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THE

# REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنُصَلِّیْ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِیْمِ

## THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

Was started in the year 1902, and it is now running the fifth year of its life. During this short period it has done a highly valuable and important service to the cause of Islam. Though yet in its infancy, the journal has obtained a wide reputation and won highly favorable opinions from the leading members of the Muslim community even in such distant countries as England and the United States of America. Even non-Muslims, whether from a friendly or a hostile point of view, have recognised its great importance. It is the only paper in English in India, nay in the whole world, that undertakes to refute the numerous objections that are published daily in the columns of Christian and other hostile papers and to reveal the beautiful face of Islam in its full glory to people to whom it has hitherto been painted in dark colours. That a Muhammadan organ dealing solely with religious questions was a great desideratum, no one would question. It is rather to be lamented that there should be only a single periodical of this sort and that too of the moderate size of forty pages, appearing only at intervals of thirty days and having a limited circulation.

### *Defence of Islam.*

Our object in starting this magazine was three-fold. In India a great religious struggle is going on. Unfortunately no religion is so insufficiently represented in this mighty struggle as Islam. Especially is this the case in English controversial writings. Almost every province of India has secular Muslim papers of its own in the English language, but before the year 1902 there was not a single religious paper in the whole of India, and even now the *Review of Religions* is the only paper of this kind, and it bears witness to a great indifference of the Muslim community to the defence of its faith that even this paper is not sufficiently supported. There was a time when the Muslims sacrificed their lives in the defence of their religion, but now they think it hard to spend a few pice in its support. When we view, on the one hand, the great zeal of the Christians to spread erroneous doctrines and to misrepresent the true and noble religion of Islam and witness, on the other, the apathy

of the Musalmans to defend their own religion or to support those who defend it, the saddest of contrasts is brought before our eyes. The one has thousands of missions spread in every country and hundreds of missionary magazines and papers, while the other has not even a single well-supported paper to defend its religion from hostile attacks. The columns of Christian papers are filled with the most daring misrepresentations of the Muslim religion, and sixty-two millions of Muslims are giving the public an impression of their acquiescence in these by observing an indiscreet silence. In short, our first object in starting this religious magazine was to defend Islam against the attacks of hostile religions.

## *Exposition of the principles and doctrines of Islam.*

With the spread of Western education in India, religious beliefs have largely been shaken though not to the same extent as in Christendom. Materialism and atheism are in fact the prevailing orders of the day and they pervade every Western idea, so much so that even the Western religion has been largely influenced by them. Our students in colleges and schools are not, therefore, so much in danger of having their pure religious ideas contaminated by Christian teachings as by these materialistic and atheistic ideas. This is not due to any lack of power in Islam to withstand the tide of materialism and atheism, but to the Muslim ignorance of their own religion. In the West, secular education went for a long time hand in hand with religious education, and the result was that with the light of education, the Christians began to emerge from the darkness of superstition. But in the case of the young Muslim student in India religious education is altogether neglected, and accordingly as he is kept ignorant of the principles and doctrines of Islam, he is unconsciously influenced by the ideas which pervade the Western education. The European student discards his religion because he knows it, but the Muslim student discards his religion because he does not know it. This is clear from two circumstances. In the first place the creeds which the advanced European thinkers, excluding of course the Atheists, are beginning to formulate are the truly Islamic creeds as the *Review of Religions* has shown on various occasions. Secondly, the Muslim ignorance of their own religion is clear from the fact that our religious literature in English, scanty as it is, is almost wholly the result of the labour of Europeans,

makes salvation impossible without a man's life being purified of all evils? What! Can Islam present a sensual paradise when it tells us in clear words that unless all the sensual passions are subdued, a man has no hope of salvation? And can the Muslims take their paradise for a sensual paradise when they know that access to it is impossible unless a man gets rid of sensuality and evil first? The subjection of sensual passions is the very first step in the way to Muslim paradise, while for the attainment of that happy goal, a far higher form of righteousness is needed.

Had Islam made the attainment of paradise dependent upon some such belief as the doctrine of atonement by which an erring and sensual person on earth at once passes into heaven after his death, it could have been charged with preaching a sensual paradise, but in the face of the fact that it requires freedom from sin as the only way to paradise and makes the attainment of a heavenly life in this world as an essential condition for the attainment of a heavenly life in the next, it is the height of absurdity to call its paradise sensual. Paradise, as every reader of the Holy Quran knows, is the goal to which Islam takes a man, and if there is any doubt as to its nature, the nature of the way which leads to this goal must remove it. That that way is the purity of heart no one has doubted, and if the way is pure, the goal to which it leads cannot be impure. No sensible person would argue that pure means were necessary for an impure end. As the means are, so would the consequence be, because it is the means that produce the result. An entire submission to Divine will, a complete purity of the heart, an utter subjection of sensual passions and carnal desires, a righteousness untainted with evil, which of these, I ask, is in consonance with a sensual paradise? Which is the impure course pointed out by Islam which leads to sensuality? Doubts may be entertained as to the pure nature of a paradise to which sensual and erring men can have access, but so long as reason reigns supreme in a man's mind he cannot entertain any doubt as to the perfect purity of a paradise to which none but the pure in heart can have access.

Apart from these considerations, the Holy Quran tells us in clear words what the fruits of righteous deeds would be. It says:

وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرَةٍ رَزَقُوا قَالُوا هَذَا الَّذِي رَزَقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَتُوا بِهِمْ مِثْلَهَا وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (البقرة)

"Bear good tidings to those who believe and do righteous deeds that for them are gardens beneath which rivers flow. So often as they are fed in that life with fruits, they shall say: 'These are the fruits which were given us formerly,' and the fruits that shall be given them there shall resemble the fruits which were given them here, and they shall have therein pure associates and they shall abide there for ever." What kind of paradise

the Muslims depicted to themselves then or do depict now is clear from this verse. We are told that when they shall be provided with fruits therein, they shall say that these fruits are the same as were given them in the former life. If then they understood that good things of the paradise were really things of this world, as the enemies of Islam say, they must have known at once that even in paradise they would get nothing but what they had already eaten in this world. What attraction could there be to them in a paradise where they could get nothing but the very few kinds of fruits which they could get even here. Besides, many of the faithful belong to the poorer classes; should they then understand that they shall have no fruits even in after life? Has any Christian met ever a Muslim who has declared to him that only those kinds of fruit will be supplied to him in the next life which he has tasted in this? And yet the verse states in clear words that *as often as any kind of fruit* is supplied to them, they will say, "this was supplied to us in the former life." It is clear from this that the fruits spoken of in this verse are not the fruits of this world, but the fruits of righteous deeds which are quite of a different nature from the fruits of the trees we see growing upon this earth of ours. And if the fruits there are of a different nature, all the other things spoken of must also be of a different nature, all the other world. Moreover, these fruits must be such as the faithful shall have tasted even here, an assertion which again supports the conclusion that the nature of the paradise which shall be granted to the faithful in after life is the same as the nature of the paradise which is granted them here upon earth. What it is, I shall try to explain later on so far as can be gathered from the hints contained in the Holy Quran.

Having shown that the fruits of the next life as spoken of in the Holy Quran can not possibly be the same as the fruits of this world, I now proceed to throw further light upon this subject by quoting verses in which the Holy Quran still more clearly explains the same law. It compares good words and deeds to deep-rooted fruitful trees, and evil words and deeds to impure trees. Thus in the chapter entitled *Abraham* it first speaks of the faithful entering into paradise in the following words: "But I will cause those who believe and do right to enter gardens beneath which rivers flow, to dwell therein for ever by the permission of their Lord; their salutation therein is 'Peace!'" (xiv: 27), and then, as if to explain what is meant by 'gardens, says in the next verse: "Dost thou not see how God explains a likeness? The good word of faith is like a good tree whose roots are firmly fixed in earth and branches shooting heavenward: it gives its fruits at every season by the permission of its Lord and God strikes out parables for men that they may understand," and then by way of contrast adds: "And the likeness of an evil word is as a bad tree torn up from the face of the earth, and has no staying place." (xiv: 28, 29). The trees of faith are the trees of the gardens of paradise which yield their fruits without intermission. And as here good words of faith are compared to trees and gardens, good deeds

are elsewhere in the Holy Quran likened to fountains and rivers. Thus in the following verse : ان الا برار يشربون من كأس كان  
مزا جها كافورا عينا يشرب بها عباد الله يفجرونها تفجيرا (الذرى)  
“Verily the doers of good deeds quaff a drink tempered with camphor ; they, the true servants of God, drink of a fountain which they have made to gush forth with their own hands.” (lxxvi: 5). That this verse relates to this world is clear from the context, for in the next verse without changing the subject the Holy Quran goes on to say : “They fulfil their vows, and fear a day the evil of which shall fly abroad, and who give food for His love to the poor and the orphan and the captive.” The righteous, therefore, make rivers to flow by their good deeds of which they drink and which water the trees of their faith. The word *káfúr* occurring in this verse requires to be explained. It is derived from the root *kaf-r* meaning to cover and suppress, (in fact cover is only a corruption of *kaf-r*, of being changed into *v*). This covering and suppression refers to the total extinction of worldly love and the complete suppression of all worldly desires and sensual passions. *Káfúr* (camphor) is an antidote to poison, and the spiritual *káfúr* which the righteous are provided with in this world is an antidote to the poison of sin.

That the paradise which is granted to a man is a paradise prepared by himself wherein the word of faith represents the trees and the good deeds the ever-running streams that water them is not only clear from the two verses quoted above, but the subject is really hinted at on almost every occasion where a paradise is promised to the righteous. الذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات لهم جنات تجري  
من تحتها الانهار are words which occur very often in the Holy Quran, and they signify that “for those who believe and act righteously are gardens beneath which streams flow.” In fact the promise of a paradise to the righteous is almost always conveyed in these or similar words. What is required of a man according to this verse is that he should believe and act righteously and what is promised to him is that he shall have gardens with streams flowing in them. Thus belief is compared to trees or gardens and good deeds are compared to streams.\* “These words reveal a deep secret indicating the connection between faith and good deeds. As trees wither away if they are not watered, so faith without good deeds is dead. Faith without deeds is useless, and good deeds not actuated by faith are a mere show. The Islamic paradise is a true representation of the faith and good deeds of this world. Every man’s paradise is an image of what he has done here below ; it does not come from without but grows from within a man himself. It is his own faith and

\*The quotation is from the lecture on Islam given by the Promised Messiah at the Great Religious Conference of Lahore where the subject of Paradise and Hell has been exhaustively dealt with.

his own good deeds that take the form of a paradise for him to live in, and its delight is tasted in this very life. The tree of faith and the streams of good deeds are even here discernable though not manifest, but in the next world all veils that hide them from the eye shall be uplifted and their existence shall be palpably felt. The perfect teaching of the holy Word of God tells us that true, pure, strong and perfect faith in God, His attributes and His Will is a delightful garden of fruit trees, while the good deeds which a man does, are in fact the streams flowing in the garden and giving life and fruit to its trees."

The whole subject is now, I think, sufficiently clear. When the Holy Quran gives us clearly to understand that the paradise promised to us is really a representation of our good words and deeds in this life, every difficulty as to the nature of the blessings of that paradise is removed. Paradise, or Hell, is in fact a clear image of our spiritual state in this life. Though the names given to the heavenly blessings are the same as those given to the blessings of this world, yet the two entirely differ in their nature from one another. The Holy Quran also tells us : *فلا تعلم نفس ما اخفى لهم من قرة اعين* "No soul knows the blessings and joys that are hidden for it." This statement would not be true if we suppose that the blessings of this world are also the blessings of paradise. There is also a tradition, which really explains this verse, which says that the blessings of paradise are such as "the eye has not seen, nor has ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of them." But we cannot say this of the blessings of this world which have been seen by the eye and heard of by the ear.

The other point that has been proved is that the Holy Quran promises two paradises to the faithful, one in this life and the other in the next, both being of a like nature. The difference as already shown is that the spiritual blessings of this world which are enjoyed by the righteous in this life take a palpable form in the next. The blessings of paradise are real and substantial blessings, embodiments of the spiritual blessings of this life, and, therefore, similar in their nature to them, but having nothing in common with the good and delicious things of this life except the name. It is for this reason that the Holy Quran says that whenever those in paradise shall be made to taste of any of its blessings, they shall say : "These are the fruits which were given us in our former life." Now these fruits were nothing, but the spiritual fruits of their good deeds which they tasted in this life. The blessings of the next life shall, therefore, recall to their minds the spiritual blessings of the love of God which they tasted here. On another occasion, the same law relating to heaven and hell is described in the Holy Quran in the following words :

*وكل انسان ا لزمناه طائره في عنقه ونخرج له يوم القيامه كتابا يلقيه*  
 "And We have in this very life bound the

effect of a man's deeds about his neck, and those hidden effects shall We bring to light on the day of resurrection in the form of a book, wide open." From this we learn that the effect of a man's good or bad deeds, which is his heaven or hell, is felt even here by him, yet it is a hidden effect and is not palpable. But on the day of judgment this very *tdir* (hidden effect of good or evil deeds) shall assume a manifest form, as a clear and open book. In other words, the spiritual realities of this world which are discernible only by the spiritual eye here shall there become palpable and manifest, and shall be clearly visible to all. Again the Holy Quran says: *يوم ترى الامومنين* "On that day, (*i.e.*, the day of judgment which is the day of the grand manifestation of Divine glory and of all spiritual realities) thou wilt see the believing men and the believing women, their light running before them and on their right hands." (lvii: 12). And again we are told in vi: 122, that a light is granted to the faithful even in this life. The difference between the two lights lies, not in their nature, but in the fact that while the light granted in this world is a hidden light, the light of the next life would be visibly manifest to all. This is further clear from the verses which follow lvii: 12, where we read: "On that day when the hypocrites, men and women, shall say to those who believe, 'Wait for us that we may kindle at your light,' it will be said, 'Turn back and seek a light.'" The light of the faithful will, therefore, on the day of judgment be visible even to the unbelievers who will beg of it, but they will be told to turn back and seek it. By telling them to turn back it is meant that they should search a light in their past life, for if their past life had no light in it, they could not have a light on the judgment day. And the result is that they find themselves totally encompassed in darkness, the darkness of their evil deeds having assumed a palpable form. Again, consider the following verse which shows that the gardens and the streams of paradise are mentioned only by way of similitude. "A similitude of the paradise promised to the righteous is this—suppose a garden in which are rivers of water without corruption, and rivers of milk, the taste whereof changes not, and rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of honey clarified; and there shall they have all kinds of fruit and protection from their Lord." (xlvii: 15). "From this verse it appears clearly that the promised paradise is only a representation of boundless oceans of all these things. The water of life which the righteous man drinks spiritually in this life shall there appear manifestly as a river; the spiritual milk with which he is here spiritually nourished like a child shall there manifest itself as a river of milk; the spiritual wine of the love of God with which he remains in a blissful state in this world shall assume the shape of a river flowing with wine; and the honey of the sweetness of faith which he spiritually tastes here shall flow in paradise in palpable rivers. The spiritual state of every person shall on that day become visible to all in his gardens and rivers, and God also shall



reveal Himself to the righteous in His full glory on that day. In short, the spiritual states shall no more remain hidden, but shall show themselves palpably.\*

A very few words about Hell would suffice. From the true nature of paradise as explained above, the true nature of hell can be easily inferred, for the two states of life, a heavenly life and a hellish life, are opposed to each other. And as it is in this world that a heavenly life begins, it is here also that a hellish life takes its birth. Its origin is in sin and it is kindled by the wrath of God. Thus the Holy Quran describes hell as

ذات الله الموقدة التي تطلع على الا فؤدة  
 "The fire of the wrath of God burned (on account of sins) which rises above the hearts." The sinful man, therefore, prepares for himself a hell in this life, but he does not see it, while on the day of judgment he will see it manifestly. Like heaven, hell is prepared by a man with his own hands. The Holy Quran is clear on this point:

الهمم التكاثر حتى زرتهم الممقا بر كلا سوف تعلمون ثم كلا سوف تعلمون  
 كلا لو تعلمون علم اليقين لترون الجحيم ثم لترونها عين اليقين (التكاثر)

"Your manifold desires and passions turn you away from God until you are consigned to the grave. Verily, you shall soon know (that you have prepared a hell for yourselves); again, verily you shall soon know. Verily, had you known (the effect of your deeds) with the knowledge of certainty, you would have seen that hell *even here*; again, certainly you will see it with your eyes *after death*." According to these verses, a man's desires and passions are the source from which a hell is prepared for him, but not till death does he know the evil effect of his deeds. The hell of the next life is prepared here hidden from the human eye but visible to those who possess the knowledge of certainty even here. The beginning of the tortures of hell is thus described on one occasion in the Holy Quran: وحيل

بينهم وبين ما يشتهون (السبا)  
 "And a barrier shall be passed between them and their desires" which will cause a burning in their hearts. As the blessings of paradise are described to be the manifestations of the spiritual fruits of the good deeds of this life, the tortures of hell represent the embodiments of the spiritual effects of the evil deeds of this life. In the chapter *Alhaqqah* we have  
 خذوه فغلوه ثم الجحيم  
 Lay ye hold on him, (i.e., the wicked one), then put chains into his neck, then cast him into hell to be burned, then into a chain whose length is seventy cubits thrust him." "The chain to be put into the neck represents here the desires of this world which keep a man with his head bent upon the earth, and it is these desires that shall assume the shape of a chain. Similarly the entanglements of this world shall be seen

\*The Promised Messiah's lecture.

as chains in the feet. The heart-burning of this world shall likewise be clearly seen as flames of burning fire." The chain is said to be of seventy cubits, for the ordinary length of human age is seventy years, as if every cubit represented an year of evil doing. Similarly in another place the Holy Quran says: "Verily We have prepared for those who reject truth and righteousness chains and collars and burning fire," these things representing their entanglements in this world, their bending low upon its mean cares without ever raising their head, heavenwards and the burning of their hearts with carnal desires. By acting as they did they prepared all these things for themselves with their own hands. The same law is expressed in the following verse of the Holy Quran: "O ye wicked ones! Be gone to the shadow of three branches which cannot shade you from the heat, nor is it of any service against the flames of fire," (lxxvii: 30). The three branches spoken of here represent bestiality, savageness and infatuation which remaining unmodified lead to transgressions and evil deeds. These three shall appear on the day of judgment as three branches without any leaves and, therefore, availing nothing against heat.

It should be borne in mind that Paradise and Hell according to the Holy Quran are not mere places of enjoyment and torture, but they are meant, the one for the spiritual advancement of man, and the other as a remedy for his spiritual diseases. Man will always remain a man and he cannot go beyond his sphere and actually become an angel or God, but the progress which he can make in his own sphere is unlimited. Thus regarding those in paradise the Word of God says: *والذين آمنوا معه نورهم يسعى بين ايديهم* وبأيما نهم يقولون ربنا اتمم لنا نورنا و اغفر لنا انك على كل شى قدير (التحريم) "Those who have (the light of) faith in this world shall have their light on the day of judgment running before them and on their right hands, and they shall be continually saying: 'O Lord, perfect our light and take us in Thy protection, for Thou hast power over all things.'" This unceasing desire for perfection shows clearly that progress in paradise shall be endless. "For when they shall have attained one excellence, they shall not stop there, and, seeing a higher stage of excellence, shall consider that to which they have attained as imperfect, and shall, therefore, desire the attainment of that higher excellence. When they shall have attained to this, they shall yet see another higher excellence, and thus they shall continue to pray for the attainment of higher and higher excellences. This ceaseless desire for perfection shows that they shall be endlessly attaining to excellences." Thus the righteous shall go on making progress in paradise and shall never recede a step, nor shall they ever be deprived of those blessings." No other religion has taken this view of paradise, *viz.*, that it is a place meant for the perpetual advancement of man. According to the Arya Samaj, the process is just the contrary. Paradise according to this sect of Hinduism is not a place

meant for progress, but one where retrogression will actually take place. The souls that shall after millions of years be admitted to the abode of bliss shall soon find themselves expelled again to undergo another endless course of transmigration. Nor is paradise according to Christian scriptures a place for the advancement of man, and the righteous there shall only be listless enjoyers of good and delicious things. But the Holy Quran not only rejects the doctrine of the Arya Samaj by saying that those that are admitted into paradise "shall never be expelled therefrom" (xv : 48) and that paradise shall be a "ceaseless boon" (xi : 110), but it also makes an advancement over the defective Christian doctrine and makes paradise not only a place of enjoyment of heavenly bliss, but also a place for lessend advancement. Had the soul of man not been meant for lessend progress, immortality should have been a burden to it instead of being a delight. For although we speak of a state of perfection in paradise, yet this perfection is by no means the highest stage of perfection to which man can attain, and accordingly human progress will not stop even in paradise.

Hell, as I have said above, is also meant for the advancement of man. The workers of iniquity shall have to undergo the tortures of hell as a remedy for the evils done in this life. It is for this reason that according to the Holy Quran those who suffer in hell will gradually be taken out of it, for when the disease is gone, then being whole they would be fit for the advancement which man must make in paradise. There is no doubt that the abiding of the wicked in hell is mentioned in the Holy Quran to be for *abad*, which word ordinarily means prospective eternity, but the sense of the word is not limited to that significance, and *abad* also means *د هر طو ریل* or a long time. Hence such phrases as *کان هذ ا فی ا باد ا لد هر* which means, 'This was a long time ago,' and hence also the use of such phrases as *ا بد ا لا بد* or *ا بد ا لا باد* to signify 'time without end.' (See Lane's Arabic-English Lexicon). Besides this consideration we have testimony in the Holy Quran itself that ultimately those in hell will be taken out of it. The following contrast between those in hell and those in heaven proves this point conclusively. "And as far those who are wicked—their place is the Fire! there shall they sigh and moan; therein they abide while the heaven and the earth endure, unless thy Lord shall will it otherwise, for verily thy Lord is the mighty worker of His will. And as for the righteous—their place is the paradise! therein they abide as long as the heavens and the earth endure, save what thy Lord will—but the paradise is an uninterrupted boon" (xi : 109, 110). It should be noticed that in this contrast while the abiding in heaven and hell is mentioned to last for ever, an exception is made in each case "unless thy Lord shall will it otherwise." But as this exception could have given rise to some misgiving that as

those in hell would be drawn out of it, so those in heaven may also be expelled from it, therefore, it is added in the case of the boon of paradise that it would be an uninterrupted and ceaseless boon. If it had been intended that those in hell would never be taken out of it, a similar phrase, that is to say, a ceaseless punishment, should also have been added in the previous verse. But here instead of such a phrase we have the hopeful assurance that "thy Lord is the mighty worker of His will," and it is clear that these words added to the exception "unless thy Lord shall will it otherwise," signify that those in hell will ultimately be taken out of it. There is also a tradition, which is recorded in the Sahih Muslim, which says that "a time will come over hell when there will be no one in it and the cold breeze (of Divine mercy) will shake its gates." In short, hell is a purgatory in which a man is cleansed of all impurities and is made whole so that he may be fit for the ceaseless advancement which he must make in paradise.

Such are heaven and hell according to the Islamic theology, and the deep philosophy which underlies them has been so well explained by the Holy Quran that no sensible person can think of objecting to the Islamic teaching on this ground. It will be seen, on the other hand, that no religion in the world has given such a clear notion and such a philosophical explanation of heaven and hell. In fact, the ideas of all other religions on these two subjects when compared with Islam are very crude and imperfect. It is Islam only which teaches that heaven and hell grow out of a man, that a heavenly or a hellish life begins in this world, that the spiritual fruits of good or evil deeds done in this life assume a manifest form in the next, and that both heaven and hell are meant for the perpetual advancement of man to a higher and higher stage. All these wonderful teachings, as I have shown above, are clearly contained in the Holy Quran, but not one of these is contained in any other religious book of the world it whether came into existence before or after the Holy Quran. We have no prejudice against any religion; we only want the purest, the simplest and the noblest teachings, but as we do not find them anywhere outside the Holy Quran, therefore we bow our heads before it as the veriest Word of God. Perhaps no other fundamental teaching of this holy book has been so much objected to as its teaching with respect to heaven and hell, but let the advocates of any religion in the world show as high, as pure and as sublime a teaching in their own books and I will admit its equality with Islam. But it should be borne in mind that such teachings should be pointed out in the scriptures taken to be of a heavenly origin by any religion, and the particular verses should be quoted. For if the book itself is silent while its advocates make all the noise, we would be justified in drawing the conclusion that all such thoughts are taken from the pure source of Islam. It is easy to charge any one for going beyond one's religious scriptures, as Mr. Sell has charged the Muslims who do not look upon the Islamic paradise as a place meant

for the gratification of sensual passions and carnal desires, but it is difficult to offer a proof of what is asserted. Let Mr. Sell quote any verse from the Bible, any saying of Jesus in particular, showing the same high and noble ideal of paradise as I have shown by quoting verses from the Holy Quran, and then I will admit that his attack upon Islam was *bona fide*, that he misunderstood the teachings of Islam, and not finding the same high ideal of paradise in them as in the Gospels advanced his objections in good faith. But let me assure the reader that he cannot quote a single word from the Gospels which should make the slightest approach to the deep philosophy and unequalled purity of the Quranic teaching on paradise.

The existence of "Houris" or beautiful women in paradise is much objected to, as if of all the nations of the world the Christian nation had the greatest aversion for beautiful women, or as if the existence of beautiful women were incompatible with a perfect state of human society. What hypocrisy this, that they crave for the society of beautiful women, clothed and decorated to their best, and regard it as an essential thing for the happiness of society, and yet object to their existence in paradise, denominating it as sensual on that account! What! are their balls not sensual where even the most pious of all Christians, a bishop or an archbishop, will seek the fairest woman to be his partner, leaving his own wife for the while! And these men object to beautiful women being the associates of the righteous in paradise! The Holy Quran no doubt affirms the existence of beautiful women in paradise as it also affirms the existence of other good things conducive to the happiness of man, but as I have shown above at length, every blessing of paradise is an embodiment of the spiritual conditions of this life. The faithful women will also be there in paradise in all their beauty and glory along with men, and it is this condition of men and women being companions of each other in paradise that is described in the verses: "They and their spouses, on couches reclining; fruits have they (both men and women) therein, and whatever they call for—'Peace' shall be the word of a Merciful Lord," (xxxvi: 56-58). No description of paradise given in the Holy Quran is inconsistent with a most happy, pure and perfect state of human society, especially when it is expressly mentioned that the blessings of paradise are not things of this world though they bear their names. Moreover, the highest blessing of paradise according to the Islamic law is the sight of God. The Holy Quran says: "Their cry therein shall be, 'celebrated be Thy praise, O God,' and their salutation therein shall be, 'Peace!' and the end of their cry shall be, 'Praise belongs to God, the Lord of the worlds'" (x: 10). From this it is clear that every word said or deed done in paradise shall be to celebrate the praise and glory of God, and this celebration shall lead to their ceaseless progress. Never will they be tired of celebrating the praise of God and never will their progress stop. All their words and deeds shall be directed to this one great end. The good things of this world are

a hinderance to the spiritual progress of man but not so the good things of paradise. The love of wealth and the love of women and children is here very often the cause of the love of God being extinguished, but in paradise there would be nothing which would interfere with a person's love of God. An instance of this we see in the lives of the righteous servants of God even in this world. A more perfect form of the same will be witnessed in the next world. And as the connection with God in paradise will be the highest source of pleasure to a man, the relations with each other of those in that happy state are denoted by the term 'Peace.' It is thus indicated that their relations with each other will be of the purest nature. Remark the following words: "There shall be no absurdity there and no sin (*i.e.*, anything which should separate man from God); Only the speech 'Peace,' 'Peace'" (lvi: 24).

I cannot understand how the pleasures of paradise can be termed sensual when their ultimate object is to lead a man more and more into Divine presence. The greatest bliss of paradise, to which all other pleasures are subservient, and the attainment of which according to the Holy Quran is the great end and aim of man's existence here or hereafter, is God's pleasure, as the following verse shows: "God has promised to believing men and believing women gardens beneath which rivers flow, to dwell therein for ever, and goodly places in the gardens of Eden. But best of all will be God's good pleasure in them. This will be the greatest bliss" (ix, 73). This verse alone refutes all the absurd objections advanced on the ground of the existence of beautiful women in paradise. And when it is further borne in mind that all the pleasures of paradise are of a different nature from the pleasure of this world, for the Holy Quran tells us plainly that "no soul knoweth the pleasures that are hidden for it," the objection of the Christian missionaries appears all the more absurd. In fact, all objections are based on the supposition that the good things of paradise will be the same as the things of this life whose names they bear, and that their enjoyment will be of the same nature as the enjoyment of the pleasures of this world. Both these suppositions are wrong. At the same time no details can be given as to the nature of these things and the nature of their enjoyment. But certain it is that every pleasure of paradise and every word or deed said or done there will be the means to the attainment of God's good pleasure and the advancement of man to higher and higher stages of spirituality and greater and greater excellences to which there will be no end.

The intensity of the the punishment of hell as described in the Holy Quran is sometimes objected to. Such objections are strange when coming from the preachers of a Gospel which at least seven times describes hell as a fiery furnace where "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" for ever (Mat. 8: 12; 13: 42, 50; 22: 13; 24: 51; 25: 30; Luke 13: 24). But as I have explained above at length,

it is the evil deeds of a man himself which are his hell, and, therefore, any intensity in the punishment in hell is due to the intensity of the evil deeds done by a man. For a reprobate sinner the severity of the hell would be far greater than it would be for an ordinary sinner. To every one will be meted out a reward or a punishment according to his own good or evil deeds. Neither would all be in equal bliss nor would all suffer equal punishment. The Holy Quran says *من جاء بالحسنة فله عشر أمثالها ومن جاء بالسيئة فلا يجزيه الا مثلها وهم لا يظلمون* (الا نعام ١٦١) "He who brings a good work shall have a tenfold reward, but he who brings a bad work shall be recompensed only with the like thereof, and to none shall injustice be done" (vi: 161). The severity of torture is then for such only as have themselves brought it over them by their horrible guilt and shameful transgressions. Let any one read the following account of the conduct of mighty Christian priests at which even the archfiend must blush red, and then say whether any description of hell contained in the Holy Quran is too severe for such diabolic and infernal deeds. It is a story of the "Holy Inquisition" and a simple and plain tale of the ignominy of the inquisitors of the "holy office." The story is told by a lady who was one of hundreds of young virgins who fell a prey to the bestiality of the Inquisitors. She was but a girl of fifteen when on a visit to a lady of rank she met Don Francisco Tirregon, second inquisitor of the holy office. He conceived a liking for her and when it was night sent his officers to seize the young lady. So terrible was the name of the inquisition and so abjectly were its orders obeyed that the father of the girl instead of making a resistance to so cruel and disgraceful a demand delivered her to the officers with much submission. "My fright was great," said the lady, "as I expected to die that very night; but judge of my surprise when I was ushered into an apartment decorated with all the elegance that taste, united with opulence, could produce." It was not till the next day that she was able to guess the object of her being brought there. In the evening she received a visit from the tyrant who had procured her arrest to satisfy his fiendish lust. "He saluted me with great respect, and told me that he came to see me in order to show the great regard he had for my family, and to inform me that it was one of my lovers who had procured my confinement, having accused me in matters of religion; and that the informations were taken, and the sentence pronounced against me, to be burnt alive in a dry pan, with a gradual fire; but that he (Don Francisco), out of pity and love to my family, had stopped the execution of it."

The next day her waiting-maid showed her the terrible means by which death was inflicted on the offenders. A large room was opened, within which "there was an oven, with a fire in at the time, and a large brass pan upon it, with a cover of the same, and a lock affixed. In the next room there was a great wheel covered on both sides with thick boards, Opening a little window in the centre, Mary desired

me to look in with a candle : there I saw all the circumference of the wheel set with sharp razors, which made me shudder.

“ Mary then took me to a pit, which was full of venomous animals. On my expressing great horror at the sight, she said : ‘ Now, my good mistress, I’ll tell you the use of these things. The dry pan is for heretics and those who oppose the holy father’s will and pleasure. They are thrown alive into the pan, being first stripped naked ; and, the cover being locked down, the executioner begins putting a small fire into the oven, and by degrees he augments it, till the body is reduced to ashes. The wheel is designed for those who speak against the Pope, or the holy fathers of the Inquisition ; they are put into that machine through the little door, which is locked after them, and then the wheel is turned swiftly round, till they are cut to pieces. The pit is for those who contemnd the images and refuse to give proper respect to ecclesiastical personages ; they are thrown into the pit, and so become the food of poisonous reptiles.

“ We went back again to my chamber, and Mary said that another day she would show me the torments designed for other transgressors ; but I was in such agonies at what I had already seen that I begged to be terrified with no more such sights. She soon after left me, but not without enjoining my strict obedience to Don Francisco ; ‘ for, if you do not comply with his will,’ says she, ‘ the dry pan and gradual fire will be your fate.’

“ The next morning Mary said : ‘ Now let me dress you as attractively as possible, for you must go and wish Don Francisco good morning and breakfast with him.’ When I was dressed she conveyed me through a gallery into his apartment, where I found he was in bed. He ordered Mary to withdraw, and to serve up breakfast in about two hours’ time. When Mary was gone, he commanded me to undress myself and come to bed to him. The manner in which he spoke and the dreadful ideas with which my mind was filled so terribly frightened me that I undressed myself, without knowing what I did, and stepped into bed, insensible of the indecency I was transacting ; so totally had the instinct of self-preservation absorbed all else, and so entirely were the ideas of delicacy obliterated by the force of terror.”

This scene of infamy was repeated for three days during which time she had occasion to meet fifty-two other young and beautiful ladies, “ the eldest not exceeding twenty-four years of age,” all of whom were like her the unfortunate victims of the bestial lust of the “ holy fathers.” But the scene now changed.

“ On the fourth morning, Mary came into Don Francisco’s chamber, and told me I must immediately rise, for a lady desired to see me in her own chamber. Mary spoke with a kind of authority which surprised me ; but, as Don Francisco did not utter a syllable,



I got up and obeyed. Mary then conveyed me to a dismal dungeon, not eight feet in length; and said, sternly, to me: 'This is your room, and this lady your bed-fellow and companion.' "

Here she learned the real facts about all these young ladies whom she had met in the three previous days from her companion who gave the following account of their infamy.

" We are strictly commanded to express all the demonstrations of joy, and to be very merry for three days, when a young lady first comes among us, as we did in your case, and as you must do in the case of others. But, afterwards, we live like the most wretched prisoners, without seeing any body save Mary and the other maid servants, over whom Mary exercises a kind of superiority, acting as house keeper. We all dine in the great hall three days in the week; and when any one of the inquisitors has a mind for any one of his slaves, Mary comes about nine o'clock and leads her to his apartment. Certain nights Mary leaves the doors of our chambers open, and that is a token that one of the inquisitors has a mind to come during the night; but he comes so silently that we are ignorant whether he is our patron or not. If one of us happen to be with child, she is removed into a better chamber till she is delivered; but during the whole of her pregnancy, she never sees anybody save the person appointed to attend her. As soon as the child is born, it is taken away and carried, we know not whither; for we never hear a syllable mentioned about it afterwards. I have been in this house six years, was not fourteen when the officers took me from my father's house, and I have had one child. There are, at this present time, fifty-two young ladies in the house; but we annually lose six or eight, though we know not what becomes of them, or whither they are sent. This, however, does not diminish our number, for new victims are always brought in to supply the places of those who are removed hence; and I remember at one time to have seen seventy-three ladies here together. Our continual torment is to reflect that, when the holy fathers are tired of any of the ladies, they certainly put to death those they pretend to send away; for it is only natural to suppose that they are too politic to suffer their atrocious and infernal villainies to be discovered by permitting their deflowered and degraded victims to go out into the world and possibly divulge the secrets of pious hypocrisy and shameless infamy. Hence our situation is miserable indeed, and we can only pray that the Almighty will pardon these crimes we are compelled to commit."

Can any one, after reading real stories of such infernal and diabolic deeds, say that the severest description of hell contained in the Holy Quran is too severe even for some "holy Christian fathers"?

## Why do the people of India reject Christianity?

This question has been asked by a European gentleman who belongs to the class of Christians who are conscious of the failure which the attempts of the Missionaries to evangelize India have met, but who still think Christianity to be the best of all religions and are unable to solve the mystery of its failure in India where it started with a most promising career. There are others, however, who consider it a sin to attribute failure to Christianity and look upon all such statements as being due to a superficial criticism of the work of missions. With them every progressive movement in India shows the influence of Christianity, and, sooner or later, the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj and every other Samaj must fall a prey to it. The paucity of actual conversions or the holding aloof of the higher classes of society brings no disappointment to them, for they have a solace in the unseen influence of Christianity on minds which are being prepared for its acceptance. The story of a boy of fifteen or sixteen, "who was pleased with his Bible," with an understanding hardly mature to form a judgment on religious questions of importance, speaks volumes to them, and the story goes over the seas to convince the subscribing public at home that India with its teeming millions is about to lay its head at the feet of Christ. It seems necessary to consider the latter view before giving an answer to the question, why do the people of India reject Christianity?

It is a fact which no Christian Missionary can deny that no religion had ever had at its disposal the enormous resources for its propagation which Christianity has. There are armies of paid preachers and vast treasures of wealth which is squandered like water wherever there is a chance for making conversions. The fact that famine-stricken areas and the lowest classes of the Indian community are most of all susceptible of the influence of Christianity is a clear index of the circumstances under which the ranks of this religion are being swelled. Indeed if the missions prepared statistics of the Christian converts excluding these two classes, the English people would soon recall them for a more profitable labour at home. I do not mean to say that Christianity has totally failed to make any converts from among the Hindus and the Muhammadans, but it is a fact that excluding those whom pecuniary indigence has led to such a course, Missionary effort cannot show a success in proportion to the mighty force engaged in the task. The failure of Christianity is the more disappointing because of the means that have been employed. Since the sixteenth century when Catholic missions were first estab-

lished in this country, organized efforts have been made to convert India. Protestant missions were established early in the eighteenth century, but what is the result of four centuries of missionary effort under a Christian Government? Nearly three millions of native Christian population. The total gain to Christianity, from births and conversions, amounted to 639,000 during the last decade, while Islam during the same time gained over 5,000,000 souls, almost without any propagandic and missionary effort and in the face of numerous disadvantages. Now all this increase in the number of Muslims is not due simply to the excess of births over deaths, for the plague has wrought such a havoc in the country during the last decade that in the whole population of India there has been an increase only of about seven and a half millions, nearly sixty-six per cent. of the increase being due to Islam and about 34 per cent. to all other religions taken together. It follows, therefore, that much the greater part of the increase of Muslims is due to conversions. Christianity, of course, can show an increase of 30 per cent. since the last census, but if the percentage were taken with reference to the Missionary forces employed and the money spent, increase in the number of Christian converts would be very low in comparison with the increase in the number of Muslim converts. In fact, wherever Christianity and Islam have been preached side by side, Islam with all its paucity of resources has made conquests far more mighty than those of Christianity.

I would consider now what are called the "indirect results" of Missionary efforts which are a proof positive to the Missionary that India is making a nearer and nearer approach to Christianity and encourage him to entertain the hope that it would one day acknowledge the Divinity of Jesus. One influence of Christianity which is said to be very clear is that the name of Christ is revered in India and this is thought to be an approach to Christianity. There is a great delusion in this thought. The two hundred and fifty millions or more of the Muslims have always revered Jesus as a righteous prophet of God. Can they be said then to have been nearer the acceptance of Christianity than any other people? On the other hand, never has a people been farther off from the erroneous doctrines of Christianity, and no nation on the face of the earth has proved more inaccessible to the inventions of this religion. Reverence for the name of Jesus, therefore, does not imply a leaning to Christianity, and is perfectly consistent with an utter hatred and absolute contempt for its false doctrines of Trinity and atonement. Nay, more than this. Recognition of the merits of Jesus as a true prophet of God and as a man is an admission of the Muslim doctrine, and the man who once takes a firm hold of this position is strongly fortified against the attacks of error which is preached in the name of Jesus. If revering the name of Jesus means making an approach to Christianity, the Christians need not spend a farthing on the missionaries. But the question is, how arises this delusion? It is rooted, in fact, in the

narrow-mindedness of the Christian missionaries themselves. They are not only taught, but even brought up, to hate all religions, but Christianity and to condemn and abuse all religious leaders except Jesus Christ. With this narrow-mindedness as their chief characteristic they are ushered into the world to preach the Gospel of Jesus to the heathen. But the poor heathen have never been in schools of divinity in England or America, nor have they been brought up in an atmosphere where Christian narrow-mindedness prevails. Accordingly, it is not a part of their religion to condemn and abuse holy men. Hence it is that a word of praise uttered for Jesus is mistaken for a leaning to Christianity by the over zealous missionary

There is, however, another side of this question. Christianity, as we all know, is the religion of the "powers that be" in India. Now although the Christian missionaries much lament the government policy of neutrality in religious matters because a non-observance of this policy would have given a positive impulse to the cause of Christianity in India, yet it cannot be denied that the fact of its being the national religion of the dominant authorities exercises a very subtle influence over the minds of the subject people. "A people have their rulers' religion," thus goes an Oriental proverb, and there is truth in it. It does not of course mean that they are all actually converted to the religion of the ruling authorities, but that there is a great temptation for them in this, and they find it convenient to be favourably disposed to the religion of their rulers and to follow their ways. I do not deny that Christianity has exercised a certain influence on India, but the good it has done is more than outbalanced by the evil it has wrought. While it has, on the one hand, done good by establishing schools and colleges and hospitals, though it must be said to its discredit that it has established them not with a humanitarian object, but with the sole motive of spreading the errors of Christianity, the good being only incidental, it has, on the other, widely spread, besides many erroneous doctrines, such evils as drunkenness and gambling. That these influences are preparing India for the acceptance of Christianity, I do not admit, for, however prone man might be to evil, yet truth and virtue must in the end prevail. It is as a spiritual power that religion can ultimately exert a wholesome influence over the lives of a people, and this spiritual power, the power to make men walk in righteousness, is lacked by Christianity in India as much to-day as it was in Arabia in the sixth century of the Christian era. It is said that Christianity has awakened India to a religious consciousness, but the effect it has produced on its religious literature is the most regrettable. From the moment that the Christian missionaries set their foot on this soil, their controversial writings are couched in a language for which the pages of any decent writing are too sacred. The evil example of Christianity has been followed by the Arya Samaj, and in this sense at least the Arya Samaj may be said to evince the influence of Christianity.

Why do the people of India reject Christianity, is a strange question. The real question to ask is, why do they accept it so far as they do? And my answer to this question is that the easy life which is led by most of the Christians and the doctrine that a man is purified of his sins by merely believing that Jesus is God and that he died an accursed death on the cross for our sake are mighty temptations for the self-indulgent. For, the message of Christianity is not that a man should shun evil and do righteous deeds, but that he should believe in the doctrine of atonement, that is to say, that his sins have been taken away by Jesus. The easiness of life which Christianity thus presents combined with other attractions of a sensual nature is a powerful factor in swelling the number of Christian converts. There are two other potent factors to which I have already alluded. One of these is famine which reducing vast masses of the population to poverty has placed them at the mercy of the Christian missionaries whose bread can win what their preachings can not. Where famine rages, there the Christian missionaries can reap a good harvest. Among the low castes too, such as the Pariahs and the sweepers, Christianity has been successful. The castes that have always been looked down upon in India and have had all their aspirations to be regarded as respectable members of society dead have found in Christianity an agency which raises them to the level of the higher classes in a generation or two. This inducement is leading thousands of them to believe in the potency of the blood of Jesus, and to this reason more than to any other single reason is due the great increase in the number of Christian converts.

The question, why do the people of India reject Christianity, has arisen only out of the supposition, for which there is not the least ground, that Christianity is a higher form of religion than the religions with which it has come into contact in India. The two great religions which Christianity has to encounter here are Hinduism and Islam. Less important than these two is Buddhism whose moral teachings are in no way inferior to those of Christianity, while it owns no such absurd doctrine as that which goes by the name of atonement. In the matter of being impracticable they both stand on a par, and accordingly Christianity cannot appeal with the slightest force to Buddhists. I admit that Christianity is a higher form of religion than the religion of the low castes, and the great progress it is making among them is a clear evidence of this fact, but I doubt if as a religion it can claim any superiority over the most orthodox form of Hinduism. The Orthodox Hindus are no doubt idol-worshippers, but, while they address their prayers to stones which their own hands have hewn, they do not actually take them for God, the Creator of this vast universe. In this respect, at least, their belief is not as contemptible as that of the Christians who actually take a man for God, and consider a weak mortal, not as a manifestation of Divine power or as an intercessor, but as the very Creator of earth and heavens. Any sensible person can see that the Christian belief of the Divinity of

Jesus is a lower form of superstition than the Hindu belief in idols. This very argument was advanced by the idolaters of Arabia when Christianity was preached to them by the Christian missionaries before the rise of Islam. Their very words are recorded in the Holy Quran: "Are our gods better, or is he?" (liiii: 58). To this even Palmer adds a foot-note, explaining the objection of the Arabs to Christianity. It runs thus: "The Arabs objected that Jesus was worshipped by Christians as a God, and that when Muhammad cursed their false gods, the ban must apply equally to him." These words of the Arabs show clearly that they rejected Christianity because they thought their gods to be better than the god which Christianity presented. It was for this reason that Christianity failed in Arabia, and for the self-same reason it must fail among the Hindus, for it does not give them any nobler conception of God than what they already have. As regards the Arya Samaj, it is decidedly in a better position, for, however low its conception of God, it is not lower than the one which considers a man as a God. The religion which will ultimately vanquish all other religions must be that which gives the highest and the purest conception of the Divine Being, and the temporary success of this or that form of superstition should not mislead any one. This is the reason that I believe that Islam, and Islam only, can be the future religion of the world, because no other religion gives one the pure and high conception of Almighty God which Islam does.

Christianity has always boasted of its plan of salvation as its distinctive characteristic, but here in India the Hindu has nothing to learn from the Christian missionary in this respect. His plan of salvation is very similar to the soteriology of the Christian, for as the latter thinks a belief in the Divinity of Jesus to be necessary for salvation, the former gives the same honour to Krishna. There is no blood-bath here of course, but an actual bath in the Ganges is at any rate a better purifier than the imaginary bath in the blood shed at Calvary. I say a better purifier, because it purifies the body if not the soul, while the blood of Jesus purifies neither. The man who admits that a mortal who lived on this earth like mortals was really God cannot find any objection with the belief that Krishna was God incarnate, and if a few drops of blood, said to have been shed 2,000 years ago, have the efficacy to purify more than four hundred million men living in this age, why not sixteen hundred miles of running water to cleanse the several millions who get a chance to dip their heads in the holy water. Both assertions are equally superstitious and equally absurd, and the believers in the one can have no attraction in the other. The only reason which both these people have to adhere to their respective religions is that they found their fathers holding the same belief, and this very reason goes against their changing faiths. Hence the Hindu is little affected by the appeals of Christianity to the Divinity of Jesus and to the efficacy of his blood in effecting a purification from sins, because he has already a God incarnate in the person of Krishna and is more sure of the efficacy of the Ganges to purify him of all his sins. And the fact is

that if God came down upon earth in the person of a man in one place, it is more probable than not that he came down also in other places and other ages in the same garb. And the Hindu belief, which looks upon Krishna as the incarnation of the Deity in one place and Christ as His incarnation in another, is from this point of view more reasonable than the Christian doctrine. The ways of God are with one people as they are with another, and as He raised His prophets among all people for their guidance, He must have appeared among all in flesh if such appearance is permissible. Similarly the Hindu doctrine of purification from sins by a bath in the Ganges cannot be questioned by a Christian who himself believes in a more unreasonable dogma of an equally superstitious nature. The one is as much opposed to reason as the other, and both show an equal ignorance of the nature of sin and its remedy. As regards actual results, the Hindus are at any rate more sober than the Christian nations, while in some other respects of morality both are equally in a fallen state.

I must take occasion here to refute an objection which is ordinarily advanced by the Christians, *viz.*, that if atonement has failed to uproot sin, so has the Islamic doctrine. This comparison is by no means true. Islam does not assert, as Christianity does, that a belief in a certain doctrine washes away the sins of the world. It negatives the doctrine of atonement itself and suggests remedies for sin which must be applied in order to get rid of it. The only remedy which Christianity suggests for purification from sins is that a man should believe that Jesus died on the cross and took away the sins of the whole world, but we see that millions of men, nay hundreds of millions, who hold this belief and look upon Jesus Christ as the very God, are as deeply immersed in sins, and even more, as those who reject the whole theory as an utter lie. In Islam the case is not the same. It suggests a remedy which, if applied, is sure to uproot the evil, and any vice or immorality that is to be met with among its followers is due only to the circumstance that the remedy is not applied. So the defect is not in the remedy as in the case of Christianity but it is in those who would not apply it. But there is another difference also. The man who follows the Holy Quran with a true and sincere heart is granted power to apply that remedy, and the truth of this assertion is clear from the fact that the purity which we witness in the lives of the companions of the Holy Prophet is not to be met with in any other society in the world. And, further than this, it is a fact that the Muslims as a nation are freer from the evils of drunkenness, gambling and prostitution than any other nation of the world. There is clear proof in these circumstances that Islam is the only religion which offers a true panacea for the poison of sin.

The other great religion which Christianity has to contend with in India is, as I said above, Islam. Having shown that the Christian missionaries can show nothing superior even to Hinduism, I need not detain the reader by occupying his attention with arguments for the

superiority of Islam, because these follow only as a matter of course. The sublime conception of the Divine Being which Islam presents is unapproached by any other religion, and in this lies the power of Islam which without any organized propagandic effort is far ahead of Christianity in making conversions. For instance, if we take the figures for the last decade, the average rate of increase in the population of India is nearly 3 per cent., and at this rate the increase in the Muhammadan population of India would be nearly 1,700,000. But as the total increase of Muhammadans during that period is 5,000,000, we may safely conclude that the remaining 3,300,00 were added by conversion from other religions. As against this surprising increase, the Christians, with their mighty forces of missionaries and the treasures of wealth at their disposal, cannot show even a fifth of this. The Christian missionaries who are never tired of blaming Islam for forcible means of propagation should ponder over these facts. This is only one instance which shows that the power of Islam lies in its principles, while the power of Christianity lies in the great numbers of the missionary force and the treasures of wealth at its disposal.

The God that Islam presents cannot be denied even by idolaters and Christians, though they hide the pure principle of faith in one God under a cloud of errors. We reject the Divinity of the man Jesus, but the Christians cannot reject our God so long as they hold that sacred big volume in their hands. The conception of God which a Muslim has is so pure and so deeply impressed in human nature that even a Christian or an idolater cannot deny its truth, but the additional gods that other religions present are strange and new, and every people have taken for themselves a different God, regarding whom no two nations can come to an agreement. And there is no criterion which should show that the God of one nation is really a God while that of another is not so. But the God of Islam is the God of all nations. Moreover, the God of Islam is the living God in whom all the righteous servants of God believed in any age. No righteous man ever believed in a God who did not speak, who did not listen to the prayers of humble supplicants and give an answer to them, and who did not show wonderful signs of His existence and power. No other religion but Islam preaches such a living God today. How can Christianity then expect to win such an invulnerable faith with defects in its own foundations which must undermine it, sooner or later. It should also be borne in mind that the special God which Christianity has set up for itself is vanishing into nothingness with the spread of education. Christian missionaries would make haste to say that education has had a similar effect even upon Muslims. But there is an important difference which should never be lost sight of. The Divinity of Jesus and his resurrection and atonement which are the basic principles of the Christian faith, the very foundations of that religion, have been shaken, nay destroyed, by the spread of education, while among the Muslims, the Unity of God, the



fundamental principle of the Muslim religion, remains as unshaken as ever. It is in questions of secondary importance that any departure has been made from the orthodox faith, and therefore this case bears no similarity to that of the decline of the Christian faith in which the very foundations are tottering.

As regards salvation, Christianity has understood very little, and that little too it has really misunderstood. According to Christian ideas, the goal to which a man should aspire is obtaining freedom from sins, but Islam looks upon it as the first step in the path to the ultimate goal. Had Christianity rightly understood even this part, it would have at least made a man reach the right point from which to start, but its doctrine of atonement has led it away from that point. Islam, however, not only makes a man start from the right starting point, but it actually leads him to the great goal of his life. It is not satisfied with the simple attainment that a man should be free from the bondage of sin, but requires highest deeds of righteousness and love for God as necessary for the attainment of that goal to which man can aspire in this world. It places before him the highest ideal of virtue and perfection and looks upon the attainment of freedom from sins as the first stage in the spiritual advancement of man. A religion like Christianity which in comparison with Islam has crude conceptions of God and salvation can never be successful in a country where Islam has also a chance to lay open its beauties before the public. And as the errors which have sprung up about the noble doctrine of unity are swept off, Islam would shine with all its effulgence before the nations of the world.

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## The Will of the Promised Messiah.\*

All praise is due to God, the Lord of worlds, and blessings and peace be upon His Messenger, Muhammad, and his offspring and companions all. As Almighty God has informed me in various revelations following one another that the time of my death is near, and the revelations in this respect have been so many and so consecutive that they have shaken my very existence from the foundations and made this life quite indifferent to me, I have, therefore, thought it proper that I should write down for my friends and for such other persons as can benefit from my teachings some words of advice. I give first the holy words of the revelation which giving me news of my

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\* Published in original on the 24th December 1905. A supplement to this will be published separately (Ed., R. R.).

death beforehand has led me to write these lines. The following are the revelations in the Arabic language:\* "The destined time of thy death has drawn nigh, and We shall not leave behind thee any remembrance of thine which should be a source of disgrace to thee. Very little has remained of the time appointed for thee by thy Lord, and We shall not leave behind thee any thing which should be a source of disgrace to thee. And We will either let thee see a part of what We threaten them with, or We will take thee to Ourselves. Thou wilt die in such a state that I will be pleased with thee. Thy time has come and We will keep manifest signs after thee to show thy truth. The time that was promised has drawn nigh, therefore, tell abroad the favours of thy Lord. Verily he who walks in righteousness and is patient, Almighty God does not bring to naught the reward of such doers of good."

It should be remembered that Almighty God says here that He will not leave behind me any mention of my name which should be a source of disgrace to me. It has a double significance. It means in the first place that all such objections shall be refuted and brought to naught as are published by my opponents with the intention of bringing disgrace upon me. It also means that people who do not give up their mischiefs, and do not refrain from speaking evil of me, shall be blotted out of existence, and as they perish, their objections will perish along with them. After this Almighty God thus addressed me in the Urdu language: "Very few days have remained; sorrow will overtake all on that day. Such and such and such things will happen and after that will come the event of thy death. After all occurrences and wonders of nature have been shown, will come the occurrence of your death."

Regarding the occurrences spoken of in the above revelation, I have been informed that death will work havoc on all sides. There will be earthquakes so severe that they will present to the eye the scene of the day of judgment, and will, as it were, turn the earth upside down, and the lives of many would be embittered. But on those who repent and eschew evil, God will have mercy. Every prophet had spoken of this time, and it is necessary that every thing should happen according as it was foretold. But those who make their hearts upright and walk in ways which are liked by God shall have no fear, nor grief. Addressing me Almighty God said: "Thou art a warner from me. I have sent thee that the righteous may be separated from the wicked." And He said: "A warner came into the world, but the world did not accept him, but God will accept him and make clear his truth by mighty attacks. I will shower so many blessings upon thee that kings will seek blessings from thy clothes."†

\*Only the English translations of the revelations are given throughout. (Ed, R.R.).

† Had the world opened its eyes, it would have seen that I have appeared in the beginning of the (Hejira) century, and almost a quarter of the 14th century has passed

As regards the earthquake to come which will be very severe, God informed me and said: "Again came the spring time and again is the Word of God fulfilled." It is, therefore, necessary that a severe earthquake should yet come, but the righteous are safe from it. *Be righteous then and walk in true piety that you may be saved. Fear God to-day so that you may be safe from the fear of that day. It is necessary that heaven should show some thing and the earth should manifest wonders, but those who fear God will be saved.* The Word of God says that many events will happen and dire calamities will descend upon earth, and some of them will be manifested in my life and others after my death, and He will give this dispensation some success through me and more completely after me. 2

It is a Divine law, and since man was created Almighty God has always been manifesting this law, that He assists His prophets and messengers and gives them triumph, as He says: "God has written, 'I will surely prevail, I and My apostles'" (lviii:22). Their triumph means that as they wish that the cause of God should prevail upon earth, and none should be able to oppose it, so it is brought about, and Almighty God makes evident their truth by powerful signs. The righteousness which they wish to spread upon earth is sown like a seed with their hands, but it is not in their life-time that this seed grows into a powerful tree. On the other hand, He sends death to them at such a time that their mission is still in fear of failure, and thus gives an opportunity to their opponents to laugh at them and to scorn and abuse them. After they are thus laughed at, He manifests another hand of His power, and brings means into existence by which that purpose is completely achieved which had been left incomplete in the first instance. In short two different manifestations of Divine power are witnessed, one at the hands of the prophet himself, and the other after his death, when difficulties surround the infant dispensation on all sides, and the enemies are in the height of their power and think that the mission of the prophet will be wrecked and his followers destroyed, when even the followers show anxiety and their hearts fail and many unfortunate men apostatize. It is at such a juncture that Almighty God manifests a second time His mighty power and supports the cause of the tottering mission. He, therefore, who waits patiently to the last moment sees this great miracle. So it happened in the time of Abu Bakar when the death of the Holy Prophet was thought to be premature and many ignorant dwellers in the desert became renegades and the companions of the Holy Prophet also became like mad men on account of great grief. Then Almighty God made Abu Bakar to stand up, and showed a second time the manifestation of His power. Thus He took Islam

away. According to prophecies both the sun and the moon eclipsed in the month of Ramazan at the time of my claim, and the plague also made its appearance and earthquakes came and more will yet come, but woe to them who loved the world for they did not accept me.

† The original word in the revelation is *bahar*. (Ed, B. B.)

by the hand when it was about to fall and fulfilled His promise which He had made in the Holy Quran: "God promises those of you who believe and do right that He will give them the succession in earth as He gave the succession to those before them, and He will establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them, and give them, after their fear, safety in exchange" (xxiv: 54). Thus it happened in the case of Moses who died in the way before he reached the goal to which he wanted to take the children of Israel, and on account of his untimely death and sudden departure, the Israelites wept for forty days. Similar was the case of Jesus, and even the apostles dispersed at the time of his crucifixion, one of them having apostatized.

Bear in mind then, my dear friends, that it being an established Divine law that He shows two manifestations of His power that He may thus bring to naught two false pleasures of the opponents, it is not possible that He should neglect this old law now. Be not, therefore, grieved at what I have said, and let not your hearts feel sorry, for it is necessary for you to see a second manifestation of Divine power, and it is better for you for it is perpetual and will not be intercepted to the day of judgment. But it cannot come until I go, and when I go, then will Almighty God send it for you and it will remain with you for ever. Thus had Almighty God promised in the Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya, and that promise does not concern me, but it concerns you, as He says: "And I will make those who follow thee prevail over those who deny thee to the day of judgment." It is necessary, therefore, that you should see the day of my departure, so that after it may come that blessed day whose promise continues for ever. Our God is a true and faithful God and He is true to His promise, and He will make you witness every thing that He has promised. Although these are the last days of the world and many are the tribulations which must come, yet it is necessary that the world should hold all that is in it until all these prophecies are fulfilled. I have appeared as the power of God upon earth and I am an embodiment of Divine power, and after me will come others who will be manifestations of His second power. Wait, therefore, for the manifestation of this second power and pray for it in one body. It is necessary that the righteous in every country should pray together, so that the other power may descend from heaven and show you how powerful is the Lord your God. Look upon your death as at the door, for you do not know when the hour may come.

It is necessary that the righteous from among my followers, whose spirits are free from impurities, should take people into discipleship in my name.\* Almighty God wills it that all those who inhabit different

\* Such men will be selected by the agreement of the faithful. Any one, therefore, about whom forty faithful men should agree that he is fit to accept *baiat* in my name from other people shall be entitled to do so, and he ought to make himself an exemplar for others. Almighty God has informed me that He would raise for my followers a man from my own offspring whom He would particularly favour with His nearness and revelation, and truth would prosper by him and many people would accept the truth. Wait, therefore, for those days, and remember, that every one is recognised in his own

parts of the earth, the Occidentals and the Orientals, all who possess a good nature, should be drawn to a belief in the Unity of God and thus collected in one faith. This is the object of God for which I have been sent to the world. Follow this object, therefore, but with meekness, high morals and incessant prayers, and until one stands up with the holy spirit from God, work all in agreement after me.

It is also necessary that you should show true sympathy and purify your souls, and thus get the blessing of the holy spirit, for without the holy spirit true righteousness can never be attained. After utterly forsaking all passions, walk for the pleasure of God in a path than which no path is narrower. Be not charmed with the enjoyments of this world for they separate you from God, and for the sake of God lead a life which seems hard. Pain in which is the pleasure of God is better than the pleasure which is the cause of the displeasure of God. Defeat in which is the pleasure of God is better than the victory which brings with it the wrath of God. Forsake the things whose love brings you nearer the wrath of God. If you come to Him with a pure heart, He will assist you in every path and your enemy will not be able to do you any harm. You can never attain the pleasure of God until you forsake your own pleasures, your enjoyments, your position, your property and your life, and in His path meet every difficulty which brings before your eyes the scene of death. But if you meet all difficulties, you will be taken into the bosom of God like a dear child, and made heirs to the righteous who have gone before you and the doors of every blessing will be opened to you. But there are very few who can do it. Addressing me Almighty God said that righteousness is a tree which should be planted in the heart, and the water which gives nourishment to the tree of righteousness, waters the whole garden. Righteousness is a root whose death brings death upon all and whose life gives life to all. What does it benefit man that he should assert with the mouth that he seeks God, but should not take a step in sincerity. Remember, I say to you truly, that the man will perish who has a leaven of worldliness in his faith, and hell is very near the soul whose intentions are not all for God, but some are for God and some for this world. If there is an atom's weight of worldliness in your object, all your worship is in vain. It is Satan you follow in that case and not God. Never expect that God will assist you in this condition, for you are a worm of the earth in this case and you will perish like a worm in a few days, and God will not be in you but will be pleased to destroy you. But if you really submit yourselves to death, then you will appear in God, and God will be pleased with you, and the house will be blessed in which you live, and the blessings of God will descend upon the walls of that house, and the city will be

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time, for before that time he may look like an ordinary man, or appear objectionable on account of some false impressions, as every one who afterwards becomes a grown up and perfect man is at one time only semen or a portion of clotted blood in the womb.

blessed in which such a man lives. If your life and your death and all your movements and your mildness and severity are all for the sake of God, and you do not try your God in every difficulty and distress, but make an advancement in every step, then truly you will be a favourite people of God. You are also men as I am a man, and the same God who is my God is also your God. Neglect not, therefore, your powers of purity. If you incline wholly to God, then bear in mind, and I say it to you as God has directed me to say, that you will be a chosen people of God. Make your hearts the seat of the majesty of God, and express His unity not only with your tongue, but also in your actions, so that God also may send down His grace and favours upon you. Shun vengeance and show sympathy to all your fellow-beings. Walk in every path of virtue, for you do not know by walking in which you will find acceptance in the sight of God.

I bear to you these glad tidings that there is no one in the field to contest with you the nearness of God. Every nation is loving the world, and the world cares nothing for things which can make a man attain the pleasure of God. There is a unique opportunity, for those who with their whole heart and soul will enter this gate, to show their merits and find favour in the sight of God. Do not think that God will destroy you, for you are a seed of God's hand which is sown in the earth. Almighty God says that this seed will grow and bear flowers and fruit and its branches will extend on all sides and it will become a powerful tree. Blessed is he who believes in the Word of God, and does not fear the intermediate trials, for trials must come that God may try you and see who is true in his promise of *bai'at* and who is false. He who stumbles at a trial cannot make the cause of God suffer any loss, and his evil fortune would take him to hell. Better it would have been for him if he had not been born. But all those will be victorious and the doors of Divine blessings will be opened on them who wait patiently till the end, though they are shaken with the earthquakes of calamities and the storms of difficulties, and laughed at by the nations of the earth and hated and abhorred by the world. Addressing me Almighty God said that I should inform my followers that those who believe, and whose faith is not leavened with worldliness, nor tainted with hypocrisy or weakness of heart, and whose faith does not fall short of any degree of obedience and submission—these are they who are the chosen people of God, and these are they whose step is a step of sincerity.

Listen, all ye that will listen! What is it that God desires of you. Only this that you should be entirely His, and not set up with him any other God, neither in heaven nor in earth. Our God is the God who is Living now as He was Living before, Who speaks now as He spoke before, and Who hears now as he heard before. It is an unfounded idea that He hears now, but He does not speak. He speaks as He hears; all His attributes are eternal, and none of them lies or will ever lie idle. He is the one, without any partner,

Who has neither son nor wife. He has no like or equal, and as He is distinguished by attributes which no one else possesses, so there is none other who should be unique in any respect like Him. There is none of equal rank with Him and none who has the same attributes, and He holds all power in His hands. Being very far, He is still very near, and being near, He is still far. He shows Himself by way of similitude to the seers, but He has neither body nor form. He is above all, but we cannot say that below Him there is anything else; He is on the *arsh*, but we cannot say He is not on earth. He is the master of all the perfect attributes, the manifestation of all the praises, the source of all beauties, the possessor of all power, the origin of all grace, the returning place of all things, the king of all regions, the Lord of all, Who has every perfection and is free from every fault or weakness, and to Him is due worship from all those who are in heaven or in earth. There is nothing impossible with Him, and all the souls and their faculties and all the particles of matter and their powers are His creation, and without Him nothing can come into existence. He manifests Himself by His own power and might and signs, and Him we can find only through Him. He ever manifests Himself to the righteous and shows them the wonders of His power. It is thus that He is recognised and it is thus that His will is known. He sees without physical eyes, and hears without physical ears, and speaks without a physical tongue. Thus does He create out of nothing. As you see that in a vision He creates a world without any matter and shows non-existent things to be existent, such are all the wonders of His power. He is a fool who denies His power and He is blind who is ignorant of His deep power. He does, and can do, everything except that which is opposed to His greatness or is against His promises. He is alone in His person and attributes and works and powers. To attain to Him all doors are closed except the door which the Holy Quran has opened. The prophets and the scriptures that went before it need not now be followed individually, for the prophethood of Muhammad encompasses all prophethoods, and besides it all paths are now closed. All truths which can lead a man to God are contained in it. Neither will any new truth come after it, nor was there any truth before it which is not present here. Therefore all prophethoods end with the prophethood of the Holy Prophet, and so it ought to have been, for that which has a beginning has also an end. But the prophethood of Muhammad does not fall short of any blessing at any time and has greater blessings than all other prophethoods. To follow it is to take the easiest way to reach God, and the blessing of Divine love and the favor of His revelation are granted in greater abundance to its follower than were ever granted to the follower of earlier prophets. But its perfect follower cannot be called an independant prophet, for this is a disrespect towards the prophethood of Muhammad. He can, however, be called a prophet and a follower simultaneously, for such designation does not involve any disrespect towards the perfect prophethood of

Muhammad, but is indicative of the lustre of its blessings.\* And when Divine revelation becomes frequent and certain in the highest degree and is free from every obscurity and defect and foretells deep secrets of the future in clear language, the stage is then reached which is designated by the title of prophethood, and this is a point on which all the prophets of God agree. It was impossible that a people of whom it had been said that "you are the best of people raised for the good of the world" and who had been taught to pray frequently and untiringly: "O Lord! show us the right path, the path of those upon whom Thy blessings have been showered,"—it was impossible that not a single person out of this whole favored nation should have attained to the perfect stage of prophethood, and all should have been deprived of this great blessing. Had it been so, not only would the followers of the Holy Prophet have remained blind and their spiritual advancement been very defective and incomplete, but in that case it would have further to be admitted that the Holy Prophet could not communicate his blessings to his followers and that his sanctifying power was defective. And the prayer which the Muslims are enjoined to repeat several times in each of their five daily prayers, would also be useless in that case. On the other hand, if any follower of the Holy Prophet could have obtained prophethood independently, that is to say, without borrowing from the light of the Holy Prophet, the finality of prophethood in him would have been falsified. To guard against both these evils, Almighty God has so ordained that the gift of a pure, perfect and holy Divine revelation is granted to such of the followers of the Holy Prophet who attain the highest stage of a complete annihilation in the prophet and the veil which keeps him hidden from strangers is entirely removed. Thus the condition of being a true follower of the Holy Prophet is fulfilled in them in a most perfect sense, for their own personality entirely vanishes away, and the image of the personality of the Holy Prophet appears in the looking-glass of their absorption. On the other hand, they are granted a most perfect gift of Divine revelation like the prophets of God and thus deserve to be called prophets.

It was in the manner pointed out here that some individuals from among the followers of the Holy Prophet gained the title of a prophet along with that of a follower, for prophethood in their case is not independent of the prophethood of Muhammad. A deep reflection at once reveals the fact that their prophethood is really the prophethood of Muhammad which appears in a new garb. Such is the significance of the phrases in which the holy Prophet des-

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\* It must however be borne in mind that no prophet who should also be a law-giver can appear after the Holy Prophet, even from among his followers, for this door is completely closed. Nor can there be any book after the Holy Quran which should give new commandments or abrogate any commandment of the Holy Quran or dispense with the necessity of following any of them, for this is the last book and its ordinances must remain in force to the day of judgment.



cribed the Promised Messiah, of whom he said that he is **نبي الله** and **ما منكم منكم** *i.e.*, "a prophet of God," and, "your leader from among yourselves." This means that he is a follower as well as a prophet. A stranger, (*i.e.*, one from among the Israelities) cannot stand in this position. Blessed is he who understands this point, for he will not perish. Almighty God brought death upon Jesus as He plainly says in the Holy Quran (v:117.). This verse read with the preceding and subsequent verses indicates that God will ask Jesus on the day of judgment if he had told his people to take him and his mother for two gods, in reply to which Jesus would say that so long as he lived in them, he witnessed and watched what they did, but when God caused him to die, he did not know into what errors they fell. Now the words **فاما تو فيتني** may either be interpreted rightly "when Thou causedst me to die," according to the unanimous testimony of all Arabic lexicons, or any one who likes to persist in error may construe these words as meaning "when Thou tookst me up with my physical body to heaven," one conclusion is evident, *viz.*, that according to the plain interpretation of this verse, Jesus would not come back into this world, for if he came a second time before the day of judgment and broke the cross, he could not remain ignorant of the errors that the Christians introduced after him into his religion, and it is impossible that Jesus, a prophet of God, should speak such a plain lie in Divine presence on the day of judgment that he was not aware that the Christians had taken him and his mother for gods. Could a man who came back into the world and lived for forty years and fought with the Christians say that he was not aware what belief the Christians held? This verse strongly opposes the coming back of Jesus, and, therefore, if he was taken up alive into heaven, he must also die there, and in that case his tomb will also be there. But this is opposed to the plain text of the Holy Quran which says that "therein (*i.e.*, in earth) shall ye live and therein shall ye die and from it shall ye be brought forth" (vii: 24). All these considerations show clearly that Jesus was not taken up alive into heaven, but that his spirit went to heaven after his death. Any belief held in opposition to this is falsified by the Holy Quran, to go against which is a transgression.

Had I not come, a mere error in interpretation would have been excusable, but when I have made my appearance and the plain significance of the words of the Holy Quran has been clearly pointed out, it does not behove a true Muslim to insist on the error. For we have appeared signs of God on heaven as well as on earth, and a quarter of the century of Hejira has already elapsed, and thousands of heavenly signs have been manifested, and the seventh thousand from Adam has also set in. What hard-heartedness is it then to reject me still. Listen, I say with a loud voice, that the signs of God have not yet come to an end. After that first earthquake of 4th April 1905, which had been foretold long before, Almighty God

has again informed me that in another season of spring another severe earthquake would be witnessed. I cannot say whether it would be the beginning of spring or its middle or end, for the Divine revelation only says: "Again came the spring time and again is the word of God fulfilled."\* As the first earthquake was also felt in spring time, therefore Almighty God has informed me that the earthquake to come will also be in spring time which may extend from the end of January to the end of May. //

Almighty God also calls the earthquake to come "the earthquake of the day of judgment," meaning, that it would be so severe that it would bring the scene of the day of judgment before one's eyes. And again He said: "For thee We will show signs, and the buildings which they raise We shall cause to fall." And again He said: "The earthquake came and it came with severity. I turned the earth upside down," which means that a severe earthquake will be felt which will devastate certain parts of the earth as it was in the time of Lot. And again He said: "Verily I will come with My hosts all of a sudden," *i.e.*, no one would know of that time beforehand, as it was in the time of Lot when people did not know anything, and they ate and drank and were merry until they were overtaken by a terrible earthquake. Thus, Almighty God says, will it happen in this case, for the transgressions of men have exceeded all bounds and they love the world with an excessive love and the way of God is looked upon with contempt. In another revelation Almighty God said to me: "The end of lives," and again "Thy Lord said that He would send down from heaven that which would please thee. It is a mercy from us, and it will decidedly come to pass, for it is a matter which had been ordained from the beginning." But it is necessary that the heavens should hold all things until this prophecy is published among the nations.

It should be borne in mind that this publication of the prophecy is not meant to cause apprehension to the public, but it aims at withholding future apprehension, so that no one should perish in ignorance. Everything depends on intention, and our intention is not to cause trouble to any body, but to warn men against a trouble. Those who repent are protected when the punishment of God comes down. But the unfortunate man who does not forsake the company of the scoffers and the abusers, and does not shun evil and transgression,—the days of his destruction are near, for his wantonness draws the wrath of God.

There is another point which I must state here. As I have already said, Almighty God has informed me of my death, and addressing me thus spoke of my life: "Very few days are left;" and We

\* I do not know whether by spring is meant the spring which would follow this winter or any other time. It, however, appears from the Word of God that the thing will come to pass at a time which may be designated spring time, but God will come secretly like one who comes in the darkness of night.

\* In one revelation Almighty God says; "Thy name shone for My sake."

also said : " After all occurrences and wonders of nature have been shown, will come the occurrence of your death." In this, there is an allusion that it is necessary that before my death some occurrences should take place and some wonders of nature should appear, so that the world might be prepared for a mighty revolution, and after that revolution would come my death. And a place was shown to me and it was said that that would be the place of my sepulchre. I saw an angel measuring the earth, and coming to one place, he told me that there was to be my tomb. A tomb was then shown to me which shone more brightly than silver, and the dust of it was all silver, and I was told that it was my tomb. And a place was shown to me which was called " the *Bahishti Maqbara*," and it was revealed to me that in it would be the tombs of such of the righteous from among my followers whose place is heaven. Since then I have always been anxious that some land should be bought for the object of making it a graveyard, but as land in the particular site intended for this object was priced very high, the proposal remained in pendency for a long time. Now after the death of our friend Maulvi Abdul Karim, may God have mercy on him, when repeated revelations came also concerning my own death, I thought it advisable to arrange for the graveyard as soon as possible. For this purpose, I have given away a piece of land belonging to myself, priced at nearly a thousand rupees, and I pray that God may bless it and make it *Bahishti Maqbara*. I also pray that this graveyard may be the final resting-place of those of my followers who are pure in heart, who have in reality preferred their faith to this world, who have forsaken the world, devoted their lives to the cause of God and brought about a pure transformation within themselves, and who have shown sincerity and faithfulness like the companions of the Holy Prophet. Amen, O Lord of the worlds !

Again I pray : " Almighty God ! make here the tombs of such of my pure-hearted followers as have really become Thine, and in whose objects there is no adulteration of any worldly object ! Amen, O Lord of the worlds ! "

Again I pray a third time : " O my gracious and powerful Lord ! O Merciful and indulgent God ! Let only such have their tombs here as have true faith in Thy messenger and have no hypocrisy, personal object or suspicion in them, as do sincerely all that faith and obedience require, and have in their hearts sacrificed their lives for Thy sake and in Thy path, as Thou art pleased with, and whom Thou knowest that they are completely lost in Thy love and have with Thy messenger a connection of true faithfulness, devoted love, open-heartedness and respect. Amen, O Lord of the worlds ! "

As for this graveyard, many glad tidings have been received by me, and not only has Almighty God called it *Bahishti Maqbara* but He has also said of it that " in it has been sent down every blessing." Therefore, Almighty God has led me by a kind of secret revelation to

impose certain conditions concerning this graveyard, so that only those may enter into it who with their sincerity and perfect righteousness fulfil these conditions. They are three in number and must be fulfilled by all.

(1). The tract of land which has now been set apart for the graveyard has been given by me as my subscription towards this fund, but to complete the yard more land is required, which shall have to be bought, and the price of which is estimated at Rs. 1,000. Trees shall also have to be planted in it to make it look beautiful and a well also shall have to be sunk. To the north of this graveyard and in the way to it is a pond where a large quantity of water gathers in the rainy season and renders passage difficult during the greater part of the year, and a bridge shall have to be constructed there. These expenses are estimated at Rs. 2,000. Thus a sum of Rs. 3,000 in all will be required for the defrayal of expenses in connection with the completion of the grave-yard. The first condition is, therefore, that every person who desires to be buried in this graveyard, should subscribe towards this fund so far as his means allow. This subscription shall be accepted from such persons only and from none others. At present this subscription should be remitted to Maulvi Noor-ud-Din, but if Almighty God will it, this system shall have to be continued after the death of us all. In this case, there should be an Anjuman which should be entrusted with the expenditure of the money, thus collected from time to time, in the spread of unity and in making the religion of Islam prevail in the world.

(2). The second condition is that only those of my followers shall be buried in this graveyard who leave by their will a truth of their property to be spent in the spread of Islam and carrying the commandments of the Holy Quran to other people in accordance with the directions of this propaganda. Every righteous man may, if he likes, leave more than a tenth part of his property by his will for this purpose, but less than this shall not be accepted. All income from this source shall be in the charge of an Anjuman composed of honest and learned members which will spend it in the advancement of Islam, the publication of the Quranic lore and theological books and the appointment of preachers for this propaganda. It is the promise of God that He shall make this dispensation prosper, therefore it is hoped that much wealth would be gathered for the propagation of Islam. Every expenditure that is included in the propagation of Islam, any details of which are at present before the time, shall be met with from this source. When one party which has the charge of these affairs shall die, their successors shall also have the same responsibilities and they shall fulfil their obligations in accordance with the directions of the Ahmadiyya Mission. The orphans and the poor and the new converts who have no means of livelihood and are members of this propaganda shall also be supported out of this income, and it will be lawful to invest the property thus collected in

some commercial enterprise. Do not think that this is improbable, for it is the will of the Almighty who is the Ruler of heaven and earth. I am not anxious as to how so much property would be available and wherefrom shall men come who will show this courage by the zeal of faith, but I fear that after our time there may be those who having charge of these incomes may stumble on account of the abundance of wealth and love of this world. Therefore I pray that this propaganda may always have such trustees in it who should work only for the sake of God. But it would be lawful that those who have no means of subsistence should be paid out of these funds by way of assistance.

3. The third condition is that the person who is buried in this graveyard should be a pious man, shunning all that is prohibited, not resorting to *shirk* or innovation; in short, he should be a true and sincere Muslim.

4. Every righteous man who has no property and who cannot pay any subscription shall be entitled to be buried in this graveyard if it is proved that he devoted his life to his religion and was a pious man.

#### DIRECTIONS.

1. Every one who in accordance with the conditions above stated desires to make a will should, after it is executed properly, make it over to the person who is in charge of such wills and should also publish it, though it shall take effect only after his death. This is necessary because at the time of death it becomes very difficult to execute a will. And as the days of visitations and heavenly signs are near at hand, the person who makes a will in time of safety is entitled to greater merit. Property which is a permanent source of income will entitle its giver to incessant merits.

2. Every one who lives in a place other than Qadian is entitled to burial in this graveyard if he fulfils the above conditions. In such a case his heirs should bring the body to Qadian. Any one who dies before the completion of the graveyard and its requirements should be buried, at the place where he dies, in a coffin which should then be brought to Qadian after every thing is complete. But it is not proper to bring a body which has been buried in a shroud and not in a coffin.\*

It should be borne in mind that it is the will of God that all those who have a perfect faith should be buried in one place, so that by seeing their graves future generations may strengthen their faiths,

\*It would be folly to consider this graveyard and this arrangement as an innovation for it is according to Divine revelation and is not any man's proposal. Nor should any one think that any person by merely being buried in this graveyard will go to paradise for it is not meant that this place will entitle any one to paradise, but that only those who are entitled to paradise will be buried here.

and so that the important services they did for the sake of God in the cause of religion should be made manifest to all. In conclusion, we pray that Almighty God may assist every sincere believer, and generate in all a zeal for faith and make their end a virtuous one. Amen !

It is necessary that every one from among our followers into whose hands this publication falls should circulate it among his friends and give it a publicity so far as possible and keep it safe for his children. The opponents should also be informed of it with politeness. ~~Patience should be shown at the abuse of abusers~~ and all should be earnestly and incessantly praying, and our cry in the end is that all praise is due to God, the Lord of worlds.

20th December 1905.

MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD,

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## Notes and Comments.

A paper on "Higher Criticism in its relation to Missionary teaching and preaching," read at the Madras Missionary Conference on the 9th October last, has been published in the December issue of the *Harvest Field*, a Missionary Magazine, and the editor, though fearing dissent from the views expressed in it on the part of some of his readers, expresses his own agreement with it *in toto*.

HIGHER CRITICISM  
AND THE MISSION-  
ARIES.

The difficulties which confront the Christian missionaries in keeping a right attitude towards the sounder views of higher criticism are well expressed in the following letter from a Hindu convert to Christianity which was published in the *Englishman* Calcutta: "Missionaries have made us to believe all this time that Bible is inspired from first word until very last, upon that reliance I have abandoned—as mythology of my forefathers what is written in Mahabharta and Ramayna and Purans. . . . . and accept Missionaries' view about total inspiration of the whole entire Bible. . . . . and now we hear Dean say, this only allegory, that only parable; *how can we choose and pick, how much accept and how much reject.* . . . This will make great mischief in convert circle, I can plainly say."

But Mr. Macphail, the writer of the article in question, boldly announces all views of the inerrancy of the Bible to be erroneous, and in so doing he does not care even for what Christ and his apostles believed. He says: "The old school holds that Christ must have known the truth about the Old Testament, and that, knowing it, He must have corrected the traditional views of the Jews if they had been wrong. . . . . It is also strange that people

should be so ready to assert dogmatically that Christ *must* have known these things, when, as He told His disciples, He did not know the hour when He should come again. For myself, as I have indicated, I can only say that it seems to me that there was no more need for our Lord to know the date of the Old Testament books, or that it was more necessary for Him to put His contemporaries right on questions of Biblical criticism, than it was necessary for Him to correct their views of the world in which they lived and to teach them geology, biology or medicine."

But this is only the first stage in the downfall of orthodox Christianity, and the next would follow when the Christian missionaries would take courage to apply those methods of criticism to the books of the New Testament which they now apply to the books of the Old, and the last stage would follow when Jesus Christ is handled in the same manner as other religious leaders. These views give us the hope that these weak dawnings in the Christian mind for search after truth will be followed by a more powerful desire to see what the truth is under the dense cloud of errors with which the face of Christianity is veiled. The most important question before all seekers after truth is whether a single fact can be proved in the life of Jesus which shows him to be anything more than a mortal?

Such a subject does not fall within the proper scope of a religious journal and this is the reason I have hitherto refrained from making any remark on the movement. But since questions have been asked as to the views of the Promised Messiah on the subject, it seems necessary to express them briefly here. So far as the Swadeshi movement has in view the development of the internal resources and improvement of the trade of the country, it deserves the sympathy of all well-wishers of India, but the extreme form which it has assumed in boycotting English goods and excommunicating those who trade in them deserves as certainly to be deprecated and denounced. The form which the Swadeshi movement has in fact assumed shows, not love for India, but hatred for England, the country which has brought to us so many blessings, and thus requires us to be ungrateful to those who have done good to us. Islam denounces such conduct. What the country needs is to avoid evil and extravagance. The other day I was astonished to come across certain remarks in a newspaper which strongly supported the cause of the Swadeshi. It denounced the conduct of some Hindu pleaders who after taking part in a Swadeshi meeting had *English made* wine served at the table. Of course the paper could not have found any fault with their conduct if they had indulged in *country made wine*. What a poor aim these reform-mongers have in view!