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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

The Purity of the Text of the Holy Quran.

5. The Collection of the Quran.

As I have already remarked, the primary work of the collection of the Holy Quran was done by the Holy Prophet himself under the guidance of Divine revelation. To this the Holy Book itself refers in the following words: "We verily will see to the collecting and the recital of it; when therefore We recite it, then follow thou the recital; afterwards verily it shall be Ours to make it clear to thee" (lxv: 17-19.) On another occasion the objection of the unbelievers as to the gradual revelation of the Holy Quran is thus met with: "And the unbelievers say, 'why has not the Quran been sent down to him all at once. We reveal it thus gradually that We may establish thy heart therewith, and We have put together and arranged well its parts'" (xxv: 34.) Here again it is asserted that "the putting together and arranging of parts" was the work of Divine revelation. These verses and the facts already mentioned go a long way to show that the primary collection of the Holy Quran was effected by the Holy Prophet. But we have seen that such collection was needed only by those who wished to commit the whole of the Quran to memory and that it was in reciting the whole that the arrangement of chapters was needed. Hence though the whole Quran existed in a complete and arranged form in the memories of the companions, it did not exist in a single volume in a written form. Every verse and every

chapter was no doubt committed to writing as soon as it was revealed, but so long as the recipient of the the Divine revelation lived, the whole could not be written in a single volume. Any verse might be revealed at any time which it was necessary to place in the middle of a chapter, and hence the very circumstances of the case made the existence of a complete volume impossible. Hence a collection of the Quran in a volume was needed after the death of the Holy Prophet which should be in accordance with the collection made by the the Holy Prophet as existing in the memories of his companions. Such a collection was also needed to facilitate reference to and circulation of the Holy Word and to give it a more permanent form than was secured to it in being consigned to memory. Such was the object with which the collection of the Holy Quran was taken in hand by Abu Bakr.

A reference to the tradition which describes the circumstances necessitating the collection of the Quran confirms the statement made above. The account is given by Zaid bin Sābit, the Holy Prophet's amanuensis at Medina, and it has been preserved to us in an authentic tradition recorded in the *Sahih Bukhāree*. Soon after the death of the Holy Prophet Abu Bakr had to send an expedition against the impostor Moseilma. A battle was fought at Yemama in which great carnage took place among the Muslims, and many of the reciters of the Holy Quran lost their lives. Since the Holy Quran existed as a whole up to this time only in the memories of the reciters, and the written fragments had not been collected in a single volume, Omar apprehended a great danger if more reciters fell in some other battle. Straight he went to Abu Bakr and advised him to give immediate orders for the collection of the written portions of the Quran into one volume. "Verily a great number of the reciters of the Quran have been slain in the battle of Yamama," he said, "and I fear that slaughter may again wax hot among the reciters of the Quran in other fields of battle, and that much of the Quran may be lost therefrom. In my opinion it is absolutely necessary that you should give immediate orders for the collection of the Quran." But the companions of the Holy Prophet were so faithful to their master, that the doing of a thing which the Holy Prophet had not done seemed to them a departure from the path which he had shown to them. "How can I do a thing,

replied Abu Bakr, "which the Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, has not done." "But," urged Omar, "that is the best course under the circumstances." Abu Bakr was convinced after some discussion and Zaid was sent for. "Thou art," said Abu Bakr to him when he came, "a young man and wise, against whom no one amongst us can cast an imputation of any kind, and thou wast wont to write the revelations of the Holy Prophet. Search therefore (the written portions of) the Quran and collect it (into one volume)." The first impulse of Zaid was the same as that of Abu Bakr. "How can you do a thing," said he, "which the Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, has not done." And so heavy did the task appear to him that at that time he thought "it would not have been more difficult for me if I had been asked to remove a mountain." But at last he was prevailed upon, and began the search.

The tradition quoted above proves several points. Firstly, it shows that the whole of the Quran was safe in the memories of the reciters who had learned it in the life-time of the Holy Prophet. There was nothing to be feared so long as the reciters were safe, but if they perished in a battle, then, it was feared, certain portions of the Holy Quran might be lost, because the manuscripts of different chapters and verses had not been up to that time collected in one place. Secondly, it appears from the tradition that the collection of the Quran undertaken in the time of Abu Bakr was meant only to supply the place of the reciters if by some mishap in a battle they were all lost. The misgivings in the mind of Omar arose because he feared that as many reciters had perished in the battle of Yamama, many others might be lost in some other battle. Hence he insisted upon a collection of the Quran which should have nothing to fear from the death of certain persons. From this it is clear that the original collection of the Quran with an arrangement of its chapters and verses was effected by the Holy Prophet himself, and Omar only desired to supplement the collection of the Quran in memories with a collection in writing. The tradition does not allege that the Quran had not been collected up to that time: on the other hand, it asserts that the Quran was safe in memories but that a written collection was needed in view of the possible loss of the reciters in a field of battle.

Memory was a good repository no doubt, but such a collection could at any time be entirely lost by the loss of those who retained the Holy Book in memory. Thirdly, the tradition proves that up to the time when Abu Bakr took in hand the collection of the written Quran, no portion of it had been lost and that there were still many reciters who had it safe in their memories. Omar only feared loss of portions of the Quran by the loss of the remaining reciters in some other battle that might ensue. It was only a contingency: certain reciters who were alive at the time at which Omar was speaking might be lost in some future battle. Nothing had been lost up to the time, but something might be lost in the future if immediate steps were not taken for a collection in writing. To sum up, the tradition shows that the entire Quran was safe in the memories of the reciters, that Omar only desired to make a collection of the Quran in writing in addition to the collection existing in the memories of the reciters and that nothing had been lost from the collection existing in memories when the collection in writing was undertaken. These are three important points which settle that the collection of the Quranic revelations in our hands does not differ in any way from the collection existing in the life-time of the Holy Prophet, and that nothing was added to or lost from it at any time. It must also be borne in mind that the tradition which settles these points is one of the most authentic and trustworthy traditions and no one has ever questioned its truth.

We have now to explain what was meant by Abu Bakr when he said that he could not do a thing which had not been done by the Holy Prophet. Omar's question related, not to the collection of the Quran, but to the collection of the Quran in writing, so that even if the reciters might perish, the Quran should still be safe. Now it is a fact admitted on all hands that though the complete Quran with a perfect arrangement of its chapters and verses existed in the safest of repositories, the memories of the companions of the Holy Prophet, the different writings containing different portions of the Quran had never been collected together and arranged. Nor could this be done so long as the Holy Prophet was alive. For whereas it was easy for the reciters to place any verse of any chapter revealed at a subsequent time in its proper place in that chapter as pointed out by the Holy

Prophet, a complete volume could not admit of such a course. Hence the Holy Prophet did not order the collection of the different writings. Now Omar asked Abu Bakr to collect these writings and this was what the Holy Prophet had not done, and therefore in the first instance Abu Bakr also refused to do it. His answer only covered the ground which Omar's demand did. It shows only the scrupulousness of the companions to interfere with the Divine revelation. But Omar's case was based on strong and sound reasoning and hence he argued it with Abu Bakr until the latter was convinced of the truth of what he said. Thus there is nothing in the tradition to show that the Holy Quran had not been collected up to the time of the incident. It only shows that the different writings had not been collected and arranged and that the complete Quran was entrusted only to the memories of men.

Another point to be elucidated in the tradition quoted above is the statement of Zaid as to the great difficulty which he thought he was likely to experience in the performance of the task with which he was entrusted. Indeed he thought that it would not have been more difficult for him if he had been asked to remove a mountain. What were his difficulties? A tradition related by Ibn-i-Abi-Daud makes it clear. "Omar rose and declared that whoever had received anything directly from the Holy Prophet should bring it (to Zaid) and they (*i.e.*, the companions) used to write it upon papers and tablets and palm-branches in the life-time of the Holy Prophet, and nothing was accepted from any body until two witnesses bore testimony" (Fath-ul-Bari, Vol. IX, page 12). This tradition shows, and the same may be inferred from the tradition under discussion, that the object of the collection undertaken in the time of Abu Bakr was to collect what had been written in the presence of the Holy Prophet. Zaid's collection was meant to secure the original writings and this was the great difficulty to which Zaid alluded. A great portion of the Holy Quran had been revealed at Mecca, and even the portion that was revealed at Medina was not wholly in the possession of Zaid. Zaid had not to search only writings, but writings which had been written in the presence of the Holy Prophet. He was chosen for the task because he had written the greater portion of the revelation at Medina and was presumed to have all those copies safe

in his custody. But the task before him was a very difficult one. He had to search all the original writings and then give them an arrangement in accordance with the arrangement of the verses and chapters as followed in the recitation of the entire Quran from memory in obedience to the directions given by the Holy Prophet. That these writings were safe, it cannot be doubted. Everything relating to Divine revelation was preserved with the utmost care. The task was no doubt an arduous one and required hard labour and diligent search, and hence Zaid with a true appreciation of the difficulties before him said that it was equivalent to the removing of a mountain.

There are clear considerations showing that the service with which Zaid was entrusted was the collection and arrangement of the original copies of the different verses and chapters made in the presence of the Holy Prophet. The object of Abu Bakr and Omar was not to have a volume of the Holy Quran prepared by Zaid by writing down the Holy Book as recited by the reciters, but to prepare a book by collecting the original writings. Hence the first direction of Abu Bakr to Zaid was to "*search the Quran and collect it,*" and it is easy to see that a search had only to be made for writing. The words of Omar expressing a fear that much of the Quran might be lost, if the reciters fell in other fields as in that of Yemama, clearly imply that he was sure that no portion of the Holy Quran had been lost up to that time, and accordingly if the object of the new collection for which Omar contended were simply to reduce the Quran to writing as recited by the experts, Abu Bakr would not have told Zaid to "*search the Quran and collect it.*" Nor would have Zaid in such a case considered the task to be as difficult as the removing of a mountain. Sufficient accuracy could have been obtained by having a few reciters gathered together and Zaid had only to write out the Holy Quran as dictated by them and approved by the companions. But Omar's object was to gather the original writings which had been written according to the directions of the Holy Prophet himself, and thus to make the accuracy of the text doubly certain. And the tradition further tells us that Zaid actually followed this course. For after being convinced that Abu Bakr and Omar were right, he thus describes what was done ; "*Then I began to search the Quran*

and to collect it from palm-branches and tablets of stone and the hearts of men, until I found the concluding verses of the chapter entitled Repentance in the possession of Abu Khuzaima Ansari and I did not find them in the possession of any body else." This shows that Zaid had two things to do, to search the writings and to collect them in a single volume. Now collection required an arrangement of verses and chapters, for the writings themselves were found in the possession of different men, and they could give no clue to the arrangement that was to be followed. It was for the sake of arrangement that Zaid had to resort to the reciters, and it is to this that the words "hearts of men" in the tradition quoted above refer. Moreover memory had also to be resorted to to test the accuracy of the writings. In fact, without the help of reciters the collection of the writings in the form of a complete volume was not possible. It was for this reason that Omar urged that the collection should be commenced whilst a large number of reciters was still alive, and it is for this reason that Zaid mentions that in collecting the writings he had to resort to memory, or "the hearts of men" as he puts it. The words do not indicate that he sought for some chapters from writings and for others from memory, for if he limited his enquiry to memory in the case of one part of the revelation, he had no need to search for writings for the rest, and the whole could have been easily written down from the dictation of the reciters.

The most important question with regard to the collection made under the orders of Abu Bakr is, Did it accord in every respect with the Quran as stored and collected in the memories of the companions, and as repeated and recited, publicly as well as privately, in the life-time of the Holy Prophet? There is not the least reason to believe that it did not. In the first place, none of the compilers was actuated by any motive to make any change in the text. The earnest desire of all those engaged in the task was to have a complete and faithful reproduction of what had been revealed to the Holy Prophet, and Zaid had only undertaken the task after a full appreciation of the difficulties. Secondly, the collection began only six months after the death of the Holy Prophet while almost all of those who had heard the Quran from the lips of the Holy Prophet were still alive. The Quran as recited by the Holy Prophet was still fresh in the

memories of the companions, and any tampering with the text could have been easily brought to notice. Thirdly, we find the companions so cautious even in reporting the words of the Holy Prophet that we cannot imagine that they could tamper with the Divine revelation only six months after his death. They held the Divine word in such great awe and reverence that it is impossible they should have fabricated a word or sanctioned the omission of any part of the Holy Book. Fourthly, as we have already seen, there were many among them who could repeat the whole of the Quran from memory. There were others who knew large portions, and these were kept fresh in memory by constant recitation in and outside prayers. It was impossible that any variation from the text as prevalent in the time of the Holy Prophet could have found its way into the collection in the presence of such men. Fifthly, there were many transcripts of the revelation current among the companions. And since every verse was written at the time of its revelation and copies of it were then made by the companions, there were ample means for testing the accuracy of the collection of Zaid. These writings were in the possession of different companions and so they all had a chance to see for themselves that the collection made by Zaid was a faithful copy of the original writings. Moreover, the writings in the possession of one man could be compared with those in the possession of another, and thus, as in the case of recitation, there was no probability of any error creeping into the text. Memory and writing corroborated the already unimpeachable testimony afforded by each other and thus placed beyond the shadow of a doubt the accuracy of the text of the Holy Quran. Sixthly, there is no mention at all in any tradition whatever that any thing was left out of the collection made under the orders of Abu Bakr or that any thing had been added to it which was not considered to be part of the Divine revelation. As Muir says, "We hear of no fragments, sentences, or words omitted by the compilers, nor of any that differed from the received edition. Any such would undoubtedly have been preserved and noticed in those traditional repositories which treasured up the minutest and most trivial acts and sayings of the Prophet."

Thus there are strong and conclusive arguments showing that the copy made from the transcripts under the orders of Abu Bakr

agreed in every way, in text as well as in arrangement, with the collection made under the directions of the Holy Prophet himself and preserved in memory by the reciters. Unless there had been a complete agreement in the text as received through the two sources, memory and writing, the companions could never have been satisfied with the collection. The copy thus made remained, we are told, in the possession of Abu Bakr and after his death in that of Omar. After the latter's death, the copy was transferred to the custody of Hafsa, the daughter of Omar and a widow of the Holy Prophet. Thus the copy of the Holy Quran transcribed by the orders of Abu Bakr came down to the reign of Othman without any alteration in its text or arrangement. It is highly probable that copies were made from this collection by those who needed them, and thus it was sufficiently circulated. But some circumstances coming to the notice of Othman, he deemed it necessary to circulate official copies transcribed by official scribes and suppress all those made by private persons either from the collection of Zaid or other writings still prevalent among them. An authentic tradition reported by Bukha-

عن انس بن مالك ان حذيفة :
ابن اليمان قدم على عثمان وكان يغازی اهل الشام في فتح
ارمينية واذ ربيحان مع اهل العراق فا فزع حذيفة ا ختلا فهم في
القرأة فقال حذيفة لعثمان يا امير المؤمنين ادرك هذه الامة
قبل ان يختلفوا في الكتاب اختلاف اليهود والنصارى فا رسل
عثمان الى حفصة ان ارسلي لنا با لصحف ننسخها في المصاحف
ثم نردها اليك فارسلت بها حفصة الى عثمان فا مرزید ابن ثابت
وعبد الله بن الزبير وسعيد بن العاص وعبد الرحمن بن العرث بن
هشام فنسخوها في المصاحف وقال عثمان للرهط القرشيين الثلاثة
ان اختلفتم انتم وزید بن ثابت في شيء من القرآن فاكتبوه بلسان
قریش فا نما نزل بلسانهم ففعلوا حتى اذا نسخوا المصحف في
المصاحف رد عثمان المصحف الى حفصة فارسل الى كل اقل بمصحف
مما نسخوا وامر بها سواة من القرآن في كل صحيفة او مصحف ان
يعرق "Anas, son of Málík relates that there came to Othman,
Huzaiifa who had been fighting with the people of Syria in the conquest of Armenia and with the people of Iraq in Azerbaijan, and who was alarmed at their variations in the modes of reading, and he said to Othman, 'O Commander of the Faithful! stop

the people before they differ in the Holy Book as the Jews and the Christians differ in their Scriptures. So Othman sent word to Hafsa asking her to send him the Quran in her possession so that they might make other copies of it and then send the original copy back to her. Thereupon Hafsa sent the copy to Othman, and he ordered Zaid bin Sâbit and Abdulla bin Zubeir and Saïd-i-bin-il-Âs and Abdul Rahman bin Hâris bin Hishâm, and they made copies from the original copy. Osman also said to the three men who belonged to the Quresh, (Zaid only being a Medinite), 'When you differ with Zaid in any thing concerning the Quran, then write it in the language of the Quresh, for it is in their language that it was revealed.' They obeyed these instructions and when they had made the required number of copies from the original copy, Osman returned the original to Hafsa, and sent to every quarter one of the copies thus made, and ordered all other copies or leaves on which the Quran was written to be burned."

The tradition states clearly the circumstances which led Othman to destroy all private copies and substitute in their place official copies transcribed from the collection of Zaid made in the time of Abu Bakr. The Caliph was told by one of his generals who had been fighting in Armenia and Azerbaijan that there were variations in the modes of reading the Quran in such distant parts of the kingdom as Syria and Armenia. No such differences are pointed out to have existed at Medina or Mecca or anywhere within Arabia. It was only in newly converted countries where Arabic was not spoken that these differences were noticed. As to the nature of these differences, it is stated in clear words that they were only differences in *Qirdat* or the modes of reading. Nor were they of such a serious nature as those existing among the Jews and the Christians with regard to their Scriptures, but it was feared that if nothing was done to put a stop to the slighter differences existing at that time, they might after the lapse of a few generations develop into more serious differences. What the differences exactly were it is difficult for us to say, but a reference to earlier anecdotes casts some further light upon the nature of these differences. We are told in authentic traditions that different modes of reading certain words were allowed by the Holy Prophet himself, and companions

unacquainted with the permission at first severely took to task any body whom they heard reading any word of the Holy Quran in a different method. Thus Omar on one occasion heard Hishám pronouncing certain words of the Quran in a different method, and in great wrath dragged him to the presence of the Holy Prophet who approved Hishám's reading. The reason for this permission was that people belonging to certain tribes could not pronounce certain words in the ordinary way. These people were allowed to read them in the manner in which they could easily pronounce them. But I do not wish to enter into details here as the subject of the various readings I intend to discuss under a separate heading. From what I have stated above, it will be seen that the permission to read any word in a different method was based on a necessity. The permission could be availed of only by those who on account of their being accustomed from their very childhood to pronounce certain words in a certain manner could not pronounce them in the pure dialect of the Quresh. But when Islam spread beyond Arabia, the need to read certain words in a different method disappeared, for the foreigners could pronounce a word in the dialect of Quresh with the same facility as in any other dialect. Some of the companions however still taught the Quran adhering to certain readings, which were not in accordance with the pure language of the Quresh. Some of them may have even abused the permission and favored certain readings though they had no need for them. This evil seems to have spread at Kufa and it was to this that Huzaifa (in the tradition quoted above) referred when he was alarmed at the variation in the readings. According to certain traditions he strongly reproved those who took to peculiar readings, some saying that they followed the reading of Ibn-i-Masood, others that of Abu Musa and others still of Ubayy-ibn-i-K'ab, whereas they could without any difficulty recite the Quran according to the original reading, that is, in the dialect of Quresh. This conclusion is corroborated by an anecdote relating to a period earlier than the time of Othman. Omar was told that Ibn-i-Masood read *عنى حين* *attā heen* instead of *حتى حين* *hattā heen*. Now in the dialect of the Huzail and the Saqeef *حتى* *hatta* was pronounced *عنى* *attā* (See Lane's Lexicon under the root *عنى*). Ibn-i-Masood did not belong to either of these tribes, but he favoured a peculiar reading which had been permitted only

because people belonging to certain tribes could not utter the word otherwise. When Omar was told that Ibn-i-Masood taught *atta* instead of *hattâ*, the caliph wrote to him that the Quran was revealed in the language of the Quresh and that he should not read it in the dialect of the Huzail. The words of Omar as given in the tradition are: "Verily the Quran was revealed in the language of the Quresh and not in the dialect of the Huzail, so teach it thou to the people in the language of the Quresh and not in that of the Huzail." Another evil that had sprung out of these variations in readings was that the new converts unable to realize the need for which they had been permitted began to attribute heresy one to another for a difference in the reading of certain words. It was this evil which made Huzaifa and Othman have great apprehensions as many traditions show, and the only remedy for it was that the variations for which there remained no need now should be entirely suppressed in reading as well as in writing and that the pure language of the Quresh in which the Quran had been revealed should be used by all.

The considerations and the anecdotes given above help us to understand the nature of the differences and the evil at which Huzaifa was alarmed, and to remove which was the object of Othman in destroying all private copies of the Quran. The instruction which Othman gave to the syndicate of the scribes further supports this conclusion. To the members of the committee who belonged to the tribes of the Quresh he gave the direction in plain words: "When you differ with Zaid in anything concerning the Quran, then write it in the language of the Quresh, for it is in their language that it was revealed." This direction we are told was obeyed. Othman then went no further than Omar. Only the variations of readings became more pronounced in his time and became the source of much evil, and he took a step which was calculated to wipe off once for all those variations which Omar also wanted to put a stop to. It may be asked what was meant by differing with Zaid in anything concerning the Quran. In another tradition also related by Bukharee instead of "when you differ with Zaid in anything concerning the Quran," we have the words, "when you differ with Zaid in an *Arabiyyat* in the *Arabiyyat* of the Quran," the word *Arabiyyat* signifying the Arabic language. The word clearly implies that by difference in the tradition

is meant difference in the method of pronouncing a word in different dialects. Zaid did not belong to the tribe of the Quresh and hence where there was a difference in the manner of reading or writing a word, the decision of the Quresh members was to be accepted. The only example of the difference alluded to has been preserved to us in a tradition. On the authority of Ibn-i Shaháb, the same narrator as in Bukharee's tradition, Tirmazi adds the following anecdote to the tradition accepted and narrated by Bukharee :
 فَاخْتَلَفُوا يَوْمَئِذٍ فِي التَّابُوتِ وَالتَّابُوتِ فَقَالَ الْقُرَشِيُّونَ التَّابُوتُ
 وَقَالَ زَيْدٌ التَّابُوتُ فَفَرَعَ اخْتِلَافَهُمْ إِلَى عُثْمَانَ فَقَالَ اكْتُبُوهُ التَّابُوتُ
 : فَاذْهَبُوا نَزَلَ بِلِسَانِ قُرَيْشٍ : " And they differed on that occasion as to
 تَابُوتٌ (tábút) and تَابُوتٌ (tábúh). The Quresh members said that
 it was تَابُوتٌ (tábút) and Zaid said that it was تَابُوتٌ (tábúh).
 The difference was reported to Othman and he directed them
 to write it تَابُوتٌ (tábút) adding that the Quran " was revealed
 in the dialect of the Quresh." This anecdote illustrates the nature
 of the differences at which Huzaifa was alarmed. It shows that the
 differences whose removal was aimed at by Othman were not ordinarily
 more serious than this. But since the companions of the Holy Prophet
 believed every word to proceed from a Divine source, they could
 not tolerate even such slight differences. And since the need for
 which such variations in the reading of certain words were permitted
 ceased to exist with the flux of large numbers of foreigners into the
 holy religion of Islam, Othman thought it expedient to put a stop to
 all variations by circulating copies of the Holy Quran transcribed and
 superintended by competent men under his own orders and suppressing
 all private copies which contained such variations.

Did the copies transcribed under the orders of Othman differ from the original collection made by Zaid in the time of Abu Bakr ? The tradition quoted above tells us that when variations of readings in the distant parts of the kingdom were brought to the notice of Othman, the first idea to which he gave expression was to obtain the copy in the possession of Hafsa and to have other copies transcribed from it for circulation among the Muslims. And from this intention he made no departure. The copies of the Quran transcribed under his orders were true and faithful copies of the collection of Zaid which as we have seen was in the custody of Hafsa after the death of Omar.

It was Zaid who transcribed the copy in the time of Abu Bakr and it was Zaid who was called upon to make fresh copies from it in the time of Othman. To remove any difference of dialect or variation in the mode of reading certain words that might possibly arise, Othman gave, no doubt, the orders that the reading of the Quresh should be adopted in preference to any other reading. But the only example of such variations that has been preserved to us in tradition is, if the anecdote be true, that Zaid read a word as *tábúh*, and the Quresh read it as *tábút*, and such importance was given to this trifling difference that the matter was reported to Othman for decision. There is no mention at all of any other departure having been made from the writing of Zaid in the copy of Hafsa. Hence we have conclusive testimony in our hands showing that the copies of the Quran made and circulated under the orders of Othman were exact and faithful copies of the original collection of Zaid. Again the message of Othman to Hafsa was: "Send us the copy of Quran that we may make copies from it and then we will return it to you." In accordance with this, the copy of Hafsa was returned after the requisite number of copies had been made. Had there been any difference between the original and the copies made, it would no doubt have come to light in the long reign of Othman or in that of Ali when the Muslims had been divided into factions and that copy was still in the possession of Hafsa. The men who murdered in cold blood the aged and venerable prince could not have failed to bring to light any difference that might have existed between the copy of Hafsa and the copies made by him. But there is nothing on record to show that any such difference really existed, and this evidence further corroborates the conclusion that the copies made by Othman were true and faithful copies of the original collection made by Zaid in the time of Abu Bakr.

Had the action of Othman in destroying all private copies of the Holy Quran been arbitrary or unjustifiable, the companions of the Holy Prophet would never have yielded to it. But it appears that they not only approved of his action, but also assisted him with willingness in the execution of his designs. Huzaifa, one of the learned companions, had come to him in all haste from distant Syria to request him that he should take immediate steps to put a stop

to variations in readings, and this he could not do except by issuing official copies of the Holy Quran as collected by Abu Bakr and suppressing all private copies which were perhaps not made with sufficient care and contained any variation of reading. Nor did Othman take this step without consulting the companions. According to a report narrated by Ibn-i-Abi Daoood through a chain of narrators which has been admitted as trustworthy (*See Fath-ul-Bari*, Vol IX, p. 16.) Ali said: "Do not say aught of Othman but what is good, for he did not take the step with regard to the suppression of the private copies of the Quran except after consultation with us. He spoke to us, saying, 'what do you think about this reading. I have been informed that some of them say to others, my reading is better than thine. This I think may amount to unbelief.' We asked him what step he thought it advisable to take in this matter. He replied that he thought it necessary to gather people on one reading. To this we all heartily agreed." This anecdote shows that it was after consultation with the general body of the companions that Othman took any step. There are said to have been twelve members in the syndicate which superintended transcription of copies. Among these were Zaid, Said, Ubbay, Anas bin Málik, Abdulla bin Abbás and others. It appears that originally there were four members only as the tradition in Bukharee tells us, but that others were added later on, perhaps because a larger number of copies than that imagined at first was required. Abdulla bin Masood was the only companion noted for his learning of the Quran who was not included in the committee, but his exclusion was not due to any prejudice against him, but to his residence at a considerable distance from Medina. Abdulla lived at Kúfa, and much delay would have been caused in the progress of the work if he had been included in the committee. And as Othman began his work after due consultation with the general body of the companions, they approved of his action after its completion. According to a report Mus'ab bin S'ad said that he met many companions when Othman gave orders for burning all private copies of the Quran and they were all pleased with it and none of them took objection to it. In fact, Othman's apprehensions and those of the companions were not due, as the words of Ali reported in the above tradition show, so much to the existence of variations in readings as to the differences resulting from these variations. Those who had

newly entered into Islam were unaware of the circumstances as a result of which the Holy Prophet permitted certain variations in readings, and adopting the reading of a particular companion they were severe upon others who adopted a different reading, and thus the slight variations in the mode of reading certain words began to lead to great quarrels and controversies. Othman and the other companions saw that the people were falling into errors and making a wide departure from what the Holy Prophet intended to be the use of variations and they adopted the best way of remedying the evil.

Ibn-i-Masood, for the reason stated above, could not take any part in the supervision of the transcription of copies made under the orders of Othman and he is the only person who in some traditions, by no means of the highest authority, is said to have made certain remarks against Zaid. For instance, he is reported to have disliked the appointment of Zaid for transcribing the copies and to have remarked: "What! the transcription of the Quran is taken away from me and it is entrusted to a man who was in the back of an unbeliever when I was a Muslim," referring to his older age and priority in the acceptance of Islam. Either this tradition is not true or Ibn-i-Masood, if he actually uttered these words, made a grievous error. Zaid was the person who had collected and transcribed the Quran in the time of Abu Bakr. Abu Bakr and Omar could not think of a better man than Zaid and they entrusted to him the task of collection. When Othman felt a similar need, he enquired of the companions as to who was best fitted for the task and who excelled others in the art of writing, and he was told that Zaid was the man. This was the reason for his selection of Zaid to do the work of transcribing and with him was joined a syndicate of several other companions to superintend the work, and it was in accordance with their directions that he transcribed the copies. Ibn-i-Masood was not, therefore, in the right in speaking of Zaid in disparaging terms if he spoke those words. But we may entertain grave doubts as to his having spoken them, for on the earlier occasion when more important work was done than mere transcription, Ibn-i-Masood never spoke a word against Zaid. The remarks which he is said to have made would have been more appropriate if they had been uttered at the time when Zaid was entrusted by Abu Bakr and Omar with the work of collecting

the Holy Quran from writings in manuscripts. It is strange that such remarks should have been made when nothing had to be done except transcription from an earlier original. But if the tradition be true, then its concluding words are sufficient to show that Ibn-i-Masood was really in error for we are told that "the most eminent companions disliked this remark of Ibn-i-Masood." Moreover according to this tradition, Ibn-i-Masood did not find any fault with Othman. There are certain traditions of very doubtful authenticity which assert that Ibn-i-Masood had really refused to give up his copy of the Quran or to accept that sent by Othman, but these traditions have not been accepted by any reliable collector of traditions. Even supposing them, for the sake of argument, to be authentic, they do not throw any discredit upon the copies made under the orders of Othman. Ibn-i-Masood read certain words, we are told, in a manner different from that in which the Quresh read it, and even Omar had enjoined him to give up such readings. On that ground he may have refused to give his copy, but not a single other companion ever supported his views. They were free to express what view they liked, but they all without any exception sided with Othman.

These considerations would leave no doubt in the mind of a person enquiring after truth that the copies circulated by Othman were true and faithful copies of the collection of Abu Bakr which again agreed in every word and point with the Quran as taught by the Holy Prophet. When Othman issued his copies, thousands of the companions were still living, and many of these such as Ubayy, Abdulla son of Omar and others were among the men who had committed to memory the whole of the Quran in the life-time of the Holy Prophet, while hundreds of others might have learnt it by heart after his death as it was then in circulation. It was only thirteen years after the death of the Holy Prophet that Othman had given orders for making official copies of the Holy Quran, and if these had in any way differed from the original copy or from what had been preserved in memory, the companions would certainly have raised their voices against such maltreatment of the Holy Book. The Quran was still their most precious treasure and they could not suffer a word of it to be changed. They would have sooner given up their lives than permitted a tampering with the Quran. They were not only sincere and earnest in their

professions, but they had also ample means to judge the correctness of the copies made under the orders of Othman. Anything left out from the Quran or anything added to it, would have been at once pointed out by hundreds of the companions. But even Ibn-i-Masúd, with all the ill-will which he bore against Othman and Zaid, never pointed out a single word that had been altered by Othman or left out from the Quran or added to it. He only remonstrated that he should be allowed to retain his peculiar reading of certain words, an example of which has been given in the word *hatta* which he pronounced *atta*, following the dialect of the Huzail.

Othman then made no alteration in the Quran as it was collected by Abu Bakr immediately after the death of the Holy Prophet. He employed the same scribe that was employed before him by Abu Bakr and in his life-time by the Holy Prophet himself. He acted after consultation with the companions and secured the services of the most eminent companions noted for their learning of the Quran to superintend the work of transcription. The copies made by his orders were recognised as true copies by the whole Muslim world. Nor could any alteration in the copies alter the text as preserved in the memories of thousands of men. The bitterest foes of Othman, those who cut off his head while he was reading the Quran and who had the whole power in their hands, never charged him with having tampered with the Quran, though ordering the burning of the copies of the Holy Book was one of their charges against him. But this latter charge was advanced because the act of burning papers on which the Holy Word was written was considered sacriligious. Even during the reign of Ali no one pointed out a word which had been omitted by Othman, and Ali is himself stated to have transcribed copies of the Quran from the official copies circulated by Othman.

As regards the copies in our hands, it is admitted by the bitterest enemies of Islam that the copies made by Othman have been handed down to later generations entirely unaltered. The purity of the text of the Quran is thus conclusively demonstrated. The collection of Abu Bakr was a faithful reproduction of the revelation as reduced to writing in the presence of the Holy Prophet and agreed every whit, in text as well as in arrangement, with the Holy Quran as preserved in the memories of the companions; the copies circu-

lated by Othman were true and faithful copies of Abu Bakr's collection, and these copies have admittedly remained unaltered through the thirteen hundred years that have since elapsed.

The Babi or the Bahai Religion, I.

The Muhammadans are generally under a misconception as to the true nature of the Babi or the Bahai movement, considering it to be a movement within the religion of Islam. The misconception arises from the circumstance that the missionaries of this religion pose to be Muhammadans among the Muhammadans and under the guise of conformity to the principles of Islam instil their secret teachings into the hearts of men quite imperceptibly. But to ensure success of the movement in the West that attitude could no longer be maintained and among the Christians this movement is associating itself with Christianity. While, therefore, in the West it is plainly acknowledged that the religion of Bab or Bahaullah has nothing to do with Islam, the Bahai missionary in the East still gives the public an impression that his creed is only an offshoot of Islam and under the guise of a profound respect for the Holy Prophet and the Holy Quran strikes at the root of the fundamental doctrines of the Muhammadan religion. As a matter of fact it is an esoteric system hiding its real doctrines and important religious writings from the public eye, while its missionaries try to live among the Muhammadans as Muhammadans and among the Christians as Christians, thus winning far more proselytes than they would do by openly preaching the doctrines of their creed. It seems to be necessary to prelude a discussion of the teachings and alleged proofs of the mission of Bab and Bahaullah by a short account of their lives and the rise of the movement. The religion is called the Babi religion after its founder who styled himself the Bab which means the "Gate," while it is known as the Bahai religion after Bab's successor who styled himself Bahaullah. The sect has for long been known as the Babi sect, but modern Bahaists prefer to be styled Bahai's, and in fact disown the title of Babis, the dispensation

of the Bab being believed to have been superseded by the dispensation of Bahauallah.

The founder of Babism was Mirza Ali Muhammad, a merchant of Shiraz, born about the year 1824 according to Count Gobineau and in the year 1819 according to the writings of the sect itself. Persia is the home of Shiism, an offshoot of Islam well-known to every reader. The followers of this sect attach special sanctity to the character of Ali, the fourth successor of the Holy Prophet, and consider twelve of his descendants as the twelve sinless Imáms. Eleven of these Imáms are believed to have lived and died like mortals, but the twelfth who is termed the Imám Mahdi, though said to have been born hundreds of years ago, is believed to be still alive hidden in some cave from which he would come out in the latter days to spread Shiism throughout the world. Now Ali Muhammad was not only a Shia but he had also become a disciple of Syed Kazim of Rasht, who was in those days the leader of the Shaikhis, a sect of extreme Shiites founded by Shaikh Ahmad. The peculiar doctrine of this sect which distinguished it from the other Shia sects was an extreme reverence for the expected. Imám Mahdi combined with the belief that at all times there must exist an intermediary between the Imám and his faithful followers. At his death, Syed Kazim nominated no successor, but only said to his followers that he was going that the truth should manifest itself. These vague words became in the hands of Ali Muhammad and afterwards in those of Bahauallah the means of attracting large numbers of people. Ali Muhammad was at Shiraz when Syed Kazim died. Another disciple of Syed Kazim, Mulla Husain by name, went to him soon after the death of the master, and when the two were talking about their late leader, Ali Muhammad put forth his claim to be the "truth" of whose manifestation the master had spoken on his death-bed and the "Báb" or the intermediary through whom the faithful could seek connection with the hidden Mahdi. It is not known to what extent, if any, the new Bab, Ali Muhammad, made departure from the teachings of the Shaikhi sect immediately upon the announcement of his claim. But his unopposed acceptance by the members of the sect as the new leader leads one to the probable inference that the departure, if any, was very slight. Mulla Husain to whom the claim was first disclosed by the Bab was soon convinced by his

eloquence, and as Husain himself was looked upon with great reverence by the members of the sect and their eyes were set upon him as the probable successor of Syed Kazim, his conversion was a signal to the other members to follow the new leader.

The claims of Bab, however, soon developed into higher pretensions. From the Bab he soon became the *Nuqtah* or the "point," meaning the focus to which all previous dispensations converged. It is difficult to make anything definite out of these claims, and the terminology adopted in fact defies all definiteness. In a pamphlet on the "Revelation of Bahauallah" by Isabella D. Brittingham, the following claims are made for Bab :—

"The Bab fulfilled Moslem prophecy in being the 'return' of the twelfth Imám. He fulfilled Zoroastrian prophecy as the 'Dawn' of the New Day when three chosen ones should appear. The first of this Trinity of Manifestation was to be like the 'Dawn.'

"He fulfilled Israelitish prophecy as Elijah. The name Elijah has a spiritual significance and is the symbol of the mission and message of the forerunner.

"The Bab fulfilled Christian prophecy as the Angel, who with sound of a trumpet, would precede the coming of the son of Man. The voice of the trumpet is the voice of the incarnated word which spoke through the Bab."

It is difficult to understand how only the vague assertions of the Bab can be regarded as marking the fulfilment of prophecies. There is no proof at all of what is claimed. The *Baydn* itself which is considered by the Babis to be the book of the revelations of the Bab is a sealed book to this day to all outside the movement, and with the exception of the chosen few it is probably also sealed to those inside the movement. Those who have access to it do not give us any proof of the assertions made on behalf of the Bab. Accordingly there is not the slightest proof that the prophecies whose fulfilment is claimed to have been brought about by the appearance of the Bab were really fulfilled in his person, and the advocates of Babrism fail to make up the deficiency. A prophecy cannot be fulfilled by the mere assertion of a person that he has

appeared to fulfil it. On the other hand, there must be unmistakable signs and clear and definite indications to make the fulfilment of a prophecy certain. In the case of the Bab, however, there are not only no signs and arguments of the fulfilment of the prophecies claimed for him, but there are clear indications showing that these prophecies were not fulfilled in his person. There is not a single statement of the Bab to show that he ever claimed to be Elijah or the Angel of the Revelation. We are not aware that he ever claimed to be even the Imám Mahdi of the Shi'ás, his only claim being that he was the Bab or the intermediary through whom connection could be sought with the Imám Mahdi, but if he ever advanced the claim to be the Mahdi himself, he surely gave no proof of it. The one sign of the appearance of the Mahdi on which both the Sunnis and the Shi'ás agree notwithstanding that they possess entirely different collections of traditions is that both the sun and the moon shall suffer an eclipse in the month of Ramazan on specified dates. This took place in the year 1894 of the Christian Era or 1311 of the Hejira, long after the Bab had been put to death and even after the death of the so-called Messiah of the Bahai movement. Thus there is not only no proof of the truth of the claims advanced for the Bab, but there is actually proof of their untruth.

We may now see what happened to Bab after the announcement of the claim. With the new leader's new claims the sect seems to have quietly made a progress for a while. There is strong reason to believe that the Bab and his followers at first adhered to the practices and tenets of Islam, for not only we hear of a pilgrimage having been undertaken to Mecca immediately after the announcement of the claim, but there were also held controversies with the orthodox Mullás in which the Bab and his followers wanted to make out the case of their being true Muslims. Secretly the Bab may have taught even at that early time a disregard for the Islamic injunctions, for the movement seems to have prospered from the beginning because of the ease that was afforded in dispensing with religious obligations, but the existence of controversies shows that an outward adherence to the religion of Islam was maintained and both the Bab and his followers tried to prove to the authorities that they were Muslims. But the teachings of the Bab were considered dangerous

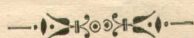
by the authorities and the orthodox Shi'as and he was forbidden to preach. While outwardly obeying this injunction, he secretly continued to teach and preach his doctrines and the authorities resorted to violent measures. Civil disturbances took place between the authorities and the followers of the Bab, and to check these it was considered advisable to send the Bab to prison. This was done, but the sect had already made a great progress and ardent preachers were with great zeal propagating the faith. Three of these acquired a great fame for their zeal in the cause. The first was Mulla Husain of Bashrawayh, who as we have already seen, was Bab's first convert and had now on account of his zeal for the cause earned the title of Bab which was left vacant by the higher pretensions of Mirza Ali Muhammad. The second was a woman named *Zerrin Taj* (the golden crown) who on account of her surpassing loveliness earned the title of *Qurrat-ul-'Ain*, or the *consolation of the eyes*, from the Babis. When most of the Babis were ready to yield under the persecutions of the authorities, it was one of her fiery speeches which brought rest to many a wavering mind. The third leading missionary of the Babi religion was Muhammad Ali Balfouroushi. Thus while the Bab was in prison, the Babi missionaries were still carrying on the propaganda and the result was a civil war in which many Babis fell. But as there was no end to these disturbances, the Persian Government at length proceeded to the execution of the Bab himself. He was brought from Cherigh where he had remained in the prison for some three years to Tabriz, and as he did not retract and still declared himself to be the *nugtah*, orders were given to shoot him to death along with two of his companions. One of these retracted and was saved, but the other died with his master. This took place in 1850.

The untimely death of the Bab when he was hardly thirty years of age and his mission not more than six years old was no doubt brought down upon him by heaven as just punishment for his bold assertions and presumptuous claims. Both the Bible and the Quran agree that a false claimant to prophethood and to Divine revelation is brought soon to end. Thus the Bible says: "But the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die," (Deut. 18: 20). And the Quran

says speaking of the Holy Prophet: "But if he had fabricated concerning Us any sayings, We had surely seized him by the right hand, and cut through the vein of his heart, nor could any one of you have kept Us off from him" (lxix: 44-47). Here the Holy Quran uses an argument to prove the truth of the Holy Prophet's mission, the essence of which is that a false prophet is soon brought to end. Since the Bab claimed that he was a recipient of the Divine revelation, and he was not true in his claims, he was dealt with in accordance with the promise contained both in the Bible and the Quran, and his untimely end is the clearest proof that he was not a prophet of God.

The Bab was succeeded on his death by Mirza Yahya of Núr who took the title of the *Subh-i-Azal* (lit, the Morning of Eternity) and was recognised without any dissent as the leader of the Babis. In 1852, several Babis made an attempt upon the life of the sovereign, but they failed and were arrested on the spot. A plot was suspected and several other Babis were also put to death. The famous *Qurrat-ul-Ain* perished along with these. But the *Subh-i-Azal* removed himself to Baghdad where he peacefully propagated the religion of the Bab. He lived, however, in seclusion and entrusted his brother Mirza Husain Ali with the direction of the affairs of the propaganda. Husain Ali recognised his authority and admitted him as the spiritual leader of the sect. For more than ten years after the death of the Bab, Mirza Husain Ali was contented with an inferior position in the brotherhood, and as late as 1858-59 he implicitly recognised in a polemical work the spiritual authority of the *Subh-i-Azal*, Mirza Yahya. There were, however, certain prophecies in Bab's works about the advent of another person, *Man Yuzhiruh-Ullah*, "one whom God shall manifest." The Bab had fixed no time of his advent and had mentioned no signs by which he was to be recognised except that when he appeared he would be recognised by all. Seeing that his younger brother, the admitted head of the movement, lived in seclusion and that the whole authority was practically in his own hands, Mirza Husain Ali declared in 1863 that he was the promised one whose advent was foretold by the Bab. He adopted the title of *Batallah* which means 'the splendour of God.' The movement needed some spirited leader like the Bab and the *Qurrat-ul-Ain* and

the claim of Husain Ali was, therefore, received by the Babis with great joy. Mirza Yahya with some of his faithful followers refused to accept the claims of Husain Ali. Hence the Babis were divided into two sects, the *Azalís* and the *Baháís*, the former remaining faithful to the old leader and the latter owing all allegiance only to Bahaullah. There were quarrels between the two sects and the Turkish Government was accordingly compelled to keep the two leaders in two different places. In 1868 Baha and his followers were exiled to Acre in Syria and *Subh-i-Azal* with his few followers to Famagusta in Cyprus. Baha died on the 16th May 1892, and was succeeded by his son Abbas Efendi. But another son of Bahaullah, named Muhammad Ali, advanced counter claims for his succession. The latter's claims were accepted by very few of the Bahais, but in Acre itself this claimant had sufficient influence to gain the custody of Bahaullah's tomb. The Azali sect has been losing in influence day by day while the Bahai sect has made a rapid progress, not only in the East but also in the West. A Bahai missionary, named Khair-ulla, preached the Bahai doctrines in the United States of America, where some three thousand persons were reported to have joined the sect in 1901, but their number must be much larger now.



Miracles of Healing in Christianity.

The miracles of healing occupy a very prominent place in the ministry of the founder of Christianity. And while most of the miracles attributed to Jesus in the Gospel stories of his life are admitted by the higher critics to belong to the domain of myth, the miracles of healing are considered to be based on substantial facts. As the author of the article "Jesus" in the *Encyclopedia Biblica*, that monumental work of Higher criticism, remarks: "The healing ministry, judged by critical tests, stands on as firm historical ground as the best accredited parts of the teaching." But even supposing that the miracles of healing as recorded by Matthew for instance were performed by Jesus, the Christian apologist has to contend with another difficulty. The healing of diseases

cannot be said to be a peculiarity of Jesus. The art of healing diseases has been practised among various nations from time immemorial, and among the Jews, the Hindus and the Muhammadans a sort of supernatural therapeutics has always been known. It has nothing to do with Divine inspiration or religious sanctity, and cannot serve as the criterion of religious truth or moral excellence. Even at the present day there are many men among the Hindus and the Muhammadans who practise the art of healing. The miracles of healing wrought by Jesus are, therefore, miracles in name only, and cannot be taken to be a conclusive proof of his Divine mission.

It appears from the Gospels that at the time of Jesus, there were many others who could heal diseases in the manner in which Jesus did. Even the Pharisees did not deny Jesus' power of healing certain diseases, but they attributed it to his connection with Beelzebub. All the Gospels mention this circumstance (see Mark 3 : 22; Mt. 9 : 34, 12 : 24; Luke 11 : 15; John 9 : 24 where Jesus is called a sinner). From this it appears that the Pharisees also knew that miracles of healing could be wrought by the righteous as well as the sinners. According to Mt. 12 : 27 and Luke 11 : 19, the disciples of the Pharisees could also work such miracles, and Jesus himself admits that even the Jews who opposed him could do it: "And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?" A man who did not follow Jesus was reported by the disciples to be casting out devils, on hearing which Jesus only remarked that the man, though he was not one of his followers, could not yet "lightly speak evil" of him. (see Mark, 9 : 38-40, Luke; 9 : 49). Even the workers of iniquity could do what Jesus was doing: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7 : 22, 23). Some of the followers of Jesus also asserted to have the power to work similar miracles. But the circumstance which deals a death-blow to all pretensions of miraculousness in the art of healing is the existence of the pool at Siloam, a dip in which had the effect of healing diseases (John 9 : 7). Another mystery about the miracles of healing wrought by Jesus is that he demanded faith for

display of his power. Where there was no faith, his power to heal also failed. Similarly when his disciples were unable to cast out a devil, he attributed the failure of their power to want of faith.

These difficulties have compelled the higher critics to take shelter in the neurotic theory of the miracles of healing. Thus the author of the article "Gospels" observes in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* :—

"Of course we must endeavour to ascertain how many, and still more, what sorts of cures were effected by Jesus. It is quite permissible for us to regard as historical only those of the class which even at the present day physicians are able to effect by psychical methods, as, more especially, cures of mental maladies. It is highly significant that, in a discourse of Peter (Acts 10 : 38), the whole activity of Jesus is summed up in this that he went about doing good and healing all those that were oppressed of the devil. By this expression only demoniacs are intended. Cp. also Lk. 13 : 32. It is not at all difficult to understand how the contemporaries of Jesus, after seeing some wonderful deed or deeds wrought by him which they regarded as miracles, should have credited him with every other kind of miraculous power without distinguishing, as the modern mind does, between those maladies which are amenable to psychical influences and those which are not. It is also necessary to bear in mind that the cure may often have been only temporary. If there was a relapse, people did not infer any deficiency in the miraculous efficacy of the healer : they accounted for it simply by the return of the demon who had been cast out. On this point Matthew 12 : 43-45 is very characteristic. Perhaps also Luke 8 : 2 may be cited in this connection, if the seven devils were cast out of Mary Magdalene not simultaneously but on separate occasions."

An objection has been raised to the neurotic theory of the miracles of healing wrought by Jesus in the recent issue of the *Hibbert Journal*. The writer of the article "The Miracles of Healing" contends that the neurotic theory cannot explain all the miracles of healing wrought by Jesus, but higher criticism replies that there is a good deal of exaggeration in the description of these miracles. This latter contention is not a mere conjecture, for the Gospels themselves afford us instances of such exaggeration. A simple event described in Matthew has a highly coloured description in Luke or Mark.

More than this, the Gospel according to John gives us an example of an exaggeration carried to the extreme of absurdity. After giving us his impression of Jesus Christ, the writer tells us that if all the things done by Jesus Christ were written in books, the whole world would not contain them. Of course no sensible person can believe that things done in the course of three years could fill up pages of books which the whole world could not contain. This is sufficient to give the reader an idea of the insignificant reality that might be hidden under the highly coloured and awfully exaggerated descriptions of the Gospels, and it is easy to conceive that trivial occurrences might have been magnified into the greatest of wonders by men who sat down to write events not with the historical object of securing their accuracy or reporting them in their true simplicity to posterity, but to make out a case for the wonder-working powers of their hero. When we find historical accuracy so flagrantly sacrificed to a desire to magnify Jesus Christ, it is very difficult, if not impossible, for us to believe that the miracles of healing wrought by Jesus were reported with strict accuracy. An exceptionally strong case of strict accuracy in the Gospel narratives must be made out before raising any objection to the neurotic theory as explaining the miracles of healing wrought by Jesus. Otherwise a fair-minded critic would be justified in rejecting as exaggerations or false descriptions all such miracles of healing as are left unexplained by the neurotic theory.

Another difficulty in accepting the miracles of healing wrought by Jesus as manifestations of a supernatural power consists in the circumstance that the same power of healing that is claimed for Jesus by the Gospel writers was claimed by the early Christians and is even now claimed by certain followers of Jesus Christ. It is, therefore, very reasonable to infer from such examples that the power of healing claimed by the followers of Christ is similar to the power claimed by the Master himself. Dr. Dowie, Mrs. Eddy and a host of other Christian scientists or mind-healers in our own times, and Paul and others in the early days of Christianity have been preaching this religion on the strength of miracles of healing, and large numbers of Christians have accepted their claim. We are, therefore, quite justified in the supposition that Christ only did what the Christians are doing to-day.

Mrs. Eddy to whom I have already referred not only lays claim to the healing of diseases herself, but she has founded a church of what are called the Christian scientists. Christian science lays claim to the healing of most of the diseases which affect the human body, while it has another and still more important claim to the "healing of the spirit." It is, however, with its former claim that we are concerned in connection with the miracles of healing in Christianity. In the wonder-loving land of America, the Christian science is making a rapid progress, having already as many as 600 churches, and chartering a new branch every four days. The founder, Mrs. Eddy, is a crazy old woman, and an account of her life founded on one of Mark Twain's writings has appeared in the April issue of the *Review of Reviews*. From her youth, we are told, she was subject to constantly recurring fits of hysteria. "They frequently came on without the slightest warning. At times the attack resembled a convulsion. Mary pitched headlong on the floor, and rolled and kicked, writing and screaming in apparent agony. Again she dropped limp and lay motionless. At other times, like a cataleptic, she lay rigid, almost in a state of suspended animation."

As she grew older, the fits became more frequent and more violent. She married twice giving birth to a posthumous son from the first husband and divorcing the second. For her son she did not care in the least. In 1862 a change came in her life. In that year she heard of Dr. Quimbey, a mind-healer, went to him and was cured within a week. She became an enthusiastic disciple of her healer. Three years later Dr. Quimbey died, and Mrs. Eddy who had already mastered his doctrines proclaimed in 1866 that she had discovered the Christian science, by which name even Dr. Quimbey used to designate the "Science of health," which he said he had discovered, but which was really a development of mesmeric powers. In 1881 Mrs. Eddy opened the Massachusetts Metaphysical College where she taught "the pathology of spiritual powers," charging twenty pounds a week as tuition fees from every student. Within seven years four thousand students passed through the College: such is the civilized superstitious America of to-day. The immense wealth thus accumulated was sufficient to give the movement a good start, and with the dollars of the superstitious Americans, Mrs. Eddy wields an immense power to-day. She claims a higher

degree of perfection than Jesus Christ and his mother. "The virgin Mary—Jesus Christ—Mrs. Eddy—appear to be the positive, comparative and superlative terms of the revelation of God to man according to this latest American religion." As regards her character, she is said to be "the most untrustworthy that the world has heard since the late lamented Ananias quitted the witness stand. Her character as revealed by her acts, displays a superlative egotism, an overweening ambition, and an insatiate lust for power."

The Christian scientists draw a vain distinction between science-healing and mind-healing or mental-healing. Both follow the same methods, and if there is any difference, it is only in assertion. The Christian scientist claims that the healing is brought about by the power of the spirit, while according to the mind-healer it is one man's mind acting upon another man's mind that heals. Practically there is no difference at all. "Mrs. Eddy, however, regards mind-healers and hypnotists with the profound aversion natural to two of a trade who never agree. Herself a great mistress of magic, she brooks no rival near her throne. If any Christian scientist has any thing to do, even in the secret recesses of his mind, with mind-healing or hypnotism, he is cast out of the synagogue. In this article of the Christian Science Church, Mrs. Eddy has a sceptre of despotism the like of which no pope ever possessed. She shares it with the witch-doctors of Africa, whose right to smell out witches is one of the most familiar and most monstrous engines of murderous tyranny that ever existed in the world until the days of Mrs. Eddy."

Besides the Christian scientists and the mind-healers, there was Dr. Dowie who claimed to heal diseases by his prayers. Some of his failures were notable but then he always sought shelter in Jesus Christ whose healing powers, he asserted, also failed on some occasions. All these examples of Christian healers throw a flood of light on the healing miracles of Jesus Christ. As Muslims we, no doubt, believe in the prophethood and Divine mission of Jesus Christ but the healing miracles as narrated in the Gospels seem to indicate that like the professional healers of our own days, Jesus Christ followed the profession of healing diseases as did also some of his compatriots from among the Jews. The Christians are compelled

to explain the healing miracles of Jesus by the neurotic theory because they have no example of a different kind in their hands. Hence Jesus is classed with ordinary thaumaturgists. But we would rather reject the exaggerated statements of Gospels than take such a low view of Jesus Christ. We cannot give any credit to such statements as that multitudes of sick and disabled persons followed him wherever he went as if he was nothing more than a quack spiritual healer. He might have prayed to God on certain occasions for the removal of certain dangerous diseases and these few occurrences have in all probability been exaggerated into stories of wonders by the writers of the Gospels. Such supernatural cures have always been effected by the prophets of God, and in our own time the Promised Messiah has in numerous cases effected such miraculous cures by praying to God, cases which do not admit of explanation by the neurotic theory. It would require a separate volume to detail all those cases here, but one or two examples of recent occurrence may be cited. A few months ago, a student of the Talimul Islam High School, Qadian, was bitten by a mad dog, and he was sent to the Pasteur Institute at Kasauli for treatment. Some two months after his discharge from the hospital he had an attack of hydrophobia and all the symptoms of that disease were fully developed. The head master of the school wired his case to the Director of the Institute asking if he could suggest any course of treatment under the circumstances. The Director, Captain W. F. Harvey, wired in reply that no remedy could be of any use at that stage as the symptoms of hydrophobia had been fully developed.* Thereupon the Promised Messiah was approached and he prayed for him and the boy was perfectly cured. Another student of the same school, Muhammad Hayat by name, fell sick with plague during the recent visitation of that fell disease. It was a case of pneumonic plague which so far as is known has always proved fatal. Again the Promised Messiah was requested to pray for him, and the boy was alright. There are numerous other examples in which the patient has been delivered from certain death by the prayers of the Promised Messiah. It is not only the fatal nature of the disease and in efficacy of all medicines under the circumstances that establish the miraculousness of the cure, but the Promised Messiah is also informed beforehand, while the patient is yet in a precarious state, of the

* Captain Harvey also wrote: "Once the symptoms of hydrophobia have developed, there is of course no possibility of treatment doing any good."

acceptance of his prayers. Another wonderful example of the same kind is the Promised Messiah's prophecy which asserts in clear words that none of those who live within the four walls of his house shall die of plague. This prophecy was published in 1902, and since then the plague has visited Qadian four times and has more than decimated the population. But out of about seventy-five persons who live within the Promised Messiah's house, and their number is considerably increased by persons seeking the shelter of his house during the visitation of the plague, not a single person has hitherto died of plague. The writer is one of those who by the grace of God enjoy this miraculous protection, and the following personal anecdote would not be without interest. In the year 1904 when the town of Qadian was visited with severe plague, and while plague mortality in the town was at its highest, I felt a severe attack of fever one morning. By noon the fever assumed a fearful aspect, and at that time, I called some of my friends to make over the charge of the affairs entrusted to me. They felt my pulse and had grave apprehension regarding me. At the same time the Promised Messiah was apprised of these circumstances and immediately afterwards he was in my room. My friends were standing there still, when to my utter astonishment as well as theirs it was found that no sooner the Promised Messiah had placed his hand on mine and declared in an authoritative voice that I had no fever at all, the fever as well as really gone, and except for the weakness, I felt that I never had an attack of fever. There are hundreds of such anecdotes but I do not wish to lengthen this subject any more. Nor do these healing miracles find a prominent place in the mission of the Promised Messiah. There are hundreds of other signs more wonderful than these and hundreds of prophecies clearly fulfilled. It may be further stated that the house regarding which the promise of protection from plague is published is one of the oldest houses and is situated within the village.

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Plague Mortality in the Punjab.

Plague mortality in the Punjab is beating all record. Within eight weeks, from the 2nd March to 27th April, there have been more than a quarter of a million deaths from the pestilence. The plague mortality

of the province has risen from 14,854 in the first week of March to 54,204 in the last week of April, and more than two-thirds of the total number of plague-deaths in India are now contributed by the land of the five rivers. The following table will show the weekly ratio of the plague mortality of the Punjab to the total plague mortality of India :—

	Plague mortality of India.	Plague mortality of the Punjab.
Week ending 9th March	... 41,667	14,853
„ „ 16th „	... 49,440	19,565
„ „ 23rd „	... 54,003	23,488
„ „ 30th „	... 53,681	27,900
„ „ 6th April	... 62,886	34,651
„ „ 13th „	... 75,472	39,084
„ „ 20th „	... 76,000	46,000
„ „ 27th „	... 75,711	54,204

Thus while the total plague mortality of India for the eight weeks ending with the 27th April is 489,860 or nearly half a million, the Punjab with less than an eleventh of the total population of the country is responsible for 260,946 or more than half the plague deaths. These figures are indeed appalling but the destruction which is being wrought in particular towns and villages is quite indescribable. Many of the villages in which the plague has made its appearance have lost more than a fifth of their population, while many have lost one-third or even one-half, and instances are not wanting in which not more than two or three souls have been left in a village. The scene of devastation which the Punjab presents to-day is one of the most appalling scenes that history can present.

This devastation of the Punjab by the plague was foretold by the Promised Messiah nine years ago when the province was almost free from the disease. On the 6th February 1898, he circulated a notice headed "The Plague" in which he wrote :

"There is another important matter to which my sympathy for my fellow-beings compels me to draw the attention of the public. I know well that people who are devoid of spirituality will only laugh at it, but because of my sympathy for mankind, I deem it my duty to give expression to it and it is this that to-day which is Sunday, the 6th of February 1898, I have seen in a vision that the angels of Al-

mighty God are planting black trees in different parts of the Punjab, and these trees are very ugly, low, dark-coloured and rightful in appearance. I asked some of the planters as to what those trees were and they replied : ' These are the trees of plague which will spread in this province in the near future.' I cannot state definitely whether he told me that the prevalence of the plague would take place in the next winter or after that, but it was a terrible scene that I saw. And before this, I received the following Divine revelation in connection with the plague: *ان الله لا يغير ما بقوم حتي يغيروا ما بانفسهم انه اوي القرية* that is to say, so long as disobedience to God which is the plague affecting the hearts is not removed, the plague, that is the disease which affects the body, shall also not leave the country. It is, therefore, necessary that the people of this country should forsake all kinds of evils and walk in the ways of goodness and righteousness, and pray to God for safety from the affliction and that it may not assume such severity that it should waste this country. Remember that the days of great tribulation are at hand and the affliction is at the door."

More than nine years have passed since these words were uttered and the reader will see what a picture of these nine years as to the havoc of the epidemic did it present. People laughed at it at that time as they even now laugh at the prophecies of the afflictions that are yet in store for the world, but for any one who reflects there is ample proof in these circumstances that the knowledge of the future disclosed in the announcement of the 6th February 1898 could not proceed from a human source. Almighty God spoke to His Messenger and he informed the people beforehand that the Punjab was about to be visited by a terrible out-burst of the plague, but few there were who paid any heed to his word, the truth of which amidst all the afflictions which it foretold, now shines forth as the meridian sun. Would that even now the people had shed tears of repentance so that the days of this great affliction would have been shortened!

Political Unrest in India.

The latter part of the last century has witnessed the rise and growth of two great religious movements in the Punjab, one

among the Hindus and the other among the Muslims, I mean the Arya Samaj and the Ahmadiyya movement, the latter being some twenty years younger than the former. I refer to the Arya Samaj as a movement in the Punjab because it is here that it has made its greatest conquests. In their political attitude these two movements stand to each other in an antipodal relation, for while the Ahmadiyya movement has exercised a most healthy influence on the feelings of the Muhammadan population of India as regards their attitude towards the British rulers, the Arya Samaj is leading the van in exciting the feelings of the Hindu community against the Government. It was the Muhammadans who were responsible for the great mischief done to this country and its rulers in the mutiny of 1857, and strangely enough it is the Hindus who are now celebrating the jubilee of the mutiny by their seditious speeches and riotous deeds against the ruling authorities. And this contrast becomes the more marked when it is seen that the members of the Ahmadiyya movement are as conspicuous by their absence in the gatherings held to denounce the Government and its authorities and their hatred of the mischievous deeds done under the shelter of a fight for political rights as the members of the Arya Samaj for the leading part they take in them and their violent and open denunciations of the ruling authorities.

What is the healthy influence of the Ahmadiyya movement to which I have referred above, it may be asked. With all their loyalty to the British, the Muhammadans have a peculiar doctrine which acting upon the masses is likely to disturb the peace of the country at any moment. This is the doctrine of the advent of a Mahdi who should wage war on all non-Muslims to compel them to accept the faith of Islam. Such a doctrine is quite out of place in a religious system, one of whose fundamental principles is that there should be no compulsion in religion, but notwithstanding the plain teachings of the Quran, the doctrine has for many centuries occupied a prominent place in the Muslim religious belief. There were probably hidden ideas of this kind which fanned the fire of fanaticism in 1857. More recently also some dangerous views were expressed in a book called the *Iqtirab-us-Sa'ah*, written by a leading member of the Ahl-i-Hadis sect. But the Ahmadiyya movement has dealt a death-blow to this doctrine. It accepts a Mahdi who claims to have come to establish

the superiority of Islam by signs and arguments, and thus cuts off all hopes of the advent of a persecuting Mahdi. The strength of the Ahmadiyya movement does not lie only in the three or four hundred thousand persons that have openly joined it, but also in the widespread and healthy influence which it is exercising over the minds of the educated and the intelligent public. Thousands of men who hesitate to join the movement openly for fear of persecution from the more orthodox members of the Muslim community have realized the futility of the doctrine of the advent of a Ghazi Mahdi and the nobleness of the teaching that the superiority of Islam lies in its moral and spiritual force and not in brute physical force. The Ahmadiyya movement has by wiping off the blot of *Jehad* from the face of Islam done a service to Islam which no intelligent Muslim can pretend to ignore. It has shown that Islam hates compulsion in faith and hence the impossibility of the coming of a *Ghazi* Mahdi who should wage war on all non-believers in Islam to compel them to accept that religion. Islam does not enjoin or allow wars for the propagation of religion, the Holy Prophet waged no such wars, and hence it is entirely in opposition to the teachings and practice of the Holy Prophet that a Muslim reformer should in the latter days propagate Islam by the sword.

One effect of the teaching referred to above upon the Ahmadiyya movement has been its opposition to all kinds of agitation against the Government and its hatred of all denunciations of the ruling authorities. Young men and especially young students of colleges and schools have been prone to excitement against the Government, but the young students belonging to the Ahmadiyya movement have, as in the case of the medical students of the Hospital Assistant Class at Lahore, set an example of obedience to the authorities gladly followed by others. Similarly in the strike of the Aligarh College students, the Ahmadi students refused to join the strikers. This is only one example of the spirit which the Ahmadiyya movement is breathing into its adherents and which is furnishing a noble example to others. This effect upon the members of the movement has been produced by the constant exhortations of its founder to be faithful and loyal to the Government, a point which he has emphasized in more than fifty of his books. In strikes, in riots and in seditious speeches, it is the same spirit of opposition to the ruling authorities that is

working, and the Ahmadiyya movement is conspicuous by the entire absence of all its members from such gatherings and their absolute refusal to take any part in any of their doings. Indeed when the feeling of one class of the public is excited to the highest pitch against the ruling authorities, it is only implicit confidence in the Government that can serve as a check against the excitement, and such confidence the Ahmadi Muslims have placed in their rulers in true obedience to the injunction of their master, and we hope that Muslims of all other classes and sects will be moved by the same noble spirit.

As regards the Arya Samaj, if it has been moved by any one spirit more than another, it is the hatred of all foreigners. For a long time this spirit found vent in the expression of hatred for Muslims who were regarded as foreigners. Only in our issue before the last, we quoted the Virjanand Magazine, an Arya Samaj monthly, which advocated an expulsion of the Muslims from this land of the Aryas. It is the effect of this teaching that every member of the Arya Samaj is filled with hatred for the Muslims, and the same spirit is now finding vent against the ruling authorities. There is hardly a member of the Arya Samaj who is not taking a leading part in the agitation and disturbances against the Government. There is much to be regretted in this attitude of the Arya Samaj towards the ruling authorities, and we hope that such of its leaders as desire the peace and safety of the country would impress upon the zealots the necessity of assuming a more peaceful and a more respectful attitude towards the Government.

For the guidance of the Ahmadiyya movement in the present state of things when disturbances are taking place in different quarters of the Punjab and some people are running mad after political agitation, Mirza Gulam Ahmad, the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement has issued the following notice to all his followers :—

**In the name of God, the Merciful, the
Compassionate.**

**We praise God and pray for His blessings on His
Noble Prophet.**

An Important Exhortation.

As I see that in these days ignorant and mischievous persons, mostly from among the Hindus and some also from among the Muhammadans, are making an agitation against the Government which savours of sedition, and I fear that these disturbances may at some time assume the form of open acts of insurrection, I deem it necessary at this juncture to emphatically enjoin all my followers who are scattered all over the Punjab and India, and whose number has now reached hundreds of thousands, that they should keep in mind the teachings which, orally as well as in writing, I have been impressing upon them for nearly twenty-six years. The essence of this teaching is that they should faithfully obey the British Government, for this Government is our great benefactor. Under this benign Government our sect has made a rapid progress so that its number has now reached hundreds of thousands. It is one of the blessings of this Government that under its peaceful rule we are absolutely safe from all our persecutors. Divine will and wisdom have chosen this Government so that under its protection the Ahmadiyya movement may be safe from the ferocious attacks and evil designs of its enemies and thus protected may make an advancement. Do you think that you can be safe from the attacks of mischievous persons if you live in the dominions of the Sultan of Turkey or make abode in the sacred places of Mecca or Medina? Certainly not. In such a place you would be cut into pieces within a week. You have heard how Sahibzada Abdul Latif, who was one of the most respectable, noble and famous raises of the State of Kabul and who had nearly fifty thousand followers, was stoned to death most cruelly by Amir Habibullah Khan for the only fault, if it was a fault, that having become one of my followers he opposed the doctrine of *Jehad* in accordance with my teachings. With such an example before your eyes, do you hope that you would be able to lead your lives in peace and security under Muslim rulers? Nay, you have been declared as heretics, who should be murdered, by the judgment

of the Muslim theologians of all the countries. It is, therefore, the grace of God and His goodness that this Government has taken you under its protection, just as Negus, the Christian king of Abyssinia, had taken under his shelter the Companions of the Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him. I do not write this to please the Government nor do I desire any reward from it as ignorant men think, but honestly and conscientiously I deem it my duty to give expression to my feelings of gratitude to this Government and to enjoin my followers to show true obedience to it. Bear in mind then and remember well, that no one who hides in his heart any seditious idea against this Government can be called my follower. I consider it as a great villany that we should not be grateful to a Government which is the means of saving us from our cruel persecutors and under whose benign protection this movement is making a rapid progress. Almighty God says in the Holy Quran: *هل جزاء الا حسنا* i.e., "Is aught but goodness the reward of goodness," and a tradition of the Holy Prophet says that "the person who is not grateful to man is not grateful to God." Just ponder a little where you can find a safe abode if you are removed from the shelter of this Government. Can you name any other government which will take you under its protection? Every Muhammadan kingdom is gnashing its teeth to murder you, for in their eyes you are heretics and worse than unbelievers. Therefore, prize this God-given blessing above all things, and know it for certain that Almighty God has established this Government in this country for your welfare. If any disaster befalls this government, that disaster will also bring you to naught. You have heard the judgments of the Muhammadan theologians who are your opponents. They hold that you deserve to be murdered for your doctrines, and in their sight a dog deserves to have mercy shown to it but you do not deserve it. The *fatwas* of the whole of the Punjab and India, nay of all the Muslim countries, regarding you, are that you deserve to be murdered, and your murder, the extortion of your property, the taking away of your wives by force, and the disgracing of your dead bodies by not allowing them to be buried in Muslim graveyards are not only according to their judgment permitted by the law, but are deeds of the highest merit. It is the English whom the people call

Káfirs who protect you from your enemies who thirst for your blood and it is for fear of their sword that you are saved from being murdered. If you doubt these words, then go and live under another government and see how you are treated. So bear in mind that the English Government is a mercy for you and a blessing. It is the shield which protects you, therefore you also prize this shield with all your heart and soul. These Englishmen are a thousand-fold better than the Muhammadans who are your bitter opponents, for they do not declare that you deserve to be murdered, nor do they wish to dishonour you. Not long ago, a Christian missionary prosecuted me for abetment of murder in the Court of Captain Douglas, but that wise and just Deputy Commissioner having come to know that the case was entirely false and got up, acquitted me honorably and even asked me if I desired to prosecute those who had fabricated false evidence against me. This is an example showing how the dealings of the English are based on justice and equity.

Bear in mind also that there is nothing so discreditable to Islam as the doctrine of *Jehad* which is imputed to it. A religion whose teachings are excellent, and to manifest whose truth Almighty God shows His signs does not stand in need of the sword to propagate it. In the time of the Holy Prophet the persecutors of the Muslims attacked them with the sword and were bent upon blotting out Islam with the sword from the face of the earth. Therefore, those who took up the sword were destroyed with the sword and the Holy Prophet was compelled to fight in defence of the Muslim society. But such doctrines as that the Mahdi would come with the sword and fight with and vanquish the Christian kings are mere fabrications, and their propagation is only corrupting the hearts of our Muhammadan opponents. Those who hold such doctrines are ~~dangerous to the peace of society~~, and they may at any moment excite the ignorant masses to insurrection. Therefore, we exert ourselves to our utmost to deliver the Muslims from the errors of such dangerous doctrines. Rest assured that a religion which is devoid of sympathy with fellow-beings cannot be from God. God teaches us that we should show mercy to those on earth that Heaven might show mercy to us.

QADIAN :

7th May 1907.

MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD,

The Promised Messiah.