easy to see that both واحدة (one free woman), and ما ملكت أيمانكم (those whom your right hands possess) are governed by one and the same verb and as that verb is admittedly نكح in the case of the former word, it must be the same in the case of the latter words. *One woman* and *slaves* are, therefore, both the objects of the verb *marry* understood. Hence as a man is not allowed to co-habit with *one free woman* except after marriage, so he is not permitted to co-habit with a slave girl except after marriage. But even here the circumstance under which slave girls may be taken as wives are not mentioned, and for these we must again resort to the 29th and 30th verses of the fourth chapter.

Thus we have at least four occasions on which the marriage of female slaves is clearly spoken of, *viz.*, ii : 220, according to which a Muslim slave girl should be preferred in marriage to an idolatrous free woman, xxiv : 32, which gives an injunction to the Muslims to marry their slaves both male and female, iv : 3, by which a Muslim may marry a female slave, and iv : 29, 30, which describes the circumstances under which female slaves can be taken as wives by free men. There are only two occasions, xxiii : 5, 6, and lxx : 29, 30, on which the Holy Quran prohibits Muslims from having sexual intercourse with any woman besides "their wives and those whom their right hands possess," but as I have shown already, the words only show a contrast between the two classes of society, the free population and the slave population. The words "those whom your right hands possess" cannot be taken without the limitations which either the context or other verses of the Holy Quran require. For instance, a certain verse of the Holy Quran enjoins the Muslims to give away their female slaves in marriage and it is easy to see that a master in such a case could not be permitted to cohabit with her, and such an act on his part would according to the Islamic law amount to adultery. Now this limitation is not met with in the verse itself, but we have to seek it elsewhere in the Holy Quran. As regards the limitation that female slaves cannot be taken without marriage, we



have it not only recorded in plain words in the 29th and 30th verses of the fourth chapter, but the contrast itself leads us to the same conclusion. The wives are contrasted to the slaves, and therefore, all that is meant is that a man may marry a free woman or a slave girl. Under what conditions may he do the one or the other is not mentioned in the verse itself, and for information on both these points we must resort to other verses of the Holy Quran. Besides this, where any connection of a man and a woman which is of the nature of a connubial connection is mentioned, marriage is implied. For instance in iv : 3, the Holy Quran says .. . . . *وا ان خفتم الا تقسطوا في* *اليتامى* "And if you fear that you cannot act fairly towards orphans then marry of women....." Here by orphans are meant not only orphan girls, but orphan girls taken as wives, though the words do not say it. This case is very similar to the one under consideration. As here the Holy Quran simply says orphans while it means orphan girls who are taken as wives, so there in the two cases referred to above, it only says slaves while it means slave girls who are taken as wives. No one can point out any difference in these two cases. Another instance of the same is met with in the chapter *Al-Ahzdb*, verse 49, which runs as follows : "O Prophet ! Verily We allow thee thy wives whom thou hast dowered, and the slaves whom thy right hand possesses, out of the booty which God has put into thy power, and the daughters of thy uncles, and of thy paternal and maternal aunts who fled with thee." In this verse we are told that Almighty God allowed His Prophet his wives and his slaves and the daughters of his uncles and aunts who had fled for his sake from Mecca. The man who argues that the slaves were allowed without being taken in marriage because they are not included in the wives must also admit the same with respect to the uncle's and aunt's daughters, because they are mentioned after the slaves and without the words "when they are taken in marriage" being added. These instances are sufficient to show that the mere non-mention of the words "when they are taken as wives" after the word "slaves" is no argument to show that the Muslims were permitted to co-habit with slave girls without actually marrying them subject to the conditions detailed in the Holy Quran.

Such is the testimony afforded by the Holy Quran. There are



two more sources from which evidence can be drawn, *viz.*, *Hadis* or tradition, and *sunnat* or practice. As regards the former, I will take Bukharee as the most authentic work on traditions. In this book I have not been able to find any tradition giving a master the right of co-habitation with his female slaves simply on account of his property in them. The only tradition on the subject in hand which Bukharee has deemed reliable is the one which has already been quoted in connection with the emancipation of slaves, and whose importance he has recognised by relating it again in the chapter on marriage. In the latter chapter it is related in the following words

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ايما رجل كانت عنده وليدة فعلمها ما حسن تعليمها وادبها فاحسن تاديبها ثم اعنتها وتزوجها فله اجران وايما رجل من اهل الكتب امن بنبية وامن بى فله اجران وايما

The Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, said, Whoever has a slave girl and he educates her and gives her a most excellent education, and instructs her in high accomplishments and makes her instruction most excellent, then frees her and then marries her, shall be entitled to a two-fold reward; and whoever, from among the people of the Book, believes in his own prophet and believes in me, shall be entitled to a two-fold reward; and whoever, being a slave, fulfils the obligations of his master and fulfils the obligations of his Lord, shall be entitled to a double reward." These words imply more than a mere inducement for the several courses recommended in this tradition; they in fact enjoin in clear words that the man who has a slave girl whom he intends to take as a wife should first give her an excellent education and instruct her in high accomplishments (so that she may be able to take the position of a true wife), then set her free and then marry her; that the person who believes in the former prophets should also believe in the Holy Prophet; and that a slave should not only obey his master's orders but should also do his Lord's commandments. The people of the Book were required to believe in the Holy Prophet and the slaves were required to do the Divine commandments. In like manner, those among the Muslims who possessed slave girls whom they intended to marry were *required* to educate and instruct them, *then emancipate them and then marry them*. This was the course which



the Holy Prophet desired, or more properly enjoined, his followers to take with regard to female slaves. He did not deem their mere emancipation sufficient to raise their status to be good wives but also required them to be highly educated and instructed.

Another tradition which throws some light on this subject occurs also in the chapter on Marriage in the Sahih Bukharee. It is a noteworthy fact that Bukharee has no chapter on concubinage and no chapter on slave trade. His only chapter on slavery is headed the "Emancipation of slaves and its excellence," while the cases of marriages with slaves are recorded under the general heading "Marriage." It is in this chapter that the following tradition occurs: "Ans reports that the Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, stayed between Khaibar and Medina for three days, Safiyya being conducted to him there on the occasion of his marriage. I invited the Muslims to the wedding repast in which there was neither bread nor meat. The cloth was then spread and over it were thrown dried dates and cheese and clarified butter. This was the marriage feast of the Holy Prophet. Then the Muslims talked among themselves, saying, whether she would be treated as one of the mothers of the faithful, (*i.e.*, as a free wife) or as one whom his right hand possessed, (*i.e.*, a wife of a lower rank). And they said, 'if she is veiled, she will be one of the mothers of the faithful, and if the veil is not cast on her, she will be one whom his right hand possessed.' When the Holy Prophet set out on his journey, he took her behind him and drew a veil between her and the people."

This tradition gives rise to many important conclusions. One of these, which, however, does not bear on the subject in hand, is that there was no bread and meat even at a marriage feast given by the Holy Prophet immediately after he had won an important battle. Could these men be said to fight for love of plunder? Everywhere in the world the Jews amassed enormous wealth and the Christian kings for many centuries tortured them to squeeze money out of them. But the Holy Prophet even after conquering such a wealthy nation had not even bread and meat to offer to his guests at his wedding repast! Could this be the case if he had plundered the wealth of the Jews? But the important conclusion to which I wish to draw the reader's attention in connection with the subject in hand is that the veil formed



the only distinction between *ازواج* (free) wives and female slaves (taken as wives). It was, therefore, only a difference in position. There was no difference as regards the marriage ceremony. We are told that Safiyya who was taken a captive at Khaibar had been married to the Holy Prophet and had even been conducted to him as a wife, even the *Walima* (the marriage feast usually given after a marriage) had been given in honour of the occasion, but still the Muslims could not say whether she was one of his *ازواج* (wives) or only *ما ملكت يمينه* (one whom his right hand possessed). This shows that all these ceremonies were common to both forms of the union between a man and a woman, the union implied in the word *azwaj*, i.e., where both parties stood on a platform of equality being free citizens, and the union implied in the much-contested phrase *md malakat aimdn-o-hum*, (i.e., where the wife was taken from among the slaves). It should, however, be borne in mind that it is only when the words *md malakat aiman-o-hum* are mentioned along with *azwaj* that they partake of the meaning of that word. In short, the veil afforded the only distinction according to this tradition between *ازواج* (free) wives and *ما ملكت* slave girls (taken as wives).

Another tradition also recorded in the Bukharee shows that Safiyya had been emancipated before marriage by the Holy Prophet. From this it appears that the phrase *ما ملكت يمينه* applied even to wives who had been married after being set free when they were not kept in veil. In fact, the first of these two traditions shows clearly that when the master of a slave girl himself intended to take her as a wife, he was bound to set her free first, and then only could marry her. This was the procedure adopted by the Holy Prophet in marrying Safiyya. As against these two traditions which make marriage necessary in the case of a female slave, there is not a single tradition in which it should be stated that marriage was not required. As regards traditions in which the master of a female slave is mentioned to have co-habited with her on account of his property in her, none of these can be traced to the Holy Prophet. And they are sufficiently contradicted by the words of the Holy Prophet himself as quoted above.

Regarding *Sunnat* or practice, I have to make very brief remarks.



The practice of the Holy Prophet himself should be our first and most important consideration, and next to him we may consider the practice of Abu Bakr and Omar. Jawairiyya and Safiyya were the only two wives of the Holy Prophet taken from among the prisoners of war and Mary the Copt was sent to him by the king of Abyssinia. The first two are admittedly included among his wives because they were not only married after being set free, but were also admitted to the distinction of the veil which only decided the true position of the wife. Mary has been called a concubine, but it is a mistake. She too like all his other wives was admitted to the distinction of the veil and this is a fact the truth of which has been recognised by all historians. She was, therefore, treated in all respects like his other wives. It is moreover a fact which has been admitted even by Muir that the Holy Prophet did not keep slaves, neither male nor female, and he emancipated them as soon as they came into his possession. No one has stated that Mary was an exception and that she was maintained as a slave notwithstanding that she was the mother of his son, Ibrahim. And as the tradition relating to Safiyya's marriage shows, neither emancipation nor marriage showed whether a wife was treated as one of *ما ملكت ايمانهم* (as occupying a low position) or whether she was regarded as a wife of equal rank. It was the veil which furnished the true criterion and Mary the Copt admittedly enjoyed the distinction of being kept under veil. Raihana, the Jewess, is also sometimes said to have been taken as a concubine, but no trustworthy reporter has mentioned this fact. Among such reports as are current, however, there are those in which it is admitted that the Holy Prophet had married her. Again, it is admitted on all hands that neither Abu Bakr nor Omar ever took a concubine or even a wife from among the captives of war.

Having these clear proofs in hand, we cannot give up the whole position which is conclusively proved to be true simply because in certain traditions whose truth is questionable, a few cases are recorded which *may* give rise to the conclusion that concubinage was practised. There is nothing to show even in those cases that marriage was not performed. Moreover, no tradition can be received as true which contradicts the Holy Quran. But even in such cases the practice shows that the connection was equivalent to that brought



about by marriage. As two sisters from among the free women could not be taken in marriage together, so could neither two female slaves who were sisters. Similarly there were other prohibitions like those in marriage. And the children of such connections were considered legitimate heirs. From all these circumstances it is clear that female slaves were taken as wives and occupied the position of a wife in all except rank. The prohibitions referred to above are not given in the Quran apart from marriage and their application to the case of slave girls shows clearly that they were also taken in marriage.

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## The Ahmadiyya.

There are very few educated persons in India who are not acquainted with the name of the Ahmadiyya or its founder, but very few of them know the true object and aim of this mission. The reason of this is that they do not care to obtain original information about its teachings and are satisfied with a hearsay, a rumour or a gossip, or, at the utmost, with second-hand information which being reflected through coloured glasses of prejudice is often very distorted. The chief object of this propaganda is to show to the seekers after truth the path by walking in which they can be released from the bondage of sin and taste the bliss of paradise in this very life, an object for the attainment of which Almighty God raised His prophets among all people and in all ages. But as for the spread of truth it is necessary to remove errors first, therefore Almighty God has raised in this age a man whose very claim involves an abolition of the chief religious errors of the time.

Errors have more or less found their way into every religious system of the world, but in none do we witness a greater perversion of truth than in the system which is named after the prophet of Nazareth. The followers of this religion have given up the simple and noble doctrine of the Unity of God for a false and mysterious Trinity, and to support this one falsehood they are obliged to give currency to a number of other false doctrines. Every prophet of God taught that salvation could not be obtained unless a man did deeds of righteousness and shunned and hated evil, but the Christian religion teaches that salvation is brought to a man by professing a belief in



the doctrine of atonement though he may be immersed ever so deep in sins. All these erroneous doctrines are based on the theory that Jesus died on the cross, rose again and was taken up into heaven whence he would return in the latter days. The Christians have even gone the length of denying that Almighty God sent His messengers among all people to point out the true way to salvation and hold that prophets were raised only among a chosen race to prepare that people for receiving the doctrine of atonement. This error strikes at the root of true religion and righteousness, and hence Almighty God has sent a messenger as the Promised Messiah whose advent undermines the basis of the Christian doctrines. The assertion that the Promised Messiah is a person different from Jesus Christ contains a denial that Jesus is alive or that he was raised to life after death. Hence arises the first principal point of controversy with the two great religious bodies of the world, the Muhammadans and the Christians. That the Christians should have opposed him in this controversy was only natural because the death of Jesus meant the utter destruction of their religion, but how this point affected the Muhammadans unfavorably is what I do not understand. Among the forces that oppose the spread and progress of Islam, none is so great as the Christian religion, and if facts are proved which deal a death-blow to that religion, the Muslims should only rejoice at the circumstance. No principle of their faith requires them to believe that Jesus is alive and the Holy Quran says in plain words that he died. Ahmad's claim to Promised Messiahship, therefore, strikes at the root of the greatest religious error of the time, the error that Christ was God and that he died on the cross and rose from the dead. Hence it is that in the Sahih Bukharee, the most authentic work on tradition, it is stated that the advent of the Promised Messiah would lead to the breaking of the cross, an expression signifying the overthrow of the Christian religious belief.

That the Divine Messenger sent in this age is also called the Mahdi is meant to correct an error prevailing among the Muslims which is a stain upon the purity of the Muslim faith. This error consists in owning the doctrine of *jihad*, i.e., killing a non-believer only on account of his professing a different religion. The only thing that keeps alive this doctrine at the present day, notwithstanding that its falsity has been clearly established by strong and conclusive argu-



ments, is a false hope based on the erroneous doctrine that a Mahdi will come who will wage war for the sake of religion and kill with the sword all those who refuse to accept the Islamic faith. This was a great blot upon the holy faith of Islam, and Almighty God is now going to wipe it off by establishing the superiority of Islam not by the sword but by clear arguments and heavenly signs. The messenger whom He has sent as the expected Mahdi is not the bloody Mahdi of the current Muslim belief, but one who has come to spread the faith of Islam by peaceful means. Thus have arisen two important points of difference between the Ahmadiyya on the one hand and the Christians and the Muhammadans on the other.

Far more important than the two points of difference indicated above is the difference with regard to the continuity of Divine revelation. In this particular the Ahmadiyya propaganda stands pre-eminently above all religions of the world. The importance of this doctrine can hardly be over-estimated. A living faith in God can never be generated in the heart of a man unless he recognises the truth of this most important principle of faith. Islam is the only religion that teaches this principle, that teaches that all the Divine blessings and favours which God granted to His righteous servants, to the messengers and the prophets whom He chose from time to time for the guidance of the world, can be granted to a true Muslim. It is a fundamental principle of this holy religion, and hence it is that the Muslims are taught to pray five times a day: *اهدنا الصراط المستقيم صراط الذين انعمت عليهم* "O Lord, guide us in the right path, the path of those whom Thou hast granted Thy blessings and favours." This is a prayer which the Muslims are enjoined to repeat several times in every one of the five prayers. It can not be omitted under any circumstance. It is not a meaningless injunction. It signifies that the chief superiority of Islam which makes it a living religion lies in the fact that the door to all Divine blessings and favours which Almighty God granted to His righteous servants is ever open to the true Muslims. In fact if this door were shut, religion would be simply a name without any reality. Now the highest of all Divine blessings and favours to man is Divine revelation, and thus we see that the continuity of Divine revelation is a fundamental principle of the Muslim faith. But the Muslims having lost sight of it, Almighty



God has established the Ahmadiyya propaganda to revive it, because with its revival is bound the revival of faith.

The means which have been adopted by Almighty God to effect this object are not strange or new. Whenever there has been a decline of faith in the world and the true and living God has been forsaken by the people Almighty God has sent a messenger to reform and regenerate the world, and through him manifested the wonderful signs of His power in such a manner that people can witness them clearly. The person so raised is a living testimony to the existence of God and His mighty power. His prayers are listened to by God and answered, and the Word of God containing deep secrets of the future is revealed to him, so that everyone might know that it is not from himself that he speaks, but from a source which is higher than that from which human knowledge proceeds. He claims that he is spoken to by God, and in support of this claim he advances the Word of God which is revealed to him which by its mighty prophecies shows its superhuman source. Since he claims to receive such information relating to the future as he receives from a source higher than human, therefore no one in the world can vie with him in this respect. In accordance with this Divine law, Almighty God has raised a messenger in this age, who, as already explained, bears the name of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, who is spoken to by God in the same manner as the prophets of yore were spoken to, whose prayers are listened, and to whom the deep secrets of the future are revealed as they were revealed to the former prophets, to show that he comes from the same God who sent His messengers in earlier days. He it is who tells us that Almighty God has not ceased to speak, that He is a living God who sees and hears and speaks even now as he saw and heard and spoke before, and that His attributes are unchanged throughout all time and they are ever manifested in the world. Since these statements cannot be taken to be true without strong proof, hence he publishes the revelations which he receives from on high from time to time to show that they are actually from God.

Such proof has abundantly appeared, but this is not the time or place that all those wonderful prophecies which have come to fulfilment should be detailed. Suffice it to say that hundreds of signs



have been shown whose extraordinary nature is so clear that anyone who considers their evidence with a calm and dispassionate mind cannot fail to be convinced of their truth. In many cases the evidence is written. I give here only one instance. The Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya is one of the promised Messiah's works, published in four parts from 1880 to 1884, long before he claimed to be the Messiah. At that time he was an unknown man. In this book he published revelations which he asserted to be from God in which it was prophesied that time would come when he would be made known in the world and when people would flock to him from all quarters. Thus: "Thou art to me as my unity and oneness, so the time has come when *thou shouldst be assisted and made known among all people.....And I will make many people follow and obey thee* and will make thee a guide to them. We will inspire people from heaven that they may assist thee. *People will flock to thee from distant corners of the world and assistance will come to thee from deep and distant paths.* It is, therefore, meet that thou shouldst not turn away from them or get tired of them because of their vast numbers but receive them with kindness and courtesy.....God will procure for thee the companions of the mat, and what knowest thou who the companions of the mat are. Thou wilt see tears flowing from their eyes, and they will say, 'O Lord, we have heard the voice of one who invites people to faith in God'." These are some of the prophecies published twenty-five years ago in a book which had a wide publication at the time and is even now in the hands of friends as well as foes. At a time when the recipient of these revelations was alone, having no followers or admirers, when he was even unknown except to a very few persons who resided in the same village with him, he received information from a source which he asserted to be Divine foretelling, not only that he would live for many days, but also that he would be made known in the whole world, that he would have a vast number of followers, that people would come to see him from distant places, and that some of his followers would take up their abodes with him who in the Divine revelation are called the companions of the mat. All these wonderful disclosures of the future could not be made by a man. A mortal cannot even say that he would live for a day more, but here we have words not only foretelling a long life but also a wonderful course of that life which appeared



the most improbable of all things at that time. There are many inconsiderate persons who would laugh at the mention of Divine revelation, but can they show anything comparable to this wonderful disclosure in human knowledge? These are serious matters and should not be passed over lightly. How deep are the secrets of the future revealed in these words, yet how clearly and definitely they are foretold and how clear and conclusive is the evidence for them.

Besides this, we find it foretold in revelations published in the same book, how opposition would rise from all quarters and how it would be brought to naught. "God is He who has sent His messenger with guidance and the religion of truth that He may make it victorious over all other religions. *They will try to extinguish the light which God has kindled, but God will make that light perfect,* and kindle it in hearts that are ready to receive it, though the unbelievers may not like it. *God will protect thee against their mischiefs* though people would try hard against thy safety." Who but the Mighty Knower of all secrets could tell long years before of the great opposition that has raged in recent years against the Promised Messiah, and who but the Omnipotent God could say that the opposition of the whole world against a solitary man would be brought to naught. Consider if any clearer and more definite prophecy with such wonderful proof of its clear fulfilment can be pointed out in the life of any prophet mentioned in the Old or New Testament.

There are hundreds of other prophecies and signs with as clear and strong proof as in the case recorded here. In most cases the testimony which can be produced is written testimony because the prophecies are generally published as soon as they are revealed. We do not in the majority of cases depend upon the testimony of this or that man, but we have an evidence whose force is ever fresh and which even the most determined sceptic cannot doubt. Here then we have one who gives conclusive proof that Almighty God does certainly speak to His righteous servants and reveal His Word to them, and anyone who walks with true meekness and submission the path pointed out by the messenger of heaven may himself become the recipient of Divine blessings and thus taste the joys of paradise



in this very life. It is then that the heart is illumined with a living faith which dispels the darkness of all doubts and leads to freedom from sin. This is the way to true purity of life and it is with this object that Almighty God has established the Ahmadiyya propaganda, and all other discussions are only incidental.

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## Notes from Diary.

*26th September.—Who is a true Martyr?* “Bear in mind that a true martyr (*Shaheed*) is not only the man who is killed in a religious cause but also the man who in all trials and difficulties remains firm and faithful to God, and who is ready to suffer any hardship in the path of God. *Shaheed* literally means a witness and, therefore, everyone who has such a living and certain faith in the existence of God that he may be said to have witnessed Him and the glorious manifestation of His power is a *Shaheed* or a martyr. He believes in the existence of God and in His mighty power and control over all with such certainty as if he had witnessed them. When the spiritual wayfarer has reached this stage, he finds no difficulty in laying down his life in the path of God: rather he feels supreme pleasure and bliss in it. By laying down life in the path of God, it is not meant that a person should seek an occasion to be actually murdered. What is meant is that he should prefer the pleasure of God to his own desires and interests, that is to say, whenever his own interests and desires clash with his duty to God, he should willingly forsake the former. Every one should reflect whether it is this life that he loves most or the next; whether if he meets with any difficulty or is subjected to any hardship in the path of God, (*i.e.*, for righteousness’ sake) he would bear it with heart’s joy, and whether if he is required to lay down his life, he is prepared for it. This is the spiritual stage to which it is my object to lead my disciples.”

*Why is a Messiah sent from among the Muslims?* “I had never any desire to claim to be the Promised Messiah; on the other hand I loved to remain in solitude and to be quite unknown to the world abroad. But Divine wisdom ordained it otherwise and God enjoined me to come out of the corner of solitude which I loved. Almighty God does not love that greater honor and dignity should be attributed to a man than that to which he is entitled, for this is against His Unity. Hence because Jesus whom God sent as a Messiah to the Israelites was taken for a God, Divine jealousy ordained that another man should be sent as a Messiah so that the world may know that the

\* These notes are taken from the utterances of the Promised Messiah.



first Messiah was nothing more than a weak mortal. Almighty God has, by raising one of the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, to the dignity of the Messiah, not only corrected the error of the Christians in unduly exalting Jesus, but also revealed the true dignity of him whose servant appears as the Messiah of the last ages. Another reason why the last Messiah is raised from among the Muslims is that Islam is a living religion whose blessings shall not be intercepted to the day of judgment. It shows how great is the sanctifying power of our Holy Prophet that his spirituality has not ceased to cast its wholesome influence upon his followers even after thirteen hundred years."

*Why are the Muslims called the best of all people?* The Muslims are called the best of all people in the Holy Quran. If it were true that the gift of Divine revelation was never to be granted to them, they should have been called the worst of all people. There were many recipients of Divine revelation among the Israelites, but Israel lost favour in the sight of God on account of its repeated transgressions. The Muslims came as successors, and as their Holy Prophet was the most excellent of all prophets, so they were the most excellent of all people. This meant that while other people to whom Divine revelation was granted deprived themselves of this boon by their own misdeeds, the Muslims were never to be deprived of this Divine favour. Islam was a living religion and spiritual death was never to overtake it. Its blessings had to continue to the day of judgment. Hence the Holy Prophet was called خاتم النبيين, the seal of prophets, which meant, not that the gift of Divine revelation was with his advent withheld from men for ever, but that the door to this blessing was everlastingly opened by him, and his imitation was sure to bring this gift to every people in all ages to the day of judgment. The prophets that passed before him had their blessings discontinued after some time, but not so were the blessings of the Holy Prophet because these were to continue for ever. The door had been shut to the Israelites, but if it remains closed even to the Muslims, in what did they excel the former. How can a blind man claim an excellence over a blind man? If revelation, inspiration and the manifestation of heavenly signs, the highest Divine blessings, had been discontinued so far as the Jews were concerned, did the door remain closed for ever afterwards? My opponents would fain answer this question in the affirmative, but I say this belief is a disgrace to the Holy Quran and the noble religion of Islam. This is in fact my only difference with them. I say that the blessings and the fruits of Islam are still the same as they were in the time of our Holy Prophet, that Almighty God manifests the signs of His power as He manifested them before and that He speaks as He spoke ere now, but my opponents deny all these facts and say that the blessings of our Holy Prophet are left behind and shall never more be witnessed. Ah! they are not yet aware of the dignity of the Holy Prophet, of the grandeur of the Holy



Quran and of the glory of God. Islam is a living religion, the Quran a living book, our God a living God, and our Prophet a living prophet: how can their lights and blessings be then dead? Ali! what greater calamity than this that we should believe that the Muslims must for ever be deprived of the blessings of Divine revelation while the Holy Quran calls them the best of all people. What for should they pray then if their prayers are not to be attended with fruits and blessings? Why should they seek if they are told that the object they seek for can never be attained? To tell them to pray in such a case is just like telling a man to dig a well informing him at the same time that he would never come to water, should he dig ever so deep. Certainly all exertions in the path of God must cease if they cannot bear any fruit. If there is no answer from God, why should man pray? In short, unless it is admitted that Divine revelation is a blessing to which a true Muslim can always have access, neither would Islam be a true religion, nor would the Muslims be the best of all people. But Almighty God has informed me in a revelation which I have published in the Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya that "every blessing proceeds from Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, and blessed is the Master as well as the disciple."

*27th September.—A great Hindrance in the acceptance of truth.* "Almighty God out of His mercy sends His messengers that they may point out the way to purity and freedom from sin, but pride, which is a most fatal disease, keeps men off from the acceptance of truth. A true believer must have, therefore, no pride in him, but he must have humility and meekness, for these are the characteristics of the holy prophets of God. Our Holy Prophet possessed them in an eminent degree. One of his servants being asked how the Holy Prophet treated him said that the Prophet served him more than he served the Prophet."

*Sympathy and kindness to fellow-beings.*—"Sympathy with man and kindness to him is one of the highest deeds of virtue and the way to attain to Divine pleasure, but I see that great weakness is shown in this respect. Others are contemptuously looked upon and scoffed at, to say nothing of taking care of them or helping them in their distress. I fear that those who do not treat the poor and the distressed kindly may themselves be involved in troubles some day. Those whom God has out of His bounty placed in good circumstances should express their obligation to Him by doing good to His creatures. They should not be proud of their wealth and trample the poor under their feet. Wealth is a poison and the only antidote to its pernicious effect is doing good to those in need. The poor should not be looked down upon, for they shun many evils which wealth brings with it. Poverty is often attended with humility and meekness of heart and this is the reason that the poor are the first in accepting a messenger of God. They have not the pride or vanity which the rich man has whom considerations of greatness keep back from sub-



mitting himself to a messenger of God. But wealth is sometimes conducive to great good. This is when the rich man, instead of being puffed up with his wealth, spends his money in relieving the distressed and the needy and in supporting the cause of truth, and when he is thankful to the Lord for His great gifts.

"The truth is that it is most difficult for a man to fulfil his obligations to his fellow men. In every step that a man takes, he comes into contact with his brethren, and therefore he must observe the greatest precaution in the use of his own rights lest he interfere with those of others. My own principle is that we should not be severe beyond a certain limit even upon our enemies. Some people are always considering plans for the destruction of their enemies, and they do not even care whether the means they employ are legal or illegal. Such enmity brings numerous evils in its train. The man who treats his enemy in this manner does mischief to himself. I say to you truly that you will be quite lost if you carry your enmity so far. Moreover, never take any body for your personal enemy. If God is with you and you make yourselves wholly God's, He will make even your enemies your servants. But if you have severed your connection with God, and have no feeling of friendship with Him, that is to say, your conduct runs counter to His will, God Himself would be your greatest enemy. In that case, not even the whole world's friendship can avail you at all, as the world's enmity cannot harm you if you have a true connection with God. Follow therefore the steps of the prophets of God, for God loves that you should have no personal enemies. It is only thus that a man can reach the highest degree of excellence. But if a man is an enemy of God and His Apostle, take him for your enemy. By this I do not mean that you should spread calumnies concerning him or do him mischief, as men of the world generally do when they take any body for their enemy. What I mean is that you should have nothing to do with him, and let God alone deal with him as he deserves. But if possible, pray for him. These are things without which you can never attain to true purity of heart."

*28th September.—Islam is not a mere code of Ethics.*—It is a distinctive characteristic of Islam that it not only gives us excellent moral teachings, but makes a man witness wonderful signs when he acts upon those teachings. The man who leads a pure life in true submission to the Divine injunctions given in the Holy Quran witnesses signs which strengthen his faith and raise it to the degree of certainty. It is only the true followers of the Holy Prophet who can witness such signs, and all other religions are devoid of them. The lights and blessings of the Holy Quran can be witnessed in all ages, and in this age Almighty God has raised me to furnish clear proof of the blessings of Islam and the signs that are witnessed by a true Muslim. Islam has never been without such men, for Almighty God had promised this in the Holy Quran.



30th September.—*Repetition in the Holy Quran*.—"It is true that the Holy Quran repeats its injunctions very often, but having regard to forgetfulness in human nature such repetition is necessary. Repetition is always met with in the words of the prophets of God, for their word is a cure for spiritual diseases, and as it is necessary that a medicine should be administered repeatedly in order that the disease may be uprooted, so the repetition of Divine injunctions is necessary for the healing of spiritual diseases. The Holy Quran is a cure for the spiritual diseases of mankind, and therefore it considers the needs of the sick and does not care for conventionalities. Moreover, as the frequent repetition of certain words impresses them upon the mind, in a like manner it impresses them also on the soul."

## Notes and Comments.

*The Agnostic Journal*, after quoting the sayings of our Holy Prophet with regard to the rights of women and kind treatment to them, says in its issue of 11th November: "These are the gallant aphorisms of Mahometanism. 'Lecherous bigamists' sneers the Christian. You, O Christian, are a more lecherous bigamist; and you are a canting, hypocritical bigamist, whose bigamy is carried on *subrosa*. In this London alone there are some 100,000 professional prostitutes, and a countless multitude of amateurs. Are these maintained mainly by unmarried men? Nay verily. Go to Constantinople, Morocco or any Muslim city, and search as you may, you will find neither a prostitute, nor a drunkard. How nobly here Mahomet contrasts with Jesus! In Christian France, the 'Houses of Ill Fame' are licensed. Here we hold up our hands in holy horror at the very idea of what we call 'licensed vice.' The man here is not a whit less of a sensualist than the man in France; but he is more of a hypocrite. A friend of mine, well accustomed to the nocturnal aspect of Piccadilly and 'Hell corner,' and such like, was, some little time ago, in Constantinople. Here he did not see even a solitary skelp-the-gutter. Yes: at last he saw one and one only; she stepped up and accosted him-and *she was English* and a Christian. The one prostitute in the streets of Constantinople knew nothing of Allah and Mahomet; only of Jehovah and Jesus—and of course, of the Virgin. If man *must* be polygamous, better his own harem at home than a promiscuous harem on the street. The Christian Church proper makes monogamous marriage a sacrament, and permits of no divorce, although ill-assorted conjugality is, naturally, the most debasing and terrible hell upon earth conceivable. The Protestant section of the monogamic sham have Divorce courts, and, by Phryne, they keep them going. Shade of Sir Francis Jeune, bear evidence, they are prurient with details which the foulest press rag in England dare not report; for, though



internally dirty, we are externally decent. And our stirpiculture, the reproduction of our race, goes on under conditions like these!" Of Prostitution and polygamy, poison and panacea, Islam has made one choice and Christianity the other, but the man is not a Christian who would give a moment's reflection to this contrast.

On no one point do the Christian communities differ as much as in matters of divorce. And the diversity of causes for which divorce is allowed shows a clear effect on the statistics of divorce in different Christian countries. Whether a greater number of divorces is really a sign of moral decline is a most point among the Christians, the tendency among people where orthodoxy is losing ground being that increase in divorce is a healthy sign of the morality of the community. England is regarded as furnishing the lowest ratio of divorces to marriages. There were only 963 petitions for divorce in 1903, while the number was greatest, being 1,050, in the previous year when the troops returned from the Boer war, the evident explanation being that adultery had increased among the wives of those abroad during the period of the absence of husbands. Besides complete divorces, there were 7,292 separation orders in 1903, the total number of marriages in that year being 260, 694. This would give one separation to nearly 32 marriages. If the same facilities were afforded as are given in America for divorce, the number would evidently be very great. As an index of marital unhappiness it is not a welcome sign. In some states of America, the ratio is as great as one divorce for every four marriages. Thus in the town of Los Angeles there were 405 divorces and 1818 marriages in one year. This is the case notwithstanding that the intervention of courts is to be sought. The condition of Muslim countries is much better where without making such facts public the ratio of divorces is certainly not so high. Another important point is that the greatest number of petitions comes from people who have been longer married. Thus in England calculations have shown that taking the average of five years from 1898 to 1903 "nearly half the petitions were filed by people who had been married from ten to twenty years." This happens rarely in Muslim countries. As in England divorce is granted only on proof of adultery, it follows that people so long married fell more into the temptation. The only reason that can be given for this deplorable circumstance is the absence of the *pardah*. But the Christians would not be convinced and they would prefer the happiness of hundreds of families being ruined to adopting an institution which is associated with the name of Islam.

Another sad circumstance is that a very great number of marriages proves unfruitful. The percentage of childless marriages in England in 1901 was 39 per cent., and in Belgium 45 per cent. If polygamy were allowed in such cases, it is certain that the unhappiness of many families would be averted. But the fact is that a nation in



the height of its power never looks to its faults until the foundations are undermined and the very roots eaten away.

Disaffection seems to be growing in Zion, Dowie's city. A lady's letter published in the *Auckland Star* of 8th September, says: "I am too disappointed with Zion City; it is a very poor place. There are not six industries in the city, and I do not advise you or any one else to come here, and you can tell as many as you please. People leave the city as fast as they come in, and people are turned out for a mere trifle. There are many sad hearts in Zion City, people who have lost all their savings through coming here. Wages are not so good as in New Zealand, while the hours of labour are much longer. Living is very expensive, many things being twice the price they are with you. Rent is also very high. A dark cloud seems to be over the city." Another writes to the *Auckland Herald* of 5th September:—"Sir, I am one of the first party who left New Zealand for Zion City in April last. We were interviewed by your reporter. Now I wish to give my impressions as I find the place after residing for three months. Zion City has been boomed in New Zealand as a prosperous, thriving place of happy people, where it was a privilege to dwell. Now, I wish to say to the people of New Zealand who are thinking about Zion City as a beautiful place to live in that it is a delusion and a snare. We are a lot of deluded people, for the most part, and would be glad to be back in New Zealand. It won't be long before some of us are back. Some of the drawbacks are scarcity of work, low rate of wage, food and clothing dear, house rents high. Education is not free. There is great depression over the place, and has been for nearly two years, and it would be a fitting name to call it the City of Bondage. I may say I was a member of Zion, also of the Restoration Host, in good standing in Wellington for two and a half years before leaving New Zealand, and was a resident of the colony in various parts for 19 years, and am fairly well known. Before this appears in print I shall be out of Zion City, or I should be put out for giving expression to my opinions. My reason for writing to the press is to fulfil a promise I made to many persons that I would give my impressions of Zion City."

It would appear from these two letters that people are not going to Zion City out of religious motives, but simply under the false impression that labour is well-paying there. The disciples which Dowie claims are therefore mostly labourers who have gone there to seek employment. Of course the illusion cannot last long.

Another party of six persons which returned from Zion to New Zealand made certain statements to a correspondent of the *Star* from which the following quotations are taken:—

"The most significant thing in the statements is that the factories are closing down. The great lace factory of which 'Elijah' Dowie prated so loudly, has closed down. . . . 'No body prospers, said one lady pathetically. 'No body but Dowie and his few paid



autocrats. It is the greatest deception of the age. They tell you work is plentiful, and you can't get it. You go there, and unless you have money of your own—and keep it—you suffer misery. The stories I could tell you that we heard would make you weep—tales of misery and unhappiness, of want and of disappointment. They have up in the bank there, where God rules man prospers,—now it is Gold that is worshipped, not God—the Almighty dollar is the God of their idolatry in Zion as well as in America!”

Writing on “Some Christian Aspects of Evolution,” in the *London Quarterly Review*, Mr. Forsyth says: “The MORALITY AND EVOLUTION. slowness of moral progress also, compared with mere civilization or social evolution, might suggest to us that there is in the moral realm some action which is rebellious to the evolutionary law. How comes it that moral progress is so slow while the advance of civilization gains in velocity as it moves through time? (Is this the acceleration of a falling body?) If moral progress be the chief, how is it that it does not run with all and more than all the accumulated speed of the forces that led up to it? Is it not because in the moral region we are in another than the evolutionary Zone, where we must stoop to conquer and go back to leap? We have to return to fight out a new the old conflicts and regain the old conquests. Each man and age has to return for itself to headquarters; and we cannot pick up our goodness, our character, just where our father left off, as we can with his research, his estate, his position. No age can inherit moral worth, as it does civilization, by legacy. . . . But it is something more grave than moral slowness that we have to contend with when we come to the summit of evolution in man; it is moral sedition. It is not mere spiritual reluctance; it is recalcitrance and rebellion. It is not that progress lags, but that regress speeds. The higher we rise in the scale of development, the more we are impressed with degeneration as an active and deliberate force.”

The truth of the last sentence may be questioned. While it is true that morality does not necessarily advance with civilization, no reasonable person would agree with Mr. Forsyth in the opinion that the higher we rise in the scale of development, the greater is our degeneration. This statement is in fact made by the reverend gentleman out of respect for the Christian doctrine of the fall of Adam and atonement of Christ. We need not go back to savageness for a higher morality. The moral and spiritual advancement of man is connected with his faith in God, and whenever this faith is renewed in the world by a messenger appointed by God Himself, then do we witness also an advancement in the moral and spiritual conditions of men. With the lapse of time hearts are hardened and there is a decline again. Jesus Christ was no exception to this law.

NOTE.—I have not been able to finish the series of articles which at the end of the last year I set before myself. The discussion on four of the subjects is complete, *viz.*, *pardah*, polygamy, divorce and slavery. The remaining three subjects, therefore, go over to the next year. (Ed. R. R.)