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CRUSADERS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

CRUSADERS

OF THE

TWENTIETH CENTURY

OR

THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY AND THE MUSLIM

AN INTRODUCTION TO WORK AMONG MUHAMMADANS

BY

REV. W. A. RICE, M.A.

SOMETIME SCHOLAR OF CHRIST'S COLL., CAMB.; CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY, PUNJAB, 1888; PERSIA, 1894

'Islām is distinct from both Judaism and Heathen religions, and needs special attention and treatment.'—THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE, 1897.

'Correct appreciations are, like incorrect ones, formed not at once but little by little: true knowledge is a construction, not a monolith.'

ESSAYS ON EASTERN QUESTIONS, by W. G. Palgrave.

'Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer each one.'—COLOSSIANS IV. 6.

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II. Reasons why the work should be undertaken now.

1. Our position to-day is very different from what it was fifty years ago: (*a*) Christians and Muhammadans are in closer contact politically.—(*b*) An attempt is at last being made to evangelize the Muslim world.—(*c*) The literature dealing with Islām has largely increased.—(*d*) As also has that of the controversy on both sides. That which is of permanent use and value in it should be preserved.

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PREFACE.

THE writer hoped his book would have been finished many months ago, but it was only on the closing day of 1907 that the last words were written. Circumstances and duties unnecessary to mention in detail, and sometimes involving the suspension of the task for weeks together, postponed its completion until then. On leaving England to return to Persia, in the spring of 1906, about three-quarters of the book were finished and type-written ready for printing, and left in the care of a friend at home. Partly owing to this circumstance, and partly on account of the want of the necessary leisure, it was impossible to subject the whole to a final revision. It therefore seemed better without further delay to make it available as it was for those for whose special use it is designed.

'The better we qualify ourselves for discussion by our acquaintance with our opponent's system,' wrote the Rev. W. Smith, whose thoughtful words have more than once been quoted in the following pages, 'the less necessity we shall generally find to exercise our talent: we shall often be able by a single well-timed remark or an apt question to stop the mouth of a gainsayer.' A mastery of the ordinary lines of controversy should certainly be part of a missionary's endowment, whether for defence or for demonstrating the weakness of the opposite side. If we have this weapon at our command and can deftly use it, the less occasion shall we usually have for employing it, and the sooner shall we be able to lay it aside. *Efficiency* is the keynote of what the modern world demands in every branch and department of its complex life. The spiritual worker should not be a whit behind the labourer in other spheres. These pages aim at the promotion of that efficiency in one of the highest and most difficult of all. And if, with the blessing of God, they help any to its attainment, the long labour they have involved will be repaid.

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JULFA, ISFAHAN,
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5th March, 1910.

INTRODUCTION.

1. THE production of another book, a large portion of which deals with the Muḥammadan controversy, demands some justification. The writer believes there is no book dealing with the subject on precisely the same lines or that covers quite the same ground. The object of the present essay may be briefly stated to be an attempt to help the young missionary from the first to deal in the most sympathetic and effective manner with his Muḥammadan brother, especially in imparting religious instruction and engaging in discussion. There can scarcely be any question as to the utility of such a handbook if properly designed and framed. It is hoped that the following pages will in some measure at least fulfil their aim and justify the effort made.

(i.) *Pity for the Muḥammadan calls us to the task.* The Persians have a saying to the effect that,

> He who knows, and knows that he knows,
> Will leap his noble steed over the dome of heaven:
> He who knows not, and knows that he knows not,
> Will manage to bring his donkey to the end of the stage:
> He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not,
> Will remain for ever in compound ignorance.

The last couplet aptly describes the condition of most Muḥammadans. They are the victims of unconscious ignorance. Their unproven calumnies against the Christian religion have shut the door in the face of Truth, and the manifold errors of their own system, engendering a bigoted prejudice and self-righteous pride, have fast bolted it on the inside. Pity then bids us leave no stone unturned to rescue and deliver the prisoners of error and ignorance (Is. xlii. 7; lxi. 1), and, with this end in view, to equip ourselves as effectively as possible to repel the attacks and meet the difficulties and objections which will inevitably be encountered.

(ii.) In the next place, *the field is a large one, and the ground shifting.* If Dr. 'Imādu'd-dīn could justly assert that all his enemies had been completely answered, it does not necessarily follow that the final word has yet been said. And even if it had been, the many books on both sides of the question have yet to be collated and any results that are of permanent value preserved. New labourers are constantly year by year taking up work among

Muḥammadans, who have to learn the right principles of discussion and controversy with those subtle opponents, and for whom some means should be devised of putting them in possession of the experience already won. No apology is deemed necessary for the publication of a new medical work or a fresh volume of sermons, because all that can be profitably said upon the subjects of which they treat has not, and never will be, given to the world. Knowledge widens, views are enlarged or modified, circumstances change, the centre of interest or of controversy shifts, old positions once thought impregnable are abandoned and new ones occupied. The same holds true of the subject now engaging our attention. If, therefore, a luminous handbook, setting forth the conditions likely to be met with, and the qualifications most necessary for coping with them effectually, were to be placed in the hands of new missionaries to Muslims, it is believed that it would confer a great boon upon them. This is what the present pages attempt to do. They are, of course, very far from being all they might be. But, being the best he has to offer, the writer indulges the hope that they will be leniently judged by those whose calling or interest in the subject induces them to peruse what he has written.

(iii.) To say further that *the work is a difficult one* is to utter the merest commonplace. Nor is the fact to be wondered at, when we remember that our holy Faith had its origin in the East, and that in the course of providence it is now the duty and privilege of us missionaries—Westerners by birth and education—to commend it to the Oriental, encountering in 'an unfamiliar language new disputants upon an untried field.' * But the hardness of the task is no reason why a Christian and an Englishman should shrink from it. It should rather stimulate him to seek for the best means to overcome the difficulties.

It may be remarked here, that the Muḥammadan will be found to cling just as tenaciously to his creed as we do to our own. If *we* are tempted to ask, on rising from the perusal of some work upon Islām, How *can* the Muslim put faith in so false and degrading a creed? your 'true believer' has an equal horror of the creed and many things in the practice of the average Christian. Mutual feelings of astonishment and distress will not carry us far on our way. On one occasion a missionary, grieved at seeing in the courtyard of a wealthy Hindū some devotees 'engaged in their morning worship, entirely unclad, their long matted hair hanging down over their shoulders, and their persons besmeared with ashes, looking more like demons than human beings,' said to one of them, 'Your appearance really shocks me!' to which the haughty answer was immediately returned, 'I have similar feelings with regard to you. I dislike your clothes, and I abhor your hat!' †—Though we can perhaps never hope to attain the fluency

* Birks's *Life of French*, I., p. 63.
† Related in *Memoir of Rev. J. J. Weitbrecht*, pp. 218, 219.

and command of language, or acquaintance with the inner thoughts of the people, which the Oriental inherits by nature, we may yet hope to avoid giving ground for such a taunt as that of the Hindū fakir, 'Go to your books and learn, and come again and teach us,' * and by studying the general principles on which succesful argument with Muḥammadans depends, and familiarizing ourselves with conclusive answers to their oft-recurring criticisms and objections, show ourselves workmen that need not to be ashamed, "handling aright the word of truth." †

(iv.) *The modern Crusader should be properly equipped.* It cannot be denied that in the accounts of discussions with Muḥammadans met with from time to time in missionary publications the reader is generally struck with the command of the situation usually possessed by the Muḥammadan, the inconclusive nature of the results achieved, and the apparent want of definite, constructive views of Christian truth stated in the manner best calculated to recommend them to Oriental minds. If the ordinary Christian should have his answer ready concerning his hope (1 Peter iii. 15), whenever called upon to give it, much more is this necessary for the missionary to Muslims whose very presence challenges inquiry and compels him to be prepared to justify his position. It would be madness and folly to send the soldier or the doctor forth to meet an infinite variety of claims and circumstances, some of them possibly new and previously unheard of, without suitable training and the proper supply of instruments and weapons. This is equally true of our spiritual warfare. If the Christian missionary has been previously instructed in the best methods of meeting the normal manifestations of ignorance or perversity, he will both have less of apprehension in engaging in those discussions which cannot be avoided, and also be better qualified to cope with unexpected phases and novel situations. If these pages at all succeed in attaining the object for which they have been written, they should save much time and study, and many painful lessons and dearly bought experience, and thus prevent much hurt and damage to our Master's sacred cause. For our object is to enable the *Crusaders of the Twentieth Century* to deal wisely and faithfully from the outset with those from whom they differ so widely—to make it possible for the recruit, as soon as he has learned the language, to enter the lists with a good hope of maintaining his part, not having to find out for himself the defects in his armour and set himself to correct and repair them, under the sad consciousness of defeat and failure. Here, if anywhere, it is a sacred duty for the workers to band together, and contribute what each can out of the stores of his reading or experience to the better equipment of every future soldier of the Cross in this particular corner of the great arena where truth and error are in deadly conflict.

* Birks's *Life of French*, I., pp. 84. † 2 Tim. ii. 15.

2. Perhaps a few words should be said about *the origin and preparation of the following work*. The writer went out to Peshāwar in the Punjāb in the autumn of 1888, and was transferred to the Persia mission in 1894. From the outset he became familiar with the fact that work among Muḥammadans is difficult, and throughout his missionary career his work has been in part among Muḥammadans, both Sunnīs and Shīa'hs. By July, 1902, he had collected a considerable mass of notes upon various points in the Muḥammadan controversy, and then formed the resolution to attempt to make a systematic compilation of them. A scheme was drawn up, embodying the chief points of difference between the Christian and Muḥammadan religions, and modified from time to time as it was found necessary. The notes were assigned to their appropriate places in this scheme, and the main points discussed with a native gentleman of liberal views, in order to make sure that the arguments used were such as an Oriental would understand and feel the force of. The usual procedure was to state the question or the difficulty with the arguments, if any, on the Christian side that had commended themselves as suitable and proper. After this the friend alluded to would give his opinion, and suggest what seemed to him the best and most effective way of dealing with the case, approving or modifying what had been advanced, and frequently changing or re-casting the whole line of argument. Any further questions or difficulties that presented themselves in the ordinary way of intercourse with Muḥammadans were treated in the same way. The chief part of the notes were subjected again to the same process, this time with the help of a native Christian convert in place of the Muḥammadan gentleman. Besides the latter's general assistance the writer is virtually indebted to him for the whole of Part III., Ch. VII., (C) (Muḥammadan arguments in support of Muḥammad's mission), and Ch. VIII., Islām, (G), 2, where the grounds of assurance of salvation offered by Islām are severally considered. The help of these two friends has been indispensable, and if the book has any value at all it is chiefly due to them. In fact, without their co-operation it would have been impossible at present to realize in any degree the writer's ideal of systematically treating the difficulties and arguments of the Muḥammadan with reference to Christianity in a genuinely Oriental manner. Again and again was it brought home to him during the preparation of these pages how different are the European and Oriental points of view, and how admirable, and much more appropriate and effective for the purpose than his own arguments were those suggested by his native friends. Arguments put forward by Europeans have also been given in places, if they appeared to be sufficiently in harmony with those derived from purely native sources. Undue use may seem to have been made of *Sweet Firstfruits* (*Bākūratu'sh-Shahīyah*), of which the author is a Syrian Christian, and *Wasīlatu'n-Najāt*, or 'Means of Salvation,' written by a Persian convert, now deceased. Their native

authorship was their recommendation and the guarantee that they would contain nothing not adapted to a native's mind. The results of the course of work and study just described are for the most part embodied in Part III. The writer hoped to have been able to make some use of the Muḥammadan controversial literature in other languages, and embody the results in these pages. This has not been possible up to the present time. As a considerable amount of material had been collected and prepared, it seemed better to place it in the hands of fellow-workers, especially the last to join the ranks, without further delay. Part II. attempts to deal with some general principles which should guide the worker in discussing religious questions with Muslims, and Part I. treats of what may be described as the personal element, and tries to show what are some of the likeliest avenues to reach the Muslim's heart, and what manner of man the missionary should be to make the best use of them. The book is the outcome of all the labour that it was found possible to devote to it for years, not to mention the time previously given to the collection of material. And therefore it is hoped that, whatever its shortcomings may be, it will not be thought to have been either hastily or indolently put together.

3. *Method and object.* The *method* of treating each topic in Part III. includes the explanation of the Muḥammadan view and the foundations on which it rests, so far as is necessary in order to make clear its relation to the Christian position. The arguments for or against each point will next be given, and objections answered. The Qur'ān and Traditions are quoted where necessary: in fact, sometimes they supply arguments of the strongest nature. But of at least equal importance is the use and application of the Scriptures, the acceptance and right understanding of which is sufficient to vindicate the truth and rebut every error. A further design in the free and full quotation of the Scriptures has been to provide the Christian controversialist with a ready means of reference to the most important texts bearing on any given subject. As to our *object*, we seek to meet the Muḥammadan on his own ground, and prove to him by means of arguments drawn from the range and circle of his own ideas, which he can understand and appreciate, that where he thinks himself strong he is weak, and that Islām will not bear unprejudiced investigation. We aim at showing him that there is another side to the great questions at issue between us, quite different from the one with which he is familiar, and that the impregnable strength of his own religion and the futility of the other is not the foregone conclusion he has been accustomed to consider it. We cherish the hope that the insuperable difficulties he encounters in proving the truth of Islām and the many claims of Christianity to careful consideration, will lead him to inquire further into matters of such vital importance, while at the same time we allow that intellectual conviction does not necessarily result in true conversion. At the beginning of intercourse with the Muḥammadan no object is of greater importance than to convince him by

arguments which he cannot refuse that our Scriptures are the genuine uncorrupt Word of God. This done, the way is open to press home upon heart and conscience the paramount obligation of studying the divine oracles, and to indicate how the blessed truths contained therein are able to afford the rest and peace which the spirit of man needs and craves.

4. *Spelling of foreign words and names.* Where a conventional method of spelling these in English has become firmly established, as, *e.g.* Caliph or Mecca, this has been adopted without alteration. In other cases the system of transliteration followed by Hughes in his *Dictionary of Islām*, and Steingass in his *Persian-English Dictionary*, has been adhered to. For the sake of uniformity foreign words and names occurring in quotations have been harmonized with the same system. But where such words occur in the titles of books they have been left as they stand and no alteration has been made. Thus Muḥammad, which is the spelling adopted elsewhere, appears as Mahomet in the title of Sir William Muir's *Life of Mahomet*. Wherever the Qur'ān is quoted the numbering of the verses is that of Wherry's edition of Sale's Qur'ān. (Words not in the original are in italics.)

5. *Some criticisms anticipated.* (*a*) The book undoubtedly might have been abbreviated in certain places with advantage. The writer's excuse for this must be similar to that of a certain noble lord (was it not Lord Palmerston?) who apologized for the length of a letter by saying that he had not had time to make it short! In the present case, the main object being to familiarize the new worker with a wide and difficult subject, it is hoped that if any error has been made in the direction of diffuseness, it will not be altogether an unmixed disadvantage.

(*b*) Perhaps another objection may be that the book has a Persian flavour. This is not unlikely, since the writer has been attached to that Mission from 1894 to 1910, and during that time the Muḥammadans with whom he has had to do have been almost exclusively Shī'ahs. He has endeavoured to call attention to the fact wherever anything occurs that touches upon their special opinions. For the rest, it is believed that the great bulk of Muḥammadan objections are the same everywhere. In any particular country the same objections are brought forward and may be met in precisely the same way time after time. But it is not improbable that there may be local variations both in the difficulties most pressingly felt, and the answers that are most suitable to be given. If anything in the following pages seems new and strange, may not the hope be indulged that it will be suggestive, and, if it be so, prove helpful as well?

6. *What remains to be done: appeal to missionaries of experience.* The work remaining to be done is in a word to collate all the literature of the subject, and preserve everything in it that is of enduring value. (This is more fully explained in Appendix IV., 'A New Weapon for the Muḥammadan Controversy.') It is

sincerely to be hoped that this work will be taken up and carried through, by whomsoever undertaken, and a permanent boon conferred upon all future workers among Muḥammadans. May not the sympathy and active co-operation of all experienced missionaries to Muḥammadans be looked for, in contributing arguments and answers which they themselves have found telling, especially those used by natives, histories of individual cases, special subjects and passages of Scripture profitable for instruction or study with Muḥammadans, hints, warnings, encouragements, etc., in short, whatever help and counsel they may think well to contribute to the common stock, and make available for the use of their younger brethren? For the experience of one man, or of several, cannot possibly cover the whole wide field. And it is only by the mutual co-operation of many workers in different places that the end in view can be attained.

7. *A word to the reader.* It is hoped that the following pages may be of service to some at all events whose duty it is to preach to, or instruct Muḥammadans, by suggesting lines of thought and suitable subjects, and possible difficulties that may be met in anticipation. But those whom the book is chiefly designed to help are young missionaries to Muḥammadans: and if it is found to fulfil a useful purpose in lessening for some among them the difficulty of grappling with new work and strange problems, the labour bestowed upon it will be amply repaid. The writer would earnestly invite all such, should they find his little book of any service, not to be content with a single perusal of it, but to read and re-read it, until the contents are mastered, and the lines of argument stand out clear and perspicuous in the memory, forming a permanent part of their mental equipment, and ready for immediate use and cogent application whenever the need arises. And lastly, the hope is expressed that all those interested in the question, especially missionaries, will freely criticize and test the views and principles herein set forth in the light of their own experience, to see whether they hold good or require modification or correction.

CRUSADERS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

PART I.

PERSONAL ELEMENTS.

CHAPTER I.

THE MUSLIM.

THE aim of the pages which immediately follow is to give fairly and without exaggeration some idea of some of the main features of the Muslim's character, which affect his attitude towards the Gospel and the messenger who proclaims it, and of which it is therefore important for the Christian worker to be fully aware. After that, a few things must be mentioned which may be looked upon as helps in the prosecution of our work among Muslims, and lastly, something should be said in explanation of the strength of Islām and the comparatively small success hitherto attained by Christian Missions.

Islām takes on a somewhat different complexion in different lands. In Turkey and Afghanistan the Government is Muḥammadan, and Church and State are one. In Egypt and some other countries of Africa, and in Sumātra and Java, the great mass of the population, together with the official classes, are Muslim, while the supreme power is Christian. Persia is the home of the great Shiite Schism, and Islām is there honeycombed with sects and Sūfism. In India, more than elsewhere, Islām is brought face to face with modern thought and progress, and with all the problems more or less acute suggested thereby, under the shadow of a great neutral Christian power. In China the thirty millions of Muslims in the north and north-west exhibit none of the customary features of their fanatical co-religionists, and are scarcely distinguishable from the rest of the Chinese. It is therefore among the countries under Muslim and Christian rule, and not among the liberal-minded Muslims, that the characteristics to be mentioned will be found most clearly delineated. The remark may here be made that to one who has lived in a Muslim country it appears that

there is sometimes a tendency in the homeland to lay too much stress on the superficial points of resemblance between Islām and Christianity, while an exaggerated estimate is formed of the observance of such religious duties as the daily prayers or the month of fasting. The practice of religion, except on special occasions, is the exception, rather than the rule. The moral standard is low, and what we mean by spiritual religion is a thing scarcely understood.

(A) SOME MAIN FEATURES OF MUSLIM CHARACTER.

(a) **Pride.**—A writer of great learning and insight accounts for the averseness of the genuine turban-wearing Muslim—the Turk and the Arab—to too much intercourse with the Levantine and the European, by attributing it to the Muslim's pride. This pride he divides into four parts—the *national* pride of those whose Sultans and Caliphs were renowned in conquest and government; the *religious* pride of the worshipper of the one true God in the light of God's latest revelation to man; the *personal* pride of the strict ceremonialist; and the *family* pride of the descendants of Begs and chieftains.* It is the second and third phases of this complex spirit of pride which, if the Chinese Muslim perhaps be excepted, are universally present wherever Islām is found, and which, therefore, specially concern us now. This feeling may to some extent explain the abhorrence which a Muslim usually feels at the idea of any one associated with him becoming a Christian, and helps us to comprehend the sentiment which prompted the following prayer of a Muslim father, on behalf of his son who had become a convert, 'O Lord, why has my son become an infidel? If he had become a drunkard it would not have mattered, or even got into bad society. If he had stolen, and was imprisoned, I could have set that right with money; but why, O Lord, should this disgrace come upon me by my son becoming a Christian?' † In fine, instead of the complacent satisfaction of regarding him as a true believer, the father must now look upon him in the light of all the shameful associations centring in the religious words *kāfir* and *najis* (infidel and unclean).

Consequences of this pride.—(i.) In such a system as orthodox Islām there is, of course, no spirit of free inquiry, for the simple reason that there is nothing to inquire about. All that it is necessary to know is to be found in the Qur'ān, supplemented by the Traditions. Whatever is not found there is unnecessary, and everything opposed to what is found there is clearly and obviously wrong. There can be no such question for the genuine adherent of Islām as this, whether any other teaching may or may not contain elements of truth; for the standard has been irrevocably fixed

* Palgrave, *Essays on Eastern Questions*, pp. 9, 10.

† Mr. A. V. Lilley, writing from Tunis, in *The Missionary Review of the World*, May, 1904, p. 395.

once for all, and the only question possible is, Does it agree with the doctrine of Islām or does it not? It goes without saying that these sentiments will be most fully manifested in the Mullā class, who have been trained up in these views, and to whom every convert won from Islām means the prospect of definite pecuniary loss. The common people and the uneducated classes often exhibit an attitude delightfully different from this. But as for the others, who can wonder that they have no compunction or difficulty in persuading themselves that they are justified in using every means to keep the common herd from this pernicious and soul-destroying spirit of free inquiry?

(ii.) In the next place, the atmosphere of Islām is not calculated to produce a sense of sin or need of a Saviour. The divorce of faith and morals is here witnessed in its most pronounced form. Along with a general laxity and carelessness in religious observances except on special occasions, the average Muslim has no doubt of his ultimate salvation. No Muslim can be finally lost. They are the chosen people of God, and acceptable to Him because they alone possess the true religion. This spirit both fosters a general carelessness in religious matters and a neglect of all moral obligation in the ordinary business of life. If conscience does claim something more, there are all the outward duties of their religion to perform, and works of merit to supplement them, and in the last resort God is merciful, and Muḥammad will intercede for them.

(iii.) The effect of the first hearing of the Gospel is often like that of a message of bad news. If Christianity be true, all the fancied security is gone, the merit has vanished, the certainty is lost. He knows, or shrewdly suspects, that if the new message is true, all his hoarded treasure is counterfeit and worthless.* *Therefore* it *cannot* be true, it *must not* be true. Every instinct, personal or social, urges the man to adopt the same conclusion, and calls him not to set himself up against or run counter to the established views of friends and former teachers, and make himself a beggar in name and fame, in purse and family affection.

(iv.) One other curious feature may be mentioned in connexion with this characteristic pride of the thorough-going Muslim, and that is his belief in the stupidity of the European. The latter may be rich, skilled in science and mechanics, but the Muslim, like most Orientals, though ready enough to flatter, has a poor opinion of him at the bottom. A high official in India, if ever he did a shrewd thing, was never credited by the natives with the merit of devising it. They would ask, Who put him up to it? Who suggested it to him? A lady in Persia, who had been long in the country, was never given the credit by her cook of independently knowing the proper price of anything. Whether the European's acquiescence in paying more for everything than the native does is taken as a proof of his stupidity, or whether it be his confessed

* Cp. Prof. Margoliouth, quoted in *C.M.S. Report*, 1899–1900, p. 143.

inability to penetrate the inner mind and motives of the Oriental, the fact remains that the latter generally forms but a low estimate of his ability. It is not, therefore, unnatural that he looks in a similarly disparaging manner upon the European's religion, and regards him as hopelessly erring and misguided.

This strong wall of pride can only be broken down by moral force, the means relied on by the Master Himself when He planted His religion. And the servant who follows in his Master's footsteps will find that by this means, and this only, will he win, first of all, if it be so, the Muslim's toleration, then his respect, and finally his love.

(b) **Ignorance.**—Mr. Grote, speaking of the Socratic method, thus describes 'the ascending mental scale'—'the lowest point being ignorance, unconscious, self-satisfied, and mistaking itself for knowledge; the next above, ignorance conscious, unmasked, ashamed of itself, and thirsting after knowledge as yet unpossessed; while actual knowledge, the third and highest stage, was only attainable after passing through the second as a preliminary.'* The Persians have a few lines of verse in which the same three grades are expressed with poetic licence, touched with the exuberant fancy of Oriental imagination :—

Whoever knows, and knows that he knows,
Will jump his sprightly † horse over the dome of heaven :
Whoever knows not, and knows that he knows not,
Will by hook or by crook bring his donkey to the end of the stage :
Whoever knows not, and knows not that he knows not,
Will remain for ever in compound ignorance.‡

The third and last of these aptly describes the condition of the vast majority of the Muslims. With the exception of China, where the percentage of illiteracy is put down at 50 per cent., the proportion varies in other Muḥammadan countries, according to the latest estimates, from 80 to 95 per cent. § In some quarters Muḥammadans are waking up to the need of education, and availing themselves of opportunities for acquiring Western learning. But by far the greater number are almost totally ignorant of history, geography, science, and the state of the world to-day. This condition, while it makes of no avail the use of certain classes of argument in discussion, yet renders any one who can be regarded

* *History of Greece*, viii. p. 252.

† The original word, Ṭarib, was the name of a horse belonging to Muḥammad.

‡ Har kas kih bidānad, wa bidānad kih bidānad,
Asp-i-Ṭarib az Gumbid-i-Gardūn bijihānad :
Har kas kih na-dānad, wa bidānad kih na-dānad,
Nāchār ḵhar-i-ḵhwīsh bih manzil birisānad :
Har kas na-dānad, wa na-dānad kih na-dānad,
Dar jahl-i-murakkab abadu'd-dahr bimānad.

§ *The Mohammedan World of To-day*—Statistical Survey of Islām, facing p. 294.

by them as a representative of that great and little-known world, an object of deep interest to their curiosity.

Wherever missionaries have been at work for any length of time, truer notions than formerly are beginning to be held about the nature of Christianity. But among the great bulk of Muslims probably the conception of Christians still holds that they have no formal prayers (*namāz*), are eaters of swine's flesh and drinkers of wine, and possess few, if any, commands of God, and have no foundation for their religion except a corrupted and blasphemous book. Of course, they commonly do not read the Christian book, and are ignorant of the Christian plan of salvation. Hence it is that missionaries have over and over again witnessed the surprise and delight with which Muḥammadans listen to the words and teaching of Jesus. Two travellers in Western Barbary found themselves in the midst of a number of cursing and abusive Arabs. One of the two who knew a little Arabic, turning to an elderly person who seemed to be a priest, asked him, 'Who taught you that we are unbelievers? Hear my daily prayer and judge for yourselves.' He then repeated the Lord's Prayer, and amid the amazed silence of the crowd, the priest exclaimed, 'May God curse me if I ever curse again those who hold such belief!'

This prevailing ignorance does not only affect the Muslim's knowledge of Christianity, but in very many cases applies equally to his own religion. Thus there are Bedouins near Rāmallah who can rarely read the Qur'ān, do not observe ceremonies, nor keep the month of fasting. The Muḥammadans of Uganda are commonly unacquainted with the Qur'ān, and even with the elementary rules of their religion. A woman was met with in Egypt who had never heard of the Lord Jesus, and a boy in the same country who thought that God was Muḥammad, and that Muḥammad was God. It may be said that such instances (and more might be given) are exceptional as they are certainly phenomenal. But when it is remembered that the vast majority of Muḥammadans in all lands are ignorant village rustics, it is not hard to believe that the prevailing condition is one of deep ignorance. In such minds the Christian teacher reports that he finds but little to displace. This at the first sounds hopeful, but any initial advantage which it gives is counterbalanced by the disheartening fact that ignorant Muḥammadans of this description, when they accept the Gospel teaching, 'are not conscious of any incompatibility between it and the religion which they profess.'

(c) **Superstition.**—We should naturally expect to find here a fruitful soil for superstition, and such, indeed, it is. A writer well entitled to speak with authority says,* 'The great mass of Indian Muslims is as idolatrous as many of the Hindū tribes.' The ordinary Muḥammadan's religion, besides the observance of the month of Ramazān, the use of religious formulas, the practice of certain ceremonial acts, and possibly the recital of a few prayers, comprises

* Rev. E. M. Wherry, D.D., of A.P.B.F.M.

mainly the invocation and worship of saints, the visiting of shrines, tombs, and sacred places, and the use of charms. But cruder superstitions are met with. Some of the Tamil women of Colombo believe that the Bible-women sprinkle an invisible powder on the inmates of the houses they visit, 'the effect of which is to make the Bible-women themselves kind and gentle, and the Hindū or Muḥammadan women disposed to listen to the Christian Message.' In Jhānsi, in the United Provinces, there is the Bībī fair, in honour of the favourite cat of a Muḥammadan saint, Makhdūm Shāh, which is supposed to be buried there. The common belief may also be recalled that the famous Akhoond of Swāt miraculously fed all the people who came from long distances to sit at his feet, the truth being that the means to do so was provided by the gifts of the pilgrims themselves.* Stranger still, where Muḥammadans are living surrounded by Hindūs, as in Kashmīr, in the districts of Āzamgarh, United Provinces, and Nadiya, Bengal, the Muḥammadans have adopted, or retained from earlier times, some of the idolatrous practices of their neighbours, and even in some cases add to their own ritual the worship of Hindū saints. And similarly in Sumātra the old pagan places of pilgrimage are retained, only given Muḥammadan names; in fact, the first generation of Muslims take over with them, without any hesitation, 'their entire doctrine of spirits and sacrifices, and the old medium in pagan times now acts the same part for the Muslim magicians.' †

(d) **Bigotry.**—No one even slightly acquainted with the record of missionary work among Muslims needs to be told that one of their most strongly pronounced characteristics is bigotry. By this ill-sounding word is *not* meant that strength and stedfastness with which the believer of any creed is rightly entitled to hold the religion which he honestly regards as true; but that blind and unreasoning adherence to his religion and intolerance of everything and everybody who would presume to raise a question about it, which is characteristic of Muḥammadanism, and in a more or less degree of all religions which exalt the outward form above the inward spirit, and which, under favourable conditions and with good hope of impunity, leads to outbreaks of wild and angry fanaticism. It is the temper of mind which closes the eyes and locks the door on the inside, and shuts the ears to any claim for truth outside a narrow and restricted circle. But unfortunately for those who thus act the circle is not drawn large enough, and the inevitable result of blinded eyes and hardened hearts follows from the exclusion and rejection of God's truth.

This spirit is, of course, found most fully developed in the divinity students and Mullās of Islām, who have been educated in those schools in which the natural result of the training given is to foster this proudly exclusive spirit. Thus, of the general tone

* *Life of Bishop French*, I. 190.

† *The Mohammedan World of To-day*, pp. 219, 220.

and character of the men turned out by the Madraseh-i-Ilm-i-Arabī at Deoband, in the Sahāranpur district, United Provinces, which is supported by the old orthodox party, Dr. H. Martyn Clark writes—

> The men turned out are intensely prejudiced. They are bitter enemies of all infidels, Christians, Shī'ahs, of all who differ from them in religion, be they outsiders or belonging to one of the many sects differing from theirs in the fold of Islām. The hate and bitterness are intensified by the fact that they are powerless under British rule to wreak their will. They are ever ready to persecute. In addition to their bigotry and intolerance, they are full of conceit and false pride—in a word, are thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Islām.

Regarding the effects of the training imparted at the great educational institution of the Al Azhar at Cairo, the late lamented Rev. D. M. Thornton wrote—

> What, in a word, is the result of this education? The divorcement of memory altogether from reason and intellect. The development of a personality which is useless for any other occupation than that of teaching Arabic phonetics and grammar, and the Qur'ān. The closing of the mind to all honest inquiry, all modern ideas and truth, outside the Qur'ān and Arabic language.

He adds, however, that there is a growing demand for English on the part of the pupils themselves.

Such being the spirit of Islām in general, and in a special and peculiar degree the atmosphere of the schools, no surprise can be felt at the hostility and hatred towards Christians instilled into the minds of both leaders and common people. Who can wonder if some of the Moors of the Marakesh district, Morocco, 'will not take the Book in their hands, or even condescend to speak of it,' or that in the two meetings held every day some years ago in each of the nine mosques of Nablous, 'the subject of the teaching was always opposition to Christianity'? or that an Arab in North Africa, who had bought a gospel, and was afterwards seen tearing it to pieces, declared to the colporteur, 'Had I known that it was a book referring to Jesus, I would not have bought it. Copies are often distributed among us, but all the books thus given are burnt. Your religion is not good, since you sell your books so cheap, or even give them away. It is not so with our Qur'ān, which no one can get without paying a high price for it. Our religion is therefore better than yours!' A Mujtahid of a famous town in Persia had for the greater part of his life been a very bigoted man, but out of gratitude to Christian skill which saved the life of his son when dangerously ill, he latterly modified his views, and said, that formerly whenever he saw a Christian, he wished to cut his head off, but now he believed there was some good in them; and before his death he is said to have recommended his sons to follow his example in other things but *not* in his attitude towards Christians!

It naturally follows, that those who hold such views must repress Christianity whenever and wherever they have the chance and the power to do so. In Turkish Arabia the Government officials object to the selling of Bibles in districts where there are neither Jews nor Christians, and colporteurs have before now been arrested and forbidden to sell their books in Muslim villages. When General Haig entered Jedda in 1887 with a bag of Bibles they were 'all taken from him and never restored.' Alluding to this experience the General wrote—

> I do not suppose, however, that even if the books had not been seized I should have disposed of a single copy in Jedda. Mr. Spillenaer, a missionary in Egypt who made the attempt under more favourable circumstances a few years ago, failed to sell a single book, and was quietly told by some Muhammadans, who saw his Bible in his room, that if they had him in the street they would cut his throat. Even the Greeks said they were afraid to be seen purchasing a Testament. People are too closely watched, and there is an unruly and fanatical mob. . . It seems plain, too, from what the governor said, that there has been of late increased vigilance on the part of the authorities, indicative of increased alarm as to the possible results of the Word of God.*

At a village in Persia one of Dr. Bruce's converts came to visit Bishop French on his way up-country, and told him that he was 'forbidden by the Mullās to read or speak of Christ.' In a village near Jerusalem, a number of men told a lady missionary that while they were glad to have her medicines, 'she had no right to mention her religion to the inhabitants of the village, since they were Muḥammadans.' The Rev. T. Bomford, speaking of the change that had taken place in some of the rural districts of Multan, wrote: 'I have seen Muḥammadan priests come and order away any Muḥammadans who were listening, and then turn round and abuse me for venturing to try to disturb the faith of true believers.'

Slight provocation and suitable circumstances only are needed for this spirit to break forth into bloody and ruthless violence. In Leupolt's days in India the Muḥammadans would sometimes tell the missionaries plainly, 'If you were not our rulers, we would soon silence your preaching, not with argument, but with the sword.' 'A traveller in the heart of Arabia tells us how for two whole years he was not safe for a single day from the spear of the fanatic because he avowed himself a Christian.' † When the father of a boy in the mission-school at Palamcotta sought baptism, the first Muḥammadan, it was believed, to do so in that place, 'the consequence was that his co-religionists came to his house, broke his scanty furniture, tore his clothes, destroyed his Christian books, abused him foully, and threatened his life.'

The proper means with which to oppose this bigoted spirit

* *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, May, 1887, p. 277, quoted in *Life of Bishop French*, II. 350.

† *C.M.S. Report*, 1899-1900, p. 143, quoting Professor Margoliouth.

are fuller and freer intercourse, increased friendliness and brotherly love, sympathy in trouble, difficulties, or sickness, and the generous imparting to the Muslim brother of the blessings we ourselves enjoy, especially education and medical skill—in a word, by the spirit of Christ dwelling in loving hearts and manifesting itself in word and deed. If actuated by this spirit, every Christian living among Muḥammadans would be a missionary to them, and the effects would be vast and telling. For the life lived, and the mind and temper exhibited are, generally speaking, the ultimate test of religious name or profession in the eyes of others. And this is only fair, and neither side has any right to grumble at its being so.

(B) HELPS.

Let us now turn with greater zest to a pleasanter side of our subject. The foregoing remarks about Muslim characteristics have not been made in any spirit of fault-finding, but with the honest desire to speak of the man as he is. And it may be further observed, that those things which seemed at first sight colossal hindrances, are not pure and unalloyed obstacles after all. For an ill-founded pride is like a house with rotten foundations. And dark ignorance calls aloud for the error-dispelling rays of truth. For superstition there is in Christ's religion deliverance from fear, and the peace and assurance which only truth can give. And bigotry can be disarmed and tacitly reproved by the practical exhibition of the spirit of Christ. But apart from these there are other things which may be counted as more or less direct helps to the Christian worker.

(i.) *The growing prestige of the Christian nations.*—In West Africa, for instance, a careful observer notes that 'a very significant change has come over the Muslim.' From triumphant arrogance he has come to have a haunting fear and cringing subservience, which is attributed mainly to the shock to Islām caused by the overthrow of the great Fulānī power, and the recovery of the Egyptian Sūdān.* Contrast again the contumely and scorn with which Henry Martyn was treated at the Persian vizier's levee, and what he described as 'the usual insulting treatment at the caravanserai,' where the king's servants 'seemed to delight in the opportunity of humbling an European' (and more recent instances, too, of the same spirit might be given), with the recent preaching of an American missionary by invitation in one of the largest and oldest mosques in Persia, into which 'any ordinary white man who had found his way uninvited . . . would hardly have escaped with his life.'† In many quarters increasing respect is shown for the Christian and his message. The reason is not only that Christian workers have come more into touch

* Dr. W. R. S. Miller in *The Mohammedan World of To-day*, p. 49.

† Sir H. Mortimer Durand, G.C.M.G., in *The Church Missionary Intelligencer*, July, 1906, p. 510.

with Islām; but that Muslims have become themselves better acquainted with the great outside world. The fabrics and other productions of Christian countries are carried to the remotest corners of Muslim countries. Pilgrims and travellers bring back news of the marvels of steamers and trains; and the carriage of European workmanship, and even the motor and the bicycle are to be seen in Muslim cities. Better still, where Christian rule prevails, there is to be found freedom from oppression, liberty and just and equal rule. While Muslim power has decayed, and Muslim kingdoms are everywhere in a stationary or decadent condition, it is the Christian world which has advanced in learning and education, in surgical and medical knowledge, in arts, crafts and sciences. And so vast has been the growth of Christian wealth, power and influence, that of 233 millions of Muḥammadans in the world, only thirty-five millions, including sixteen in Turkey, are at the present time under Muslim rule; and of the remainder, 161 millions are under Christian rule or protection, and thirty-four millions, of whom the bulk are in China, are under non-Christian rulers.* In a word, Christianity in many quarters is acknowledged to be the winning side to-day. The Christian expects to be treated with respect, and his expectation is seldom disappointed. This great and growing prestige may thankfully be counted a valuable asset by the worker among Muslims, and used for his Master's glory and the extension of His Kingdom.

(ii.) *The influence of Christian character.*—The Qur'ān speaks as follows of Christians: 'We gave Him (Jesus) the Gospel: and we put in the hearts of those that followed Him compassion and mercy.' † And again, 'Thou shalt surely find the most violent of all men in enmity against the true believers to be the Jews and the idolaters; and thou shalt surely find those among them to be the most inclinable to entertain friendship for the true believers who say, "We are Christians." This cometh to pass because there are priests and monks among them, and because they are not elated with pride.' ‡ The European Christian, at all events, is generally credited by Muslims with kindness, generosity, justice, fairness and truthfulness—the very opposite of the qualities, as they themselves admit, so common among themselves. Amid the profound and universal distrust which they entertain for one another, they feel that they can safely trust him. A Persian gentleman allowed a European an unusual amount of liberty in his house and garden, because he trusted his honour, and knew that he would not abuse the confidence placed in him. The traveller in the heart of Arabia mentioned above, who was for two years in daily danger of his life because he avowed himself a Christian, tells us 'how those same fanatics thought he could be

* Rev. S. M. Zwemer, D.D., in *The Mohammedan World of To-day*, ch. xix.

† Sūr 57, *Hadid* 27.

‡ Sūr 5, *Mā'idah* 85.

trusted where they would not trust their own co-religionists, and thus considered a Christian to be one who would not deceive.' Such testimony is noteworthy, as showing how confidence in Christian integrity can overcome religious bigotry and racial antipathy and the disfavour arising from uncongenial manners and customs. On the other hand, a certain amount of dissatisfaction and disappointment is sometimes felt by Muslims in regard to their religious teachers, who, instead of being patterns of unworldliness and unselfishness, are often found to be as grasping and close-fisted as others.

(iii.) *Inquisitiveness and fondness for religious discussion.*—In the nearer and middle East, and excluding the far-off Chinese Muslims, these are such common characteristics of the Muslim as to be almost reckoned as universal. Thus, for instance, we read of the upper class Muḥammadans of Jerusalem, that they are 'not only most friendly, but many of them are really anxious to know what we believe and teach—not because they want to become Christians, but because they are inquisitive and are interested in religious subjects.' In a large Persian village, the Rev. C. H. Stileman was preaching to a number of people in his room in the caravanserai, when the venerable chief Mullā of the same place came in, and started the well-known objection that the Gospel is abrogated by the Qur'ān. This having been conclusively answered, Mr. Stileman writes that he was 'plied with questions for the next half-hour!' At Nablous, Palestine, we read of Muslims repairing to the book-shop primed with formidable questions prepared for them by their learned men, and keenly enjoying the discussion of them. All this is a great help to the missionary. It makes it never difficult to introduce the subject of his message. Sooner or later the conversation is sure to come round to religious topics. Such discussion must be looked upon, in places to which current literature has scarcely penetrated and books are rare, as supplying the place which the latter occupy in more civilized and developed countries.

(iv.) *Responsiveness.*—The Oriental is in a remarkable degree amenable to courteous treatment and responsive to just and appropriate appeals to good sense and reason. One or two slight illustrations of this may be given. An aged Persian, well known as having formerly been a Bābī, was on several occasions abused by a boy in the open street. The old man did not at first perceive that the words were directed against him, but when he discovered it, he repressed the old Adam's desire to curse the boy, because he now desires to live according to Christ's teaching, and silenced him with these words: 'When you go home this evening ask your father whether I am a good man, and if he says I am, why do you abuse me? But if he says I am a bad man, why does he greet me with "Salām"?' This little story has a pathetic ending. The poor boy was taken ill the same day, and died about a week after. The writer was walking past a number of small

urchins loitering in a country lane one evening, when they were rather free in their exclamations of 'dog!' and after we had passed a small clod or two began to fly in his direction: the phrase is designedly used, as such missiles do not usually seem intended to do more than perhaps *just* reach you. So he turned and stopped and asked why they treated him so 'unkindly,' and what bad things he had done to them that they should treat him so badly in return. Whereupon several of them at once began to clear themselves from blame, and one of them called out, 'Forgive it.' This ready responsiveness is a thing to be thankfully acknowledged, studied, valued, and turned to a good account. The most impracticable and impossible of Orientals (and some of them can be very much so sometimes, though it must in fairness be acknowledged that the fault is not always or wholly on their side, but often arises, in part at least, from their point of view being overlooked or only partially realized) only wants the magnetism of the right, sympathetic touch (for is he not a big, overgrown child after all?) to transform him into smiling, willing cheerfulness.

(C) THE STRENGTH OF ISLĀM.

(i.) *Islām claims to be the one true religion*, embodying the final and complete revelation of God to man through the last and greatest of the prophets. Its prescribed forms of ceremonial and worship are for all times. Its sacred book is supposed to represent the very highest form of inspiration. Its elaborate law claims to embrace the whole of life and conduct. No follower of this religion will be finally lost.

Islām, moreover, countenances to a certain extent the two other great book religions, Judaism and Christianity, with which it came into contact in its original Arabian home, and enhances its own merits by the patronizing attitude it adopts towards them. It acknowledges their prophets as genuine, and at least theoretically accepts their sacred books. At this point, however, the process of belittlement and depreciation comes in. Those great religions, it is alleged, were true only for their own age and people. The accidentals of religions have been changed since then. The eternal principles of them all are the same. And if there appears to be a great difference at the present time between Islām and those religions, it is easy to assert that this is so because Jews and Christians have corrupted the sacred oracles committed to them. If a great gulf divides them from the Muslim, the simple explanation given is that they have not with open and unprejudiced mind submitted to God's latest revelation. In a word, the only true religion for the present age is Islām, and the only 'true believer' is the Muslim. All others are still blindly wandering in ignorance or error, in obstinate perversity or blasphemous fatuity. Such an estimate of themselves and of all

others outside their own charmed circle must obviously afford to those who entertain it ample grounds for a very complete satisfaction with themselves.

(ii.) *Islām appeals strongly both to the religious instinct and to unregenerate human nature.*—(*a*) It omits those things which are humiliating and repugnant to the pride of the natural man. It possesses no mysteries like the Trinity and the Incarnation and Divinity of Christ, before which the human intellect must bow in humble and submissive faith. It rejects those doctrines which wound man's pride, such as the Atonement, coupled with man's inability to save himself and the absence of all merit from even his best actions. It demands no radical change of heart and mind, nor bids the 'true believer' to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts in the maintenance of a constant struggle with his lower nature. No wonder that adherents are received very easily into the fold of Islām! 'A family of three, a man with his wife and daughter, apostatized to Islām. The open renunciation was preceded by impurity of life and by the contraction of debts, yet the man was received without inquiry and without instruction on simply repeating the Kalimah, as a recognized adherent of Muḥammadanism.'

(*b*) Further, Islām gratifies the natural man by admitting much that is congenial to his lower nature, by its formalities and works of merit and self-righteousness, by its low standard in reference to sin, holiness, repentance, and pardon, and by the indulgence it permits in such matters as polygamy, concubinage, temporary marriages (among the Shī'āhs), and slave-holding. The Gospel * finds men with strong passions and full of infirmity, but teaches us that God gives grace to overcome, and that we can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us. The Qur'ān, however, represents God as indulgent, and the ground of this very indulgence is the weakness and frailty of human nature. God wishes to make the burden of duty light because man has been created weak (Sūr. 4, *Nisā* 27). 'This is the comfortable religion of human nature.' There is not in it the uncompromising spirit of the Gospel. 'The Qur'ān never tries to put entire restraint on the passions, but is content with doing so *partially*. Conscience is silenced on such principles with no great effort.' There is nothing here like working out our own salvation with fear and trembling.

(*c*) In the third place, Islām contains a large element of truth —much that appeals to the conscience and the religious consciousness of man and is stamped as true by their verdict. Under this category comes the doctrine of the One true God, heaven and hell, the punishment of sin, the reward of the righteous, and the revelation of God's will through His servants the prophets. In every case the truth as taught by Islām is but a 'half-truth'—an incomplete or perverted version of the truth. And the

* See *The Missionary*, Dec., 1853, pp. 352 sqq.

reception of these imperfect instalments of truth has a twofold effect upon the recipients. It creates within them the inward witness of their own hearts that these things are true (for how can the principle of truth contained be denied?); and not unnaturally it leads them on a step further to the unwarranted conclusion that this is the whole of God's truth. At the same time it re-acts upon those other elements of their religion, in which proud, weak human nature is too tenderly dealt with, and lends strength and support to the gratifying persuasion that these things also are from God and true. 'The *ulamā'* make no mistake. Whatever they say is correct,' said an uneducated and bigoted Persian one day in closing a discussion with a friendly Armenian. These things *are* true, they *must* be true, and anything that differs from them *cannot* possibly be true—this is the spirit engendered by Islām.

Islām thus appeals both to the higher and to the lower elements in man's nature. It claims to bring him the majestic truth of the Unity and make him safe for the eternal hereafter, while not worrying him with a too exacting standard or troubling him with excessive demands here below. In a word, it is 'a very comfortable faith' for the heart of the natural man. 'God is minded to make (His religion) light unto you' * is the spirit of it. Paradise is a bargain—and a cheap one, too. For it cannot reasonably be contended that the observance of the outward demands of Islām, including the Month of Fasting, are at all a heavy price to pay for the proud assurance and complacent self-righteousness which they impart.

Many a Muḥammadan seems to be more or less conscious that the profession of the 'true faith' by no means debars him from the enjoyment of 'the pleasures of sin for a season.' It is, of course, a perversion of the teaching of Islām; but it only too easily follows from the belief that no Muslim can perish eternally. A Muslim teacher is reported on good authority to have thus expressed himself: 'Christianity is a narrow path; there is room for you in it, but not for your sins. Now, the whole faith of Islām is a broad road; there is in it plenty of room for both you and your sins,' † words which suggest a curious comparison with the teaching of Christ about the 'broad' and 'straitened' ways.‡ The following is an illustration of this from real life. Miss A. Gertrude Hubbard, of the North Africa Mission, writes—

> The Muḥammadan religion is so easy that it just suits the sinful human heart, that wants a religion and yet wishes to continue in its sin. A man may do all he likes, and yet be sure of Paradise if he die a 'believer'—in Muḥammad, of course. A man told me a while ago, after I had been talking with him: 'Because I am a Muḥammadan, I can

* Sūr. 4, *Nisā* 27.

† Quoted by the Rev. W. St. Clair-Tisdall, D.D., at the Church Congress at Great Yarmouth. See *The Times*, Oct. 3, 1907, p. 10.

‡ St. Matt. vii. 13, 14.

steal, or lie, or kill, or do highway robbery, or live an impure life, or any other sin I like, but at the last I shall receive the mercy of God through the Prophet.' 'Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap,' says God's word, and I told him he could not sow nettles and expect to reap corn.*

The judgment of the Muḥammadan is therefore the same as the judgment pronounced by the Lord upon the 'hypocritical' Scribes and Pharisees of His day, and a modern writer thus expresses it in setting forth one interpretation of the dogmatic aspect of the parable of Dives and Lazarus, of which he says that it is 'in one word, the judgment of Pharisaic hypocrisy under its twofold aspect of self-indulgence veiled by petty austerities, and of moral license disguised by a scrupulous regard to legal minutiæ.' †

(iii.) The great truths of Christianity centre in the person of its Founder. In a different way Islām is bound up with the personality, even to the minutest details, of its prophet; in all matters, small or great, he is their perfect example. Hence among the influences which contribute to the strength of Islām must be mentioned the *excessive veneration paid to Muḥammad.* Being regarded as the last and greatest of the prophets, his followers and admirers have not flinched from exalting his claims to wonder and reverence by every title which imagination and ingenuity could suggest. The circumstances of his childhood, life, and mission, his physical and mental qualities, his habits, excellences, and miracles are all treated in this way, and surrounded with a wonderful halo of the marvellous. Two or three instances must suffice here. 'His spirit was created first, and the spirits of all other beings were derived from his.' 'That prince's blessed body was so light-like that when he walked against the sun or the moon it produced no shadow.' 'God ennobled him in this world with His beauteous grace as He had not done to any other creature.' ‡ Perhaps the following cannot be surpassed in this line. It is addressed to Muḥammad. 'No man, in whatsoever condition he is, can resemble God so much as thou dost. But if there could be an image to represent God as He is, it could be no other than thyself.' §

(iv.) *Social prestige.*—Among heathen tribes and peoples, where Muḥammadanism is in the ascendant through the power and influence of Muḥammadan rulers and traders, as in parts of Africa, there is a strong inducement, in order to escape oppression and obtain equal rights, to embrace a religion which at once places the lowest in a position of equality with the Muslim. Exactly the

* *All Nations*, June, 1903, p. 118.

† Professor A. B. Bruce's *Parabolic Teaching of Christ*, p. 381.

‡ Koelle has collected a great number of such exaggerated statements from Muslim authors, in his *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, book ii.

§ *The Missionary*, Dec., 1853, p. 355, quoting the seven songs of Hosain Said from Chardin, in Southey's Commonplace Book, series 4, p. 232.

opposite, of course, is the case in countries under direct Muḥammadan rule or Christian overlordship where the convert to Christianity becomes at once an object of hatred and contempt, and is sometimes debarred from office and positions of trust, as in Java. So naturally is the non-Muslim looked upon as the lawful prey of the superior Muslim that Dr. W. R. S. Miller, speaking of the spread of Muḥammadanism in Hausaland, gives on good authority the remarkable fact that when prosperous places are brought under the dominion of the 'Muḥammadan Empire' in that land, the people are actually discouraged from becoming Muḥammadans, as they form a hunting-ground for slaves and pay a larger tribute as Heathen than they would do as Muḥammadans.*

(v.) *Christian rule or suzerainty.*—As a further cause of the strength of Islām to-day must the fact, strange as it seems, be mentioned that the religion of 'the Prophet' flourishes most at the present time under the shadow of Christian powers. No longer backed by all the power of mighty states, and having no more opportunity to extend its sway by the sword of conquest, Islām, in these circumstances, has to resort to peaceful means. Under the equitable rule of Christian governments, it is obliged to dissociate itself from the oppression and injustice which are its natural concomitants. At Mombasa, for instance, we are told that, in presence of a stable government, many of the up-country heathen people come to the coast, are well treated by the Muḥammadan townsfolk, given work and food, and pressed to embrace the Qur'ān; and during a recent famine in the same region hundreds of pagans were given food and shelter by the Muḥammadans, and told they had to confess and follow 'the true faith.'† In the Basa country, of Western Equatorial Africa, again, in regions once soaked with blood by the Muḥammadan conquerors and raiders, one reads that, 'from constant intercourse with Muḥammadans under English rule,' the people 'will soon forget their old wrongs,' and embrace the religion of Muḥammad, unless Christian teachers are quickly sent to them.‡ Another writer, speaking of the principal Muḥammadan states of West Africa, tells us that 'a peaceful Islām under British rule, free to proselytize while Christian missionaries are hampered, will be a greater power' to overcome than all the powers of Heathenism. The administration of these vast regions under British suzerainty is largely left to the capable, but cruel, Muḥammadan Emirs. And so we read, with real regret, that the government 'becomes involved in backing up Islām politically, and inevitably religiously also. Repairing broken-down mosques by order, subscriptions to Muḥammadan feasts,

* See *C.M.S. Intelligencer*, June, 1903, quoted in *C.M.S. Report*, 1903–04, pp. 76, 77.

† Annual Letter of the Rev. F. Burt, Church Missionary Society, dated Mombasa, Nov. 22, 1902.

‡ Rev. J. D. Aitken, writing of the Basa Bunus.

forcible circumcision of heathen soldiers on enlistment, etc., are some of the ways in which the general trend is indicated.' * British rule in Egypt and India has had a similar effect upon the prospects of Islām. The Rev. A. Watson, D.D., of the American U.P. Mission in the first-named, points out that the possession by Muḥammadans of nearly all the executive posts in the administration gives immense strength to Islām in an Eastern country, where religion enters into every department of life, and is 'a chief reason in the decision of all questions and a principal moving power in all actions;' and he declares that he does 'not hesitate to say that the British occupation, instead of weakening Islām, has strengthened it.' † And similarly in the case of North India: 'At the close of the reign of Aurangzeb the political power of the Muslims rapidly began to wane, and eventually gave place to the Christian dominion of Great Britain. Christian conquest brought to all classes religious liberty; and so the Christian became deliverer to the Muslims who were being oppressed by their Hindu and Sikh conquerors. Under the peaceful rule of the Christian Islām is enabled to reorganize its forces and to propagate its tenets among the people without let or hindrance.' ‡

(D) Comparatively small Success hitherto of Christian Missions to Muslims.

Some of the reasons for the comparatively slow progress of Christian Missions apply to all ages and countries, and are not peculiar to Christianity when confronted with Islām. It is not necessary here to do more than briefly allude to these. In the case of the poor, pre-occupation with the cares and toils of life is a great obstacle to the reception of the Gospel. Lack of energy, fear of novelty, dread of persecution, contempt, and the disruption of home ties, and the pride, partly racial, which is unwilling to make admission of error—all operate in the same direction.

(i.) But a more pertinent reason than these for the comparative lack of success under consideration is to be found in *the absence of organized missionary effort* directed to Muslims. For many centuries little or nothing was done to evangelize Muslims. The name and work of Raymond Lull, in the latter part of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth, stand out conspicuous in solitary grandeur. Another great name at the beginning of the nineteenth century is that of Henry Martyn, who, though a chaplain of the East India Company, will ever be remembered for his labours and controversies in Persia and his translation of the New Testament into the language of that country. It was only the latter half of the nineteenth century which saw the beginning of

* Dr. W. R. S. Miller in *The Mohammedan World of To-day*, pp. 46, 47.
† *The Mohammedan World of To-day*, pp. 30, 31.
‡ *Ib.*, p. 151, paper by Rev. E. M. Wherry, D.D., on 'Islām in North India.'

larger efforts to bring the Gospel to the Muḥammadans. Previously to that time, not only was the task an infinitely more difficult one than it is now, because of the perils and hardships of foreign travel, the lack of communications, and the limitations to intercourse with foreign and distant lands, but the great mistake was made of despising the foe, looking with contempt upon Islām and its founder, and even speaking of him as a 'vile impostor.' We shall not be wrong, too, in saying that there has been loss of power and effectiveness through the want of special training of missionaries to Muḥammadans.

(ii.) Other reasons may be found in the *Christian religion itself*, or that which passes under its name. Four may be given.

(*a*) *Incompatible items*, by which are meant stumbling-blocks to the Muslim, arising from doctrines or practices in vogue among Christians, such as the Trinity, or the use of certain articles of food or drink.

(*b*) *Practices current in a debased form of Christianity*, such as those of the Oriental Churches, which seem to a Muḥammadan to savour of idolatry.

(*c*) *The spiritual elevation and uncompromising demands of the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ.*—We have already had occasion to mention that one cause of the strength of Islām is the indulgence it accords to the natural inclinations of the heart of fallen man. The religion of Jesus Christ, on the contrary, unflinchingly and uncompromisingly opposes those instincts, and makes large demands for holiness, purity of heart, and self-denial. The Gospel message has a twofold effect, according to the state of heart of the hearer; and while it is admirably calculated to comfort the heart of the earnest inquirer and genuine seeker after peace, it also arouses all the opposition of the rebellious and unrenewed will. This is true all over the world, for the heart of man, under whatever coloured skin it beats, is very much the same everywhere; and everywhere the great foe to the reception of divine truth is the opposition of the will. This is certainly not least true of those countries in which the lofty, ideal standard of Christianity is in sharp contrast with the gross accommodations and lenient indulgences of Islām.

(*d*) Lastly, and with sadness, must be named *the low standard and inconsistent lives of many professing* Christians in Muslim lands, who bring reproach upon that holy Faith of which they themselves possess little more than the name. The mere allusion to the melancholy fact is all that is necessary here.

CHAPTER II.

THE MISSIONARY.

'The Apostles inquired of Jesus, Son of Mary, With whom should we associate? His Excellency answered, With the man the sight of whom reminds you of God, whose speech increases your knowledge, and whose actions incline your hearts to the other world.—MUḤAMMADAN TRADITION.

WHAT are the special qualifications needed by the missionary to Muslims, to insure that his witness to the Truth and his endeavours to press it home should be as effective as possible? Can any general principles be laid down as to the best attitude to adopt towards the Muslim in order to secure this object? The missionary brings to his work something at least of the learning of the Schools, a cultivated mind, refined tastes and habits, and the citizenship of no mean country. Along with all these he possesses firm convictions, an earnest desire to benefit his fellow-men in the highest sphere, enthusiasm for a sacred cause, and loyal devotion to his Master. But the difficulties he has to encounter, especially at the outset, when he is a stranger in a strange land, are neither few nor small. 'I am more and more persuaded,' wrote Bishop French, 'it is a very rare and hard thing to be a real good missionary.'* And what missionary is there, whose heart at one time or another has not echoed these words? How, then, is the missionary to use most wisely and turn to the best account his little stock of qualifications, which seem so slight and feeble when brought into contact with the Muslim world in great cities and countries? Each worker of any experience will doubtless have his own plans and methods of working and influencing, in a word, of using the individual talents with which God has entrusted him. But are there no qualities and endowments, either natural or that may be acquired, which are specially needed by the man or woman who would labour among Muslims? 'Christian things, done in a Christian way,' sums up most of them. It may help us, however, in view of the recognized difficulty of the Muḥammadan field, to expand this general principle into a number of particulars.

Before entering upon these, a few words in a general way may be said as to the stamp of man required.

(*a*) The missionary should be *one who carries weight*,—the

* *Life*, II. p. 269.

weight of influence and character. 'It is clear,' wrote Mr. French, in 1876, when advocating the proposed 'Cambridge Mission to Delhi,' 'that colourless and savourless character will not do; but men whose influence will tell, search, and penetrate.' * While this is more or less true everywhere, it is pre-eminently so in the East. A Consul in Persia declared that if anything is to be won from the Persians, it must be through personal influence. An Armenian telegraphist in a small town of the same country occupied a really remarkable position among the leading residents, which was curiously shown on one occasion, when he was ill, by his receiving as presents from them no less than sixty or seventy dishes of food supposed to be suitable for invalids. He attributed the friendly estimation in which he was held solely to the weight of his personal influence. Still more signal instances of the telling effect of character are to be found among the famous band of Punjab heroes, of two of whom the late Rev. Robert Clark wrote that 'the natives used to say there were two *ferishtas* (angels) among the English in the Punjab; that they were so good that, if all the English had been like them, the whole country would have been Christian by seeing them and witnessing their actions, without the aid of any missionaries at all; and that these two ferishtas were Sir Donald MacLeod and General Reynell Taylor.' † Above all others, the character of the Christian missionary should not be wanting in this telling effectiveness. His ruling purpose and tender love for souls should express themselves in such strong, clear lineaments in his life and character as to be unmistakably recognized and acknowledged.

(*b*) The missionary must be *a man with a message*, which he believes to be of supreme importance, and which he earnestly and affectionately desires to bring to the notice of his Muḥammadan brethren. General Reynell Taylor, founder of the Derajāt Mission, one of the two ferishtas just mentioned, thus describes in a letter to Sir Herbert Edwardes the sort of man the missionary should be:—

> The kind of man I picture to myself as likely to do good is one who should be well acquainted with Muḥammadan history, creed, etc.; one who could say, 'Come, I have got a story to tell you which is well worth your hearing!' He would certainly get hearers, as the whole community are idle enough; and if the speaker be equal to telling his tale with all the force that belongs to it, and his telling be blessed, there would be results sooner or later, but whether in our time in India or not it would be hard to say.‡

Some years ago, an Indian Christian called attention to the noteworthy change that had come over missionary preaching. It no longer consists of vigorous attacks on other religions, nor of invidious comparisons, but is rather of the nature of the delivery

* *Life*, I. p. 324.
† Quoted in *Life of Bishop French*, I. p. 125.
‡ *Life of Bishop French*, I. p. 129.

of a message—'missionaries are anxious to preach in the spirit of love Christ as Saviour of sinners, and to avoid as far as possible all controversy.' *

'If asked,' wrote Leupolt, '"What do you preach?" I reply with the Apostle Paul, "We are determined to know nothing among the Heathen but Christ, and Him Crucified." For if the sinner is to be brought to the knowledge of his sins, he must be led to the foot of the Cross; if he is to repent of them, he must look at the sufferings of the Son of God; if he is to receive forgiveness of his sins, and to find peace with God, he must seek these blessings through the death of Christ; if he is to obtain motives for crucifying his affections and lusts, and strength to live a holy life, he must draw them from the cross of Christ; and if he wish to join the heavenly choir hereafter, he must now learn to sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." † We therefore preach the Lord Jesus Christ, as our "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption" ', ‡, §—never a message better worth the telling or more deserving of being told in the best possible way.

(*c*) *The missionary should be natural and true to himself.*—While imitating St. Paul's example (1 Cor. ix. 22), and striving to be to the Oriental an Oriental in tact, courtesy, and appreciative insight, it is equally important that the Western should in other respects be true to himself and the lofty standards and ideals he has had set before him in his Western home—in a word, to be all that is implied in the endowment of a Christian scholar and gentleman, and the gifts and zeal of an enthusiastic soul-winner. Here he may give himself a free hand, and rest assured that the instinct and insight of the Oriental will not judge amiss.

(A) EARNESTNESS.

The earnest purpose of the missionary needs to be always maintained, and seriously and stedfastly pursued. 'Seriousness in argument,' wrote Henry Martyn, when reviewing his labours at Dinapore and Patna, 'seems most desirable, for without it they laugh away the clearest proofs. Zeal for making proselytes they are used to, and generally attribute to a false motive; but a tender concern manifested for their souls is certainly new to them, and seemingly produces corresponding seriousness in their minds.' ‖ Let us never forget in all our intercourse with Muḥammadans, that it is our aim and object with God's help to touch the heart; to appeal to the conscience; to lovingly and earnestly indicate the one true remedy for the sins and woes of fallen man, however much they may

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1900–1, p. 238. † Rev. v. 12.
‡ 1 Cor. i. 30. § Leupolt, *Recollections*, pp. 60, 61.
‖ George Smith's *Henry Martyn*, p. 217.

struggle and rebel against it, like a little child against the salutary treatment of a skilful physician; to direct them to the best of all books, and encourage and stimulate them to the prayerful study of it in dependence on the Holy Spirit for light and guidance—which is God's voice speaking to the 'opened,' willing ear.

Visits are sometimes paid to the missionary out of curiosity, sometimes from less worthy motives. There are many who look upon religious discussion only as a war of words in which the more clever disputant will come off best. Muhammadans in Persia have been known to say, 'We go to —— and smoke the clergyman's cigarettes and drink his tea, and it does not matter much what we say.' But whatever may be the precise motive of his visitors, what a solemn responsibility rests upon the minister of the everlasting Gospel! What a precious opportunity is his, for which he should be prepared to deliver a faithful, earnest message! Our acceptance of the Master's commission means nothing less than this, that we regard those to whom we are sent as being in a terrible and pitiable state of blindness towards God and His Truth, in spite of all their vaunted light, and superior knowledge, and their contempt and hatred for those who differ from them. Oh! for the consistent earnestness, that would keep us ever living on the highest plane, and never for a moment deflecting from the most exalted sense of our high calling and privilege! How this is brought home to us, when one and another of the friends and acquaintances with whom we have discoursed upon religious questions is called away! Oh! for the spirit that would enable each one of us always to speak 'as a dying man to dying men,' so that the message may lose nothing of its paramount importance by any failure on our part in solemn and urgent representation, but that both our consciences may be clear in this matter, and that others may not through any fault of ours lose their chance of hearing, understanding, and 'having faith unto the saving of the soul'! * 'It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.' † May God vouchsafe this resolute, unswerving faithfulness to all those who are called to be 'stewards' of His 'mysteries' to Muslims!

(*a*) Two or three questions arise in connexion with this subject. The first concerns intercourse with natives other than that which is expressly and avowedly for the consideration of religious subjects. The Rev. W. Smith, C.M.S., formerly missionary at Benares, thus expressed his opinion on this subject—

> While it is our bounden duty to have all the intercourse we can with the natives *on religious subjects*, it is in other respects rather to be avoided, as calculated to injure, at least, our own spirituality of mind.‡

The words in italics are qualified by the Editor in a footnote in

* Heb. x. 39. † 1 Cor. iv. 2.

‡ *The Missionary*, Aug., 1852, p. 225.

the following way: 'We would rather say, *in a religious way*,' which he explains to mean, in such a temper and spirit 'that whatever be our incidental occupation, neither we nor they are likely to forget our high calling as ministers of Christ.' This strikes the right note. The more freely we can mix with the people of the country the better, always provided that such intercourse be deliberately and really made subservient, even though not immediately directed, to the great object of winning men to Christ.

(*b*) Another question is this. Is the smart answer, the clever retort, consistent with the earnestness and seriousness of which we have just been speaking? One perhaps has heard of shrewd retorts or arguments, which with relentless ingenuity seize hold of the weak spot, make a good point, and are calculated to raise a laugh, but nothing more. Such tactics are simply inadmissible. But there seems no reason why earnestness should necessarily preclude a clever, incisive answer, or novel tactics, provided that the main object of faithful dealing with immortal souls is never allowed to drift into the background. According to this view, a Persian convert's retort that the real 'Kāfir' was the man who bowed down to a little piece of earth, in allusion to the prayer tablet made of earth from Kerbela, which the Shī'ah Muslim places on the ground before him when praying, and touches with his forehead as he prostrates himself; or the somewhat humorous condition upon which a Peshawar missionary many years ago held a discussion with the village Mullā at a chief's house in the district, viz. that whichever side was worsted should embrace the religion of the other, is allowable. In a matter of this kind there is room for difference of opinion. The personal equation varies. That which would be permissible and helpful for one, would be the reverse for another. Each must decide for himself, always keeping the main object in view, and laying every power and talent at the Master's feet.

(*c*) Once again, the very earnestness that has been spoken of will absolutely preclude any unfairness in argument, or taking advantage of the ignorance of the hearer, even though this may involve a confession of inability to give an immediate answer to some question that has suddenly been raised. Bishop Lefroy admirably points out the moral victory that such an admission inspires, and the moral effect that it will be sure to have, if not on the leading antagonists, at least on the majority of the listeners.*

(B) CLEARNESS AND DEFINITENESS.

We must have a distinct, definite message, and be ready to deliver it simply and clearly whenever occasion offers, and be sure that it has been understood. As a rule, a man receives no special

* On 'Preparation of Workers for Work among Moslems,' in *Methods of Mission Work among Moslems*, pp. 213, 214.

training to enable him to cope with the difficulties of Muḥammadan work, though these have been amply recognized, together with the need of the special preparation of the worker, as at the Lambeth Conference of 1897. The Committee appointed by that Conference to consider and report upon the subject of Foreign Missions, made this among other recommendations with reference to work among the adherents of Islām, 'That those who undertake this work should, as a rule, be men who have received a special training for it, and should be exclusively set apart for it.' The reverse of this, however, is generally the case. The missionary destined for Muḥammadan work may perhaps attend a course of lectures on different religions, but he receives no definite training to fit him for the difficult task of presenting the Truth to Muslims, and coping with them in argument, but is left to pick up such information as he can from any chance books that he may read, and in the school of experience. This is unfair both to the missionary and to the interests of Truth. If he has not a clear message to deliver, presented in a way suited to his hearers, and can only give inconclusive answers if questioned and challenged, what reason for surprise is it if the Muḥammadan thinks that he has little to the point to say or communicate, and is actually confirmed and strengthened in his own belief?

A just and accurate conception, then, of the relative positions and mutual relations of Christianity and Islām is essential to success. It goes without saying that the missionary is fully persuaded in his own mind of the truths he is sent forth to proclaim. But it by no means follows that he will be equally apt and ready to persuade others, unless he has an intimate acquaintance with the system he is opposing, and has given careful attention to such questions as these: Where, and how far, is our opponents' view of truth correct, so as to command our assent? Where is it faulty, deficient, or distorted? and has also carefully considered the nature of the appeals to heart and conscience, which are most likely to strike home. To quote again from French's description of the kind of men required for the proposed 'Cambridge Mission to Delhi': 'They must,' he says, 'be qualified also for close and keen investigation of those particular wants of the people they have to deal with, which Christianity is adapted to meet, and the special difficulties they find in embracing it.' * If this ideal is steadily pursued, we ought to be able to give simple, definite teaching, to present the Truth in clear-cut outline, and impart instruction at once appropriate and in a way not unacceptable, being workmen that need not to be ashamed, 'handling aright the word of truth.' †

The revered Henry Martyn seems to have made a deep impression upon the Persians by the clearness and strength of his arguments, 'an impression which was only deepened by the youthfulness of the disputant, and his evident enfeeblement by disease.'

* *Life of Bishop French*, I. pp. 324, 325. † 2 Tim. ii. 15.

'He came here,' they told Sir R. Kerr Porter, 'in the midst of us, sat down encircled by our wise men, and made such remarks upon our Qur'ān as cannot be answered. Our King has called upon the wise men to answer them, but they cannot.' * It is a beautiful and touching picture. We should strive after the same grasp and power. There is no excuse for want of clearness of view. It is attainable, and it is the bounden duty of every missionary to spare no effort to attain it. We cannot hope to emulate the Mullās in those Arabic studies to which they devote so many years. But if we take pains to acquire accurate views of Islām and its relation to Christianity, and if this be backed up by a working knowledge of Arabic, and especially the Qur'ān, together with one or two standard commentaries and collections of traditions, as Bishop Lefroy suggests, † our ability to win the respectful hearing of the Muslim will be vastly increased. If Jewish converts of old were enjoined to be ready with intelligent reasons for their 'hope,' ‡ much more must the man or woman who would be a missionary to Muslims be ready to deliver the message with all the force of reason and persuasiveness.

Plain speaking, always tempered with tact and good sense, is the right policy towards Muslims. 'We have found,' says Dr. S. M. Zwemer, 'that neither compromise nor a paring down of the Truth, but positiveness and a full Gospel awaken the respect, if not the assent, of intelligent Muslims.' § 'He who will speak to Muslims,' writes 'An Armenian Christian Evangelist,' '*must not be afraid of them, or hesitate to speak the truth in love.* They respect the honest man who will not dissimulate or conceal his real convictions. We must believe that we shall not suffer unless God will it, and if He does we must be ready.' ‖ And not only is plain dealing the right policy, it is also a necessary duty. The truths of the Gospel must be clearly represented, for it is only these which give the value to the message. There is a tendency among the uneducated to accept simple Christian teaching, because in their ignorance they are not aware that there is any incongruity between it and Islām. Hence a fellow-missionary thus speaks of Dr. Sterling's Arabic addresses at Gaza:—

> He plainly and fearlessly sets forth Jesus as the divine Son of God, and shows them the fallacies of their own creed. He finds, if he does not do this, they only put the new teaching on the top of their old beliefs, and their faith remains unshaken.¶

'In dealing with them,' writes the Doctor himself a few years later, 'we must unravel before we can weave.'

* *The Missionary*, Aug., 1852, quoting the *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, May, 1852.
† *Methods of Mission Work among Moslems*, pp. 222-224.
‡ 1 Pet. iii. 15.
§ *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 721.
‖ *Ib.*, p. 725.
¶ *C.M.S. Report*, 1896-97, p. 150.

In dealing with the Muḥammadan inquirer or controversialist, a further point may be added. Desultory, discursive, unmethodical discussion is to be avoided. His particular point of view and object in coming having been first ascertained, a definite course and plan should be marked out, if not by mutual agreement, at all events in the mind of the missionary, and steadily followed. The writer would recommend having a sheet of paper for each inquirer or catechumen, and noting down briefly the main subjects of each interview. This will prevent overlapping and repetition, and secure a regular sequence. Point after point can be dealt with in succession, difficulties met, and the Truth gradually unfolded. The practice of keeping some record of discussions held is a valuable one for the missionary himself, for the clearing up and strengthening of his own views. 'The diary,' wrote the Rev. W. Smith, of Benares, 'besides keeping up a lively sense of our duty and obligations, has other uses; e.g. I have often, in writing down an account of a discussion, obtained clearer views of the subject; and more cogent arguments than I thought of at the time have occurred to my mind, to be laid up for future occasions.' *

Lastly, let us always remember that the most important thing for acquiring that clearness and definiteness of which we have been speaking, is a strong grasp and thorough knowledge of the Word of God. There is nothing to equal it for meeting and dissipating difficulties and objections. There are few, if any, questions that any one has a right to ask, which cannot be answered from the Word of God itself, rightly appreciated and understood. From this inexhaustible mine they must be patiently and prayerfully dug out, and held in readiness for the proper occasion. The more we trust God's Word, the more competent shall we find it to be to vindicate its divine character by the dispelling of error and the resolving of doubts and questions, to the glory of God.

(C) TACT AND CONCILIATION.

We have to practise a genuine, unaffected, sympathetic tactfulness in all our dealings with Muḥammadans. It is needed in the daily round of life and work, in social intercourse, in itinerating, and when making fresh acquaintances, or seeking to establish friendly relations. While important at all times, it is never so necessary as in the actual delivery of our message. 'The offence of the Cross' has not indeed ceased, and never will. It may further be allowed that public preaching in bazars, etc., even though the utmost prudence is exercised, is always liable to interruption and disturbance by ignorant and fanatical spirits. But speaking generally, the present writer believes it to be possible to give a faithful presentment of Christian truth (not necessarily of the *whole* of it, however) on most occasions, public or private, in

* *The Missionary*, Aug., 1852, p. 225.

such a way as not to provoke the prejudices or excite the ill-feeling of Muḥammadans. '"Put yourself in his place" is a good rule.' So speaks the 'Armenian Christian Evangelist' already quoted. 'Try to feel as the man does, or the woman, with whom you are talking, whom you are striving to win, to make allowance for heredity, environment, training.'* He in whose heart the love of Christ is truly shed abroad, loves and longs for the lost sheep for whom his Saviour died. The magical power of that love will inspire a sympathetic insight, and Divine grace in the heart will quicken and perfect it.

The various classes into which Muḥammadans may be divided, according to their attitude towards the Christian Faith, will test to the utmost every power of resourceful Christian tactfulness that the worker possesses. There are those whose daily bread and social position depend on Islām: these are the Mullās and divinity students, most of whom are prejudiced and fanatical. Secondly, there is the large class of those who are utterly ignorant even of their own religion, and are easily moved by the first-named to oppose the Gospel. Of this class in Egypt Klein wrote—

> The commonest fellah feels himself far superior to the most learned Christian from a religious point of view, for he considers him a *mushrik* or idolater, worshipping three Gods, and pretending that God was born of a woman.†

The third class are those who are intellectually convinced of the truth of the Christian religion, but through fear of hostility or persecution proceed no further, and remain outwardly Muḥammadans. Yet there are those (and who shall say how many?) who sincerely embrace the Truth, but remain secret believers to the world at large, though perhaps known to be such by the inner circle of their own friends.‡ Another important class are those, generally respectable and well-to-do, who are content to go their way, and do not wish to have their belief interfered with, and who are more or less strongly attached to Islām. Such people do not want fresh light, and do not care to hear the Christian message; they probably do not believe that there is anything worth hearing outside the boundaries of their own religion, and if there is, they do not want the trouble of hearing it, nor are they at all inclined to embrace the lofty moral standard of Christianity, or incur the difficulties, social and domestic, and the mental and spiritual struggle, in which a disposition to give a favourable hearing to its claims would probably involve them. Other classes are those who are resolutely determined not to give ear to Christianity, and resist it to the utmost,

* *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 727.

† *History of the Church Missionary Society*, III. p. 515.

‡ This three-fold division is adopted and expanded from 'The Opinion of a Converted Muslim (Translated),' in the *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 730.

sometimes with a perception of the fact that Islām and Christianity cannot *both* be Heaven-sent religions, and sometimes with dawning consciousness of the weakness of Islām. And, lastly, there are the genuine seekers after Truth, and the many, comparatively free from fanatical prejudice, especially in mission schools and in villages and country districts, who are willing listeners to the life-history and the teaching of Jesus. A good idea of the various attitudes of Muslim women towards the Gospel may be gathered from the following interesting classification given by Miss Elverson in her report of house visitation in Jerusalem—

> In the city the Muslim women are very friendly, but of course there is a great variety in their real attitude towards the teaching. Some are afraid of it, some are curious, some inclined to argue; some appreciate its beauty, and are evidently relieved to find it commend itself to their conscience in a way they had not been led to expect; some assent to everything read or told, perhaps from ignorance of their own creed, or from desire to please.*

With all these different classes of hearers, it is obvious that the bow must not be drawn at a venture; but they must be fed with food convenient for them—milk for babes, and meat for those who are able to bear it.

(*a*) 'It is of prime importance,' to quote words written many years ago, but as true now as then, 'for the missionary to distinguish the errors of the will and those of the understanding.' † Thus, for instance, if we come across a case where a man has been a so-called inquirer for a number of years, we may shrewdly suspect that the heart and will, and not the mind, are at fault; or, again, in the case of the sudden resentment and dispersion of crowds of previously attentive listeners, it is not unlikely that the fault lies in the understanding, and that Christian truth has been too suddenly or strongly presented to the unaccustomed minds of the hearers.

(*b*) A conciliatory spirit should always be shown. In countries where liberty of conscience does not exist, this is the only attitude possible for any one who would do any work at all. It is not asserted here that there is no hypocrisy or selfish worldliness which is not really and truly deserving of denunciation. But, as a general rule, conciliation is proper for him who would follow the example of his Master. A friendly disposition will rarely fail to make itself felt and secure the respectful regard and thoughtful attention of those addressed. No one actuated by such a spirit would make 'harsh and irreverent onslaughts' on the creed of others. He would not needlessly raise points of difference at the outset, nor emphasize the gulf separating Muslim and Christian.

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1895-6, p. 141.

† *The Missionary*, vol. iv. part 2, p. 165, 'Fragmentary Hints on Missions,' x., 'Propagation of the Gospel in the East,' etc. Rendered into English from the High Dutch, and dedicated to the Most Honourable Corporation for the *Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*. (*London, 1718.*)

He would not be too severe in pinning his adversary upon the horns of a dilemma, or insist that, if *this* is true, *that* must be false. Still less will he ever be betrayed into a tone of superiority, scorn, or triumph. There are points of conflict enough, which will come up, doubtless, later on, and will have to be frankly stated and fairly faced. But at the beginning we may well lay stress on common points of view, and take pains to show where we agree. This will make it all the easier to deal with the difficult questions when they arise. Our duty will not, of course, have been fulfilled till we have, sooner or later, shown our friend, with such loving tact as the Holy Spirit's help, earnestly sought in prayer, shall enable us to exercise, where Christian truth modifies, corrects, or completes his view of it. We must lead him from the first to look to God's Word and His Holy Spirit rather than to *us* for light and guidance. For this has been our object all along, our ultimate and definitely realized purpose, to secure ready and willing attention to the Truth as it is in Jesus, and as it is enshrined in the Word of God.

(*c*) Our blessed Lord and His Apostle St. Paul both practised this principle, founded upon ordinary prudence, that in imparting instruction regard is to be had to the progress men have already made in knowledge. Christ said to His Apostles, 'I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.' *

St. Paul's manner of preaching in the synagogue was very different from his addresses to the Heathen. His 'resolve "to know nothing among" the Corinthians "save Jesus Christ and Him crucified" certainly never meant that, in going among the Heathen, he spoke to them at once on this high subject.' His whole soul, indeed, was filled with it, and 'because it was so—because he was firmly rooted and grounded in the love of Christ—he could calmly go out to meet those whom he was teaching. He could venture, as it were, to their intellectual point of view, to endeavour gently to lead them onward, removing first one obstacle and then another, till at last they too began to feel the attraction of the Cross.' This may be illustrated by a list of the topics urged by St. Paul upon the people of Lystra and of Athens. In the former case we find these mentioned—

'(1) The *absurdity of idol-worship*; (2) the existence of *one God*; (3) the fact of *Creation*; (4) man's fall and *alienation from God*; (5) the divine call now made on all men to *repent*; (6) the doctrine of *loving Providence*: (7) the *witness* borne by the facts of Providence,' which are all facts drawn from natural religion or attested by conscience. 'These topics all reappear in the sermon on Mars' Hill, but with some more specially Christian truths superadded. These additional topics are: (8) the doctrine of a future judgment; (9) to be held by a divinely appointed *Man*; (10) the doctrine of a general resurrection of the dead; (11) grounded on the fact of Christ's resurrection,' which were suited

* St. John xvi. 12; cp. 1 Cor. iii. 2: 'I fed you with milk, not with meat.'

to the cultured Athenians, who had speculated in moral and political subjects.*

A few instances and examples of Christian tactfulness may be given. The first is that of the late Rev. C. Fallscheer, known and beloved throughout Palestine, alike among Christians, Muslims, and Jews. A fellow-missionary thus depicts him—

> How did he, a 'plain' man, as he often called himself, acquire such a reputation? I think it was because he was Christ's man, not only in name but in deed. He followed the steps of his Master, and, in following 'hard,' caught something of his Master's spirit of love and compassion. And love never fails! He seemed to be able, by the grace of God, to identify himself with the people among whom he lived, and in many (lawful) ways to follow their customs. He had been able to fuse his own character with theirs, and (that rare thing) to apprehend the Eastern point of view.

Hence, when it became 'known that Christian Fallscheer was dead, a great sorrow fell upon the people, and Moslems and Christians alike cried with a bitter cry, "Our father is dead, and we are orphans."'†

Among the masters of Christian tact Bishop French will always rank high. Such was his influence with the Afghan borderers of the Derajāt that one tribe wished him to accompany them, and proposed to draw out a regular agreement. French was willing to consent, 'on condition,' he said, 'that you make me one of your Mullās, and listen to God's word at my mouth;' but they insisted that they would count him as one of their brothers.‡ His willingness to meet others on their own ground and in their own way, however, never led him to consent to what his judgment disapproved of. On one occasion this firmness had rather an amusing sequel. French was itinerating in the Peshāwar district, and, arriving at a certain village, sat down on the mouth of the well. A great crowd gathered round, and at last came 'a very grand-looking Mullā,' who, because French would not discuss the particular subject he wished, as he thought it 'not a fit one for an unlearned audience,' waved his arm, and the multitude melted away like snow, and he was left alone with 'two or three little boys and girls, who smiled to see the sāhib left all by himself.'§ French's tactful sympathy was particularly seen in his constant endeavours to select topics likely to be specially interesting and attractive to his hearers. Thus, on one occasion in a circle of Arabs in a village near Muscat, he says—

> From Isaiah xxxv. and Psalm lxxii. I showed some of the characteristic features of this kingdom (of God and Christ), and how the kings of

* From a review of the Rev. (afterwards Canon) W. B. Hopkins' 'Apostolic Missions: Five sermons preached before the University of Cambridge in May, 1852,' in *The Missionary*, vol. iv. part 4, pp. 293–295.

† *C.M.S. Report*, 1900–1, p. 170.

‡ *Life*, I. 148.

§ *Ib.*, I. 192.

Arabia and Seba should bring gifts (which seemed specially to arouse their attention).*

During his journey through Persia, French on several occasions spoke of Daniel and his prophecies of Christ and His Kingdom both to Jews and Persians. † When some Afghan tribesmen were reproached by a passing Hindū for listening to a 'feringhi Kāfir,' they answered, 'No, he speaks to us as a friend of our prophet.' ‡ Perhaps the most remarkable instance of the appositeness of French's subjects, together with his courage and patience, was when he attempted to soften and instruct a number of noisy and abusive women in an empty, roofed shed near one of the town gates of Muscat, where a pile of clean stones did duty for him as a bench to sit on. 'One violent lady is unpleasant, but ten or twelve at once a real trial,' remarked the good bishop quaintly and pathetically in referring to this occasion. He then describes how he tried various passages to draw their attention, *e.g.* Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27, 'A new heart will I give you, and a right spirit will I put within you;' 'I will take away the heart of stone.' He then appealed to their patriotic and religious feelings: 'There is no reason,' he said, 'why the Arabs and English should fight. The Arabs are a fine, generous, noble race, so are the English; they ought to be friends, not enemies. We both profess to believe in the prophets and apostles of Christ.' Finally, he tried them with the two prayers of their great sage, Abdu'l-Qādir, 'which, if answered, he said he would never ask another: (1) the death in which is no life, and (2) the life in which is no death.' § As an instance of French's *practical* tact, we may recall the following, in which he is referring to itinerating between Peshāwar and Attock. He says—

> I found no plan so successful for gathering a good and attentive audience as making straight for the mosque and inquiring for the Mullā. Instead of hanging about the village and having one's object suspected, this was a definite and straightforward object; and besides often meeting in this way on equal terms with the Mullā, the Khāns and other respectable villagers would congregate in the mosque—beside the young divinity students from Swāt, Bajour, etc.‖

The 'Armenian Christian Evangelist,' already quoted several times, after touchingly describing how difficult he felt it to go and carry the Gospel to the cruel Kurds who had shed so much of his people's blood, and how in answer to his earnest supplication this grace was given him, so that, as he says, 'when I went to them the older ones were as my parents, the children as my little ones, and all my brothers and sisters, I loved them so truly,' goes on to speak of the tact and sympathy which are the natural fruits of this love. His words must be quoted in full—

* *Life*, II. 374.
† See *Life*, I. 72, 73, 74.
‡ *Ib.*, I. 148.
§ *Ib.*, II. 380.
‖ Bishop French's *Life*, I. p. 197.

From this love springs *tact*, which teaches how to approach men. An evangelist unarmed, alone, in a solitary valley hears the cry 'Halt!' and a robber appears from behind a rock. 'Stop, or you are a dead man! What are you doing here?'

'I came to find you.'

'Me! what business can you have with me?'

'I have a message for you.'

'From whom?'

'From God.'

The robber listens, is won, and takes the traveller home as his guest for two days, so his village hears the good news. Five brigands, armed to the teeth, are encountered; the guide flees. The preacher goes straight to them, Bible in hand:

'If any one should photograph you now and the picture remain, you would always appear with a dagger, sword and gun, ready to kill men. But I have another kind of sword which destroys not men's bodies, but the sin of their souls.'

The robbers wonder. 'What manner of salutation is this?' and guard his exit from the place of danger after they have listened for an hour to the Word of God. They are heard of afterwards as warning villagers that if the preacher suffers from them they shall not go unpunished.

Love teaches *sympathy*. The preacher, passing through the bazaar, studies from day to day how to get hold of a certain shoemaker. He prays about it, and God teaches him what to say.

'You have made me happy to-day,' he says to the man.

'I? How? What have I done?'

'I see you working so hard at an honest trade, not stealing or idling away your time, but trying to support your family and doing God's will, which is that we should be diligent.'

When he has won the man's heart he tells him of Jesus, and hears from him: 'Oh, I do thank you; you have so cheered and helped me to-day; come again.'

What can he say to these bakers? 'I admire your trade; it is the most needful of all. The baker feeds the king himself. What could we do without you? Let me tell you about another kind of bread.' And now when he passes the bakeshop there is a call: 'Come, Mirza, come and tell us more about the Bread of Life.' *

One more example may be given of the exercise of judicious tact under somewhat critical circumstances. The occasion was the controversy, arranged by the Rev. Fath Masih, according to the conditions of which the Muḥammadans and Christians were to read the Bible and the Qur'ān by turns for half an hour each on certain pre-arranged topics. During the progress of the controversy, 'the Muḥammadans smarted under the sense of having been worsted, [when] a slight indiscretion on the part of a Christian was as a spark to the powder magazine, and in one moment the assembly was ablaze with wrath . . .; turmoil and personal altercations reigned, and things looked as bad as bad could be. At this juncture a few words from Dr. Clark were as oil on the troubled waters, and from angry looks and threatened violence, in a moment the men passed to smiles and polite

* *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, pp. 725, 726.

apologies, and were the same orderly, quiet, good fellows who had been listening all along.' *

(D) COURTESY.

It goes without saying, that the missionary both out of respect for himself and from regard for those with whom he has to do, will always strive to speak and act in the courteous manner befitting a Christian gentleman. While the native is quick to note any indications of the reverse, he will rarely fail to appreciate and respond to civil and gentlemanly treatment, and learn to look upon the missionary as a friend in whom he may confide. A few practical details may be given.

(*a*) It is well worth while to endeavour to acquire as far as possible the polite forms of speech used by natives of the country gratify, in their intercourse with one another. This will please and although the omission of them will not usually cause offence, as it will be attributed to the European's ignorance of them. Thus in Persia, at the beginning of a discussion, the remark may be made, 'My object in arguing is to understand: it is not that I have any interested object in view' (*Gharaz-i-man az mubāhaṣah maṭlab fahmīdan ast, na īn-kih gharaz-i-shakhṣī dāshtah bāsham*); or the following, either at the beginning or at any time, 'We ought to be fair in accepting or rejecting (what our opponent has to say)' (*Az rū-ye insāf bāyad raddi wa qabūl kunīm*). If it is necessary to intervene in the middle of another's remarks, the polite form of apology is, 'Kindly give me your attention' (*Iltifāt bi-farmāyīd*), or simply, 'In the middle of your observations' (*Wasaṭ-i-farmāyishāt-i-shumā*). A polite Persian, if he thinks you are wrong, or your argument defective, will not flatly contradict you, but remark, 'What you say is right (or true), but——' (*Rāst* or *Ṣaḥīḥ mi-farmāyīd, ammā——*). A common apologetic formula for using an illustration, *e.g.* from animals, is, 'There is no offence in an illustration' (*Dar maṣal munāqashah nīst*).

(*b*) In speaking of Muḥammad the customary forms of showing respect should be used. (It is unnecessary to say that the Christian will *not* use, nor be expected to use, the brief prayer which the pious Muḥammadan utters after his name, for God's blessing upon him and his seed.) It must also be remembered that in Persia, at all events, it is the rule for great personages to be spoken of by their titles, their personal names being seldom used. Accordingly Muḥammad is usually spoken of as 'His Excellency the Messenger' (*Ḥaẓrat-i-Rasūl*), 'The Honoured Prophet' (*Paighambar-i-muḥtaram*), 'The Revered Prophet' (*Paighambar-i-mukarram*), or 'His Excellency the Last of the Prophets' (*Ḥaẓrat-i-khatmī-martabat*). In referring to him it will be sufficient for the Christian to make use of such expressions as 'Your

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1899-1900, p. 255.

Prophet,' 'Your honoured' or 'honourable Prophet' (*Paiġhambar-i-shumā, Paiġhambar-i-muḥtaram-i-shumā, Janāb-i-Paiġhambar-i-shumā*); and the plural verbs and pronouns should always be used in alluding to him. Our not accepting him as a prophet is no excuse for showing gratuitous disrespect by our manner of speaking of him, in the eyes of those who do accept him as such.

(*c*) Never send a native friend or visitor away, especially such as come for the first time, without seeing and speaking with them face to face. Otherwise they will probably think that you are too busy, or disinclined, to see them, and never turn up again. If it is impossible at the moment to lay aside some pressing duty and receive their visit, at least see them if only for a minute, and exchange a few words with them, and let them see that you are really glad of their coming and wishful to have a talk with them, and are sincerely sorry that it is not possible at the present moment. Thus acting, you will not incur the danger of losing a would-be friend.

(*d*) Similarly, if a person expresses a desire to pay you a call, fix as early a day as possible. If the time appointed is rather distant, the chances are that he will not appear, and the opportunity will have been lost for the time, perhaps for ever; or will only be recovered, if recovered at all, with more or less trouble and difficulty. The earlier an appointment is made for your visitor the greater will be the evidence of your desire for his friendship.

(*e*) One other point, and not an unimportant one either, may be mentioned here; and that is to avoid giving unnecessary offence, or provoking unmerited ridicule and contempt by habits, manners, or actions, which, though innocent in themselves and considered right and natural among us, are viewed with disfavour by Orientals. Only one small instance need be given. The short coat commonly worn by Europeans is so unseemly in the eyes of Orientals, that it may well be wondered how any one at all aware of native prejudice on this point can feel comfortable in mind when wearing such a garment in public. It may be retorted that points like this are immaterial. So they are, perhaps, when the people of the country have come to know us, but *not till then.*

(E) GENTLENESS AND PATIENCE.

The Christian missionary should be gentle, patient and forbearing. He can afford to be so. He has the conscious assurance, both from personal experience and from a fair and unprejudiced acquaintance with what can be said on both sides, that the truth is with him. In this respect he is generally at a great advantage as compared with the Muḥammadan, in that he has examined both sides of the question. This is seldom the case with the Muḥammadans, outside the Mullā class. And even these last are commonly ignorant of the true nature of Christianity, and are

generally only acquainted with false and libellous caricatures and denials of its blessed facts and truths. The Christian, then, with the consciousness of truth on his side, can well afford, as it is his duty also, to be compassionately gentle and tender towards the ignorant and prejudiced, if so be that God would bring them to the knowledge of the truth. By thus acting, moreover, he will be giving an object-lesson of that 'meekness and gentleness' * which distinguished the Master and should be the mark of His followers. 'Those who carry on Missions,' said the late Lord Salisbury in his memorable speech at the Bicentenary Meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, held on June 19, 1900, 'should abstain from all appearance of any attempted violence in their religion, and abstain, if possible, from undue publicity wherever that construction is very likely to be placed upon their acts.' 'You have in your hands,' he added a little later, 'one of the most powerful and one of the most sacred levers that ever acted upon opinion.' † Possessed of such a mighty weapon as the Gospel, there is no need to use violence or force, and it would do great harm. There are scientific instruments and appliances so keen or so powerful, that no force is required in the skilled hand that would use them rightly, while they are capable of working incalculable mischief if recklessly and roughly employed.

'It is not ZEAL *for our own religion*,' said Rajah Brooke, 'that will convince: for an undue zeal may beget an undue zeal in opposition to it. There is but one way, and that is the Christian way; it is mild persuasion only that will *convince* people.' ‡ 'We must not give them [the Muhammadans] ill words neither; but must avoid all reproachful language, all that is sarcastical and biting: this never did good from pulpit or press. The softest words will make the deepest impression; and if we think it a fault in them to give ill language, we cannot be excused when we imitate them.' § 'If we cannot open a man's eyes to the truth of religion by our arguments, we may perhaps open them to its beauty by our moderation. But we put it out of our power to become the instruments of God in promoting the spiritual good of any one, if we stop up the avenue to his heart by our violence or imprudence.' ‖ We do not need to travel outside the New Testament to learn this lesson. 'The Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing, in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves; if peradventure

* 2 Cor. x. 1.

† Quoted in *C.M.S. Report*, 1900–01, p. 159.

‡ Sir James Brooke, speaking at a meeting of the Lambeth Association of the S.P.G., in reference to the Borneo Mission, quoted in *The Missionary* for Feb., 1852, p. 98.

§ From Bishop Kidder's third rule for those who would attempt the conversion of the Jews, as given in his *Demonstration of the Messias*, pt. iii. ch. 2, applied *mutatis mutandis* to Muhammadan work. See Sale's Preface to his *Preliminary Discourse*, pp. 4, 5.

‖ Mrs. H. More; quoted in *The Missionary*, vol. iii. No. 7, p. 204.

God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, and they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by the Lord's servant unto the will of God.'*

The revered Henry Martyn, who has already been spoken of as a master of clearness in thought and expression, attracted the Persians no less by his patience and gentleness, which seem, indeed, to have been a principal cause of the great impression he made upon them. Mr. Morier says of him—

> The Persians, who were struck with his humility, his patience, and resignation, called him a *mard-i-Khudāī*, a man of God; and indeed every action of his life seemed to be bent towards the one object of advancing the interest of the Christian religion.†

The same point is illustrated by the affecting story of the conversion of Muḥammad Raḥīm,‡ as related by a writer in the *Asiatic Journal* who had spent a few weeks at Shīrāz about the year 1820:—

> 'And whence came this happy change?' [I, the writer in the *Asiatic Journal*, asked.] 'I will tell you that likewise,' [he, Muḥammad Raḥīm, replied.] 'In the year 1223 [of the Hejira] there came to this city an Englishman, who taught the religion of Christ with a boldness hitherto unparalleled in Persia, in the midst of much scorn and ill-treatment from our Mullās, as well as the rabble. He was a beardless youth, and evidently enfeebled by disease. He dwelt among us for more than a year. I was then a decided enemy to infidels, as the Christians are termed by the followers of Mahomet; and I visited this teacher of the despised sect, with the declared object of treating him with scorn, and exposing his doctrine to contempt. Although I persevered for some time in this behaviour towards him I found that every interview not only increased my respect for the individual, but diminished my confidence in the faith in which I was educated. His extreme forbearance toward the violence of his opponents, the calm and yet convincing manner in which he exposed the fallacies and sophistries by which he was assailed—for he spoke Persian excellently—gradually inclined me to listen to his arguments, to inquire dispassionately into the subject of them, and finally to read a tract which he had written in reply to a defence of Islāmism by our chief Mullās. Need I detain you longer? The result of my examination was a conviction that the young disputant was right. Shame, or rather fear, withheld me from avowing this opinion. I even avoided the society of the Christian teacher, though he remained in the city so long. Just before he quitted Shīrāz I could not refrain from paying him a farewell visit. Our conversation—the memory of it will never fade from the tablet of my mind—sealed my conversion. He gave me a book—it has ever been my constant companion—the study of it has formed my

* 2 Tim. ii. 24-*fin.*

† Appendix to *Adventures of Hajji Bābā in England*, quoted in *The Missionary*, Aug., 1852, p. 280.

‡ The writer in the *Asiatic Journal* thinks this Muḥammad Raḥīm may possibly be one of the young men, mentioned by Mr. Sargent in his Memoirs of Henry Martyn, who came from the college 'full of zeal and logic,' to try him with hard questions. Mr. Geo. Smith says definitely that he had been trained for a Mullā.

most delighful occupation—its contents have often consoled me.' Upon this he put into my hands a copy of the New Testament in Persian. On one of the blank leaves was written, 'There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth—Henry Martyn.'*

It goes without saying that the patience and gentleness we are speaking about will be most needed, and be most severely tried, when those opposed to us, either in controversy or in private discussion, show themselves perverse and unreasonable. Under these circumstances the exhibition of those qualities is specially attractive and calculated to favourably dispose our opponents towards ourselves and our teaching; at the same time, the failure to preserve a quiet, unruffled spirit under trying circumstances becomes in the same degree unfortunately conspicuous. To lose one's temper, or succumb to provocation, if not a sign of having been worsted in the argument, at least shows that a man cannot bear the free interchange of views and criticisms. 'Meekness, forbearance, good temper,' writes Bishop Lefroy, 'are qualities which the East always ranks very high amongst those which should characterize the religious teacher, and surely they have a perfect right to demand them of the followers of Him Who when He was reviled, reviled not again.'† 'It should always be remembered that "honest and good hearts" may be present in the company, even when the spokesman seems most perverse and unspiritual. If, therefore, the Christian acts calmly and patiently, a good impression may be left, even when the antagonist is noisy and blustering. There is the promise of "a mouth and wisdom" for such occasions, and that promise may be claimed and realized.'‡ Could the ultimate causes of conversion from bāzār preaching be traced, thinks Bishop Lefroy, more effective than intellectual skill and ability would be found to have been 'the good temper and kindliness of the preacher in the face of bitter opposition and insult.'§

In order to preserve this most desirable spirit we should endeavour to maintain within ourselves (1) the spirit of prayerful recollectedness, bearing in mind the momentous issues involved and the eternally blessed results that may under God result from judicious and faithful use of the opportunities given; (2) a calm steadfastness and a quiet confidence and hopefulness, remembering that 'in quietness and confidence' shall be our strength (Is. xxx. 15), that he whose mind is stayed on the Lord Jehovah will be kept by Him 'in perfect peace' (Is. xxvi. 3), that the Master has promised to be with His followers 'all the days'.

* The above account was transferred from the *Asiatic Journal* to the *Missionary Register*, June, 1829. It was also printed in the *C.M.S. Intelligencer*, and thence transferred to *The Missionary*, Aug., 1852, pp. 226, 399. It is also to be found in Geo. Smith's *Henry Martyn*, pp. 525, 526.

† *Methods of Mission Work among Moslems*, p. 219.

‡ Rev. M. G. Goldsmith, C.M.S., Hyderabad, in *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 780.

§ *Methods of Mission Work among Moslems*, pp. 219, 220.

(St. Matt. xxviii. 20, marg.), and that the ultimate victory of His cause is certain and potentially achieved (1 John v. 4, 'This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith!'); (3) a humble, loving spirit, 'speaking truth in love' (Eph. iv. 15), avoiding heat at all costs, but being straight, vigorous, uncompromising, yet not unduly pursuing an advantage or claiming the victory; and lastly (4) we must ever cultivate an active reliance on the Holy Spirit to guide aright in all things and carry home to the hearts of men His own Truth, Whose office it is to 'convict the world' (St. John xvi. 8), and Whose work is accomplished 'not by might nor by power,' but by His own gracious and powerful influences (Zech. iv. 6). So much for the spirit by which we ourselves should be actuated. In reference to others, let us strive to be (1) loyal and devoted teachers, pointing out errors as well as instructing in the Truth—'faithful men . . . able to teach' (2 Tim. ii. 2), 'declaring . . . the whole counsel of God' (Acts xx. 27); (2) true witnesses to a full Gospel and its sufficiency for meeting human needs; and (3) faithful and wise stewards (St. Luke xii. 42), ever keeping in remembrance our high privilege and awful responsibility as 'stewards of the mysteries of God' (1 Cor. iv. 1). Well may we pray in the words of the ancient collect—

> O Lord Saviour Christ, Who camest not to strive nor cry, but to let Thy words fall as the drops that water the earth, grant to all that contend for the faith once delivered, never to injure it by clamour or impatience; but, speaking Thy precious truth in love, so to present it that it may be loved, and that men may see in it Thy goodness and beauty. . . .*

(F) A Holy Walk and Conversation.

For its influence upon Muḥammadans there is nothing to be compared with a holy life lived among them and in their sight. 'The best means of reaching Muslims,' says a converted Sayid, 'is a holy walk and conversation on the part of missionaries and their helpers.'† We are to be epistles 'known and read of all men,' even 'an epistle of Christ.'‡ For those who live among Muḥammadans may take it for granted that they are under close inspection, and their lives and conduct are the object of shrewd and inquisitive attention. Of the in-patients in the hospital at Nablous, Miss Bedells wrote—

> They are comparing our teaching with our lives, and that not silently, as we English are inclined to do, but openly. §

Still more emphatically writes Miss A. Montgomery, of the American Presbyterian Mission, Hamadān, Persia—

* From Dr. Bright's *Ancient Collects*, quoted in Bp. French's *Life*, II. 118, 119.

† Sayid M— A—, in the *Missionary Review of the World* for Oct., 1904, p. 230.

‡ 2 Cor. iii. 2, 3.

§ *C.M.S. Report*, 1899-1900, p. 160.

No mere professions of love will do in this land, where the people have the sure instinct of little children, are clever physiognomists, expert mind-readers, and close observers whether the power of a risen Christ is seen in a life of purity and holiness among those who call themselves the disciples of the Lord Jesus.*

Therefore there should always be issuing forth from us, from our homes and lives, a quiet but powerful evidence for the pure faith of Jesus—the evidence of good deeds, holy lives, and the loving, unworldly spirit. Experienced missionaries will affirm that it is a great thing to *live* among the Muḥammadans, even if the door be closed to work outside the four walls of one's own house. There will be a felt power for good in the diffused influence of even a single Christian life that is worthy of the name, shedding abroad the sweet incense of righteousness, holiness, and love unfeigned. If the life be there, it must by its clear, pure shining penetrate the gloom. If the salt be present, it will assuredly exercise a wholesome, purifying influence on all around.

Happy, indeed, is he who from the very outset places this high standard before him, that no thought, word, look, or action of his can be left out of account, as forming no part of his living presentation and practical exhibition of Christianity before the eyes of those among whom he lives. As he is in his inmost heart and soul, such will be the picture of Christ's servant presented by him to the Muḥammadan. May his beloved Master never be dishonoured thereby! The missionary may rest assured that hundreds of eyes are scrutinizing him; that many who have not the inclination to come and talk with him are keenly interested in watching how this Christian lives and conducts himself; that little or nothing escapes their ken or is hid from keen, observant eyes; and that his whole life is an object-lesson from which those around him draw their conclusions, favourable or otherwise, of the teaching and power of his Saviour.

Here, too, we may find a remedy for certain forms of despondency. One may sometimes be tempted to think that there is so much to learn in order to acquire real efficiency and grip of the work—the language, first of all, then the manners, customs, and thoughts of the people, and the best ways of dealing with inquirers, etc.—that there is little hope of becoming a fully qualified missionary until some distant day, when length of service and increasing years will begin to whisper that before long he will have to make way for others. One remedy for such despondent feelings that may sometimes arise when we consider how difficult it is to be a *real*, true missionary may be found in the reflection that the indwelling Spirit and the life lived are the main things, that it is the Holy Spirit of God Himself Who brings about all the results that are accomplished, and that among visible agencies the most powerful auxiliary is the *life* that conforms to,

* *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 782.

and illustrates, the *Book*. 'I often envy my Persian hearers the freedom and eloquence with which they speak to me,' wrote Henry Martyn. 'Were I but possessed of their powers, I sometimes think that I should win them all; but the work is God's, and the faith of His people does not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.'* And that is often, as in his own case, manifested in a holy, devoted life.

'After all, it is from the holy life and heavenly manners of the missionary that a Heathen will be able to spell out the soundest conversion.'† 'The way to reach Muslim peoples is not by theological discussion, but by winning them, through living a Christ-like life before their eyes, and by bestowing upon them those blessings that they crave at our hands' (such as schools, good literature and hospitals).‡ 'It is a certain and experienced truth that virtue and goodness (especially that of humility) hath a secret party and interest even in the worst of men; and men secretly love, or at least approve it in another, though they practise it not themselves. For virtue, goodness and humility hath a secret congruity to the true and genuine frame of the human nature; and though men's lusts and passions may in a great measure obscure the consonancy to it, they can never extinguish it: but the mind and conscience will give a secret suffrage to it wherever it finds it.'§ *Cujus vita fulgur est ejus verba sunt tonitrua*, 'he whose life is lightning, *his* words are thunder.'‖

(G) SPIRITUAL EQUIPMENT.

Here we reach the most inward and vital part of the whole question of missionary efficiency. The previous section has dealt with its importance in relation to those among whom we work. The present section, however briefly and unsystematically, has for its object to go to the heart of the matter and consider this question of the missionary's spiritual equipment, as it concerns the missionary himself. Few subjects more solemn can engage his thoughts and aspirations. The prayers and pains of the true missionary will be constantly exercised to kindle to greater fervour his love for the souls for whom Christ died, and to let the grace of God work in him more perfectly and effectually, destroying the remains of indwelling frailty and infirmity, developing all Christian virtues and graces, constantly circumscribing the demands of self, and promoting the growth of Christ's image in the soul, so that he may be increasingly 'kept' and continually 'used' in the Master's service.

* George Smith's *Henry Martyn*, p. 364.

† Ziegenbalg's Letters, quoted in *The Missionary*, vol. iv. pt. 2, p. 165.

‡ Rev. G. F. Herrick, D.D., in *Methods of Mission Work among Moslems*, pp. 162, 163.

§ Chief Justice Hale's *Contemplations*, pt. 1, p. 162, quoted in *The Missionary*, vol. iv. pt. 2, p. 165.

‖ *The Missionary*, vol. iv. pt. 2, p. 165.

'I hope you have brought a sharp sickle, that you may have a share in the harvest,' were the words with which A. L. O. E. greeted the writer as a young missionary soon after his arrival in India. The words were well chosen, both to point to the supreme importance of spiritual vigour and fitness, and also to be a striking and suggestive phrase, not easily forgotten, applying a salutary and comprehensive test, and often recurring to mind with its implicit, heart-searching question.

The impression produced by Bishop French upon those who were able to appreciate his noble and lofty character may well be a standard and ideal for those who come after him. One who knew him well, the late Dr. 'Imādu'd-Dīn of Amritsar, thus expressed his admiration for him—

> Bishop French was an uncommon man. I have not yet seen another like him. We do now and then meet with learned, good, godly, and earnestly pious men in the Church. But Bishop French was possessed of some qualities over and above these; . . . his spirit was generally found to be basking in the sunshine of God's countenance, and his eyes habitually manifested beatific communion with Him . . . I have always believed Bishop French to be a special friend of God on the earth. This grew up in me of itself. Once I was living for a few days like a stranger at the station of Khānpur in the Bahāwulpur state. There I had for some days conversations on Christianity with a few respectable Muhammadans. They asked me whether I knew anybody among the Christians whom I might specially call the friend of God, and confidently recommend him to them. I said I knew not one but several such persons whom I could recommend them safely as such. But as they wanted only one, I told them Bishop French was such a one, fully coming up to our idea of the saints of God, as spoken of in Eastern books. Others were the servants of God, accepted of Him.*

Why should not all attain to, or at least approach, this high standard? Is it not but faithlessness or indolence and acceptance of a lower standard that causes so few to produce an impression of this kind on those around them? We may sometimes be in doubt as to the best methods of work, the most profitable ways of employing our limited energies and powers, or the most useful studies for increasing our efficiency. We may even make serious mistakes concerning such things as these. But if we first of all seek for ourselves a fuller spiritual life and a greater efficiency of the soul, if we let loose every energy to the acquiring of a larger measure of holiness, and a closer walk with Christ, and conformity to His will, we shall be doing the very best thing to commend the Gospel of Christ to others.

A few points may be mentioned in detail, largely by means of extracts from different writers.

1. **Consecration.**—'I have been a missionary twenty years,' wrote Weitbrecht, 'and I can assure you it is a blessed work to any man whose whole heart is engaged in it. To spend one's life

* *Life of Bishop French*, II. pp. 111, 113.

and wear out one's strength in spiritually benefiting and leading to the knowledge of the Truth a heathen population is a work which angels would delight to be engaged in. . . . You are doubtless well aware that the spiritual preparation is the chief thing—a heart moved and sanctified by grace, a spiritual knowledge of Christ, living in Him, and nourished by His Word—this is the groundwork of missionary preparation.' * And in another place he says, 'This consecration of the heart is what made Henry Martyn and Fox such eminent labourers. A young man who lays a good foundation on a spiritual and experimental knowledge of Christ is sure to become a good, faithful, and persevering missionary.' † The novelty of foreign peoples and strange customs will wear off, but not, for the truly devoted worker, the solemn romance and fascination of soul-winning and shepherding the flock, even though he may often have cause to mourn over the feeble or the fallen, experiencing some of the heart-pangs of St. Paul as he yearned over his spiritual children.‡

2. **Maintenance of Unbroken Communion with God.**—This should be our constant state of mind, the consciousness of the blessed Master's realized presence, powerful to guide, encourage, strengthen, and control. We must remember that His angel is standing by us, bidding us 'fear not,' for God has 'granted' us souls (Acts xxvii. 23, 24); yea, that the Lord Jesus Himself is near us, to bid us 'be of good cheer,' for we have both 'testified' and must also 'bear witness' (Acts xxiii. 11). 'To convince them,' wrote Ziegenbalg, 'of the folly of Heathenism and truth of Christianity requires an experimental wisdom. And this wisdom is not to be had in the barren schools of logic and metaphysics, but must be learnt at another university, and derived from God Himself for this purpose. The best way is to keep the mind constantly in that temper and serenity that the great God may influence it Himself, and qualify it for so important a work.' §

If at any time we feel that we are overwrought, and find our work a heavy burden, with no leisure to meditate, and scarcely time to read or pray, we may be sure that we have temporarily lost the secret and joy of the Master's presence, and that our work cannot be of the best quality. Steps should at once be taken to remedy this state of things. Let us aim to do *less* work *well*, and at all costs make time for prayerful communing with our Lord day by day. If more or less out of health, which is probably the case under the circumstances, the necessary steps must be taken to restore and preserve it. Duty may sometimes call for sacrifice of health, just as it does for laying down life itself. But, as a general rule, the sensible care of health is a duty we owe to our

* *Memoir of the Rev. J. J. Weitbrecht*, p. 457.
† *Ib.*, p. 492.
‡ Gal. iv. 19.
§ From Ziegenbalg's Letters in *The Missionary*, vol. iv. pt. 2, p. 167.

Society and ourselves, for on its maintenance our hopes of continued usefulness and ripened experience depend.

Most appropriate to the present subject are the Rev. J. J. Weitbrecht's words of counsel to a young missionary just arrived in India—

May the Lord give you grace to live near Him, much in a spirit of prayer. Let me affectionately advise you as an elder brother to adopt a resolution, with a view to advance your growth in grace and spirituality and Scriptural knowledge, which I have found most useful. I spend at least half an hour, and if possible one hour *very* early, and again before bed-time, in reading, meditation and prayer. This has a remarkable effect in keeping one in that calm, proper, peaceful, cheerful frame of mind (and this precious jewel one is always in danger of losing, especially in India), we so much require, to fit us for the great work we have to do, and it imparts tact and feeling, helping us to act and speak as we should do at all hours. I have often regretted my own remissness in this respect in earlier years, for it is only private intercourse with God that can feed the soul; and when we neglect it, we are empty and starving, as the body is when deprived of its proper meal. And what is worse, sin, selfishness and other passions, gain the upper hand, and we lose the very life of true religion. He is likely to do best as a missionary who feeds his own soul *well* with the bread and water of life, and as *regularly* as the poor, mortal body is fed.*

A word of caution may be given as to what has been called 'the lust of finishing.' 'I have learnt,' wrote the Rev. W. Smith, C.M.S., Benares, 'that it is a great loss, in a spiritual point of view, to *engage to finish any work* (though of a religious nature or tendency) *within a set time*. As, for instance, a book for the press. It has both robbed my own soul (perhaps, also, injured my health) and prevented me from spending that time with native visitors which I ought.'† We may set before ourselves some piece of work, highly proper and commendable in itself, and so eager are we to make progress and finish our self-appointed task that we devote every spare moment to it, and grudge every interruption that comes to interfere with our cherished project. When this becomes our state of mind, we are spiritually in an unhealthy and unnatural condition, and have assuredly lost for the time the quiet, alert spirit of disengagedness and readiness to spend and be spent, which is so essential to happiness and usefulness and 'shining.' If we are not at all times joyfully willing to lay all else aside and lovingly minister to Christ's little ones, old or young, it is only too manifest that 'the lusts of other things' have entered in, and a season of unfruitfulness will assuredly sadden and shame us, unless we return to the Master's side and make it right with Him by sincere confession and recollection of the spirit we ought to be of, and then return to our duty, no longer with the primary object of finishing this or that, but to enjoy the heart satisfaction of doing the Father's will.

* *Memoir*, pp. 517, 518.
† *The Missionary*, Aug., 1852, p. 224.

3. **Patient Endurance.**—'I have been comforted,' wrote the Rev. J. J. Weitbrecht, 'with the thought last week that the love and compassion of Christ towards these perishing creatures is infinitely greater than ours can be. Ours is a tiny spark; His the sun—an ocean of mercy. I quite agree with dear sainted Wybrow in what he said in his *last* letter, that "one of the principal qualifications, both for missionaries abroad and those who labour in the work at home, is patient endurance amidst all trials and hopes deferred." This cuts at the root of selfishness, and humbles the instrument into the dust.'*

4. **Love.**—When French was at Bhera, in May, 1885, a very respectable man in the bāzār said to him, before all his brethren, that Gordon had such an attractive love that he would have drawn all their hearts after him, and all the people round the district too, if only he had lived long enough. 'I have never heard this said,' French remarked, 'of any other missionary.'† Miss Jarvis, of Ramallah, speaking of the difficulty of bringing the Word of God to the knowledge and apprehension of the people, writes—

> Love only can bridge that gulf. God's great wondrous love in Christ, realized in our own souls, and going out through us to them, as we seek to break the Bread of Life by giving them portions of His word in simplest language, and praying that they may eat, and their eyes be opened to *see* the Lord Jesus lifted up for them, and, seeing, live.‡

'The prime requisite for successful Muslim work,' says 'an Armenian Christian Evangelist,' 'is *unfeigned Christian love*, obtained by immediate contact with the heart of the Master of love.' The Rev. Montagu Beauchamp, of the China Inland Mission, one of the 'Cambridge Seven,' reckons every Chinaman with whom he comes into contact as 'at least an enemy disarmed, if not a friend.' Such will be the happy experience of workers among Muḥammadans too, if inspired with the same spirit of genuine love.

5. **The Martyr Spirit.**—In the thirteenth century, Raymond Lull, the first missionary to Muslims, wrote—

> I see many knights crossing the sea to Muslim lands; they think that they shall conquer by force of arms. It appears to me that victory can be won in no other way than Thou, O Lord Christ, with Thy Apostles, didst seek to win it, by love and prayer, by shedding of tears and blood, by self-sacrifice, by spiritual not by carnal weapons.

The Rev. W. Smith, of Benares, thus expressed the same conviction—

> Any native, Hindū or Musulmān, of but a moderate degree of respectability, must, to become a Christian, make sacrifices, generally speaking, that none, not the most zealous supporter of a Missionary

* *Memoir*, pp. 506, 507.
† *Life of Bishop French*, II. 117.
‡ *C.M.S. Report*, 1900-01, p. 173.

Society ever dreams of making, and that very few, if any, missionaries ever have made. He must, in short, have *the spirit of a martyr*. Now *we* have not this, and perhaps here is the real secret of our little success. Like produces like: and it would seem that it is only martyrs that can produce martyrs. So it was in the primitive ages.

On the occasion of his journey through Persia in 1883, Bishop French often impressed this thought upon Dr. Bruce, as the latter himself tells us, 'If we would win these Muslim lands for Christ, we must die for them.'

Conclusion.—While we strive after personal consecration and those graces and qualities which have been mentioned above, we shall not make the mistake of thinking that this is all that is required for the conversion of the Muslim, nor overlook the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those with whom we have to do. Without personal holiness we cannot expect to be used in the Master's service. The practical manifestation of the Christ-life is the best means for winning Muslims. The evidence for Christianity, so converted Muḥammadans will tell you, is ample for those who have eyes to see it and hearts to receive it. But it is the Holy Spirit's divine prerogative to soften the heart, to bend the will, and bring the estranged soul into communion with Himself. 'From all our experience,' writes Miss A. Montgomery, of the American Presbyterian Mission, Hamadān, 'what is the conclusion? Give Christ's Gospel by the hands of those who love the Muslim as Christ loves them, and live lives thus consecrated in homes of purity and peace. Give God's own Word, assured that His promise is true, that it shall not return void, and let those who teach and preach advance to the attack of every heart-citadel on their knees, and the Crescent shall wane in the light of the Cross, and the Muslim world shall soon confess that Jesus is Lord, true prophet, priest and king, to the glory of God the Father.'

CHAPTER III.

INQUIRERS AND CONVERTS.

THOUGH bigoted fanaticism is a common characteristic of Muḥammadans, and the majority hold fast their religion with fervid zeal and even with enthusiasm, it does not follow that there are not many among them whose orthodoxy and loyalty to the faith would never be questioned, who are yet at heart dissatisfied with Islām and fail to derive from it any peace or assurance. The object immediately before us now is to gather together and classify some of these causes of dissatisfaction with Islām which the more thoughtful and open-minded among Muḥammadans not unfrequently feel and express to those in whom they have learned to confide, and who may, perhaps, they think, be able to direct their attention to something more satisfactory and satisfying. Next will come the suggestive subject of the questions commonly put by Muḥammadans to the Christian worker, and the aspects of Christian truth and practice which experience shows to be specially attractive to their minds. And, finally, the deeply interesting topic presents itself of the reasons which Muḥammadans give, why they have crossed the border-line, left their old faith behind, and embraced the religion of Jesus Christ.

As the instances collected and recorded in the following pages pass before us in review, we shall come into contact with many a restless, anxious, inquiring soul. We shall see some becoming interested and drawing nearer. We shall obtain glimpses of struggle and conflict. We shall see souls finding sure ground and a safe resting-place for their weary feet, and then stepping out into the new life of liberty and peace. What follows will have been written in vain, if it does not open out avenues for loving sympathy, enlarge our insight into the workings and cravings of Muslim hearts, and suggest helpful topics and methods of procedure for explaining and commending our Christian faith.

In the work of collecting instances considerable labour has been expended, with a view to supplementing the necessarily limited scope of individual experience by a wider and diversified range of illustration and anecdote, gathered mostly from recent Reports of the Church Missionary Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society, and less frequently from missionary

magazines, etc. It has not usually been thought necessary to cumber the pages with a multitude of references. It has sometimes happened that a single anecdote, which might have served to illustrate several different points, has been assigned its particular place because of the light it throws upon a single one. Sometimes italics have been used to emphasize the point of an anecdote, to which it is desired to draw special attention.

(A) Causes of Dissatisfaction with Islām felt by Muḥammadans.

(i.) **Neither Islām nor the book which is its foundation can satisfy the anxious soul.**—They have but little to offer to the soul that longs to know God with an intimate, personal knowledge, to obtain pardon and salvation, and to be at peace with Him. The absence of any teaching in the Qur'ān about the means of salvation came out in a remarkable manner in the Rev. Fatḥ Mīsaḥ's novel controversy with Muḥammadans, according to the prescribed conditions of which the two sides were alternately to read passages from the Bible and the Qur'ān respectively for half an hour each on certain specified subjects. 'The Qur'ān teaching on "Salvation" was baldness itself,' wrote Dr. Browne of this most interesting controversy; 'in fact, the whole of the references given in the Qur'ān completely evaded the question and dealt with the state of Paradise, the sensual joys and pleasures, the hourīs and the wine, etc., there to be provided for the faithful Musulmān. Even with all this the poor Maulawī was at his wits' end to fill up the time, as there really was nothing in the Qur'ān that he could read on the subject.' *

This being so, it is in no way surprising that a Persian, one of a number who had been to a missionary's house to argue with him, remarked 'that he was anxious to know the Way of Life, but had altogether failed to find it in his Qur'ān;' nor that another, an inquirer, who was at one time entirely devoted to his Qur'ān, 'found,' to quote his own words, 'no satisfaction to the soul, no knowledge of God in it.' In 1898, a Maulawī was baptized in India who had for years been a prominent opponent of Christianity in different places. He was trained for his work by a well-known Maulawī at Dehli, where he studied for twelve years. Even then his mind was in a state of unrest, and he *could not find in the Qur'ān a divinely appointed way of salvation.* In 1898 he visited Basim, in Berar, where he came into contact with the workers of the Methodist Episcopal Mission. As the outcome of discussions with them he asked the Muḥammadans there to show him from the Qur'ān "the way of salvation for sinners." On their failing to do so, to their astonishment he announced his intention of becoming a Christian. Subsequently, at a social gathering of the leading Christians and Muḥammadans in the place, he 'declared

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1899-1900, p. 255.

that he was convinced that salvation was to be obtained through Christ alone,' and asked for baptism.* Some years ago, there was a clever, respectable dervīsh in the north-west of Persia. 'He was led by the Holy Spirit to think of the sinful nature of man, and his need of a Saviour to save him from his sins, and thereby to make him fit for the kingdom of heaven. His soul, so to say, craved for his salvation; and, according to his story, the religion of Muḥammad could not satisfy those cravings.' In the same part of the country a lady of the American Presbyterian Mission relates the story of a young Mullā, who is now, she writes, one of their most successful physicians. 'This young man was the son of a well-known teacher in the capital of Kurdistān—a Kurd of the Kurds.' He was besides a very zealous and bigoted Muslim, who 'not only fulfilled all the demands made by the straitest interpretation of Muslim requirements, but went far beyond them; hating Christians, and instead of saying to them "Salaam," which means peace, by a clever turn he changed the word to mean a curse.' He was fully aware of the evil fruit Islām bore in his own life and the lives of those about him. *He felt the burden of sin, which all his making of merit by prayer and fasting would not remove;* he saw only vileness in the lives about him. So that when a Nestorian preacher came from Urumia, fired with the zeal of the missionaries there, and filled with the Spirit of Christ, he soon fell under his influence. This man's absolute truthfulness in word and deed made a profound impression upon him. He 'forthwith began to study God's own Word for himself, and soon found Him by Whom alone we can be cleansed from sin and have peace with God. He then became a living witness to the fact that sinful, degraded man can be changed by Christ's Spirit alone into the divine image, and can bring forth the fruits of righteousness,' and in due time he was baptized.

(ii.) **Islām as a system is found to be unattractive and unworthy of confidence.**—The Rev. J. T. Parfit, formerly of Baghdad, tells the remarkable story of an old recluse, a secret believer in Christ, as came out on his death-bed, who led another man to become an inquirer. The old recluse 'won the heart of his earnest pupil, and the old man's philosophy led A. to the conviction that the religion of Islām was unworthy of his confidence.' Dr. Sturrock, of the same Mission, 'in the summer of 1899, . . . received a letter from three Muḥammadans living at Karbalā, stating that, after studying the tenets of many religions, their faith in Muḥammadanism was shaken, and they desired to receive advice.' A well-to-do Persian tradesman who 'had been seeking the right way for some twenty years . . . had gradually become convinced that Muḥammadans had not the true knowledge of God.' A student from the Muḥammadan Anglo-Oriental

* His history is fully given in the *C.M.S. Report* for 1898–1899, pp. 252, 253. To the great disappointment of those who knew him, he afterwards apostatized (*C.M.S. Report*, 1899–1900, p. 287).

College, Aligarh, who asked for instruction in Christianity, 'was weaned from Muḥammadanism by the low standard of morality which Muḥammad set forth, and had been influenced favourably towards Christianity by a boy whose father was a convert.' 'You came to us once in our town,' said a party of Bedouin from the edge of the Arabian Desert to the Rev. A. Forder, 'and told us of Jesus the Son of God, how He died and became our Saviour. You gave us books. We have read them and believe them, and now we want to fast, pray, and do as you do, and become Christians. We are tired of our own religion; we don't believe Muḥammad was a prophet, and his religion does us no good.' Much more they said; and they received the sound advice that 'fasting and praying and joining a Church did not make a man a Christian. Only faith in Jesus as Son of God and Saviour of the world could do that.' At last they went away, saying, 'We are your children; we no longer believe as we used to; we believe in Jesus.' A lady missionary at Agra mentions 'an old Muḥammadan woman in one zenānā who remarked in a hopeless manner, "How can we Hindūstani people possibly be good when our religion has nothing nice in it?"'

(iii.) **Particular points in the system objected to.**—An Indian Sayid, a Shī'ah from Aligarh, felt the existence and sanction of slavery to be a great stumbling-block. A Persian Mirzā mentioned, among other things of which he did not approve in Muḥammadanism, the circumcision of children, which was often the cause of much pain and suffering. Why not leave nature alone? The two following instances speak, indeed, of serious disaffection with the present state of Islām as concerns the religious law and its observance, but the objectors are still staunch Muḥammadans, and lay the blame for the existing state of things on their religious guides and teachers. A Persian Mirzā, not the one just mentioned, thought the Muḥammadan law perfect and the foundations of their religion firm, but considered that the Mullās had spoilt it by adding to it such things, for example, as certain ceremonial purifications, which were really impossible to perform at all seasons. Similarly, Mr. Theodore Morison, Principal of the Anglo-Oriental Muḥammadan College at Aligarh, wrote, in the *Spectator* of December 29, 1900, that these reformers 'believe that in their faith are enshrined the great truths of religion and morality, but that in the past they have misread the Word of God, and that narrow-minded Mullās have expounded it amiss.' It is asserted, for instance, that 'in the Qur'ān are the clearest directions to marry but one wife and to free the slave, and that God, through His prophet, most emphatically forbade coercion in religion.' Here the modern spirit revolts and rebels against certain things usually considered inseparable from orthodox Muḥammadanism. The first of the two Persian Mirzās mentioned above strongly disapproved of the practice of a woman being married to a husband without any previous opportunity of finding

out whether their tempers are suited to one another. Here is a practical point, not, indeed, laid down in the system, but inevitably following from the false and low conception of womankind ingrained in it, and the jealous restrictions and limitations by which women are surrounded in social life.

(iv.) **Islām, judged by its fruits and found wanting.**—A young Persian schoolmaster fell into a state of doubt as to the true religion, because of the kindness shown by Christians and the opposite character of Muḥammadans. It is indeed a common subject of observation and remark, among the Persian Muḥammadans, at all events, that in contrast with Christians there is no kindness and love among their co-religionists. 'A native of Hyderabad, who, after visiting Mecca, had resided for some time at Kāshān, asked for baptism, saying that what he had seen at Mecca and elsewhere had convinced him that there was no truth in Islām.' A Muḥammadan lady, wife of a *nāẓir*, or court official, at Aligarh, was married under false pretences to a husband who was given to drink, and had for four months made her no allowance. Under these distressing circumstances she invited a lady missionary of her acquaintance to go and see her, and poured out her sad story. 'She had been under Christian instruction for some time, and had a Bible from which she read, though it was against her husband's wishes. She has seen the impurity and shallowness of her religion, and is anxious to leave her present surroundings and to embrace Christianity.'

(v.) **Disillusionment arising from the character and conduct of Muḥammad himself.**—A young ākhund, or divinity student, at Shiraz considered that there were things in Islām contrary to wisdom (*ḥikmat*), such as Muḥammad's having nine wives, and his not appointing a successor, which had been the cause of so much subsequent strife and division. In the district round Kunnankulam, Cochin, India, 'some of the Muḥammadans are dissatisfied with their prophet as their intercessor with God on account of his sinful and inconsistent life.' Of one or two students of the Muḥammadan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh, who came to him for about four months for instruction in Christianity, the Rev. W. V. K. Treanor writes—

> He had investigated Buddhism and the various tenets of the Aryas and other sects, in his endeavour to discover the truth. He told me that his dissatisfaction with Islām arose from the inconsistencies of its founder; and also from the fact that, although Musulmāns are ordered to follow Muḥammad, yet many excesses were allowed to him which they are forbidden to practise. He told me, shortly before I left Aligarh, that he felt Christianity was the best religion with which he had yet come in contact; and that its openness and honesty, together with the fact that Christ Himself led the kind of life He wished His disciples to lead, had greatly impressed him.

(vi.) **The divisions in Islām and its difficult survival after Muḥammad's death.**—A doctor in India was led to doubt

the truth of Islām because of the numerous differences among Muḥammadans.* An educated Persian was of the opinion that two points which told heavily against Islām were the difficulty with which it maintained its footing after the death of Muḥammad, and the existence of numerous sects, each relying on some man's leadership and guidance, being in this respect unlike the Christian sects.

(B) QUESTIONS ASKED BY MUḤAMMADANS.

It is well for some reasons that the Christian missionary should know the kind of questions Muḥammadans are fond of asking. Such questions may at any time be suddenly sprung upon him, either when preaching or by visitors who call upon him, to test him or puzzle him, or to see what he has to say, and what his views and opinions are. Knowing the common currents of Muslim thought, the missionary will be able both to introduce suitable topics in conversation and to provide himself at leisure, and after careful reflexion or inquiry, with the most suitable and effective answers to the questions most likely to be put to him. Some of the most common may be arranged under the following heads.

(i.) **Questions relating to Muḥammad and the Qur'ān.**—'Do you believe in Muḥammad?' is a not unfrequent question in Persia. A Mujtahid in the same country inquired of a colporteur, 'What idea have the Christians about Muḥammad?' Some Arabs in a village near Muscat asked Bishop French what he thought of Muḥammad and the Qur'ān.

The questions asked often turn upon supposed allusions to Muḥammad's coming in the Bible. Thus, in the town of Gedarif, on the Blue Nile in the Egyptian Soudan, a colporteur was asked by a man to whom he was trying to sell a Gospel, 'Said not the Lord Jesus that Muḥammad, the greatest of the prophets, should come after Him?' A white-bearded Sayid met Abdu'l-Masīḥ at Miran ki sarai, and after hearing from him the reasons which led to his conversion, solemnly asked him to tell him on oath whether Muḥammad's name was in our Bible.† A Muslim in the Delta, Lower Egypt, before buying a Bible, asked, among other things, 'Where was the passage referring to Muḥammad, the greatest and last of the prophets?'

(ii.) **Questions about Christ.**—Why did not the Jews believe in Christ? is a question sometimes asked. An itinerant missionary was reverently and earnestly asked by Muḥammadans in the district of Aurungābād, Western India, 'Who was Jesus Christ?' 'Is He alive now?' The first of these, especially, seems a curious question for Muḥammadans to ask. As a rule they are only too ready, one might almost say, to assert their belief in Him as one of the prophets. 'Can you tell me when the

* Fifth story at the end of the *Mīzānu'l-Ḥaqq*, p. 307 (Pers. Edn.).
† *Ib.*, pp. 308, 309 (Pers. Edn.).

Saviour shall be revealed?' asked a Dervish of a colporteur in Persia, following it up with the further question, 'When the Lord shall be revealed, what shall be the result?' Questions of a controversial character are, of course, frequent, as, for instance, at Dr. Harpur's weekly 'At Homes' in his house at Cairo, where on one occasion 'the room was filled with some forty of the educated "Effendi" class; many of them came prepared with hard questions, attacking the Divinity of Christ, the inspiration of the Scriptures, etc.'

(iii.) **Questions regarding Christian prayer and worship.**—'How do you worship God?' asked a Muḥammadan of the Aurungābād district. At Haifa, in Syria, it was noted as an encouraging feature of the work among the Muslim women that they were beginning to ask intelligent questions, such as, 'What does your Book say about prayer?' 'How can we pray?' In a village near Muscat various questions as to prayers and pilgrimages were put to the aged Bishop French, as he sat in a circle of Arabs with their Sheikh at their head. A Persian Sayid inquires in which direction the Christians turn in prayer. Referring to village itineration in the Derajāt, where the Khāns were, as a rule, the first people to call, French wrote that their first inquiry usually was if he knew General Nicholson, and then 'the next question would generally be whether the English ever prayed, implying, in fact, whether they had any religion; for religion and the stated seasons for prayer are almost synonymous in the Afghān mind.

(iv.) **Questions as to sin and forgiveness.**—On the occasion above alluded to in a village near Muscat, Bishop French was asked, among other questions, 'what would become of the drunkard and the fornicator in the coming Kingdom; in answer to which last,' he says, 'I read much of Rev. xxi. and xxii., which seemed to strike them much.' A Syrian woman asks, 'What does the Book say about sin and forgiveness?' During the spring of 1901 there was 'an unusual commotion among the Muslims, owing to a great interest stirred up by the evangelistic meetings in Cairo. The book depôt was crowded for weeks by eager inquirers and disputants.' 'Much of the discussion,' wrote the late Rev. F. F. Adeney, 'was, I fear, unprofitable, such demands, for instance, being made as, "Prove to me, by philosophy, that I am a sinner."'

(v.) **Questions about particular passages of Scripture.**—Many questions are, of course, asked as to the explanation of difficult passages in the Scriptures. For example, we read of a well-to-do Muslim living near Tangier, in Morocco, who read the Scriptures in secret. 'It is significant that what most interested him was the warning against false and lying prophets, and he visited the missionaries to inquire who were meant.'

Referring to his visit to Shīrāz, in April, 1883, Bishop French wrote of a general and a Sheikh who called upon him, 'They

inquired particularly about "wilādat-i-ṣānī" (new birth), what it meant and how it was attained.' A young Muḥammadan of Kashmīr asks the meaning of the words, 'The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth,' etc. Sometimes it may be an apparent discrepancy which attracts the reader's attention. At Baghīn, on the way from Isfahān to Yezd, a Khān, who possessed a New Testament, asked a missionary 'to reconcile the statements, first, that Herod the king died, and then, later in the Gospel story, that Herod the king killed John the Baptist.' The two following questions were probably not so much prompted by a desire to know the correct interpretation of the passages referred to as by curiosity to see how a Christian would explain verses of the Bible to which they themselves attach a meaning in accordance with their own preconceived opinions. Thus Bishop French writes of his Persian callers during his visit to Shiraz, in April, 1883, 'This morning . . . some of them asked me to explain the words, "I will give you another Comforter;"' Muḥammadans commonly insisting upon it that this refers to their own prophet. The speakers on this occasion were probably curious to hear the Bishop's views. One of the chief Mujtahids of Kerman, who is 'a man of renowned sanctity, and gets the credit of working miracles,' was visited by the Rev. A. R. Blackett, and produced a copy of Henry Martyn's New Testament, and, turning to the account of the Transfiguration, he asked, 'Who the Elias could be that was to come before Christ's return?' the thought beneath his inquiry being that Christ foretold the coming of Muḥammad. Or the speaker may have had leanings towards Bābism or Behāism.

(vi.) **Sundry questions about various matters.**—At Lahore 'one day a Mullā asked French why he was not a Jew, since he believed in the Law (Taurāt),' to which the reply was given 'that it was a question of *race*.' A Muslim in the Delta, Lower Egypt, who had never seen the Bible before, asked 'many curious questions' before finally purchasing one: 'Why was the gospel of Jesus Christ named after other men?' 'Why was there not a Gospel of Paul as well as of Matthew?' 'How did God send the three books (the Law, the Psalms, and the Gospel) down?' The Rev. D. M. Thornton, speaking of the work 'at an out-station three miles to the north of Cairo, . . . among the boatmen who assemble there from all parts of Egypt to sell their grain and goods,' says—

> Some of their most constant inquiries will perhaps interest you; such as 'How was Christ conceived? How can a sinner be saved? How will Christ come again? How do you reconcile the teaching of the Qur'ān and the Gospel? What is the object of your preaching? Has the Gospel really been corrupted? Do you suppose through our Lord Isā we obtain divine blessings? Why was Christ crucified? Was it necessary for Him to be crucified? Do all Christians carry out the Word of God? Why cannot we receive this teaching and remain Muslims? How can God become man? This is an exceedingly strange thing.' And still more pointedly: 'If a man believes in Christ and remains in

His religion and only a Muslim by name, and is nothing but a Christian at heart, what then? But for the matter of the Crucifixion I would become a Christian at once.' But I must not forget to pass on the most searching appeal of all: 'How is it that you speak to us now in these days only, when you say that the Injīl, the Message of Salvation, was known 600 years before Muḥammad and the Qur'ān?'

(C) Aspects of Christian Truth specially attractive to Muḥammadan Minds.

In the pages that immediately follow an attempt has been made to gain a general idea derived from a number of collected instances of those aspects of Christian truth which most powerfully attract Muḥammadans. The result of the investigation will be found to be only that which, as Christians, we should expect. God's Word 'has still its ancient power.' 'The old, old story' is ever new. 'The Gospel of Christ' is still 'the power of God unto salvation.'* The Bible proves to be now, as ever, among Muḥammadans as well as among other men, the great witness to itself; and the story of Jesus Christ, crucified, risen, and able and willing to save, is the great magnet to draw all hearts to Himself.† May the instances given below of the power and attractiveness of the Gospel serve to confirm our faith, to enhance our loyalty to the Holy Scriptures, and to stimulate us to greater zeal and faithfulness in making them known and bearing witness to the words of divine Truth!

(i.) **The Bible.**—(*a*) *The volume excites interest.* In Algeria, in an Arab coffee-house at B., an Arab bought a Bible, saying, 'For a long time I have desired to possess this book.' His interest in it, we may conjecture, arose from reading the praises of it in the Qur'ān, or from a desire to become acquainted with the Holy Book current among the wealthy and powerful Christian nations. At a social gathering in the house of a leading ecclesiastic at Shiraz, Bishop French tells us that 'the great copy of the *whole* Persian Bible seemed very attractive to them.' This is quite in accordance with the Oriental instinct that a sort of dishonour is done to the Word of God if it be not printed in large and imposing style and size.

(*b*) But better than this, *the Bible attracts* not merely by its reported excellence or its formidable size, but by the actual knowledge of its contents. 'Once I asked him,' writes a missionary of a convert from Muḥammadanism, 'what was the chief thing that first attracted him to the Bible, and he said, "Well, the first day I met you I asked you a lot of questions about different things in religion, and instead of answering me out of your own head, you found some place in the Bible, and read me out something out of this in answer to every one of my questions. I thought that it must indeed be God's book if it had an answer to all the questions which were troubling my mind."'‡ Said an old Muḥammadan

* Rom. i. 16. † St. John xii. 32.

‡ *Punjāb Mission News*, June 15, 1903.

woman in Palestine to her guests, after listening to a Bible-reading by a missionary, 'Didn't I tell you that the Christians' doctrine is good, and their lives are better than ours?' In the United Provinces, India, a Muḥammadan woman said to the missionary, 'Read to us out of your book, Miss Sāhib; it is God's book—a wonderful book. We can't let you go till you have read to us.' A wealthy Muḥammadan, a former patient of Dr. Sturrock's, at Baghdād, tells him that 'he had been reading the Gospels and found them very beautiful.' Writes Miss Cay, of the old Cairo Mission—

> Presently a remark was made, which I treasure, partly for its pretty Eastern expression, and partly for its deep truth as regards the Gospel we preach; one of our hearers said: 'Their words are so sweet that the thirsty may drink from them.'

The Rev. J. Tunbridge, Kangra, India, writes, 'A Muḥammadan seized a copy [of the New Testament] one day when we were talking to the people near his shop, and became at once immersed in its pages, saying, "This appeals strongly to my heart." ' How many are the cases of which the following is typical, where patients in medical missions, who are at first indifferent or opposed to the Bible-readings, after a while become keenly interested! Miss Bird, speaking of such an instance in Yezd, writes—

> For some days the mother sat silent during our Bible talks, and only appeared interested when we united in prayer for the invalid's recovery, if it should be God's will. But the story, new to them, of love passing knowledge won its way, and before ten days were over she was the keenest for teaching.

The following is also doubtless a typical instance of many cases, where interest in the Bible is first aroused by the recommendation of a friend. A man visited his home (two hundred miles from where he lived) after a long absence. While there, 'a friend said to him, "Have you ever read the Christians' Book? If not, I advise you to get a copy." He did so, and once was found by a Muḥammadan friend using it. In answer to the reproaches of his friend, he said, "Let me read you something from this Book." He did so, and that man too soon possessed himself of a Bible, and commenced the study of it.' The Rev. C. H. A. Field's experience of evangelistic work in the Peshāwar district is in harmony with the instances above given. He says—

> One is struck in almost every case of genuine inquiry with the fact that the inquiry was started by a copy of the Scriptures falling into some one's hands, and not by anything the missionary had said or done. A Testament bought at an auction led to the purchaser becoming an inquirer in one case; and one taken up casually in a friend's house led to the same result in another.

(*c*) In some cases it is more particularly *the instructiveness and moral teaching of the Bible* which appeal to men's hearts. A man

comes into the Bible Depôt at Wad Medani, on the Blue Nile, and after reading part of St. Matthew's Gospel, exclaims, 'I perceive that the *Injil* forbids every evil act, whereby it is plain to me that it is the truth.' A Muslim officer at Khartum remarks to a colporteur, 'I have read the Bible in Egypt and am fond of it, for I find there is no other book like it so full of instruction.' As a colporteur was selling books at the market of A. G., in the Province of Constantine, Algeria, a Kaid comes up, and is handed a Bible, which he carefully examines, and reads aloud a few verses, saying, 'This is excellent.' To the bystanders he also speaks thus of the book: 'It is the Word of God.' 'You insult God by speaking so [*i.e.* calling the books 'kouffar' (infidel)], since it is the Holy Book. It teaches the pardon of offences and love to our fellow-men. After all, the God of Jesus is the same as the God of Muḥammad.' In the preceding are some seasonable words against several Muḥammadan prejudices or ignorances. The Kaid did not indeed declare the whole truth, but only so much of it as the bystanders could take in, and in a form to which they could not object.

(*d*) The Bible is recognized as *the vehicle of the truth*. Dr. J. O. Summerhayes writes—

> It was reported to me that an Arab who came and heard the preaching said, when he was tackled about his faith, that he had 'the Taurāt and Injīl' (the Old and New Testament), and knew that they showed the right way even better than the Qur'ān, but feared to let this be known, or he would be called a 'Wahhābī.'

A Muḥammadan at Qumishah tells a colporteur, who had explained to him what his books were: 'I know very well that the Truth is in those books, for I have read them; there is nothing in our hands like them.' 'Abdu'l-Masīḥ was invited by an old fellow-student, a doctor, to come and see him. He could not credit it that he had become a Christian. After a great deal of discussion about the Injīl and the Qur'ān the doctor admitted that he could not refute the arguments which had led Abdu'l-Masīḥ to become a Christian; that the Qur'ān was not equal to the Gospel, and that the truth was to be found only in the Gospel. So he begged a Gospel from Abdu'l-Masīḥ.* Sheikh —— was for a time in the hospital at Old Cairo, and was at first very fanatical and 'much opposed to hearing the Gospel read or spoken in the ward. . . . By degrees the Word of God seemed to be softening his heart, and instead of refusing to listen to the teaching of Christ, he became an eager hearer, and at last was hardly ever seen without a Gospel in his hand. . . . He seemed to be a true believer in Christ as the Son of God, and confessed so to Miss Sells on the last Sunday that he was in the hospital, saying, "How can I but believe now that I have read the Book?" "But you didn't believe when you first came here; you were like the

* Fifth story at the end of the *Mīzānu'l-Ḥaqq*, p. 307 (Pers. Edn.).

Muḥammadans outside who refuse to believe in Jesus." To this he answered, "Ah, but then I hadn't seen your Book; they would believe too if they had read that."' Strikingly similar to the previous in its main outlines is the following. One of the chief Muḥammadans of Kashmīr, who might not inappropriately be called the 'Archdeacon of the upper part of the valley,' was for a time an in-patient of the C.M.S. hospital, Srinagar, and at first most reluctant to listen to any Christian teaching. By degrees his prejudices began to pass away, and he began to study day by day the Gospel of St. John, which Dr. A. Neve put into his hands. And before he left 'he confessed to me,' wrote the doctor, 'that what was in our Book was true, and that he knew Christ was the Saviour of the world.' The two following are also instances of a conviction of the truth arising from the perusal of the Scriptures. In the Marakesh district of Morocco, 'a young Moor who had bought a Gospel returned it after a few days to the depôt, saying that he would either have to become a Christian or give up reading the Book.' 'About six years ago,' writes the Rev. T. Davis, of Bombay, 'a young Maulawī came to our discussions and soon took an active interest in them. He began to study the Bible with a view to carry on a mischievous aggression against the Christian religion. By degrees he was led to experience that lonesomeness of the human heart which truth creates and alone can satisfy. After a pilgrimage to Mecca he returned still unsatisfied, and at the close of one of our discussions declared himself to be in heart a Christian, and requested baptism.'

(ii.) **Particular Books or Passages of the Bible.**—'Sheikh Ṣāliḥ, a zealous Dehli Muḥammadan,' afterwards well known under the name of Abdu'l-Masīḥ as 'the first native clergyman of the Church of England in India,'* was drawn in the first instance to Christianity by hearing Henry Martyn preaching to Hindūs at Cawnpore upon the Ten Commandments, and perceiving the superiority of the Old and New Testament to the teachings of the Qur'ān and all the books of the Muḥammadans that he had read. † The Rev. C. H. A. Field, speaking apparently with special reference to the Pathāns, writes: 'The Psalms especially seem to appeal to some, as they have many points of contact with the Qur'ān.' Of Ceylon we read: 'At Jaffna, Muḥammadans . . . often purchase copies of the Psalms and Proverbs and read them carefully.' Miss Butlin, Baghdad, writes of the father of a boy patient in the hospital, he 'was the most wonderful Arab I have ever met, as he was always reading the Bible, and his face would light up with joy at any striking passage. Some one had given him St. John's Gospel and the Psalms, and he had read these while in the desert, and begged for a Testament. "Now sit down and listen to this," he would say; "was there ever anything like it? Why, I am a Christian, and my boy Azeek must be a

* *History of the Church Missionary Society*, vol. i. pp. 182, 183.

† Fifth story at the end of the *Mīzānu'l-Ḥaqq*, p. 305 (Pers. Edn.).

Christian too."' Colporteur Mas'ad Daoud writes of his work in Port Said: 'About one-third of my sales have been among Muḥammadans, who chiefly ask for the Proverbs of Solomon.' 'Here is a book I bought from you last year,' said a Muslim to Colporteur Sinas in Scutari, producing at the same a well-thumbed copy of Proverbs; 'it is my guide and companion.' At Jaffna, Ceylon, 'in the home of Muḥammadans, a considerable number of portions were sold, especially of St. Matthew's Gospel and Proverbs.' The Rev. C. H. A. Field 'reports the baptism of a Pathān from across the border, whose first contact with the Gospel was through a torn copy of St. Matthew in Pushtu finding its way to his village.' Mr. T. A. Carmichael, Meerut, in reference to his itinerating work writes: 'A large crowd of Muḥammadans listen well in another spot while I discourse on some of Christ's teachings, taken from the Sermon on the Mount.' A colporteur offers Scriptures at the railway station, Cairo, to several Muslims waiting for a train. After a little conversation, 'I took out a copy,' he says, 'and read to them from St. Matthew xxii. 35–40. And when I had read, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind*, and again, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, one of them said, "Would God that all men did walk according to this Word!" and forthwith he purchased not only St. Matthew, but also a New Testament.' A Shī'ah Muḥammadan at Karāchī who was afterwards baptized, was attracted by the Rev. A. E. Ball's reading a passage from St. Matthew vi. at a noisy bāzār preaching. A woman in Egypt was 'intensely interested' in the story of Christ's casting out the evil spirit in the synagogue (St. Mark i.) and His healing Simon's wife's mother. 'I have often seen the women listen before,' wrote Miss Waller, 'but never devour the words as this one did.' Colporteur Salīm relates that, when travelling in Central Morocco, he journeyed for seven days with some Sūs men, 'who gladly listened to his reading of God's Word, and were especially impressed by the story of the Prodigal Son.' We read as follows of a 'village lady' in the C.M.S. hospital at Kirmān: 'Last night a bigoted Muslim neighbour brought her a copy of their "Traditions;" she looked at it for a minute, and then laid it down, saying, "I love the Gospel of St. John best, it enlightens my heart; the more I read it, the more hungry I am for it."' In November, 1890, Bishop French wrote from Tunis—

> I am starting with the Mullā a careful translation of St. Hilary on the Trinity, the early chapters of which, on St. John's teaching in his first chapter, appear to seize the Mullā with a great surprise. He went into a kind of ecstacy over them this morning, of a most genuine and unmistakable kind, however, on the words 'born not of blood, nor of the will of man,' etc. He put his hand over his forehead and exclaimed 'Fahimt! Fahimt!' (I understand, I understand), like the old Eureka! Eureka! 'Now I see what for these fifty-five years of my life I never had a conception of before.' In all my missionary days I never was more

struck with the seizure divine truth makes, and the hold it takes superhumanly, of a heart somewhat unprejudiced and open to its influences.*

(iii.) **The Life, Work, and Teaching of Jesus.**—There are, no doubt, some like the women among whom a Bible-woman was working in Morocco, who seem to be 'dense and sensual, with no care for the comfort and teaching the Bible gives.' But, thanks be to God, there are many others, both men and women, to whose hearts the Lord Jesus Christ most touchingly appeals in one aspect or another through the many-sided attractiveness of His life, work, and teaching.

(*a*) *His surpassing Dignity.*—A doctor in India, already mentioned, was attracted by the Muḥammadan title of Jesus, Rūḥu'llah (Spirit of God), and led to inquire about this great Personage.† 'A Muḥammadan in Southern India, not long ago, was first drawn to faith in Jesus Christ by reading the genealogy with which St. Matthew begins his narrative. Such a procession, he thought, must lead up to a mighty name; and he approached with reverence the story of the Nativity.' ‡

(*b*) *The Story of His Life and Work.*—In Algeria, 'at T., an Arab bought the New Testament in French, and was very glad that it contained the story of the life of our Lord.' He said to the colporteur, 'I have heard much talking about Jesus Christ, and to-day you bring me the book which speaks of Him.' In the same country again, 'at S. O., an Arab,' writes a colporteur, 'when he saw that I had the Bible for sale, exclaimed, "Ah! you sell the Holy Book. I know it. I have been in Constantine, and had intercourse with the English missionaries there, who always speak of Jesus. Wait! I will call my friends, and then you shall speak to us about Him."' In Persia, a colporteur thus describes a visit to nomads: 'Those very few who could read bought some Scriptures, and the rest eagerly begged us to read and explain the story of 'Īsā (Jesus), to which they joyfully listened.' At 'Alīgarh 'an old Muḥammadan woman who constantly comes, bringing various members of her family, seems wonderfully to have grasped the truth of Christ being the Son of God and Saviour of the world; she loves to hear our story of Him each time she comes.' Many of the patients at the men's hospital, Isfahān, 'ask for Bibles and Testaments before they leave, that they may take them home and read the life of Jesus Christ for themselves.'

(*c*) *The love of Jesus realized.* 'We love Him, because He first loved us.'§—A wealthy Muḥammadan lady at Āgrā, after reading the Bible regularly for some time, one day whispers to the Bible-woman, 'I do believe in Christ and love Him, and so does my husband; but we dare not confess it.' Dr. H. Martyn Clark

* Birks' *Life of Bishop French*, II. 333.
† Fifth story in *Mīzānu'l-Haqq*, p. 307 (Pers. Edn.).
‡ Moule on Romans i. 3 (Expositor's Bible), pp. 14, 15.
§ 1 John iv. 19.

writes as follows of a Muḥammadan inquirer under instruction:—'As I talked of the family troubles which would ensue on baptism, his face lit up with a joy touching to see. "I do not know much about Christ," said he; "but this I know, He is more to me than father or mother, or aught beside."' A Muḥammadan woman of one of the villages near Howrah, though illiterate, begs for a tract from the missionaries, and declares her intention to learn to read, 'so that I may read about Jesus, and what He has done for me.' And again, she assures the missionaries 'she should never forget what Jesus had done for her.'

Little Bāgum, a child-wife of fourteen years of age, had been treated by her husband with the greatest cruelty, and finally he attempted to kill her by pouring two bottles of naphtha over her, and setting her on fire. After she had been taken thirty miles to the women's hospital, Julfa, 'she began asking for the "Book" to be read to her,' writes Dr. Emmeline M. Stuart, 'and begged us to tell her more about Jesus.' It came out that she had been greatly interested in the story of the Woman of Samaria, which she had heard from a missionary, and had subsequently learned all she could about Jesus from the two children of a Christian convert who stayed for a time in her mother's village. 'Ignorant of nearly everything else in the Bible, she yet had grasped in a most wonderfully clear manner the leading truths. Over and over again, both in delirium and when quite conscious, would the little voice recite her simple faith in words like these: "Jesus Christ loves me; He died for me; He has forgiven my sins; I believe in Him; He has got a place for me in heaven." She asked me the first day if she would get better, and I told her gently that she could never be well here on earth again, but that there was a happy home in heaven, where all who loved Jesus and believed in Him would go and stay there always, free from pain. She looked up so brightly and said, "Yes, that will be much better, and *I* believe in Jesus; He loves me, and He will give me a place there."' *

(*d*) *The Words and Teaching of Jesus.*—A Persian inquirer (and how many there are like him!) 'is greatly struck by our Lord's character and teaching.' 'I have begun reading the New Testament,' said a Maulawī in India, 'and I am astonished at it. Take that command alone, "Love your enemies"—we have nothing like it in the Qur'ān. Yours is the better book of the two.' A Muḥammadan woman in an Indian zenana, after hearing a picture of the Good Shepherd explained to her, says, 'I want to meet the Lord Jesus, Miss Sāhib; how can I see Him?' Some rude and bigoted Muḥammadans near the Pyramids, who were at first noisy and made interruptions, listened quietly to 'the sayings of Jesus,' and said to Miss Jackson, 'You bring us beautiful words,' adding, 'you

* The story is given in the *C.M.S. Report*, 1900-1901, pp. 187, 188, and has also been published separately as one of the Medical Mission Leaflets, No. 7. 'Joyful, joyful, shall the meeting be.'

would change the whole village with such words as these,' if she would consent to come and live among them. Malays at Medan, Sumātra, when offered a copy of the Gospels for sale, used often to give it back when they saw the name Injīl on the cover, 'saying that Muslims had no need for such books.' But when persuaded to listen to some of our Lord's parables, they nearly always purchased copies, 'remarking that they had no idea that the Gospels contained such good things.' A Shereef from the Sūs country among the Atlas mountains, received a Gospel on a passing visit to Tangier. Subsequently to this he spent some years in the dungeon of Mogador on a grave criminal charge. 'While in prison, he sent to Tangier for a copy of the New Testament, in the hope that it might be useful to him in working sorcery! He found the Book of greater value than he had anticipated, for his attention was arrested by the character and teaching of Christ, and after his release he inquired of several missionaries more fully the way of salvation,' and was eventually baptized in the city of Fez. Here too, perhaps, we may appropriately place the striking testimony of a well-to-do Persian tradesman, who had been seeking the right way for twenty years and 'had gradually become convinced,' writes the Rev. C. H. Stileman, 'that Muḥammadans had not the true knowledge of God. By degrees he had also come to the conclusion that the followers of Christ had really come to know Him Whom to know is life eternal; and he told me that nothing could satisfy him but this knowledge.'

(*e*) *His Crucifixion and Resurrection.*—At a Sunday service, conducted by Miss Brighty and Dr. Urania Latham at Fahraj, twenty miles from Yezd, the latter 'read the story of the Crucifixion, and, finding the people were listening so attentively, she went on to the Resurrection, and explained it all. It was a most impressive service. Most, if not all, had never heard the story before, and were struck with wonder. When any newcomers entered the room, they made signs to them to sit quiet and listen.' Miss Nuttall writes from Ramallah, Palestine: 'Last Easter Sunday but one, I took the subject of the Resurrection with our Christian women as usual. A tall Bedawy-looking woman had come in, and seemed much interested. After the meeting she said, 'Oh, lady, how beautiful are the words of your honourable Qur'ān! Do tell me more about Saidna 'Īsā. Let me know more of the precious news. . . .'' So I invited her for the next day, and she sat and listened for about two hours while I told her of Christ's Death and Resurrection.' Of the attitude of Muḥammadans in his district, the Rev. F. Bower, of Kunnankulam, Cochin, S. India, writes—

> **As a rule, the majority of them are more or less proud, rude, and bigoted, but during the last year or two there has been a change in them for the better. Some will now listen to the story of the Cross most attentively for a considerable time, and even rebuke those who try to put a stop to the preaching.***

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1899–1900, p. 338.

(*f*) *Christ's Second Coming.*—Speaking of the Julfa to Kerman road, Persia, a colporteur writes, 'At many places along this route we were unable to sell books, but we had many conversations, almost all of which referred—as most of the conversations do in this country nowadays—to Christ's second coming.' * The Rev. C. T. Wilson, of Palestine, writes—

It is very remarkable that our Lord's second coming is a subject which I invariably find interests and solemnizes the Muslims, especially the more serious and thoughtful ones. As is well known, they expect His return to slay the Dejjāl or Antichrist, which event the Palestine Muḥammadans say is to take place near Lydd; and to find that we, too, are expecting Him, and that soon, makes a deep impression on them.

'On every hand,' wrote the late Miss Attlee, 'I notice a marked spirit of inquiry into Christianity among the Muslims, far more than there used to be, and I believe it is chiefly due to the general expectation amongst them that the Lord Jesus, Whom of course they all look upon as a great Prophet, is "coming again" soon to "judge the world for forty years." I heard that one of the chief Muslim teachers in Jerusalem had said, in a public address lately, "We have been mistaken in thinking that the end is to be for Muḥammad; we know now, it will be for Sayyidna 'Isā (our Lord Jesus)." Several men have said the same to me, viz. that the day of Muḥammadanism is nearly over, and that as it was "established by the sword," so they expect it to be put an end to in the same way.'

(*g*) *The Great Intercessor.*—An old woman in one of the villages near Old Cairo, who, though apparently not baptized, confesses herself a Christian before her Muslim neighbours, says of the Saviour, 'My love for Him comes from the bottom of my heart, for He is my Mediator and Advocate in the day of judgment, and if I do not trust and love Him, to whom shall I go?' A beggar accosts a colporteur in Morocco with the unusual formula, 'In the name of the Intercessor.' It transpires that on a previous occasion he bought a book from the colporteur. Since then, misfortune and bad times had overtaken him, 'But this one book' (a little Gospel) he said, 'I would not sell, because it tells of the great Intercessor.'

(*h*) *Sundry:* The 'many mansions'; the privilege of prayer to Jesus; the universality of the Gospel; the lofty spiritual character of Christianity.—Miss E. L. Oxley writes as follows of two interesting pupils in Madras, 'a mother and daughter, very poor and ignorant, but very eager listeners to the word of truth':—

They say they are both really Christian at heart, and I am never to say that they are Muḥammadans, for it grieves them. The mother does not expect to live long, and says she knows that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for her. She is very timid, having always lived in retirement, so sometimes she asks, 'Will He come to receive me Himself?' and when I say 'Yes,' she looks pleased, and says, 'I am to be fetched.'

* British and Foreign Bible Society's *Report*, 1902.

A Muslim woman in Egypt, when asked if she would like to pray to our Lord, and ask Him to save her, was much astonished. 'Can I pray to Him?' she asked; 'I don't know the right words to say, and ought I not to put on a clean dress to pray in?' An aged Muḥammadan woman in Cairo 'listened eagerly to the Gospel, and often asked to hear more of the Book. She displayed unbounded delight when the words, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" were read to her, and clapped her hands, saying, "It is for everybody, the Muslim women as well as the Christian. Praise be to God."' A Muḥammadan lad, the first convert in Mombasa, who previously had displayed considerable bigotry, said 'he wished to become a Christian,' because he saw our faith was holier, and our religion more spiritual than his own, and the lives of the teachers of our Christian faith so different.

(iv.) **The good tidings of an Atoning Saviour.**—A Muḥammadan came to the missionary at Kushtia, Nadiya District, Bengal. 'He said he had read a great deal of the Bible, and was convinced that Christ alone could save him, and not Muḥammad.' One of the strongest arguments is our personal witness of our relation to Christ, and what He has done for us. "If you have received this salvation," asked one Muslim, "why should not I?" 'As I told two young men of salvation in Jesus, their Kurdish servant, sitting by, leaned forward to listen, and finally broke out with: "Khānum, is it for the Kurds too?"'* A poor Muslim woman in an Egyptian village thus expresses her intended venture of faith: 'I have always heard from my neighbours that He died only for the Christians, but the *Sitt* says He died for Muslims as well, and I'm going to believe it.' In Cairo, 'to go from house to house reading the Gospel of Jesus Christ is still a work of great patience, . . . but there are many who are beginning to confess themselves in need of *just such a Saviour*.' Two Muslims in the Panjāb said to a Christian worker, 'We believe and love your message, and think that *beside Christ, there is no Saviour*; but we shrink from confessing our faith publicly, lest we should find afterwards that we were unable to live up to our profession.' From Kirman, Miss Bird wrote in 1901—

> In the dispensary we have seen a marked change in the interest taken in the Gospel readings and prayers. Only last August one woman said, 'Tell us all about Jesus Christ's death, and why He died.' 'It will take some time.' 'We are in no hurry if you are not.' As she spoke she looked round to see if any one dissented from her, but though forty-three were present, not one said she had not time to listen. There was perfect silence for twenty-five minutes. Many wept and looked so longing when they heard 'why He died.'

From Palestine comes similar testimony. 'One hears,' wrote

* So writes 'An Armenian Christian Evangelist' in *The Missionary Review of the World* for Oct., 1904, p. 727.

the late Miss Attlee, 'of the village men and women sometimes sitting up talking about religion until midnight, and a woman told me she had overheard a man on one of these occasions say that "nothing made him so glad" as to hear me tell "about the atoning death of Christ."' In the same country, a young Muḥammadan Sheikh on one occasion 'brought an older Sheikh, who listened most attentively to the Bible, and then exclaimed, "Then there is an atonement for sin! These words are sweeter than honey."' And again, in the Muslim quarter of Bethlehem, a Muḥammadan says to a lady missionary, 'We know that Jesus was a prophet, but never heard that He was a Saviour till you came and told us, and every day you come I feel more convinced that what you read or say is true. Why has no one told us before?' At Baghdād an earnest inquirer relates, 'I could not sleep last night, but stood and wept, as, in vision, I saw the crucified Christ dying for my sins.' Faith in the Saviour's Atonement gives hope and peace to the sick and dying. An old Muḥammadan woman in Ceylon before her death tells her daughter, 'I know I am dying, but I am not afraid, for I am going to God, and I shall be with Jesus, who, the teacher says, came to save sinners.' A native of Morocco, who had been reading the New Testament, but was not apparently baptized, when very ill, testifies thus: 'It is all settled now; Jesus is in my heart, and as He is the only Saviour of men He is my Saviour. I have no fear of death, for as He lives, I shall live also.' A Muḥammadan woman near Faizābād, United Provinces, India, invites her aged mother to listen to the Christian teaching in these words, 'Listen, mother, you have never heard anything like this before, how Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to die for us, to wash us from our sins.'

(v.) **The prospect of Rest for the Soul.**—This is often felt to be the soul's most pressing need, and the craving for rest and the hope of finding it in the Christian faith act as a powerful magnet to the troubled heart. Referring to 'a long and pleasant evening with a Nicodemus-like Mullā, who sat one and a half hours,' Bishop French wrote at Shiraz in 1883—

> 'Masīḥ imroz ārām' (Christ is peace to-day), and the teaching based upon it, struck him much. . . . I was most refreshed by meeting such a gentlemanly, humble, modest inquirer to whom the truth seemed as clear as fresh water out of springs. In speaking of 'Christ is peace to-day' the Nicodemus said, 'You must have the Holy Spirit dwelling in you,' of which I had been speaking. Evidently the thought had taken hold of him in a strange way.*

The following refers to a young woman in Palestine, a member of an in-patients' class:—'One day, when speaking to them of Jesus taking away our sins, she said thoughtfully, "That would be rest. Can Muslims have this rest?" Later on she said, "I

* *Life of Bishop French*, vol. ii. pp. 58, 59.

believe with all my heart that Jesus is the Son of God, and that He died for our sins, and now I have rest."' She was subsequently baptized. A small boy came to a missionary in a town which he visited once a year for preaching, and said, 'I want to be a Christian.' 'Why?' 'Four years ago I bought a New Testament from you, and have been studying it ever since.' 'What is there in that that makes you wish to be a Christian?' 'There is one verse alone which is enough to make me wish it, that verse where it is said, "Ye shall find rest unto your souls." None of our books speak of rest to the soul, and I want that rest.' *

'Why do you want to be a Christian?' said the Rev. T. Bomford to a Muhammadan once. 'There is one verse in the Gospel which would alone be enough to make me wish to be a Christian.' 'What is that?' 'It is the words in St. Matthew, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." "You shall find rest to your souls." I know the books of Islām; there is no promise of rest there. I want that rest.' † Just before Mr. Bomford left India in 1891 a Muhammadan Maulawī wrote to him from a place a hundred miles off, saying, 'I have searched our books through and through, but find no rest to my soul in them. Can Christianity reach the soul? How can I learn about it?' ‡

(vi.) **Faith in Christ, the secret of Spiritual Strength and Power.**—A young Mullā, 'son of a well-known teacher in the capital of Kurdistān—a Kurd of the Kurds,' and a very zealous and bigoted Muslim, came under the influence of a Nestorian preacher from Urumia. 'This man, he found, spoke the truth, and although he tempted him in many ways, could not induce him to lie in act any more than in word. The young Muslim concluded that a religion which will keep a man from lying must be worth looking into.' 'One young woman,' wrote Miss Attlee of her work on the Mount of Olives, 'the eldest in our girls' class, cheered me very much by coming in one day to me when I was sitting alone and saying so earnestly, as if from her very heart, "If only one knew how to be saved from sin!" And when she did seem to realize the truth, unlike most who are afraid ever to speak of Christ, she at once told her mother, "It is Jesus only who saves us from sin"; and afterwards she repeated the same to some poor women with whom she was engaged in labour on the open-air village threshing-floor, adding, "I know it is true, for I have proved it myself."' In an account of work in the Muslim villages near Jerusalem, a lady missionary writes, 'In their hard circumstances, with little or nothing to break the monotony of the daily round, the missionary's appearance is a welcome sight, and as they hear of the world beyond with its peace and rest, they naturally long for it, and are open to be taught the way. The

* *Punjāb Mission News*, Aug. 15, 1903.
† *C.M.S. Intelligencer*, July, 1898.
‡ *Ib.*

fact that nothing unclean can enter there comes home to them, and the question asked, "How can I keep this tongue?" leads on to practical Christianity through the only Saviour. Many are the prayers sent up from earnest hearts for forgiveness and salvation to God in these Muslim villages, in the name of the Lord Jesus.' With these instances may be compared the following, which indicate some consciousness at all events of the soothing and elevating power of the Word of God and prayer. Miss Bird wrote from Yezd of a Khān's wife, who had been visited and successfully treated for tuberculosis, and afterwards became an earnest listener to the Bible-reading. One day she said, 'I should like to sit and listen all day, then I could be good; but now as soon as you go the devil makes me worse than ever.' In Palestine, 'one missionary states that several girls were accustomed to come in to family prayers in the evenings, saying that if they felt angry or ruffled about anything it always seemed to soothe them, and to "drive the devil away."'

(vii.) **Christian example and other visible results of practical Christianity.**—Deeply interesting is it to read of 'the increasingly large number of converts who have been won to Christianity by association with Indian Christian families, whose influence has been that of a distinctly Christian character.' * Thus at Annfield, in the United Provinces, North India, two Musulmāns 'were drawn into Christianity through the friendly conduct and kindness of our native Christians, who had employed them as servants.' A convert of the Muḥammadan Mission in Bombay 'was won by the example of his Christian employers.' A Muslim convert in the prime of life in Morocco was drawn to Christ, and led to trust Him, through the example and teaching of two European agents of the British and Foreign Bible Society.† Dr. Adams says of his medical assistant at Sakhi Sarwar, that a leading Baluch chief secretly writes 'to say he had watched his consistent life, and wanted to know more of the Christian religion.' Among the inquirers some years ago in Julfa and Isfahān was 'a man who was first drawn to Christianity by noticing the marked contrast between the lives of the professed leaders of Islām and the life of a poor old convert in his own village who had frequently been beaten, and had suffered much persecution for Christ's sake. It seemed to him that the religion of the one was but a mere outward shell, whereas the faith of the other was a living reality.' The quiet testimony and unostentatious exhibition of Christian graces in the circle of home life should, and does have, as the following cases show, the effect of leading those who witness them to inquire and believe. Through the witness of a bright young convert in her home in a Persian village 'a sister has believed and confesses herself a Christian.' In the same country, again, the

* Rev. T. Davis of the C.M.S. Muḥammadan Mission, Bombay, in his Annual Letter, 1903.

† *Report*, 1902, p. 178.

influence of another village girl since her baptism has been so blessed that her mother-in-law, who ill-treated her, 'because she was found praying a Christian prayer,' 'has become quite a keen inquirer, and seems really seeking salvation through Jesus.' Here are some examples of the attractive influence of the results of practical Christianity. At Baghdad, 'one man who underwent an operation became an earnest inquirer, recognizing in the dispensary work a practical illustration of the lofty tenderness of the Gospel, which he learned to read and love.' A missionary's wife in Palestine 'inquired at the public well about a girl who had been in the hospital, and the woman to whom she spoke turned to her companions and exclaimed: "Truly the religion of these Christians is better than ours. She how she asks after a poor girl! Our religion does not lead us to do that."' 'Two soldiers of the Baluch regiment, who had been in Uganda,' writes Dr. Summerhayes of Quetta, 'astonished me by coming and demanding Bibles. They said they had seen what Christianity was doing in Uganda.'

(viii.) **The Christian's joy in life and peace in death.**—In Turkish Arabia a young man, the distant relative of a convert whose life and conduct he has watched for years, begins 'privately to read the Bible to discover the secret of ——'s joy.' 'A young Kabyle, the son of the native chief,' in Kabylia, Algeria, determined to become a Christian; and 'in his confession of faith the young convert said: "A religion which causes such a change in the life of men like 'Alī and others, who are now so happy and bright, is surely a true one; and henceforth I too will believe in Jesus as my Saviour."' The peaceful serenity of the last days on earth of 'little Bāgum,' to whose touching story allusion has already been made, produced a deep impression upon the women in the hospital, who, although Muḥammadans, used to sing Christian hymns to the dying child. 'They vied with each other in caring for her, and she was never left a moment alone. They confessed they had never seen such a thing, and I do not think they will ever forget it. The child was so perfectly sure she was going straight to heaven. Jesus had forgiven her sins. He had a place ready for her. She had no fear, but talked constantly of the joy of heaven. It was so different from the callous indifference of the Muḥammadan death-bed that no one could fail to be impressed.' And again, 'A few months after her death, in November, Bāgum's mother and young sister walked from their village home to Julfa, for the sole purpose of finding out what was the secret of her happiness in her last hours, that they too might die like her.'

(ix.) **The high Christian ideal of Marriage.**—'In this degrading custom of polygamy,' writes Miss A. Montgomery, of the American Presbyterian Mission, Hamadān, 'we often find a text by which we show how inferior is the religion of the false prophet to the blessed, pure religion of the Lord Jesus. One never finds a Muslim woman who will deny Christianity this

superiority over the religion of the false prophet.' * A young Mullā of Bukhārā had been led to believe in Christ, in consequence of which his wife threatened to denounce him to the government. 'Her husband was specially kind to her, and asked if he was better or worse since his new belief. She could not but admit he was kinder and better. Then he read to her the pages where a man is commanded to have one wife. As the object of every Muḥammadan wife is to keep her husband from taking another wife, she was intensely interested. He went on to read that a man should love his wife as himself. This, so contrary to Oriental practice, struck her forcibly. Slowly her mind began to open to the truths of Christianity, and now they are both desiring to be baptized.' †

(x.) **Dreams.**—Last, but by no mean least in interest or importance, we come to dreams. Many are the instances in the Persia Mission of the Church Missionary Society which have come under the notice of the missionaries, when the faith of inquirers has been stimulated and strengthened, or men have been led to become inquirers, through this means. The cases given below by way of example have all occurred in the Mission just mentioned. It would be highly interesting to know whether, in the experience of workers among Muḥammadans in other countries, dreams have played an equally remarkable part in creating or fostering a spirit of inquiry. As the Persians are firm believers in dreams, and regard them as messages from the unseen world, they constitute for them a powerful incentive to corresponding action. Looking at the effects produced, and remembering the manifold means by which the Almighty works, few perhaps would be found to deny that He seems to have made use of this medium to speak to human hearts in Persia.

In a certain Persian village the life of a poor old convert and the cruel persecution he endured made a great impression on one of his fellow-villagers. 'After the old convert's death,' this man 'had a dream in which the old man appeared, and beckoned him to follow the path he had taken; and this led him to seek the missionary' and become an inquirer.‡ Dr. Lucy Molony of Yezd writes, 'One girl whom we have known for some time had two dreams, in which she heard a voice telling her to come to me, and I would show her the way of salvation. After this, while we were still in the hills, she came almost daily for teaching, and I felt she was really anxious to learn, though very ignorant.' 'A most interesting man, about fifty, came repeatedly, bringing some poetry (composed by himself and written down for him by a professional writer) in praise of Christ, and confessing His deity. This man often brought others with him. His whole family profess themselves Christians, but fear to come out. He was led to seek the

* *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 734.
† *Ib.*, p. 790.
‡ *C.M.S. Report*, 1899–1900, p. 168.

truth through a dream.' * Another case is that of two 'brothers, the latter a fine young soldier. The elder brother had a dream, which resulted in the conversion of both.' After careful instruction they were recommended for baptism.† 'Paulus (Paul), like many other Easterns, was first influenced by a dream, by which he was convinced that our Lord Jesus Christ could alone save him. It was long after this dream that he first saw any portion of God's Word in his own language. His wife had visited Miss Bird's dispensary for Persian women, and having there heard the Gospel message, procured a portion of the Persian New Testament. Paulus eagerly studied the Word of God, and was apparently a sincere Christian before he ever saw a Christian missionary. The Holy Spirit was his teacher, and he thankfully and joyfully accepted the message of salvation through Christ.' ‡ An educated man, able to read well, travelled a distance of 200 miles to the C.M.S. hospital at Yezd, in order to be cured of the opium habit. 'About twelve years ago he bought from a colporteur of the Bible Society copies of St. John and St. Luke in Persian, which he read with great interest. Six months ago he had a remarkable dream by which he was convinced that our Lord Jesus Christ was able to save, and that Europeans might be able to help him to give up the opium habit. Shortly afterwards a man came to his village and testified to the fact that opium-smokers were being cured in the C.M.S. Hospital in Yezd, and he decided to come the eleven days' journey and try to obtain deliverance. In the hospital he heard the Gospel message day by day, regularly attended the services, and finally came day by day for regular instruction with a view to baptism. He went away very happy, having, as we believe, found the Pearl of great price as well as deliverance from the opium curse.' §

It may be interesting to give a few of these dreams in detail, and it will hardly be denied that they are, to say the least, remarkable. The following is related by the Rev. Napier Malcolm of Shīrāz. (The dream in question occurred before the man became an inquirer.)

He dreamed he was in a desert and was being guided by my wife to a coffin. In the coffin there was a man in white clothes asleep and apparently dead; but when my wife touched him he got up. They all went together to another part of the desert, where there was a table, and over it was an arrangement like a shower-bath from which water was falling. As the water fell it formed into very large bubbles containing fruit and flowers of all kinds, and the bubbles bounced off the table on to the ground, where they were caught up by a vast crowd surrounding the table. I think he said that when he came forward to get a bubble some

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1899–1900, p. 168. This and the following instance are related by the Rev. W. St. Clair-Tisdall, D.D.

† *Ib.*

‡ Rev. C. H. Stileman's *Subjects of the Shah*, p. 88.

§ Rev. C. H. Stileman, writing from Yezd on June 27, quoted in *C.M.S. Intelligencer*, Sept., 1906, pp. 698, 699.

of the water fell on him. That is all I remember, but there is no doubt that the dream made a great impression on him and led to his baptism.

Dr. D. W. Carr thus relates the story of another man—

He dreamed that he was loaded with some chains by two men. They were taking him away when they met three people coming towards them. I was just going down to the hospital when I met the man; he was waiting at our door and almost leaped at me when I came out, and seized me by the coat with both hands and glared at me in such an astonished way that I thought he was mad. I asked him who the men were, and he said the one on one side was myself. The one on the other side he did not know, but he had a clear recollection of his face and would know him if he saw him. The middle man was the remarkable one, and had a great light radiating up from his head into heaven. I asked him who he thought it was. He said he didn't know, but he thought it must be Jesus Christ. The centre man commanded that the chains should be loosed from his hands and neck, and they fell off; then he took him and they went up together from the earth, and then he awoke. He asked me what I thought it meant. I told him that it seemed to me that God was speaking to him directly, telling him that he was bound with the chain of sin, and that he was going down to destruction, but that Jesus Christ was the One Who alone could break off those chains. He said he was so afraid of the consequences if he acknowledged Jesus.

A Persian Khān dreamed that he was wandering in a wide desert, when he saw an enormous number of wild beasts in front of him, which commenced to attack him. On turning round to make his escape from them, to his astonishment he found his way intercepted by a vast lake. Being in a dilemma what to do, he at last reluctantly made up his mind to enter the water as his only way of escape from the furious creatures behind him. To his great surprise, he found he could walk on it, and when he had gone some little distance he perceived a house in the middle of the lake, and heard the Kashīsh (priest) Ṣāḥib, who was standing in front of it, calling to him and saying, 'Come,' which he did, and found a place of safety there. Some time after the dream the Khān was a patient in a mission hospital, and related his story. He had been a firm believer in Islām, but, through his dream, was led to the conclusion that the only way by which he could obtain salvation from his sins, typified by the wild beasts he thought he saw, was by embracing the Christian faith. He professed himself convinced of the truth of Christianity, and seemed to be remarkably well acquainted with the Gospel.* 'G., a Persian woman, had been coming to the hospital from time to time for about six years. She had heard a great deal of the Gospel story, but it did not seem to make much impression on her. One day R., a Christian man, and husband to —, also a Christian, asked why it was she had not become a Christian. She replied, "Well, you see, I am so afraid that perhaps at the Resurrection Day I shall discover

* I am indebted for the above to the Rev. W. Holmes Walker, who identified the 'Kashīsh Ṣāḥib' with one of the missionaries.

that Christianity was not the true religion after all." A little while after this G. returned to her own village. One night she had a dream which greatly impressed her. In this dream she saw R., who seemed to come from the other world, and he said to her, "G., the Christian missionaries have made no mistake. Christianity is *the true religion*. Do come now and believe yourself." G. answered, "All right, R., I will come to Julfa at once, and will declare my belief in Jesus Christ." Accordingly, G. did come to Julfa, and what was her surprise to find that R. had died a few days previously! She was therefore more than ever convinced of the reality of the dream, and was at once very keen to learn more of Christianity. After a great deal of further teaching (it was wonderful how very little she had really taken in of the Gospel story during all those previous years) G. was baptized, and seems now a sincere Christian.' *

(D) Reasons why Muḥammadans embrace Christianity.

Formerly the opinion was commonly held that Muḥammadans could not be converted to Christianity. Many years ago now a Bishop of the English Church asked an Indian missionary † whether he had ever known of a Muḥammadan being converted to Christianity. A French priest in Algiers gave it as his conviction that the conversion of a Muḥammadan to Christianity was a thing impossible. ‡ Intelligent Armenians in Julfa, Isfahān, who were themselves Christian workers, have been known to hold the same opinion. But at the present time such views could only result from ignorance of the work that has actually been, and is being done to-day in Muslim lands. The Rev. 'Imādu'd-Dīn, in his paper read at the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago at the time of the Exhibition, asserts the fact that the converts from Islām to Christianity 'have come, and are coming, in their thousands.' § And besides those who confess Christ more or less openly in baptism, let not the numbers of secret believers be forgotten. At the Last Day, it has been remarked, many Christians will rise from Muḥammadan graves.

In the present section the object has been to give the reasons stated in most cases by Muslims themselves, either before or after baptism, why they became Christians. Not a few of the instances given below resemble those mentioned in the previous section. This is not surprising. That which attracts in the first instance is often the same as that which leads ultimately to the definite acceptance of Christianity. The reason why the number of instances given below is not so great as that of those in the third

* G.'s story is told in the above words by the late Miss Buncher, C.M.S., Julfa, Isfahān.

† The Rev. (now Bishop) E. C. Stuart.

‡ Canon Robinson's *Mohammedanism; has it any Future?* p. 47.

§ The paper was reprinted in the *C.M. Intelligencer*, Aug., 1893.

section is twofold. Those who are drawn on different accounts towards Christianity are sure to be more in number than those who take the great step of actually accepting it; and besides this, in some countries more or less reticence is necessary in publishing statements about converts. It will be noticed also that the number of headings under which are classified the various reasons given by Muḥammadans for embracing Christianity is small compared with the section that precedes. This is both natural and true. For while there are many things to interest and attract in the Bible story and the Christian faith, the motive for becoming a Christian is in the main *one*, that is to say, the convert sincerely believes Christianity to be the true and only way of salvation. This conviction, however, may be expressed in different ways, corresponding to diversities of temperament and the varied conditions and needs of the soul which Christianity, and it alone, is found able to satisfy. And further, the final crystallization of conviction and purpose may be the result of longer or shorter periods of preparation and the action of different forces, no special influence in many cases predominating, or, at all events, not being particularly recorded. Thus we read of a Muḥammadan who was baptized with his wife and two children: 'The man first heard the truth at a mission-school, and the impression which it made gradually deepened, until he felt that he could hold back no longer.' And again, a Muḥammadan widow of the better class took her only boy to a mission hospital, where he was operated upon, and as the wound was slow to heal, the two attended the hospital regularly for several months (about thrice weekly), and each time among the other out-patients they heard the Gospel preached, and, 'in the long run, the woman wished to be prepared for baptism with the boy, and in due time both were baptized.'

(i.) **The reading of the Scriptures produces conviction.**—'A Moor . . . became converted to Christianity through reading the Scriptures in the depôt at Tangier.' 'A man was converted through reading the Bible at a bookshop of the Arabian Mission.' 'Another Muslim between here (Hamadān) and Tabriz became a true Christian through no other instrumentality than his own perusal of God's Word, and without any contact with Christians until after he was converted.' The Imām of a village mosque near Batāla, who had been convinced and brought to the light by reading God's Word, was baptized. A young Muḥammadan in Gujarāt, who 'fully intends to declare himself a Christian when he is able to maintain himself . . . was directly convinced by reading the Scriptures, as up to that time he was one of our great opponents, and was dreaded by the missionaries who do street preaching.' * 'A native of North-West Persia, formerly a respectable dervīsh, had a New Testament given him by a friend.' Taking it home, he began to read it from the beginning, and by the time he had finished it, he was, by the grace of the Holy Spirit,

* Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1898, p. 204.

convinced of the truth of it and of the Christian religion, and greatly wondered why the nāib called it a useless book. He believed all that was written in it about Christ, and that satisfied the cravings of his soul; for "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." ' A colporteur in Morocco 'was brought to the Lord some years ago, and almost entirely through reading the Scriptures. A friend who was a convert himself gave him a copy of the New Testament, which he took away to his home in the South and studied it well for three months. He was then so convinced of the truth of the Book that he set out to find some one who would teach him more fully.' 'A Persian of gentle manners . . . received a copy of Martyn's Persian New Testament. After fourteen years' study of it, in silence, he applied to the nearest Christian, an Armenian Bishop, for baptism unto Christ. Fearing the consequences, the Bishop sent on the catechumen to the Armenian priests at Calcutta, who, equally afraid that the news would reach the Persian authorities, handed him over to the Rev. E. C. Stuart, then the Church Missionary Society's Secretary there, and a Persian scholar. * . . . Mr. Stuart took him as his guest, found that he delighted in instruction in the New Testament, and baptized him. Ultimately the convert went back to Persia as one who "had gained a sincere faith in Christ from the simple reading of H. Martyn's Persian Testament." ' † 'Abdu'llāh and Sayid Sabat were two Arab gentlemen of noble birth, and closely connected by ties of friendship. The desire to travel having taken possession of them, and being staunch and pious Muḥammadans, they first visited Mecca and Medina; after that they went to Persia, and ultimately they found themselves at Kābul. Here 'Abdu'llāh determined to remain, and entered the service of the Amīr, while his companion proceeded to Bukhārā. During his stay in Kābul 'Abdu'llāh received an Arabic Bible from an Armenian merchant, which he carefully studied, with the result that he became a sincere Christian. Finding it impossible to conceal his faith in Kābul, he made up his mind to escape to Russia, and leaving Kābul in disguise arrived in due course at Bukhārā. Here he met his old friend, who on becoming acquainted with his change of faith bitterly reproached and upbraided him; but 'Abdu'llāh entreated him and made him swear not to betray him or prevent his escape. The particulars that follow were related by Sabat himself. Anger at 'Abdu'llāh's apostasy from Islām so overcame him, that he bade his servants seize him, and hand him over to Prince Murād, the Amīr of Bukhārā, by whom he was condemned to be executed. On the appointed day a great crowd assembled in the public square, and Sabat took up his station not far from his old friend. The executioner with drawn sword was standing by the prisoner, when a message came from

* Subsequently Bishop of Waiapu, and now Head of the C.M.S. Persia Mission.

† Dr. George Smith's *Henry Martyn*, pp. 526, 527.

the Prince, offering him pardon and freedom if he would recant. When he nobly refused to exchange his spiritual for bodily life, one of his hands was cut off. At this juncture a surgeon came from the Prince with tempting offers, and promised to heal his wound if he would but return to his former faith. The martyr vouchsafed no reply, but looked up to Heaven with longing gaze and brimming eyes, while tears bedewed his cheeks. He then lovingly turned towards Sabat, and looked at him with forgiving heart and happy eyes. His other hand was next cut off; but nothing prevailed to shake his steadfast resolution, and finally he was beheaded. The people of Bukhārā were greatly astonished at the martyr's firmness; and Sabat himself, who had never anticipated such a result, but only thought to frighten his former friend into forsaking Christianity, was heartily sorry and ashamed at the disgraceful part he had played, and leaving Bukhārā, travelled from place to place in order to obtain peace of mind, but all in vain. At last he made his way to Madras, and was subsequently appointed qāzī at Seringapatam. Here an Arabic New Testament chanced to come into his hands, which he diligently studied with unprejudiced mind, and by comparison of it with the Qur'ān he came to the conclusion that the way of Truth was to be found in the Gospel alone. After a time he returned to Madras, and was baptized there at the hands of an English clergyman. The sequel of his history is a sad one. He afterwards apostatized and returned to Arabia. But finding no peace of heart, he resolved to return to India, adopt the Christian faith again, and write a book on the vanity of the Muḥammadan religion, but was unhappily drowned at sea before his purpose could be accomplished.

(ii.) **Christ is acknowledged to be the Saviour of the World.**—A Shī'ah Muḥammadan at Karāchī, after a month of eager study and inquiry, at last 'professed himself satisfied that Christianity was of God, and Christ the only Saviour, and he begged to be baptized,' and was admitted into the visible Church. The late Rev. Christian Fallscheer, of Nablous, gives an account of a Muḥammadan who 'died in the Lord' at Tobaz. A married woman, who had been in the mission-school there, used often to read the Word of God to him in the evening. 'He became a believer,' writes Mr. Fallscheer, 'and I gave him a Bible in which he used to read himself. By the grace of God, and with the help of our teacher, he made great progress in knowledge. After a time he became very ill, and before he died a Sheikh visited him and wished to read or recite a portion from the Qur'ān, but he said, "I do not wish to hear it." Then the Sheikh said, "Say there is only one God, and Muḥammad is His Prophet." "No!" answered the sick man; "I believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world," and then he fell asleep.' A patient in the Tulloch Memorial Hospital, Tangier, who had diligently studied the New Testament and received a good deal of teaching

in different places, 'says he too believes that Jesus is the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. He gave his testimony before other Moors, to whom he also tried to show the true way.' A young Pathān girl thus gave her testimony at the village dispensary to some Pathān women who were eager listeners, 'I was blind; four years I saw nothing—no, nothing at all! My mother brought me to the hospital. Miss Ṣāḥib operated on my eyes, and now I can see. But it was Jesus who opened the eyes of my heart. I knew I was a sinner, and God is holy. No defiled thing can enter Heaven. I felt miserable. Then I heard of Jesus, the Son of God, Who is the Saviour of the world, not only a prophet, but the Son of God—holy and good. He came down from heaven. He never did any sin. He gave His life for me that I might be forgiven. And He gave it for you too (St. John iii. 16). He gave peace to my heart, and I just want to serve Him.'

The personal and individual appropriation of the salvation of Christ comes out clearly in the two instances that follow. An inquirer in Bombay, who had suffered much persecution when his intention to embrace Christianity became known, on his return to Bombay after a long absence, when asked 'if he had made any progress in "the things of Christ," answered readily, "Certainly; I know that He is God, and has wrought my salvation."' He was subsequently baptized. There came to the weekly meeting in the Bible depôt of the North Africa Mission at Tunis 'a rough and discourteous little man, a Muslim.' Obstinately did he oppose the Gospel message, and hotly did he argue against the truth. 'He appeared intensely stupid; nevertheless, Miss Grissell reiterated for many weeks the story of Christ's death for sinners. One evening we were startled by his abruptly and openly averring that Christ had indeed died for him; and said he, "Tell me what are His requirements."' Though fully aware of the probable results, he so urgently and frequently asked for baptism, that it was felt there was no reason to keep him back, and he was baptized 'in the sea under the ruins of ancient Carthage.'

(iii.) **The Gospel Message brings Rest and Peace to the Soul.**—'The great motive which led a young Muḥammadan convert at Quetta to read the Gospel was the hope that he might find rest from the restlessness which possessed him. Thank God! He did find rest.' 'An immigrant Pathān' was baptized in the open air at the Leper Asylum, Srinagar. When examined for baptism, 'he seemed to have a genuine conviction of sin and desire for the assurance of his soul's salvation. One remark he made . . . was that "*Dozakh mere dil men hai*" ("Hell is in my heart"), and it was that torment that he sought deliverance from.' Those who find this peace often testify that they have been seekers for it in vain in the Qur'ān and the religion of Muḥammad. A young Muḥammadan in Bombay, for example, came to the workers in the C.M.S. Muḥammadan Mission there, 'apparently under

conviction of sin and of the futility of his own religion. After about three months' instruction he was baptized.' A middle-aged Persian 'had been unable to find peace and spiritual satisfaction in the religion of Muḥammad. But he found it in Jesus.' 'A young Mullā of Bukhārā had been awakened to feel himself a sinner. He searched the Qur'ān, and there he learned that Christ was a great prophet. It struck him that perhaps Christ could save him from his sins. For nine years he sought and longed for the knowledge of a Saviour. At last the Swedish Mission sent a young Nestorian missionary to Bukhārā with New Testaments.' One of them came into the hands of the young Mullā, who read it carefully night and day, and after many conversations with the Nestorian, 'was finally led to believe in Jesus.' Subsequently his wife, who was at first bitterly opposed to her husband's change of faith, was brought into the light, and both were desirous of receiving baptism.'* A Muḥammadan was baptized in the Punjāb who 'had become dissatisfied with his own life and found no satisfaction to his soul in the Qur'ān.' A few weeks after his baptism he was standing by some missionaries who were preaching at a fair, when 'a man of his own clan came up to him and said, "By your dress you belong to us; what are you doing with these people?" He said, "If you will listen a minute, I will tell you." And opening a New Testament, he read out Christ's words, "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And he added, "This is why I became a Christian. I was weary, and in the Qur'ān I could find no rest for my soul. I heard these words and believed on the Man who spoke them, and I have rest."'

(iv.) **Sunday; Christ a living Saviour; prayer answered; Christ the One foretold by all the prophets; comparison of the evidence for the miracles of Christ and those of Muhammad; comparison of Islāmic tradition with the Old Testament history of Solomon.**—'Ya'qūb Yuḥannā (James John) obtained a New Testament from the colporteurs of the Bible Society, and studied it carefully for two years, at the end of which time he was convinced that Jesus was living at God's right hand. He thought it better to trust in a living Saviour than in a dead prophet (Muḥammad), and accordingly came to receive further instruction.'† A Persian Muḥammadan 'was committed to prison for having unintentionally shot a man in a scuffle. After about eight months an Armenian was confined in the same prison, and to him he said, "I know that you and your Jesus are going to be my salvation." This appears to have been indeed the case, for we hear how on some three or four occasions, after useless prayer to Muḥammad on the part of his fellow-prisoners, this man prayed to Christ, and the prayer was in each case answered, and he was eventually released.' This striking answer to prayer was the means of his conversion; and

* *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 790.
† *Subjects of the Shah*, pp. 87, 88.

although not yet baptized, it is hoped he may soon be.' A Persian convert baptized in Baghdad 'said that what had led him to Christ was the fact that all the prophets pointed to One that should come; but when Christ came, He said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life;" "I am the Door;" "I give Eternal Life;" "I am the Bread of Life;" "I give the Living Water;" directing men to look to Him alone for salvation. Yuḥannā said he had always been taught that the Gospel spoke of Muḥammad, and directed men to look to him for teaching; but having read the whole Bible carefully, he could find no mention of Muḥammad, only Christ throughout.' *

Another Persian inquirer, who professed to be fully persuaded of the truth of Christianity, though not baptized, arrived at this conviction by a comparison of the miracles of Christ and those of Muḥammad. In support of this belief, their followers refer respectively to the Gospel and the Qur'ān. But while the Jews, who were the enemies of Jesus, admit that He was able to perform miracles by means of the Incommunicable Name, the evidence of the Qur'ān is against the belief that Muḥammad possessed this power. The numerous miracles attributed to him by his followers are without foundation, and the passage at the beginning of Sūr. 54 *Qamar*, alluding to the splitting of the moon, which many Muḥammadans take literally, is copied, with the change of only one word, from the Odes of the ante-Islāmic poet, 'Imru'l-Qais.† 'I once asked a learned Arab Koord,' writes Dr. G. F. Herrick, 'a dear friend of mine, who was led to believe in Christ by careful reading of the Bible, with the guidance of a deacon of the Evangelical Church at Mosul, just what it was that finally led him to accept the Christian faith. I expected he would point to some of those words in the Gospels which I knew had deeply impressed him. He replied, "It was a comparison of Islāmic tradition concerning Solomon with the Old Testament narrative." '‡

* *Subjects of the Shah*, p. 86.

† C.M.S. Persia Mission, *Annual Letters*, 1896, p. 15 (Rev. W. St. Clair-Tisdall).

‡ *Methods of Mission Work among Moslems*, ch. x., 'How to win Moslem Races,' p. 165.

PART II.

THE MUHAMMADAN CONTROVERSY: CONSIDERATION OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

INTRODUCTION.

I can readily understand how a man should allow himself to think, before he has actually been engaged in mission work, that the intrinsic excellence of the Gospel would so impress *itself* upon the minds of the people that there would be no need for any study of the Art of Persuasion to assist that impression. But surely no one can continue to think so after he has had the slightest experience of the dullness, ignorance, and hardness of the human heart, before it is enlightened and softened by Divine grace. When a man has once had experience of this, I should think he would not hesitate for a moment to apply all the faculties with which God has endowed him to the work of impressing on unbelievers the truth which God has revealed to him. Even an Apostolic Bishop was enjoined to '*give attention to reading*, to exhortation.'—*The Missionary*, Jan., 1852. 'Hints on Missionary Preaching, Letter I.'

'I MUST needs say,' wrote Ziegenbalg, 'that notwithstanding this people be led away by a world of errors and delusions, they nevertheless give at times so pertinent answers in matters of religion as perhaps I should never have thought on. Some of our learned in Europe have writ entire books upon methods and ways of converting the heathen, but they all this while argue with themselves only. Should they come to a closer converse with the Pagans, they would not find them so destitute of arguments as we imagine. They are able to baffle, now and then, one proof alleged for Christianity by ten brought in against it.' *

Those who would successfully deal with Muḥammadan questioners or disputants must take every care and precaution not to fall into the mistake, noted above by Ziegenbalg, of arguing with themselves only. Before engaging in controversy, both the nature of the arguments and criticisms commonly brought forward against Christianity should be known, and also the most appropriate and effective rejoinders. We shall try and consider these in detail in Part III. Our present object is to gain, as far as possible, clear ideas as to the principles on which we are to proceed in order to make our rejoinders effective. It is not enough to have a suitable

* 'Ziegenbalg's Letters,' quoted in *The Missionary*, vol. iv. pt. 2, p. 166.

collection of answers to Muḥammadan questions, unless we know on what their effectiveness depends. When we have arrived at the understanding of this, we shall possess criteria by which new arguments may be tested, and shall be in a better position for meeting any fresh situations that may arise.

The Muḥammadan controversialist usually appears well equipped for the contest. He may not be well acquainted with his subject, and may be very ignorant of the Christian side; but what he lacks in knowledge he will make up in fluency, assurance, and a ready command of the weapons familiar to his use. This will not cause surprise, when it is remembered how often Muḥammadans, and especially divinity students, engage in religious discussions. Sometimes the respective merits of different religions are canvassed, and will be championed by selected speakers. In these ways familiarity with religious discussion and not a little subtlety and acuteness, are acquired. Here, then, the Christian missionary, apart from all differences of race, language, and modes of thought, often stands at a disadvantage, until he has gained a stock of experience.

Our object is, as far as possible, to remove this inequality from those who have not had the opportunity of acquiring the necessary experience by explaining some general principles and their application. We may take to heart for ourselves in reference to our Muḥammadan opponents the apprehensions expressed in the following words by 'Abdu'l-Karīm, one of the supporters of Islām, in *Sweet Firstfruits* (p. 53), with regard to the supposed argumentative skill of the renegades. 'They have become,' said he, 'moreover, adepts in the argument, and, supposing we were to begin a discussion with them, might confuse us by dates, quotations, and such-like, gotten from their Christian friends, which we might not know how to answer.' If we Christians on our part without due preparation hastily and unadvisedly enter the lists of controversy we may justly entertain fears of being put to confusion by our Muḥammadan adversaries. We should aim at such expertness as the Christian converts above were credited with having acquired. We should set before ourselves the ideal of becoming 'adepts' in the controversy and mastering at least such principles and details as are within our reach, so as to be able forcibly and convincingly to uphold our Master's cause.

CHAPTER I.

THE PROPER PLACE OF CONTROVERSY.

THE question may fairly be asked, Is controversy really necessary? May it not with judicious tact be avoided altogether, and a fruitful cause of bitterness and heart-burning removed?

§ 1. Perhaps there are underlying these questionings three main ideas which must be considered.

(1) It may, in the first place, be felt that conversion is the work of the Holy Spirit, in answer to prayer, and is not brought about by frigid argument. Before he left India for Persia, Henry Martyn wrote, 'I wish a spirit of inquiry may be excited, but I lay not much stress upon clear arguments; the work of God is seldom wrought in this way. To preach the Gospel, with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven, is a better way to win souls.'* At a later time he writes at Shīrāz, 'I have now lost all hope of ever convincing Muḥammadans by argument. The most rational, learned, unprejudiced, charitable men confessedly in the whole town cannot escape from the delusion. I know not what to do but to pray for them.'†

While the power of prayer and the working of the Holy Spirit and the inability of argument alone to turn a soul from darkness to light are most fully allowed, still it is hoped that the necessity of studying how best to answer the Muḥammadan according to his own ideas will be granted, and a suitable sphere conceded for controversy carried on in a Christian spirit.

(2) Secondly, there may be a strong belief in the sufficiency of the Scriptures to meet every objection. From that grand armoury may not a suitable weapon be fetched to drive home each truth and ward off every assault of error? 'To those who believe,' writes 'an Armenian Christian Evangelist' in the *Missionary Review of the World* for October, 1904, p. 727, 'like the 'Alī Illāhīs, in the transmigration of souls, and that man may be born again as a lower animal, he [the Christian Evangelist] cites the permission to slay and eat animals, tho' cannibalism is forbidden. To the Bābī who tells him of successive births of Christ he opposes "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more,

* Geo. Smith's *Henry Martyn*, p. 233. † *Ib.*, p. 379.

death hath no more dominion over Him." To the claims of the Arab Prophet he replies that the Deliverer must come from Mount Zion, and therefore be a Jew. Texts which had no particular meaning for him acquire a new use and significance, as he notes how every error has been foreseen and provided against. Let there be much practice of and acquaintance with the sword of the Spirit. "There is none like that." ' While heartily endorsing the above remarks, and yielding to none in our jealousy and zeal for the Word of God, we believe that controversy has a useful place to fill, more particularly in the preliminary stages of intercourse and religious inquiry. While the Muḥammadan is still comparing and contrasting the teaching of the Christian religion with the tenets of Islām, and before he trusts himself to the simple Word of God, humbly accepting it as his absolute rule and guide, questions will be asked, points of difficulty or obscurity will arise, concerning which it will be helpful to him to receive answers and explanations couched in familiar terms and agreeable to Oriental ideas and thoughts.

(3) Thirdly, the sense of the importance of controversy may be weakened, and it may be relegated to a very secondary place, because it is felt that the supreme aim of the Christian missionary is to preach the Gospel of Christ crucified to perishing sinners.

We cordially approve this view of the missionary's paramount duty, and would never substitute controversy for the preaching of the Gospel. Whenever the reading of the Bible and the exposition of Christian truth and the delivery of Christ's message to a lost world will be listened to, let controversy be left severely alone. Happily, it is not our chief aim and object to argue with the Muḥammadan, though we ought to be prepared to do so when necessity arises. When we remember that the vast majority are totally ignorant of our Scriptures and their teaching, and recall our solemn conviction that herein alone is God's appointed way of salvation set forth, it will be our earnest desire and purpose to avoid controversy as far as possible, to hold up Christ as the Saviour of sinners, to unfold the Gospel plan of salvation and sanctification, and to induce the Muḥummadan to read the sacred Scriptures for himself. The appeal to the heart, the manifest desire for the highest good of those whom we are addressing cannot but exercise a softening effect on proud bigoted natures which mere controversy is not calculated to do. This was the spirit in which the late Rev. C. Falscheer laboured. In his Annual Letter for 1900 from Nablous, Palestine, he wrote as follows:—

> In my discussions with them [the Muslims] I avoid disputes, which will only cause bitter quarrels and will have no effect, as St. Paul says to his disciples. I try to put before them the only way of salvation, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. . . .

The following words also breathe the wholesome conviction

that the best antidote and substitute for controversy is the loving presentation of the Gospel message:—

> The stock objections which Muslims urge in all parts of India and of the world were often heard [in Madras], . . . and many others of a more frivolous nature were frequently put forward, to all which the preachers responded by patiently pressing home the great Gospel facts—a crucified and yet living Saviour.*

§ 2. Though it has been conceded above that in the Scriptures we have a completely furnished armoury to meet all attacks, and that controversy is to be avoided wherever possible, the fact remains that *controversial discussion is frequently necessary and unavoidable* in private intercourse as well as occasionally in the more pronounced form of public disputation. What is true, however, of litigation holds good to a certain extent also of controversy. Just as a lawsuit may usually be averted, and generally should be, so it is with controversy, more especially in public; and it is accordingly a good rule to lay down that controversy is to be avoided whenever possible, especially in the form of public discussion, till the need has become really apparent. Controversy may be looked upon as a strong measure, rather to be held in reserve than habitually employed. For all that, strong measures are sometimes necessary, and then it is only weakness which shrinks from using them and employing for the highest ends the admirable weapons which lie to hand. The effect of controversy should be something like that of the surgeon's knife, to remove or correct what is unsound, vicious, wrong, or perverted, and give opportunity for free and healthy growth. Public controversy conducted with the necessary ability and in Christian spirit clears the air, removes misconceptions, vindicates the claim of Christianity to be heard, and stimulates inquiry both as to the soundness of what has previously been unhesitatingly accepted and as to the new truths now proclaimed. If it has been rightly conducted, it should produce a crop of inquirers; and, moreover, this may well be a test as to whether it has been conducted throughout in the best manner.

§ 3. Let it not be forgotten that controversy which deliberately attacks, as may sometimes be necessary, the strongholds of the enemy, *is only too likely to wound the feelings of those against whose cherished beliefs and objects of veneration it is directed.* A great many well-founded objections can undoubtedly be brought forward against the divine mission of Muḥammad, for instance, or the supernatural origin of the Qur'ān. But their use will be as much calculated to alienate as to win the Muḥammadan. It is not merely that attack is made upon what he holds sacred; but that the acceptance of the exclusive claims of Christ's religion would call upon him, as it has been remarked, to sacrifice at a blow his entire stock of religious capital. We can to some extent

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1901–2, p. 286.

realize his position and feelings by imagining how we should regard what we considered clumsy and sacrilegious assaults on our beloved Bible. We should be not a little upset, more especially if we felt ourselves unable to cope adequately with our opponents. Hence, as a general rule, the attitude adopted in the religious discussions on selected subjects with Muḥammadans in the Mission Hall, Bombay, is admirable. It is thus described by the Rev. T. Davis, Head of the Muḥammadan Mission, Bombay:—'Invariably our practice has been to study various phases of Christianity and objections arising therefrom, carefully avoiding as much as possible any controversy on the Muḥammadan religion. Our work, then, has been constructive rather than destructive, and our use of Muḥammadan tenets and writings has been illustrative rather than critical.'*

Similar to this and equally commendable are the remarks of the Rev. M. G. Goldsmith, C.M.S., Hyderabad, India, with reference to preaching:—

> With regard to the style of preaching, we strongly deprecate anything polemical; we believe that the simple statement of God's truth, illustrated by such facts and incidents as help to make it attractive and understood, is what is really needed; 'things new and old,' set forth with the power of the Holy Spirit, and explained, when practicable, by quotations from their own books.†

§ 4. What is needed in controversial encounters, whether public or private, is not the pugnaciousness of the mere disputant, but '*the meekness and gentleness of Christ*' (2 Cor. x. 1). It is not so much the Christian's object to capture the position by direct frontal assaults, as by setting forth the truth as it is in Jesus, to develop, so to speak, a flanking movement, which will render the enemy's previous religious standpoint no longer in his eyes either tenable or desirable. The Christian has it indeed in his power to deliver direct attacks, and truthfully use the strongest language, but as a general rule it will avail him little in this spiritual warfare. The weapons needed are those which are 'not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds' (2 Cor. x. 4), sharpened not with argumentative acuteness, but with love for souls. The very strength of the Christian position should lead its champions to strive after that tenderness and forbearance which is the duty as well as the crown and glory of the strong. 'We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak' (Rom. xv. 1).

No! we wish to attract the Muḥammadan by the sight and prospect of something better and more soul-satisfying than anything afforded by his own religion. And though the Bible is very humbling to the pride of sinful, fallen man, there is no other book like it which can so satisfy the deepest needs of the human heart,

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1899–1900, p. 280.
† *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 729.

or reveal God in such tender love and awful majesty, and open heaven to the longing gaze of faith. As a little child, to use the metaphor employed by a native Indian Christian, drops its undesirable plaything of a piece of dirty charcoal to grasp some bright attractive object held up before its eyes, without need of threat or argument, force or chastisement—even so the soul that has apprehended and begun to appropriate the loving message and solemn call of the Gospel, no longer needs well-meant destructive criticism of that which once it cherished and revered. All that has already dropped from its grasp when the hand is stretched forth to lay hold of the new-found treasure. Or, to vary the figure, the earnest Muslim seeker after truth, when enlightened by the Holy Spirit, will be as glad to quit the faith which once he fancied an impregnable stronghold, as he would be to escape from a crumbling, tottering ruin.

§ 5. To sum up the conclusions arrived at—controversy may often be avoided; much will depend on individual character and tactful resource to bring about this desirable end; and the escape from this necessity will be gladly and thankfully welcomed, when Muḥammadans are found ready to listen to Christian truth. But this will not always be the case, and it is in consequence of this fact that these pages have been written. Controversy, both public and private, cannot and should not always be avoided; there are occasions when it should be advisedly and deliberately undertaken to clear the ground, or remove misconceptions as to the nature and tenets of the Christian Faith and its claims to an attentive hearing, or to overthrow the barriers behind which the artificial system of Islām has entrenched itself. Let us apply the Apostolic rule, 'Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer each one' (Col. iv. 6), not only to ordinary intercourse, but also in the higher and more difficult paths of controversy; and never forget Bengel's advice, which might well be writ large over every preaching-hall, and engraven on the heart of every missionary, to 'enter upon no controversy without knowledge, without love, and without necessity.'*

* Quoted by Mr. Kamcké, *C.M.S. Report*, 1900–1.

CHAPTER II.

THE DIFFICULTY OF DEALING WITH ORIENTALS, AND NEED OF SPECIAL EQUIPMENT.

(i.) **The Oriental regards things in a different way from the European.**—It is hardly necessary to observe that the Oriental often looks at things from a different point of view, and in a different light, from the European. A few instances, however, may help to make this clearer.

One day a young Armenian colporteur of the British and Foreign Bible Society paid a visit to a country village in Persia, in order to try and sell copies of the Scriptures. He eventually made his way to the little market-place, where he sat down and displayed his books and did a good trade, selling in all about thirty copies. Meanwhile, some of the books had been taken and shown to the pīsh-namāz, or leader of the public prayers, who came up to the colporteur and put to him the old question which timid conservatism, endangered prestige or ignorant bigotry puts in every age, 'Why do you sell these books to *deceive* the people?'* Before considering the answer actually given, let us pause and think what effect such an insinuation would probably have had upon a European, and how he would be most likely to meet it. Would it not appear to him to be a question of truth and right? And might not his sense of duty be expressed somewhat after this fashion, 'If I am right in doing this work and holding these views, is it not also incumbent upon me to maintain and defend them?' He would, moreover, be grieved at the slur cast upon his beloved books, and the accusation against himself as a disseminator of pernicious literature. And it may well be imagined that his first impulse would be to rebut this unfair and prejudiced representation of the case, and clear himself and his wares from the false imputations cast upon them. Now, had such a line actually been taken by the colporteur, an argument or altercation would probably have arisen, and the result in all likelihood would have been that the pīsh-namāz would have publicly given out that the books were injurious, and must be returned to the seller. The latter, however, so far from defending himself in the above way, took refuge

* Cf. the charge against Socrates of corrupting the youth; St. John vii. 12, 'He leadeth the multitude astray'; and Acts xvi. 20, 21; xxi. 28.

behind several unanswerable propositions, viz. that it was his work to sell these books, he earned his salary by so doing, and his livelihood depended on it; that no one who was firmly established in his own religion would be disturbed by reading them; and that our learned Christian divines read the Qur'ān, but do not become Musulmāns. It is highly instructive to compare these two together —the actual reply of the colporteur and the course a European might have taken. Each seizes a different point in the situation, and frames his answer from a different aspect of the case. Both proceed upon what they would consider undeniable assumptions. The one is indignantly jealous for the truth and the liberty of disseminating it; the other, in a non-provocative and sweetly reasonable manner, shirks the real point of the question, and appeals to incontrovertible facts. The result was what might have been expected. To the inoffensive remarks of the colporteur the pīshnamāz had no reply to make. Their truth and forcibleness obviously could not be gainsaid. So he went on his way. And the colporteur, after the turn things had taken, thought it prudent to do likewise without delay, and the Scriptures sold remained in the possession of the purchasers.

The second instance we will take to help us to look at things through Oriental eyes shall be from the following circumstances. There was at one time a certain amount of talk and agitation in a Persian city against the presence of a Christian missionary there. A Persian friend of his was sitting in a company of Mullās, when the question came up in the course of conversation. This friendly gentleman took the missionary's side, and the arguments he used were of the following nature: that it is only natural for every one to try and spread his own religion; that a religion adopted under the influence of force or fear, or to gain any object such as dignity, position, or money, is not worthy of the name; that argument is the right weapon to use in the defence and support of religion; and that the course dictated by wisdom and prudence in the present instance was that they should continue to teach and instruct their own people, and thus prevent them from forsaking their religion. The same friend outlined the following style of reply as suitable to be given by the missionary, should he be formally questioned as to his work there: I am here to help Christians who feel any difficulty in their religion to solve it; I am ready to help all in any way which lies in my power; I have devoted myself to God's service, and to be of what use and assistance I can to His servants; if any one wishes to read English or grammar, or the Bible or anything else, with me, I am willing to help them as far as I have power and opportunity; I have no private ends to serve, and use no force, pressure, or compulsion to induce any one to read the Bible or pray or accept Christ's religion; I am quite willing (he might further add) to meet any representatives of the other side, and allow them to come and see my work.

Sometimes very curious arguments are used. 'He could not understand,' wrote French of a certain Mullā, 'if the Jews committed such a sin, as we suppose they did, in crucifying the Lord of glory, why they should not be kana (one-eyed), or some bodily mark of shame or penalty be borne; to which Ebenezer replied, native fashion, that this was not God's way. If a firm and true believer had not four eyes given him for his faith, why should they have only one for *unbelief?*'

The reasoning employed is sometimes most ingenious. In illustration of this, let us take the following incident which occurred at a critical juncture in a bāzār preaching in Lahore before a noisy and intractable audience. The Rev. E. F. E. Wigram thus describes it—

> Mīr 'Ālam Khān with delightful tact stepped forward and said: 'As we came along the streets to preach I heard the people in their shops say to one another, "There go the *double roti walas*"' (this, I should explain, is the commonest taunt in Lahore, that Christians, and notably catechists, have become what they are for the sake of 'double roti,' *i.e.* English bread as contrasted with the unleavened cake of the country). 'Well,' said he, 'and who were we before, we who you say became Christians for bread and butter? Hindūs and Muhammadans like yourselves. So whenever a Hindū or a Muhammadan becomes a Christian, I am to understand that he does so for bread and butter? Well, then, that Englishman in Ceylon who became a Muhammadan the other day, I suppose that was for bread and butter too? Oh no, you all say, that was for the truth's sake, for the truth's sake. Ah, then, now I see; whenever a Hindū or Muhammadan becomes a Christian it is for bread and butter, whenever a Christian changes his religion it is for the truth alone. From which I can but deduce that the chief result of the religions of this country is to lead men to sacrifice all to their stomach, while the Englishman's religion results in his being before all things a seeker after truth wherever it may be found. Judge you now whose religion is the more worthy!' It was a delightful turning of the tables which the previously noisy crowd could not but appreciate.*

The following story, condensed from *Mercy and Truth* for May, 1904, where, at pp. 136–8, it may be read *in extenso* in Dr. H. Martyn Clark's racy style, is a capital instance of correct appreciation of and skilful appeal to native ideas. The purchase by the doctor of a desirable piece of property appeared likely to fall through at the last moment, owing to the existence on the domain of a Muhammadan prayer-platform, which the owner of the site positively refused to include in the deed of sale, and declared it must ever remain free and open for its sacred purpose. A hint that its situation between the dwelling-house and the kitchen might cause the nostrils of worshippers to be assailed with unholy odours produced a great impression, and the suggestion to remove it to a corner of the ground was welcomed with delight. A little of the honey of flattery was judiciously administered, and it was gently insinuated that even in this situation the Muhammadan

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1896–7, pp. 228, 229.

worshippers would be likely in the future to be rudely disturbed at their devotions by unwelcome sounds of Christian worship. So the idea was proposed that an equivalent place of worship should be built elsewhere. The erection of a mosque being a work of great merit, of which the owner of the land stood much in need, this point too was conceded. And when the doctor made his last move, and declared that he would not give a pice towards the new mosque, but that it must be built out of the Muḥammadan's own resources, otherwise there would be no merit in it, this too was incontrovertible, and the incident terminated in the most favourable manner.

In Appendix I. will be found some specimens of bāzār bargaining, which it is hoped may give a little further insight into the grooves in which the thoughts of Orientals run.

(ii.) **Racial antipathy and unscrupulousness in argument.**—The difficulty of successfully dealing with Orientals is increased by two causes, the first general, and the second bearing directly upon the subject under consideration, viz. controversy with Muḥammadans.

(*a*) The first of these is *racial antipathy*, by which is here meant the aversion and repugnance felt by the bigoted Muḥammadan towards the foreigner and the infidel. 'It seems clear that antipathy to the English,' wrote French, 'lies at the door of much opposition to the Gospel.'* It is unnecessary here to enter into the various causes for this feeling. Suffice it to say that much of it springs from the lack of sympathy engendered by misconceptions and want of mutual knowledge and acquaintance. The remedy is a correspondingly simple one, and as a rule all that is required for the removal of the evil is free and friendly intercourse maintained in the tone and spirit of a Christian gentleman.

(*b*) The second cause which enhances the difficulty of dealing with the Oriental, and more particularly concerns us now, is the well-known *unfairness and unscrupulousness in argument* sometimes displayed by the Muḥammadan.

The Rev. C. Grant, for instance, thus describes his visit to a place where low grade Muḥammadans predominated: 'As for listening to the truth, that is the last thing they desire.' When Sūr. 48 *Fatḥ*, 2 was quoted to them, to prove that Muḥammad was a sinner, 'All their reply,' he says, 'is that such words are not in the Qur'ān.'† When the Revs. A. E. Day and H. J. Hoare were itinerating in the Abbotābād district, a Mullā, in order to prove his point, read out a verse from the Qur'ān, deliberately introducing into it the word *shafā'at* (intercession) in reference to Muḥammad. When pressed to point out the verse, he positively refused and immediately shut up the book.

'In defence of these notions (viz. the erroneous tenets of their own religions, imbibed from childhood), the Muḥammadans and Hindūs do not argue sincerely, but generally merely strive for

* *Life*, I. 205. † Annual Letter, dated Jan. 26, 1904.

the mastery. They allow themselves, therefore, in every kind of evasion, dissimulation and false assertion.' So wrote Leupolt,* and later on † he adds, 'Sometimes they attack us, to show their cleverness or to deface any impression which may have been made upon the hearers.' Occasionally recourse is had to blasphemous taunts or questions. The Scriptures are sometimes quoted with perverse ingenuity.

The inexperienced worker stands little chance against such antagonists. He is probably delighted to find a Muḥammadan willing to discuss religious questions with him, and perhaps it never occurs to him that the arguments he has found so clear and perspicuous in his own studies may not prove equally so to every one else. His wide-awake opponent will not be slow to grasp the situation, to take every advantage of ignorance or inexperience, use every artifice to gain the victory, and, when he goeth forth, vaingloriously proclaim the fact. It is a thousand pities that with so good a cause the Christian should ever give an unscrupulous adversary an opportunity like this, the effect of which is calculated to enhance pride and bigotry, and confirm in error others who may have listened to the discussion, or heard the boastful vaunts with which the issue was announced.

Mr. Ridley (afterwards Bishop of Caledonia) has left a graphic account of an incident that occurred in a tour he took with French in the Peshāwar district. After a long and friendly discussion in the house of a leading nobleman of those parts, the suggestion was made, to Ridley's no small consternation, to call in the old Mullā. What follows is thus described by Ridley himself--

> This new antagonist entered, and all rose in his honour. He was a famous Sayid. He had come to crush me, and felt sure of doing so. Perhaps he would have quite succeeded had not succour come when I was sore pressed. He had rained torrents of words, and poured quotations from Arabic and Persian authors on me, intending to cover me with confusion. I bore up as bravely and calmly as I could, but felt that his tactics were likely to win the admiration of his friends, and compass my discomfiture.

He then describes how French arriving came to his rescue--

> He nimbly took up the subject, and, taking out his watch, proposed that he and the great Mullā should speak in turn five minutes each. This was received with acclamation by the audience, but without pleasure by his antagonist. . . . French had frequent occasions for quoting Scripture, which he did from the original without translating, excusing himself on the ground that so excellent a scholar needed no such help. The host, now seeing the turn matters were taking, tactfully and courteously broke up the assembly. ‡

In difficult cases like these it is of no use to draw a bow at a venture, nor will inexperience and unpreparedness, however

* *Recollections*, p. 87. † *Ib.*, p. 89.
‡ Birk's *Life of T. V. French*, I. 186, 187.

well-intentioned, be able to turn the scale. There is needed the faithful and loving insistence and persistence of the man who is not only zealous for the truth, jealous of his Master's honour, and enthusiastic in His service, but also well-armed at every point, and keenly alive to the possibilities and openings afforded by the shifting phases of the situation; able to control, manipulate and give right direction to the course of the discussion, and determined with God's help to press home the truth on reason, heart and conscience.

(iii.) **Recognition of the difficulty.**—It is something that the difficulty of presenting the Gospel to the Muḥammadan is widely recognized. 'It was a well-known fact,' said the late Archbishop Benson, speaking in support of the Archbishop's Mission to the Syrian Christians, 'that Westerners could make no impression upon Islām. The Eastern way of looking at things was so entirely different from ours.' *

'No form of Christianity introduced,' writes Canon Robinson, 'whether from London or from New York, presented as it inevitably must be in Western dress, is ever likely to appeal very strongly to the Eastern mind.' But if the Eastern Churches be reformed, 'there is no reason why history should not repeat itself, and why the members of these Churches should not become missionaries to the Muḥammadans, amongst whom they live, and with whose methods of thought they, as Easterns, are so fully in sympathy.' †

A writer in *The Missionary* for March, 1852, p. 114,‡ thus speaks of the difficulty of clothing the Gospel in a garb adapted to Oriental minds. He is speaking of heathen, but his remarks apply equally well to Muḥammadans—

> The grand difficulty, therefore, is for the missionary to make himself intelligible to the uneducated, and not offensive (by an assumption of superior knowledge) to the educated. What may be the success of missionaries in grappling with the *second* of these difficulties I am not able to say; but as a great many of the tracts written for the instruction of the lower orders of heathen are almost unintelligible (notwithstanding the simplicity of the language) in consequence of their being founded on arguments and modes of thinking with which none but a religiously educated European can be familiar, there is but too good reason to fear that they have been far less successful than they might have been in dealing with the first of them.

With this may be compared Henry Martyn's words, 'To preach so as to be readily understood by the poor is a difficulty which appears to me almost insuperable, besides that grown-up people are seldom converted.§

To the above may be added the testimony of an Oriental

* *Family Churchman*, July 19, 1895, p. 33.
† *Mohammedanism; has it any Future?* p. 47.
‡ 'Hints on Missionary Preaching,' Letter 3.
§ Geo. Smith's *Henry Martyn*, p. 390.

himself. A Persian Bābī went to the root of the matter when he spoke in the following strain to a Christian worker:—

> You can never speak the language as we do: you can never understand the thoughts of the people's hearts—the ideas which lie behind their words: you have been so long in the country and what have you to show for it? We have only been working a short time and our converts are numbered by thousands.

But let us listen again for a moment, for our comfort and consolation, to what Henry Martyn says—

> In your prayers for me pray that utterance may be given me that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mysteries of the Gospel. I often envy my Persian hearers the freedom and eloquence with which they speak to me. Were I but possessed of their powers I sometimes think that I should win them all; but the work is God's, and the faith of His people does not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*

Still, the Oriental enjoys the advantage of undoubted freedom and facility in addressing himself to the hearts and minds of his own people, as exemplified by the following incident. A Persian convert, no longer living, who had formerly been an adherent of the Bābī sect, was in company with two missionaries, when the party engaged in conversation with some Muḥammadans. The chief speaker was the convert; and his rejoinders to the Muḥammadans were so shrewd and apposite, that he heard some of them remark among themselves that he must surely have been originally a Musulmān!

A sad instance of the opposite kind is thus recorded:—'The zeal of Fatḥ Muḥammad (afterwards the Rev. Fatḥ Masīḥ, but at that time a bigoted Muḥammadan) had been aroused by seeing a village Maulawī, as it seemed to him, completely vanquish a Christian missionary in his arguments, and drive him from the village.'† It may be hoped that such incidents have seldom occurred. The reader of missionary literature, however, can scarcely have failed to derive the impression that the arrival on the scene of the Muḥammadan champion often produces a disconcerting effect, that great difficulty is felt in contending with him, and that the result is not so satisfactory or conclusive as might have been wished.

The young missionary, accordingly, unless well and wisely equipped, is likely soon to experience practically the difficulty of disputation with Muḥammadans, and sadly reflect that the arguments he thought so powerful and convincing appear to have little or no effect on Oriental minds. Hard facts, for instance, which a European would find difficult to digest, are swallowed by them without any indication of discomfort. For example, Muḥammadans

* Geo. Smith's *Henry Martyn*, p. 364.
† *Life of T. V. French*, I. 270.

assert on the strength of Sūr. 37, *Ṣāffāt* 99 *sqq.* (*v.* commentators *in loc.*), and of tradition, that it was Ishmael, not as in the Bible narrative Isaac, whom Abraham was commanded to sacrifice. Here is a discrepancy in historical facts of the most pronounced kind. We jump to what we regard as the only possible conclusion, that since only one of these statements, viz. that in the Bible, can be true, the religion which upholds the other is in palpable error, and unworthy of credit. But the Muḥammadan is far from being nonplussed by a trifle like this. 'Who knows?' he will remark, 'what are we to say? God knows which is correct; your version is true for you, and ours for us.' What has been gained? You have let fly your hard facts, and thought to have vanquished your opponent, but perceive you have made as much impression as a volley from a popgun on an ironclad.

The position of affairs which has to be faced may thus be summed up. Muḥammadans as a rule can neither follow our arguments nor appreciate our refutations of their errors, if we argue according to the rules and principles of Western learning. It is of the utmost importance to be able to present truth and rebut error in accordance with their ideas and sense of fitness and conclusiveness; and the failure to do so will be unfortunate, if not disastrous. No allowance will be made by them for the difficulties of the other side. The conclusion not unnaturally will be drawn, that if nothing effective has been said it is because there is nothing that can be said, and error in consequence will be strengthened and encouraged. The question, then, we have to put to ourselves is this: How am I to find the right lines, and follow the right principles in my discussions with Muḥammadans? What arguments am I to use? Are they to be those which I have learned at College, or come across in my own reading, and which are satisfactory to me? Or am I to definitely set about seeking for those which may commend themselves to a different class of mind? This is a much more difficult task. But if I am convinced that it is the right course to pursue, and that I have no right to look for success without it, it becomes as much my duty to acquire this expertness, as it was to furnish myself with any other part of my equipment.

In conclusion, perhaps the conservatism of the English character may have had something to do with the fact that this subject has not hitherto received the attention it deserved. It has been said that English merchants in Persia do not show sufficient elasticity in meeting the legitimate demands of the Persian market, but seem to think that their excellent fabrics must win their way and hold their own through sheer excellence. Whether they are exactly what the customer demands, is quite another question, but one worthy of the best attention. And so it is with our arguments; we should not aim at merely selecting those which are best and strongest from our point of view, but choose the ones

which carry weight and win acceptance with those whom we desire to influence.

(iv.) **The need of special equipment admitted.**—A simple incident may serve to illustrate the importance of familiarity with, and adaptation of our message to, Oriental ideas. A native of Isfahān once bought some envelopes for the writer in Shīrāz, and, apologizing for the price he had paid, said they ought to have been cheaper, only being himself an Isfahānī he did not know the correct way to bargain with the Shīrāzīs! From which it appears that the shopkeeper would only sell at the proper price to one who was evidently acquainted with bargaining in the recognized Shīrāzī fashion, and was obdurate and unyielding to any one not possessing that qualification. If this be true, we may expect to find the same hold good with at least equal force in the sphere of religious discussion, and that argument and disputation will make but a feeble appeal unless clad in the garb to which the hearers are accustomed.

Seeing that even in a Christian country the truth needs to be presented differently to varying classes of minds, it can the more easily be understood how great is the difficulty of clothing the message acceptably in a foreign language for people of another country, race and religion, brought up among the social and moral surroundings of a civilization differing widely from our own. To reverse the position for a moment, and regard ourselves as the object of persuasive effort, and the Jew as our instructor—have we not sometimes felt that types and figures and lines of argument in the Bible do not in every case appeal to us with the force they doubtless possessed for the original hearers, who were in most cases Jews and Orientals?

The need of the special study of Muḥammadan modes of thought in order to win a readier access for Christian truth has long since been felt by the greatest workers among Muḥammadans; and last year witnessed one of the latest recognitions of the fact in the publication of Dr. St. Clair-Tisdall's *Manual of the Leading Muḥammadan Objections to Christianity*, arranged in dialogue form.

In the thirteenth century Raymund Lull 'was not in doubt that God had chosen him to preach to the Saracens and win them to Christ. He only hesitated as to the best method to pursue. All the past history of his native land, and the struggle yet going on in Spain emphasized for him the greatness of the task before him.'

In Lull's introduction to his 'Necessaria Demonstratio Articulorum Fidei' he refers to the time when the idea of a controversial book for Muslims first took possession of him, and asks 'the clergy and the wise men of the laity to examine his arguments against the Saracens in commending the Christian Faith.' He pleads earnestly that any weak points in his attempt to convince the Muslim be pointed out to him before the book is sent on its errand.

The knight of Christ felt that he could not venture into the arena unless he had good armour. The son of the soldier who had fought the Moors on many a bloody battlefield felt that the Saracens were worthy foemen. The educated seneschal knew that the Arabian schools of Cordova were the centre of European learning, and that it was not so easy to convince a Saracen as a barbarian of Northern Europe.*

Henry Martyn, while in India, made a somewhat similar appeal to his clerical brethren. After remarking that he can only learn three arguments in defence of Islām from the best of the Muḥammadans, viz. 'the miracles wrought by Muḥammad, those still wrought by his followers, and his challenge in the second chapter of the Qur'ān, about producing a chapter like it,' he adds, 'If my brethren have any others brought forward to them, they will, I hope, mention them; and if they have observed any remark or statement apparently affect a native's mind, they will notice it.' † We find mention of what we may perhaps regard as his ideal in writing for Muḥammadans, in a letter from Tabrīz to the Rev. C. Simeon, where, speaking of his controversy with the Muḥammadans in Shīrāz, he says of the third treatise he wrote against them, 'There is not a single Europeanism in the whole that I know of, as my friend and interpreter would not write anything which he could not perfectly comprehend.' ‡

Leupolt felt very strongly the need of penetrating as far as possible into the inner thoughts and feelings of those we are trying to influence. 'In preaching and arguing,' he says, 'the missionary must not only be able to speak the language fluently, but he must also learn to think as the people think. This can only be attained by time and application, and by constant intercourse with the people. . . . If I may be permitted to use the expression, we must become Hindūs and Muḥammadans as to language and modes of thinking, and Christians as to heart, mind, and sentiments.' §

In another place, ‖ alluding to a lengthy and inconclusive argument with a Brahman, he remarks: 'In this way we went on, and at the end I found I had gained nothing. If, however, we know their systems, it is easy to silence them.' And then he mentions two telling questions which he found it useful to put, and which he says 'no Brahman ever was able to answer.' The moral drawn as to the necessity of knowing their systems applies to the case of the Muḥammadan as well, but this knowledge must be thorough, and the use of it skilfully made if the same result is to follow.

Before leaving Leupolt, whom we have had occasion to quote more than once above, let us look for an instant at the affecting

* Dr. Zwemer's *Raymund Lull*, pp. 53, 54, 58.
† Geo. Smith's *Henry Martyn*, p. 217.
‡ *Ib.*, p. 475.
§ *Recollections*, pp. 65, 66.
‖ *Ib.*, p. 35.

sight of the veteran missionary himself battling bravely for the truth in the midst of an excited, insolent and triumphant throng, and behold the truly Christian spirit he exhibited when hardly put to, to meet the perverse ingenuity of his opponent. 'Here,' he says, 'I did not know what to answer so as to come home to the heart of a Muḥammadan. I looked up to the Lord, therefore, and He fulfilled His promise.' *

The opinion of two other veteran missionaries may be quoted in conclusion. Both Ziegenbalg and French sought alleviation for the difficulty of successfully meeting the Muḥammadans in the special training of picked men under missionaries of experience. The former wrote—

> We would humbly propose to the Protestant Churches to supply us with learned students in divinity, and send them here to be instructed in the Indian languages, to capacitate them for future service under our direction, who have by our long practice among these people dived into their inclinations; and know upon our own experience, what sort of arguments are most likely to gain their approbation, and persuade them to hear patiently the admonitions of the Lord.†

French put forward a more elaborate plan, which was that some of the men to be hereafter sent to North India should know their destination beforehand, and steadily prepare themselves with that end in view for several years; and that during the same period the missionaries in the field should be preparing a similar band of workers, natives or others; so that at length when these forces were joined they might be able to go forth in bands and take for their objective the large towns of North India, and remain in them for a few months, 'making a determinately aggressive effort upon the forms of Hindūism and Muḥammadanism most prevalent there, not having all to begin afresh and make many blunders from inexperience and ignorance, but able to maintain the antagonistic position from the very commencement; thus doing the double work of giving the advantage of our experience to those just arrived, who might be trained up for awhile under us whilst engaged in the most direct missionary work.' ‡

* Quoted in *The Missionary* for November, 1853, from Leupolt's *Recollections*.

† From Ziegenbalg's Correspondence, quoted in *The Missionary* for January, 1852.

‡ *Life*, I. 65.

CHAPTER III.

THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF ARGUMENT.

Strive to convince the head, but not less to touch the heart. There can be no more dangerous state than that of a man, intellectually convinced of the truth, who knows he ought to yield to it and fails to do so. If conversion does not follow conviction, all is useless.—An Armenian Christian Evangelist, in the *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 728.

A FRIEND told me one day that he was uttering an opinion before a Mullā contrary to received Muḥammadan ideas: whereupon he was asked 'by what rule' (*Bih cheh qā'idah*) he held it. Another common phrase heard in religious or other discussions is *Bih cheh dalīl*, 'By what argument?' Such phrases imply a certain amount of readiness to discuss a new view or opinion, and also presuppose that the party who has expressed the novel opinion that has astonished or scandalized ought to have good reasons, not obvious as yet to the other, for having done so.*

In the present chapter an attempt will be made to explain and illustrate the chief classes of argument which are recognized as having weight by Muḥammadans themselves, and then to lay down a few general principles for our own guidance as to the nature of the arguments which will be found most effective when dealing with Muḥammadans.

(A) The Four Chief Kinds of Argument.†

The four chief kinds of argument, arranged according to their respective strength and weakness, are the following:—

1. *Dalīl-i-Ḥissī*, the argument from the evidence of the senses:

2. *Dalīl-i-'Aqlī*, the argument from reason, which together with the previous one is most popular with philosophers (*Ḥukamā'*):

* Cf. Isa. xli. 21, 'Produce your cause . . . bring forth your strong reasons. . . .'

† I am indebted to a native convert for the substance of this section. It makes no pretence to completeness. It is only a simple popular statement, and may be taken to represent the amount of knowledge on the subject possessed by a well-educated native gentleman.

3. *Dalīl-i-Naqlī*, the argument from tradition, which has most weight with the learned in the Muḥammadan law and religion, the '*Ulamā*':

4. *Dalīl-i-Ilhāmī*, the argument from revelation, most common among Ṣūfīs and mystics ('*Urafā*').

These are all more or less liable to error. Their cogency depends upon the degree to which they are free from this liability. In the above classification the different kinds of argument are arranged in the order of their respective value when judged by this standard, the strongest being placed first.

1. *Dalīl-i-Hissī*. The evidence of the senses, though the most forcible argument, does not escape the possibility of mistake and error. For instance, at night a man totally unacquainted with science would think that the stars are really the size they appear to him to be. A traveller who does not know how mirages deceive the sight will fancy he sees beautiful lakes and islands. Unless previous experience has taught him the contrary, a man would naturally believe that shadows are permanent, or that the reflection in a mirror has a real existence. Though these and similar mistakes are apt to occur in relying upon the evidence of the senses, still the errors of sense are very much less than those of reason.

2. *Dalīl-i-'Aqlī*. Reason too is liable to be mistaken, but its testimony, while inferior to that of sense (1), is of greater force than that of tradition (3), and revelation (4). The liability of Reason to fall into error is seen from the fact that, *e.g.* philosophers with the same data before them will draw different or contrary conclusions, *e.g.* as to the world being eternal or created (*Qidam, Ḥudūṯ*); or from the very diverse conclusions in regard to worldly affairs to which men placed in similar situations are guided by the light of reason.

3. *Dalīl-i-Naqlī*. The argument from tradition is liable to two sources of error. (*a*) The chain of authority (*Sanad*) may be defective, and the person to whom a saying is attributed may never have uttered it. (*b*) The second source of error has to do with the meaning of the words (*Ma'nī*). The language employed may be understood in a different sense from that intended by the original speaker, and error will be the result. It is Reason which comes in here like a Governor, and passes judgment. For these reasons, therefore, it is manifest that this kind of proof is of less force than that from reason.

4. *Dalīl-i-Ilhāmī*. This is derived from revelations (*Mukāshafah*) and visions (*Ro'yā'*), and is entirely unworthy of confidence or credit; because while God is the author of true revelations, supposed ones may possibly come from the devil and evil spirits, or be due to other causes such as errors in diet. These visions are very common among Ṣūfīs and dervīshes. They are often caused by excessive austerities, whereby the brain becomes weakened, or by the constant dwelling of the mind upon particular

objects, whereby at last they are seen in dreams, and regarded as supernatural revelations.

It is evident that the strength of arguments of the first class (*Dalīl-i-Ḥissī*) is a question of numbers. In matters depending upon the evidence of the senses, the greater the number of the witnesses, the more reliance can be placed upon their testimony. Thus, if one person asserts that this tablecloth is smooth, while five others declare it is rough, we accept the verdict of the latter in preference to the former. Somewhat similar is it with the *Dalīl-i-Ilhāmī*. It has been shown above that this kind of argument is the least worthy of credit, and lies under the greatest suspicion of possible error. If, however, the alleged revelation has been granted to more than one person, its credibility is greatly increased, and this in proportion to the number of mediums. Or, again, if a person receives the same supposed supernatural illumination on more than one occasion and in various ways, *e.g.* in dreams of different kinds, but all with the same meaning and intent, the result is the same, viz. to enhance the probability of the truth of the revelation proportionably to the variety of the modes and occasions of its manifestation. The most convincing kind of *Dalīl-i-'Aqlī* is that which is in harmony both with the Qur'ān and the Traditions. And, lastly, the *Dalīl-i-Naqlī* that carries the greatest conviction is the one mentioned in various places of the Qur ān, as well as in a number of independent, consentient traditions; and next in value to this comes the argument which is derived only from one or other of these two sources, and is either mentioned in the Qur'ān or in independent traditions.

FURTHER REMARKS UPON THE ARGUMENTS FROM REASON AND TRADITION.

(*a*) *Dalīl-i-'Aqlī*.—Of the arguments which appeal to reason, two of the chief are the syllogism and conditional dependence.

In Logic (*'Ilm-i-Manṭiq*) we meet both with general statements or conceptions (*Taṣawwur*), as, for instance, about heat and cold without reference to any particular object; and also with particular statements (*Taṣdīq*), when the general truth is narrowed down and limited to some particular object. These, again, may each be divided into *Ẓarūrī*, or those truths which command the acceptance of all men without reflection, as, for example, 'snow is cold'; and *Kasbī*, or those which require thought and reflection for their verification, and even so will not be accepted by all. Because thought is needed, and the reasonings and conclusions of different minds vary, there is here the possibility of error, which must be guarded against. The object of Logic is to do this.

The *Shakl-i-Awwal* (lit., the first form) or syllogism, the right employment of which depends on the correctness and proper

co-ordination of the general and particular statements involved, is the most convincing of the arguments from reason. It requires a major proposition (*Kubrā'*) and a minor proposition (*Sughrā'*). To be valid, it is necessary that the dependence between the two should be obvious or conceded, and that each should be correct and patent to, or acknowledged by all, or at least by the opposite side. These conditions being fulfilled, this argument is of the strongest kind. The following is an example of it. Every changeable thing is non-eternal; the world is changeable; therefore the world is non-eternal.

In the *Qazīyah-i-Shirtīyah*, or conditional proposition, we have the statement of a condition and the conclusion which follows from it, as, *e.g.* 'If the sun be risen, it is day.' If the condition is not fulfilled, the conclusion will be a negative one: 'If the sun be not risen, it is not day.' It does not logically follow that it is night. For the correct use of this argument, the dependence between the two parts must be a real one. Error arises from the absence of this connexion, as, for example, in the proposition, 'If there is no one in this garden, no noise will be heard.' There is no necessary connexion between a noise being heard in the garden and somebody being there. Sounds may be heard there without the presence of any one in the garden, as, for example, from some animal or thing. Hence the absence of a necessary connexion between the members of the proposition vitiates the conclusion.

(*b*) *Dalīl-i-Naqlī.*—The strength of arguments from tradition depends upon three things: (1) The recognized authority of the source from which they are drawn, commanding attention and respect. The Qur'ān, regarded as the very words of God, has here no equal. (2) The genuineness of the tradition. (3) The understanding of the words in their obvious meaning, which is not capable of being explained away in a sense different from the natural and literal meaning of the words, or by figurative and metaphorical interpretation (*Tafsīr*, *Ta'wīl*).

The Qur'ān, of course, in the eyes of a Muḥammadan meets the two first requirements *par excellence*; and if the third condition also is fulfilled, no argument of this kind could possibly have greater weight. The only question a Muḥammadan would raise in reference to the use of the Qur'ān in argument would be in connexion with the meaning and interpretation of the passage quoted.

The Traditions satisfy the first and, generally, the third of these requisites; but care must be taken only to bring forward in argument traditions, the genuineness and authenticity of which are above dispute; otherwise they will be disallowed.

The Qur'ān, if cited, must be applied in the sense accepted by the particular class of Muḥammadans with whom we have to do, *Sunnīs*, *Shī'ahs*, etc., and therefore it is well to quote the authorities whom they themselves acknowledge.

(B) A CLASSIFICATION OF THE ARGUMENTS FROM REASON ('DALĀ'IL-I-'AQLĪ') AND FROM TRADITION ('DALĀ'IL-I-NAQLĪ'), ILLUSTRATED BY EXAMPLES TAKEN FROM 'SWEET FIRST-FRUITS' AND 'THE TORCH OF GUIDANCE.'

(*a*) *Dalāil-i-'Aqlī*, or arguments from reason. (i.) The syllogism, conditional dependence and the *à fortiori* argument. The following examples, if reduced to logical form, will be found to contain instances of these:—

'Is it not conceivable that the Almighty should desire the salvation of man otherwise than by sending His Son? . . .' (*S.F.*, p. 116).

'The intercessor for others must himself be sinless' (*T.*, p. 34).

'. . . can any but God Himself know His own nature? . . . Then we need a revelation of the same from Himself' (*S.F.*, 118).

'The argument against the corruption of the Christian Scriptures after Muḥammad's time from the existence of different Christian sects' (*Ib.*, 129).

'We come now back to ask, If this was the case with these great men so well versed in the Qur'ān, men of grace and learning, and one may say chiefest among the Muslims,—and yet cut off from peace and consolation in the hour of trouble;—what must the case be with the common ranks of men throughout the world?' (*T.*, 28). (Cp. 1 Peter iv. 18: 'And if the righteous is scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?')

(ii.) Appeals to general truths or admitted principles, including proverbs. (Cp. the arguments in Hag. ii. 10–14, and Acts iv. 19, 20, and many instances in Christ's teaching.)

'If the Father . . . sent the Son, . . . was it for the creature to raise objection?' (*S.F.*, 26).

'But let us not judge hastily by first appearance . . .' (*Ib.*, 29).

'Errors of judgment should be corrected by argument, not by persecution' (*Ib.*, 50).

'Convictions can be altered only by argument and reason' (*Ib.*, 74).

'The existence of apparent contradictions in Scripture is an argument for their genuineness' (*Ib.*, 128).

'Interpolations inserted in a document would not be obviously contrary to reason' (*Ib.*, 118).

'The Jews, wishing to curry favour, falsely told Muḥammad or the Companions about the alleged testimony to Muḥammad in the Pentateuch; and they, to aggrandize Islām, gave currency to the fictions' (*Ib.*, 155).

'Ḥabīb's act, of buying his soul from the Lord with an

immense sum of money which he distributed in charity, did not bring him peace; else why did he repeat it four times?' (*T.*, 29).

'Why was Muḥammad himself afraid of the Judge, except because he felt he himself needed a ransom?' (*Ib.*, 33).

'Every youth swears by his father' (*Ib.*, 43).

(iii.) Analogies (*Muqābalah*, *Muqāyasah*) and illustrations (*Misāl*, *Tamsīl*).

'As little children take their father's word for things beyond their comprehension, so should man his heavenly Father's; and so must we accept with all humility what in His word He hath revealed to us of His own nature' (*S.F.*, 26).

'Reading the Holy Scriptures, the truth will dawn upon you that just as there is one sun which illumines the whole world, even so the Sun of righteousness, the Saviour, is the light of all mankind' (*Ib.*, 28).

'Does the patient refuse the medicine prescribed for him till he knows its nature? . . . Even so with us; we must come to the divine Physician and accept the remedy, take the blessed Son as our Saviour, and refrain from asking as to the *how* or the *wherefore*' (*Ib.*, 45, 46).

'Men do not enter on an action without an object; what possible object could the Christians have had in falsifying their Scriptures?' (*Ib.*, 129).

'Perhaps it might illustrate it [Christ's divine Sonship] to say that *heat* is begotten of the sun, both having had an origin at one and the same time' (*Ib.*, 119).

'For man is a sinner, and works, however earnest, cannot justify him in the heavenly court; even as the repentance of a murderer, or good deeds done by a robber, could not justify them in a court of law from the charge of murder or robbery, or avert its punishment' (*T.*, 7).

(*b*) *Dalāil-i-Naqlī*, or arguments from tradition.—In the widest sense the argument from tradition embraces not only the Traditions, and the Christian and Muḥammadan Scriptures, but also everything that has been handed down whether orally or in writing. It is thus opposed to the argument from reason, where reason is called in to judge of the logical correctness and validity of the propositions and conclusions submitted to it.

(i.) Axiomatic religious truths, which are accepted by both sides without question. We have received them as they were handed down to us by others; and they are in harmony with the Scriptures and the Qur'ān, if not explicitly stated therein. As being for the most part also truths of natural religion, they are capable of proof from reason. But it is on the former ground that they command the assent of Christian and Muḥammadan, and they may appropriately be placed here among the *Dalāil-i-Naqlī*. For example—

'Holding it reasonable that man should look for a revelation of his Maker's will. . . .' (*S.F.*, 25).

'The Lord will not suffer those who seek His face to be led astray' (*Ib.*, 43).

'Nothing is impossible with God' (*Ib.*, 116, 127).

'When He commandeth a thing, who can say unto Him, "What doest Thou?" . . . God acts in accordance with His perfections, and is absolute' (*Ib.*, 116).

'The eye of the Almighty and Holy One sees far more clearly than we can the pollution of sin, and the vainness of good works or repentance to justify a man in His sight' (*T.*, 48).

The justice and other attributes of God.

(ii.) Truths of revealed religion. Of those admitted *by both sides* are the following:—

The unity of God; the divine mission of Jesus; His Ascension into heaven (the Muḥammadan version is an imperfect one); Heaven and Hell; the Resurrection and the Judgment. Others are only admitted by one side or the other, as for example, the Trinity by the Christian, and the prophetic mission of Muḥammad by the Muḥammadan.

(iii.) The appeal to what is written in the holy books of the Christian and Muḥammadan—

(*a*) On the Christian side, the Bible, with the proper explanation and exegesis of the same, *e.g. S.F.*, 143 and 148, 149; where the promise of blessing to all the world through Isaac's seed, and the prediction of 'a prophet . . . like unto me' (Deut. xviii. 15) are respectively explained. The Bible is the source of our distinctive Christian doctrines; and our authority for them (cp. *S.F.*, 118, 'We can only accept what the Almighty has been pleased to reveal of Himself . . .'). Instances will be found *passim* in *S.F.* and *T.* This is the means *par excellence* to enlighten, to instruct, and to remove prejudice, when the Muḥammadan has once been led to admit the genuineness of our Scriptures.

(*b*) On the Muḥammadan side, the Qur'ān and the Traditions, which are of the highest value in their proper place. In *S.F.* the Qur'ān is chiefly quoted as testifying to the genuineness of the Christian Scriptures, and the duty incumbent on Muḥammadans of reading them; and as corroborating the Gospel testimony to the divinity of Jesus. The main argument of *T.* turns upon Traditions showing that Islām failed to give peace and assurance in the prospect of death even to the chiefest among the Muslims.

Quotations from the Qur'ān must be understood in harmony with the opinions of the recognized commentators, and according to the accepted rules of grammar. (In *S.F.*, p. 120, attention is called to the remarkable fact that Kalimat 'The word,' applied to Jesus, though grammatically feminine, is construed as masculine in Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 46.)

(iv.) Arguments from history, when recognized as valid. But it must be remembered that historical arguments are, as a rule,

difficult to bring home to the Muḥammadan, unless the facts are well known and admitted. The argument may be refused without any good reason, simply because the opponent does not choose to admit the truth of that which is contrary to his ideas and wishes. It is, therefore, difficult to convince or satisfy him with arguments of this nature. If, however, his assent can be obtained to the truth and accuracy of such and such an historical work, then in that particular case the objection to the use of arguments from history is at once removed. The curious notions of Muḥammadans about Alexander the Great are enough to show that historical accuracy is not their strong point. He is said in the Traditions to have visited Mecca while Abraham together with Ishmael was building the temple there, and to have 'acknowledged him as the messenger of Allāh, and encompassed the temple seven times on foot.' Several astounding miracles are related of him on the same authority. About his birthplace, etc., 'the learned,' it is said, are divided in opinion; but the majority (evidently desirous of reconciling their traditions with sober history) believe that there were two sovereigns of that name, of whom the elder was a descendant of Ham and contemporary of Abraham, and is mentioned in the Qur'ān, and the younger was the famous son of Philip the Greek.*

(v.) Quotations from poets and authors; as, for example, in support of the opinion that there is nothing miraculous in the eloquence of the Qur'ān. Such quotations, used to enforce or embody the truth or a part of the truth, are valuable as a means of disarming prejudice or suspicion. It will be like meeting an old face with its well-remembered lineaments under a new guise. The new acquaintance turns out to be an old friend after all. And the truth thus presented does not startle by a strange garb and foreign accent.

French, describing an interview with a Hindū youth, a pupil in a Government School, who seemed 'almost persuaded,' has this remark, 'Short, pithy, dogmatic sentences from their own poets stand as unquestioned authorities with them.' † The remark applies equally to Muḥammadans. And it is interesting to note how it harmonizes with French's own practice, who at a much later date on more than one occasion tried to interest and attract his Muslim hearers by showing them how 'Abdu'l-Qādir's prayer could only be fulfilled through Christ. Thus in the account in his diary of an encounter with a party of Arab women, some of whom at first were violent and abusive, we read as follows :—

> Afterwards I told them of their great sage, 'Abdu'l-Qādir's two prayers which, if answered, he said he would never ask another: (1) the death in which is no life, and (2) the life in which is no death. This took much with some of them, though some tried to ridicule it; but I think they felt it, and I pressed on them the death and life which can only come to us in union with Christ.‡

* Weil's *Legends*, pp. 70, 71. † *Life*, I. 82. ‡ *Life*, II. 380.

(C) GENERAL REMARKS ON THE NATURE OF ARGUMENTS SUITABLE FOR MUḤAMMADANS.

(1) They should be *brief and perspicuous*. (*a*) They must not go beyond the scope of the ideas and knowledge of those addressed: and it is to be remembered that this is a limited one, and very different from our own. (*b*) Further, they must not require sustained thought; they ought not to involve chains of reasoning, or depend for their effect upon their cumulative force.

In illustration of the first of these (*a*) the following arguments may be contrasted. (i.) Dean Spence * argues in reference to the testimony of Christ to the Old Testament Scriptures, that, whatever view may be taken of the Lord's *kenosis* (Ph. ii. 7) before His Resurrection, some writers maintaining that Christ's critical knowledge of the Old Testament was no greater than that of the learned of His own day, yet after the Resurrection, when He bore the same emphatic testimony as before to the Jewish Scriptures in their threefold division (St. Luke xxiv. 27, 44), no one would assert that He was *then* subject to such limitations of knowledge. For He was then 'robed in the glorious resurrection body,' and all authority had been given Him 'in heaven and on earth' (St. Matt. xxviii. 18). (ii.) A useful argument for Muḥammadans, who allege the corruption or spuriousness of the Old Testament, is that Christ would not have quoted or referred to it so often, had it not been genuine, because *as a prophet* He must have been acquainted with the true state of the case. (The same inference may be drawn for the same reason from Muḥammad's frequent allusions to the former Scriptures.) Cp. Pt. III., Ch. I., D, § 2. (iii.) Now when these two lines of argument are compared, it will be obvious at first sight that the argument suitable for the Muḥammadan is not so for the Christian, for Christ is nothing to him if He be not infinitely more than a mere prophet. And *vice versâ* the argument addressed to the Christian would not be proper for the Muḥammadan, because it rests upon facts of Christian belief quite foreign to his creed.

(2) They should be *apt, forcible and conclusive*, such as are fairly calculated both to carry conviction to a mind not blinded by prejudice, and to put to silence the gainsayer and the disputatious. No argument should be used that admits of a ready retort, rejoinder, or *tu quoque*.

(3) *Illustrations and analogies*, which the Muḥammadans themselves frequently introduce into their discussions, being concrete and pictorial in their nature, fulfil the required conditions and are very effective, if carefully chosen and judiciously used. But they must be derived from the sphere of life and experience with which the hearer is acquainted, and be really apposite and appropriate to the subject they are designed to elucidate, otherwise

* *Voices and Silences*, ser. 1, pp. 15 sqq.

their applicability will soon be called in question. On the other hand, parables, in which the subtle Hindū mind delights, are not found suitable for Muḥammadans, because of the sustained mental effort demanded to follow and apply them. Thus we are told that in North Nadīya, Bengal, 'It was found that the Muḥammadans required different treatment from that accorded to the Hindūs, for they did not appreciate parables, or anything which called for thought, but preferred to be told plainly what they ought to do and believe.' *

(4) *Appealing to the heart and conscience.* Though this does not come within the proper scope of argument, the object we have in view could not be attained without some reference to it. The missionary's purpose being not merely to win a barren intellectual assent, but to carry home a deep, practical conviction that should influence life and conduct, he cannot fail, as he seeks to witness and to foster the 'awakening' of a human soul to the fulness of light and truth and peace, to express something of his own intense sympathy, and seek to enlist on his side the deepest feelings and loftiest aspirations of the heart. Bishop Stuart wrote to the following effect in January, 1904:—'Of making books there is no end, but the primitive means of the living witness and the spoken word has yet to be more fully tried.' After all said and done, nothing under God, next after God's own blessed Book, is so calculated to reach the Muslim's heart as earnest exhortation, loving appeal, and united prayer side by side. Let it always be our ultimate aim to get into this close touch. Our supreme desire is not to convince the reason, but to move the heart, which is our most powerful ally, and which has its right as well as the mind to make its voice heard in the final verdict. This definite aim is not only philosophically right,† but is also a following of the example of the New Testament, which abounds in appeals to the heart. With all our desire to be able to argue and answer well and wisely, let us ever seek to avoid controversy, or to lay it aside, if it has been necessary, at the earliest moment, and come to closer quarters.

Our appeals, which will be seldom altogether in vain, need not be confined to common sense, based for instance upon the urgency of the matter, the importance of the issues at stake, our need in God's sight of inward purity and not merely ceremonial exactness; or to candidness, to justice and fairness, to the need of laying aside every prejudice, bias and inherited opinion ‡ in approaching the

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1899–1900, p. 202.

† 'Philosophy now submits the problem of what man holds to be true to *the whole nature of man*. In deciding what we have a right to believe and to trust in, the heart is perfectly justified in joining itself with the intellect.'—Rev. Dr. Caldecott in *Rationalism and the Gospel* (*Record* Report of the Islington Clerical Meeting, 1905), p. 30.

‡ Thus in the *Torch of Guidance*, p. 50, 'Alas for the inflexibility with which men cling to the religious views and customs inherited from their forefathers! How this blinds their vision. . . .'

vital questions on the right answer to which depend the soul's present peace and eternal welfare. Higher and deeper still let us address the hearer's very heart, and challenge the verdict of the quickened conscience and the spiritual sense.* Our Muhammadan brother has within him, however stifled or ill-defined, the same needs, longings, and yearnings as ourselves, which Christ alone can satisfy; and the same capacity of response to the Saviour, Who first loved him and gave Himself for him.

'We seem to stand outside a locked and barred door, as hopeless as the gate of Peter's prison. We touch it with a trembling finger, and lo! it swings open, and behind it we find human hearts beating with fear and apprehension, heavy with sorrow and hungering for the bread and water of life which we do not know how to appreciate because it is so much a matter of course. "Let us go up and possess the land, for we are well able to overcome it."' †

* Cp. *Torch of Guidance*, p. 47, 'And now, the Lord guide thee, dear reader! Dost thou not feel that thou art sinful in the sight of the great and holy Lord God, before Whom thou must give an answer for all that thou hast done throughout thy life? Wilt thou remain in careless pleasure, and be content in reading the Qur'ān without anxiety or thought, resting satisfied with pilgrimage, almsgiving, fasting, and such outward obligations? . . . Would it give you peace and a contented heart?'

† An 'Armenian Christian Evangelist' in the *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 728.

CHAPTER IV.

METHODS OF ARGUING.

1. *Adducing proofs.* Instances of this will, of course, be found *passim.*

2. *Denial of the conclusion,* or of the facts on which it is founded, supported by appropriate arguments. *E.g.* the contention that the Christian religion is lacking in commands may be met with a direct denial (Pt. III., Ch. VI., B, 2). The supposed existence of predictions of Muḥammad under various names in the Pentateuch and Psalms is explicitly denied in *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 150.

3. *Reductio ad absurdum:* the assumption for the time being of the correctness of the case on the other side, in order to show that it leads to untenable conclusions and must therefore be wrong. Thus, the corruption of the Christian Scriptures being assumed for the sake of argument, it may be shown in detail that they could not have been corrupted before, during or after Muḥammad's time, and were therefore not corrupted at all. The commandments which it is for the moment assumed have been substituted for those of Christ must either be better, equally good, or inferior. These alternatives are successively examined and shown not to be true, whereupon the assumption falls to the ground. (Pt. III., Ch. VI., B, 1, § 3, (i.).).

4. *Denial of the validity of arguments* used on the other side on critical or logical grounds. For example, in Pt. III., Ch. VII., C, i. (2) (the miraculous character of the Qur'ān argued from its acceptance by the Arabs) the opponent had urged that, regarded with respect to its evidential value, the *acceptance* of the Qur'ān by some told more in its favour than the *rejection* of it by others did against it. It is accordingly pointed out, that the dictum, that assertion is more credible than denial, is admissible in a case of this kind, where the two statements or views contradict one another.

The use of passages of the Qur'ān such as Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'īl*, 90 (the combined efforts of men and genii would be unable to produce a book like the Qur'ān), to prove its divine and miraculous origin, is a begging of the question at issue between the Muḥammadan and the Christian.

In *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 135, the Qāẓī brings forward the spread

of Islām as an argument for the divine mission of Muḥammad. If reduced to syllogistic form, the major premise is found to be at fault.

In the two following cases there is a contradiction involved:—'What, then, was the advantage of the Prophet confirming the Scriptures revealed before, [as the Qāẓī had asserted, p. 137] when he denied these their essential truths?'—*Ib.*, p. 139. 'If Muslims then bring tradition to prove miracles, when the Qur'ān distinctly holds that the Prophet showed none, say, my good friend, whether that is not putting the greatest possible slight on the Qur'ān itself?'—*Ib.*, p. 140.

5. *The exhaustive method*, which is not a direct proof, but an indirect demonstration. This is a favourite method among Muḥammadans of opposing or substantiating a proposition by the successive examination of all the possible alternatives involved, all of which, except one, are shown to be inadmissible. An example will be found in Pt. III., Ch. VI., A, Ans. ii. The question whether Christianity or Islām is the better road is to be decided by a comparison of the Gospel and the Qur'ān. There are three alternatives here, viz. both are true, both are false, or one only is true. The last case only is possible, and the better guide of the two is then shown to be the Gospel.

6. *The argument by interrogation*, in order to establish a proposition or refute an opponent by means of his own answers and admissions. (Cp. the argument in Hag. ii. 11–14: 'Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying, If one bear holy flesh,. . .' and the questions put to Jesus by different sections of the Jews and the Lord's counter-question addressed to the Pharisees, St. Matt. xx. 15–fin.; St. Luke xx. 19–44.) Elaborate instances of the use of this method in disputations between Muḥammadans will be found in Sell's *Faith of Islām* (ed. 1896), pp. 177, 178, and 179, 180; and Malcolm's *History of Persia* (ed. 1829), vol. ii. pp. 253–261. With these may be compared the following interesting case, related at length in Fred. Shoberl's *World in Miniature*, vol. ii. pp. 108–144. A servant of Prince 'Abbās Mīrzā, having outrageously abused an Armenian merchant and his religion for no other reason than that he was a Christian, received a sound thrashing from him, and forthwith carried his complaint to the Prince-Governor. The latter perceived where the fault lay, and determined to stop such offences for the future by giving judgment in accordance with the decision of the Muḥammadan religious authorities. Having therefore summoned the Sheikhu'l-Islām of Tabrīz, with the chief 'ulamā', he 'proposed the following questions, which he required them to answer in succession, according to their custom':—

Question.—'Was the Lord Jesus (*Ḥaẓrat-i-'Īsā*) a real prophet sent by God?'

Answer.—'Yes.'

Question.—'Are the laws contained in his noble Gospel (*Injīl-i-sharīf*) just or not?'

Answer.—'Yes, they are just.'

Question.—'Is it permitted by our laws to blaspheme the Lord Jesus and his noble Gospel?'

Answer.—'No, it is unjust.'

The Prince then released the Armenian merchant, and commanded his servant to be severely bastinadoed and dismissed from his service.

The following are simple examples of the use of the same method in religious discussions:—

A Persian, discussing Ṣūfī doctrines with Henry Martyn, put his case thus: 'You will allow that God cannot bind, compel, command Himself.' 'No, He cannot.' 'Well, if we are one with God, we cannot be subject to any of His laws.'*

'Wherefore was it,' asks 'Alī, the Christian advocate, 'that the Prophet fell back on the testimony of the Tourât and Gospel?' The Qāẓī replies, 'In order to tell of the creation and fall, the story of Mary and Zacharias, and other such histories, as well as of the origin of certain ritual observances.' 'But then he omitted,' rejoins 'Alī, 'the most important of all the truths, or denied them.'† Mīr 'Ālam Khān's argument (Ch. II., (i.)) is another instance.

7. *The dilemma,* or 'argument equally conclusive by contrary suppositions.' *E.g.* 'Abū Bakr and 'Umar either believed Muḥammad to be the Prophet of God or they did not. Let us suppose they did. Then whence this dread and consternation at the approach of the great Day of Account, which led one to wish he had been but a green leaf or a bird, and the other that he had never existed. Again, suppose the other alternative. Then they could not have been true believers, and so were Muslims simply out of policy.'‡

In Pt. III., Ch. VII., C, (i.) the argument to prove that the alleged splitting of the moon by Muḥammad was not a miracle is put in the form of a dilemma.

NOTE.—*The use by Muhammadans of arguments drawn from the writings of Western Critics and Sceptics.*—In 1866, French, in propounding his 'Proposed Plan for a Training College of Native Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers for North-West India and the Punjāb,' speaks of the missionary's need of a sufficient library, 'when sharp, shrewd objectors are buzzing like bees all around him, taunting him with seeming discrepancies of the sacred text, thrusting sore at him with difficulties and objections laboriously compiled from the works of bold, irreverent or inadvertent Christian writers, so called, or those of reckless sceptics.'§

Again, 'As is usual nowadays, we find it stated that Islām does not rely upon its own resources. The controversial books written

* Geo. Smith's *Henry Martyn*, p. 386.
† *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 143.
‡ *Torch of Guidance*, p. 27.
§ *Life*, I. p. 162.

by Maulawīs "borrow from all European infidel writers, tending to downright scepticism, and rejection of all divine books and of the Qur'ān itself."'*

The genuine Oriental modes and style of argument with which these pages attempt to deal are the product of minds unacquainted with Western languages and learning. But where these have found an entrance, as in India, the acquisition of English among a section of the population has opened the door to the great library of Western literature, and unhappily given an opportunity to infidelity, scepticism, and bigotry to take advantage of the divisions and different schools of thought among Christians, and borrow weapons forged in the West for their controversies with Christians in the East. These arguments will have to be met, as a rule, with Western answers. It is no part of the scope of this work to enter upon the endless task of supplying these. Each worker will have to fall back on the best means at his own command if called to the task of meeting such adversaries.

* 'K.' in *C.M. Intelligencer*, Dec., 1881, p. 733.

CHAPTER V.

THE USE OF THE QUR'ĀN AND THE HOLY SCRIPTURES IN CONTROVERSY.*

THE ultimate foundation of Islām is the Qur'ān. It is freely quoted in debate by the Muḥammadan, and is a valuable weapon in the hand of the missionary. It will therefore be helpful if certain general principles can be arrived at, which should regulate the use and application to be made of it. Our point of view embraces both the general consideration of the introduction of the recognized holy books of each side into discussion, and also the special use of them as controversial weapons. The results to which we shall be led may be briefly stated in advance, viz. to set limits to the bringing forward of the Qur'ān by the Christian in controversy, and to stimulate in every way the constant, systematic reference to the Christian Scriptures.

These conclusions, assuming for the moment that they will be substantiated, afford grounds for hopefulness and encouragement. If it can be shown that the citation of the Qur'ān is not so necessary for the controversialist as perhaps is generally supposed, that it is useful only within a circumscribed area, and that otherwise it is likely to prove a two-edged weapon, provoking resistance and contention, there is some consolation here for those who may have been in the habit of regarding the free quotation of the Qur'ān as an indispensable part of their equipment for Muḥammadan work, and yet one likely to remain for years beyond their grasp. On the other hand, the Christian worker, it may be with faith both rebuked and strengthened, will learn to rely more confidently on the inspired Word—or, rather, upon God, who designs by its means to enlighten the mind and speak to the hearts and consciences of men.

(A) THE QUR'ĀN.

(1) **Direct attacks and damaging criticisms of the Qur'ān are out of place until it is certain that our Muḥammadan friend will receive them without offence.**—The respective positions of the Muḥammadan and the Christian towards

* This chapter is reprinted with corrections and additions from the *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, Dec., 1904.

the Qur'ān are diametrically opposed. The Christian approaches the book from the first with the firm belief that it is not from God. The European writers he has read upon the subject have supported this opinion by many irrefragable proofs, expressed in forms familiar to him, and resting upon axioms and principles understood and admitted. Among other things, he learns that the testimony of the Qur'ān against itself is decisive. One writer * gives nineteen excellent 'reasons why the Qur'ān is not considered to be the word of God.' But most of these are unsuitable for the bigoted Muḥammadan, because he is not in a position to receive or weigh them fairly. He has been trained to look upon the Qur'ān with excessive reverence, and his mind is not open to entertain the possibility of a different estimate. He believes in the plenary and verbal inspiration of the book in the fullest and most unqualified sense of the terms. He regards it as having existed from all eternity, written upon the 'preserved table' in heaven, from whence it was brought down by Gabriel and imparted to Muḥammad. Its eloquence is miraculous, so that the united efforts of men and genii could not produce another book like it.† It comprehends all sciences, and is the repository of a perfect law. 'The Muḥammadans will tell you,' wrote Leupolt in his *Recollections* (p. 87), 'that if God Himself were to come down from heaven and say that the Qur'ān is not true, they would not believe Him.' An aged Balūchī Ḥājī, encountered by Bishop French in a large mosque outside the gate of Muscat, told him 'his Qur'ān . . . was enough for him, and contained all he need know for both worlds, the best and most perfect of all knowable things.' ‡ Hence the Muḥammadan, holding such exaggerated opinions, and supported in them by all the force of fanatical prejudice and ignorance, is as far as possible removed from that openness and fairness of mind which is capable of receiving the truth. Until there are indications of a more liberal spirit, it is worse than useless to directly assail that which he holds so dear and honours with such unbounded reverence.

(2) **Reference to the Qur'ān is liable to create wrong impressions.**—The Muḥammadan's opinion of the Qur'ān being such as has just been described, we do not desire to do anything to confirm him in these sentiments, but rather to wean him from them. On general grounds, therefore, it is advisable to regulate the use of the Qur'ān both by ourselves and our opponents and keep it within well-defined limits. There is nothing gained by allowing the Muḥammadan to parade the erroneous teaching of his book before us. We know that as a Muḥammadan he implicitly accepts its teaching; and the proud enunciation of its

* 'Papers for Thoughtful Muslims,' No. 2: *The Qur'ān Examined*. Published by the Christian Literature Society for India. London and Madras.

† Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'il*, 90. The references throughout are to Wherry's edition.

‡ *Life of Bishop French*, II. 377.

dogmas, if it does not place the missionary in a false and uncomfortable position, is at least neither welcome nor edifying, and it is quite easy to check it quietly and firmly and without giving offence.—Their book, we must remember, is the bulwark of a false religion and the vaunted charter of an erroneous system. In spite of all the borrowed elements of truth it contains, yet the system it embodies is untrue, and all the more dangerous and difficult to combat because of the portion of truth which is in it.—As a general rule, then, no encouragement should be given to the other side to bring forward the Qur'ān. The impression produced upon the speaker himself and other Muḥammadans present is not a desirable one, nor one we wish to see fostered. Even the use of the Qur'ān by the missionary in order to prove his points is liable to mislead, and requires careful safeguarding. The position, sometimes stated in words like these, 'I bring forward these arguments for you because the Qur'ān has weight with you,' even with this qualification, can hardly fail to give some colour to the idea that the book possesses an independent value, and is therefore calculated to encourage the Muḥammadan to rely upon it. Reference to the testimony of the Qur'ān has before now provoked the retort that the missionary himself acknowledges its authority. Therefore the point must be made quite clear that although we may have occasion to quote the Qur'ān, yet it is only for our opponents' sake that we do so, and that we do not acknowledge its authority for ourselves, nor seek its aid to establish the truth of the Christian religion.

(3) **The difficulty of the effective use of the Qur'ān** also acts as a dissuasive from all but a moderate and discriminating employment of it in controversy. The interpretation of the text is an important part of Muslim theology, being itself an exact and elaborate science.* There are besides many ways in which the effect of an argument from it may be evaded or minimized. One verse may be capped or answered by another. Questions of grammar, exposition, and interpretation (*tafsīr*, *ta'vīl*) may be raised. The possibilities of involving and obscuring a plain issue and neutralizing the force of an argument, that lie ready to the hand of a subtle arguer, are obvious when we bear in mind the existence of abrogated and abrogating verses and the seven or (as is also alleged) seventy inner meanings said to be contained in the Qur'ān.† All passages labouring under any of the above-mentioned disabilities will be avoided by the Christian controversialist unless he knows that he both has the balance of authority on his side and also the strength and ability to carry his point. Still,

* See Sell's *Faith of Islām*, pp. 57–67.

† The following tradition of Ibn Mas'ūd does not make quite so extravagant a claim. He relates that 'the Prophet' said, 'the Qur'ān was sent down in seven dialects; and in every one of its sentences there is an external and internal meaning, for each of them is a high place, from the top of which may be seen its bottom!'—*Mishkātu'l-Maṣābiḥ*, Bk. II., ch. II., pt. I., p. 61 (Eng. tr.).

even so, the use of all but a limited number of quotations from the Qur'ān is only too likely to raise a storm of objection, protest, and counter-argument, and is hence opposed to what should be one great canon of controversy with Muḥammadans, viz. that the arguments used should be weighty and irrefutable.

(4) **The employment of the Qur'ān in direct support of distinctive Christian doctrine is inadmissible.**—It is true that Muḥammad regarded Islām in respect of its essential truths as identical with uncorrupt Judaism and Christianity,* and declared that the Qur'ān was sent down 'confirming that Scripture which was revealed before it.'† But these assertions rest upon his ignorance of the real nature of those religions and the contents of their books. To attempt to prove essential Christian doctrine from the Qur'ān is in effect to try and show that Muḥammad was ignorant of the true meaning of his supposed revelation and uttered expressions containing ideas which no Musulmān ever attributed to him. It is as though we were trying to cause the scales to fall from the eyes of the 'true believer' in order that he might at last see clearly and find himself after all a Christian! It is entirely against Muḥammadan consciousness, and will provoke resistance to the uttermost, in the same way as we ourselves should fight strenuously against any attempt to prove to us that we had misread our Gospel, and that if only we understood it aright we should be Bābīs or Muḥammadans!

(5) **The Qur'ān, after all, is a most useful weapon.**—In spite of all that has been said above, an important sphere remains for the employment of the Qur'ān in controversy, and it is highly desirable to be able to make effective practice with this arrow from the enemy's quiver.‡ The excellent greatness and sublime glory of Jesus shine forth from the pages of the Qur'ān: He is God's 'Word,' and 'a spirit proceeding from Him.'§ The Qur'ān bears striking testimony to the existence and uncorruptness of the previous Scriptures, the charge of corruption only being alleged against the Jews, and this not being a falsification of the text, but a perversion of the meaning. On the other hand, the Qur'ān is found to differ from the Bible in important particulars, *e.g.* the divinity of Christ, His death and atonement, etc.‖ On the negative side it has no undoubted means of salvation to offer, and from the evidence it affords no reliance can be placed on the intercession of Muḥammad either being granted or proving effectual.¶

* Sūr. 3 *Al 'Imrān*, 83.

† Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 52.

‡ A large portion of the argument of *Sweet Firstfruits* turns upon the testimony of the Qur'an to, and its agreement (to a certain extent) with, the previous Scriptures.

§ Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 169; 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 39; cp. 21 *Anbiyā'*, 91; 66 *Taḥrīm*, 12; see also 2 *Baqarah*, 86.

‖ *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 33.

¶ See Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 255; 10 *Yūnus*, 3; 32 *Sijdah*, 3; 74 *Muddassir*, 44–49.

It may also be profitably quoted on the Christian side, to refute the extravagant additions of later tradition to the 'primitive deposit' of the Qur'ān itself, as, *e.g.* the glorification of Muḥammad and the attributing to him of countless miracles.* These points, if established and accepted, do not, of course, necessarily turn a Muḥammadan into a Christian; but they should go a long way in that direction and effect important modifications in his spirit and attitude towards Christianity. If all that it accomplishes is only of a preliminary nature, it is notwithstanding an advantageous clearing of the ground. Prejudices are thereby removed. Christianity is discovered to be not an altogether baseless, worthless fabric. The difference between Muslim and Christian is found not to be a hopeless, yawning gulf, as was supposed. Further study and inquiry accordingly may not be absolute waste of time for him. Nay, the 'true believer' can hardly continue to be a good Muḥammadan if he neglects the perusal of those ancient Scriptures of Jew and Christian, so wonderfully attested and eulogized in his own Qur'ān.

(6) **Arguments from the Qur'ān may most properly be refused by the Christian.**—While the Muḥammadan, from the nature of the case, cannot decline to accept arguments fairly drawn from his Qur'ān, no such necessity lies upon the Christian to endorse them, and he, if need be, may reject them on good grounds. For example, the divine Sonship, the Deity and Crucifixion of Jesus are all denied on the strength of verses of the Qur'ān; and this testimony has the greatest weight with the Muḥammadan. But the case is very different with us, to whom the Qur'ān makes no appeal and comes with no authority. Our refusal to receive its evidence may take this line: 'It is of no avail for you to bring me proofs from a book which I cannot as a Christian accept. Arguments from what is accepted only by one side are obviously futile. Either prove to me that the Qur'ān is true before you argue from it, or else, leaving it on one side, bring forward proofs from outside the Qur'ān (*az khārij*), either proofs of reason (*dalīl-i-'aqlī*) or arguments from the Taurāt and Injīl, the holy books which we both acknowledge.'

(B) THE ABOVE PRINCIPLES TESTED.

The principles stated above should be tested by carefully noting the manner and extent to which natives themselves apply the Qur'ān in controversy. Some typical instances are given below, which may be used for this purpose.

(i.) The first is a remarkable conference with Muḥammadans held in Mauritius.† After long disputation a leading Muḥammadan, 'one of the more educated Miajis,' and formerly at the meetings

* See Sūr. 18 *Kahf*, 110; and Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'il*, 60; etc. Cp. St. Mark vii. 13.

† *C.M.S. Report*, 1899–1900, p. 357.

a vigorous opponent of the Christians, suddenly rose and showed his co-religionists that they were arguing contrary to the Qur'ān and therefore must be wrong; that, according to the harmonious testimony of the Qur'ān and the Injīl, Messiah is the only true Saviour, as Al Baiẓawī's great commentary on the Qur'ān also shows; and that, according to the Qur'ān, Muḥammad could not save them, and the only One Who could do so was Christ. The only reply to all this was anger, curses, and taunts; but we also read, 'Many became thoughtful.'

(ii.) The second instance is the controversial use made of the Qur'ān in *Sweet Firstfruits*. The chief purposes for which its evidence is alleged are the following:—To show that the exalted dignity of Jesus is described in such striking terms as to imply His divinity; to prove that the Jewish and Christian Scriptures are genuine and uncorrupt, and that the Christian religion as founded on them is true; that belief in the Qur'ān necessarily involves the acceptance of the previous Scriptures, and implies the duty of reading them as the Word of God, intended for all men; and that the Qur'ān contradicts the Christian Scriptures in important particulars. The relation of the Qur'ān to the Bible is beautifully put on pp. 45, 48 and 49 of the same book:—

> As to the varying testimony of the Qur'ān, though some texts did deny the divinity of our Lord, it signified the less, as others clearly admitted it, like those in which He is termed 'the Word' and 'Spirit of God.' In fact, the Qur'ān, as it were, showed the glory of Christ on one side and hid it on the other; just as the new moon discloses, but a tiny streak of the shining disc, while one could trace dimly and darkly the shadowy outline of the full orb, well aware of the lustre thus concealed.
>
> What the Qur'ān told us was indeed only as the drop of water for the thirsty man, which but increased his longing for the stream whereof to drink and be satisfied; and the grand merit of the Qur'ān was to point the thirsty one to the stream of life that flowed from the Saviour.

(iii.) Since the above was drafted I have received from a native source a list of the reasons on account of which arguing from the Qur'ān is inadvisable; and another, of points where the evidence of the Qur'ān is apposite and useful.

(1) Arguing from the Qu'rān is not recommended, for the following reasons:—

1. To do so is liable to create a belief that we acknowledge it inwardly in our hearts.
2. The existence of numerous differences in the explanations of commentators and the supposed occasions of the revelations.
3. The existence of various interpretations and hidden meanings.
4. Many divergencies in the verses themselves.
5. Differences of exposition among the Sunnīs, Shī'ahs, and the other sects of Islam.

(2) The evidence of the Qur'ān is useful in respect of:—

1. The dignity and rank of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The praise of priests and monks.

3. The conception of Jesus through the operation of the Holy Spirit.

4. The exalted position accorded to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

5. The absence of corruption of the Holy Scriptures.

6. The miracles and wonderful works of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7. The proof that the Holy Scriptures are from God.

8. Our Lord's Ascension to heaven.

9. The absence of means of salvation for Muḥammad's followers.

10. The unprofitableness of the intercession of intercessors without the divine permission.

11. Muḥammad did not come with miracles and wonderful works, and had no power to perform them.

12. Muḥammad confined the proof of his prophetship to the Qur'ān itself.

13. Proof of sin and error concerning Muḥammad himself.

14. Proof of heaven and hell being understood in a carnal and physical sense.

15. Proof of numerous contradictions in the Qur'ān.*

16. Restriction of its teachings to outward commands, as things obligatory and praiseworthy, unlawful and disapproved.

These three instances, in which we can bring to the test the conclusions previously stated, would seem to be worthy of attentive consideration. They are all derived from purely Oriental sources. And inasmuch as they support the general drift of the views explained above in reference to the uses to be made of the Qur'ān, and the limitations to be imposed, in discussion with Muḥammadans, they encourage the hope that the principles laid down are formulated on right lines.

(C) THE USE OF TRADITIONS.

A few words may be added as to the use of traditions. When appropriately introduced in argument they are very effective. They are frequently quoted by Muḥammadans themselves and are well worth the attention and study of the missionary. But they must be well authenticated. A tradition not well known or attested, especially if used to support an unwelcome proposition, will be immediately rejected. As for ourselves, we are not bound to accept the traditions that may be brought forward. As we may decline arguments from the Qur'ān, much more may we refuse the evidence of traditions, if they contradict the clear sense of the Qur'ān (*e.g.* traditions of Muḥammad's miracles, or his sinlessness and that of all the prophets), on the ground that we have to do with the Qur'ān, which is the authoritative charter of

* Compare Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 81, and Wherry's note *in loc.*

Islām, and not with the traditions, of which there are many thousands, true and false.

Another use of traditional sayings and actions of Muhammad, viz., to rebuke incivility or rudeness, may be alluded to here, though not coming strictly within the scope of this chapter. The Rev. Dr. Bruce, as the late Rev. H. Carless related, was once visiting one of the chief men of Isfahān, and the customary civilities were pointedly omitted; upon which the doctor put the assembly to shame by questioning their right to call themselves Musulmāns because of their neglect of the well-known traditional precept, 'Honour the guest, although he be a kāfir' (*Akrimu'z-zaifa wa lau kāna kāfiran*). On one occasion, if the mention of a personal incident may be permitted, the writer successfully tried the same tactics. When itinerating near Isfahān, I was overtaken by a party of people on horseback, who had been to call on a Mullā and welcome him back from Teherān. I had some conversation with the gentlemen of the party as we rode along, and, after they had passed on, began talking with some others, who seemed to be part of their retinue, and, judging by their behaviour, 'fellows of the baser sort.' They were inclined to scoff and become abusive, one of them calling me 'unclean,' and 'a child of hell.' So I asked him whether they were commanded by their Prophet to abuse others, and told him the story of Muḥammad calling upon the sick Jew, who, according to one version of the story, had been a bitterly abusive enemy of his; and moreover, I added, he was not a Muḥammadan to act in that way. To this they had nothing to answer, and rode off almost immediately, and the few left behind showed a better spirit.

(D) THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

Since many things in these pages, such as the consideration of arguments from reason and the use of arguments specially suited to Muḥammadan minds, may have a tendency to unduly withdraw our attention from the Word of God, the strongest emphasis may here be laid upon its inestimable value, and the foremost place it should hold in all the missionary's dealings with Muḥammadans concerning religious questions. Thus the Rev. C. H. A. Field wrote from Peshāwar, 'I find discussion with Muḥammadans quite useless till they have at any rate read the Bible or parts of it, and therefore seek to distribute as much as possible.' *

Though we should always be ready to answer the Muḥammadan according to his own ideas, and give him the proofs from reason he is so fond of, still the argument drawn from the well-filled storehouse of Holy Writ is the best, and often the only one to use.

Merely regarded as a controversial instrument, the Holy Scriptures are of supreme importance. In the whole

* *Annual Letter*, dated Jan. 21, 1903.

of the Christian armoury there is no weapon like it, containing a sufficient answer to every reasonable question, and an adequate resolution of every doubt.

But it must be observed, the Bible is more than a repertoire of arguments, and has a far higher use. Our object is to lead the Muḥammadan to the Bible, and to secure reverent attention and a respectful hearing for its saving truths. A great (though not indeed the final) end has been attained in the reading of the sacred page and drawing attention to its solemn message. We may, therefore, be deeply thankful whenever we are privileged and enabled to promote this happy result. Herein lies the attainment of the object of long preparation, the goal of many labours, and the fulfilment of one of the missionary's happiest tasks, when his hearers consent to listen to the Gospel message of God's love and His great salvation. It is a beautiful picture—that of the aged Bishop French, in his last days, armed with his big Arabic Bible, going about Muscat and the neighbourhood, seeking opportunities for the entrance of the Word, in all sorts of places and surroundings, and among all sorts and conditions of men and women, and meeting with various receptions. 'The circulation of the Scriptures undoubtedly awakens opposition and arouses fanaticism, even because the Bible is divine and speaks to the conscience. But *it is one of the best means to reach Muslims*' (the italics are ours). So wrote Sayid M—— A——, a converted Muslim, and a faithful colporteur in Arabia for over two years.* It is well, too, to impress afresh upon our souls, lest we should ever be tempted to forget it in the stress of controversy and the strife of tongues, the thought of the solemnity and responsibility of our work, than which no higher can be conceived for mortal man—the bringing of human souls face to face with the message and claims of God's Word, on the acceptance or rejection of which eternal issues hang.

The missionary's use of the Bible in controversy may be divided into general and special.

(1) **General.**—He will make it a point of definite effort to bring the Bible forward wherever possible, and drive it home with all the power God gives him. Regarding it as the sovereign remedy not only for sin and guilt, but also for ignorance, prejudice, and bigotry, he will earnestly and steadfastly employ the medicine of the divine Word. He will pour in as much as possible of the grape-shot of the Truth. In short, if the figure may be allowed, he will try to turn the flank of controversy by the well-directed and skilfully handled forces of the Word of God; to drive the evil spirit of debate and disputation from the field; to raise the tone of discussion to a higher level; to manifest a longing yearning for souls, and make it evident that the object of controversy on his side, at all events, is not a verbal or argumentative victory, but the spiritual enlightenment and eternal welfare of immortal souls.

* *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 730.

A few words may here be added on the value of the Bible alone to reach the hearts and minds of men — Muḥammadan and Christian being witnesses. The Rev. T. Bomford * 'was talking to two Muḥammadans, the one a man of good family, and the other a Mullā. The first man expressed a wish to be a Christian, or at least to have Christian books given to him. The Mullā struck in, "The Book to read is the Bible, and I can lend you that."' What delightful words to hear! The same missionary elsewhere gives some touching incidents which further illustrate the point: '"Why do you want to be a Christian?" said I to a Muḥammadan once; and, "Why did you become a Christian?" I heard a Muḥammadan ask a fellow-tribesman who had recently been baptized; and in both cases the answer was the same. "There is one verse in the Gospel which would alone be enough to make me wish to be a Christian." "What is that?" "It is the words in St. Matthew: 'Come unto Me; I will give you rest. You shall find rest to your soul.' I know the Books of Islām, and there is no promise of rest there. I want that rest." The baptized man added, "I have believed on the Man Who made the promise, and I have the rest."' †

One of the American missionaries writes from Teherān, under date April 11, 1902, 'Scripture in large and well-prescribed doses is the very best thing I know of. St. Matt. xxiv., 1 Cor. xiii., the last chapter of Revelation, and the Sermon on the Mount, are all rich in food for Muslims.' The striking testimony of a leading Hindū may also be given: 'If I were a missionary,' he said, 'I would not argue; I would give the people the New Testament, and say, "Read that!"' ‡

(2) **Special.**—Turning now to what may be more definitely considered the controversial use of the Scriptures, we may, for the sake of clearness, thus divide it up—

(*a*) *The simple reading of the Bible in opposition to the Qur'ān.*—This is an ideal method. It confronts the genuine inspired Word of God with the word of man, presumptuously claiming that sublime prerogative.—French on one occasion attempted this manœuvre. He thus wrote of a visit to Turangzai, when out on an itinerating tour between Peshāwar and Attock: 'I asked [the Mullā] for a *gosha* (corner) in his *jamā'at*, or mosque, that I might sit and read the Old and New Testaments, and he the Qur'ān, and see which got the more hearers.' But the Mullā was an astute gentleman, and plausible excuses were made for declining the well-meant proposal.§—In recent years a controversy has actually taken place on these striking lines. The Rev. Fatḥ Masīḥ, at Amritsar, proposed to a number of Muḥammadans, who declared that the Gospel of the Christians was not the original Word of

* *C.M.S. Annual Letters*, 1901, p. 540.
† *C.M. Intelligencer*, 1898.
‡ Br. and For. Bible Society's Centenary Pamph. X. p. 15.
§ *Life of Bishop French*, I. 197.

God mentioned in the Qur'ān, 'that he and his opponents should read in public the Bible and the Qur'ān alternately, each for half an hour, and let the people judge for themselves.' It was afterwards decided that the reading should deal with specified topics. The result was most successful, the barrenness of the teaching of the Qur'ān about salvation being specially noteworthy.*

(*b*) *The explanation of Scripture by Scripture.*—A passage that arouses criticism and causes difficulty may be illustrated or explained by another. Thus, in a conversation between a Persian convert and some Muḥammadans, strong objections were raised against the truth of the miracle of turning water into wine at Cana (St. John ii.), on such grounds as these: that a prophet could never have exercised his power to create such an accursed thing as wine, nor given his sanction to the use of it. The novel answer was a reference to 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, from which the argument was adduced that, judging from the company in which drunkards there find themselves, and the fearful doom pronounced upon them, the sentence of Christ's religion upon drunkards is even severer than that of Islām (cp. Pt. III., Ch. VI., D, 1, § 3, v.).

(*c*) *The examination of the context.*—Two notable instances of the value of this method at once occur to mind, viz. Deut. xviii. and St. John xiv.–xvi., where the context conclusively shows that neither the 'prophet' foretold nor the promised 'Paraclete' can possibly refer to Muḥammad.

(*d*) *The refutation of every kind of error by the application of the Word of Truth.*—As will be immediately explained below, the first point to be aimed at in controversy with Muḥammadans is the acknowledgment of the authority of our Scriptures. When this has been agreed to, the controversialist will find his every need supplied from the riches of God's Word. From this alone every objection can be met and every cavil answered. Every side of truth is here safeguarded, and all avenues for error closed by anticipation. The Divine Word justifies and approves itself to every open, unprejudiced mind (cp. St. Luke vii. 35, 'Wisdom is justified of her children'). Thus the keeper of the Book Depôt at Mosul writes, 'You will now see daily numbers of Muslims in our shop ready to urge their objections to our religion which they have gathered from this book [*Iẓhāru'l-Ḥaqq*], and one by one we take them to our Scriptures and compare passage with passage, so that the truth becomes revealed to them, not so much from our comment as from the convincing words that are read to them from the Book of God.' †

(*e*) *The production of the Scriptural evidence for everything advanced,* not only, as above, in refutation of error, but also in the setting forth of Christian truth. This systematic reference to the Holy Scriptures has been found to produce a marked effect upon the Muḥammadan. A writer in *The Missionary* for May, 1852, on

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1899–1900, pp. 254, 255.

† *Ib.*, 1902–1903, p. 164.

'Hints on Missionary Preaching,' Letter 3, has some remarks on this subject, which, though his point of view is rather different, are applicable here. He says—

> I would suggest that much may be done both in instructing the uneducated and in getting the educated to give the subject a fair hearing, *by constantly referring each truth, as we state it, for its evidence and authority to the fact that* 'IT IS WRITTEN.' This would not only add weight to what is said, but would also tend to prevent all intellectual collision between the parties by diverting their attention from the speaker to the very words of that God Whose message he is delivering.

The writer of the above then gives his own experience—that he has made a better impression and been better understood when he has followed this rule, and thinks it calculated to make the speaker both more earnest and more courageous.

There are two ways in which it is sought to defeat the testimony of the Bible. They must be promptly and firmly dealt with, and happily this is not a difficult matter.

(i.) The first of these is the *denial of the genuineness of the Bible.* The question requires early and decisive treatment. A colporteur of large experience, connected with the British and Foreign Bible Society in Persia, expressed his sense of the importance, in dealing with Muḥammadans, of settling at the outset this fundamental question whether our present Scriptures are the uncorrupted Word of God or not. 'All controversy,' wrote Geo. Smith,* 'from P. H. Xavier's time [the nephew of the famous Francis Xavier] to Martyn's, Wilson's, and Pfander's, shows that the key of the position is not the doctrine of the Trinity, as the Shī'ah Mujtahids of Shīrāz and Lucknow and the Sunnīs everywhere make it, but the genuineness and integrity of the Scriptures, by which the truth of the whole Christian faith will follow, the Trinity included.' In a similar strain wrote Pfander in his account of the Agra controversy, 1854.

> Formerly, the Muhammadans thought they could prove Muḥammad's mission from our Scriptures, and that our belief in the divinity of Christ and the Trinity was an absurdity, and was not borne out even by the New Testament. Further inquiry has convinced them that they were mistaken in these views, and they find now, that, unless they can invalidate the integrity of the Gospel, they must give up Muḥammad and their Qur'ān.†

There is no doubt of the truth of the above opinions. Until the Muḥammadan is convinced of the genuineness of our Scriptures, what weight, as evidence, can appeals to them have upon his mind? And, besides this, the missionary evacuates his strong tower if he permits doubt to be cast upon the Scriptures, and puts himself in a false position if he allows the burden of proving their genuineness to be thrown upon him. This is an error of the first

* *Life of Henry Martyn*, p. 416.
† *C.M. Intelligencer*, Nov., 1854, p. 258.

magnitude. There are, of course, proper times and occasions for the production of the overwhelming evidence we possess for the authenticity and uncorruptness of our Scriptures. If the contrary assertion is made, the *onus probandi* unquestionably rests upon the shoulders of those who make it (*as-subūtu 'alā'l-muddaʿī*). We are, perhaps, sometimes too complaisant in this matter, and forego our proper rights, when we allow the Scriptures to be repudiated, and accept the burden of proof which belongs to our adversaries. The weakening of the Christian's hands thus caused is shown by the words of Leupolt: * 'They attack us on the Trinity; and as they do not allow the authority of the Scriptures, we stand in a disadvantageous position, which they know well.' Even Pfander, the renowned Christian champion against Islām, admits the error he made at the close of the famous Agra controversy, in April, 1854, in *not* taking up the strong ground, 'that he [the Maulawī] must either establish his assertion [that the contents of the Gospel have been altered, and therefore we no longer have the original Gospel] or allow us to go on with the discussion, and consent to any proof we should adduce from the Gospel in establishing our arguments.' † To give up our infallible weapon of the genuine Word of God would be as reasonable as for a fully armed man, opposed to an ignorant savage with his bow and arrows, to consent to give up his trusty sword and revolver. We shall refuse to admit the allegations against our Bible, and may and must insist upon our right to refer to it for the support of the truths we hold, until the Muḥammadan has disproved its claim to that position of authority accorded to it by the unanimous consent of Christendom.

(ii.) The second way in which Muḥammadans attempt to defeat the testimony of the Scriptures is by *explaining them according to their own prejudices*. Allusion is not here made to philosophical gentlemen (*ḥukamā'*), whose free handling of the inspired Word (*e.g.* arguing, contrary to Genesis, that man has existed from all eternity on the face of the globe, because the existence of the thing caused must be co-extensive with the existence of the cause, and God's attribute of creative power is eternal) is apt to fill one with a feeling of dismay and despair. There is an appropriate way of dealing with such opponents, but this is not the place to enter into it. We have now to do with two classes of orthodox Muḥammadans: firstly, those who acknowledge the truth of the previous Scriptures, and are anxious to press them into their service, and hence interpret them in accordance with their own wishes and prejudices; and secondly, those who object to the conclusions to which the Scriptures interpreted by Christians point, and would explain them away by misguided exegesis. This free handling of the Scriptures must be checked at the outset and their proper treatment insisted upon. The attempt to drive our opponent from each false position in succession is difficult and unsatisfactory,

* *Recollections of an Indian Missionary*, p. 87.

† *C.M. Intelligencer*, Nov., 1854, p. 257.

and involves the waste of much precious time. The matter must be treated as a question of principle. The interpretation of the Christian Scriptures must be regulated in a manner similar to that of the Qur'ān. The exposition of the latter is an exact science, and recourse is always had to the opinions of the great commentators. There is no such thing as the private interpretation of the text. A tradition says, 'He who interprets the Qur'ān by his own opinion is verily a Kāfir' (infidel) (*Man fassara'l-Qur'āna bi ra'yi-hi fa-qad kafara*). And on the authority of Abū Hurairah 'the Prophet' is reported to have said, 'to quarrel and dispute about the Qur'ān is to disbelieve.'* If this is the judgment passed on the Muḥammadan who dares to rely upon his own judgment in interpreting his Qur'ān, how great is the offence, and heinous the recklessness of the man who thus deals with the sacred scriptures of another religion! Our attitude may thus be expressed: 'If you wish to know the Truth contained in our Holy Books, or meet with any difficulties in reading them, I will explain them to you to the best of my ability in accordance with the opinions of our most famous commentators. But it is of no use, either for you or me, for you to come here to ventilate your own unsupported opinions.' I adopted a similar line not long ago with a friend who had often been to see me, with good, almost pathetic, results. We are in a sound position when we decline to discuss biassed interpretations of our Scriptures unless supported by evidence produced from recognized Christian commentators. The uselessness of making interpretations opposed to the whole body of the Christian exposition of the Scriptures may be enforced by some such illustration as this: 'Though you have never perhaps seen Bombay or Mecca, you believe such places exist, and on very good authority, too; and the fact cannot be denied. And similarly, there are many other things which it is equally impossible to deny, and the man who does so only deserves to be regarded as a fool or a madman.'

* *Mishkātu'l-Maṣābiḥ*, Bk. II., ch. II., pt. I., p. 61 (Eng. tr.).

CHAPTER VI.*

RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN CONDUCTING CONTROVERSY.

TWO preliminary remarks may be made: (*a*) It is taken for granted that any one contemplating controversy with Muḥammadans will endeavour as far as possible to acquaint himself beforehand with the nature of the arguments that will be used on the other side. If the information required cannot be obtained from books, a little carefully collated experience derived from discussions with individuals of different classes, learned, unlearned and moderately well educated, will soon supply it, as each class usually has its own methods and arguments. (*b*) The intending disputant will also prepare himself beforehand with appropriate arguments and answers, which, if not carefully thought out previously, may contain some logical error, the effect of which will be very damaging. We may now proceed to lay down a few rules concerning deportment and tactical skill, on which much of the effectiveness of controversy depends. (See also Appendix II., Amenities of Controversy.)

1. **Do not be the first to bring forward your arguments.** Let your opponent first say what he wishes to say and adduce his arguments. After that enter the lists and state your own views. They will have a much better chance of obtaining a favourable hearing if your opponent has first had the opportunity of unburdening his mind by giving expression to his opinions. Whereas, if you are the first to argue, your opponent's mind meanwhile will be full of his own side of the question and be busy going over his arguments and counter-arguments, and not sufficiently at leisure and disengaged to give due hearing and consideration to your statements; and so your arguments, though they may be of the weightiest kind, will go for nothing. This is a most important rule, and the need of it is frequently illustrated in discussions. In the above sense, then, have 'the last word' in the controversy, *i.e.* let your opponent have his full say first, and hold your strength in reserve.

2. **Do not at once deny what you do not agree with** in your opponent's position or contentions. Set out, first, all your points of agreement. This will please him, and render your

* I am indebted to a native convert for the substance of this chapter.

subsequent treatment of points of difference less calculated to offend and wound. [Cp. St. Paul's speeches at Athens, Acts xvii. 22 *sqq.*, and on the castle stairs at Jerusalem, xxii. 1 *sqq.**]

3. **Exercise great care to say nothing that will vex or anger your adversary.** Practise the greatest mildness and gentleness. If your adversary is once put out of temper, further discussion will be entirely useless. This is especially needful for the Christian to bear in mind, because many of the things he wishes to say are such as may be at first unpalatable to the Muḥammadan.†

4. Similarly, **avoid vexing the Muḥammadan by any word or act which is calculated to have the same effect, even though it have no connexion with the subjects of controversy**, *e.g.* any omission of the usual civilities, having a dog running about the room, especially if the animal be wet,‡ etc.

5. **Avoid controversy with a man at the first meeting.** This course possesses several advantages. After a few meetings, you will see what sort of person he is. Moreover, if some degree of friendship springs up between you, your subsequent discussions will have a far better chance of a successful issue. Further, any disputation at a first interview will probably be of an incomplete and inconclusive character. The man will most likely not venture to say all that is in his mind on such an occasion. He will be shy, or reluctant to mention things which he would freely utter after a fuller acquaintance has been established. Now, it is very important that he should state his case fully and without reserve; otherwise he will feel that his side of the question has not been adequately represented, and that the arguments that may be urged on his side have not been answered. Consequently he will remain holding fast his previous opinions. For example, you might be injudiciously led to pass some unfavourable criticism upon Muḥammadan customs or conduct, to which your friend feels he could make retort by pointing to certain things among Christians. But he would feel ashamed to do this. And so your conversation would lack completeness and conclusiveness, because all has not been heard that may be said on both sides, and the subject has not been thoroughly threshed out.

* Cp., too, the opinion of the Rev. A. V. Liley, Tunis, N. Africa, missionary of the N. Africa Mission: 'Experience has proved that, in dealing with a Muslim to lead him to Christ, it is best to begin upon ground in which you and he are likely to agree rather than to differ' (*Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 731).

† Contrast the following. In the English translation of the *Sulasut Tul Kutuub*, written for educated Indian Muhammadans, such sentences as the following occur: 'This passage [of the Qur'ān] has been composed for the very purpose of deceiving,' p. 5; 'We have before proved both himself and his book [Muḥammad and the Qur'ān] to be false witnesses,' p. 30; and these are not the most severe remarks to be found in the book.

‡ 'Ibn 'Umr says that dogs used to come into the Masjid at Mecca in the time of the Prophet, but the Companions never purified the mosque when the dog was dry' (Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, s.v. 'Dogs').

6. **Difficult or unusual words or expressions should not be employed,** but the greatest clearness studied.

7. **As concerns the brevity or prolixity of your arguments** regard must be paid to the individual with whom you have to deal. One man best understands what is brief and pointed. With another man this style of argument would carry little weight, for that very reason. In the latter case, a fuller statement would better serve to carry home conviction. Study and observe the man, then, and adapt yourself in this respect to his taste and capacity.

8. Generally speaking, it is important to bear in mind that **different individuals require different treatment.** Thus the actual weight and force in practice of the arguments from reason and tradition respectively, though their real force may be that which has already been explained, will vary greatly with different individuals, because of their diversities in mental powers, characteristics, and training. With one man the former has more weight, with another the latter. It is well, therefore, in controversy, to *test one's opponent,* and if one or two arguments of one particular class have been tried with little or no effect, recourse should then be had to those of another. Attention must be paid to the taste and disposition of the individual, and suitable arguments chosen. An argument from history, for example, will be of little avail for an uneducated man, or one from an English book for one who does not know the language.

In conclusion, it should be remarked that *experience is necessary for efficiency.* A man may theoretically know all the rules of controversy and yet not be able to observe them in practice, or carry on a discussion with success. The art of controversy is like that of healing. Head knowledge by itself is not enough in either case without practical skill. Twenty years of study alone will make neither a capable physician nor a controversialist without actual experience of the application of the rules of his art to individual cases.

CHAPTER VII.

MISCELLANEOUS HINTS AND CAUTIONS.

(i.) **If argument does not seem to immediately prevail, we must not be discouraged.**—We must not suppose, even though we have taken pains to acquire clear views of the Truth and the power of forcible exposition according to Oriental ideas (as we may fondly hope, and all the more so for the time and thought expended on it), that therefore our opponents will at once accept all we have to say. The grace of God alone can effect the great change of heart.—We are justified in expecting the most far-reaching results from the simple reading and explanation of His Word in the course of discussion. Many of the new thoughts, facts, and truths found therein, *e.g.* the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, often arouse the keenest interest, sometimes create astonishment, and, if judiciously explained, usually meet with a ready assent, even if they do not, as we read sometimes happens, produce a more marked effect, and seem to carry immediate conviction. Such results, we may observe in passing, are more likely to be met with in country districts, among comparatively uneducated men, than in the towns.—But if argument seems to have been all in vain, and our labour thrown away, there is no need to be downcast, unless we have consciously failed to set forth the truth faithfully and lovingly to the best of our power. A moment's reflection will convince us how unlikely it is, humanly speaking, that a man will at once give up the ideas and convictions of a lifetime, unless, indeed, his heart has been touched. His self-respect leads him to try and show good reason for what he has been taught and learnt to believe. Any proposed alteration of view may entail upon him the burden of a difficult and arduous inquiry, which, if it turn out adverse to his present opinions, may bring upon him endless difficulties and vexations. He shrewdly perceives how great a change would be wrought by the acceptance of the new teaching in his present life, habits, and surroundings; and how absolute is the devotion which Christ demands from His servants. Self-interest and the fear of man, indolence perhaps, or a genial tolerance, love of peace and quietness—nay, of life itself—above all, the absence of any deep sense of sin and need of a

Saviour, may all combine to powerfully persuade him not to break with the past, and part with the stock of religious beliefs he holds in common with family and friends. We might, rather, suppose that an honest and sincere man would fight—and fight hard—to uphold his present convictions, and not yield without a struggle. And the more dangerous he perceived the attack to be, the more strenuously would he resist, and skilfully fence and argue to escape the unwelcome conclusion. But it must also be remembered that 'there is an exquisite satisfaction to the soul of man in the possession of truth, which compensates a thousandfold for the doubts, fears, and difficulties which must be overcome to reach that goal.' *

Bishop Lefroy, of Lahore, holds the opinion that those most likely to be helped and influenced by public controversy are the audience. This comforting reflection may well be borne in mind when no impression seems to have been made upon the principals in the discussion. There must be many who have not obtained peace of heart from Islām, or whose conscience revolts against many things in that religion, and who are Muslims only in name. Some of the Sayids in a certain town in Persia are reported to have expressed themselves to this effect, that they knew the foundations of Islām were shaky, but they were obliged to keep up their religious profession and prestige as their livelihood depended on it.—A curious case is the following: there was a certain Muḥammadan, prominent as an opponent of Christianity, and 'the leading spirit in the formation of a Muḥammadan club.' He afterwards came to the knowledge of the truth and was baptized. It is related of him that 'the truth flashed upon him whilst he was asking derisive questions about Christ's religion.' †

The conclusion of the whole matter seems to be that in these Oriental countries, where the fear of man and mutual distrust so largely prevail, it is difficult to gauge the result of our words; and impressions may be produced when no outward sign is given. We have, therefore, every reason to work cheerfully on in faith and patience and with undiminished zeal. Christ alone can effectually reach the heart. Truth will ultimately triumph.

(ii.) **Desultory discussion is to be avoided.**—There should always be a definite aim in view, steadily pursued. To this end two practical hints may be given—

(*a*) *Make sure what your opponent's point is*, or the difficulty about which he may wish to consult you, before attempting to answer him. 'He that giveth answer before he heareth, it is folly and shame unto him' (Prov. xviii. 13). Cp. Appendix II., Amenities of Controversy, 8.

(*b*) *Exercise selection as to the suitable point or points in an adversary's case to take up and discuss.*—A Muḥammadan will often

* 'Abd 'Īsā, *Food for Reflection: or, Mohammedanism and Christianity*, p. 5.

† Annual Letter for 1903 of Rev. H. J. Smith, Aurungabad and Bombay.

raise a bewildering number of issues, and pass from one to another without a satisfactory consideration of any one of them. It may be that he rather shrinks from closer handling of definite propositions; while, on the other hand, the missionary is only too likely to experience a depressing feeling, as of one wandering in a hopeless maze of error, half-truths, and misconceptions, as he tries to follow the other side. Up to a certain point all this is allowable, and even instructive, as showing our friend's point of view and stage of progress, and suggesting subjects for discussion in the future, as opportunity serves; but if allowed to go on, the conversation rapidly degenerates into desultory and unprofitable talk. To avoid this, it soon becomes imperatively necessary to make choice of what to let go for the time being and what to discuss, and adhere to that.

(iii.) **Do not allow yourself to be thrown on the defensive.** —It is necessary to be on one's guard against undertaking to prove articles of Christian belief which the Muḥammadan already acknowledges, and which, if challenged, he is bound, as such, to accept, as *e.g.* the prophetic office of Jesus, and the truth of Christianity. We stand here on common ground, and no proof is necessary. If asked for it by the Muḥammadan, it is certain he has some ulterior purpose to serve by this manœuvre.* He probably fights shy of coming to close quarters, and desires to shift the issue into a region where he feels more sure of his ground, and will have opportunities of showing off his learning and argumentative skill, and above all, where, by assuming the offensive, and criticizing and with a show of success meeting and confuting the arguments of the other side, he will appear to have the best of the encounter. The idea, of course, is not intended to be conveyed, that under no circumstances should the Christian consent to bring forward his arguments to show the superiority of his creed over that of Islām. On the contrary, he will often do so—not, however, because he has been outmanœuvred, but deliberately and advisedly.

'An Armenian Christian Evangelist' thus puts it—

> Do not let the Muslim assume that he is to require proof of you for the truth of Christianity, or that you act solely on the defensive. It is his to defend Islām as a new faith, and never forget to press on him the need of substantial evidence of its claims. How do they know their prophet was sent from God? What evidence did he bring? What good does their religion do them? †

These are some of the points we may urge. Instead o

* The Rev. S. G. Wilson relates that on one occasion, when paying a cal upon a leading ecclesiastic, the latter proposed the evidence for the existenc of God as the subject for their discussion—probably, it may be supposed, wit the design of avoiding any embarrassment to either side by the introductio of disputed questions. Courtesy and policy alike would indicate the course t follow under the circumstances, and the opportunity for witness would com in due time. (*Persian Life and Customs.*)

† *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 727.

consenting to attempt to prove the divine mission of Jesus, we shall assume that the Muslim admits it, otherwise he is no true Muslim; and so, leaving this, we are free to ask for his proofs of Islām. We know that he has no satisfactory ones to offer. But it is necessary to be able to dispose of the stock arguments commonly adduced.

The opposite course to that here recommended was taken by a Christian in a dispute with a Muḥammadan Sheikh, with the result that might have been expected. An account of it was given, evidently written from the Muḥammadan side, in a Persian newspaper. The Christian began by asking for proofs of the prophetic office and divine mission of Muḥammad; but instead of adhering to this, he allowed himself to be put off and thrown on his defence by undertaking, in answer to a question put to him by the Sheikh, to bring forward the Christian proofs for the prophetic office of Jesus. This error ensured his defeat. (1) When he adduced in proof the Christian Scriptures, the Sheikh brought forward arguments, frivolous enough indeed it is true, to show that Christ could not be the Messiah and a true prophet according to the Holy Books as we now possess them. (2) When the Christian alleged the growth and spread of Christianity, the Sheikh refused to allow any weight to these, as they depended, so he averred, on the vigour and spirit of a people, and if Muḥammadans, he said, were not so lax and spiritless they would gain more adherents in one year than Christians in ten. (3) The miracles of Christ were also brought forward; to which it was easy for the Sheikh to reply, that the miracles of Muḥammad were far more numerous and wonderful than those of Christ. (See Pt. III., Ch. VII., B, 4 *fin.*)

The writer has a vivid recollection of the straits to which he was reduced by a rather similar manœuvre, when itinerating years ago in the Isfahān district in company with a Jewish convert. We were lodged in the house of one of the chief men of the large village where we were staying, and two Mullās were invited to meet us one evening. We had a long talk with them, but unfortunately my diary records that 'they completely floored us, and prevented all hopeful discussion by assuming the position of non-believers in Christianity.' They were without any religion at all, they said—this position being, of course, assumed merely for the sake of argument, though this was not expressly stated. We fell into the snare, and not rightly apprehending the bearings of the case began to bring forward proofs from the Old and New Testaments for the truth of Christianity. They professed not to accept these books, and the ground was cut away beneath our feet.

It may be well to give briefly the course which ought to have been adopted on the occasion just mentioned in the opinion of a Persian gentleman of liberal views, with whom the matter was at a later time discussed. Ask the disputant whether he believes in

God or not. If he says no, produce the usual arguments, common to Islām and Christianity, for the existence of the Deity, such as the argument from design, in accordance with which the existence of a house, for instance, necessitates design on the part of the builder. When the existence of God has been admitted or established, the way is open to proceed to the prophetic office (*Nubuwwat*), etc. Thus: God desires to lead men to the knowledge of Himself (*Hidāyat*). To this end means (*Asbāb*) are necessary. God is eternal and glorious. We are created, while He is self-existent (*Wājibu'l-wujūd*, contrasted with *Mumkinu'l-wujūd*). Hence between Him and us a link of connexion (*Rābiṭah*) is needed—touching the Deity on one side, and mankind on the other (*Jambah-i-ulūhiyat* and *Jambah-i-basharī*), to be a medium (*Wāsilah*) between the eternal and that which enters into existence in time (*Ḥādiṣ* and *Qadīm*). Otherwise men will be deprived of this divine guidance and the work of God will be in vain, and His creation of man futile. God has therefore sent the prophets. The question now is, which of the prophets sent by God is the more worthy of credit.

(iv.) **Do not invite or allow the Muḥammadan to indulge in boastful championship of Islām.**—1. Take care not to throw back the Muḥammadan on the laudation of his own religion, the extolling of the Law of Islām, or the praise of his prophet and the Qur'ān, all of which are fundamental parts of his belief as a Muslim. We have not come to the country to listen to these eulogies of a corrupt system. Besides being distasteful to listen to, and causing the missionary to occupy a false position, their tendency will be to confirm the speaker and hearers in their errors. The impression created would be a very undesirable one; and this, whether the man was a recognized leader among his people, or whether he possessed no right from learning or station to stand forth as the champion of Islām.

If the missionary finds himself in danger of such a predicament, no false notion of fair play or excess of courtesy should stand in the way of his immediately giving a new turn to the conversation. This can be done easily and without offence. In answer, for instance, to the exaggerated praise of Muḥammad, we may reply that we say the same, and *much more*, of Jesus Christ, and with much better reason too, because while the Muḥammadan has to resort to the testimony of tradition, we only say what is actually found in the Gospel itself. If Muḥammadans claim 'that all that Christ could do for the Christian, Muḥammad could do for the Muslims,'* it may be answered, as was there done, that Muḥammad *never claimed to be a Saviour*. (See Pt. III., Ch. VI., E, 3, and Ch. VII., 7.) Or, again, we might say in reply to the laudation of Islām—'Every one, of course, glories in his own religion. But this is no proof of its truth; otherwise we should equally have to admit that Zoroastrianism and Hindūism are

* *Punjāb Mission News*, April, 1905.

true. All we require to know about Islām we can find in the books of our scholars who have carefully studied it.' If our friend wants to show us that he is a staunch Muḥammadan, we know *that* already, and that these are his opinions, otherwise he would not be a Musulmān. He may be gently rallied on this point, and assured that we have no doubt about it. If it seems advisable to take the offensive, he may be asked his reasons for holding these views, and their unsatisfactoriness exposed.

2. Sometimes the attempt will be made to take the wind out of our sails by remarks such as, 'We too say that,' or 'We say much more than that,' as *e.g.* in praise of Jesus, 'Whom,' Muḥammadans sometimes say, 'we honour even more than you Christians do.' Here again an awkward situation is apt to arise through the glorification of the rival creed, and it is therefore advisable to be prepared for such contingencies.

The Muḥammadan's boastful assertions may thus be met: (i.) Real honour is shown to a teacher or prophet (such as Jesus) only by hearkening to him and obeying his words.

Objection.—This is not necessary for us, who have the Qur'ān.

Answer.—How can you afford to neglect a book (the Bible) which, you yourselves say, tells you about Muḥammad? You are bound to read it.

(ii.) You do quite right to honour Jesus. Christ attested the truth of Moses; Muḥammad, as you allow, that of Christ. Now tell me, *who attests the truth of Muḥammad?*

(iii.) (Suitable for philosophers and mystics.) Why, then, do you explain away the literal truth of Christ's miracles, by assigning to them a spiritual meaning only, while you accept all the miracles of Muḥammad? Is this consistent with paying equal, or greater honour to Christ?

(iv.) The occasion may also be used to set forth the grounds of the pre-eminent dignity and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. (See Pt. III., Ch. IV., B, 1.)

3. Two or three illustrations may be given of the way in which Muḥammadans claim for Islām what the Christian does for Christianity.

When the illustration of a lock and key was used to explain the relation of the Old and New Testaments, the Muḥammadan addressed at once retorted, that the Masnawī (the Ṣūfi poem of Jalālu'd-dīn Rūmī) said the same with regard to the relation of the Qur'ān to the previous Scriptures. To this it was replied that the reading of the Qur'ān had failed to reveal any relationship of the kind alleged, whereas the advent and work of the Messiah were foretold in the Old Testament, and the fulfilment of those predictions was found in the Gospel.

And again, the command to love one's enemies having been instanced in proof of the high spiritual character of Christ's teaching, the Sayid to whom the remark was made immediately replied, 'We have the same in the Qur'ān'—which is an entirely

erroneous statement. Such assertions must not be left unchallenged. Errors and mistakes must be kindly but firmly corrected. These are opportunities for bearing witness to the truth, and the duty is clear.

(v.) **The use of suggestive questions.**—A few words should be said about the advantages and disadvantages of propounding what we may call *suggestive questions* to Muslims. It is natural to consider this matter here because of the undoubted tendency of such questions, unless carefully framed, to give an opening to the Muḥammadan to extol Islām. On this account they should be used with caution, and in order to throw the Muḥammadan on the defensive and lay upon him the burden of proof—not to precipitate him into a glorification of his creed. Hence, instead of asking such a question as, 'How do you prove Muḥammad's mission?' our line should rather be, 'If you wish me to accept it, you must bring me convincing proofs.' For the same reason we shall avoid inviting the Muḥammadan, as to a possible task, to give explanations of his erroneous views, or substantiate what we believe to be false positions, in the hope of finding occasion in his words of demonstrating the weakness of his position. He is hardly likely to expose his hand in the way expected, and meanwhile poses as the champion of Islām. In private discussion, with a sincere inquirer, the case is quite different.

With due precautions and carefully safeguarded, however, suggestive questions are a useful and important weapon in the Christian armoury. Thus in Birks' *Life of T. V. French* * we read of his having a long discussion with the late 'Abdu'llāh Āthim, who is described by the author as 'the celebrated convert who had challenged all the Maulawīs in North-Western India and Sindh with questions which it caused them no small difficulty to answer'! The following instance shows how a similar effect was produced, though in rather a different way. In the Rev. Fatḥ Masīḥ's controversy with Muḥammadans, † the two parties were to produce from their holy books the teaching of their respective religions in regard to different topics, and among them salvation. On the Muḥammadan side we read that the Maulawī completely failed to produce anything relevant from the Qur'ān.

Properly framed and wisely used, there can be no doubt that questions of this kind are calculated to encourage thought and stimulate inquiry. Doubtless the attempt will be made to answer them, as it would be damaging to leave them unnoticed and unanswered. But as the thoughts of Muḥammadans usually run in well-defined grooves, it ought not to be difficult after a little practice to conjecture the lines of argument that will probably be taken in reply, and be ready with the best ways of dealing with them. As a general rule the questions propounded must be such as to entail upon the Muḥammadan the duty of attempting to

* Vol. i. p. 197. † *C.M.S. Report*, 1899–1900, p. 255.

justify his hostile attitude towards Christianity, and prove his accusations and insinuations against it. These conditions are admirably fulfilled in the list of questions contained in the following extract from *The Missionary* for June, 1852, p. 179 :—

Amongst other means of spreading the knowledge of Christianity among the Musulmāns, Mr. Slater [the Rev. S. Slater, S.P.G. missionary, Calcutta] drew up some questions in Urdu with a view to open a controversy. The questions are as follows—

1. How does it appear that the Christian religion was an imperfect, and therefore not a final, revelation?

2. What was there deficient in the Christian religion, which Islām has supplied?

3. Is there in Islām any doctrine which may strictly be called a revelation, other than those doctrines which had been already revealed in the Christian dispensation? I ask this question with reference to the fact that the Christian religion contains doctrines which are strictly the subjects of revelation, and which had not been already revealed in the Jewish dispensation.

4. Has the Muḥammadan code of morals improved upon the Christian, as the Christian has done upon the Jewish? Please to state all the particulars fully.

5. What circumstances could have led to the belief of all Christians, that Christ is both God and Man?

6. You say that Muḥammad acts as mediator in your system. Can the idea of mediation exist independent of the idea of atonement?

7. During the first few years after the promulgation of a new religion, is a corruption of it the creed of the majority, or of the minority? I ask this question in reference to the undoubted fact of the doctrines of the Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, and the Atonement, being the creed of the majority immediately after the promulgation of Christianity, as also at the present day.

8. If (as you say) the Christian Scriptures have been corrupted, in what books, or in what age (previous to Muḥammad) may we find a correct statement of Christian doctrine? Or has this been lost?

9. Was it pardonable ignorance, or wicked presumption, that elaborated the doctrine of the Trinity out of the New Testament immediately after its promulgation? If you say ignorance, is it likely that the immediate followers of Christ should have mistaken His meaning after they had been *by Him* appointed teachers of the religion? If you say presumption, what was the motive of it?

We read further that an educated Muḥammadan wrote for explanations of the following:—In what respects the Christian code of morals had improved upon the Jewish; and 'in what part of the Bible it is said that mediation depends on the Atonement of Jesus'; and asked also for definitions of revelation and mediation. 'In a visit which Mr. Slater paid the same year to Ooloo-berriah, he called on the Munṣif of the place, and presented him with a copy of the questions. A long discussion followed; but though he made many objections, the only points on which he dwelt at any length were the Christian doctrine of the mediation of Christ and the genuineness of the Gospels.'

(vi.) **Critical examination of a particular incident.**—An

examination of a discussion with a Maulawī which took place a few years ago, of which an account was given in a missionary magazine, may here be made with a view to illustrating several of the points just considered and some others. The missionary, acting as spokesman for the Muḥammadans, puts the case in the following way to the Maulawī, who had been invited to the discussion, 'Were they to rely on Jesus or Muḥammad for salvation; and as they as Musulmāns had passed over Jesus and rested on Muḥammad, contrary to the will and law of God, would he prove the Prophet's right to occupy this position from the Pentateuch, Psalms, or Gospel?' 'The Maulawī replied that for argument's sake he knew not Jesus. First prove Him to be the Saviour from the Prophets, and *then* he would prove Muḥammad to be the true Prophet and Saviour from the Gospel.' This challenge was unfortunately accepted. When the statement of the Christian case, supported by Scriptural quotations, had been concluded, it was summarily dismissed by the contention that there was no authority for the application to Jesus of the prophecies in question; His name was not mentioned in them. Next, the Maulawī, in fulfilment of his part of the compact, adduced St. Matt. iii. 11 ('He that cometh after me,' etc.) and St. John i. 21 ('Art thou that prophet?'), and applied them to Muḥammad; and further attacked the Christians by the application to them of St. Mark xvi. 17, 18 ('And these signs shall follow,' etc.), and the Saviour on the ground of St. John x. 8 ('All that ever came before Me,' etc.).

The Christian challenge does not seem to have been framed in the best possible way for several reasons.

(1) It treats the question too much as an open one—as though the proof asked for were within the limits of possibility; and too obviously invites the other side to champion their prophet.

(2) Sayid M. A., 'a converted Muslim,' gives his opinion of certain controversial works in the following words:—

> There are books which are too strong and sharp for the average Muslim, like *El Hidaya*, *Makalet-fil-Islām*, and *The Sources of Islām*. These books, if generally given out, may turn a timid seeker after the truth back to his old prejudices; although the authors rightly think the argument used unanswerable, yet the books have no *attractive* effect. These latter books, however, have their use for Christian converts and workers among Muslims.*

It is important as a general principle not to frighten the timid Muḥammadan inquirer. An instance of what to avoid may be given from *Sulasut tul Kutuub*, ch. VII., in which the author undertakes to show that the coming forth of the little horn denotes the rise of Islām, and says, 'Doubtless, to believe that the much-vaunted religion of Islām is nothing more than a fearful curse, which the Lord, for the iniquity of the professing Church of Christ, permitted

* *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 731.

to have effect, but which in an appointed season He will destroy, must prove exceedingly hard to the Muḥammadan reader' (p. 143). It should be mentioned that the treatise was originally published in Hindūstani, and is 'inscribed to the Erudite Muḥammadans of Hindūstan.' It is quite unnecessary to accentuate every point of difference (see Ch. VI., 2, 3). Rather, the truth should be gradually unfolded, and its beauties and attractiveness by degrees exposed to view.

In reference to the case now before us, a somewhat similar criticism might with justice perhaps be passed. *The attack here is too overpowering*, and provokes resistance instead of winning acquiescence. It has been already remarked (iii.) that the defensive attitude properly belongs not to the Christian but to the Muḥammadan. So that to try and put the Maulawī, as here, on his defence is so far a correct course to pursue. But it is injudicious to press the attack home in all cases in the strongest possible way. The question is begged, moreover, by the introduction of the words 'contrary to the will and law of God,' and the scope of the argument is injudiciously limited by requiring the proofs to be drawn from the Bible. The attempt, in short, is deliberately made to force the Maulawī's hand and place him in a difficult position. Now, we may be sure that this was done in all good faith and with serious and honest purpose. It may reasonably be conceived that the object in view was to induce the Maulawī fairly to face the question of the respective claims to allegiance of Christ and Muḥammad, in the hope that, when he found himself unable to establish his case, he would be more open to the reception of Christian truth. This, however, appears to be expecting too much, and not allowing due weight to force of habit and prejudice. The mental attitude of the Muḥammadan is not sufficiently realized, and he is credited with possessing a liberal, unbiassed mind, prepared to welcome the truth as soon as it is presented to him with all the consequences involved. But the old Adam within is a strong ally of error against truth; and fairness in argument and an unprejudiced mind open to the reception of truth whenever and wherever found, even at the risk of loss of prestige and means of livelihood, are not naturally to be looked for, where every worldly, self-interested motive pulls the other way, in a Muḥammadan Maulawī pledged to uphold his creed before a company of the faithful. What rare courage, candour and open-mindedness would have been displayed by this village Maulawī, brought from a distance, as we are told, to confront his Christian antagonist, if he had undertaken either to prove the divine mission of Muḥammad, or, failing that, to acknowledge the falsity of Islām! What inducement has he to consent to accept the alternatives proposed, and if he fails to prove his point, to admit the error of his ways? He cannot do the first by fair, straightforward argument; and how can he be expected to do the latter, even if convinced, before his co-religionists? So he resorts to a clever device. It is interesting

to compare this case with that of a village Mullā in Persia, mentioned by the Rev. C. H. Stileman, who, though convinced of the truth of what he had heard, did not openly profess his belief, but sought for an opportunity for further conversation at night.

(3) All the difficulties experienced in the subsequent discussion would have been avoided, if the design underlying the Maulawī's request for proof of the divine mission of Jesus had been detected, and a defensive attitude not been gratuitously adopted by the Christian.

In the Maulawī's reply to the Christian challenge, we may briefly notice the following points: (1) Before accepting for himself the defensive position, the Maulawī induces the Christian to agree to stand on his defence, and prove what both sides admit, namely, the divine mission of Jesus. This clever move brings about a complete reversal for the time being of the relative positions of the two parties; while the Maulawī gains time before coming to close quarters, scores heavily against his opponent by refusing to allow any weight to the Christian arguments, and then stands forth as a defender of the faith. (2) The Maulawī's words ('prove Him to be the Saviour . . . he would prove Muḥammad to be the true Prophet and Saviour') amount to the assertion (see above, iv.), 'What you say of Jesus is just what we say about Muḥammad.' And, further, he cleverly introduces the favourite Muḥammadan idea that the prophets before Muḥammad's time were sent for particular ages and peoples, and that each foretold the coming of the one who was to succeed him. (3) The appeal by both sides to the Holy Scriptures having been allowed by the Maulawī, he might well have been asked whether he acknowledged the genuineness of the Bible now in the hands of the Christians.

With regard to the discussion that ensued, a few remarks may be made. (1) The disingenuousness of the Maulawī is apparent from his attack on our Saviour, whom all Muḥammadans acknowledge to have been one of the very greatest prophets, founded on the words of Jesus in St. John x. 8. This would be justifiable only on the ground that the Scriptures, as we now possess them, are corrupt, and not a faithful record of the words and life of Jesus. But as both sides on the present occasion had agreed to draw their proofs from the Christian Scriptures, it would be only a natural presumption that their genuineness was acknowledged by the Maulawī. In the light of the discussion that followed, however, it would have been well if the question had been raised at the time, and the Maulawī's position towards the Bible defined. (2) Unlicensed, irresponsible handling of the Christian Scriptures should have been absolutely declined, and only such interpretations accepted as had for their support the acknowledged authority of Christian divines. (See Ch. V. *ad fin.*) (3) Some suitable answers to the damaging use made of St. Mark xvi. 17, 18, are given in Part III., Ch. VI., D, 2. a.

(vii.) **Arguments to avoid.**—The use of arguments from the spread of Christianity, the number of Christians now in the world, the wealth and power of Christian nations, and on the opposite side the weakness and decay of nations professing Islām, as showing the truth and falsity of their respective creeds, will not be found satisfactory or convincing. They rather partake of the nature of 'hitting a man when he is down,' and ungraciously throwing his weakness in his teeth. Even if they influenced the mind, such arguments would not touch the heart. It is very doubtful whether they even do the former. For most Muḥammadans have read and travelled little if at all, and are therefore not in a position to verify or disprove the truth of the unpalatable assertions we might make. Besides this, they are ignorant of history, and unable to appreciate an argument from the rise and fall of nations. Both Judaism and Islām, as well as Christianity, can point to periods of vigour and of weakness; so that it is difficult to found any conclusion as to the truth of a religion upon the exaltation or decay of the nation professing it. A Muḥammadan may not unnaturally argue that these depend upon the spirit and energy of the people. (Cp. iii., *supra*; disputation of a Christian with a Muḥammadan Sheikh.)

Similarly, the higher moral tone of Christian nations is a quite inconclusive and useless argument. To appreciate it, an intimate acquaintance with both the Christian world and the Muḥammadan is needed. And unfortunately the finger may often be pointed at that which seems to give the lie to any such assertion. Muḥammadans will generally admit that more truth and kindness are to be found among Christians than among Muslims; but this is only regarded by them as an indication of the decadence of Islām, or of the corruption of the true faith by Muslims, not of its organic falsity.

(viii.) **Do not attempt to explain the inexplicable.**—When asked about the mysteries of our Holy Faith, such as the Trinity * and the Divinity of Christ, we must be careful not to go beyond Scripture, nor attempt to pass beyond the limitations imposed by the reticence of God's Word, and the feebleness of human speech and understanding. The impression must not be conveyed that these sacred mysteries can be fully comprehended by the mind, or that every difficulty can be removed by lucid explanation. They are not puzzling riddles, of which cleverness and sharpness will be able to guess the answer, nor problems, which thought and intellectual effort may solve. They are mysteries, and as such must be accepted by faith, and adopted as the foundations of doctrine and practice. Thus only will their spiritual significance be appreciated, and the mystery that was once so dark will be illuminated with the light of serene and satisfying insight. Belief is the necessary condition of the right apprehension of spiritual

* Cp. Pt. III., Ch. II., on the Trinity and Mystery in Religion.

truth. The key to this knowledge is not understanding, but faith.*

(ix.) **Loyalty to the Truth.**—It is not necessary from an over-conscientious loyalty to the truth, and an honest conviction of our opponents' error, to allow no mistake or falsehood to pass unchallenged and unrefuted. (Cp. Ch. VI., 2.) To the proud assertion, 'We have the noble Qur'ān,' a colporteur once replied that that need not prevent the reading of the Injīl as well. It would be unadvisable to outrage the Muslim's feelings by immediately giving a downright forcible expression of belief that the Qur'ān is not from God. It is not good policy to attack the whole of error at once. The mine only affects a limited area; the efforts of the besiegers are specially directed against a particular sector of the fortress. Maḥmūd, a convinced inquirer, in *Sweet Firstfruits*, sensibly tempers boldness with prudence in the following words: 'In Him then let us trust as our Saviour and giver of eternal life. But having this faith, my friend, we must needs boldly avow it in the coming conference, not dogmatically, but bringing it out gradually by questions and discussion thereon' (p. 34).

(x.) **Avoid being drawn into abstract discussions.**—When Bishop French was at Ābādah, in Persia, in 1883, a party of Bābīs called, and had a long conversation. In reference to their visit the Bishop wrote: 'If they could only get out of the Persian dilettante discussion of truth as a philosophical pastime and weighing of problems not of vital and eternal importance!' † These words suggest a sound principle. The wise disputant will avoid being drawn into abstract, philosophical discussions, *e.g.* as to the origin of evil, unless experience has shown him that he is able to bear his part therein, and with the definite object of utilizing such conversations as a stepping-stone to more practical and profitable matters.

(xi.) **How to deal with questions asked by Muḥammadans.**—Naturally, no general rule can be given. Each must be dealt with as it arises, and according to the circumstances of the case. Those of a speculative nature may be met with the admission that we cannot give a full and complete answer, or with the statement of what we are told in the Word of God. In place of unprofitable discussion every effort should be made to give a practical, personal bearing to the question. Thus, if the origin of evil is proposed for discussion, it will be more profitable to consider, the fact of the existence of evil being granted, How may we best escape it? What is God's remedy? What hope is there of ultimate deliverance from it?

* I am indebted to the Rev. H. G. Grey, late Principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, for the following references. Augustine makes use of such expressions as *Crede ut intelligas* in his *Tractatus* on St. John xiv., and in his *De Doctrinā Christianā*. (Cp. Isa. vii. 9 *fin.*, 'If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.')

† *Life*, II. 69.

Sometimes a counter question may be useful, or the request that your friend would first give his view of the matter.

The following points may be borne in mind:—

(*a*) *For every question there is a reply suitable to, and consonant with Oriental ideas and modes of thought.*—A Persian convert, when the question was once rudely put to him, which of the public baths he had defiled by bathing in it, replied by quoting the story of Muḥammad, who said his prayers on one occasion on the very place which a little Jewish child had defiled; and asked whether Muḥammad's forehead was defiled by the place, or the place hallowed by the touch of his forehead. In reply to his followers, Muḥammad of course gave the latter reply.—It should be our business to find out what the conventional answer to any question is, or what reply a convert would give in such a case. It may not, probably will not, contain the whole truth; but it will almost certainly be framed and designed so as not to give offence at the time, and further conversation or subsequent interviews will afford opportunities for fuller statements of truth.

(*b*) *It is not always necessary or expedient to give a direct answer.*—A colporteur of the B. & F. B. S. relates* that when asked by a Dervish, 'What is your object in circulating these books?' he replied, 'This is the command of our Saviour, namely, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" '—a prudent speech, but not a direct answer to the question put. Again, the question may be asked, Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God? This is not a case in which loyalty to our Lord requires us to give an immediate assent to the question. The ordinary Muḥammadan means something quite different from what we do by the expression 'Son of God.' The idea in his mind would be of this nature: Do you hold those carnal and blasphemous views of the divine Sonship of Jesus which are condemned in the Qur'ān (*e.g. Sūr.* 2 *Baqr*, 116)? Therefore, to reply 'Yes' to this question would produce quite a wrong impression, and bring disgrace on the truth you wish to serve; because you and your questioner associate different ideas with the words used, and that which conveys a certain impression to you means something very different to him.

The writer was once sitting outside a shop in a small town, and reading the Gospel to a small crowd of Persians, when he was suddenly asked the impious question, How many sons has God? Truly enough, but unadvisedly for the occasion, he told the audience that we Christians had the best of evidence for calling Jesus the Son of God, viz. that of prophets, angels, and apostles, not to mention that of evil spirits, and, chief of all, that of Christ Himself. The result was uproar.

(*c*) *Leading questions are not generally put in a humble and teachable spirit*, and with an honest and sincere desire to know the truth, but in order to puzzle the speaker, or start an

* *Annual Report*, 1904, p. 204.

interminable controversy, or to destroy the effect of his words and appeals. Such an antagonist's mouth must therefore be stopped, and then the way will be open for more profitable intercourse. This may sometimes be happily done by means of a shrewd rejoinder, as in the following instances.

A missionary was once asked, in accordance with the Ṣūfī belief that man has always existed on the face of the globe, Who was the father of Adam? He at once replied, Yāsānājām, giving the name of his reputed father according to Zardushtian mythology, —and the questioner had not another word to say.

The Rev. T. J. Lee Mayer, of Banu, was once hard pressed by a ragged old Mullā shouting and tugging at his elbow in the midst of a turbulent crowd 'amid loud outcries and howlings' to answer the question, Whose son was the Devil? 'At last,' wrote Mr. Mayer, 'I turned round, gave him a friendly slap in the back, and roared out, "*Your* son, old man! Let me go on"'—'which retort,' he tells us, 'secured him ten minutes' quiet attention.'* Perhaps this question might be briefly met, and turned off by a reference to the Jewish notion that angels were created from fire, and the Muḥammadan idea according to the Qur'ān that the Devil was similarly created, and was originally one of the angels nearest to God.†

In conclusion, it may be remarked that Muḥammadans and their questions need not always be taken too seriously. This remark applies especially to young men, and people, such as Afghans, who can see and appreciate a joke. With such as these, a good-humoured retort or friendly home-thrust is most useful. But the advantage must be followed up. It is not enough to have succeeded in raising a smile and winning the reputation of being a good-natured fellow.

(xii.) **Aim at the recognized leaders.**—Bishop French, while in Muscat, wrote, 'I want to get hold of the learned men, if I can, because of their influence on others, but I do not forget the words, "Thou hast revealed them to babes," and "not many wise," etc.'‡

It is a good general rule, applicable to residence in a particular place as well as to itinerating, to go first to the big men and the leaders. Both courtesy and policy recommend this course. It is due to their position in the eyes of their fellow-countrymen, and the recognition of the fact will usually meet with a ready and friendly response. And, on the other hand, failure to show this mark of respect will have a prejudicial effect on the influence and prestige, and therefore on the power of doing good, of the missionary himself. Try then to win their favour and goodwill, if nothing

* *C.M.S. Hist.*, III. 156.

† Sale's Prelim. Discourse (Wherry's *Qur'ān*), p. 120; and Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, s.v. 'Devil,' who also says, 'The Devil is believed to be descended from Jann, the progenitor of the evil genii.'

‡ *Life*, II. 381.

more. It will be a great point gained, and the effect of it will be felt down to the lowest social strata. The news that you have been courteously received by, and are on good terms with the great men, will be generally known, and produce a marked impression on the attitude adopted towards you by all others.

As a corollary to the above. Do not condescend to hold discussion before others, or engage in public controversy, except with *worthy, reputable opponents*, whose position and education entitle them to be heard. (Cp. Appendix II., Amenities of Controversy (4).) To publicly argue with all sorts and conditions of men would have a lowering effect on the dignity which it is desirable to guard and maintain when dealing with Orientals.

One other caution may be added. When a missionary begins work in a place where he is a stranger, or in one not previously occupied, he should be careful, particularly at the outset, to weigh his words and say nothing calculated to give offence to Muḥammadan prejudice. Some of his earliest visitors, as likely as not, have no other object in view than to find out the temper and character of the new comer, whose remarks will be noted and repeated, and serve as a basis for forming an opinion as to what sort of person he is.

PART III.

A SYSTEMATIC ATTEMPT TO DEAL WITH THE CHIEF POINTS AT ISSUE BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND ISLĀM IN ACCORDANCE WITH ORIENTAL IDEAS.

INTRODUCTION.

How profitable were it, in regard of the more effectual conducting of Christian missions, to be more conscious than generally we seek to be, of what is our peculiar strength, and what the peculiar weakness, of each of those systems of error, which we seek, in love to the souls which are made prisoners by it, to overthrow;—so that we should not blindly run a tilt against it, with no other preparation save a confidence in the goodness of our cause, but with wisdom and insight assail it there, where there were best hope of assailing with success. For all these systems, while their strength is in that fragment of Truth, which, however maimed and marred, with whatever contradictions, and under whatever disguises, they hold, have also eminently their weak side, that on which they signally deny some great Truth, which the spirit of man craves, which the Scriptures of God affirm—a side, therefore, on which if assailed, they must sooner or later perish, or rather will not always continue at strife with their own blessedness. To know this, and to know also what engines out of the divine armoury ought to be especially advanced against each of these strongholds of confusion, to know not merely that we are strong and they are weak, but where and why strong in regard of each, and where and why they are weak; this is surely a needful, as it is a much-neglected, discipline; this is a duty not indolently to be foregone by a Church like our own, a Church which God's providence and leading has so already marked out to do the work of an evangelist on vast continents, and in far islands of the sea.

To give such a training as this, was no doubt the meaning and purpose of the catechetical schools of Alexandria, so famous through all Christian antiquity; they were instituted to afford the highest culture to the evangelist, to give him the fullest understanding of what he was to oppose, and how he was to do it. And such an insight as this, could we have it clear, into Scripture and its adaptation for overcoming each shape of falsehood, how would it make us workmen that did not need to be ashamed? How would it enable us at once, and without beating the air, to address ourselves to the points really at issue between us on one side, and Jews, Muḥammadans and infidels, on the other? For the Truth which is still the same, which might not give up one jot or tittle of itself, though it had with this the certainty of winning a world, may yet of infinite love continually change its voice, and present itself ever differently, according to the different necessities of those whom it would fain make its own.—Trench's *Hulsean Lectures* for 1845.*

BEFORE attempting to apply the principles that have been considered it may not be out of place to state succinctly the object aimed at in the following pages, and give some account of the character of what, for the sake of brevity, may be called our typical Muḥammadan opponent.

* Quoted in *The Missionary*, Aug., 1858.

The object aimed at may be described as a threefold one: (*a*) to answer Muḥammadan objections to Christianity, and remove errors and misconceptions commonly entertained by Muslims relating thereto; (*b*) to set forth Christian truth in contrast with Muḥammadan error; (*c*) and to carry the war into the enemy's own country by refuting the false claims of Muḥammad and Islām; and further, to do all this in the ways best suited to Muḥammadan minds and Oriental ideas.

The typical opponent may be defined as the Muḥammadan who, staunchly adhering at least outwardly to Islām, is yet willing to discuss religious questions. There is a third feature, which, if not already present in the person we desire to influence, is of the utmost importance to make actually existent as early as possible, viz. the acknowledgment of the authority of the Christian Scriptures. For sooner or later reference must be made to these. And meanwhile, what respect can the Muḥammadan feel for that which he believes to be a false creed resting upon lost or corrupt credentials? If the question, therefore, does not naturally arise, it should be introduced and disposed of at the first convenient opportunity. The definition just given embraces a large variety among those who may be regarded as proper subjects for admission into our arena of controversy. If the line is drawn on one side at the sceptic and on the other at the heated disputant, between these extremes all should be welcomed and faithfully and lovingly dealt with in faith and hope, that God will bring them to a better mind, and open their eyes to the truth.

No amount of ignorance, bigotry or prejudice, of resolute determination not to yield, or even unscrupulous unfairness, should deter the Christian worker from patiently and persistently holding up the banner of the Truth to the end. No cut and dried method can be prescribed as suitable in every instance. Probably no two will be exactly alike. An infinite variety in the personal element will lead to a corresponding diversity of individual cases. Character, temperament and disposition; education and intelligence; knowledge and mental attitude; experience of life and religious attainment; surroundings past and present, and the state of heart and life, may each and all contribute something to differentiate one personal unit from another. Most important of all is a man's attitude to Truth itself. He may be firmly convinced that Islām is the only true religion for the present age, and refuse to allow the possibility of truth being found elsewhere, and utterly repudiate the idea of going in search of it. Again, without any such depth of conviction, he may simply not wish to have his religion questioned or discussed. Or he may be inwardly convinced, while still refusing to give in and fighting against the light. Or, on the other hand, he may be interested in new aspects and phases of religious thought, and therefore glad to learn what Christianity has to teach. And once more—most hopeful sign of all—he is perhaps restless and dissatisfied with the imperfect and

distorted views of truth he has hitherto received, and a genuine seeker after something fuller and soul-satisfying. What has been here attempted is, to set forth in accordance with broad principles and general rules, those methods that inquiry and actual experience have shown to be the best for dealing with the situations that most commonly arise. A considerable number of objections, questions and criticisms with appropriate answers, have been given. Variations from the normal type must be dealt with as they arise. If sound principles and the right spirit to be shown in dealing with Muḥammadans have been grasped, the peculiar circumstances of special cases ought not to present any insuperable difficulty. The missionary will be like an archer equipped with full quiver, and may rely on the God of all grace and wisdom to give him ready tact and skill to choose the right arrow and direct it home.

In the following pages it may perhaps be thought that too dogmatic a tone has sometimes been adopted, and it is only to be expected that the experience of others will not always square with what is here brought forward. Should this prove to be the case, it may be remembered that differences of opinion must be looked for among the numerous workers in so wide and varied a field. An individual writer can obviously only give expression to the results of his own study and the experience gained from intercourse with the people among whom his lot has been cast. His opinion has no weight beyond this, and no more is claimed for it. There still remains a further goal, which has yet to be reached. And the hope may be indulged that the present attempt to deal with a difficult subject may bring about increased interchange of views, and lead to the adoption of a larger scheme, which will aim at nothing less than a thorough and comprehensive study of the whole controversy from all points of view, and a practical and scientific formulation of the best principles and methods to be followed by the soldier of the Cross, who is as much bound to put forth strenuous efforts as to seek to be wholly governed by the loving spirit of his great Captain in this latest Crusade for His glory.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES.

NOWHERE is the Christian position stronger than in the defence of the very citadel of truth, the integrity and authenticity of the Scriptures; and on the other side the weakness of the Muḥammadan case is in no respect more apparent than in the rejection of the Old and New Testaments, as is shown by the various and conflicting expedients to which they are obliged to resort to maintain their position. In repudiating the Scriptures the Muḥammadan has to dispose of two great difficulties. First, Islām is believed by all Muslims to be the same as the religion of Abraham, Jesus and the rest of the prophets, as taught in the former Scriptures. And secondly, the Qur'ān itself bears the highest testimony to the authority and genuineness of the Bible. There are only two ways out of the difficulty for the Muḥammadan, which are, either to show that the former Scriptures are no longer necessary for him to read, or that, as they now exist, they are unworthy of his credence. We shall begin with the first of these, and pass on after that to the successive consideration of the more hostile attacks upon the Scriptures.

(A) The Bible said to be unnecessary for Muḥammadans to read.

1. This is the least offensive attitude assumed by the Muslim who does not wish to accept the Scriptures of the Christian. One or two instances of this may be given.

'While I was offering the Scriptures,' wrote a colporteur working in the valley of the Volga, 'a Kirghese at the Exchange Mart wanted to have the Gospels; but as he was looking at the book a Tartar came up and said, "Don't take that; *we don't need the Gospel*." "How so?" replied the Kirghese; "Muḥammad did not reject it, but ordered us to believe in it among other things, as it is from God." The Tartar replied that, although the Gospel is from God, yet it was *only necessary till Muḥammad came*, and after Muḥammad it was not necessary. But the Kirghese retorted: "If Muḥammad ordered us to believe also in the Gospel,

then how is it not necessary?" The Tartar, instead of answering, swore at the Kirghese and went away.' *

The following colporteur's narrative refers to the same district. He writes—

This week I visited Tartar dwelling-houses. In one house five men were sitting, who, when I offered them the books, only laughed. When I repeated the offer, they said: 'Read them yourself; *we have no need of them.*' I quoted several passages from the Qur'ān, in which Muḥammad commanded to believe also in the Gospel as a book given by God, and then one of the Tartars said: 'Truly this is written in the Qur'ān; but *we follow the Qur'ān and not the Gospel.*' I quoted a passage in which Muḥammad says that only the unbelieving make distinction between messengers, believing one and not believing another; † and I added: 'Consequently you do not accept the words of your own prophet, and you do not wish to follow his teaching.' 'No,' said one of them, 'we believe in Muḥammad and we believe also in the Gospel; but it is only this—*we follow the Qur'ān.*' I said that in the Qur'ān the Gospel is mentioned, but of the Gospel history and doctrine there is no record; and I continued: 'If you believe in the Gospel, you ought to know what you believe in, and on this account you ought to read the Gospel in which all this is written.' ‡

The same men also brought forward the curious objection that *Bi'smi'llāh* was not put on the colporteur's books as an inscription. This expression, which means 'In the name of God,' stands at the head of every Sūrah of the Qur'ān except the ninth, and is commonly prefixed by Muḥammadans to all books and writings.§

2. There is, however, another and a cheering side to this picture. If a certain amount of hostility is sure to be met with in some quarters, particularly among the ignorant and those interested in the maintenance of the existing order of things, the Bible is nevertheless often welcomed and read. In Persia, for instance, where a more liberal attitude than elsewhere is naturally to be expected, the Scriptures have a wide circulation. Copies of them are gladly received even by Muḥammadan clergy and dignitaries. The instances mentioned below may well give ground for encouragement to all endeavours to induce Muḥammadans to read the Scriptures. In attempting to induce them to study our Bible we have an immediate and practical end in view. The removal of ignorant prejudice is a great gain; and still more so is the creation of a favourable regard for the Bible; both of which results we have good reason to hope for, from the reading of our Scriptures by the Muḥammadan. Instances are indeed on record, as of Fatḥ Muḥammad, originally a bigoted Muḥammadan, who however afterwards became a Christian clergyman, well known

* Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1900, p. 108.

† Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 149, 150.

‡ Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1900, p. 108. In both extracts the italics are ours.

§ Sale's *Preliminary Discourse*, p. 100.

as the Rev. Fatḥ Masīḥ,* where the reading of the New Testament has actually resulted at first in the confirmation of faith in Islām. The study of the Bible, especially without opportunities for Christian help and guidance, may of course arouse hostility to a system which is found to be really and deeply opposed to Islām. Hence it is sometimes found that the reception given to Christian evangelists on a second visit to a Muḥammadan centre is not so favourable as their first reception was. This possible eventuality is from the very nature of the case unavoidable; it invariably accompanies every presentation of the Truth to the unenlightened and unevangelized; and is consequently inseparable from the evangelist's office. (Cp. 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.)

The Christian Scriptures are sometimes read for the first time with positive feelings of relief and delight, because they are discovered to be so different from what they are commonly supposed to be. A Gospel of St. Luke, carried away into Sūsland, Morocco, 'was studied with wonder and delight by Sheikhs and Ṭulabā' (theological students).† From Medan, Sumātra, Mr. Williams writes—

> Much of the hatred these Malays show towards the Gospel is due to sheer ignorance. Often when I offered a copy for sale, they would catch sight of the name *Injil* on the cover, and hand it back, saying that Muslims had no use for such books; but when I could get them to listen while I read some of our Lord's parables, they nearly always purchased copies, remarking that they had no idea that the Gospel contained such good things.‡

Speaking of house visitation in Jerusalem, Miss Elverson writes, that some appreciate the beauty of the Christian teaching given, 'and are evidently relieved to find it commend itself to their conscience in a way they had not been led to expect.' §

The following instances will show further the enlightened opinion regarding the Scriptures to which Muḥammadans are capable of arriving and the high appreciation they are often willing to accord to them. A man came into the Bible Society's depôt at Wad Medani on the Blue Nile, asked for a New Testament, and after reading St. Matthew for a while remarked, 'I was accustomed to think that the Injīl had been corrupted, but now it is plain to me that it is true.' And when asked how he knew it was really true, he replied, 'I perceive that the Injīl forbids every evil act, whereby it is plain to me that it is the Truth,' and forthwith he bought the four Gospels. When a colporteur working on the Nile presented his books for inspection to 'a courteous young Muslim officer' and his companion, the latter asked, 'Do you bring us these absurd books again?' But the officer answered him, 'Say not so, these books are the very best

* *Life of Bishop French*, I. 270.
† Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1899, p. 168.
‡ *Ib.*, 1901, p. 246.
§ *C.M.S. Report*, 1895–6, p. 141.

for reading.' * A colporteur meets a Mullā in a tea-shop in Persia, to whom two years before he had sold a Bible. The Mullā takes a Bible from the colporteur, and praises it in the hearing of those present. 'One of them said, "We have the Qur'ān for our guide, what need have we for these books?" The Mullā answered, "Have you not read in the Qur'ān that the Scriptures are a guide for all men; what harm will they do us if we read and understand them and find the way to life everlasting, and perform the works and prosper as these Christians do?"' † On one occasion Benjamin Badal, a most devoted colporteur of the Bible Society in Persia, met a Muḥammadan at Kūmishah, to whom he explained what his books were. After listening attentively he said, 'I know very well that the truth is in those books, for I have read them; there is nothing in our hands like them.' ‡ In the province of Constantine, Algeria, 'at the market of A.G., a rich native, whom I,' says the colporteur who relates the story, 'afterwards learnt was a Kaid, approached a group of Arabs to whom I was offering the Scriptures, and very politely asked to see my books. I handed him a Bible, which he examined very carefully, reading aloud some verses and saying, "This is excellent." Then addressing his co-religionists he said, "You should buy this book. It is the Word of God." One of the bystanders, a ragged, fanatical Muslim, spoke against the books, saying that they were *kouffar* (*i.e.* infidel). But the other rebuked him, saying, "You insult God by speaking so, since it is the Holy Book. It teaches the pardon of offences, and love to our fellow-men. After all, the God of Jesus is the same as the God of Muḥammad."' § May not the above suggest useful lines on which to proceed sometimes, when seeking to commend the Gospel to the followers of Muḥammad?

3. In this section may be considered in some detail some of the arguments calculated to favourably dispose the Muḥammadan to venerate and read the Christian Scriptures.

(i.) Chief among these is **the testimony of Muḥammad and the Qur'ān to the Bible.** The question has been asked whether such an argument is proper for a Christian to use. Thus, "Buy the Gospel, for Muḥammad commands it." This argument may be proper in the mouth of a mere hawker of books; but should a colporteur ever use it?' ‖ Not to mention the universal use by workers among the Muḥammadans of the testimony to the Old and New Testaments contained in the Qur'ān, it may be explained that the Scriptures are not advertised or advocated on Muḥammad's authority in such a way as to imply that they stand

* Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1903, p. 156.

† *Ib.*, 1904, p. 204. It is quite possible that this Mullā may have secretly been an adherent of the Bābī sect, which acknowledges the genuineness of the Christian Scriptures.

‡ *Ib.*, 1902, p. 195.

§ *Ib.*, p. 169. Cp. Sūr. 29 '*Ankabūt*, 45 *fin.*, 'Our God and your God is one.'

‖ *Ib.*, 1904, p. 100.

in need of his *imprimatur*. Should the impression be conveyed by the use of this argument, as has sometimes been the case, that the authority of Muḥammad and the Qur'ān is acknowledged by the Christian, the reply to give is that these arguments are brought forward for *you*, because you are a follower of Muḥammad and the Qur'ān. As a matter of fact, the original Jewish and Christian Scriptures already possess an established position among Muḥammadans. The religion inculcated in them is believed to be identical, with the exception of certain minor differences, with that of the Qur'ān.* The previous Scriptures are acknowledged to be from God, and the Qur'ān bears the clearest testimony to their genuineness and sacred character. It is quite a legitimate course to argue with the Muḥammadan from his own standpoint; but, of course, should there be any disposition to think that Christianity relies for its confirmation upon the authority of Islām, the idea will be immediately disavowed. Our appeal then amounts to this: I invite you to read that with which it is your duty *as a Muḥammadan*, and for your own advantage, to make yourself acquainted. Or, in other words, instead of saying, Read these books because Muḥammad praises them; we should say, These books are highly spoken of in the Qur'ān, and therefore it is your duty to read them. The value of the argument is not affected by the fact that Muḥammad had an entirely erroneous idea as to the relation of his Qur'ān to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures (cp. Sūr. 42 *Shūrā*, 11; 29 *'Ankalūt*, 45).

The following are a few simple practical instances of the use of this argument:—

A colporteur of much experience in Persia describes his usual method of procedure as follows, in order to induce the Persians to buy the Scriptures. When he is asked what his books are, he replies, 'Your Prophet and the Qur'ān have borne testimony to these books, therefore it is profitable for you to know what they contain. They speak of Jesus Whom we, like you, expect to return; and we are commanded by Him to go and tell all men of Him.'

A colporteur thus describes an interview with a Muḥammadan of Senaar: '"I am not concerned with this book," said a man from Senaar, to whom I offered a Bible. "But it is the *Taurāt*," said I. "I know not the *Taurāt*," was his reply; "I know only the Qur'ān." Said I, "But the *Taurāt* also it is thy duty to know."' And finally he bought the Bible, delighted at its cheapness.†

A Persian convert suggests the following use of the same argument: Muḥammad himself in the Qur'ān testifies that Christ is from God, and that the previous Scriptures are the Word of God, therefore to read about Him in the divine books is good.

Objection (1).—'But they were only for that age.'

Answer.—'Are they the Word of God or not?'

* Cp. Sūr. 42 *Shūrā*, 11.

† Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1902, p. 160.

'Yes.'

'Then they are for every age.'

Objection (2).—'But the *Taurāt* was abrogated, and so has the *Injīl* been.'

Answer.—'First of all, we do not admit the premise. But, leaving on one side for the present the question of abrogation (see B), is the *Injīl* God's Word or not?'

'Yes.'

'Now, Jesus says, "Heaven and earth shall pass away; but My words shall not pass away." * This is either true or not true. It cannot be not true. Therefore it must be true, and the words and commandments of Jesus last for ever, and can never be abrogated.'

There is *a large number of passages in the Qur'ān which refer to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures*, and many of them may be usefully brought forward in discussion with Muḥammadans. A few only can be given here, taken mainly from Muir's *The Corān* (Non-Christian Religious Systems, S.P.C.K.). For convenience of reference, these are distinguished by the number of the section placed within brackets after the reference to the Qur'ān. The numbering of the verses has been made uniform with that in Wherry's Edition of Sale's Qur'ān.

God 'had formerly sent down the law, and the gospel a direction unto men,' Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 3 (cv.).

Muḥammad proposed to settle a difference of opinion between himself and the Jews by a reference to the Old Testament, 'They were called unto the book of God, that it might judge between them,' Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 23 (cvii.). Cp. 'Say (unto the Jews), Bring hither the Pentatouch and read it, if ye speak truth,' ver. 93 (cxv.).

The Old Testament is called 'the book of God,' Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 23 (cvii.); and the title of Furqān (the distinction) which is applied to the Qur'ān is also given to the Pentateuch, Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 52 (lxviii.); 21 *Ambīyā'*, 49 (xlviii.).

The Book of Moses is described as 'a light and a direction unto men,' Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 92 (xxxvii.); cp. 28 *Qaṣaṣ*, 43 (xliii.). It is 'a perfect rule unto him who should do right, and a determination concerning all things (needful), and a direction and mercy,' Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 154 (xli.).

The supposed testimony of the former Scriptures to Muḥammad is frequently alluded to by him, *e.g.* 'They to whom we have given the Scripture know (our apostle), even as they know their own children,' Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 147 (lxxxiv.).

To charge any of the Scriptures (including the Qur'ān) with falsehood is a great sin: 'They who charge with falsehood the book (of the Qur'ān), and (the other scriptures and revealed doctrines) which we have sent our (former) apostles (to preach), shall hereafter know (their folly),' Sūr. 40 *Mū'min*, 72 (xxvi.).

* St. Mark xiii. 31; St. Luke xxi. 33.

All the Scriptures given by God are to be believed in: 'Say, I believe in (all) the Scriptures which God hath sent down,' Sūr. 42 *Shūrā*, 14; 'O true believers, believe in God and His apostle, and the book which He hath caused to descend unto His apostle, and the book which He hath formerly sent down. And whosoever believeth not in God, and His angels, and His Scriptures, and His Apostles, and the last day, he surely erreth in a wide mistake,' Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 135 (ci.).

They are the standard of guidance which God has given. Cp. Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 47–51 (cxxiv.), where a threefold judgment is passed on 'whoso judgeth not according to what God hath revealed,' that 'they are infidels' (ver. 48 *fin.*), 'they are unjust' (ver. 49 *fin.*), and 'they are transgressors' (ver. 51 *fin.*).

No distinction ought to be drawn between any of the apostles of God: 'They who believe not in God and His Apostles, and would make a distinction between God and His Apostles, and say, We believe in some (of the prophets) and reject others of (them), and seek to take a (middle) way in this (matter); these are really unbelievers,' Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 149, 150 (cii.).

Along with all this positive testimony on the one hand, we may, on the other, safely challenge the Muḥammadan to bring forward any passage from the Qur'ān in which the praises of the Gospel and the Old Testament have been abrogated. There is none to be found. For anything of the kind we should have to go to the Traditions.

One of the characters in *Sweet Firstfruits* mentions the earnestness and devotion with which he used to read the Qur'ān, so that he was sometimes even moved to tears. It was while he was so engaged one day, that, as he says, he stumbled upon this verse, which filled him with astonishment: 'Lest ye' (the people of Mecca) 'should say, The Scriptures were only sent down unto two peoples before us; and we neglected to peruse them with attention' (Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 156). 'Now, thought I,' he continues, 'if this were a reproach from God against the Meccans for their neglect to read the Bible, how can we, without reproach, be neglectful of the same?' The two following passages then came into his mind, 'If they who have received the Scriptures . . . observe the Law, and the Gospel, and (the other Scriptures) which have been sent down unto them from their Lord, they shall surely eat (of good things) both from above them and from under their feet' (Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 70); and again, 'O ye who have received the Scriptures, ye are not (grounded) on anything, until ye observe the Law and the Gospel and that which hath been sent down unto you from your Lord' (ver. 72). 'Pondering over these texts,' he adds, 'I marvelled that I had never observed them before; and, longing to see the books thus lauded in the Qur'ān, I searched for them like a weary traveller for a fountain in the desert.' * Another

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 31, 32.

of the characters in the work just alluded to beautifully expresses in the following words the inestimable service done by the Qur'ān in pointing to the Scriptures of the Old and New Covenants: 'What the Qur'ān told us was indeed only as the drop of water for the thirsty man, which but increased his longing for the stream whereof to drink and be satisfied; and the grand merit of the Qur'ān was to point the thirsty one to the stream of life that flowed from the Saviour.' *

(ii.) **The possession of the Qur'ān is no bar to the reading of the Bible.**—'At the Cairo station,' a colporteur relates, 'I offered the Scriptures to several Muslims, who were waiting for a train. "This is the book of the Christians," said they, "and does not concern us, for we are Muslims, and have the noble Qur'ān." "But that need not prevent you from reading the Bible too, a Book which is so full of instruction for your soul."' The colporteur then read St. Matt. xxii. 35–40; and one of the hearers, exclaiming when he heard verses 37 and 39 read, 'Would God that all men did walk according to this word,' subsequently purchased St. Matthew's Gospel and a New Testament.†

(iii.) **The Bible deserves to be read on positive grounds, because of the interest attaching to it, and the instruction and comfort it is able to impart.**—The Old Testament should be studied, because Christ cited or referred to it so many times, probably more than four hundred,‡ and instructed His disciples to look to it for the prophetic testimony to His work and mission. And the Gospel is the book which tells us almost all we know of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. Said an Arab in Algeria to a colporteur, 'I bought a New Testament ten years ago, which I read with great pleasure every day; I consider it is the Book of God's Law.' § A Mujtahid (Muḥammadan divine) in Persia buys Scriptures from a colporteur and says, 'I have seen your books in several houses in this place, and looking over them I have come across many comforting passages; I was very glad when I heard that you had come to this town again.' ‖ A Muslim officer in Khartum told the colporteur, 'I have read the Bible in Egypt, and am fond of it, for I find there is no other book like it so full of instruction.' ¶

(iv.) Yet further, **the Bible is the inspired Word of God,** and therefore disregard of the books of God, as an enlightened Persian remarked, is disregard of God Himself. A Mujtahid in Persia, after a long conversation with a colporteur on religious topics, 'expressed his mind and opinion about the Scriptures,

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 48, 49.
† Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1902, p. 152.
‡ Spence, *Voices and Silences*, p. 15.
§ Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1899, p. 164.
‖ *Ib.*, p. 188.
¶ *Ib.*, 1902, p. 159.

saying, "The Bible is the Word of God, and anybody who wishes to buy it may do so." This is a very wonderful testimony,' the colporteur adds, 'from a Muḥammadan chief priest.' * 'One cannot put a price on this Book [the whole Bible],' said a Muḥammadan at Wad Medani, an important centre on the Blue Nile, 'for the Word of God is very precious.' † A Muslim from Cairo bought the Pentateuch, Psalms, and New Testament from a colporteur at the railway station, Alexandria, and when his companion raised objections, he answered, 'These books are inspired of God, and it is our duty to read them with reverence,' ‡ The same attitude towards the Word of God was dramatically expressed by the Sheikh of a village on the Blue Nile, who, when after the customary civilities a colporteur displayed a Bible to him, took and kissed the sacred volume, saying, 'Peace upon thee, O Great Book.' §

(v.) **God is one, and His true religion is one, and for all mankind;** therefore the Bible which reveals the Divine will is to be read. The following anecdote shows how an objection raised against one part of this argument was answered. A colporteur working on the Nile writes: 'Passing through Kerreri, I found most of the people hail from Lower Egypt and can read, so I offered a book to one of them, who said that he was a Muslim, "So be it," I replied, "this Book is for all people." "Nay," said he, "it tells of Jesus, and Jesus was sent to the Jews only." "Why then have we accepted it and believed it, albeit we are not Jews? Is it not because we found it true? Take thou the Book and read it, and then thou shalt see that it is true indeed." So he took from me a Gospel and a Psalter.' ‖

(vi.) In these Scriptures **we find a very clear and definite plan of salvation,** and means of obtaining the forgiveness of sins; so that no one who is sincerely desirous of finding peace will read them in vain.

Objection (1).—It was for that age only.

Answer (*a*)—Very good. But suffer me to explain it. Since it is written in the holy books, it is well worth hearing.

(*b*) The object of the holy books is to guide men into the way of salvation. And we naturally desire the best way of attaining this great end. Now in this respect the Qur'ān must be either worse than the Gospel, or equally good, or better. If worse, it is, of course, not worth paying attention to. If only equally good, why give up the good thing you already possess for one that it not any better? If there are two boxes of matches on the table before me, one of which is mine, why should I change mine for the other if no better than my own? But if you believe the Qur'ān to be better, you should have good reasons to show for it.

* Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1902, p. 198. † *Ib.*, 1901, p. 157.
‡ *Ib.*, 1900, p. 144. § *Ib.*, 1904, p. 162.
‖ *Ib.*, 1903, p. 156.

Objection (2).—We say the same about the Qur'ān.

Answer.—You are a Muḥammadan, and naturally say so. Suppose there are two doctors, recommending different remedies, the one advocating cold ones, and the other hot; the one who succeeds in removing my pain and suffering is the one in whom I shall place confidence. I believe the Gospel, not merely because I have received it from my parents and teachers, but because it assures me of pardon and peace. I do not find in Islām any sure and certain way of obtaining these blessings. Many Muḥammadans, after reading their own books in vain, find peace through the Gospel. But I have never heard of a sincere Christian who resorted to the Qur'ān in order to obtain that assurance of salvation which he could not find in the Gospel. A notable convert from Muḥammadanism, the late Rev. 'Imādu'd-dīn, D.D., bore this testimony to Islām, 'I found nothing in Muḥammadanism from which an unprejudiced man might in his heart derive true hope and real comfort, though I searched for it earnestly. Rites, ceremonies and theories I found in abundance; but not the slightest spiritual benefit does a man get by acting on them. He remains fast held in the grip of darkness and death.' * I admit that Christians in very rare instances have embraced Islām, but this was because in almost every case they had some worldly motive.

Objection (3) *and Answer.*—'When the pilgrims to Mecca were passing through Port Said,' wrote a colporteur, 'I met with some who hailed from Damascus. Seeing books in my hand, they asked, "What are these?" I replied, "They are the holy books which conduct us to salvation." They immediately said that pilgrimage was the true and only road to salvation. Whereupon I was encouraged to tell them of Him Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.'

(vii.) **Any one seeking for the true religion should read the Scriptures, which were given for light and guidance** (cp. the quotations from the Qur'ān in (i.) *supra*).—Similar advice was given by a local Muḥammadan headman in the district of Yezd, Persia.† The Psalmist thus testifies of God's Word, 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path' (Ps. cxix. 105). 'The opening of Thy words giveth light' (ver. 130). And Jesus says, 'I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life' (St. John viii. 12, cp. ix. 5). Read the Scriptures for yourself. You will find spiritual teaching there. Your soul will assuredly be enlightened, and God will certainly bless you, if you humbly and sincerely read His Word in order to become acquainted with His will. Cp. Ps. xxv. 9, 'The meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach His way.'—If you meet with things you do not understand, seek help and counsel from some Christian

* C.M.S. leaflet.

† Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1900, p. 186.

on whom you can rely. The Lord will not suffer those who seek His face and honour His Word to be led astray.*

(viii.) **Those who are established in their own faith should read the Scriptures, because a man ought to hold his belief not merely on the strength of tradition (taqlīd) but from intelligent conviction (taḥqīq).**- All that Muḥammadans usually know about the Bible has been received on hearsay. A man should read the heavenly books and judge for himself. No attempt ought to be made to hinder others from reading these holy books. Those who now hinder and dissuade people from doing so will not be able to help them at the last day. If any one has been prevented by others from reading the books of God, and at that Great Day finds that he has not been walking in the right path, his blood will be upon their head. Both Muḥammad himself and the unbelieving Quraish are referred in the Qur'ān to the previous Scriptures, which not only proves their genuineness but their authoritative force. 'If thou art in doubt concerning (any part of) that which we have sent down unto thee, ask them who have read the book (of the law) before thee' (Sūr. 10 *Yūnus*, 94, where, however, see the commentators). 'Ask those who are acquainted with the Scripture, if ye know not (this)' (Sūr. 21 *Anbiyā'*, 7). If Muḥammad himself, who had the Qur'ān, was referred to the former Scriptures, it is certainly important for you to read them.

4. A number of illustrations have been reserved for this closing section of the chapter, which it is hoped may be of service to brighten a discussion, adorn an argument, or point a moral.

(i.) 'Let us not judge hastily by first appearance. Everything red is not a cinder, nor yet every black a slave. Jewels may be hid in the sand, and in the clod a precious stone. . . . What is false we shall reject, and if there be in it aught of truth, accept the same.'† This is the course a wise man will adopt. He will suspend judgment until he has sifted and weighed the evidence.

(ii.) 'Men stumbled over them ["the precious truths of the Bible"] as unperceived jewels in their path; or as precious simples in a field, that would cure the fatal disease of him who trampled heedlessly on them; or as a box of precious ointment thrown carelessly away.'‡

(iii.) It is foolish not to take medicine when sick, but far worse is the folly of not coming to the Great Physician for healing of the soul. The holy books should be read, to see where a perfect physician and medicine are to be found, and in what religion. Read all religious books, and do not neglect the holy books (*kutub-i-muqaddasah*) of the Christians.

(iv.) If a man would be quite sure that his water is brought in a clean vessel, and not in any way contaminated or poisoned, his best plan would be to draw it himself from the pure spring.

* Cp. *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 43. † *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 29.
‡ *Ib.*, p. 45.

(v.) A traveller's opinion of a country will depend upon the particular object he has in view—antiquities, art, sport, jewels, minerals, etc. He will speak well or ill of the country just in proportion as he finds there that which he went to seek. Traverse the pages of the New Testament. Carefully note what you find there, like a traveller through an unknown country. Mark the wonders, the mysteries, the beauties of divine love on every hand. If you have felt the burden of sin, and are really a seeker after pardon and peace with God, you will assuredly find all you need there, and be ready to exclaim, 'There is no other book in the world to be compared with this!' But if you read the sacred volume only to criticize and object, if you approach it in a proud, self-righteous spirit, it is sadly possible that the peaceful Land of Promise may find no favour in your eyes, and the good news, so comforting to the sinner, may bring you no blessing.

(vi.) 'Five blind men . . . went to ascertain what kind of a creature an elephant was. The first laid hold of the trunk, and said the animal resembled his bent arm; the second laid hold of a leg, and said an elephant resembled a tree; the third got hold of the tail, and said an elephant was something like a rope; the fourth caught hold of an ear, and was sure an elephant was like a fan. "No, no," cried the fifth, who felt the belly of the animal, "you are all in the dark: an elephant is like a woolsack."' This story is applied by Leupolt * to the writers of the Shastras, and the moral he draws is, 'The truth is always the same in all ages; but untruths never agree.' It may well illustrate the folly of those who repudiate and condemn the Christian Scriptures on various grounds without an adequate knowledge of their contents.

(vii.) Leupolt's head catechist, Triloke, was once scarcely able to obtain any hearers when preaching on the occasion of a certain Hindū festival, so he cried out, 'Potatoes! potatoes! Poison! poison! He! he! Potatoes! potatoes!' The people were attracted, and after crying out several times more in the same fashion, he continued, 'Such was the cry when they were first introduced into India. And why? Because people did not know them. Some persons, however, tried the so-called poison, and found it good. But the people called them fools for so doing, and expected their death. But, behold, they lived. Others observed this and followed their example, and could not but acknowledge that they were wise people who examined the potatoes before they passed judgment upon them. And how do matters stand now? Potatoes are cultivated over all India, and people frequently say, "What should we do without potatoes?" Thus it is with Christianity at present. People cry out, "Poison! poison!" And who are those who thus call out? Those who have never examined Christianity. Some, however, have examined and embraced it; but these persons are called fools. Yet, after all, it is evident that those who have embraced Christianity do not thereby become

* *Recollections*, p. 148.

worse characters, but are cheerful and happy; they become good husbands, good wives, good children, good neighbours, good friends. And just as potatoes have spread throughout the country, so will Christianity shortly everywhere take root and fill the land.' *

(B) THE THEORY OF ABROGATION.

1. **Its nature and foundation.**—The Muḥammadan will satisfactorily be absolved from the necessity of reading the former Scriptures if the latter have been abrogated by the Qur'ān. Hence arises the convenient theory to this effect, that, as the Gospel superseded the Law of Moses, so the Gospel itself, in its turn, has had to give place to the Qur'ān, by which it has been abrogated. Some things, according to this view, have been entirely abolished, such as the Jewish sacrifices and ceremonial regulations generally. All that has not been abrogated has been promulgated anew in the Qur'ān and the authoritative Traditions. The abrogated things belong to the non-essentials of religion. No Muḥammadan would think of affirming that any of the essential elements of God's true religion have been or ever can be changed. This is a most important distinction, to be carefully borne in mind and made use of in discussions with Muslims on this point.

Muḥammadans can produce the authority of the Qur'ān for the existence of abrogating and abrogated verses of that book, as, *e.g.* 'Whatever verse we shall abrogate, or cause thee to forget, we will bring a better than it, or one like unto it' (Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 105). But the Qur'ān says nothing of this kind with regard to the previous Scriptures, either in relation to one another or to the Qur'ān itself. On the contrary, they are consistently praised or confirmed. Jesus was taught the Law and the Gospel by God (Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 48). He confirmed the Law and received the Gospel, 'confirming also the light which (was given) before it' (5 *Mā'idah*, 50). Muḥammad and the Muslims accept all the former Scriptures without making any distinction between the Apostles of God (2 *Baqarah*, 136, 285; 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 83). The Qur'ān itself '(is) a confirmation of that which was (revealed) before it, and an explanation of the Scripture' (Sūr. 10 *Yūnus*, 38).

It is only when we turn to the Traditions that anything can be found to support the doctrine of the successive abrogation of the Scriptures.†

* Leupolt's *Recollections*, pp. 75, 76.

† As *e.g.*, Wa ba'dahu kāna 'alā sharī'atihi wa minhājihi wa tābi'an li-kitābihi ilā zamani Mūsā.

Wa kullu nabīyin kāna fī aiyāmi Mūsā wa ba'dahu kāna 'alā minhāji Mūsā wa sharī'atihi wa tābi'an li-kitābihi ilā zamani 'Īsā.

Wa kullu nabīyin kāna fī aiyāmi 'Īsā wa ba'dahu kāna 'alā minhāji 'Īsā wa sharī'atihi wa tābi'an li-kitābihi ilā zamani nabīyinā Muḥammad wa sharī'atu Muḥammad lā tunsakhu ilā yaumi'l-qīyāmah.—'Uyūnu akhbāri'r-Riẓā, ch. 31.

2. **The Law not abrogated by the Gospel.**—It will be convenient to consider the Muḥammadan theory of abrogation as applied to the Scriptures * and the Qur'ān in two parts, viz. the supposed abrogation of the Law by the Gospel and that of the Bible by the Qur'ān. In the present section we have to deal with the first of these. The most suitable arguments to use are the following:—

(1) Christians do not hold this opinion, viz. that the Gospel has abrogated the Law. *It therefore rests with you to prove your point.* And as that which abrogates must be superior to that which is abrogated, you have to show how this is so. (This is a strong position and the right one to take. It is absurd to allow the Muḥammadan to propound an unsupported and untrue theory, contrary to received Christian teaching, and throw the burden of disproving it upon the Christian. At the proper time and place, however, we shall be ready to show by positive arguments that the Muḥammadan theory is a mistaken one.)

Objection.—The Gospel abrogates the Law of Moses, according to the teaching of Christ Himself.

Answer.—If you refer to external matters such as legal purifications, etc., these belong to the non-essentials (*furū'āt*, *lit.* branches) of true religion. But if you are alluding to the moral law, Christ changed none of its commands, but gave them a wider and more binding force.

(2) There is *no support for this theory of abrogation in the Scriptures*, either (*a*) of the Christian or (*b*) of the Muḥammadan. (*a*) 'The word of our God shall stand for ever' (Is. xl. 8=1 Peter i. 25); 'Till heaven and earth pass away,' said Christ, 'one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished' (St. Matt. v. 18; cp. St. Luke xvi. 17); 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away' (St. Matt. xxiv. 35 and parallels); 'Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. iii. 11; cp. Gal. i. 6–9). Neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament gives any intimation of such a doctrine as that of abrogation. (*b*) Nor is any support lent to it by the Qur'ān, which, on the contrary, positively confirms all the previous Scriptures.

(3) In opposition to this theory of abrogation *the true relationship between the Law and the Gospel* may be briefly explained. The New Testament contains an explanation and full manifestation of that which was obscure, figurative, or typical in the Old. The New Testament is the key which unlocks the mysteries of the Jewish Scriptures. The Old Testament might be compared to the moon, which has no light of its own but shines brilliantly

* The author of the *Iẓhāru'l-Ḥaqq* asserts that the statement made by the author of the *Mīzānu'l-Ḥaqq* (p. 4, Eng. tr.) that Muḥammadans affirm the abrogation of the Pentateuch by the Psalms, and that of the Psalms by the Gospel, has no foundation either in the Qur'ān or the Traditions.

with the reflected rays of the sun. The New Testament brings to perfection all that was rudimentally taught in the Old, and enables us, if we will, to arrive at the realities therein foreshadowed. (Cp. St. Matt. v. 17, 'Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil.')

Illustration. A man comes to the door, takes hold of the curtain, and, as he pushes it aside, we first see a portion of his hand, then part of his arm, then his face emerges, next his head and part of his body, until gradually he issues from behind the curtain and we behold the whole of his person. In like manner the plan of salvation was revealed by gradual degrees. Few positive commands are recorded before the time of Moses. The Mosaic Law contains many particular precepts, the institution of the priesthood, regulations concerning festivals, sacrifices, ceremonial purifications, etc., ordinances of divers kinds, and the inculcation of justice, mercy, and uprightness. All this prepared the way for the New Testament teaching as to spiritual worship, the one meritorious sacrifice of Christ, His mediation and intercession, and the necessity of purity of heart and motive in addition to external conformity to law.

A few points may be mentioned with rather more detail, in order to bring out the office of the new covenant in relation to the old. *Circumcision* spiritually signifies the mastery over the flesh. By itself it is nothing without faith and obedience (1 Cor. vii. 19; Gal. v. 6). Now that the Gospel has come, pointing us to the way to attain true holiness, the external ordinance is no longer of any positive value. For the true circumcision of the heart, see Rom. ii. 28, 29; Col. ii. 11.*

Ceremonial purification was designed to teach the need of spiritual purity and cleanness of heart in those who would draw near to God (Heb. x. 22; Tit. iii. 5).† The Jews were taught by external ordinances suited to their understanding what Christ and the Gospel teach plainly. *Acceptable worship* in God's sight does not depend upon a magnificent temple and a gorgeous ritual. The devout worshipper draws near in spirit and in truth (St. John iv. 20–24). Henceforward the faithful believer's heart is the temple of God where He loves to dwell (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17).‡

Sacrifice.—The death of Christ upon the Cross once for all 'a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world'§ has for ever rendered animal sacrifices unnecessary and meaningless (Heb. x. 1–18). Instead of these, God expects from the believer the 'sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving'§ in word and deed (Rom. xii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 5).‡

Illustrations.—The first three given below are best suited to

* Cp. *Mīzānu'l-Ḥaqq*, pp. 6, 7 (Eng. tr.).
† Cp. *ib.*, p. 6.
‡ Cp. *ib.*
§ The Holy Communion Service.

illustrate our rejection of the Muḥammadan theory of abrogation of the Scriptures. These Scriptures contain the progressive instruction and enlightenment imparted by God to His people. The external rites and ordinances of the earlier books are no longer necessary for the pupils in Christ's higher school; but we do not say that they are abrogated in the sense in which one law or statute is abrogated by another. The three last illustrations are better adapted to explain the true relationship of the Old and New Testaments.

(*a*) In learning a new language you begin with the primer and go on to the first reader, etc. You do not return to the A B C when you have finished the reading-book. A pupil who has arrived at the fourth reader has no longer any need to study the primer. But no one says on that account that the latter is abrogated. It has accomplished its proper purpose in preparing the learner to take the next step forward. Would a student of Arabic who has mastered his *Siyūṭī* and *Mughnī* say that the *Amsilah* is abrogated? No; it retains its excellence, though it may be no longer perhaps necessary for him to study. So the Scriptures of the Old Testament prepared the way for the New.

(*b*) The study of reading-books is only a means to an end—the perfect acquisition of the language. They do not become abrogated when the end is attained, but are respected as having been useful and valuable aids. Thus the previous Scriptures prepared the way for the full light of Gospel truth.

(*c*) You use a word or a sentence to convey an idea, *e.g.* 'horse,' 'come.' There is no need to spell the word. That is dropped, and even, as it were, the word itself when the idea has been conveyed.*

(*d*) The two following illustrations were used by French, and are given in his own words. 'Look at this banyan tree we are seated under. There is the old, old stock, very thick and strong, and then the after boughs and trunks, and then others newer than they; yet all are *one tree*. So it is with the Word of God; the old and the new are all one.' †

(*e*) 'Or again, look at that wall. There are the old foundations and layers of stone or mud, or whatever it is built of, one above the other; but you can't do without the lower because you have got the higher—many layers, but one wall. So is the Word of God.' ‡

(*f*) Pfander uses the illustration of an edifice, the Pentateuch being the foundation and the writings of the Prophets and Apostles the superstructure.§

3. **The Bible not abrogated by the Qur'ān.**—The nature of the arguments to be used will be gathered from the following.

(1) *Prove your argument from the Qur'ān.*—I have only to do

* Suggested by a Persian gentleman. † *Life*, I. p. 192.
‡ *Ib.* § *Mīzānu'l-Ḥaqq*, p. 4 (Eng. tr.).

with that, not with the Traditions, for no authentic Tradition can contradict the Qur'ān.*

Objection.—Shī'ahs may object, 'Are not the Imāms to be believed?'

Answer.—(i.) They practised concealment of religious opinions (*taqīyah*).†

(ii.) These Traditions lack confirmatory evidence. They are solitary (*khabar-i-wāḥid, lit.* solitary information), *i.e.* which one person only has recorded and handed down. (This argument applies to both Sunnīs and Shī'ahs; the preceding one to Shī'ahs only, as *taqīyah* is only allowed by them.)

(2) *That which abrogates must be superior to that which is abrogated,* in accordance with the tradition, 'excellence appertains to that which takes precedence' (*al-fazlu-li'l-mutaqaddimi*), and with the spirit of Sūr. 2 *Baqarah,* 105, quoted above. If the Qur'ān abrogates the former Scriptures, it must be in some degree superior to them. *Illustration.*—An artist scribbles a rough outline denoting a man; another adds eyes, another feet, another arms, another the rest of the features, till it becomes a perfect representation.‡ Now, the religion of Jesus was superior to the Mosaic Law. And if you assert that the Qur'ān has abrogated our Scriptures we wish to know in what respect it has done so, and in what way it is superior to them. As a matter of fact, when we turn to the Qur'ān we find therein that Muḥammad does not summon the Arabs to something newer and higher, but recalls them to the religion of Abraham.

(3) *The grounds for the supposed abrogation of the Bible by the Qur'ān are the following,* with appropriate answers.

(*a*) The Qur'ān is superior to the Bible, because it contains nothing but the words of God Himself.

Answer.—Is not the Gospel the word of God? Do not Muḥammadans admit that Gabriel brought the Injīl to Jesus even as he brought the Qur'ān to Muḥammad? The Gospel then is the word of God, and for this we have the testimony of the enemies of the Christians, viz. the Muḥammadans, which is most valuable evidence. Bring forward similar testimony, on the part of an enemy, that the Qur'ān is the word of God.

(*b*) The superiority of the Qur'ān is seen in its law and ordinances, such as prayer, pilgrimage, etc.

Answer.—(i.) These are non-essentials (*fu-rū'āt*). The Qur'ān does not claim to alter the essential elements (*uṣūl*)§ of the true

* 'It is the universally accepted rule that no authentic Tradition can be contrary to the Qur'ān.'—Sell, *Faith of Islām,* p. 88.

† This is not regarded as sinful, even in a prophet; cp. the Shī'ah tradition received from the Imāms, 'Concealment of religious opinions is my religion and the religion of my fathers' (at-taqīyatu dīnī wa dīnu ābā-ī).

‡ This was suggested by a Persian Sayid, and is an illustration which he said he had himself used in discussion.

§ The distinction is a most important one, and one which no Muḥammadan will gainsay. The essential articles of the orthodox Muslim creed are

religion, but to confirm the previous revelation. (Whether it really does so or not is a different question.)

(ii.) The Jews had their Law and many rites and ceremonies, of which all the external elements have been superseded by the spiritual law and teaching of Christ. It is inconceivable that a later revelation, claiming superiority over the earlier, should go back to the externals. *Illustration.*—The father of a well-behaved, grown-up son would never think of beginning to teach him again the first rudiments of manners and morals.

(*c*) The Law of Moses dealt with externals; it was a law of outward ordinances; it was carnal, external, earthly (*jismānī, zāhirī, arzī*). The Gospel is wholly spiritual and heavenly, and has to do with the heart (*rūḥānī, samāwī, bāṭinī*). The Qur'ān, which combines the two elements, is superior to both its predecessors, and is better suited to men who are not wholly spiritual, but to a greater or less degree carnal.

Answer.—(i.) Any changes introduced in the commands of the Gospel were made in particulars (such as prayer, almsgiving, sacrifice, etc.), not in general laws, which are of universal obligation (*i.e.* in the *juz'iyāt*, not the *kulliyāt*). But Muḥammad introduced changes in the latter also, as, for example, murder, theft, and adultery. In proof of this it is only necessary to allude to the command of the Qur'ān, 'Kill the idolaters wheresoever ye shall find them' (Sūr. 9 *Taubah*, 5; cp. 2 *Baqarah*, 191–193); the vast amount of plunder taken in the campaigns of Muḥammad and his successors, and rendered lawful (*ḥalāl*); and the story of Zaid and Zainab. These matters belong to the fundamental commandments of God (*uṣūl-i-aḥkām*), which can never be changed, no, not even by a prophet.

(ii.) The spiritual is superior. The kernel is better than the shell. If a little piece of the shell finds its way into your mouth, it quite spoils your enjoyment of the kernel. The rose water is better than the leaf from which it has been extracted.

embraced in the following confession of faith: 'I believe in God, angels, books, prophets, the Last Day, the predestination by the Most High God of good and evil, and the resurrection after death' (Sell's *Faith of Islām*, p. 165). The Shi'ahs profess belief in the unity of God (*tauḥīd*), His righteousness (*'adl*), the prophetic office (*nubuwwat*), the *imāmat* or succession of twelve inspired successors of 'Alī, and the Resurrection (*mi'ad*). The argument from the unchangeable nature of the essential elements of the true religion is one that will never be refused by the Muḥammadan, and may therefore be freely used without fear of contradiction. It is a fair and proper argument, though a little reflection will show how different is the idea which Christians and Muḥammadans have of the nature of these *essentials*. With one or two exceptions, the Christian could truly repeat the Muslim creed, but in his mouth the scope and purport of almost every article would be modified. In using the argument from the *uṣūl* of religion, we do not of course admit that those of Islām and Christianity are identical, whatever opinion the Muḥammadan holds in theory on this point. We reject much that the Muslim holds essential, and Islām, on the other hand, does not possess many of the vital truths of the Christian faith.

(*d*) The former Scriptures are unsuitable for the needs of the present age.

Answer.—(i.) Suppose for the moment that Islām was well suited to the Arabs of the age of Muḥammad and afterwards: you must show that it is better suited than Christianity for the rest of mankind and for this present age.

(ii.) Test our Scriptures themselves, and see what they have to say.

In the above arguments we have, first of all, challenged the Muḥammadan to prove his contention (1), (2), and have, in the next place, shown that the various points in respect of which the Qur'ān is said to be superior to the Gospel, and to abrogate it in virtue of that superiority, will not bear examination (3). We may now bring forward *some positive arguments* on our side to prove that the Qur'ān does not abrogate the Gospel or the Old Testament, always remembering, however, that by so doing we do not for a moment consent to relieve the Muḥammadan from the burden of proving his case.

(4) *The Qur'ān condemns the theory* not merely by not mentioning abrogation at all in this connection, but by frequent allusions to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, and positive assertions of their confirmation by itself. (*Vid.* A, sect. 3 (i.); and 1, *supra*.)

(5) *We find nothing in the Qur'ān superior to Christianity.*—We must first go to the Christian Scriptures. A Muḥammadan is not a true one who does not accept them. We find there the sublimest teaching and the loftiest morality. Then when we come to the Qur'ān, which for the sake of argument we suppose to abrogate the Scriptures formerly given, we naturally expect to find something vastly superior. But in this we are disappointed, for we perceive (*a*) no superior excellence in the teaching of the Qur'ān, (*b*) nor in its commands, (*c*) nor do we see that Muslims have advanced in the performance of the works of God. As to the first, contrast for example Muḥammad's sensual paradise with Christ's 'in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven' (St. Matt. xxii. 30). As to the second, how far removed are Muḥammad's commands to fight against and slay the infidels from the brotherhood of man and the love even of enemies inculcated by Christ and the Gospel! In respect of the third, there is only need to mention the lying, oppression, backbiting and depriving people of their property, which are rife among Muḥammadans. From all this it is clear that neither the teaching of the Qur'ān, nor the practice of those who follow it, are superior to the Gospel and the lives of those who profess to be guided by it. This last is a tangible argument—an argument that appeals to the senses—(*dalīl-i-ḥissī*), from that which we see around us.

Illustration.—I believe in the doctor who successfully cures my serious ailment, not in the one who comes after him claiming to be superior, but failing to do what the other has already done.

(6) To say that the Qur'ān abrogates the Holy Books given before it *is inconsistent with your appreciation of the character of Muḥammad* as a true prophet and the last of the prophets. All the prophets who came after Moses recalled the people to the religion of Moses and Abraham.

Objection.—This abrogation only refers to the *juzʾīāt.*

Answer.—No. Muḥammad changed some of the fundamental commands of God (*Vid.* (*c*), Answer (i.), *supra*), and by denying them virtually abrogated various vital truths taught in the Bible. No prophet before him ever did this.

(7) *The idea of the successive abrogation of the Scriptures is unworthy of an all-wise God.* If you say that the Qur'ān abrogates the Scriptures given previously, you make God's Word imperfect and futile (*'amal-i-laghw*).

Illustration.—If a Governor issues an order, and then substitutes another one for it, he makes it manifest that his second order is superior to the first one.

(C) THE ALLEGED CORRUPTION OF THE FORMER SCRIPTURES.

1. **Introduction: the Nature of the Charge.**—The attempt made by Muḥammadans to throw discredit upon the Christian Scriptures is, firstly, consistent with a certain feature of Oriental character, and, secondly, proceeds naturally upon lines of thought with which the Muslim is already familiar.

In the first place, it is true to Oriental character. In the East, when an attempt is made to destroy a man's good name, or put the law in force against him, instead of one or two well-proven accusations, a host of charges are usually laid at his door, generally including one form or another of gross sensual excess.* The accusers seem to think themselves right in laying upon the shoulders of the accused the burden of proving his innocence, and that, if they make that burden sufficiently ponderous, he will find it a very difficult matter indeed to clear himself altogether of the charges made against him; or as we say, if mud enough is thrown, some of it is sure to stick. And so the accused finds himself in the unenviable position of having to refute a number of accusations for which in all probability there is a very small show of evidence. The Oriental plaintiff may imagine that he strengthens his cause by these tactics. But colder natures, with a less exuberant fancy, only see in them proof of a weak case coupled with a lamentable want of veracity and sense of responsibility.† Even so is it with

* Cp. Morier's *Travels in Persia*, vol. I. p. 27, 'When the unhappy Sheikh of Bushire was dragged to Shīrāz, and hurried into the presence of the Prince, all his crimes real or fictitious were immediately accumulated in his face. Of every vice in the catalogue of enormity he was pronounced guilty. . . .'

† A good instance of the kind is related in Frederic Shoberl's *World in Miniature; Persia*, vol. II. pp. 108–114. In January, 1807, a Persian belonging to the household of 'Abbās Mīrzā, afterwards Shah of Persia under the name of Muḥammad Shāh, but at that time heir-apparent to the crown

the various mutually inconsistent allegations made by Muḥammadans against the Scriptures (viz. that they are either useless to read, or abrogated, or corrupted, or spurious substitutes); on the ground of which they seek to evade their duty towards the Holy Bible. They endeavour to make up for the want of a good case by the number and variety of their attacks. If the allusion may be permitted, such conduct recalls the amusing anecdote of the man who was accused of having borrowed a jug, and returned it broken. In his defence he said he had three excellent arguments to prove his innocence; first of all, that he did not borrow the jug; secondly, that it was cracked when he received it; and thirdly, that it was whole when he gave it back.

In the second place, it may be observed that Muḥammadan charges against the sacred literature of the Jews and Christians follow the lines of thought and belief with which they are already acquainted. As Gabriel brought down the Qur'ān from heaven to Muḥammad, so he presented Jesus with the book of the Gospel, resembling a shining mirror, which descended into His heart and filled Him with a perfect knowledge of the divine will, and of all God's words and operations.* Here we have the foundation on which is built the curious Muḥammadan idea that Jesus took up the Gospel with Him to heaven. That these divine originals might possibly be corrupted was part of the common stock of Muslim ideas in the first age of Islām. This corruption was actually alleged against the Jewish and Christian Scriptures as having already taken place (see *infra*), and was even feared for the Qur'ān itself,† if indeed there might not be some suspicion that it had already occurred. Or the originals might be diminished or lost altogether. Here again Muslim apprehensions for the safety of their Qur'ān may be compared with the charges of having been lost or taken up into heaven, brought against the Old and New

and governor of the province of Azerbaijan, publicly abused an Armenian merchant in Tabrīz for no other reason than because he was a Christian, and insulted his religion in the most atrocious manner. At last the Armenian, provoked beyond endurance, gave the Persian a sound thrashing and left him lying on the ground. The latter, covered with dust and blood, went straight to the Prince-Governor to lay his complaint before him. The manner in which he did this is the reason why the story is repeated here. 'He took good care to conceal from the prince the real cause of their quarrel, and interlarded his story with many false allegations against the merchant,' introducing into his deposition 'a variety of circumstantial details that had all the appearance of truth, but in reality were nothing but fictions.' Justice happily triumphed. The prince, after a most careful examination of the case, released the Armenian merchant, and ordered his servant to be punished with one hundred strokes of the bastinado and dismissed him.

* From the proofs of the forthcoming Oxford edition of the *Gospel of Barnabas*. Cp. the 'giving' of the Psalms to David (Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'īl*, 57).

† 'Hodzeifa, who had warred in Armenia and Adzerbaijan, and had observed the different readings of the Syrians and of the men of 'Irāq, was alarmed at the manner and extent of the variations, and warned Oṡmān to interpose, and "stop the people, before they should differ regarding their Scripture, as did the Jews and Christians."'—Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, p. xx. See, for the tradition, *Mishkātu'l-Maṣābiḥ*, bk. VIII., ch. III., pt. III.

Testaments (cp. D, 2).* With the idea of abrogation the Muḥammadan is quite familiar, owing to the presence of the abrogated and abrogating verses in the Qur'ān (cp. B). Again, the existence of 'inspired' tradition by the side of the Qur'ān affords him a convenient standard with which to compare the Christian Scriptures (cp. D, 3). And lastly, the dogmas of the eternity of the Qur'ān and its communication in the very words of God Himself, with all the other excellencies ascribed to it, lead up naturally to the idea that those who possess this sublime revelation of God's will know all they need to know about all things human and divine, and have no obligation to read, and nothing to gain from the perusal of, the Scriptures formerly given to other peoples (cp. A).

In this section and the next we have to do with the alleged corruption of the Scriptures, but under two different aspects. Under whatever form the question may be raised, it is a crucial one, and it is of the utmost importance to have the point settled as soon as possible. In the present section we shall consider the supposed falsification of the divine exemplar; and in the following the circulation of what are regarded as essentially corrupt and misleading substitutes for a lost original. Perhaps the Muḥammadan usually has no very clearly differentiated ideas upon the subject. He probably repeats what he happens to have heard, and sometimes emphasizes the corruption supposed to have taken place, sometimes the imaginary loss of the divine original. In our treatment of the subject clearness will be gained by drawing a broad distinction between these two attitudes and discussing them separately. We shall find in each case that the accusation has no foundation in fact, and that the arguments on the Christian side are overwhelming.

2. **The evidence adduced by the Muḥammadan from the contents of the Scriptures: the Muḥammadan dilemma.**—If the Christian Scriptures were regarded by the Muḥammadan only as unnecessary for him to read, or as merely abrogated by his Qur'ān, there would seem to be no particular objection against the reading of them, or any reason why those interested in religious questions should not make themselves acquainted with the books of a famous system acknowledged to have been true at least for certain ages and peoples. What is the reason for the hostility so often displayed against the Scriptures? Why do 'Muḥammadans . . . after a few hours return the books they have bought, because the Mullā forbids them to be read?' † Or why do fanatical Muslims in Kabylia, as a

* '"I fear," said he ['Umar], addressing the Caliph Abū Bakr, "that slaughter may again wax hot amongst the reciters of the Qur'ān, in other fields of battle; and that much may be lost therefrom. Now, therefore, my advice is, that thou shouldest give speedy orders for the collection of the Qur'ān."'—Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, p. xx. See also *Mishkātu'l-Maṣābiḥ*, bk. VIII., ch. III., pt. III.

† Account of the work in Tiflis and Central Asia, Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1902, p. 115.

colporteur relates, 'say that my books are books of the infidels, only good for Jews and Christians'? * And again in the streets of Fez, Morocco, we read in a colporteur's narrative, that 'some hand back the book with a curse.' † The two following extracts will explain the matter. In the report of a colporteur working in Egypt we read, 'At Ghizeh a sheikh disputed with me, arguing that we have changed and corrupted the Bible.' ‡ At Nehavend the Mullās complained to one of the Mujtahids about colporteur Benjamin Badal, 'This man has again brought his erroneous and blasphemous books and is spreading them here.' § In short, the commonest accusation made against the Bible is that its contents have been corrupted both by way of (*a*) addition, and (*b*) omission. (Most of the charges enumerated below will be found dealt with in their appropriate places, while a few particular passages of Scripture commonly brought forward by Muḥammadans to prove their point, have been reserved for consideration in the last section of this chapter. Cp. also Ch. VI., D, 1, 'Christianity condemned, as unfaithful in practice to revealed truth,' where several points of difference between Islām and Christianity are discussed.)

(*a*) Of the former class, *i.e.* of additions to Scripture, one of the chief charges against the Christians is that they have inserted passages which speak of the divinity of Jesus Christ. In Algeria the colporteur was told in two cases with reference to the Scriptures, 'It is a bad book, good only for Jews and Christians. It contains a great lie, since it declares that Jesus is the Son of God.' ‖ 'When Sheikh —— came first to the hospital [at Old Cairo] he was much opposed to hearing the Gospel read or spoken in the ward, and he used to tell the ladies who spoke to him of Christ that if they had happened to be in his village and had dared to speak of the Son of God, the people, and he himself, would have killed them with a sword.' ¶ The same spirit breathes in the address of the Wālī to the Christian perverts brought before his court in *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 68, '"Out upon you!" cried the Wālī. "As for the Gospel, it has been shamefully tampered with —even calling Jesus, son of Mary, both God and man; and pretending that this so-called God, after being crucified and buried, rose again the third day; and asserting that by His disgraceful death He hath cleansed His followers from their sins! Could any grosser fabrication be imagined, or affront against the Deity, or more glaring apostacy than this? No, by my life! God forbid it! What could have led you into this abyss of depravity? I protest that, instead of worshipping the one true God, ye have become idolaters and polytheists."' Other doctrines and facts supposed to have been foisted into the Bible are the Trinity,

* Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1898, p. 161. † *Ib.*, 1904, p. 176.
‡ *Ib.*, 1902, p. 154. § *Ib.*, 1901, p. 192.
‖ *Ib.*, 1898, p. 160. ¶ C.M.S. *Report*, 1898–9, pp. 131–2.

and the Fatherhood of God; the Crucifixion, Death and Resurrection of Christ; the Atonement; and the attributing of sin to the prophets. (*Vide* Ch. X., 1, 'The sinlessness of the Prophets.')

(*b*) The most famous charges of omission brought against the Scriptures are the expunging of Muḥammad's name Aḥmad, and the prophecies relating to him, and of the verse in which death by stoning for adultery is commanded in the Law of Moses. (See Sale and Wherry on Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 23. The latter points out that as stoning was the ordinary Jewish method of execution (Ex. xvii. 4; St. Luke xx. 6; John x. 31; Acts xiv. 5), there was no necessity to specify it particularly in Lev. xx. 10: and that from Deut. xxii. 21–24 it is evident that this method of punishment was intended. 'It is also observable,' remarks Sale, 'that there was a verse once extant in the Qur'ān commanding adulterers to be stoned; and the commentators say the words only are abrogated, the sense of the law still remaining in force.'*)

(*c*) Alleged instances of discrepancy are also brought forward. 'Here are a few,' says a Muḥammadan disputant in *Sweet First-fruits* (pp. 126, 127), 'Matthew mentions two blind men cured; the other Gospels only one. Matthew speaks of bringing an ass and its foal to Jesus; Mark, only the foal. In Acts ix. 7 the men with Paul heard a voice; in chapter xxii. they heard no voice. Paul holds that faith saves without works; James, that works do justify. These are a few specimens. Such confusion and contradiction are clear proof of corruption.' The supposed discrepancies in the genealogies of Christ are also sometimes adduced. In dealing with any of these, suitable explanations may be given, or the larger question may be raised, 'Is the present Gospel genuine?' If so, we must accept what it contains. (The consideration of the limitations of our knowledge arising from the distance of time and the brevity of the records, etc., or of the human imperfection of the writers, is not suitable for Muḥammadans.)

We shall have to discuss in the following section the exact nature of the alleged corruption, *i.e.* whether it is an actual falsification of the text, or only the perversion or concealment of the true meaning, when considering the bearing of the evidence of the Qur'ān upon the question in hand. The latter is the opinion of the old standard commentators, 'who most probably had never seen a copy of the sacred books of the Jews and Christians.'† But the former opinion is held by all orthodox Muḥammadans at the present day. It is found in the Traditions; as for example, when Jesus returned from heaven for a brief space to comfort His mother who was sorrowing over His shameful death, while speaking about the approach of the last day He said to her, 'I shall then burn the Gospel, which has been falsified by

* See also Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s. vv.* 'Adultery,' 'Stoning to death.'
† Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s. v.* 'Corruption of the Scriptures.'

ungodly priests.' * It is supposed to derive support from spurious Christian writings, such as the Gospel of Barnabas. 'From these or some other forgeries of the same stamp it is that the Muḥammadans quote several passages of which there are not the least footsteps in the New Testament.' † If it seems to be a matter of astonishment that God should have allowed, as Muḥammadans believe, one portion of His Word to have become corrupted and not another, or 'if any argue, from the corruption which they insist has happened to the Pentateuch and Gospel, that the Qur'ān may possibly be corrupted also, they answer that God has promised that He will take care of the latter, and preserve it from any addition or diminution [Sūr. 15 *Ḥajr*, 9]; but that He left the two others to the care of men.' ‡ But *the chief reason why the Muḥammadan professes to believe in the corruption of the very words of the Scriptures, is that he really has no choice but to do so.* The Qur'ān, while praising and professing to confirm the former Scriptures, contradicts them in so many important particulars, that both cannot be from the same true God. And since the Muslim as such is bound to hold the divine origin of his Qur'ān, he is thus placed in a most awkward dilemma, and one of the easiest ways out of the difficulty is to allege the literal corruption of the Bible. The heathen Arabs who constituted the greater part of the first Muslim converts were mostly ignorant and uneducated and totally unacquainted with the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. They therefore felt no difficulty in accepting all that was said about them. But later ages were better informed. 'Muḥammadan controversialists, when they become acquainted with the nature of the contents of the sacred books of the Jews and Christians, and of the impossibility of reconciling the contents of the Qur'ān with those of the sacred Scriptures, charge the Christians with the *taḥrīf-i-lafẓī*' (falsification of the text).§ 'Have a care!' exclaims 'Abdu'l-Qādir, at the friendly conference which met to consider the epistle of the Christian to his Muḥammadan friend, 'ye cannot receive the Bible now in the hands of Christians without rejecting the Qur'ān. Beware, before it be too late!' ‖ These words faithfully represent the true state of the case, and the dilemma in which the inquiring Muḥammadan will be placed, and the bitter hostility which may be aroused, when it is realized that the contents of the Bible, however admirable they may seem in some respects, are totally inconsistent with the acceptance of the Qur'ān.

3. **The argument from the Qur'ān.**¶—This is of such

* Weil, *Legends*, p. 231.
† Sale, *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 124.
‡ *Ib.*
§ Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s. v.* 'Corruption of the Scriptures.'
‖ *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 39, 40; see also p. 24.
¶ See Muir, *The Corān*, pp. 229–235; *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 131–133; *The Torch of Guidance*, pp. 43, 44; and Sale on Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 44, to all of which this section is indebted.

importance as to deserve separate treatment. No argument could carry greater weight than one derived from the Qur'ān, if sound and applicable. As a matter of fact, the employment of this argument against the Christians in the present case is beset with grave difficulties. The few passages brought forward to prove the falsification of the Christian Scriptures will not bear this interpretation when impartially and accurately examined, while those that support the directly opposite view are numerous and indisputable. So that the Christian might reasonably take his stand here and refuse to entertain any suggestion or imputation that conflicted with this, the highest testimony in the opinion of every true Muḥammadan. Moreover, it is not really incumbent upon Christians to answer the charge at all,* because it is never made against them, but against the Jews, and further it does not refer to all the Jews but only to those of Medina where the breach between them and Muhammad became final and complete. †

The three classical places where this charge of perversion (*taḥrīf*) is mentioned in the Qur'ān are Sur. 4 *Nisā'*, 44, 'Of the Jews there are some who pervert words from their places'; 5 *Mā'idah*, 14, 'They dislocate the words (of the Pentateuch) from their places'; and ver. 45, 'They pervert the words (of the law) from their (true) places.'

That the perversion alluded to is not a falsification of the text itself will be clear for the following reasons:—

(1) That these passages do not allude to any actual tampering with the text of the Bible is clear, first of all, from the opinions of the old commentators, and even some of the moderns such as the late learned Sayid Aḥmad Khān.‡ 'The Imām Muḥammad Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī (p. 1127, line 7) records that Ibn 'Abbās said that "the word *Taḥrīf* (corruption) signifies to change a thing from its original nature; and that there is no man who could corrupt a single word of what proceeded from God, so that the Jews and Christians could corrupt only by misrepresenting the *meaning* of the words of God."' The Imām Fakhru'd-dīn commenting on Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 77, 'says it refers to a *taḥrīf-i-ma'nawī*, and that it does not mean that the Jews altered the text, but merely that they made alterations in the course of reading.' This was also the view of Ibn Mazar and Ibn Abī Hātim (in the commentary known as the *Tafsīr Durr-i-Manṣūr*), of Shāh Walīyu'llāh (in his commentary, Fauzu'l-Kabīr), and Ibn 'Abbās.§

As to the nature of this perversion of the meaning, there are several ways in which it may have taken place, according to the commentators.

(i.) The Jews concealed certain passages, hid the truth, or denied what they knew. Thus Al Rāzī on Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 45,

* Muir, *The Corān*, p. 199.
† *Ib.*, p. 234.
‡ 'Abd 'Īsā, *Food for Reflection*, p. 44.
§ Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s. v.* 'Corruption of the Scriptures.'

'"They change the words from their places," that is, from where the Lord hath placed them, meaning the imposition of obligations, or release therefrom, or the hallowing of certain things.' * 'This is illustrated by the tradition of the adulterer and adulteress of Khaibar, regarding whom the Jews concealed the passages containing the order for stoning; but there was no imputation of falsification, only of hiding a certain text.' † This concealment of the truth is explicitly alleged against the Jews in other passages of the Qur'ān, such as—

They to whom we have given the Scripture know (our apostle), even as they know their own children; but some of them hide the truth, against their own knowledge. (Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 147.)

O ye who have received the Scriptures, why do you clothe truth with vanity, and knowingly hide the truth? (Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 70.) (Cp. also 2 *Baqarah*, 41, 100.)

(ii.) Or they perverted the reading of the Scriptures with their tongues (Al Rāzī), *i.e.* they purposely read it wrongly, or made the meaning uncertain. This again is expressly alleged against them in the Qur'ān—

And there are certainly some of them who read the Scriptures perversely, that ye may think (what they read) to be really in the Scriptures, yet it is not in the Scripture; and they say, This is from God; but it is not from God: and they speak that which is false concerning God, against their own knowledge. (Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 77.)

(iii.) Or they give wrong interpretations.

(iv.) Or again, they copied and palmed off certain passages, as the Qur'ān asserts—

And woe unto them, who transcribe (corruptly) the book (of the Law) with their hands, and then say, This is from God: that they may sell it for a small price. (Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 78.)

Some passages may have either been rabbinical extracts which they pretended were 'actual extracts from Scripture,' ‡ or at least of divine authority; or altered quotations from the Bible itself §—the MSS., however, not being tampered with.

Objection.—'And if you say, How could this be possible, if copies of the Turāt were scattered over the East and West? I answer. . . . That those learned in the Jewish Scriptures were but few at Medina, and therefore could without difficulty palm off such altered passages.' ‖

(v.) Or once more, they misrepresented the words of Muḥammad himself. 'They used to visit Muḥammad and ask him questions,

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 131, 132.
† *Ib.*, p. 132; see Sale on the passage quoted.
‡ Sale on Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 44.
§ *Ib.*
‖ *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 131.

then go out and misrepresent his words, thus changing or perverting them' (Al Rāzī).*

At any rate, whatever may have been the particular way in which the Jews attempted to deceive Muḥammad with reference to the contents of their Scriptures, the passages above quoted and the remarks of the commentators, so far from supplying evidence of textual corruption, afford, on the contrary, a most valuable testimony to the integrity and purity of the Jewish Scriptures. '"The People of the Book" are represented as knowing that their Scripture contained passages in favour of Muḥammad, and yet never attempted to change them, even though they interfered with their own views; but only sought to cast doubts upon the meaning of such passages by their own interpretations or dissembling of the tongue, or by altogether hiding what they wished them not to see. Is not this the highest testimony of their care of the original text, and of their unwearied safeguard and vigilance in preserving the blessed Word revealed of their Lord at the hand of Prophets and Messengers of old; and so retain their valued right for ever to be called "The People of the Book"?' †

(2) The conclusion at which we arrive from a review of the opinions of the old commentators on the Qur'ān is amply borne out by the Qur'ān itself, as we have just seen in a number of passages, where, for the rather vague charge of *taḥrīf* are substituted accusations of perversion. Besides these, there is another class of passages in the Qur'ān, which allude to the Scriptures in such terms, and speak of them so highly, as to preclude any other conclusion than that Muḥammad believed the Scriptures extant in his day to be genuine and uncorrupt.—Thus an appeal is made to the recipients of the existing former revelations to receive the Qur'ān—

> O (ye) to whom the Scriptures have been given, believe in the (revelation) which we have sent down, confirming that which is with you. (Sūr. 4 *Nisa'*, 45.)

The People of the Book, according to Muḥammad, are to observe the Law and the Gospel (as well indeed as the Qur'ān) as the condition of God's favour, and being grounded in the true religion—

> If they observe the Law, and the Gospel, and (the other Scriptures) which have been sent down unto them from their Lord, they shall surely eat (of good things) both from above them and from under their feet. (Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 70.)
>
> Say, O ye who have received the Scriptures, ye are not grounded on anything, until ye observe the Law and the Gospel and that which hath been sent down unto you from your Lord (ver. 72.)

The Law and the Gospel contain the Truth of God, on the testimony of the Qur'ān itself—

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 131. † *Torch of Guidance*, p. 44.

And whoso judgeth not according to what God hath revealed, they are infidels . . . unjust . . . transgressors. (Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 48–51.)

Muḥammad himself professes his belief in all the previous Scriptures—

Say, I believe in (all) the scriptures which God hath sent down. (Sūr. 42 *Shūrā*, 14.)

Further, the 'Prophet' is referred to those, who had received the previous Scriptures, for confirmation of the Qur'ān, or when he began to doubt his own inspiration. 'Would God have desired His Prophet to remove his doubts by referring to a people whose Scripture had been tampered with? Never!' *

If thou art in doubt concerning (any part of) that which we have sent down unto thee, ask them who have read the book (of the law) before thee (Sūr. 10 *Yūnus*, 94.)

We sent none (as our apostles) before them, other than men, unto whom we revealed (our will). Ask those who are acquainted with the Scripture, if ye know not (this). (Sūr. 21, *Anbīyā'*, 7.)

The Qur'ān confirms the previous Scriptures—

And when there came unto them an apostle from God, confirming that (Scripture) which was with them . . . (Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 100.)

That which we have revealed unto thee of the book (of the Qur'ān) is the truth, confirming the (Scriptures) which (were revealed) before it. (Sūr. 35 *Malā'ikah*, 28.)

It was sent down to save the Arabs from the reproach of neglecting to read the previous Scriptures. (In the following extract we notice (*a*) that had the former Scriptures been in Arabic, there would presumably have been no need for the Qur'ān; and (*b*) that there is no hint of any corruption of the Scripture):—

And this book which we have (now) sent down is blessed; therefore follow it, and fear (God) that ye may obtain mercy: lest ye should say, The Scriptures were only sent down unto two people before us; and we neglected to peruse them with attention. (Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 155, 156.)

The Law and the Gospel are believed to point clearly to Muḥammad—

. . . who shall follow the apostle, the illiterate prophet, whom they shall find written down with them in the Law and the Gospel. (Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 158.)

The promise of Paradise for true believers who fight for their religion rests, according to Muḥammad, upon the Law, the Gospel, and the Qur'ān—

Verily God hath purchased of the true believers their souls and their substance, promising them the enjoyment of paradise on condition that

* *Torch of Guidance*, p. 45.

they fight for the cause of God: whether they slay or be slain, the promise for the same is assuredly due by the Law, and the Gospel, and the Qur'ān. (Sūr. 9 *Taubah*, 112.)

The above passages are devoid of all force, unless they refer to Scriptures accepted as genuine in the days of Muḥammad. In other words, it is impossible with these texts of the Qur'ān before us to suppose that any tampering with the text (*taḥrīf-i-lafzī*) was believed to have taken place before or during Muḥammad's lifetime. If, therefore, the passages which speak of a *taḥrīf* are interpreted as meaning that the text of the Jewish Scriptures had been falsified, there would be a clear *contradiction* between them and the passages just given. But this cannot be, according to the express statement of the Qur'ān itself, 'Do they not attentively consider the Qur'ān? if it had been from any besides God, they would certainly have found therein many contradictions' (Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 81). Hence we come again to the same conclusion as before, that the only *taḥrīf* which has taken place is *ma'nawī*, or the perversion of the meaning.

A few special points in the testimony of the Qur'ān to the Scriptures may be noticed here.

(i.) The Qur'ān speaks of 'the book which Moses brought, a light and a direction unto men' (Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 92) and of the Gospel as 'containing direction and light' (Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 50; cp. 28 *Qasas*, 43 and 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 2). If the Scriptures, however, had then been in a corrupt state, how could they have fulfilled this merciful purpose?

Objection.—These verses refer to the divine originals, not to your spurious copies.

Answer.—No! If the original Scriptures had either been lost or taken up to heaven, and the existing copies were spurious or falsified, how could they serve to guide and enlighten mankind? Besides this, other passages of the Qur'ān make it quite clear that Muḥammad was referring to the Christian Scriptures then current.

(ii.) The office of the Qur'ān in relation to the former Scriptures was to 'confirm' them (cp. Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 40, 'O (ye) to whom the Scriptures have been given, believe in the (revelation) which we have sent down, confirming that which is with you'; and 4 *Nisā'*, 45), which necessarily implies their genuineness.

(iii.) The Qur'ān was to guard the previous Scriptures, which must therefore be in a state of purity, unless the Qur'ān has failed to fulfil its office. (Cp. Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 52, 'We have also sent down unto thee the book (of the Qur'ān) with truth, confirming that Scripture which (was revealed) before it; and preserving the same safe (from corruption).') The following is a practical illustration of the use of this argument:—'The Sultan, in the course of conversation, admitted that the Qur'ān allows the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and itself claims to have been sent from heaven in order to preserve intact those Scriptures. Dr. Young pressed

the conclusion that if the Qur'ān has done its work, the Holy Scriptures are uncorrupted, and still remain the very Word of God.' *

(iv.) Jews and Christians are styled in the Qur'ān 'People of the Book'—a title which could not conceivably have been applied to them, had it been known that their Scriptures were corrupt.—'Suppose the Qur'ān had been tampered with, would any good Muslims care to be called "People of the Qur'ān," *i.e.* possessors of a mutilated Scripture? I trow not.' †

(v.) After the fact that the Qur'ān in so many places honours and praises the Scriptures (v. *supra*), then to speak of them as changed or corrupted is nothing less than to dishonour both Muḥammad and the Qur'ān. (Cp. D, 2 (iii.), *infra*.) 'Marvellous, that after all this proof of the purity of the Taurāt, any intelligent Muslim should venture to speak of it as changed or tampered with. Nay, an imputation of the kind is nought but an imputation on the Qur'ān itself, which gives them [the children of Israel] the assurance of its perfect purity, as is evidenced by the passages quoted, and numberless others of equal weight and authority.' ‡

(3) Another way in which the charge of corruption of the text of the Scriptures may be met, is by means of what may be called the *exhaustive argument*, by which it is shown successively that the alleged tampering could not have occurred either before, during, or after the time of Muḥammad, and therefore did not take place at all. This argument holds a prominent place in all English books on the Muḥammadan controversy from the time of Pfander.§ For this reason it need not detain us long. It is of the kind most suitable for learned or thoughtful opponents. Two brief resumés of the argument will be found below. (*a*) As the charge of *taḥrīf* is only made against the Jews in the Qur'ān, the Old Testament will be dealt with separately first, and it will be shown that it could not have been at any time corrupted. (*b*) The charge of corruption is, however, commonly brought against the Christians, too, and they must therefore be prepared to meet it.

(*a*)‖ The Old Testament could not have been corrupted by the Jews—

(i.) *Before the time of Christ*, because of His constant references to it, and the absence of any warning by Him that it had been falsified.

(ii.) *At the time of Christ*, out of hatred of Him, because the

* Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1903, p. 153.

† *Torch of Guidance*, p. 43.

‡ *Ib.*, p. 45.

§ See his *Mizānu'l-Haqq*, pt. I., ch. III., pp. 11 sqq. (Eng. tr.); W. R. Aikman's *Sulasut Tul Kutuub*; St. Clair-Tisdall's *Muhammadan Objections*, pp. 82–88; cp. also *Sweet Firstfruits* (Sir Wm. Muir's translation), pp. 128–131.

‖ Chiefly from Aikman's *Sulasut Tul Kutuub*. As given above, the argument will probably be found too long and complicated for general use.

first passages to be altered would naturally have been the prophecies relating to Him, which still exist.

(iii.) *After Christ,* because the Old Testament then came into the possession of a multitude of nations, who would have detected the imposition. Some true copies, at all events, must have survived. Could the Indian Muḥammadans, we may ask, falsify the Qur'ān and not be detected by the Persians, Arabians, etc.?

(iv.) *Before Muḥammad's appearance.* The reason, as given in the Qur'ān, why the Jews dissented from Muḥammad, was envy. Before his appearance, according to the Muḥammadan theory, Jews and Christians alike were expecting him, and therefore the idea of tampering with their Scriptures on his account is inconceivable, there being no motive for it. (See Sūr. 3 *Al 'Imrān*, 19 and 98 *Baiyinah*, 1–3, and Sale's notes on both passages.)

(v.) *During Muḥammad's time.* The high testimony of the Qur'ān to the Scriptures (*e.g.* Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 52, etc.; cp. (2), *supra*) precludes this supposition. And again, had the Jews been guilty of tampering with their Scriptures, the fact could easily have been proved against them by the production of uncorrupted copies of the Old Testament.

(vi.) *Or after Muḥammad's time.* It is evident from the Qur'ān that the Jews entertained the utmost enmity and contempt towards Muḥammad and his revelations. They 'turned their backs and retired afar off' (Sūr 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 23); they 'make a laughing-stock and a jest of your religion' (Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 62); and are 'the most violent of (all) men in enmity against the true believers' (ver. 85). Why, then, should they *then* have falsified their Holy Book for this 'prophet' in whom they did not believe, contrary to the solemn injunctions of God? ('Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it,' Deut. iv. 2). Besides this, the existing copies agree with those written before Muḥammad's time.

(*b*) The Scriptures have been at no time corrupted by the Christians—

(i.) *Either before Muḥammad's time.**

(*a*) Above all, because of the testimony of the Qur'ān.

(*b*) Because of the existence of ancient MSS., some of them dating from long before the time of Muḥammad, which are in substantial agreement with one another and the copies now in use.

(*c*) The writings of the Christian Fathers are all religious works, chiefly commentaries on the Scriptures, from which they quote largely. Here, too, the same agreement is observable. Thus we have writings of Clemens Romanus, Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Tertullian, from A.D. 120 to A.D. 200; of Origen and Cyprian in the third century; and

* Chiefly from Pfander's *Mīzānu'l-Ḥaqq*.

Eusebius, Ephraem Syrus, Ambrose, Basil, Chrysostom, Jerome, and Augustine in the fourth and fifth.

(*d*) For three hundred years after the time of the Apostles the Christians were bitterly hated and persecuted. It is impossible to imagine that they would deliberately corrupt those Scriptures which were their greatest comfort in their tribulations, and for the sake of their belief in which they were willing to suffer such things.

(*e*) To successfully corrupt the Scriptures, a universal agreement to carry out the wicked design would have been necessary among all Christians throughout the world. This would be manifestly impossible. Asia Minor, Syria, Greece, Egypt, and North Africa were all Christian in the days of Muḥammad. So were Italy, France, Spain, England, and the greater part of Germany. And Christians were to be found in Arabia, Persia, and India. Had the Church in Italy, for example, tampered with the Scriptures, the Church in North Africa would have convicted them of it. If Syrian or Arabian Christians had falsified the text of Scripture, the fact would have been brought to light by Christians of other countries.

(*f*) The enmity between Jews and Christians rendered falsification of the Scriptures impossible on either side.

(*g*) The same remark applies to the strife a[illegible] Christian parties and sects. Besides being, on the face of it, beyond the bounds of possibility, nothing would have given such a handle to opponents as any attempt to tamper with Scripture.

(*h*) History is silent as to any such thing. The disputes among Christians had to do with questions of interpretation. The charge of corrupting the Scriptures was never made.

(ii.) *Or after the age of Muḥammad.**

(*a*) 'How could it have been possible, unless they had all agreed in the alterations? And had they agreed, they would surely have first settled their differences, and come to one religion, ritual, and doctrine. But they continued in their variances and hatred, and here you still find them opposed to one another, and yet holding to one and the same Book in their different tongues and divers Churches, a clear proof that there has been no tampering with their Scriptures. So that if these were not corrupted before the rise of Islām, they could not possibly have been corrupted after.' †

(*b*) There was no motive for them to corrupt the Scripture. If they had had an object, 'it would surely have been to remove those passages which condemn such portions of their teaching,

* From *Sweet Firstfruits*, where the argument is put with admirable force and brevity into the mouth of one of the speakers. (For the impossibility of the Scriptures being corrupted during the time of Muḥammad, cp. (*a*) (v.) *supra*; a similar argument to the one there given might be used here.)

† *Ib.*, p. 129.

rites and ritual, and modes of worship as are opposed to the Scripture, and lead each of the opposing sects to do this in accord with its own practice. In particular, would they not have removed the stringent commands against the use of images and pictures, and worship of the creature?—practices which prevailed, and still prevail, in many of the chief Churches. But, thanks to God, they never ventured to stretch out their hand against these; and there they remain, a witness against their declension from the truth.' *

Two simple instances may be given in conclusion of the practical use of the above argument: (*a*) two Persian schoolboys were asking a convert one day whether the Gospel they read at school was the uncorrupted one or not. One of them brought forward a verse from the Qur'ān alleging corruption, but only in reference to the *Taurāt*. The convert replied that it was nowhere asserted in the Qur'ān that the *Injīl* had been corrupted; and they could easily satisfy themselves from history whether it had been corrupted after that time or not. This was readily acquiesced in. (*b*) The following incident is related by a colporteur working on the Nile: '"But," replied the first speaker [the companion of an officer], "do you suppose this Bible is the same as that which came down unto the prophets? Has it not been changed by the Christians?" "No," was the officer's reply, "that cannot be, for as to the Old Testament, you are aware if the Christians should change it the Jews, who are ever standing in watch, would object; and as to the New Testament, you know that there are many sects of Christians, and if one sect should change anything in it, the other sects would oppose." So the stranger was put to shame and talked no more.' †

4. **Other Muhammadan arguments.**—From the evidence of the Qur'ān we pass naturally to the consideration of other arguments by means of which Muḥammadans seek to uphold their views. There can be no doubt that the Christian controversialist does right to take his stand on the unequivocal testimony of the Qur'ān, and will do well positively to refuse to admit that the verdict of this, the highest authority to which the Muslim can appeal, is other than that which it obviously appears to be. It is likely, however, that even if the Muḥammadan ultimately yields here, his mind will revert before or afterwards to the old arguments with which he has long been familiar. He will feel that they present a formidable obstacle to his acceptance of the Christian view. And in order that they may be satisfactorily disposed of, it is necessary to be prepared to show the Muḥammadan that the foundations on which his arguments are built will not bear the superstructure—

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 130. Cp. *ib.*, p. 37: 'Thus the Western Church omitted the second commandment from its service and ritual, and to make up the number divided the tenth into two; but did not venture to touch the text in the *Taurāt* itself.'

† Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1903, p. 156.

that the supports are weak, and the evidence on the opposite side overwhelming. This will form the subject of this and the following section.

(1) *If the Jews, it is sometimes alleged, had possessed the true and uncorrupted Scriptures, why did they not believe in Jesus, their promised Messiah, when He came?*

Answer.—(*a*) Unbelief is no proof of the truth or falsity of religion. Your own Qur'ān often implies that true believers are few in number.

(*b*) It is well known throughout the world that the Jews are contentious (*lajj*). (The Lord Himself, Moses, Hezekiah and Stephen testified of them that they were, and had been, a stiff-necked people; Ex. xxxii. 9; xxxiv. 9; 2 Chron. xxx. 8; Acts vii. 51.) Why did they not believe in your 'Prophet'? You would say, because of this same characteristic contentiousness (*lijājāt*). Similarly in the time of Jesus. And if people won't believe when the prophet is with them, how is it possible that they should do so at another time on the evidence of books alone, when the prophet himself is withdrawn from sight?

(*c*) Granting for the moment the corruption of the Old Testament - your Qur'ān, you say, is not corrupted: why, then, do the Jews not believe in that?

(*d*) Prejudice blinds their eyes.

> When self-interest came in, excellence vanished:
> The heart cast a hundred veils before the eye.*

Belief depends on a willing heart. We have the same Scriptures now as the Jews had then. We Christians have believed them. And year by year some from among the Jews also in different countries receive the testimony of these same Scriptures to Jesus the Messiah, and believe in Him. The evidence is sufficient for them, and it would also have sufficed for the Jews of our Lord's age if their minds had been free from prejudice and their hearts open to the truth. They regarded themselves as God's chosen people, who ought not to be under bondage to any earthly power (cp. St. John viii. 33), and expected their Messiah to free them from the Roman yoke. But when it became evident that Christ's kingdom was unworldly and spiritual (cp. St. John vi. 15; St. Luke xxii. 24–27) and offered no encouragement to their political ambitions, they would have none of it. The prophets who preceded Christ were similarly treated by them (St. Luke xi. 47–51, 'the blood of all the prophets'; xiii. 33, 'it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem'); and finally John the Baptist was rejected by large sections of the upper classes (St. Luke vii. 30, 'the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being not baptized of

* Chūn gharaẓ āmad, hunar pūshīdah shud:
Sad hijāb aẓ dil bih sū-ye dīdah shud.
Maṣnawi, bk. I.

him'). French's answer to the same argument may be given here. Of a visit paid by him to the Agurpara Schools, Calcutta, soon after his arrival in India, he wrote—

> They [the scholars] asked me to explain how it was that the Jews, who were so entirely acquainted with the facts of Christianity, did not believe in them. I could only show them that it had been prophesied before it should be so; that *knowing* the truth was a widely different thing from embracing it; and that we yet looked for the time when the Jews should be gathered in.*

(2) *The Jews, again, are said to have falsified their Scriptures at the time of Christ out of envy and hatred towards Him.*†

(*a*) Had the Jews been minded to do this, the very first passages which they would have altered would have been those relating to the Saviour, such as Is. vii. 14; xi. 1–5; liii.; Dan. ix. 24–27; Mic. v. 2; Zech. xii. 10; and Ps. xxii. 16–18. And the next would have been those relating to their backslidings and idolatry and their punishment, all of which remain to this day.‡

(*b*) No adequate motive can be assigned for such action. 'To tamper with Scripture could only be with some object, as of an enemy to deceive, or to remove a blessing from an envied one, or to gain an unfair advantage. Now, if any man of intelligence reads the Taurāt as it is in the hands of the Jews, he cannot but see that it is full of nothing but goodness and blessing to them. Thus the promise is there given of One from amongst them to be born of a Virgin, in Bethlehem of Judæa, of the tribe of Judah and lineage of David, and His going forth from before all time' (Mic. v. 2). The 53rd chapter of Isaiah tells of His rejection by men, though He came to be their Saviour and Sin-bearer. Dan. ix. 24–27 fixes the time of the appearance of Jesus, 490 years after the restoration of Jerusalem by Cyrus the Persian. 'We find no attempt at any alteration here, for any intelligent reader will see that if the Jews had entertained any desire of change it would have been to shorten the period here mentioned, and to have altered or expunged the prophecies in the chapter of Isaiah given above regarding their rejection and crucifixion of Christ and their rebellion against Him. All this shows that where the Jews might have felt it the most they left the text of their Taurāt sound and untouched.'§

(*c*) The Jews were commanded by God not to add to, or diminish aught from, His commands (Deut. iv. 2; xii. 32; cp. Prov. xxx. 6; Rev. xxii. 18). And so strictly did they obey this command that they even counted the words and letters of every

* *Life*, I. p. 27.

† The following answers to this argument are mainly derived from Pfander's *Mizanu'l-Haqq*.

‡ *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 127.

§ *Torch of Guidance*, pp. 41, 42.

book to guard against the addition or loss of a single word or letter. The copies now in the hands of the Christians are exactly the same as those in use among the Jews.

(*d*) Most of the early Christians were Jews. Had there been any corruption of the Holy Books at or before the time of Christ, they would have been aware of it, and disclosed the fact after they became Christians. We find, however, no mention of anything of the kind. The first Christian teachers only charge the Jews with wrong interpretation of those passages which refer to Christ.

(*e*) Christ and His Apostles in the pages of the New Testament constantly refer to the writings of the Old, and regard them as the genuine, inspired Word of God. Had they been tampered with, Christ would certainly have declared the fact, indicated the corrupted passages, and corrected them.

Objection.—Justin Martyr charges the Jews with altering certain verses, and Irenæus and many of the Latin Fathers have repeated the accusation.

Answer.—(i.) He did not know Hebrew, and finding differences between his Greek translation and the Hebrew in the hands of the Jews, thought they had altered their copies, whereas it is the Greek translation which is wrong in certain places, not the Hebrew copies.* The charges 'have no internal probability, were never made strong points in argument, and indeed have long been given up; and if some few critics have expressed a belief of wilful perversion of Ps. xxii. 16, it has not found general concurrence.' †

(ii.) We may add, Justin Martyr may have said these things, but did not prove them; and the other writers only echoed his words.

(iii.) His testimony in this matter is not so weighty as that of the famous Jewish historian, Josephus, who, 'writing whilst the fourth Evangelist was yet alive, says, "They [the sacred Hebrew Scriptures] are justly believed to be divine . . . no one being bold enough to add to them or to take from them, or to alter them." (*Against Apion*, i. 8.' ‡)

(iv.) Most important of all, Justin Martyr's words have no weight at all compared with the testimony of Christ in numerous instances where He directly or indirectly refers to the Hebrew Scriptures.

(3) *The Jews are accused of taking away the prophecies relating to Muhammad.*

This charge may naturally have arisen from the fact that some of the Jews believed or professed to believe in Muḥammad.§ And

* Pfander, *Mizānu'l-Ḥaqq*.

† *The Missionary*, vol. IV., pt. 3, p. 220, 'An examination of certain statements in the Koran,' etc. The writer of the article refers to Justin Martyr's *Dial. cum Tryph.*, sec. 71–73, pp. 246–252; Ed. Otto, with the notes; and Bochart, Hieron., vol. I., l. 3, c. 6, pp. 783-784.

‡ *The Record*, April 1, 1892, p. 340, Canon Girdlestone's *Doctor Doctorum*, XIII.

§ *Vid.* Wherry, on Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'il*, 108.

when the other Jews asserted that their books contained nothing to support his claims, they would be met with the retort that they had changed them. Many Muḥammadan 'ulamā' repeat this accusation, and say that the Jews and Christians were unanimously expecting Muḥammad, but out of envy and hatred refused to accept him when he came and corrupted their books in order to hide their unbelief.* Such teaching from their authorized religious guides is enough to account for Muḥammadans in the streets of Fez, Morocco, handing back the colporteur's books with a curse, or for others saying they are good books, while excusing themselves from buying them on the ground that they do 'not contain the name of Muḥammad.'† Here, again, Muḥammadan disputants are not agreed, for while some bring forward the charge just mentioned, others try hard to find references to Muḥammad in the prophet like Moses, who was to arise (Deut. xviii.), and the Paraclete (St. John xiv., xvi.). The following answers may be given:—

(i.) 'The Qur'ān accuses "the People of the Book" of denying Muḥammad, though they had in their Scripture a description of him so clear that they knew him to be the Prophet of the Lord even as they knew their own children.‡ The intelligent reader must see that this proves the absence of any attempt at change, for had they been guilty of tampering, surely the first thing that occurred to them as his adversaries would have been to remove any such description of the Prophet from their Scripture—the clearest proof that tampering was never dreamt of.' §

(ii.) The Jews never ventured to touch the prophecies relating to the Messiah, though they had every reason to do so. Hence there is no ground for supposing that they changed any passages referring to Muḥammad, where the inducement to do so would have been much less.‖

(4) *The admitted existence of various readings in the Scriptures is put forward by some Muḥammadans as proof of their corruption.*

Now, it is true that the same charge can be made against the Qur'ān itself, though it is doubtful how far any practical use can be made of it. Pfander tells us that if two copies of the Qur'ān with commentaries be compared together from Sūr. 12 *Yūsuf* to Sūr. 81 *Takwīr*, thirty-three words will be found containing variations of letters; and he argues that a full examination of numerous copies of the whole Qur'ān brought from different countries would disclose many more such variations over and above mere differences of vocalization. Baiẓawī records in his commentary sixty-nine

* Pfander, *Mīzānu'l-Ḥaqq*; Sale on Sūr. 98 *Baiyinah*, 1-3.

† Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1904, p. 176.

‡ Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 147; 6 *An'ām*, 20. Cp. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 70, where the charge is made that they 'clothe truth with vanity, and knowingly hide the truth.'

§ *Torch of Guidance*, p. 43. Cp. *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 133.

‖ Cp. Aikman's *Sulasut Tul Kutuub*, pp. 36, 37.

various readings in Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'il*, and in Sūr. 18 *Kahf* ninety-one, though these are not very long chapters of the Qur'ān. Pfander concludes by saying that if all the Sūrahs were carefully examined thousands of variations would be discovered not only in the vowel points, but even in words and sentences, of which he gives instances.* Care, however, should be taken not to press the point too far and provoke the rejoinder that the copyist was ignorant or untrustworthy. And the tradition must not be forgotten, which relates that the 'prophet' said, 'Verily, the *Qur'ān* was sent down in seven dialects.' † But 'Osmān, fearful of the difference which might arise amongst people, ordered all other dialects to be expunged from the *Qur'ān* except the *Quraish*.' ‡

Two cautions may be borne in mind: (*a*) Though there is a strong case against the Qur'ān, it would be both ill-advised and perfectly useless to attempt to wring from the Muḥammadan a confession that it was on this account a corrupt and untrustworthy book, so highly does he venerate it on many other grounds as well as on the alleged testimony of God Himself to the purity of the text: 'We have surely sent down the Qur'ān, and we will certainly preserve the same (from corruption),' (Sūr. 15 *Hajr*, 9; but see Wherry, *in loc.* See also Sūr. 11 *Hūd*, 2). Moreover, two wrongs do not make one right. The 'tu quoque' argument will not substantiate our case, and is only too likely to irritate. The corruption of the Qur'ān, even if it could be demonstrated, would not prove the Bible to be free from corruption.

(*b*) We must also be on our guard against making the same kind of unsupported charges of corruption against the Qur'ān which we deprecate the Muḥammadan making against our Scriptures. We should advance nothing we cannot prove amply.—The following line of argument may possibly be found useful:—

(i.) Almost all ancient books are liable to the occurrence of various readings, as is the case not only with our respective Scriptures, but also with the Greek and Latin classics for example.

(ii.) But though we admit the existence of verbal variations in our Scriptures, and in rare places even of additions, the fullest examination of ancient Christian MSS. and religious writings fails to show that any important doctrine has been modified or new doctrine introduced into the Scriptures.§

(iii.) We might make similar charges against the Qur'ān. We do not forget its manner of compilation and recension. But for practical purposes we agree to accept it as 'an authentic record of Muḥammad's revelations.' ‖ And so with the Bible; until you bring forward conclusive evidence from MSS. or recognized Christian writers to show that its essential teaching and contents

* *Mīzānu'l-Haqq*, pp. 49, 50 (Persian translation).
† *Mishkātu'l-Maṣābīḥ*, bk. VIII., ch. III., pt. I.
‡ *Ib.*, pt. III.
§ Cp. *Mīzānu'l-Haqq*.
‖ Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, p. xxvi.

have been altered, we cannot take any notice of vague unsupported charges.

(5) *The same conclusion has sometimes been drawn from differences in the various translations of the Bible.*

(i.) But many of these, as the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate, existed long before the rise of Islām. 'If discrepancies in these had affected the divine teaching of the Scriptures, the Prophet would never have commended them as he did, nor enjoined their observance on the Jews and Christians.' *

Objection.—'The Arabs had only the Hebrew text, and knew nothing of the various translations.'

Answer.—'Such reasoning would impugn the knowledge which, as a prophet, Muḥammad must have had of the discrepancies in the various translations.' †

(ii.) Different translators, one better than another, will translate the same passage differently. The Persian and Urdu interlinear translations of the Qur'ān, for example, exhibit such differences, although both are literal word for word renderings.

(iii.) Incorrect translation does not affect the originals. If a similar objection were made to the translations of the Qur'ān above-mentioned on account of differences of translation, the reply would at once be given that, if the Arabic originals agree, the criticism is of no value.

(iv.) In spite of some variations, the chapters and essential contents of the Bible are the same in all the translations.‡

5. **Christian counter-arguments.**—(1) The Muḥammadan may be politely told that he is *not a true Muḥammadan if he refuses to accept the Gospel.* If he turns round and asks, Do you accept as true the words of the Qur'ān? we may reply, I bring forward these arguments for *you.* §

(2) *It has never been shown,* as you Muḥammadans who make the charge are bound to do, *when, by whom, or in what manner the Scriptures are corrupted, or which are the corrupted passages.* Certain unproved charges are brought against the Jews. But even if it be granted that they may have had a motive for falsifying their Scriptures, it is by no means clear why the Christians should have done so. Instead of bare assertions, we require proofs from the works of accepted Jewish or Christian writers.

(3) If you say the Gospel is corrupted, *is it this one which I have in my hand, or some other one?*

(i.) It cannot be this one, because this is the same Gospel as was in existence before Muḥammad's time, as is proved by MSS. which we still possess.

(ii.) If, however, you assert the contrary, and declare this to

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 87.
† *Ib.*, p. 88.
‡ (ii.)–(iv.) are from Pfander's *Mīzānu'l-Ḥaqq.*
§ Suggested by Benjamin Badal, a devoted colporteur of the Br. and For. Bible Society in Persia.

be the corrupted Gospel, where is the true one which Muḥammad praised and which was clearly in existense in his time? Produce it if you can, that we may see it and compare the two together; or at least, bring forward reliable testimony from Christian sources to prove your point.

(4) *The argument from prophecy.* The existence of fulfilled prophecies shows that the Bible has not been tampered with.

Objection.—The prophecies were interpolated after the event.

Answer.—Many of the prophecies are of a nature that would be most displeasing to the Jews, such as their punishment for idolatry, which they would therefore have been the last to fabricate. 'Copies of the original text and of the Septuagint translation had already been spread over the world long before the event, such as the destruction of Jerusalem and other great cities in the East.'* The Captivity, the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jews, the coming of the Messiah and His rejection by His chosen people, were all foretold in Scriptures existing long before the events came to pass.†

(5) *Argument from the contents of the Bible.* The Bible as it stands is a harmonious whole, and the Qur'ān itself bears clear testimony to some of its most precious truths.

(*a*) The Bible would be a meaningless book without redemption through Christ foretold and fulfilled. 'The tidings of ransom, and the fulfilment of them in Jesus the Messiah, is as necessary to the life of Scripture as the soul is to the body. When the soul departs, the human frame becomes stiff and rigid, and of no further use; just so, if the tidings of redemption, and that through the divine Saviour, were away, the Scripture would be vain and meaningless.‡

(*b*) The Bible, which tells us of God's wrath against sinners and of the punishment of sin, would only be a cause of fear and dread to us without the good news of a Saviour, of which the Old Testament tells us, and the means of obtaining redemption and righteousness through Him, which we learn from the New Testament. §

(*c*) 'The clear testimony of the Qur'ān given to the previous revelation and the person of the Christ.' One of the characters in *Sweet Firstfruits* works this out under five headings, arranging the testimony of the Old Testament, the Gospel and the Qur'ān in three parallel columns on a great sheet or table. ‖ The following are the headings, with the texts given under each, from the Arabic edition, where the quotations are given in full. (The references to the Qur'ān have been made to correspond with the numbering in Wherry's edition.)

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 39.
† See *e.g.* Keith's *Evidence of Prophecy*.
‡ *Torch of Guidance*, p. 42.
§ *Ibid.*
‖ *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 44 and the note.

	1. Old Testament.	2. Gospel.	3. Qur'ān.
I. Emmanuel.	Isa. vii. 14. Isa. ix. 6.	Matt. i. 23. Luke i. 30, 31, 34, 35.	3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 45. 46. 19 *Maryam*. 20, 21.
II. The Word.	Ps. cx. 1. Mic. v. 2.	John i. 1, 14. Col. i. 17. 1 John v. 20. Rom. ix. 5.	4 *Nisā'*, 169. 57 *Ḥadīd*, 27.
III. Blessing to mankind from the seed of Abraham and in the line of David.	Gen. xxvi. 4. Gen. xxviii. 14. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Isa. xi. 10.	Acts iii. 25, 26. Rom. xv. 12.	6 *An'ām*, 154. 156, 157. 5 *Mā'idah*, 51.
IV. The death of Christ.	Isa. liii. 12. Ps. xxii. 16, 17.	John xix. 1, 2. Mark xv. 25, 27, and 28. John xix. 30, 33.	3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 54.
V. The Resurrection.	Ps. xvi. 9, 10.	Luke xxiv. 5, 6.	19 *Maryam*, 34, 35.

(6) *The corruption of the Scriptures is incredible when we regard the matter from the divine side.*

(i.) As God promises to guard the Qur'ān from corruption (Sūr. 15 *Ḥajr*, 9, and the Muslim commentators *in loc.*; and Sūr. 11 *Hūd*, 2; cp. Wherry's notes on both passages), in like manner it is to be expected that He has extended the same protecting care to the other divine books which have emanated from Himself. There is the strongest possible presumption in favour of this.

(ii.) Is God just or not? Of course He is just. Then how could He allow the Gospel to be corrupted? Will He ever allow the world to be *bi-ḥujjat*—without proof of and witness to revealed truth? Assuredly, no. (Both Sunnīs and Shī'ahs are equally emphatic on this point.) Then He cannot have permitted the Gospel, which was the only *ḥujjat* from the age of Christ to that of Muḥammad, whom you regard as His successor, to become corrupted. The prophets come and deliver their message and pass away. If their writings do not remain in the world, or if they become corrupted, what have mankind left to guide them? *

(7) *It is incredible also on man's side.*—It is impossible to imagine that the Jews would be guilty of wilfully tampering with the Holy Books in which they believed and which they looked upon as from God. Here was the repository of all they held most dear and sacred. In them were recorded the call of their great ancestor Abraham, the establishment of God's covenant with His chosen people, and the giving of the Law. Their Bible was the charter

* From the colporteur alluded to above.

of all their privileges.* Would a man conceivably falsify the legal instrument by which great and inestimable benefits were secured to him? When, moreover, it may be added, did they become so immoral and dead to all religion (*bīdīn*) as to commit so great a sin as tampering with God's Word? And why, again, being in such a state of depravity, did they think it worth their while to take the trouble to do so?

(8) *The corruption of the Scriptures was, moreover, impossible.*

(i.) They were in the hands of Christians as well as Jews. Had the Jews falsified their own copies, they could not have done the same to those in the hands of the Christians.

(ii.) If the Jews of Muḥammad's time had succeeded in altering their Scriptures, they would not have been able to do this to the different versions, some of which, as the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and the Syriac, had been in existence long before the rise of Islām.

(iii.) The Gospel began to be translated into different languages from the time of the Apostles, and therefore could not have been afterwards corrupted. For, granting that the original might have suffered corruption, it is simply incredible that all the versions could have been simultaneously falsified.

(iv.) There were undoubtedly honest and sincere converts to Islām, from Judaism and Christianity. They would have had no motive for corrupting the Scriptures, but every inducement on the contrary to take all precautions to preserve them pure and intact (Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 160; 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 113, 114; 5 *Mā'idah*, 70).†

(9) (*For Sunnīs only.*) The Shī'ahs say that your Qur'ān has been corrupted by the omission of passages in praise of the house of 'Alī. Of course you deny it, and say it is a false accusation. It is exactly the same with the similar charges made by you against the Gospel. Assertion without proof is of no value.

(10) (*For Shī'ahs only.*) If corruption of the text be a bad thing, why do your learned divines admit it in the case of your Qur'ān? This they do on the authority of the Imāms. Thus, for instance, in the *'Ainu'l-Hayāt*, by Majlisī Muḥammad Bāqir, it is related that Ja'far-ṣ-Ṣādiq (the sixth Imām) said, 'In Sūrah (33) *Aḥzāb* many excellencies of the men and women of the Quraish, and others besides them, were recorded, and it was longer than Sūrah (2) *Baqarah*, but they (the Caliphs before 'Alī) abbreviated and corrupted it.' In the *Dabistān-i-mazāhib* the whole of what purports to be a missing Sūrah of the Qur'ān is given. It contains praise of 'Alī, and censure of his predecessors, and is said to have been removed from the Qur'ān by Osmān. The following are a few passages from it: 'O ye who believed, believe in the two lights (Muḥammad and 'Alī), whom we sent to read to you my signs, and cause you to fear the punishment of the Great Day.' 'Certainly 'Alī is one of the pious, and we will certainly render to

* Aikman's *Sulasut Tul Kutuub*, p. 32.

† Muir, *The Corān*, p. 233, and references there given.

him in full his rights at the Day of Judgment.' 'Certainly their enemies (*i.e.* those of 'Alī and his House) are sinful Imāms.' 'Upon those who oppressed them after thee is my wrath; certainly they are a bad people, and shall suffer loss.'

(D) THE SUPPOSITION THAT THE EXISTING SCRIPTURES ARE INFERIOR SUBSTITUTES FOR THE DIVINE ORIGINALS.

1. **Introductory: The Muḥammadan point of view.**—(i.) On one occasion when some Bashkirs were taking books from a colporteur in the valley of the Volgo, a Muḥammadan Tartar said to them, 'These books are of no use to you, they are only tales.' 'Then,' says the colporteur, 'I read aloud from the Qur'ān the passage which declares that the Gospel is a holy book sent down from God, and that Muḥammad orders belief in it, and in the other holy writings of the Old Testament.' The Tartar could make no reply to this, and afterwards came himself and bought a Gospel.*

There is more behind the above scornful allusion to the Word of God as 'only tales' than appears on the surface. And it is this which first of all demands a few words of explanation, in order to make clear the nature of one of the fundamental objections of the Muḥammadan to the Christian Scriptures.

He believes that his Qur'ān existed from all eternity in the essence of God, and that it contains nothing but the very words of God Himself, communicated to Muḥammad. The origin of this idea is to be found in the fact that many passages of the Qur'an begin with the command 'say,' which is supposed to be addressed by God to the 'prophet.' But when he turns to the Pentateuch he finds that much of it is history and is not, as the Qur'ān is supposed to be, the actual words of God. Similarly there are in the New Testament comparatively few of Christ's own words. To the Muḥammadan it appears to be a book of reminiscences recorded by some of His Apostles and companions. Besides narratives of His life and teaching, and that of some of the chief Apostles, it contains Epistles addressed to Churches or individuals, and an Apocalypse dealing with the future fortunes of the Church of Christ to the end of time. On this account the Muḥammadan regards the sacred volume of the Christians as of less intrinsic value than his own Qur'ān. And he explains the fact by the bold assertion that the originals have perished† from the earth, and that the books now bearing their names are nothing more or less than a body of traditions.‡ But this is not all. Not only are the Scriptures not the Word of God in the sense that the Qur'ān is supposed to be, but on account of their extraordinary contents they do not, in the eye of the Muḥammadan, even merit the same

* Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1901, p. 113.
† Cp. Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s. v.* 'Corruption of the Scriptures.'
‡ Cp. Sell's *Faith of Islām*, p. 16.

honour and consideration as that paid to his own traditions, which take rank with the Qur'ān itself as inspired (*Vid.* 4, *infra*). In a word, the nature of many passages of the Scriptures is, according to the Muḥammadan view, such as to make it clear that they are most inferior substitutes for the divine exemplars, being permeated with error, and therefore worthless as guides.

(ii.) How, we naturally ask, did this idea occur, and what does the Muḥammadan bring forward to support it? It may easily be believed that it arose in some such way as this. Among other things the Christian doctrines of the Trinity and the divine Sonship of Christ, and the absence of definite allusions by name to his own 'prophet,' which the Qur'ān and his traditions led the Muḥammadan to expect to find in the Bible, shocked and scandalized him. While in this frame of mind and anxious to discredit the Scriptures and rob them of all authority, he conveniently happened upon the tradition of Ezra as held by the Jews, related in 2 Esdras, or mentioned by some of the Christian Fathers;* or he discovered St. Luke's reference to other written versions of the Gospel history (i. 1–4); or St. Paul's startling allusion to 'a different Gospel' (Gal. i. 6–9). This he eagerly seized upon, as supplying him with the very thing he needed; although fuller knowledge and a just interpretation would have robbed the evidence of every shadow of the significance which he sought to attach to it. Yet still to-day the Muḥammadan will often repeat the bold assertion that the Pentateuch was lost at the Captivity, and the Injīl taken up by Jesus into heaven, on which account the Jews and Christians compiled their spurious Scriptures.

* That Ezra was in some special way connected with the Law, and rendered special service to it, is stated both in Jewish tradition ('The Law was forgotten out of Israel: Ezra came up [Ezra vii. 6], and established it.' Succah 20a) and in the canonical Book of Ezra, which records that Ezra was 'a ready scribe in the law of Moses' (Ezra vii. 6). Tradition has magnified and extended his work, till it takes the form in which we find it in 2 Esdras. By a transparent fiction it was supposed that 'Ezra, by a divine inspiration of memory, reproduced the whole of the Scriptures of the Old Testament which had been burnt by the Chaldæans.' So believed Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement Alex., and Augustine; probably deriving their opinion from the legend in 2 Esdras xiv. 1–10, 23–44, which relates how Ezra retired 'into the field' with five scribes for forty days. Then he was mysteriously presented with 'a full cup, which was full as it were with water, but the colour of it was like fire.' After drinking it, his heart was illuminated and his memory strengthened, and within the forty days the scribes wrote at his dictation 204 books. The Second Book of Esdras is generally agreed to have been written towards the close of the first century A.D. It is extant in Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, and Armenian. (Stanley, *Jewish Church*, vol. iii. pp. 121–122; Churton's edition of the *Apocrypha*, p. 68; Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, pp. xxx.–xxxii.) If the above-mentioned tradition possessed any weight as evidence of the loss of the original Pentateuch, this would be completely balanced by the testimony of the same authority to its perfect restoration. In explaining the words 'The Jews say, Ezra is the son of God' (Sūr. 9 *Taubah*, 30), some Muḥammadan commentators say the words were uttered by the Jews out of astonishment at Ezra's miraculous restoration of the Scriptures (Sale, *in loc.*).

Thus the Muḥammadan attempts here to effect a master-stroke. For nothing less than this would it be, if by a single word he could put the Scriptures of the Jew and Christian for ever out of court, and deliver himself from all obligation to read or understand them or reconcile with them the momentous departures contained in his Qur'ān from the former revelations of God to mankind.

In the following pages we may first of all discuss the idea that the original Scriptures were lost or removed (2), and that the present Gospel contains only valueless traditions (3), and then compare the inspiration of our Scriptures with that claimed for the Qur'ān and the Traditions; reserving for the next section (E) the consideration of a few special passages or topics, which are supposed to support the Muḥammadan view.

2. **The supposed loss of the original Scriptures.**—Although the Muḥammadan is in fairness bound to show good reason for his assertion, it is well to have short, forcible arguments ready on our side to demonstrate the absurdity of the supposed loss of the Scriptures.

(i.) Assuming the Gospel was brought from heaven in the way that Muḥammadans believe, we ask, Did Jesus bring it for Himself or for His people? Clearly it cannot have been for Himself, for He was a Prophet and knew God's will. It must therefore have been for His people, to guide them into the way of truth. It would have been great injustice if Jesus had taken it up again into heaven. What proof (*ḥujjat*) would then have remained in the world to testify to the true religion? For such *ḥujjat* must either be the person (*nafs*) of the prophet, or his word (*kalām*). (The same argument may be applied to the case of the Old Testament Scriptures in the age before Christ.) *Illustration.*—How unaccountable and unjustifiable would it be if a king were to devise means of depriving his people at his death of the laws he had established for their well-being during his lifetime!

Objection (i.)—*The effect of a cause perishes with the cessation of the cause*, as, for example, a wall collapses if the foundation be removed, or the light and heat of a fire cease when the fire goes out. In a similar way Jesus was the cause of the Injīl, and when He left this world, the Injīl passed with Him from earth to heaven.

Answer.—Why did not the same take place and for the same reason, in the case of the Taurāt and the Qur'ān?

Objection (ii.).—The Injīl was taken up into heaven because the people to whom it was given did not obey it.

Answer.—(*a*) But what of all the generations between Christ and Muḥammad?

(*b*) And again, granting that this objection might possibly be urged against the Jews, who as a nation rejected Christ, how can it apply to the Christians, who became Christians for the very reason that they accepted Christ and His teaching?

(ii.) Is it conceivable that God should first allow the heavenly books to perish from the earth, and then permit Jews and Christians to be deceived by corrupt copies purporting to be restorations of the lost originals? Is this consistent with His mercy and goodness?

(iii.) What explanation do you give of the references made by Jesus and Muḥammad to former Scriptures, for we cannot suppose that they as prophets were deceived by spurious copies? If they had been corrupt, they would not have appealed to them as they did, without a hint or a warning as to their unreliable character, because as prophets they must have been aware of the fact, and it would have been their duty to inform us of it. *Illustration.*—If a man were to declare that a plate was made of gold, when we knew it was really china, we should place no further confidence in his word or opinion. The point may be further pressed, thus—

(*a*) What are the Scriptures of which Muḥammad spoke so highly in the Qur'ān and which clearly were in existence in his time? (*Vid. supra*, C, 3, 'the argument from the Qur'ān.') Are they the ones we now possess or some others? And if not the same, what has become of those others?

(*b*) What do you say about the Scriptures which were used and quoted by Christ and His Apostles? (This line of argument is equally applicable to the alleged corruption of the Scriptures.)

(iv.) If the Injīl was taken up into heaven, what reason was there in the nature of things, why the Taurāt and the Qur'ān should not have experienced the same fate? The heavenly books have been given to guide and teach men. If not for this, for what purpose were they given? And in order to fulfil their work of guidance and teaching, they must be in the hands of men. But according to the Muḥammadan theory mankind were without the light of Gospel truth for 540 years.

(v.) You Muḥammadans believe that your 'prophet' was foretold by name in the former Scriptures? How could the Jews and Christians recognize him if their Scriptures had been lost and replaced by incorrect substitutes?

3. **The present Gospel supposed to be only a collection of traditions.**—When this position is taken up by the Muḥammadan, and it is asserted that the divine words have been largely mixed with the words of men, some of the following arguments will probably be found serviceable:—

(i.) *Do you believe the Injīl to be the Word of God or not?* If it is God's Word, then it contains the truth of God.

(ii.) *What we want are heavenly words.* If you object to receive the histories which you say St. John, etc., related about Jesus, put them on one side and retain only the actual words of Jesus Himself, though you have comparatively little left.

(iii.) *Such objections as this against God's Word are really directed against God Himself.* The Qur'ān having attested the Gospel, you

are bound to accept it on this authority. How then can you object to the particular way in which God has seen fit to impart His word to us?

(iv.) *What is the difference between a speech and a faithful report of the speech*—between (*a*) the tongue of the speaker and the record of the very words used (*naql-i-qaul bih 'ain*) as 'Go,' and (*b*) a true account of the meaning of the words employed (*naql-i-bih ma'nā*) as 'He said I was to go'?

(v.) *The Injīl, which contains the words of Apostles and their companions, is all the more perspicuous and complete* (*tamāmtar, kāfitar*) *for that very reason.* They had the promise of divine assistance for the full and correct apprehension ('shall teach you all things,' St. John xiv. 26; 'all the truth,' xvi. 13) and the perfect record ('all that I said unto you,' xiv. 26) of Christ's message. Their words are introductory and explanatory: they make the meaning and connexion clearer, and are therefore of the utmost importance to us, though obviously not of equal value with the words of God Himself. Such introductory words (*muqaddamah*) are really quite necessary to the intelligent understanding of any message by whomsoever given, and cannot be dispensed with. If the Shah sends an order or direction, it is quite obscure without such words. What harm again is there, if the holy words have been thus set in the words of the Apostles, like priceless gems in a gold ring?

(vi.) *This is exactly what has happened to your own Qur'ān*, which does not only contain the words of God, but those of Muḥammad. An instance of such a *muqaddamah* is found in Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 54, 'When God said, O Jesus, verily I will cause thee to die,' etc. The same phrase *iz qāla'llāhu* occurs in a number of places (*e.g.* 5 *Mā'idah*, 116). But speaking generally of the Qur'ān it is not as a rule clear which words are introductory and which are not. Hence arises the superior perspicuity of the Gospel.

Other passages of the Qur'ān which may be adduced are 'God said, Verily I will cause it to descend unto you,' etc. (Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 115). Here we have an instance of reported speech (*naql-i-qaul*), and it cannot be denied that the words 'God said' are introductory to it. If God had been the speaker, He could not have used this formula. (Contrast ver. 111, 'And when I commanded the Apostles of Jesus, saying, Believe in me and in my messenger,' where God speaks in the first person. And for another instance of the indiscriminate use of the first and third persons see Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 124, 125 '(Remember) when the Lord tried Abraham by (certain) words, which he fulfilled: God said . . . And when we appointed the (holy) house (of Mecca). . . .') In Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 80, 'God shall write down what they meditate by night: therefore let them alone, and trust in God,' we have what is supposed to be the word of God addressed to Muḥammad, and therefore should have expected to find 'I will write,' instead of

'God shall write.' (This instance is perhaps not so conclusive as the former.)

The Muḥammadan answer to the above may perhaps be that the word 'say' or 'speak,' if not actually used, is 'understood to precede every sentence.' *

(vii.) *As the teaching of Jesus was not written and thrown into the form of a book at once, so neither were the fragments of the Qur'ān collected and published during the lifetime of Muḥammad*, but afterwards by the 'writers of the revelations' (*kātib-i-wahy*).† (The chapters and verses of the Qur'ān were first collected by Zaid at the entreaty of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, and a further recension was made during the Caliphate of 'Oṣmān by the same Zaid, with whom was associated 'a syndicate of three of the Quraish'). ‡

(viii.) *The word of God is eternal.* It is not the particular words in which it is expressed that are eternal, but the will and commands of God. We Christians believe that the eternal truth of God is contained in our Scriptures, just as you Muḥammadans believe it to be in the Qur'ān. We might go further and assert that what is said about the Qur'ān having existed from all eternity might be said of every book, even of an inferior nature, that has ever been written. For it was God's will that it should be written, and His will is eternal.

Hughes quotes the interesting distinction made by Abū Ḥanīfah between the eternal and the written word of God. 'According to Abū Ḥanīfah, the great Sunnī Imām, the Qur'ān is eternal in its original essence. He says, "The Qur'ān is the Word of God, and is His inspired Word and Revelation. It is a necessary attribute (*ṣifah*) of God. It is not God, but still it is inseparable from God. It is written in a volume, it is read in a language, it is remembered in the heart, and its letters and its vowel points, and its writing are all created, for these are the works of man, but *God's word is uncreated* (*ghairu'l-makhlūq*). Its words, its writing, its letters and its verses, are for the necessities of man, for its meaning is arrived at by their use, but the word of God is fixed in the essence (*zāt*) of God, and he who says that the word of God is created is an infidel" (see *Kitābu'l-Waṣīyah*, p. 77).' § With this we may compare the phraseology in which the inspired utterances of the Israelite and Jewish prophets are described. The common formulas are, 'The Lord said unto,' 'The word of the Lord came unto,' and the speaker himself prefixes to his words the solemn announcement, 'Thus saith the Lord.' Cp. also Isa. li. 16, 'I have put My words in thy mouth;' Hag. i. 13, 'Then spake Haggai the LORD'S messenger in the LORD'S message unto the people, saying, I am with you,

* Sell's *Faith of Islām*, p. 49.

† Cp. St. Clair-Tisdall's *Muḥammadan Objections to Christianity*, p. 66, par. 37.

‡ Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, p. xx.

§ Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, p. 484, *s.v.* 'Qur'ān.'

saith the LORD'; and Mal. i. 1, 'The burden (or oracle) of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi.'

Objection.—If it be said that Arabic is the only perfect vehicle of communication, the

Answer may be given that the Old Testament was chiefly written in Hebrew and a small portion of it in Chaldee, and the New Testament in Greek; and they too are the Word of God.

(ix.) *My aim is to know the will of God, and I regard the books, from which I learn it, as the Word of God*, because they tell me what that will of God is. I am not particularly concerned with the words or the language in which the divine will is made known. The object of revelation is to teach us the truth about God and our duty towards Him. This object is amply provided for and fully attained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. 'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation' (Art. VI.). Cp. 2 Tim. iii. 15–17, 'Thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation . . . that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.'

(x.) *The excellence of the Gospel.* Read the Gospel through, and you will see that all the commands and prohibitions contained in it are good and excellent. (This was the reason given by an educated Persian gentleman, himself a poet, for his belief in the genuineness of the Gospel.) The words of Jesus are unique and exquisite and cannot be added to. *Illustration.*—They are like the gems of a precious necklace, which has been broken and the gems scattered. But wherever they have fallen, among papers, stones or dust, they will be immediately recognized for their intrinsic beauty and splendour.*

Objection.—It may be said that the words of Jesus are not the words of God.

Answer. It is impossible that any mere man could have uttered such words (which Muḥammadans will readily admit).

Two instances of the above argument may be given in conclusion. 'At Bab-el-Hanain a number of wild and fierce-looking Muḥammadans listened attentively to Christ's Sermon on the Mount. When I read the words, "Love your enemies," they wondered, and one said, "How could that be? Do you really wish to be kind and do good to us, while we wish to kill any Christian we dare?" "Yes," I answered; "this is our Gospel and the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ." The ringleader of the party said, "My good man, believe me, no Christian would live were it in my power to kill. How can you wish me well?" Again I said, "Our Lord teaches us to be kind to every creature and to love our very enemies. To do evil and to hate one's enemies is natural to man; but the Gospel and the grace of God change

* A similar illustration is given in the *Mutawwal*, by Mullā Sa'd Taftāzānī, where the words of Sheikh 'Abdu'l-Qāhir are compared to the scattered gems of a broken necklace.

men's hearts. He has compassion on those who trespass against Him. In this way we know it to be the Book of God. All of you need it and its teachings." "You speak the truth," their leader replied. "The Gospel is true, and what it says is true, but we must live according to our own customs." "But," I urged, "you will perish at last and fall under the wrath and condemnation of God, while whosoever accepts Christ Jesus shall be saved." Some of them were truly affected, and left me, saying, "Who is able to obey?"' *

Another colporteur working at Port Said gives the following account of an interview with two Muḥammadan visitors: 'I drew their attention,' he says, 'to the spirit of the Gospel as the great proof of its divinity, and pressed upon them the truth that only by the study of the Bible with the aid of God's Holy Spirit can Jesus Christ be known.' †

After all, the best course, whenever possible, is to let the Word of God speak for itself. And though we endeavour when necessary to put forward the most convincing arguments for the victims of tradition and prejudice, we shall always remember that conviction is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit working by means of His own inspired message in honest and true hearts.

4. **The inspiration of the Bible compared with that of the Qur'ān and the Traditions.**—The difficulty of commending the Christian view of the inspiration of the Scriptures to the Muḥammadan may be said to turn upon the part played by the human agent. 'That there should be a human as well as a divine side to inspiration is an idea not only foreign, but absolutely repugnant to Muḥammadans. The Qur'ān is not a book of principles: it is a book of directions.' The Pentateuch is described in the Qur'ān as being of this latter nature. 'We wrote for him (Moses) on the tables an admonition concerning every matter, and a decision in every case' (Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 145). 'It is such an inspiration as this the Qur'ān claims for itself. Muḥammad's idea was that it should be a complete and final code of directions in every matter for all mankind. It is not the word of a prophet enlightened by God. It proceeds immediately from God. . . . This to a Muslim is the highest form of inspiration; this alone stamps a book as divine.' ‡

For this reason it is not advisable in the early stages of discussion to try to explain the Christian idea of the inspiration of the Bible to the ordinary Muḥammadan with a view to its justification and acceptance. It is a difficult subject, and one about which many even of educated and intelligent Christians find it hard to form clear conceptions. How much more difficult then will it be for the Muḥammadan with his definite and exalted idea of what is

* Narrative of a colporteur working in Syria; Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1900, p. 152.

† *Ib.*, p. 147.

‡ Sell's *Faith of Islām*, pp. 48, 49.

meant by the Word of God. Nor is it really necessary to attempt the task, because the Muḥammadan theoretically acknowledges our Scriptures as God's Word. We enjoy here the advantage of being on common ground. And our efforts will be better employed in attempting to remove any hesitation the Muḥammadan may feel in acknowledging the genuineness of the existing copies. But if it should be found necessary to enter upon the question of inspiration, instead of simply taking our stand on the Muḥammadan admission that the Bible is the Word of God, the following points of comparison between the inspiration of our Scriptures and that claimed for the Qur'ān and the Traditions may perhaps be found of service.

(i.) *Many Muslims, namely Sūfīs and philosophers, deny that Gabriel came in visible, outward form* to Muḥammad, and say that what is meant under this figure is a heavenly force (*quwwah-i-malakūtī*) operating on the heart of the 'Prophet.' This, as a Persian gentleman once admitted, closely resembles the inspiration of the writers of the Old Testament, as described in 2 Pet. i. 21, 'Men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost'; cp. St. John xiv. 26; xvi. 13. If God really imparted a message to the prophet or writer, it makes little difference whether He spoke direct to his heart or through the medium of an angel. The Bible affords instances of both these methods of the communication of the divine will to man.

But here one or two cautions must be given about speaking of the Holy Ghost. It is necessary to be on our guard against speaking of the Holy Ghost descending; for this is one of the names given to Gabriel in the Qur'ān, and confusion would probably arise between the two. And again, when mentioning the Holy Spirit's operation, we must beware of laying ourselves open to the charge of limiting and setting bounds to God. Better is it to speak of the minds of the inspired writers as having been illuminated by divine light.

(ii.) *Even if our Scriptures are only regarded as traditions, they are still inspired.* In the case of any matter not recorded in the Qur'ān, but only preserved by tradition, do you accept it or not? Of course you do. (If a Shī'ah, you consider a tradition of one of the Imāms as similar to a tradition of the 'Prophet.') And you regard the 'Prophet's' word as similar to that of God. You believe both the tradition and the Word of God to be inspired, even though you make a distinction between the two and say that the inspiration of the former is only that of the heart (*Waḥyu qalb*). Similar to this last mentioned is the inspiration of the Christian Scriptures.

The matter will perhaps be made clearer to the reader by a brief account of the Muḥammadan opinion of the inspiration of the Qur'ān and the Traditions.* The inspiration of the Qur'ān (*Waḥyu Qur'ān*) is the highest kind of external inspiration (*Waḥy-*

* Taken from Sell's *Faith of Islām*, pp. 47, 48, and Hughes' *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Inspiration.'

i-ẓāhir). The revelation 'was received from the mouth of the angel Gabriel, and reached the ear of the Prophet, after he knew beyond doubt that it was the angel who spoke to him. This is the only kind of inspiration admitted to be in the Qur'ān.' It is also called *waḥy-i-matlū* (read or recited revelation). 'It is the belief of all orthodox Muslims that their Prophet always spoke on matters of religion by the lower forms of inspiration (*i.e. Isḥāratu'l-Malak, Ilham*, or *Waḥyu qalb*); and consequently a Ḥadīs [tradition] is held to be inspired in as great a degree, although not in the same manner as the Qur'ān itself. The inspiration of the Ḥadīs is called the *Waḥy-i-ghair-i-matlū*. (See *Nūru'l-Anwār*, p. 181; *Mishkāt*, book i., ch. vi., pt. 2.)' In the form of inspiration termed *ilhām* the angel who is the medium of communication to the Prophet does not actually appear to him.

(iii.) At the least, *our Scriptures are superior to Muhammadan 'inspired' writings* for two reasons. (*a*) Even in the Traditions there are many contradictions. The Shī'ahs explain this by the concealment of religious opinions (*taqīyah*) which the Imāms practised. But in the Word of God there ought to be no such thing as *taqīyah*. In the writings and teaching of the Apostles there are no contradictions. (*b*) There are many abrogated and abrogating verses in the Qur'ān: there is nothing of this kind in the Christian Scriptures.

(E) Particular Passages which lend Support to the Theory of Corruption.

A few special passages which give colour to the theory of the corruption of the Scriptures have been reserved for this section. Generally speaking, they are such as are supposed to dishonour God, or cast reflection on the character of the prophets, or be at variance with the Qur'ān.

1. **Noah's fall** (Gen. ix. 20, 21).—This offends the Muḥammadan idea that the prophets must be sinless. Hence they conclude that the Bible which records their faults has been corrupted. (The general question of the sinlessness of the prophets is considered in Ch. X. 1, and the supposed sinlessness of Muḥammad in Ch. VII.) In dealing with cases of this kind, it will be best to rely upon the general answer, that the prophets are by their own confession only men (*bashar*) and partakers of our common humanity (*basharīyat*) with its appetites and passions; but also to give such explanations and qualifications of any particular incident as it may admit of.

With reference to Noah's fall, it may be remarked that the preparation and use of wine is in the Bible traced back to the patriarch, 'to whom the discovery of the process is apparently, though not explicitly, attributed.' * It is possible therefore to

* Smith's *Dict. of the Bible, s.v.* 'Wine.'

suppose that Noah erred through ignorance of the potent effects of the wine he had prepared. But he was not so thoroughly intoxicated as to be ignorant of the indignity put upon him by his 'youngest son.' *

2. **Lot's disgrace** (Gen. xix. 30–fin.).—In addition to the general answer that the prophets are but men after all (as above) the following considerations may also be put forward.

(i.) Although the indignity done to Lot and the disgrace brought upon his name are a melancholy page in his history, he is regarded in the Bible as a servant and follower of the one true God. He was saved by a special divine interposition when the wicked cities were overthrown (Gen. xix. 29), and his righteousness is thrice mentioned in 2 Peter ii. 7, 8, 'righteous Lot,' 'that righteous man,' 'his righteous soul.'

(ii.) It is not stated in the Bible that Lot himself deliberately sinned, but the reverse. The guilt of sin depends upon knowledge and consent. If a man purloins my seal and signs a false document with it, without my knowledge, there is no sin attaching to me. *Illustration.*—There was once a Mujtahid, or learned Muḥammadan doctor, named Ḥājī Ibrāhīm Kalbāsī (so called from the name of a village near Isfahān), who when going to the mosque very early one morning was met by a party of abandoned rascals (*lūṭī*) and compelled by them on pain of death to drink a bottle of wine. It was no sin in him to do so.

(iii.) The daughters of Lot, it may be added, only desired to perpetuate their race (*baqā-ye-nau' mīkẖwāstand*).

3. **The use of wine by the prophets.**—In Ch. VI. D, 1, § 3, the objection against Christians drinking wine is considered among other things. In the present section the same question of the use of wine has to be dealt with in relation to the histories of the prophets. That they should have had anything to do with it constitutes a serious ground of offence to Muḥammadan minds, and causes difficulty in the acceptance *e.g.* of the history of Jeremiah and the Rechabites (Jer. xxxv.), the miracle at Cana of Galilee (St. John. ii.) and the Last Supper (St. Luke xxii.). Muḥammadans will declare that it is impossible that the prophets could ever have partaken of wine, because its nature is intoxicating, and this is invariably its effect in proportion to the quantity taken. The conclusion therefore drawn is that the book which relates such stories *must* be corrupt. The following answers may be given:—

(i.) Those who accept the Bible believe the truth of all that it contains.

(ii.) With regard to this and similar questions, such as the eating of pork, people hold the opinions which have been instilled into them from childhood. Your butcher's meat is unclean for the Jew and his for you. And in contrast to both, the Parsi thinks it wrong to take life at all in order to satisfy his hunger, and holds

* Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*, *s.v.* 'Noah.'

that animal products only, such as milk, cheese, and eggs, are lawful.*

(iii.) *Wine has always been made and used*, and been partaken of by prophets and philosophers in moderation, to warm the body in the morning or to remove fatigue and weariness after work and toil. It was in use in Muḥammad's time, as the mention of it in the Qur'ān and the Traditions shows (see Ch. VI., D, 1, § 3). It was the excesses of the Arabs and the abuses proceeding therefrom which caused its prohibition by Muḥammad. The common opinion about it in all Muḥammadan countries is due to this. It does not, however, necessarily follow that because your 'Prophet' found it necessary to forbid wine to the Arabs, that the same rule holds good for all other races of men. It should further be remarked that it is only the bad whose use of wine leads them into sin, in accordance with the following verse:—

> Wine doth not make a man depraved in every case:
> He that is so already, it maketh him still more so. †

(iv.) *Wine is not altogether a bad thing.*—See Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 218 (quoted in Ch. VI., D, 1, § 3, v.) and the tradition of Muḥammad given in the same chapter, (i.), (*b*). It is lawful, too, for Muḥammadans in cases of serious illness. Why, again, are rivers of wine mentioned in Paradise (Sūr. 47 *Muḥammad*, 16, where the word used is *khamr*, 'which all Muslims admit to be the word used specially to indicate intoxicating drinks,' Wherry, *in loc.*), if it is an absolutely abominable thing? And if you bring forward Sūr. 37 *Ṣāffāt*, 44–46 to prove that the wine of Paradise does not inebriate, we reply that this is one more indication that the *evil* of wine consists not in the thing itself but in partaking of it too freely. In the same way every good thing may be abused by excess, as *e.g.*, tea, which is unlawful (*ḥarām*) if used immoderately. This principle is entirely in accordance with sound reason. (This is a very effective argument for Muḥammadans.) (Cp. Ch. VI, D, 1, § 3, v.)

4. **The Sacrifice of Isaac.**—The belief of Muḥammadans and Christians is at direct variance here, the former holding that Ishmael, not Isaac, was the intended victim. 'Popular tradition amongst both Sunnīs and Shī'ahs assigns the honour to Ishmael, and believes the great Festival of Sacrifice, the 'Īdu'l-Aẓḥā, to have been established to commemorate the event.' ‡ 'The Jews, and even many Musulmāns do, indeed, maintain that it was his son Isaac whom Abraham offered; but the true believers reject

* These two answers (i.) (ii.) were given by a Persian convert when asked about the miracle of Cana by some Muḥammadans in a town in which he had recently come to reside, and are noteworthy for their inoffensive character. He was probably suspected of being a Christian and aware of the fact, and therefore answered with becoming mildness.

† Bādah nī dar har sar-ī sharr mīkunad:
Ānchinān-rā ānchināntar mīkunad.

‡ Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Ishmael,' p. 219.

this opinion, inasmuch as Muḥammad called himself the son of two men who had been set apart as sacrifices, meaning thereby Ishmael and his own father, 'Abdu'llāh, whom his grandfather, 'Abdu'l-Muttalib, intended to offer in fulfilment of a vow, but, by the decision of a priestess, redeemed with a hundred camels.' * In the spurious *Gospel of Barnabas Ishmael* is consistently spoken of as the child of promise, and the victim whom his father Abraham was bidden to sacrifice.† A Persian gentleman who on one occasion strongly and repeatedly made the same assertion was much impressed with the fact that in the Bible the name of the victim is Isaac. He distinctly perceived the dilemma involved, and in order to escape it, asked whether it was not possible that there might be two narratives of different incidents, and whether there was any mention in any other place in the Old Testament of Ishmael's sacrifice having been commanded by God.

The Qur'ān does not mention by name either of the sons of Abraham in the account of his memorable sacrifice (Sūr. 37 *Ṣāffāt*, 100–111). The argument from the Qur'ān in favour of Isaac may be put in the following way (as was once done by another well-educated Persian gentleman):—

(i.) In the account of Isaac's birth in Sūr. 11 *Hūd*, the word *bashsharnā-hā* occurs in the promise of a son to Sarah, 'we promised her Isaac' (ver. 71). And again, in Sūr. 37 *Ṣāffāt* 99–111, the same word is used in the promise to Abraham of the son whom he afterwards intended to sacrifice: 'Wherefore we acquainted him (*bashsharnā-hu*) (that he should have a son, who should be) a meek youth' (ver. 99). ‡

(ii.) Immediately after the story of the sacrifice (vers. 100–111) without any break we come to the words, 'And we rejoiced him with the promise of (*bashsharnā-hu*) Isaac, a righteous prophet' (ver. 112). This promise of the prophetic office was his reward for his submissive resignation to his father's command and the will of God.

Wherry, however, commenting on ver. 99, says—

> The Qur'ān does not specify which of the sons of Abraham was laid on the altar as a sacrifice, but I think Ishmael is clearly implied, seeing that the promise of Isaac, according to ver. 112 below, was given *after* the trial of Abraham's faith.

The verdict of tradition is equally uncertain. According to Al Baiẓawī it was Ishmael. 'The two commentators al-Kamālān quote a number of traditions on the subject. They say Ibn 'Umar, Ibn 'Abbās, Ḥasan, and 'Abdu'llāh ibn Aḥmad relate that

* Weil, *Legends*, pp. 62, 63.

† See Can. Ragg's edition.

‡ Speaking of the comparison together of these two passages, Hughes says, 'There can be no doubt in any candid mind that, as far as the Qur'ān is concerned, Isaac and not Ishmael is intended' (*Dict. of Islām, s.v.* 'Ishmael').

it was Isaac; whilst Ibn Mas'ūd, Mujāhid, 'Ikrimah, Qatādah, and Ibn Isḥāq say it was Ishmael.' *

To sum up so far: the attempt to show from the Qur'ān that Isaac was the victim seems doomed to failure; and this argument should not therefore be used. The evidence of the Qur'ān is not conclusive in itself, and when taken in conjunction with the tradition of Muḥammad mentioned above seems undoubtedly to point to Ishmael. While authoritative tradition is divided in opinion, the whole body of popular belief is on the side of Ishmael. The historical blunder, it may be added, of supposing that the sacrifice was that of Ishmael, will cause no surprise, when Muḥammad's well-known inaccuracy in matters of Old Testament history is remembered. He does not even seem to be aware of the relationship between Isaac and Jacob, but to regard them as brothers born of Sarah.†

Arguments that may profitably be used are as follows:—(i.) Ishmael is nowhere spoken of by name in the Qur'ān as the victim of Abraham's sacrifice.

(ii.) If the authority of tradition is brought forward, we answer, How is it that such an important matter is established in your opinion by tradition and not by the Qur'ān, so that your belief derives its support from the former, which is inferior to the latter? Further, in order to bring home yet closer to the Muḥammadan the weakness of his position, and throw the burden of proof on him, we may urge the following considerations:—

(*a*) In face of the universal Jewish and Christian testimony to the sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. xxii., esp. ver. 2; Heb. xi. 17, 18; Jas. ii. 21), what proof can you adduce for the contrary assertion? Can you produce the genuine Old Testament if this one is corrupt, or tell us when the alteration was made?

(*b*) What motive again for altering the text could the Jews have had, who were so scrupulous in guarding the integrity of their Scriptures (as is well known), even though many passages in them do not redound to their honour? You must bring forward convincing proofs, if you wish me to change my opinion. It is of no use to allege the supposed testimony of the Qur'ān or tradition, because I do not accept them.

(*c*) If the Jews had no motive, you Muḥammadans have a most obvious one for substituting Ishmael for Isaac, viz. to glorify the forefather of your 'Prophet' by attributing to him such a splendid act of devotion and resignation. With a similar object in view one of your traditions says that 'Sarah was . . . the more jealous since the light of Muḥammad already shone on Ishmael's forehead,' ‡ of which there is not the slightest hint in the Old Testament.

5. **The creation of man in the image and likeness of God** (Gen. i. 26, 27).—Persian Muḥammadans have objected to

* Hughes, *Dict of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Ishmael.'
† Wherry on Sūr. 11 *Hūd*, 71.
‡ Weil, *Legends*, p. 59.

this passage on the ground that God has no corporeal existence, and explained it to mean '*man's* own image' ('God created man in his own image,' ver. 27), or 'according to the will of God.'

(i.) In answering this objection we may first of all emphasize the fact that we do not yield one whit to the Muḥammadan in our zeal for a purely spiritual conception of the Being of God.

(ii.) We may then proceed to explain the true meaning of the passage. 'The image of God in man consisted,' wrote Bishop Wordsworth *in loc.*, 'in the incorporeality and individuality of his soul (says *Augustine*), in its immortality, in its rational intelligence, and other mental faculties, in his free will, memory, forethought and imagination, which gave him a kind of omnipresence; in his moral qualities of holiness, and love of what is good.' Pfander thus explains the passage for the Muḥammadan reader—

> Man, on the day of his creation, was perfectly free from sin and impurity of heart, from lustful desires, from infirmity of body and soul, and entirely exempt from disease and death. . . Knowing God intimately, heartily loving Him, and desiring His good pleasure, he enjoyed supreme felicity; and thus, his spirit being filled with power and knowledge, he was able to preside and rule over all creatures.* So we see that the likeness to God in which man was created had reference only to spiritual, and not to corporeal attributes.†

Man enjoys in accordance with God's express design, in virtue of the moral and intellectual endowment bestowed upon him, an honourable position and pre-eminence above all the visible creation. He shares the divine attributes, but not the essence of God the Creator and Preserver of all things.

(iii.) The expression objected to may be compared with the titles Yadu'llāh (hand of God), and Asadu'llāh or Shīr-i-Khudā (lion of God), all of which are applied to 'Alī (the second and third by the Arabs and Persians respectively ‡), to denote a degree of dignity.

(iv.) Lastly, the same expression is found in Muḥammadan literature, and is explained by Muslims to refer to the attributes (*ṣifāt*), not to the essence (*ẓāt*) of God; *e.g.*, the tradition, 'Truly, God created Adam in His image,' *Inna'llahu khalaqa ādama 'alā ṣūrati-hi*, and the verse of the poet Jāmī:

> O thou whose lovely image excels all,
> God formed thee in His own image.§

* Gen. i. 26, 28, 'Let them have dominion,' 'have dominion.'
† Pfander, *Mīzānu'l-Ḥaqq*, p. 32 (Eng. tr.).
‡ Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* '"Alī.'
§ Ai zi hamah ṣūrat-i-khūb-i-tu bih,
Sawwara-ka'llāhu 'alā ṣūrati-h.

CHAPTER II.

MYSTERY IN RELIGION: THE TRINITY.

St. Augustine, in his treatise on the *Holy Trinity*, takes special pains to dwell upon the incapacity of human thought to fathom the depths of the nature of God, and he carefully prefaces his reasonings by a statement of the Scripture evidence of the doctrine as a matter of faith and not of reason. —Rev. W. Wheler Bush, *St. Augustine; his Life and Times*, p. 137.

(A) Mystery in Religion.

1. **The necessity of clear and correct views on this question.**—Before proceeding to the consideration of the Trinity, it will perhaps not be waste of time to say a few words about the place of mystery in religion and the proper attitude to be maintained in reference thereto. Clear ideas as to these two points we shall probably find will be of great service, when in intercourse with Muslims we come face to face with those cardinal tenets of the Faith, which are rightly regarded as generally presenting peculiar difficulties to their minds.

Muḥammadans themselves admit the place of mystery in religion when they allow that the nature of the Deity is incomprehensible and unfathomable. We claim from them the same admission regarding the Trinity and the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. We must be ready to demonstrate the reasonableness of this attitude by means of considerations acceptable to them and consonant with their habits of thought. To set forth such considerations is the immediate object of the following pages. If they prove serviceable for the end in view, a valuable preparation will have been made for a favourable consideration of those elements in the Christian revelation which are confessedly beyond the power of human reason to comprehend.

2. **Truth revealed but not explained.**—(i.) 'The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.'* If the Bible contained only mystery it would not be a working guide for life and conduct. But the Bible has the most practical object in view, namely, the obedience of mankind to the will and law of God—'that we may do all the works of this law.' And with regard to these the teaching of God's Word is perfectly clear. There is never any doubt

* Deut. xxix. 29.

as to whether God has or has not commanded such and such a thing. If there were anything vague, obscure, or mysterious here, and men were left in doubt as to the commands of God, the end of the revelation would not be attained. When, therefore, the Bible speaks to us about ourselves and our duty towards God and man, it addresses us with no doubtful and uncertain voice.

(ii.) But there are passages of a different tenour. A remark has been quaintly made by some one to the effect that in the river of God's Word there are both places where a child may wade and others where an elephant must swim. Of this latter kind are the passages which speak of the nature of God or the Divinity of Jesus. These are of 'the secret things' that 'belong unto the LORD our God'; and of these mysteries we can know only just so much as God has been pleased to reveal to us in His Word. We cannot count the drops of ocean or number the host of heaven or measure the sand of the sea. But if God vouchsafes to do this for us * we should accept His numbering as correct, and it would be the height of folly and impiety to doubt it. Even so with regard to His own nature, we can only apprehend that which He Himself has revealed. If He has been pleased to unveil for us a part of His own secret knowledge, if certain relations within the one divine Essence are clearly indicated, though not fully explained, in human speech and figure, we have only to reverently accept the declarations of the inspired Word.

(iii.) 'A truth revealed and not explained is a mystery.' † That such unexplained truths are to be found in the Bible will appear in no wise strange when the object of the sacred volume is remembered. It is not meant to satisfy curiosity or present a minute and philosophical analysis of the divine nature, but, on the contrary, to reveal God as the object of faith, obedience, and love, and thus dispose us to walk in His holy ways. With this end in view it seemed good to the divine wisdom to declare to us certain truths, but not to furnish us with the key to their explanation. Hence, as we should be led to expect, we find ourselves confronted with mysteries in the revealed Word of God.

(iv.) This should not cause us any surprise. If among earthly things there is much we cannot understand, is it to be wondered at that the same should be true, and much more so, of heavenly things? Every human science is hemmed in by barriers beyond which the intellect of man cannot penetrate.‡ Is it, therefore, strange if the case is the same in regard to the highest science of all?

(v.) It is, moreover, doubtful whether those sacred mysteries could be made intelligible at all to finite intellects through the imperfect medium of human speech.

* Cp. Jer. xxxiii. 22; Ps. cxlvii. 4.

† Rev. Hugh M'Neile, D.D., *The Adoption and other Sermons*, Ser. IX., on Luke xviii. 17, 'The Trinity—humbleness of mind.'

‡ Cp. (D), (iii.).

(vi.) Our human spirit is sufficiently akin to the Deity to be receptive with the Holy Spirit's help of that which God has revealed concerning Himself.* From the nature of the case we should expect it to be so. The heavenly books have been given for guidance and enlightenment, and we therefore expect to find that means have been provided for the understanding by the human mind of that which has been revealed therein.

(vii.) There is all the difference in the world between a practical, working knowledge of a thing, imperfect, indeed, but adequate for present needs, and a full and complete understanding of every principle and detail involved. Thus we do not understand the nature of the force known as electricity, nor are we in all probability acquainted with all that is implied in the construction and working of a railway engine. We know enough, however, for our immediate purposes, although it may amount to no more than the knowledge of the facts that trains come and go and telegraphic messages are sent. It is a common principle of human life and conduct 'to admit the truth of what we cannot understand.' † Similarly, if our finite minds are unable to comprehend the whole or penetrate to the heights and depths of divine mysteries, yet we may understand enough about them to inspire, elevate and transform our lives. What we know is enough for this purpose, and it would be unreasonable to expect to know the whole.

(viii.) The subject may be illustrated by comparing revealed truth with the sunlight which streams into house, bāzār and mosque, or overspreads the fields and is sufficient for each person for the everyday work of the world. We enjoy but a very small portion of the sum total of its heat and radiance. We cannot bring the whole of it within our grasp or imprison it in one small room. Indeed, if the glorious orb of the sun came but a little nearer us, the whole earth would instantly be scorched up by the fierceness of its rays. When but a minute portion of them is concentrated on one particular spot, such as a piece of paper or dry wood, it immediately begins to smoke and break out into flame.—The following saying is also pertinent to the subject in hand, and may be usefully employed to enforce the point that, though the essential nature of the Deity (*kunh*, *ḥaqīqat*) cannot be known, yet His attributes (*ṣifāt*) may be: 'That which is not understood in its entirety is not rejected in its entirety.' ‡

* Cp. Gen. i. 27, 'in the image of God;' v. 1, 'in the likeness of God'; and St. John iv. 24, 'God is a spirit' (or 'God is spirit,' R.V. marg.). For man's tripartite nature, see 1 Thess. v. 23, 'your spirit and soul and body.' And for the connecting link between God and man, 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15; and Stanley, on ver. 11, 'The Spirit of God, whether in the Godhead or residing in man, is the true bond between God and man.' For the development of which the converted soul is capable, see 2 Peter i. 4, 'partakers of the divine nature.'

† Rev. Hugh M'Neile, D.D., *The Adoption and other Sermons*, *loc. cit.*

‡ *Mā lā yudraku kullu-hu, lā yutraku kullu-hu*, a tradition of 'Alī, quoted in *Wasīlatu'n-Najāt*, p. 28.

(ix.) The mysteriousness of many things in the Christian religion arises from the very nature of its subject-matter. 'In the nature of the things which are the subject-matter of the Christian religion there are these three properties, which must of necessity render them mysterious, obscure, and of difficult apprehension:—

'First, their surpassing greatness and inequality to the mind of man. . . .

'A second qualification of the chief things treated of in our religion, and which must needs render them mysterious, is their spirituality and abstraction from all sensible and corporeal matter, of which sort of things it is impossible for the understanding of man to form to itself an exact idea. . . . For in this case we can fetch in no information or relief to our understandings from our senses, no picture or draught of these things from the report of the eye; but we are left entirely to the uncertainties of fancy, to the flights and ventures of a bold imagination. . . . In all the descriptions which we make of God, angels and spirits, we still describe them by such things as we see. . . . As it would be extremely irrational for a blind man to conclude and affirm positively that there neither are nor can be such things as colours, pictures or landscapes, because he finds that he cannot form to himself any true notion of them, so would it be equally, or rather superlatively, unreasonable for us to deny the great articles of our Christianity, because we cannot frame in our minds any exact representation of them. . . .

'A third property of matters belonging to Christianity, and which renders them mysterious, is their strangeness and unreducibleness to the common methods and observations of nature.' Christ's sacrifice for sin, by which He Who was the offended person willingly delivered up His own beloved Son to be sacrificed for the redemption of His declared enemies, 'this, I say, was such a transaction as we can find nothing analogous to in all the dealings of men, and cannot but be owned as wholly beside, if not also directly contrary to, all human methods.'*

3. **The futility of reason.**—(i.) Reason is unable to explain these divine mysteries to us. 'Canst thou by searching find out God?' (or, 'Canst thou find out the deep things of God?' R.V. marg.). 'Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?'†

(ii.) The Muḥammadan in like manner admits the impossibility of analyzing the nature of God, and counts as blasphemous the attempt to do so.

> How long wilt thou pride thyself upon reason, O Philosopher?
> This road will not be traversed by thy cogitations.

* South (1633–1716), quoted in Bertram's *Homiletic Encyclopædia*, pp. 200, 201.

† Job xi. 7.

The intellect will discover the nature of His Essence
When the chip reaches the bottom of the sea (*i.e.* never).*
Mirzā Sayid 'Alī of Isfahān (known as *Mushtāq*).

We do not know Thee according to the truth of Thy knowledge.†—*Tradition of Muḥammad.*

He who asks about the Unity is verily ignorant; and he who answers is verily a polytheist.‡—*'Ali*, in the *Nahju'l-Balaghah.*

And yet God has designed that men should know and worship Him.

I was a hidden treasure, and I desired to be known; so I created men in order to be known.§—*Ḥadīṣ-i-Qudsī.*

(iii.) Man cannot explain the mystery of his own tripartite nature. 'He cannot explain how the bodily life, the animal soul, and the reasoning spirit, are blended, and sympathize together, in his own person.' ‖ How then can he dare presume to dissect the nature of the Great Power so infinitely above and beyond him, Who is so near him, and yet so far from him? The Muḥammadans have a prayer addressed to 'Him Who is nearer to me than the jugular vein.' ¶ There is also a traditional saying of Muḥammad: 'He who knows himself verily knows his master.' **

(iv.) In the investigation of religious mysteries reason can but throw us back upon ourselves and our own imaginings. Agreeable to this is the traditional saying of 'Alī: 'All things which you discern with your most subtle thoughts are creations like yourselves, referred back to yourselves. †† We cannot penetrate below the outward surface (*ẓāhir*) to comprehend the hidden mystery. We cannot get behind the exterior. Baffled, we revert to the scope of our own ideas and knowledge. Could we imagine animals forming conceptions of God, the ant would suppose its god to be a greater ant with immense antennæ, etc. Similarly, sheep would imagine their god to be like themselves, though vastly superior in size and power.‡‡ This, in like manner, is what

* Bih 'aql nāzī, ḥakīm, tā kai?
Bih fikr-at īn rah na-mīshavad ṭai.
Bih kunh-i-ẓat-ash khirad barad pai,
Agar rasad khas bih qa'r-i-daryā.

† Mā 'arafnā-kā ḥaqqa ma'rifati-ka.

‡ Man sa'ala 'ani't-tauḥīdi, fa huwa jāhilun; wa man ajāba 'an-hu, fa huwa mushrikun.

§ Kuntu ganjan makhfīyan, fa aḥbabtu an u'rafa: fa khalaqtu'l-khalqa li-kai u'rafa. These three last quotations are from Dr. St. Clair-Tisdall's *Friendly Dialogues*, pp. 9, 10.

‖ W. R. Aikman, *Sulasut Tul Kutuub*, p. 123.

¶ Yā man huwa aqrabu ilāya min ḥabli'l-warīdi. From the *Du'ā-ye-Iftitāḥ*, or Prayer for Victory over Satan.

** Man 'arafa nafsa-hu, fa qad 'arafa rabba-hu.

†† Kullu mā mayyaztumū-hu bi adaqqi auhāmi-kum, fa huwa makhlūqun mislu-kum mardūdun ilai-kum. From Nahju'l-Balāghah, or 'Road to Eloquence,' a collection of 'Alī's sermons, compiled after his death.

‡‡ Cp. the teaching of Xenophanes of Colophon, in Asia Minor (b. 569 B.C.). who migrated to Elea, in Italy, about 540 B.C.: 'If animals had had hands,

idolaters have had recourse to in their vain and fond ideas about the gods are. We can speak of the Essence of the Deity only in a superficial manner (*bih taur-i-zāhir*), and as far only as it has been made known to us in the Bible. All further explanations or descriptions would be but the creations of our own minds.

(v.) Muḥammadans may indeed sometimes try to inveigle us into the attempt to prove religious mysteries by reason. But it would be a mistake to consent to try to do so. 'Whilst,' wrote French, 'Muḥammad's recognition of Christ and of the Gospel affords a point of vantage to the Christian advocate, his followers evade it by entrenching themselves behind the citadel of reason. "Prove it from 'aql, reason, as well as prove that it is written." Now to prove from reason the doctrine of the Trinity is impossible, all that we can show is that it is not diametrically opposed to reason. So here we fall out to begin with.' *

(vi.) On account of the existence of common ground between us and the Muḥammadan in our attitude towards mystery in religion, it should seemingly be possible to avoid the occurrence of any hopeless breach with him at the outset of discussions where this is involved. We may reasonably hope, if a right attitude is assumed towards the mysterious element in religion, and the nature of the Christian belief in the Trinity and other mysterious doctrines is carefully explained and supported by suitable considerations, that the Christian position will at least be treated with the respect it deserves by those who have not yet accepted it.

4. **The right attitude towards mystery.**—(i.) When it has once been clearly recognized that reason cannot unlock for us the door of divine mysteries, then the great advantage of receiving them on the strength of an authority we may not question becomes obvious, together with the repose of heart and mind which follows from submission to such authority. In other cases where questions at issue are subjected to the arbitrament of fallible human reason, see to what different conclusions the wisest of mankind with the same data before them will arrive, not only with regard to philosophical and scientific, but also social and political questions. In approaching the mysteries of religion, if authority is discarded, there is nothing to prevent every man conceiving and setting up a god after his own ideas; *i.e.* one man will believe that God is angry with him, and therefore, 'I must propitiate Him as best I can with my doings, and sufferings, and sacrifices'; another will insist that God cannot possibly take vengeance, but will forgive without requiring any satisfaction.† The history of the heresies of the Christian Church may serve to point the lesson, and give solemn force to the warning that in face of the mysteries of our holy Faith, the right attitude for us is one of humble, reverent submission to

they would have depicted gods each in their own form, just as men have done' (quoted by Prof. Joseph B. Mayor, *Sketch of Ancient Philosophy*, p. 14).

* *Life*, I. p. 68.

† Rev. Hugh M'Neile, D.D.

what God has revealed, without any desire or attempt 'to go beyond the things which are written.'*

(ii.) But authority demands obedience, and obedience springs from a willing heart. And when the heart is rightly disposed towards the will of God, the mind's eye will have clear and unclouded insight touching that which has been revealed. 'If any man willeth to do His will,' says our blessed Lord, 'he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from Myself.'† '*Self-will* is the root of unbelief. Obedience to God's will is the root of divine knowledge.'‡ 'The principle here laid down,' says Bishop Ryle, 'is one of immense importance. We are taught that clear knowledge depends greatly on honest obedience, and that distinct views of divine truth cannot be expected, unless we try to practise such things as we know. Living up to our light we shall have more light. Striving to do the few things we know, we shall find the eyes of our understanding enlightened . . . and shall know more. . . . We learn, furthermore, that God tests men's sincerity by making obedience part of the process by which religious knowledge is obtained. Are we really willing to do God's will so far as we know it? If we are, God will take care that our knowledge is increased. If we are not willing to do His will, we show clearly that we do not want to be God's servants. Our hearts and not our heads are in fault.'§ 'If there be no sympathy, there can be no understanding. Religion is a matter of life and not of thought only.'‖

(iii.) Holy Scripture further teaches us that our attitude towards revealed truth should be characterized by (*a*) a readiness to hear, and earnest, expectant prayer for divine enlightenment: 'I will hear what God the LORD will speak' (Ps. lxxxv. 8); 'Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law' (Ps. cxix. 18); (*b*) distrust of reason, combined with recognition of the true source of spiritual illumination: 'Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven' (St. Matt. xvi. 17); 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God . . . they are spiritually judged' (1 Cor. ii. 14); (*c*) a childlike, trustful confidence in our Informant: 'Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein' (St. Luke xviii. 17). 'The distinctive characteristic of the state and learning of little children is that they are acknowledging authority, submissive to authority, and receiving on authority, what is at the time beyond the powers of their understanding. But while they advance in knowledge,

* 1 Cor. iv. 6.

† St. John vii. 17.

‡ Wordsworth, in *loc. cit.*, who also quotes Ps. cxi. 10, Prov. ix. 10, 'The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;' Ecclus. iii. 19, 'Mysteries are revealed unto the meek;' and Ambrose, 'Intellectus merces fidei est.'

§ Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on St. John*, in *loc. cit.*

‖ Westcott, in *loc. cit.*

they make progress at the same time in the better understanding of that which they have already learnt.' *

(iv.) This submissive, receptive attitude may further be illustrated by what the Qur'ān itself says about literal and figurative passages: 'It is He Who hath sent down unto thee the book, wherein are some verses clear to be understood; they are the foundation of the book, and others are parabolical. But they whose hearts are perverse will follow that which is parabolical therein, out of love of schism, and a desire of the interpretation thereof; yet none knoweth the interpretation thereof except God. But they who are well grounded in the knowledge say, We believe therein, the whole is from our Lord; and none will consider except the prudent.' †

(v.) It is no disgrace to the man of science to admit that a point is reached sooner or later in his investigations, beyond which the human mind is powerless to penetrate. Nor should any reluctance be felt in making a similar admission with regard to that science which is so infinitely above us and beyond our unaided reach. What we require is the best book and the best teacher to instruct us in the things concerning God. And to this end we have the best of all books—the Holy Bible, and the best of all teachers—the Holy Spirit of God, Who Himself 'moved' and taught the sacred writers. ‡ We therefore trust His inspired Word. We cannot prove, and with such a teacher we do not need to prove, the mystery itself by reason. At the same time, we have good grounds for accepting the mystery by faith. Religion, as has been well remarked, is the most difficult of the sciences, but the easiest of the arts.

(B) THE MUḤAMMADAN POSITION.

1. Muḥammadans, as is well known, hold the doctrine of the Unity of God in the most absolute and uncompromising form. The Qur'ān and Traditions, as well as the whole of Muḥammadan literature, are pervaded with this belief. It is almost incredible with what strength and fervour it is held by the whole world of Islām.

The three passages of the Qur'ān where the Unity is asserted in opposition to the Trinity are the following: 'Say not, *There are* three gods; forbear *this*; it will be better for you. God is but one God.' § 'They are certainly infidels who say, God is the third of three; for there is no god besides one God.' ‖ 'And when God

* Rev. Hugh M'Neile, D.D.

† Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 7. But see Salo and Wherry, *in loc.*, as to the different interpretations of the passage by Sunnis and Shī'ahs respectively.

‡ 2 Peter i. 21.

§ Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 169.

‖ Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 77.

shall say *unto Jesus at the last day*, O Jesus son of Mary, hast thou said unto men, Take me and my mother for two gods besides God? He shall answer, Praise unto thee! it is not for me to say that which I ought not.' *

The traditional belief is seen in the following selections from Weil's *Legends*:—

When the whole of the creation was moved with pity by reason of Adam's bitter lamentations after his fall, and came to him to commiserate with him, the first to arrive were the locusts, of whom it is related, 'The black letters on the back of their wings are ancient Hebrew, and signify, "There is but one only God. He overcomes the mighty, and the locusts are part of His armies, which He sends against sinners."' † Adam's prayer, taught him by Gabriel at God's command, which procured for him the opening again of the portals of heaven, contains a confession of the Unity, 'There is no God besides Thee.' The same prayer afterwards saved the prophet Jonah in the whale's belly. ‡ After Adam's repentance was accepted, he prayed, 'Defend me against the future artifices of Iblīs my foe!' to which God replied, 'Say continually there is no God but one, and thou shalt wound him as with a poisoned arrow.' § When God made His covenant with the whole assembled human family, He cried to them and said, 'Confess that I am the only God, and that Muḥammad is my messenger.' ‖ And in the narrative of Abraham's being cast into the fire by Nimrod because of his contemptuous rejection of the fashionable idolatry of the day, his prayer out of the midst of the burning pile is thus recorded, 'There is no God besides Thee; Thou art Supreme! and unto Thee alone belong praise and glory!' ¶ And when Nimrod's daughter, Radha, who afterwards married Abraham, visits the pile on the seventh day after he had been cast into the fire, and finding him seated comfortably in the midst of a blooming garden, begs his permission to approach him, he replies, 'Confess that there is but one only God, who has chosen me to be His messenger!' **

The same doctrine is more plainly asserted in the *Gospel of Barnabas*, as might be expected from the nature of the case, *e.g.* 'He (God) hath no father nor mother; He hath no sons, nor brethren, nor companions.' ††

It would probably be difficult to produce anything to surpass the passionate prejudice expressed in the subjoined declaration of adherence to Muḥammadan doctrine.

Christian Peoples:

The hour is come to listen to us. The hatred of Islūm against Europe is irreconcilable. After ages of efforts for a mutual understanding we arrive at this decisive result: that we hold you in horror more than at any other epoch of our history.

Understand, then, able men of Europe, a Christian, whatever otherwise

* Ver. 116.
† P. 16.
‡ P. 17.
§ P. 17.
‖ Pp. 20, 21.
¶ P. 52.
** P. 54.
†† Canon Ragg's edit., 1913, p. 31.

may be his position, by the sole fact that he is a Christian, appears to us a blind man who has completely lost the dignity of man.

For us, we know very well what we are, and for you we must needs at length persuade you of this fundamental truth: that the whole edifice of Islām rests upon the doctrine of the Unity of God, Who is infinite, incomparable, eternal, Who has in no wise been engendered nor has engendered. This article of faith is directed especially against the Christians. By this sole fact the Christian doctrine of the Trinity becomes the sworn enemy of Islām. The contrast between these two fundamental dogmas is for every Muslim soul a burning and terrible test.

You Christians, brought up from youth in the doctrines of your Church, you absolutely cannot represent to yourselves what terror, what repugnance overcomes us at the mere mention of your Trinity.

Consent, then, to grant us this indisputable truth: between us and your belief in the divinity of Jesus there is an abyss eternal and impassable. Understand that, penetrated as we are with a faith unbounded in the Unity of our God, it is to us an utter impossibility to admit, to support, to pardon whoever it may be, who, from far or near, is capable of offering insult to the absolute Unity of our God, incomparable, eternal, infinite.

We have not forgotten the Crusades. They continue to-day under forms a hundred times more accursed. You have combated and humiliated us by all the means at your disposal. You have, at all points of the globe, caused the frontiers of Islām to recede, and by your diplomats, as well as by your missionaries, you seek constantly to break asunder that which remains of us. Your plan is well laid out. You pursue it openly, systematically; it signifies the ruin of Islām. You have no other pretext than the accusation which you hurl against us of being rebels to your civilization. Ah, well, we are that indeed—rebels even unto death. But you alone are responsible for it—responsible, apparently, by the fact of being Christians. We see by this that, few as are the visible gains as yet, the Crescent already begins to tremble before the Cross.' *

2. But what is it that the Muḥammadan condemns as the Christian doctrine of the Trinity?

There is a remarkable passage of the Qur'ān in which Muḥammad seems to mention the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, though obviously ignorant of their nature and mutual relationship as revealed in the New Testament, and identifying the 'Word' with the 'Spirit.' The passage runs as follows: 'Verily Christ Jesus the son of Mary *is* the Apostle of God, and His word, which He conveyed into Mary, and a spirit *proceeding* from Him.' † Immediately after this Muḥammad condemns the belief in three gods, which he supposed the Christians to hold. From a verse of the Qur'ān already quoted ‡ it has been seen that they are God, Jesus, and Mary. Similarly, we shall find the

* From the *Missionary Review of the World*, March, 1904, pp. 234, 235. The extract is thus introduced: '*Le Missionaire* gives the following "Declaration of War" from a Sheikh of Baghdad, member of a "Holy League of Muḥammadanism." We translate the introduction.' It has not been thought necessary to curtail it, though the last paragraph does not concern the question immediately under consideration.

† Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 169.

‡ Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 116.

Prophet of Islām labouring under misconceptions as to the nature of Christ's divine Sonship, and as to the Person denoted in the New Testament by the Holy Spirit. Such want of knowledge, as the Muḥammadan himself would allow, is irreconcilable with the idea of Muḥammad being a prophet, and is therefore a strong argument against his claims; but it must be used with great caution, and as a rule only in the case of individuals with whom previous acquaintance has made it certain that it will be received without dire offence.

Another erroneous Muḥammadan conception of the nature of the Christian Trinity is, that it consists of God, Jesus, and Gabriel, probably a modern gloss of the Bible language, 'Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,' the term Holy Spirit, as found in the Qur'ān, being always understood to refer to the Angel Gabriel.*

If Muḥammad's idea of the Trinity was a mistaken one, later Muḥammadan authorities at least became acquainted with the Christian phraseology of 'Father,' 'Son,' and 'Holy Spirit,' as denoting the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, even though they did not understand the orthodox doctrine concerning the same. These writers connect the Three Persons (*aqānīm*) of the Deity respectively with the Essence (*ẕāt*) or Existence (*wujūd*) of God, the knowledge (*'ilm*) of God, and the life (*ḥāyāt*) of God.† Shahristānī records the same opinion. Sheikh Bahāī in his *Kashqūl* slightly varies it, describing the Three Persons of the Christian Trinity as denoting severally Essence with existence, Essence with knowledge, and Essence with life.‡ At the present time it may be taken for granted that increased intercourse with Christians and the dissemination of the Scriptures have tended to promote a more correct and intelligent knowledge of the real tenets held by Christians.

3. It is not of much practical importance to inquire whence Muḥammad obtained his ideas of the Christian Trinity. Arabia was of old famous for heresies, and it was here that the Collyridians flourished, a small sect of women who came originally from Thrace and settled down in the country. They 'introduced the Virgin Mary for God, or worshipped her as such, offering her a sort of twisted cake called *collyris*, whence the sect had its name.'§ Al Kindy traces the accusation of the Qur'ān that the Christians hold that 'God is one of Three,' or that 'there are three Gods,' to 'the heretical dogmas of sects like the Marcionites, "ignorant dogs," who did not deserve even the name of Christian.'‖ Sir

* Wherry's edition of Sale's *Qur'ān*, on Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 2, where reference is made to *Tafsīr-i-Raufī*, *in loc.*

† Al Baiẓāwī and the *Ghiyāṣu'l-Lughāt*, *s.v.* 'Naṣārā.' See Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Trinity.'

‡ These last two authorities are quoted by Sayid Ni'matu'llāhi'l-Jazā'irī in his *Anwāru'l-Nu'māniyah*, p. 213, in the discourse enumerating and explaining different sects.

§ Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 63; Neander's *Church History*, vol. iii. p. 482.

‖ Sir Wm. Muir's *Apology of Al Kindy*, p. 42. Cf. Schaff, vol. i. p. 244,

Wm. Muir, however, thinks that, judging from the Qur'ān, 'Muḥammad's knowledge of Christianity was derived from the orthodox party, who styled Mary "Mother of God." . . . The truth, however, is, that Muḥammad's acquaintance with Christianity was at the best singularly dim and meagre.' *

4. The fact is that, whatever excuse they may have had in former ages through heresies rife in the Church for entertaining wrong views of Christian doctrine, the majority of Muḥammadans to-day are guilty of a culpable error in rejecting to all intents and purposes the sacred books in the hands of the Christians, and so closing against themselves the road by which they might arrive at the truths really held by the Church of Christ. Instead of this they foist erroneous doctrines upon the Christians, and spend much labour in condemning them, and take great credit to themselves for so doing. A truth-seeking, intelligent study of the Bible itself, and the use of such means as are in many cases available for ascertaining the nature of the truths held by Christians, would show them that the Christian faith contains profound mysteries, which must be allowed to remain such to human intelligence. But unfortunately, through not adopting such a sound position as this, Muḥammadans in general perversely misunderstand these sacred mysteries and then blame the Christians for the blasphemous teaching falsely attributed to them, and further point to it as conclusive evidence of the corruption of the Christian Scriptures.

(C) TREATMENT OF THE QUESTION OF THE TRINITY IN DEALING WITH MUḤAMMADANS.

1. **The difficulty of satisfactorily answering questions as to the nature of the Trinity.**—(i.) 'Some missionaries find great difficulty in speaking of the doctrine of the Trinity, so obnoxious to Muslim ears. The most ignorant village woman you meet will proudly assert "*Allah wāhid dur*" (God is one), as if it were a totally new truth, and glare at you as if expecting to be contradicted.' † This topic is frequently introduced by Muḥammadans and an explanation asked for; and of all the questions commonly put, perhaps none seems to present more difficulty in the way of giving a satisfactory and satisfying answer. The

quoted in Smith's *Student's Ecclesiastical Hist.*, vol. i. p. 222: 'Marcion supposed three primal forces—the good or gracious God, whom Christ first made known; the evil Matter ruled by the Devil, to which heathenism belongs; and the righteous World-maker (Demiurge), who is the finite angry God of the Jews.'

* *Life of Mahomet*, ii. p. 19, note, quoted in Wherry's edition of Sale's *Qur'ān* on Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 16.

† 'An Armenian Christian Evangelist,' in the *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 727.

reasons for this are not far to seek. The Trinity is a doctrine of revealed truth, and transcends the power of human reason to fathom. The questioner moreover, has, in all probability, no familiarity with Christian thought and phraseology, but on the contrary has from the first imbibed notions of what is meant by the Trinity of the Christians, as false as they would be rightly considered blasphemous if true.

The first thing to guard against then will be the appearance of any undertaking to explain the inexplicable.* On the one side, the attempt will be certain not to gain the assent of the hearer, and only convey to him a feeling of vagueness and dissatisfaction; and on the other side, it will leave a sense of having failed to convey the message and the information which it was desired to impart. The contrary course is the right one to pursue, and the Muḥammadan must from the first be instructed to regard the Trinity as a sacred mystery, only comprehensible as far as revealed, and only to be comprehended at all by reverent recourse to the inspired volume. Stress should be laid upon this aspect of the truth. 'We can only accept what the Almighty has been pleased to reveal of Himself in the Bible, and as embodied there in the form of words at baptism, enjoined by Jesus Christ Himself on His disciples.' †

(ii.) We may with greater confidence adopt this attitude, because it is in perfect harmony with the spirit in which the Church framed the formularies containing the articles of the Christian Faith. 'The Church in her *symbols* endeavours to express the mystery, as set forth in Scripture; not to embrace it with the intellect, but to protect it both against *Unitarianism* and *Tritheism*; so that a Christian may possess saving faith in the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, without the knowledge of these dogmatic forms; yet no one can reject these without rejecting the Trinity.' ‡

(iii.) But though we decline to attempt the impossible task of explaining the nature of the Holy Trinity in a brief conversation, the opportunity should be jealously taken advantage of to urge upon our Muḥammadan friend as strongly as possible the duty and necessity of prayerfully studying the Word of God in order to find out what He has revealed concerning His own nature. Till then, it will be well to decline kindly but firmly to be drawn into a discussion of it, just as a teacher would rightly decline to teach the Fifth Reader to a boy until he has read the previous four. The Muḥammadan who asks questions about the nature of the Trinity is usually unacquainted with the Christian Scriptures, saturated with prejudice, ignorant of what Christians believe, and full of objections against that which he imagines to be their belief. The first necessity for such a man is to read the Gospel

* See Part II., Ch. VII., viii.

† *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 118.

‡ Arnold, *Ishmael, or a Natural History of Islāmism*, p. 444.

and make himself to some extent acquainted with its contents. The Rev. C. H. A. Field, of the Peshāwar Mission, in one of his Annual Letters, gave it as the result of his experience, that it was useless to argue with a Muḥammadan till he had read the Gospel.

(iv.) But in the meanwhile not a little may be done, and the way may be carefully prepared to render the reception of the truth easier for the Muḥammadan mind.

(*a*) And first of all, care should be taken to remove at once the common misconception that any carnal sense attaches to the mention of the Trinity, or that we believe that there are three Gods, or that the Almighty is the third of three, as the Qur'ān gives the reader to understand. In harmony with the teaching of their Scriptures,* Christians explicitly believe and confess the Unity of God, and regard idolatry or the idea of a plurality of gods with as much horror as any Muḥammadan.

(*b*) In the next place, emphasis should be laid upon the provision made by Almighty God and revealed in the Bible for the redemption of mankind. It may be pointed out that the Bible has not been given to satisfy curiosity, but to make known the means of salvation. Any other motive for reading it is liable to disappointment. But the seeker after truth and peace will find therein that which exactly meets the longings and cravings of his heart. A prayerful study of the New Testament, prompted by the sincere desire to find redemption and salvation, will show that the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity co-operate together to this end, each Person performing a certain work and fulfilling a certain office towards the attainment of that so greatly to be desired goal. 'The mystery of redemption . . . is revealed in the Gospel . . . as the merciful achievement of divine love, wisdom, holiness, justice, and power. The triune God is revealed in the Bible as the *Father* Who resolves upon our redemption, as the *Son* Who accomplishes the blessed work, and as the *Holy Ghost* Who communicates its gracious and sanctifying influences to the Church in all ages; hence the formula of baptism, expressive of our Christian faith.' † The knowledge of these facts will bring the greatest consolation and assurance to the soul that is conscious of its sin and need, and remove the difficulty of accepting the doctrine merely as such.

'The doctrine of the Trinity is the great stumbling-block in the way of Muslims, but their difficulty seems to lie in the inability to conceive of it as a spiritual doctrine to be spiritually discerned. Adopting a low and material view, prejudging the case, so that they often refuse to listen to any evidence in its favour, they lose the comfort and satisfaction it offers to both mind and heart.' 'In this doctrine every human need is met, and all

* *E.g.* Exod. xx. 3; Deut. vi. 4; Isa. xlv. 5; Mark xii. 32; 1 Cor. viii. 4; 1 Tim. ii. 5; James ii. 19.

† Arnold's *Ishmael*, p. 441.

the requirements of divine justice satisfied.' * We must, therefore, try to awaken in the Muḥammadan's heart a true sense of his needs, and show him that they are satisfied, and can only be satisfied, by God's revealed plan of salvation.

'The doctrine of the Trinity,' says Dr. Henry H. Jessup, 'never seemed to present any difficulty to him (Kamil), because, being under deep personal conviction of sin, he felt the only remedy lay in God as manifested in the Trinity; so will it be with truly converted Muslims, and I feel it is what they require above all else.' † Hence, instead of looking upon the doctrine of the Trinity merely as a cause of offence, we should rather regard it as an essential feature in the divine plan of salvation, which alone can save men's souls and give them peace, whether they be Muḥammadans or not. So far, then, from being something to stumble at, it is rather that for which assuredly the awakened soul will be exceedingly grateful.

Thus will it ever be when souls are truly born again. 'One day a school-fellow met Ebenezer, a student in the Lahore Divinity College, who finished his earthly course after but a fortnight's active labour in the Jhelum district, and said, "I wept when I heard you had become a Christian. However came you to believe in the Trinity?" "Ah," he replied, "you wept for that; I should weep indeed had I to part with the doctrine of the Trinity." ' ‡

The same was the case with the devoted Raymund Lull, 'first missionary to the Muslims,' who was called from a life of self-indulgent pleasure by the vision thrice repeated of the Crucified Christ, in Whom 'he had seen the highest and deepest unrequited love.' § 'The image of the suffering Saviour remained for fifty years the mainspring of his being. Love for the personal Christ filled his heart, moulded his mind, inspired his pen, and made his soul long for the crown of martyrdom. Long years afterward, when he sought for a reasonable proof of that greatest mystery of revelation and the greatest stumbling-block of the Muslims—the doctrine of the Trinity—he once more recalled the vision. His proof for the Trinity was the love of God in Christ as revealed to us by the Holy Spirit.' ‖

(*c*) In the third place, judicious use may be made of one or two analogies from the natural world,¶ to show that the doctrine

* *Islām and Christianity, or the Qur'ān and the Bible: a Letter to a Muslim Friend*, by 'A Missionary,' pp. 76, 77 (published by the American Tract Society). The author adopts the same line as that advocated above, of seeking to win acceptance for the Trinity through the heart, not through the head.

† 'An Armenian Christian Evangelist,' in the *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 727.

‡ *Life of Bishop French*, I. pp. 262, 263.

§ Zwemer's *Raymund Lull*, p. 35.

‖ *Id. Ib.*, pp. 45, 46.

¶ See section 3.

of the Trinity is not so unreasonable as may at first sight be supposed, but can be illustrated in a remarkable way from the visible works of God in creation.

(v.) Finally, let us remember that the hearer must be gradually led on and familiarized with this great truth. It may be a work of time. We have no more right to expect him to fully grasp it at once than we should have to expect a beginner to be able to take in the lessons of the highest class in the school. We must with God's help impart the truth as the learner is able to 'hear' it (St. Mark iv. 33), to 'bear' it (St. John xvi. 12), to 'receive' it (St. Matt. xi. 14; xix. 11; St. Mark iv. 16), and to 'assimilate' it (1 Cor. iii. 2).

(vi.) The course of action above recommended will avoid the discussion and controversy which is certain to arise if we attempt to explain what God's Word does not explain, and which will be sure to be inconclusive and unsatisfactory if not worse. It will also remove any ground of self-reproach for failure in our duty to 'declare the whole counsel of God,' because we shall be conscious that we have honestly attempted to make known the truth, not indeed in its fulness, but as the hearer was able to 'receive' it. Above all, this method of procedure gives honour to Almighty God by the exercise of faith, which believes that the unfolding of the divine scheme of redemption, though containing mysteries too hard for human comprehension, is nevertheless by divine wisdom designed and admirably fitted, as often before, so now again, to bring peace to the troubled soul.

(vii.) A few words from the *Life of Bishop French* may suitably bring this section to a close. 'The fifth class of little boys' in the C.M.S. Agra College, he says, 'seem as alive to every point, though so young, as the boys of the first class. By their questions on one of the discourses of St. John, they led me, against my intention, to the doctrine of the Trinity. I told them they must not ask questions about it, as they were very little boys, and it was a solemn and sacred subject. I begin to find in the bāzār too, that little is gained by the exposition of these mysteries of our faith. The love of God, the character, work and words of Christ, the effects produced by the Holy Spirit, seem to be the really effectual topics; others, in which more mystery is involved, lead to such blasphemous remarks.' *

2. **Arguments.**—'The Trinity is a revealed mystery,' says Leupolt, 'and if we desire to prove it, we must have recourse to Revelation.' † This is perfectly true. As the mystery of redemption wrought through the co-operation of the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity is a mystery that neither natural religion nor reason could have anticipated,‡ so the Trinity is incapable of absolute proof from reason, and we are thrown back upon faith in the revealed Word of God. The Christian position, however,

* *Life of Bishop French*, I. p. 57. † *Recollections*, p. 88.
‡ Arnold's *Ishmael*, p. 440.

may be upheld and justified by argument addressed to the reason, and there are proper occasions when this should be done. For such opportunities it is hoped that the arguments given below may be suitable. Yet here, as always, we must not forget that bare arguments are not of much use to convince the head, when the heart is at fault, and the antagonism of the will lies at the root of all.

(*a*) *Proof that the doctrine of the Trinity is true.*—Do you believe in the Bible or not? we may ask. If you do not, you are not a Muḥammadan. If you do, you will find it there written.

In the Qur'ān, as in the Bible, there are many difficult things recorded, as to which no comparison or similitude can be adduced from other things in order to substantiate them: yet you believe them, because they are contained in that which you regard as God's Word. For instance, there is the dividing of the Red Sea into two parts, mentioned both in the Pentateuch and the Qur'ān,* and the miracles of Jesus, the curing of him that had been born blind, the cleansing of the leper and the raising of the dead, all of which are mentioned in the Qur'ān † as well as in the Gospel. Your unaided reason will never accept these things, but you say you believe in them because they are written in the Word of God.

Objection.—Suppose the disputant here raises the objection that the Pentateuch and the Gospel have been corrupted.

Answer.—Do you mean to say that these narratives have been corrupted? If he says, Yes, answer, Then what about your Qur'ān, which says the same? Do you make that also void (*bāṭil*)? Just in the same way as you give credence to those narratives of events which you cannot prove by reason, in the same way you must accept the doctrine of the Trinity, which reason is unable to prove, but which demands assent as being taught in God's Word.

(*b*) *Proof that the doctrine is contained in the Gospel.*—Philosophers (*ḥukamā'*) deny that Jesus wrought miracles. You deny that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is in the Gospel. In each case, from the mere fact of the denial it is clear that these things *are written* in the Gospel; otherwise they would not have been denied. *Illustration.*—If a provincial Governor gives an order which the people consider bad, and they oppose it, their opposition is a proof that they firmly believe that the order has been issued.

After all your arguments against the Trinity, you cannot prove that it is not plainly declared in God's Holy Word. If this be so, how great is the sin of not believing on the authority of the divine Word!

(*c*) *The doctrine is foreshadowed in the Old Testament, and clearly set forth in the New.*—Thus in Psalm xxxiii. 6 we read, 'By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of

* Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 138; 10 *Yūnus*, 90.
† Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 48; 5 *Mā'idah*, 110.

them by the breath of His mouth.'* On this passage Perowne says that the phrase, 'the breath of His mouth,' 'can hardly be understood here of the Spirit of God Who moved over the chaotic mass as the great source of life in creation, at any rate not in the personal sense, which is quite precluded by the addition "of His mouth." . . . Still "the breath" (*ruach*) denotes especially the source of life in the creative work, as "the word" is that which summons into existence. . . . We have thus a prophetic foreshadowing of the final Revelation of the Word Who is the wisdom and the power of God, and of the Spirit Who is the giver of life.'

It would seem that some caution must be exercised in the choice of passages to be brought forward in this connexion. Verses, for example, where the plural pronoun occurs, may be true indications of the Trinity, and, as such, of great interest and weight to the *Christian* mind. But it may be doubted whether they would go any way towards convincing a Muḥammadan, although this argument is used by the author of *Sweet Firstfruits*,† and defended by Al Kindy on the ground that the plural number in such passages, according to Hebrew usage, is not merely honorific.‡ Against the inference drawn from these verses the Muḥammadan might easily bring forward others where the first person singular is used, *e.g.*, 'And the Lord said, . . . I will go down now and see.' §

In the very first chapter of Genesis we find mention of God the Creator, the creative Word (cp. St. John i. 3), and the brooding Spirit. Similar terminology frequently occurs in the Old Testament, so much so that it may be said with truth that 'the doctrine of the Trinity runs through the Bible.' ‖ But it is not until we come to the Gospel, wherein is contained God's final revelation to man, that it comes forth into full clearness and prominence, and to such an extent that if you take away this you take away the very core and kernel of the Book.

In contrast with the absolute Unity of the Qur'ān, it may be pointed out that the Bible not only emphatically asserts this truth, but goes a step beyond the barren declaration that God is One, and, while still leaving depths of mystery unfathomed, teaches us plainly that in the One Essence (*Ẕāt-i-wāḥid*) there are Three Persons (*aqnūm*).

(*d*) The argument given at length in Section (D), that the doctrine of the *Trinity in Unity is not only reasonable, but necessary*, may be briefly stated here in the following words: '"Only in the social interchange of Persons can we find the eternal relationships of Love." The conception of the awful loneliness of a uni-personal God is impossible; the fulness of love, the communion of eternal

* Quoted in Al Kindy's *Apology*, edited by Muir, p. 42.
† P. 118.
‡ *Apology*, p. 42.
§ Gen. xviii. 20, 21.
‖ *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 118.

energy, eternal wisdom, eternal love, are found in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in Unity.' *

(*c*) *An argument for Shī'ahs.*—We say, indeed, that there is only one God, and that Jesus is one with the Father. If you call this blasphemy, what is the meaning of what you say about 'Alī, 'He is not God, and he is not separate from God' (*Khudā nīst wa az Khudā jidā nīst*)? What we say of Jesus is only that which we find in the Gospel. Your authority for such words as the above is only that of tradition.

3. **Analogies and Illustrations.**—(*a*) These must be used with caution and a just appreciation of their proper value, after the example of St. Augustine in his treatise on the Holy Trinity. 'Certain ingenious and subtle theories respecting types or resemblances of the Holy Trinity traceable in human nature as being the image of God, seemed to him to supply, not indeed a logical proof, but a strong rational presumption of the truth of the doctrine itself; and thus to make it incumbent upon him to expound and unfold them in order to meet rationalizing objections upon (so to say) their own ground. He is careful not to deal with these analogies or images as if they either constituted a purely argumentative proof, or exhausted the full meaning of the doctrine, upon both which assumptions such speculations have at times been the fruitful parent of presumptuous theorizing and of grievous heresy.' †

(*b*) The analogies from nature adduced in illustration of the Trinity are of two kinds. The first class includes those in which a single whole is seen to embrace several distinct parts or functions. Thus, the sun consists of a shining orb, whence proceed light and heat. 'Look again at the white light streaming from the sun, decomposed by the prism into red, yellow, and blue rays, which pass by insensible gradations from one to the other, and which scientists tell us are due to the action of force vibrating with various degrees of rapidity. To the same cause we owe the threefold effect of the sun, reaching us in heat, light, and vivifying power. Surely, if nature furnishes any emblem of unity it is found in the great orb of day. Yet in its manifestation of being it presents us with One in Three and Three in One.' ‡ A simpler illustration is that afforded by a candle, with its flame and light and heat. Another obvious analogy is derived from the constitution of man himself, consisting of body, soul, and spirit (1 Thess. v. 23). A Persian Christian in conversation expressed a strong preference for the analogy of the sun over that of man's composite nature, on the ground that the elements of the solar trinity are necessarily co-existent and inseparably connected (*lā yunfakk*;

* *Punjāb Mission News*, Feb. 15, 1903, quoting the sermon of Dr. Alexander, Archbishop of Armagh, preached on the occasion of the visit of the British Association to Belfast.

† *St. Augustine; his Life and Times*, pp. 136, 137, by Rev. R. Wheler Bush.

‡ *Islām and Christianity*, by a Missionary, pp. 74, 75.

lāzim wa malzūm). In the case of man, however, it is not so: for reason may be lost and the man live on, and the body remains when life has departed. Perhaps the most striking analogy that can be brought forward from the world of nature is that of the polyp, 'a compound animal, the whole of whose parts are animated by a common principle of life and growth.' * The Oriental with his profound ignorance, in most cases, of natural science may find some difficulty in understanding the illustration; and indeed to give an intelligible explanation of it may possibly be rather a tax upon the powers of the teacher himself. Still we feel it must not be passed over here, and we cannot do better than give it in the words of Charles Kingsley, written to Mr. Thomas Cooper: 'Every comparative anatomist will tell you the exact contrary (viz. that "Three in One" is *not*, as some assert, "contrary to sense and experience"), that among the most common, though the most puzzling phenomena, is multiplicity in unity—divided life in the same individual of every extraordinary variety of case; that distinction of persons with unity of individuality (what the old Schoolmen properly called substance) is to be met with in some thousand species of animals, *e.g.* all the compound polypes; and that the soundest physiologists, like Huxley, are compelled to talk of these animals in metaphysic terms, just as paradoxical as, and almost identical with, those of the theologian. Ask them then, whether, granting one primordial Being Who has conceived and made all other beings, it is absurd to suppose in Him some law of multiplicity in unity, analogous to that on which He has constructed so many millions of His creatures.' †

(*c*) The second class of analogies are from things which, though essentially the same in substance, are capable of taking different shapes or forms under different conditions. As the analogies of the former class best illustrate the Three in One, so those of this latter are most appropriate as types and figures of the One in Three. The first two (i., ii.) of those given below are used by Ṣūfīs, to illustrate their pantheistic notions of the Deity. The two poetical extracts that follow later, translated from the Persian, are imbued with the same spirit. It is well known how widely spread are the tenets of the Ṣūfī sects in Persia, and how addicted to poetry are its people. The most distinguished among those Persians eminent for learning and genius who have adopted Ṣūfī opinions, are the poets.‡ 'The very essence of Ṣūfīism is poetry,' adds Sir John Malcolm.

(i.) Whether we speak of bubbles, waves, foam, spray or sea-water, all are essentially parts of the same sea (*'ain-i-daryā*).

(ii.) We may talk of the sea, rivers and streams, rain, steam, ice, the component gases of water, yet we are referring to one and the same thing.

* The *Imperial Dict.*, *s.v.* 'polyp.'
† Quoted in Hughes' *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Trinity.'
‡ Malcolm's *History of Persia*, vol. ii. p. 279 (ed. 1829).

(iii.) 'Does not water itself tell the same story, and, indeed, all matter in the three possible states, solid, liquid, and gaseous?' *

(iv.) 'The charcoal of our furnaces, the graphite of our lead pencils, the brilliant diamond, are but three forms of one and the same element, carbon.' †

(v.) Again, whether we say, the fire burns well, or the heat warms the room, or the wood is blazing, we refer to one and the same thing. In like manner you make mention of Ar-Raḥmān (the Merciful), or Ar-Razzāq (the Provider), or any other of the ninety-nine names or attributes of God: ‡ and we Christians believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: but neither you nor we have any thought of a plurality of gods, but mean one and the same God.

(vi.) The following is from the poet Hatif of Isfahān:—

Thus spake I in a church to a fascinating Christian. 'O thou who holdest my captive heart in thrall, O thou, with the warp of whose waist-cord every separate hair of mine is woven, till when wilt thou miss the road to the Unity?—how long cast the infamy of the Trinity upon the One? To the one true God how doth it become to give the names of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? Opening his lovely lips he thus addressed me (from his sweet mouth laughter rippled, and his lips dropped sugar), 'If thou knowest the mystery of the Unity, endorse not against us the charge of infidelity. In three mirrors did the Eternal Beloved cast the ray of His resplendent countenance. *Silk will not be three different things if you call it painted silk and silken cloth and silk brocade.*' Thus we conversed, when from a certain quarter the note of a Christian gong sounded loud. 'There is but One, and none other beside Him: He is the only One: there is no God but He.' §

* *Islām and Christianity*, by a Missionary, p. 75.

† *Id.*, *Ib.*

‡ Cp. Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, p. 141, *s.v.* 'God.'

§ Dar kalīsā bih dilbarī tarsā
Guftam, Ai dil bih dām-i-tu dar band!
Ai kih dārad bih tār-i-zunnār-at
Har sar-i-mū-ye man jidā paiwand!
Rah bih waḥdat na-yāftan tā kai?
Nang-i-Taslīṯ bar yekī tā chand?
Nām-i-Ḥaqq-i-yegāneh chūn shāyad
Kih Ab-o-Ibn-o-Rūḥ-i-Quds nihand?
Lab-i-shīrīn gushūd-o-bā man guft,
(Az shikar khandeh rīkht wa'z lab qand,)
Kih gar az sīrr-i-waḥdat āgāh-ī,
Tuhmat-i-kāfirī bih mā ma'p'sand:
Dar sih āīneh Shāhid-i-azalī
Partau az rū-ye-tābnāk afkand.
Sih na-gardad barīshum, ar ū-rā
Parniān khwānī-o-ḥarīr-o-parand.
Mā dar īn guftugū, kih az yek sū
Shud zi nāqūs īn tarāneh buland,
Kih yekī hast-o-hīch nīst jūz ū,
Waḥda-hu, lā ilāha illā hū.

The last four words, it will be observed, are almost identical with the first half of the Muḥammadan *Kalimah* or creed, *lā ilāha illā'llāh* = There is no deity but God.

(vii.) Extract from the *Dīwān* of Nāṣir-i-Khusrav-i-'Alawī:—

Everything that has become manifest in the world is from the reflected image of the Friend [*i.e.* God], be it mote, be it sun or moon, or friend or stranger.* On many-coloured latticed windows a single ray falls, hence infidelity and faith, church and mosque (*lit.* the temple at Mecca), the rosary [of the Muḥammadan], and the waistcord [of the Jew or Christian]. The Cup-bearer of the day of eternity [*i.e.* God] poured the dregs of His cup upon the earth, whence came the vine, grapes, wine, and the portion given to a friend. In the eternal past we delighted in profound secrets with the Friend: between us and Him the earthly body became a wall. Nāṣir [the poet's name] bites his lip with his teeth [a sign of repentance] for uttering things that should not be said. He repents. God forbid! (he says). He was frenzied. He has recovered his senses.' †

The figure of the sunlight shining through a parti-coloured window and falling in different shades of colour upon the ground may be used alone without the poet's elaborate extension of it, to illustrate the truth that the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity are one in Essence and are permanently manifested to us in different aspects and relations. (N.B.—Guard against Sabellianism here.)

(*d*) It may be necessary to guard against the supposition that by quoting such passages as the above we approve of the theology involved. The point is, that when the Ṣūfī, dissatisfied with a barren orthodoxy, begins to contemplate more deeply the nature of God, he appears to be driven to the view that God has manifested Himself in different ways and in manifold forms. We have here, therefore, in the speculations of the Ṣūfīs a point of comparison with the revelation of the personality and work of God made known to us in the Gospel, where the doctrine of the Trinity carries us much further than the bare monotheism of the Jews in understanding the nature and operations of the Supreme Being. The knowledge of God and the means of union with Him, which the Ṣūfī ignorantly strives after with the aid of the dim light of reason, has been revealed to man in the New Testament. The difference is that the Christian doctrine is founded upon God's

* Cp. what Malcolm says of the Persian Ṣūfīs: 'The Creator, according to their belief, is diffused over all His creation. He exists everywhere, and in everything.' And in a footnote he quotes the following from a Persian MS.: 'The creation,' say the Ṣūfīs, 'proceeded at once from the splendour of God, Who poured His spirit on the universe as the general diffusion of light is poured over the earth by the rising sun' (*History of Persia*, II. 269).

† Har chih dar 'ālam huwaidā shud, zi 'aks-i-Yār shud,
Zarreh shud, khurshīd-o-mah shud, yār shud, aghyār shud.
Dar mushabbakhā-ye-rangārang yek partau fitād,
Kufr-o-dīn, dair-o-ḥaram shud, subḥeh shud zunnār shud.
Sāqī-ye-rūz-i-azal tah-jur'eh-ī bar khāk rīkht,
Tāk shud, angūr shud, mai shud, nasīb-i-yār shud.
Dar azal bā Yār khush rāz-i-nahān-ī dāshtīm;
Jism-i-khākī dar mīān-i-mā wa ū dīwār shud.
Nāṣir az nā-guftanīhā lab bih dandān mīgazad—
Taubeh kard, astaghfiru'llāh, mast bud, hushyār shud.

Word, whereas the teaching of the Ṣūfī is the offspring of the human mind.

4. **Objection founded on St. John xvii. 21.**—Objection has been made by Muḥammadans to the doctrine of the Trinity on the ground of the words of Christ, 'Even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee,'* which they declare are incomprehensible. The illustration of a sponge in a basin of water, where simultaneously the sponge is in the water and the water in the sponge, has been found most helpful.† Perhaps the following considerations may be of service:—(*a*) The truth of the union of Christ and the believer ('He that abideth in Me, and I in him'‡) may prepare the way for the reception of the higher truth concerning the Father and the Son. To enable us to understand the former doctrine, Christ Himself uses the figure of the vine and the branches.§ The branches are in the vine, and the goodness and profit of the vine, which is worthless in itself as wood, are in the branches. (*b*) Many things are not realized or credited at the first hearing, until actually seen or experienced. (This may be illustrated from the railway or the telegraph.) Even then it is the fact only which is patent to the observer: the hidden causes and inner workings are not understood. It is thus with the mystical union between Christ and the believer. Practical experience solves the mystery, and further doubts and questionings cease. He who has by God's grace attained this blessed experience, will have little difficulty in acquiescing in the higher mystery, the union of Christ and God.

(D) THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY ACCORDANT WITH REASON.‖

Non-Christians are often repelled by the doctrine of the Trinity, which they conceive to be contrary to reason. Instead of meeting this attitude of mind with the assertion that the truth rests on the foundation of God's Word, and therefore must be true and must be accepted, endeavour to convince the doubter that it is in no wise contrary to the dictates and demands of sound reason.

(i.) '*There is no logical contradiction involved in the statement*, "There is but one God; yet in the Unity of the Godhead there are three consubstantial Persons."'

To affirm that three persons are one person, or three Gods are one God, would of course be to vitiate the laws of the understanding. But to affirm that in the composite Unity of the one God

* St. John xvii. 21.

† For both objection and illustration the writer is indebted to Dr. J. O. Summerhayes, formerly of the C.M.S., Quetta.

‡ St. John xv. 5.

§ Vers. 1-7.

‖ The following paragraphs contain an abstract of an article under the above title in the *Missionary*, June, 1853, pp. 165 sqq.

there is a plurality of subsistences and a diversity of operations on the part of these subsistences is in no way contrary to reason.

(ii.) '*The seeming contradiction is to be referred in a great measure to misconceptions about the word "Person"*'. Applied to finite creatures, it suggests separate existence—separation of substance. But applied to the divine Nature, it implies nothing beyond 'distinctness of deliberation, volition, operation, and mode of subsistence; those in whom such distinction resides being still united in one substance or essence.'

(iii.) '*We admit that the doctrine of the divine nature is a mystery.*' A very pertinent remark is quoted from M. Cocquerel's *Christianisme Experimental*: 'God is the only intelligent Being, for Whom no mystery exists. To be surprised, to be indignant at encountering mysteries, is to be surprised, is to be indignant at not being God.'

A mystery is a fact which lies on the borderland between the known and the unknown, neither totally beyond our cognizance nor fully grasped and comprehended. Of the fact itself there is no doubt. The nature, cause, analysis, explanation of the fact are quite beyond us. All nature is full of such mysteries. They confront us sooner or later in every science, *e.g.* in physics, the universal law of gravity; in organic chemistry, the vital force; in physiology, the transference of its intelligence by the sensorium to the mind; in moral philosophy, the nature of the will and how it comes to be affected by the intellect or the passions. This remains true, although the limits of knowledge may be carried forward. There will still be 'an Unknown pressing on the confines of the Known.'

'The Christian, therefore, when he finds the nature of God as revealed to him in Scripture to be mysterious- so that he cannot explain accurately wherein the union of the divine Persons consists, or what is the essence of Deity—is not surprised. He is but finding in the Creator the same limits to his power of comprehension which he had before found in all created things and in himself.'

Gregor. Naz., Orat. xxix. 4, says, 'Walk in the sunlight, but do not stand gazing at the sun; you will only blind yourself.'

(iv.) '*It was in the highest degree probable that the nature of God would contain some great mystery.*' Granted that we perfectly knew all mundane sciences till we mounted up to the one First Cause, would not Reason herself bid us stop here? We do not know what Spirit is. How impotent are we to grasp such ideas as Infinity, Eternity (past and future), etc.! It is only reasonable to suppose that if God should reveal to us anything about Himself 'such revelation would contain matter transcending our theoretical faculties, however available the knowledge might be in a practical way. For the finite, dependent being to expect to understand the nature of the Infinite and Self-existent would be most irrational.' *

* 'It is said that when St. Augustine was writing his discourse on the Trinity, he strolled by the seaside in meditation. There he saw a child digging

(v.) '*Reason itself makes it probable that part of the mystery of the divine Nature would be the existence of a plurality in the divine Unity.*'

'We do not base our belief upon any reasoning process,' but assert that in viewing what purports to be a divine revelation, Reason not only acquiesces in it, 'but positively *desiderates* some such mystery as revelation supplies.'

(1) Reason demands as one of the perfections of the divine Nature that it should be infinitely and perpetually '*energizing*.' It must, therefore, necessarily have something to act upon; and as we cannot allow an eternity of matter, 'what remains then but that the divine Nature should possess in itself as one of its necessary and inherent perfections a plurality of distinctions?'

(2) This comes out more clearly from considering the attribute of Benevolence. 'God is love.' 'He was not, as the heathen say, in a sleep or torpor; He was energizing love from all eternity. But love requires an object to be loved; and, as we have already seen, Reason precludes us from admitting that object to be aught but a co-existence internal to the divine Nature itself. Revelation alone supplies the requisitions of enlightened Reason' (St. John xvii. 24).

(3) 'The rational knowledge we have of God is derived by inferences from what we find in ourselves.' Apply this to the question of Felicity. 'We all agree that the highest happiness of life consists in the affection of friends based upon conformity of temper, thoughts and inclinations.' Separate existence hinders that complete interchange of thought and feeling. 'Perfect felicity, therefore, requires (so far as human reason can judge) a plurality of persons, between whom there is the purest harmony of thought, will, and affection, and who are indivisibly united in one nature and essence.'

(4) Reason also suggests that there must be an infinite difference, not only in degree (which is the distinction between finite and infinite), but also in kind, 'infinitely transcending the difference between the vegetable and animal, or the irrational and rational.' This difference must be not only mysterious, but absolutely incomprehensible to the highest created intelligence.

Now, the idea of Oneness is most easily comprehensible. 'Yet Reason demands that God should be both essentially One and Incomprehensible. How is this to be compassed unless He be (as revelation states Him to be) One involving many, possessing a combination of Unity and Plurality which must for ever, and unmistakably, distinguish the divine existence from that of all dependent beings?'

(vi.) '*Though Reason does not imperatively demand that such*

a hole in the sand, and then attempting to fill it with sea-water by means of a shell. In answer to the student, the child said he intended thus to empty the great deep. "Impossible!" said Augustine. "Not more impossible," replied the little one, "than for you to explain the mystery of the Trinity."'—Nye, *Anecdotes on Bible Texts; St. Matthew*, p. 126.

plurality should be a Trinity, yet she readily assents to and confirms the statement that it is so.'

'For she can only devise three principles to be (if we may so speak) impersonated in the divine Being, viz. Originating Will, Effluent Wisdom, reflecting back the "express image" of the Father's purpose, and Operative Energy, proceeding from, and in perfect combination with, both the eternal Will and Wisdom.'

Illustrations.—The sun: the orb, the originator of light and heat; the body of rays, ever issuing in an uninterrupted stream from it; and heat and illumination conveyed by the rays from the orb. This is an analogy, but not a perfect one.

Again, 'A single ray of light may be decomposed by the prism into three coloured rays—red, yellow and blue' (Sir D. Brewster). 'It is found, too, that these spectral rays differ in their operation, the blue having the greatest intensity of chemical power, the yellow of light, the red of heat—power, illumination and heat.' Who could have discovered this by reason? Yet Reason readily acquiesces in the fact, though inexplicable. Reason, therefore, unfettered and unprejudiced, will 'learn to distinguish generally between things *contrary* to reason and things inexplicable to reason; between having *evidence for a fact* and being able to form a distinct analysis, conception, or hypothesis about every part of such fact.'

(vii.) '*It is a matter of historical fact that the Reason of mankind has very largely acquiesced in the Doctrine of a Tri-unity.*'

What is here alluded to is not the *Trimurti* of the Hindūs, or the *Triglaf* of the Northmen, notable as they are, but the fact that so many Christian believers have found their highest joy and consolation in this truth, and have felt it their duty not to conceal it at the very time when they were suffering martyrdom for their protest against polytheism. Burnet ('On the Thirty-Nine Articles') mentions another reason, which might have induced the believers to conceal or deny the doctrine of the Trinity, *unless* they were absolutely convinced of it, viz. the handle it would give to their opponents of charging them with blasphemous inventions, of a man being God and God having a son.

The article, of which the above is a summary, closes with the following words:—

Nothing would be easier than to win proselytes among the Hindūs and Muḥammadans if only this doctrine of the Trinity were given up. But we know that if we gave up that, we should be giving up everything for which we desire them to become Christians. We should be giving up that which is inseparably wrapped up in the contents of both Old and New Testaments; which gives meaning to the whole plan of salvation: that without which even Reason feels that she has not a God worthy of her aspiration, and which Faith clings to as her dearest treasure, her hold upon eternal realities, her pledge of progress in knowledge, and love, and holiness, and felicity through endless ages.

CHAPTER III.

GOD THE FATHER. CHRISTIAN AND MUḤAMMADAN CONCEPTIONS OF GOD.

'THE God of Islām is undoubtedly the only true God, inasmuch as He is represented as a personal God, the Creator and Preserver of all things, as a prayer-hearing God, and as possessing many other characteristics of the God of the Bible.' * But on the other side it may rightly be urged that the Muḥammadan portrayal of the attributes and operations of the Deity is so faulty and inconsistent with, or contrary to, that which is revealed in the Bible, that the reader of the Qur'ān cannot thereby arrive at the knowledge of the One true God as He really is. Thus Leupolt says, 'The Muḥammadan creed contains nearly all the various truths and attributes of God which are revealed in the Old Testament. But these truths are so mingled with error, and these attributes of God are so erroneously stated in the Qur'ān and in the Traditions, that although the God of the Bible and the God of the Qur'ān are nominally the same, yet, in reality, they are as different from each other as light is from darkness; and no Muḥammadan who believes the whole Qur'ān can at the same time have the knowledge of the true God.' †

(A) THE MUḤAMMADAN IDEA OF GOD.

Much has been written about the Muḥammadan idea of God. The student of the subject will find that, though in the words of the Qur'ān, 'Our God and your God is one,' ‡ there is much in the Muḥammadan picture that is new and strange to the Christian mind, and that the points where the Muḥammadan doctrine differs from the Christian may be classified in two broad divisions as

* From the note by Wherry to Sale's *Preliminary Discourse*, p. 118. See also the rest of the note. Other authorities consulted in the preparation of the following pages are Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'God'; Arnold, *Ishmael*, Pt. II. chap. iv.; Leupolt, *Recollections of an Indian Missionary*, Pt. I. chap. ii.; and an able review of Zwemer's *The Moslem Doctrine of God*, in the *Punjāb Mission News* for Dec. 15, 1905.

† *Recollections of an Indian Missionary*, p. 21.

‡ Sūr. 29 *'Ankabūt*, 45.

either (1) erroneous, or (2) deficient. The former will include not only incorrect and mistaken views about God, but also that which misses the mark by the destruction of the harmony and due proportion which exist among the various attributes of God. We shall also find that when we come later to consider the best ways of dealing with the Muḥammadan in reference to this momentous subject, the same general classification will serve to guide us as to the best course to pursue.

1. **Erroneous features.**—(*a*) Of all the attributes of God, the most prominent in the Muḥammadan conception of Him is His omnipotence. A large proportion of the ninety-nine 'excellent names' of God will be found to refer to this one attribute under one aspect or another.* It is not too much to say that in the Qur'ān the omnipotence of God is so far exalted as to overshadow all His other attributes. The words of the Muḥammadan creed, 'There is no God but God,' do not only deny the existence of any other deity, or any plurality in the Deity, but also, understood in their full sense in Arabic and among Arabs, imply, as Palgrave says, 'that this one Supreme Being is also the only Agent, the only Force, the only Act existing throughout the universe.' A little further on the same writer describes Him as 'this tremendous Autocrat,' and the system in which He is the presiding figure as 'the pantheism of Force, or of Act, thus exclusively assigned to God, Who absorbs it all, exercises it all, and to Whom alone it can be ascribed, whether for preserving or for destroying, for relative evil or for equally relative good.' †

(*b*) It seems to follow necessarily from the above that the God of the Qur'ān is the author of both good and evil, sin and holiness; and such we find him to be. 'The fate of every man have we bound about his neck.' ‡ 'Whomsoever God shall direct, he *will be rightly* directed; and whomsoever He shall lead astray, they shall perish.' § 'Shall he, therefore, for whom his evil work hath been prepared, and who imagineth it to be good, be as he who is rightly disposed and discerneth the truth? Verily, God will cause to err whom He pleaseth, and will direct whom He pleaseth.' ‖ The following tradition gives a similar picture of the Deity in even more vivid colours. 'One day a dispute arose in Heaven between Adam and Moses. Moses said, "Thou art that Adam who committed sin, and involved the whole human race in misery." Adam replied, "And thou art that Moses who killed an Egyptian, and yet thou wast the friend of God. When thou copiedst the Pentateuch from the original, which is kept in Heaven, pray how many years before my existence was it written that Adam should sin?" Moses

* A list of these names will be found in Hughes' *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'God,' pp. 141, 142; and in Wherry's Ed. of Sale's *Qur'ān*, Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 181, note.
† Quoted by Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'God,' p. 147.
‡ Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'īl*, 14; and Wherry, *in loc.*
§ Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 179.
‖ Sūr. 35 *Fāṭir*, 9.

replied, "Forty years." "Well," said Adam, "if it was decreed forty years before my creation that I should sin, why blamest thou me for doing that which I was necessitated to do?"' Upon this, God is said to have turned round and approved of Adam's reply.*

(*c*) Predestination, again, is closely associated with the same irresponsible omnipotence of God. 'The fatalism of Islām . . . is . . . a far more pronounced expression of God's foreknowledge than Western Calvanism.' † The writer of the able review of Dr. Zwemer's book, who quotes this opinion of the author's, properly reminds us that 'the more objectionable form of' this fatalism 'belongs to the Traditions,' and enters his protest against the tendency to make an unfair use of them in controversy, while he admits their place in the Islāmic scheme, and their influence in moulding and forming character. Wisely does he counsel us to abandon the doubtful plan of laying stress on the Traditions, and in a chivalrous and truly charitable spirit seek to judge the system of Islām rather at its source. It may be added, that in the opinion of the two native gentlemen, to whose assistance the writer has been so largely indebted, unwelcome traditions, if unsupported by chapter and verse, will be stoutly denied and refused by the Muḥammadan. In like manner the Sunnī will decline to accept Shī'ah traditions as arguments, and *vice versâ*, if it suits the purpose of either to do so. This is so obvious that further stress need not be laid upon it. It serves, however, to emphasize the need of wisdom and restraint in the use of the Traditions.

As our immediate need here is rather to give a just view of Mūslim belief than to provide material for the controversialist, the quotation of the following tradition may perhaps be permitted. 'When God resolved to create the human race, He took into His hands a mass of earth, the same whence all mankind were to be formed, and in which they after a manner pre-existed; and having then divided the clod into two equal portions, He threw the one half into hell, saying, "These to eternal fire, and I care not"; and projected the other half into heaven, adding, "And these to Paradise, I care not."' (*Mishkātu'l-Maṣābīḥ*, Bābu'l-Qadr). On this Palgrave remarks—

> Commentary would here be superfluous. But in this we have before us the adequate idea of predestination, or, to give it a truer name, predamnation, held and taught in the school of the Qur'ān. Paradise and hell are at once totally independent of love and hatred on the part of the Deity, and of merits or demerits, of good or evil conduct on the part of the creature. ‡

The question of predestination is less suitable than other points

* *Mishkātu'l-Maṣābīḥ*, quoted by Leupolt, *Recollections of an Indian Missionary*, pp. 21, 22.

† Review of Dr. Zwemer's *The Moslem Doctrine of God*.

‡ Palgrave, *Central and Eastern Arabia*, vol. i., quoted by Hughes, *Dict. of Islam*, *s.v.* 'God,' p. 148.

to bring forward when discussing with Muḥammadans the different conceptions of the Supreme Being presented by Islām and the Christian religion, because of the inherent difficulty of the subject, and the different opinions in vogue among Muḥammadans themselves as to predestination and free-will. The Shī'ahs, by allowing some place to the free agency of man, occupy a middle position between the orthodox fatalists and the sectaries who believe in man's absolute free-will. The Sunnīs hold that no Muḥammadan will be finally left in hell—the minimum requisite for a Muslim to enjoy the position of a true believer being the simple recitation of the Kalimah. According to the obvious sense of Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 72, 'There shall be none of you but shall approach near the same,' the commentators admit that all Muslims will pass by or through hell, but to those who have not committed great sins it will be cool and pleasant, or, according to other writers, they will simply pass over the different regions along the bridge Ṣirāṭ. The author of the *Sharḥu'l-Mawāqif* says that all those [Muslims] who are sinners and have committed great sins (*kabā'ir*) will go to hell, but they will not remain therein for ever, in agreement with Sūr. 99 *Zalzalah*, 7: 'And whoever shall have wrought good of the weight of an ant, shall behold the same.' * The Shī'ahs, agreeably to their own special views, couple belief in 'Alī with the orthodox confession of faith as necessary to secure deliverance from the pains of hell. No Shī'ah, they believe, will go there, because God's mercy is greater than His wrath, in accordance with the traditionary prayer addressed to Him, 'whose mercy outstrips His wrath.' † With this should be compared Sūr. 39 *Zumar*, 54, 'Say, O my servants who have transgressed against your own souls, despair not of the mercy of God, seeing that God forgiveth all sins, for he is gracious *and* merciful,' and the famous Shī'ah tradition, 'How am I to deal with a handful of earth [*i.e.* human beings], except it be to forgive?' ‡ The origin of this tradition is said to have been as follows: Muḥammad was asked whether God ever spoke by the mouth of any of the prophets in Persian, as He spoke through Moses in Hebrew, through Jesus in Aramaic, and through Muḥammad himself in Arabic; and in reply he adduced this verse which, he alleged, God addressed to him on the night of the Mi'rāj. These last two quotations go to show that (according to the Qur'ān) there is ground for hoping that God's mercy will be extended to all men, even idolaters and (as the Shī'ahs would say) Sunnīs.

(*d*) To return from this digression. The mercy of God, to which there is frequent allusion among Muḥammadans, no other attribute except His greatness being so often mentioned, is a very different quality from the compassion and tender mercy of God so often set forth in the Biblical revelation of Himself. It is a true remark that has been made, that on the showing of Islām, God's

* Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Hell,' pp. 172, 173.
† *Yā man sabaqat raḥmatu-hu ghaẓaba-hu.*
‡ *Chūn kunam bā musht-i-khāk jūz ān-kih bi-āmurzam?*

mercy is chiefly manifested in saving all Muslims, however wicked they may have been, from the punishment due to their sins, rather than as being the ground of sinful man's present repentance and future hope.* Again, it is true, as Leupolt points out, that every Sūrah (chapter of the Qur'ān) begins with the words, 'In the name of the most merciful God.' 'But,' he adds, 'the same Qur'ān says that God created beings for the purpose of coming into this world to commit sin, and to be cast hereafter into hell.' † The torments of hell are thus described in Sūr. 37 *Ṣāffāt*, 62–66:—

> It [Al Zaqqūm] is a tree which issueth from the bottom of hell: the fruit thereof resembleth the heads of devils; and *the damned* shall eat of the same, and shall fill *their* bellies therewith. And *there shall be given* them thereon a mixture of filthy and boiling water to drink; afterwards shall they return into hell.

How is this consistent with the character of a merciful God?

(*e*) One of the ninety-nine names of God is the Holy (*Al Quddūs*). But no prominence is given to this attribute, and it falls altogether short of the holiness of the God of the Bible. The unpardonable sins in the Qur'ān are idolatry, polytheism, and the rejection of Muḥammad as a Heaven-sent prophet. For these no denunciation can be too strong, and no punishment too severe. 'The allusions to hell in the Makkan Sūrahs are brief, and are in every case directed against unbelievers in the Prophet's mission, and not against sin; *e.g.* Sūrah ix. 69: "God hath promised to the hypocrites [*i.e.* dissemblers as far as Islām was concerned], men and women, and unto the unbelievers, hell-fire to dwell therein for ever."' ‡ But we miss in the Qur'ān the exalted expressions in which God's holiness is declared to us in the Old Testament, *e.g.*: 'Thou that art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and that canst not look on perverseness'; § 'The heavens are not clean in His sight'; ‖ 'His angels He chargeth with folly'; ¶ 'Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate!' **

And not only so. God's holiness is positively lowered in our eyes by other characteristics attributed to Him in the religion of Islām which are inconsistent with the idea of an absolutely holy God.

(i.) His justice is capricious. Here again we are indebted to the Traditions for the more pronounced and lurid shades of the picture.

'God's justice,' says Leupolt, 'is represented as partial.

* The *Missionary*, vol. iv. pt. 4, art. v., pp. 311 sqq., 'Account of a Public Discussion at Agra between the Rev. C. G. Pfander and Moulvee Rahmat Ullah.—Agra, 1854,' by 'S. S.'

† *Recollections*, p. 22. Cp. Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 180: 'Moreover, we have created for hell many of the genii and of men.'

‡ Hughes, *Dict. of Islam*, *s.v.* 'Hell,' p. 171.

§ Hab. i. 13.

‖ Job xv. 15.

¶ Job iv. 18.

** Jer. xliv. 4.

Friends and favourites are allowed many things which would be punished in others; and many sinful and absurd stories are told to prove this fact.' He then quotes the following tradition of Muḥammad: 'A certain sinner, having slain ninety-nine persons, thought of doing works of repentance. On this account he left his village, and on his way he met a certain darwīsh, whom he asked whether he thought that the door of repentance was still open for him. The darwīsh replied, "I cannot say whether it is still open for such a sinner as yourself." Upon this the sinner killed him and went on. Meeting another man, he asked the same question. But he, knowing the sinner, replied, "I am not skilled in learning; go to the next village; there lives a holy man who can tell thee." The sinner set out for that village, but, death coming upon him as he went, he died. Instantly the angel of death and the angel of mercy presented themselves before the throne of God, each claiming the body and soul of the man. The one stated that the man had been an enormous sinner; and the other pleaded the mercy of God. God said, "Proceed to the earth, and measure the distances between the body and the two villages. If the body be nearer the place to which he intended to go, the body shall belong to the angel of mercy, for then the man intended to repent, and I will accept his intention for the deed; but should he be nearer to the village from whence he proceeded, he shall belong to the angel of death." The two angels obeyed; but, before they could reach the earth, God had preceded them, and removed the one village a mile back. On measuring, therefore, the distances, the angels found that the body lay a span nearer the village to which the man intended to go. He therefore went to heaven.' On this Leupolt remarks, 'Thus, to save His favourite, God is represented as disregarding His justice, and deceiving His own angels.'*

Leupolt also tells the following, which he describes as 'one of the most sinful stories' he had read in the Traditions. 'There was once a holy man, who did nothing but works of righteousness, and a certain sinner who did nothing but sin; these were two friends. The holy man continually admonished the sinner to repent, lest God should close the door of repentance. But the sinner would not. When he had one day committed an enormous sin, the holy man said, "God will surely not pardon thee, if thou actest thus." The sinner replied, "Leave this to God and me." At this moment they both died. Coming before the throne of judgment, God asked the holy man, "Can I save this man?" He replied, "Thou art Almighty, and canst do what Thou pleasest." To this God replied, "Well"; and turning to the sinner He said, "Go thou into heaven," and to the righteous, "Go thou into hell."'†

(ii.) Again, God's favour is represented as partial, being limited

* *Recollections*, pp. 22, 23.
† *Ib.*, pp. 23, 24.

to Muslims, no matter what their character may be, even the infants of unbelievers being relegated to hell fire. *

(iii.) One of God's 'excellent names' is the Truth (*Al Ḥaqq*); but truth is sacrificed by Islām's justification of the denial of one's faith in self-defence, and the approval of lying if it be to preserve life or property or for the advancement of Islām.† In support of *the first* may be adduced the words of the Qur'ān, 'Whoever denieth God, after he hath believed, except him who shall be compelled against his will, and whose heart continueth steadfast in the faith, *shall be severely chastised.*' ‡ Though this passage encourages Muḥammadans to dissemble their faith under pressure, yet in justice to them it should be added, that 'it is unanimously agreed by the Muḥammadan doctors to be much more meritorious and pleasing in the sight of God courageously and nobly to persist in the true faith, and rather to suffer death itself than renounce it even in words.' §

2. **Deficiencies.**—From that which is erroneous in the Muḥammadan presentation of the attributes of God, we have now to pass in review the chief points wherein the Muḥammadan conception of God is deficient.

'The attributes of God have been divided into *moral* and *metaphysical*; the moral attributes comprise His holiness, justice, mercy and truth; whilst His metaphysical perfections refer to the *physical* world and are known as His omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, and eternity. All these perfections are revealed in the Bible in due proportion, and (what is more important) in perfect harmony with each other. But the Qur'ān passes over the moral attributes and treats almost exclusively of the metaphysical perfections of the Godhead; thus producing a fearfully distorted image of the divine Nature.' ‖ Now, it is in the doctrine of the Trinity and all that is involved therein touching the divine scheme for the redemption of fallen man, that the moral attributes of God—His love, His holiness, His justice, and His mercy, are most clearly displayed in their harmonious working. And hence it is a natural consequence of Islām's 'obstinate and impious rejecting of the Trinity' ¶ that these attributes occupy so small a space in its delineation of the adorable perfections of the divine Nature. To explain in detail—

(*a*) Dr. Zwemer rightly considers 'the almost complete absence of love as a moving principle in creation and the divine government' to be one of the chief deficiencies in the Muslim idea of God.** Among His ninety-nine names we do indeed find such as

* Wherry's note to Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 118.

† See Wherry on Sūr. 16 *Naḥl*, 108; and his note to Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 118.

‡ Sūr. 16 *Naḥl*, 108.

§ Sale, *in loc. cit.*

‖ Arnold's *Ishmael*, pp. 486, 487.

¶ Sale, *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 118.

** Review of Zwemer's *The Moslem Doctrine of God.*

the Loving (*Al-Wadūd*) and the Kind (*Ar-Ra'ūf*). And Imām al Ghazzālī says of Him, 'Loving-kindness, the showing favour and grace, and beneficence, belong to Him.'* But, as remarked above when speaking of His mercy, the blessings derived from the exhibition of these divine qualities are confined to Muslims, if perhaps we except God's kindness shown in the bestowal of His gifts of Nature to all mankind, unbelievers and idolaters as well as Muslims. And further, 'widely different from Allāh, Jehovah in the administration of His providence "declares His almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity."'† How touching is His compassion towards Israel! How tender is His solicitude that His people should walk in right paths! He led His people 'like a flock, by the hand of Moses and Aaron.'‡ 'His tender mercies are over all His works.'§ His name and nature are love,‖ and within the arms of that love are embraced the whole human family. He 'willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.'¶ He is 'longsuffering . . . not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.'** But unfortunately for Muḥammadans, the Qur'ān with its 'wrong idea of absolute monism in the Deity,'†† and in its efforts to represent God as an incomprehensibly powerful Deity, and its ignorance of His moral perfections set forth in the Bible and most chiefly shown in the plan of salvation explained therein, 'withholds the gracious and loving attributes of God; hence the frigid nature of Islāmism.'‡‡

(*b*) The Fatherhood of God is unknown in Muḥammadan theology, whether within the Deity Himself, or in reference to believers, whom God is pleased to call, and treat as 'sons.' 'I . . . will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to Me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.'§§ 'God sent forth His Son . . . that we might receive the adoption of sons.'‖‖ 'It is for chastening that ye endure; God dealeth with you as with sons.'¶¶

(*c*) An inadequate conception of God's holiness, coupled with an imperfect realization of the nature of guilt and sin, and of the requirements of divine justice, have led to another deplorable omission in the doctrinal edifice of Islām, namely, the absence of any atonement for sin. In fact, the association of any vicarious element with the idea of sacrifice is carefully excluded in the following verses of the Qur'ān, whether Muḥammad's primary object may, or may not, have been to guard his followers from the rites of the pagan Arabs:—

* From his *Maqṣadu'l-asnā*. See Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* pp. 144, 146.

† Arnold's *Ishmael*, p. 439.

‡ Ps. lxx. 20.

§ Ps. cxlv. 9.

‖ 1 St. John iv. 8.

¶ 1 Tim. ii. 4.

** 2 St. Peter iii. 9.

†† Zwemer's *Raymund Lull*, p. 139.

‡‡ Arnold's *Ishmael*, p. 438.

§§ 2 Cor. vi. 18.

‖‖ Gal. iv. 4, 5.

¶¶ Heb. xii. 7.

The camels *slain for sacrifice* have we appointed for you as symbols of your obedience unto God; ye *also* receive *other* advantages from them. Wherefore commemorate the name of God over them *when ye slay them*, standing on their feet disposed in right order, and when they are fallen down *dead* eat of them, and give to eat *thereof both* unto him who is content *with what is given him without asking*, and unto him who asketh. Thus have we given you dominion over them, that ye might return *us* thanks. Their flesh is not accepted by God, neither their blood, but your piety is accepted of Him.*

It is, indeed, hard to see the place or need for any atonement in such a system as Islām, where unbelievers and idolaters are *ipso facto* excluded from all hope of heaven, and where, subject to the proviso that no Muslims will be finally lost, salvation depends upon the mercy of God and the performance of good works, and the preponderance of good works over evil ones, which will be determined by the weighing of the books wherein they are separately recorded, at the Judgment Day. And as though this were not enough, it is also believed that the evil deeds of Muḥammadans will be credited to the unbelievers, and the merit of the good deeds of unbelievers assigned to the 'faithful.' 'In thus destroying the glorious harmony of the divine perfections, the Qur'ān deprives the sinner of all true comfort, as well as of every incentive to a holy life.' †

(*d*) No article of the Christian Faith was further beyond the spiritual horizon of the Prophet of Arabia, or more strenuously denied by him, than the Incarnation. Hence Muḥammadans know nothing of the supreme manifestation of divine love; and the cardinal point in the divine scheme of rescuing man from his fallen state and restoring God's image in him, is hidden from their eyes, and brings no tender, affecting influences to bear upon their hearts.

(*e*) And lastly, Muḥammadan theology not only knows nothing of the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of true believers, as Guide, Teacher, and Sanctifier, but has actually transferred the name to the angel Gabriel, who is several times spoken of in the Qur'ān under this appellation.

(B) ERROR AND DEFICIENCY SUGGEST THEIR OWN APPROPRIATE REMEDIES.

1. In the preceding pages the attempt has been made to explain briefly and clearly the main elements of error or deficiency in the Muḥammadan idea of God. If a correct account has there been given, its proper effect upon us should be to forewarn us to expect to find those views in vogue among the Muḥammadans

* Sūr. 22 *Ḥajj*, 38, 39; and Wherry, *in loc.*
† Arnold's *Ishmael*, p. 488.

in the midst of whom our lot is cast, to lead us to be on the watch for suitable opportunities of correcting or supplementing their imperfect conceptions, and to a large extent to forearm and prepare us for making use of our opportunities in the best way.

2. As throughout our controversial encounters with Muḥammadans, so here again particularly we shall do well to remind ourselves of the following weighty words of Dr. George Smith:—

> All controversy, from P. H. Xavier's time to Martyn's, Wilson's, and Pfander's, shows that the key of the position is not the doctrine of the Trinity, as the Shī'ah Mujtahids of Shīrāz and Lucknow and the Sunnīs everywhere make it, but the genuineness and integrity of the Scriptures, by which the truth of the whole Christian faith will follow, the Trinity included.*

There are indeed many vital questions at issue between us and the Muḥammadan, but in place of the separate discussion of these we may and should consistently and persistently go back a step to the primary and comprehensive question of the genuineness and validity of our sacred Scriptures, on which all our doctrines rest. If they are above suspicion, we must unhesitatingly believe all they contain. And as to their acceptance, the whole consensus of Christian opinion is not to be lightly set aside as a thing of no account by bald, unsupported assertion. Both our positive right to adduce the evidence of the Scriptures is to be steadily maintained, and also the equally emphatic duty on the part of the Muḥammadan to acknowledge and admit that evidence as of paramount authority, until he can conclusively prove that it is unworthy of confidence. In practice, it is true, we often find it expedient to temporarily forgo our right, to justify the faith we hold, and produce our cause and bring forth our strong reasons,† in order to prove that the truth of the matter is with us. But we need to be ever on our guard against conceding to the Muḥammadan the right to require proof from us. And so in the case before us, of the being and attributes of God, it is more than commonly important to make our appeal to 'what is written,' ‡ and more than usual is perhaps to be lost by the discussion of our conflicting views on the implied assumption that the bases of both are equally authoritative; just as we might dispassionately discuss the respective merits of, let us say, a couple of horses, each of which might be presumed to possess as good a claim as the other to be considered on its own merits a first-rate steed. This mistake, it is to be feared, is often made. But because the Qur'ān claims to be a later and superior revelation, and is honestly regarded to be such by Muslims, it by no means follows that fairness to our opponents requires us to tacitly proceed upon this

* George Smith's *Henry Martyn*, p. 416.

† Isa. xli. 21.

‡ St. Luke x. 26.

assumption. Since the Qur'ān contains an admittedly later revelation, the Muslim has not merely to justify his claims that it supersedes and abrogates the previous revelation, but to show cause why it should be considered a revelation at all.*

3. While the position above indicated is the strongest and most correct for us to take up, it will not be found possible in practice to adhere to it rigidly and unbendingly. It would not be wise to press the Muḥammadan too closely at the outset even on the question of the authenticity of the Scriptures. He may adopt the Agrippine attitude, 'With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian.' † He may rather be left to ponder over what has been said, without immediately pressing it to the bitter conclusion. Perhaps he will desire to waive the question for the time being and request to hear what further we have to say to establish and recommend our opinions. The invitation may be readily complied with, and our cause still further strengthened by showing that our views not only challenge acceptance with the clear strong voice of unimpeachable authority, but also appeal to heart and reason.

4. When this stage has been reached in discussion, the very points of difference in the Muḥammadan and Christian ideas of God, as classified above, will serve to indicate the lines on which to proceed. The erroneous statement and the existence of imperfect knowledge themselves suggest their own appropriate remedies, namely, the rectification of the false by means of the true, and the dissipation of ignorance in the light of knowledge. Without any doubt the latter method of procedure is both simpler and easier. For the Muḥammadan no doubt believes his conception of God, erroneous though it is, to be the true one; nay, he is often most zealous and enthusiastic on behalf of it, and prepared stoutly to defend and uphold it. In spite of all that, the Christian will not be afraid of crossing swords with him nor shrink from the privilege of boldly and faithfully exposing error, when duty and policy summon him to do so. It is, however, a much more congenial employment to endeavour to show the Muḥammadan how much he loses through his imperfect views of the Deity, and how much the Almighty has revealed to us in the Bible and more especially in the New Testament, that exactly corresponds with the needs of human hearts, and can satisfy them as nothing else can. In both cases, whether combating error or striving to repair and make good deficiency, but in the latter chiefly, we shall find that many appeals lie to heart and conscience: and we shall be encouraged and emboldened herein to strive to declare 'the whole counsel of

* The Rev. T. Davis, Bombay, finds the following challenge, 'if led up to in a quiet, friendly way,' most effective with some of the Maulawīs, who, when discussing before others, 'love to extol the monotheistic virtues of the Qur'ān': 'Mention *one doctrine only* of monotheism revealed in the Qur'ān which is not revealed in the Mosaic writings' (*C.M.S. Report*, 1896–7, p. 249).

† Acts xxvi. 28.

God' * by the thought that the true conception of God is the very thing needed by the creatures whom He has made 'in His own image' † and created for Himself, and that the Holy Spirit's influence is able to break down every wall that ignorance or prejudice has raised.

(C) CONSIDERATIONS CALCULATED TO PROMOTE IN THE MUḤAMMADAN A FAVOURABLE DISPOSITION TOWARDS THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD.

1. Since the imperfections in the Muḥammadan idea of God suggest their own remedy, and the proper lines on which to proceed in correcting them, it is not thought necessary to pursue the subject further, with one exception—The Fatherhood of God. This great and blessed truth is more particularly a cause of stumbling to Muḥammadans. The mere mention of the Fatherhood of God is repugnant to their notions and offensive to their ears, because they think of it only in a gross and carnal sense, and are unaware of the true meaning attached to it in connexion with the eternal Sonship of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

2. With regard to the Fatherhood of God in connexion with the adoptive sonship of the believer, 'this, of course, is, in a certain sense, only a figure of speech. No one attaches to it precisely the same meaning as belongs to the notion of a father among men and other material creatures. But it is used in the metaphysical sense to denote a relationship, a kinship between the Deity and mankind, and an imparting of the divine Spirit to men, of which no other word could convey an equally adequate expression.' ‡ In the conception of God as our heavenly Father, rightly explained and understood, there is very much that is peculiarly attractive and that must appeal to every heart, while the conception itself is within the grasp of the comprehension of all, even the youngest and least educated. It is an easy transition from 'No one loves like a father' to 'No one can be so infinitely tender and loving as the great God, Who calls Himself our Father and us His children.' The Rev. A. R. Blackett writes: 'The other afternoon, a poor fellow awaiting a serious operation told me that the old man with him was his father, and added that no one was so "heart-burning" (compassionate) as a father—which afforded a splended start for a talk about the better Father in heaven.' § Thus, when the welcome opening comes, we may explain how, when we accept Christ, we are recovered from our lost and fallen condition, and exalted to the adoption of sons.‖

* Acts xx. 27.
† Gen. i. 27.
‡ Chancellor P. V. Smith, in the *Churchman*, Jan., 1904.
§ Annual Letter, 1897.
‖ Gal. iv. 5; Eph. i. 5.

3. On the one hand, the earthly father's love is a parable of the vastly greater love of our heavenly Father towards His children. But over and above this, the earthly connexion with its fulness of tender association helps us to realize something of the divine love eternally existent between the First and Second Persons of the ever Blessed Trinity. This relationship within the Deity is of a high and spiritual nature, and exceeds the loftiest earthly conception of fatherhood and sonship.

4. Then, when we are told that this Supreme Being Himself loves us with a fatherly love, our hearts comprehend something of what this means from our familiarity with the earthly love which we have felt or experienced. The knowledge of the Great Father in Heaven ordering all things for the best for the welfare of His children, will give a peace and trust that nothing else can, and stimulate courage and effort, while inspiring hope and patience. Widely different from this is the fatalistic idea, that what is to be will be and that there is no power to resist it, with its paralyzing, deadening tendencies. Such a creed may fortify and steady the soul of man in adversity, but it knows nothing of the buoyancy and living power that Christian faith in the loving Father imparts.

5. Three practical results follow from this comforting view of the relationship in which Almighty God has been pleased to place Himself with reference to His creatures who know and love Him.

(i.) *Prayer* will be the outpouring of the heart to God in child-like confidence and openness, not the bare reiteration or the ostentatious repetition of forms and phrases,* in which our heavenly Father has no pleasure, and from which but little satisfaction is to be derived.

(ii.) (iii.) *Love to God and man.* In reference to these, a few words from a writer already quoted may suffice here :—

> Islām. in consequence of its denial of the Fatherhood of God, can only very imperfectly grasp the two great commandments of the Gospel, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,' and 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'† and the essential dignity of every member of the human race as the offspring of God. Islām grasps them to a certain extent, for it repudiates the degrading system of caste, which is an integral part of Hindūism, and it does not inflict on Muslim widows the life-long torture of a despised and down trodden widowhood, which is one of the worst curses of Hindūism. But in its general degradation of women, and in its toleration, and even encouragement of slavery and traffic in slaves, it shows that Christ's teaching of the Fatherhood of God cannot be rejected without a corresponding grievous declension from the standard of Christian ethics.‡

* St. Matt. vi. 5–8.
† St. Matt. xxii. 37–39.
‡ Chancellor P. V. Smith, in the *Churchman*, Jan., 1904.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

'Our prophet does all for us,' the Muḥammadans say; but I am able to tell them he could never say four things of himself which Christ said: 'I am (1) the Door of heaven, (2) the Light of the world, (3) the Resurrection and the Life, (4) the Rest-giver to all earth's burdened ones.'—*Bishop French.**

General.

1. The subject of this chapter is second in importance to none. 'I see now the *very centre of your religion* is Christ,' said a Muḥammadan convert to a Bible-woman who was visiting her, adding, 'and I do want to love and serve Him.' † This witness is true. Christ is the central figure of the Christian religion, and no true Christianity is possible or conceivable, where the perfect and altogether lovely proportions of His image are blurred and distorted by the faulty medium through which it is seen.

2. With regret it must be admitted that there is no one cardinal fact concerning the Life, Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is not either denied, perverted, misrepresented or at least ignored in Muḥammadan theology.

3. The prophetic mission of Jesus, attested by miracles, is admitted in the Qur'ān. '*Remember* when we accepted their covenant from the prophets, and from thee, *O Muḥammad*, and from Noah and Abraham, and Moses, and Jesus the son of Mary, and received from them a firm covenant.' ‡ 'And when Jesus the son of Mary said, O children of Israel, verily I *am* the apostle of God *sent* unto you, confirming the law which *was delivered* before me, and bringing good tidings of an apostle who shall come after me, *and* whose name *shall be* Aḥmad. And when he produced unto them evident miracles, they said, This *is* manifest sorcery.' §

4. In the great company of prophets, whom the Sunnīs hold

* *Life*, II. 125.
† Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1901, p. 304.
‡ Sūr. 33 *Aḥzāb*, 7, 8.
§ Sūr. 61 *Ṣaff*, 6.

to number 144,000, and the Shī'ahs 124,000, all of whom the Muḥammadans consider to have been sinless, although the number includes sinners such as Adam and Noah,* the Lord Jesus Christ is assigned a conspicuous place. We learn from the Qur'ān that there are differences of rank within this 'goodly fellowship': 'We have bestowed peculiar favours on some of the prophets, preferably to others; and we gave unto David the Psalms.' † 'These are the Apostles; we have preferred some of them before others; some of them hath God spoken unto, and hath exalted the degree of others of them. And we gave unto Jesus the son of Mary manifest signs, and strengthened him with the holy spirit.' ‡ Jesus is ungrudgingly ranked among the distinguished inner circle, so to speak, of the six prophets who brought new laws, and inaugurated fresh dispensations, and have been honoured with special titles. They are Adam, Ṣafīyu'llāh, the chosen of God; Noah, Nabīyu'llāh, the prophet of God; Abraham, Khalīlu'llāh, the friend of God; Moses, Kalīmu'llāh, the one with whom God speaks; Jesus, Rūḥu'llāh, the spirit of God; Muḥammad, Rasūlu'llāh, the messenger of God. These are called the Aṇbīyā-ye-Ūlū'l-'Azm (endued with resolution, *i.e.*, to obey God's commands), because they were the heads of their respective dispensations, and because they will be permitted by God to intercede in the day of judgment for their followers. They are the greatest and most exalted of the prophets.§

5. Yet after all, what does the honour given to our Lord amount to? According to the Muḥammadan, His office was only temporary, and His mission a local one. He was only the prophet of the Children of Israel, just as Hūd was sent to the 'Ādites, and Ṣāliḥ to the tribe of Thamūd,‖ and has now been superseded by Muḥammad. Hence the Qur'ān says, 'God shall teach him the Scripture, and wisdom, and the law, and the gospel; and *shall appoint him His* apostle to the Children of Israel.' ¶

6. But above and beyond this, any rank higher than that of apostle and prophet is carefully and studiously denied to the Lord Jesus Christ in the Qur'ān. Thus, '*Jesus* is no more than a servant, whom we favoured *with the gift of prophecy*; and we appointed him for an example unto the Children of Israel.' ** And again, 'Christ, the son of Mary is no more than an apostle; *other* apostles have preceded him; and his mother was a woman of veracity: they *both* eat food' (*i.e.*, were human, not divine beings).††

* *Islām and Christianity*, by a Missionary, p. 176.
† Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'il*, 57.
‡ Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 253.
§ Sell's *Faith of Islām*, pp. 209, 210. Cp. Hughes, *Notes on Muḥammadanism*, pp. 84, 85.
‖ Sale, *Prelim. Disc.*, pp. 21, 22.
¶ Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 48. Cp. Sūr. 61 *Ṣaff*, 6, quoted above.
** Sūr. 43 *Zukhruf*, 59.
†† Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 79.

7. The fact is, that Islām is an eclectic system,* in which Muḥammad figures as the exalted medium and chosen messenger between God and man, the whole being overshadowed and dominated by the majestic but oppressive and overwhelming idea of the absolute Unity. In admitting others to a share of prophetic dignity, Muḥammad followed a simple rule. No pre-eminence or distinction is allowed to any one of them, not even to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, which would infringe the prestige and prerogatives of the Prophet of Arabia. And nothing was incorporated by him into his system, except that which agreed with his preconceived ideas of the nature of the stern monotheism of the so-called 'religion of Abraham,'† with which he chose to regard his own Islām as identical in all fundamental points.‡

8. Here may be noticed a boastful assertion commonly in vogue with Muḥammadans, when arguing with Christians, namely, that they honour the Lord Jesus Christ much more than Christians do. After all their deliberate and systematic lowering of His dignity, and depreciation of His claims, and undervaluing His work, as we regard it in the light of the Gospel, this hollow vaunt sounds peculiarly strange and startling, not to say offensive to Christian ears, especially when heard for the first time. Probably most workers among Muḥammadans, like the writer, have been surprised and shocked in this way, and withal saddened, to think how gross is the ignorance, and how complete is the misconception of the main purport of the Gospel, implied in such a vainglorious boast. The following is an example from life. 'Another was only come,' wrote French, 'to dispute and entangle us in our talk, a learned Mullā, full of captious quibbles and subtle disputations. He said he was sure he loved Christ more than I did, for he didn't believe such bad things as I did, that He was crucified, dead and buried, for he believed, and all Muḥammadans believed, He never died at all.'§

9. It is necessary to observe that when Muḥammadans make this boast, they found it upon one or other of two reasons, only one of which was mentioned by the 'learned Mullā' in the preceding anecdote. The 'bad things' which they charge Christians with asserting about the Lord Jesus Christ concern either His divine Sonship or His sufferings and death. To the former the answer may briefly be given, that those who accept the Gospel, receive all that is contained therein, even though it appears mysterious and incomprehensible at first sight. To the latter, which was the ground of the Mullā's hostile criticism above, it may he answered—

* See Dr. St. Clair-Tisdall's *Yanābi'u'l-Islām;* or Muir's translation and abridgement of the same, entitled *The Sources of Islām.*

† Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 130, 'Who will be averse to the religion of Abraham but he whose mind is infatuated?'

‡ Cp. Wherry, on Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 39; and Arnold's *Ishmael*, p. 201.

§ *Life of Bishop French*, II. 119.

(i.) That belief in the sufferings of Christ is no proof either of love or want of love towards Him. A Muḥammadan does not love his Prophet or the Imāms if he be a Shī'ah, any the less, because he acknowledges the wrongs and sufferings they underwent. Belief has to do with the reality of things, not with what one may imagine or like to believe about them. *Illustration.*—If you say the Shah drinks wine, and I deny it, this is no proof that my loyalty and devotion to him is greater than yours.

(ii.) We find these things in our Gospel. If we accept the book, we must receive what it contains.

(iii.) We have the witness of the Jewish historian, Josephus, to His sufferings and death.*

(iv.) You Muḥammadans do not love Him as we do, for you place Him below Muḥammad.

(v.) When we study the Gospel more thoroughly, any previous misconceptions we may have had are removed, and we arrive at a clearer and fuller understanding of things at first perhaps unintelligible, *e.g.*, the Crucifixion of Christ, for which we perceive there are good and sufficient reasons why it *must* have taken place.—The most incredible things are believed (*e.g.*, the telegraph, railways, etc., etc.), when the proofs are adequate.

(A) THE LIFE, ETC., OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST: VARIOUS POINTS DENIED OR PERVERTED.

1. **The Incarnation.**—(1) The miraculous birth of Jesus is accepted by all Muḥammadans. But the idea of God becoming man is quite foreign to Muḥammad's teaching, being either beyond his ken or summarily dismissed according to his practice mentioned above of not admitting anything in another prophet that encroached on his own dignity, or was contrary to the plan of his religion. Hence the history of the Incarnation, if such it can any longer rightly be called, as reproduced in the Qur'ān and Muḥammadan writers, is a strangely perverted and emasculated one.

(2) Of the two passages of the Qur'ān where the history of the Annunciation is given, in the one it is the 'angels,' † in the other Gabriel,‡ by whom the tidings are brought to Mary. Tradition, not content with assigning this honour to Gabriel, and supposing him to be the Holy Ghost, which title is actually given him in several places in the Qur'ān, § relates that 'When Gabriel had thus spoken, he raised with his finger Mary's robe from her bosom, and breathed upon her. Thereupon she ran into the field, and had

* *Antiquities*, Bk. XVIII., ch. III. 3.
† Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 42–47.
‡ Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 16–21.
§ See Ch. V., The Holy Spirit.

scarcely time to support herself on the withered trunk of a date tree, before she was delivered of a son.' *

The history of the Birth of Jesus is also given in the Qur'ān.† Both here and in Muḥammadan exposition and legend, the theme is expanded ‡ in a manner altogether distasteful to the Christian consciousness, reared upon the simply beautiful and reverent narrative of the Gospel, and absolutely at variance with it in almost every detail.

(3) The quotation which follows may be taken as a typical instance of the difficulty which a Muḥammadan feels at the outset in approaching the subject of the Incarnation. 'We,' wrote Henry Martyn at Shīrāz, speaking of himself and Muḥammad Ja'far, 'had a great deal of conversation afterwards on the Incarnation. All his Muḥammadan prejudices revolted. "Sir, what do you talk of? the self-existent become contained in space, and suffer need!" I told him that it was the manhood of Christ that suffered need, and as for the essence of the Deity, if he would tell me anything about it, where or how it was, I would tell him how the Godhead was in Christ. After an effort or two he found that every term he used implied our frightful doctrine, namely, personality, locality, etc. This is a thought that is now much in my mind—that it is so ordered that since man never can speak of God but through the medium of language, which is all material, nor think of God but through the medium of material objects, they do unwillingly come to God through the Word, and think of God by means of an Incarnation.' §

The error into which the imperfectly informed Muḥammadan may fall, and which is to be specially guarded against, is illustrated by the following episode from the life of another redoubtable champion among missionaries to Muḥammadans. 'He,' wrote French of a Mullā whom he met at Manakai, near Attock, 'like so many others, had the false notion of God being changed into man, and the finite and infinite being thus mingled in confusion of natures, instead of both in their perfection meeting unchanged and unaltered in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.' ‖

(4) In what manner, then, we must next inquire, are we to approach this subject in our intercourse with Muḥammadans? How may the most wonderful and most comforting fact of the Incarnation be best introduced and presented to them? Three lines of argument may be mentioned, (*a*) from reason, (*b*) from authority, and (*c*) from the love of God.

(*a*) *Argument from reason.*—The philosophers (*ḥukamā'*) maintain the strict connexion between cause and effect (*'illat, ma'lūl*).

* Weil, *Legends*, p. 220.

† Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 23–34.

‡ See Wherry, on Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 22, quoting Sale, Baiẓawī, and Yaḥyā; and Weil, *Legends*, pp. 219–221.

§ *Henry Martyn*, by Geo. Smith, pp. 386, 387.

‖ *Life*, I. 198.

God, for instance, is the great Cause, and creation consists of the things brought into being by His operation. A gap (*infikāk*) between cause and effect is impossible. There is a necessary connexion, for example, between a carpenter, who is the *'illat*, and the articles he makes, which are *m'lūl*. The philosophers again say that there must be a bond or connexion (*rābiṭah, rabṭ*) between the contingent (*ḥādiṣ*) and the eternal (*qadīm*); the former belonging to the class of contingent possibilities (*mumkināt*), the latter to that of necessary existences (*wājibāt*). If there be no such bond of connexion between the two, there will be a break (*infikāk*) in the chain of existence (*dar wujūd tafrah lāzim mīyāyad*).

We have here to do with the philosophers (*hukamā'*), not with the *uṣūlī-hā* or with the *mutakallimān*. Of these three, the first-named argue from reason (*az ma'qūl sukhan mīgūyānd*); the *uṣūlī-hā* from the 'objective basis' * of that which has been handed down (*mangūl*), the Qur'ān and Traditions (*Sunnat*); while the *mutakallimān*, or scholastic philosophers, attempt to reconcile the two. The *uṣūlī-hā* say there is no such *rābiṭah* as that mentioned above: the *mutākallimān* admit that there is, but say they do not understand it, thus confessing their own ignorance. The following argument, then, is based upon the premises granted by the philosophers and their admission of the necessity of a *rābiṭah* between the eternal and the contingent.

If there be not this *rābiṭah*, then it will be impossible for the love of God to be manifested to man. *Illustration.*—If a teacher were in the form of an angel or jinn, he would not be able to teach his pupil. He must be like him in all respects—have the same kind of body, speech, clothes and food, in order to be able to impart instruction to him. In the same way Christ manifested the love of God by taking our human nature (*insānīyat*), that He might be able to teach us. If the way of truth had not thus been pointed out to us, we should not have been accountable (*mu'ākhaḥ-dār*) for our actions, nor would the guilt of sin attach to us. *Illustration* from a hen, which teaches her young ones to pick up grain by pecking on the ground, lifting up a grain and letting it fall again, and so with other things. If you were to *tell* the young chicken to do this, it would not understand, and you would be acting unkindly (*bī-muḥabbat*) towards it, by not teaching it in a way it could comprehend. But if you take its nature upon you, and become like it, and act in a way it can understand, this is perfect love.

(*b*) *Argument from authority.*—This argument is brought forward in the 'earnest and well-reasoned epistle' which *Yūḥannā Ghāyūr*, a Christian of Aleppo, sends to his Muslim friend, 'Abdu'-l-Hādī, a citizen of Damascus, in these words—

> **The Incarnation, though beyond our reason, is in no wise opposed to it; for nature abounds in things we believe, though we cannot understand.**

* Sell, *Faith of Islām*, p. 169.

As little children take their father's word for things beyond their comprehension, so should man his heavenly Father's; and so must we accept with all humility what in His Word He hath revealed to us of His own nature.*

(*c*) *Argument from the love of God.*—Each individual worker will no doubt set forth this argument as it is revealed in God's Word, and as it has been illuminated and enforced by his own experience or the history of the lives of the saints in the storehouse of Christian biography. Of all the arguments in the Christian's repertory none is so persuasive as the love of God: 'There is none like that.' † There is no attraction so powerful as the magnetic spell of love. 'I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love.' ‡ 'We love, because He first loved us.' § This was the inspiring motive and main argument of Raymund Lull, 'first missionary to the Muslims.' We read of him, indeed, that while preparing himself for nine years by the study of Arabic and spiritual meditation for his great conflict with the Muslims, 'the idea occurred to him of composing a work which would contain a strict and formal demonstration of all the Christian doctrines of such cogency that the Muslims could not fail to acknowledge its logic and in consequence embrace the truth.' ‖ 'With such power did this one idea take possession of his mind that at last he regarded it in the light of a divine revelation, and, having traced the outline of such a work, he called it the *Ars Major sive Generalis*. This universal system of logic and philosophy was to be the weapon of God against all error and more especially against the errors of Islām.' ¶ But once face to face with the Muslims, 'his one weapon was the argument of God's love in Christ,' just as it was the mainspring and stay of his spiritual life, as we read, 'Of the length, breadth, depth and height of the love of Christ, all Lull's devotional writings are full'; and this too was his dying theme at Bugia North, 'stoned to death while preaching the love of Christ to Muslims,' according to the testimony of all his biographers. **

Thus he used to argue with his Muslim opponents: 'If Muslims, according to their law, affirm that God loved man because He created him, endowed him with noble faculties, and pours His benefits upon him, then the Christians according to their law affirm the same. But inasmuch as the Christians believe more than this, and affirm that God so loved man that He was willing to become man, to endure poverty, ignominy, torture and death

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 26 (translated from the original Arabic, and abridged by the late Sir Wm. Muir).
† 1 Sam. xxi. 9.
‡ Hosea xi. 4.
§ 1 St. John iv. 19.
‖ Zwemer's *Raymund Lull*, pp. 57, 58.
¶ *Id.*, *Ib.*, p. 59.
** *Id.*, *Ib.*, pp. 142, 146.

for his sake, which the Jews and Saracens do not teach concerning Him; therefore is the religion of the Christians, which thus reveals a love beyond all other love, superior to that of those which reveals it only in an inferior degree.' 'Islām,' adds Lull's biographer, 'is a loveless religion. Raymund Lull believed and proved that Love could conquer it. The Qur'ān denies the Incarnation, and so remains ignorant of the true character not only of the Godhead, but of God (St. Matt. xi. 27).' *

On the other hand, abstract negative arguments such as 'lack of love in the being of Allāh, and lack of harmony in his attributes,' which were the two propositions advanced by Lull after long and fruitless discussion with the Muslim 'ulamā of Tunis,† though supported by the weight of his illustrious name, do not appear to be practically effective at the present day at all events. They labour, moreover, under the disadvantage which pertains to all attempts to prove a negative. When mentioned to the Muḥammadan gentlemen to whose help these pages are so largely indebted, neither of them seemed at all impressed with their cogency. One of them remarked, that the Christian argument from the want of active love in the Godhead would be evaded, for example, in the following manner, by the assertion that the verses of the Qur'ān which speak of God's causing to err and filling hell, etc., refer to special cases such as that of infidels. Hence the argument is not suitable for general use, though good for those able to take it in and give it its due weight and value. Quite different from the above is the concrete argument from the manifestation of the divine Love seen in the Incarnation, and the life, sufferings and death of Christ, which is a most weighty and forcible one.

2. **Christ's Crucifixion.**—(1) The historical fact of the Crucifixion of Jesus is categorically denied in the Qur'ān, and an heretical Christian legend substituted in its place. The Jews 'have said, Verily we have slain Christ Jesus the Son of Mary, the apostle of God; yet they slew Him not, neither crucified Him, but He was represented *by one* in His likeness; and verily they who disagreed concerning Him were in a doubt as to this *matter*, and had no *sure* knowledge thereof, but followed only an *uncertain* opinion. They did not really kill Him; but God took Him up *into* Himself: and God is mighty *and* wise.' ‡ The following passage also of the Qur'ān is interpreted as referring to the same facts: 'And *the Jews* devised a stratagem *against Him*: but God devised a stratagem *against them*; and God is the best deviser of stratagems.'§ This is the common opinion of Muḥammadans, who, with the remembrance of these passages, or from a mistaken notion of honouring Jesus by denying His ignominious death, will stoutly and sometimes indignantly deny that He was crucified. One or two instances may be given to illustrate this preverted opinion. In an account which Dr. Cecil Lankester gives of 'A Fortnight's

* Zwemer's *Raymund Lull*, pp. 140, 141
† *Id.*, *Ib.*, p. 89.
‡ Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 156, 157.
§ Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 53.

Itineration' in the Peshāwar district, he says that 'when the Padri mentioned Christ's sacrifice, a large crowd, hitherto attentive, quite suddenly dispersed at the instigation of one or two specially orthodox religionists.'* The Rev. J. N. Wright of Tabriz, Persia, relates the following experience during a preaching tour:—

> At one village I found a Muḥammadan who had read the Testament, but his idea was much like that of the Jews, that Jesus, being an exalted person, would have great temporal power, and be honoured by the people. On finding Christ presented as a sufferer at the hands of the Jews, he was disgusted, and concluded the book was false. So he tore it up and *pasted it on the window*. He told me his experience, and wanted to know if I had 'another Gospel.' On hearing the Scriptures explained, and seeing that Christ must needs have suffered these things in order to be our Saviour, his eyes were opened and he rejoiced in the glad tidings. He found the truth as it is in Jesus.†

(2) Muḥammadans commonly hold the opinion that some other person was crucified in Jesus' stead; but as to who this person was, their divines are no more in agreement than are Christian sectaries. In the *Tafsīr-i-Baghawī*, it is a spy sent to entrap Him, who was transformed by God into the resemblance of Christ and thus crucified in His place by mistake. According to the *Tafsīr-i-Baiẓawī*, it was one of Christ's own disciples, who, in response to His request, offered to assume His form and be crucified instead of Him. The *Tafsīr-i-Kalbī*, again, says that it was Titian, who by Judas's direction entered the house where Jesus was, in order to kill Him, and was changed by God into His likeness.‡ And, once more, the *Gospel of Barnabas*, which is regarded as the work of a Christian pervert to Islām, declares the substitute to have been the traitor Judas himself. Jesus, it says, 'chose twelve, whom He called apostles, among whom is Judas, who was slain upon the cross.'§ In like manner the Christian sects from whom the Muḥammadan idea was borrowed, having forsaken the simple truth, had adopted a number of contradictory and conflicting views. The Basilidians held that the person crucified was Simon of Cyrene; the Cerinthians and Carpocratians that it was one of Jesus' followers; while the Persian heretic Mani taught that it was the 'prince of darkness' himself.‖

This rejection of the Crucifixion of Christ is certainly a strange phenomenon whether in the Christian heretic or in the adherent of Islām. The former, in virtue of his docetic or dualistic presuppositions, sees in the Crucifixion of Christ only a notable example

* *Mercy and Truth*, Aug., 1902, p. 239.

† J. L. Nye's *Anecdotes on Bible Texts: Acts*, p. 24.

‡ Hughes, *Notes on Muhammadanism*, pp. 262, 263. See also Weil, *Legends*, p. 230; and Dr. St. Clair-Tisdall's *Religion of the Crescent*, App. A.

§ *Gospel of Barnabas*, Ragg's Ed., p. 25.

‖ *Vide* Sale, on Sūr. 3 *Al 'Imrān*, 53; Hughes, *Notes on Muhammadanism*, pp. 261–263; Arnold, *Ishmael*, pp. 189–192; and Neander, *Church History*, vol. ii. pp. 177, 187.

of that regeneration and liberation from the contaminating influence of the material world, which ought to be repeated in every soul that would rise to a higher spiritual level. But at what a sacrifice! He gives up the whole Scriptural doctrine of the atoning work of Christ, which to unprejudiced minds is the central feature and crowning glory of the Bible. The Muḥammadan, however, is drawn to the same position by other considerations. His whole soul revolts at the idea of the great prophet Jesus being ignominiously crucified; which is a curious fact when his long roll of suffering and persecuted prophets, not excepting Muḥammad himself, and including according to the Shī'ah belief the cruelly afflicted House of 'Alī, is recalled to mind. This denial, moreover, is peculiarly strange on the lips of the last-named sect, whose religious fervour is so largely nourished by the yearly recitals of the sufferings of 'Alī and his family, and who are not unacquainted with the idea of an atonement; for, if told of the 'perfect and sufficient sacrifice' of Jesus, they will not unfrequently remark that they too have a saviour and that 'Alī and his descendants gave their lives and became a ransom for their people. The Cross of Christ has been called 'the missing link' in the Muslim's creed,* and such it is in truth. However great a position may be given to Jesus as a mere prophet, nothing can make up for the omission of this fundamental fact and the essential doctrine based upon it.

(3) How next is Muḥammad's repugnance to the Crucifixion to be accounted for?—a repugnance so great that the Muslim historian Wāqidī relates that he destroyed everything brought to his house with that figure upon it.† We may suppose that Muḥammad wished to defend the reputation of his great predecessor from the stain which he considered to be cast upon it by the Jews, who boasted that they had slain Him.‡ He abhorred the idea of the Prophet being left to the mercy of His foes, unaided and unrescued by His God. He was ready enough to see the resemblance between his own persecutions and rejection by the Quraish and the treatment accorded to previous prophets by unbelieving peoples. But he could not tolerate the story of the God-forsaken Prophet done to death as a slave and malefactor—a picture of unrelieved ignominy and horror, so different from the miraculous deliverances wrought by God for His prophets, Noah, Ṣāliḥ, Lot, and Shu'aib, when those who rejected them were destroyed,§ or for Abraham, who comfortably reposed as in a beautiful garden in the midst of the vast furnace into which Nimrod had cast him.‖ And so he gladly adopted the idea which brought the history of Jesus into harmony with those of other

* Hughes, *Notes on Muḥammadanism*, p. 263.
† *Id.*, *Ib.*
‡ Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 156.
§ Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*.
‖ See Weil, *Legends*, pp. 53, 54; and Sale, on Sūr. 21 *Anbiyā'*, 69.

prophets, viz. that He was not really crucified but delivered by God out of the hands of His enemies, and taken up by Him into heaven.

There was really nothing, humanly speaking, to prevent Muḥammad from adopting this view. He was but imperfectly acquainted with the real nature and doctrines of Christianity, unaware of the fact that Jesus came on purpose to suffer and die for the sins of the whole world, and further, had never witnessed the inspiring spectacle of a vigorous spiritual life in a Christian Church or community. Under such circumstances, he became acquainted with certain heretical Christian opinions which exactly fitted in with his own scheme. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that he was only too ready to regard them as true and accept them forthwith; while he felt no difficulty in rejecting that which was not in accordance with his own Islām.

And so the rejection of the Crucifixion has ever since been part and parcel of Muḥammadan belief. However the master arrived at his opinion, his followers to-day hold it fast, imagining that they are honouring Jesus, and all unaware of the inestimable blessings flowing from the Cross of Christ, the loss of which they are inflicting upon themselves.

(4) And now, what is the best way of combating this erroneous opinion? Let the fact be borne in mind that we are thinking of it now as a controversial point, as a part of that which forms the great gulf between Christian and Muḥammadan. We are not contemplating it here as the groundwork of the strongest appeal that lies to the heart of sin-stained and sin-burdened man.

The arguments brought forward by Persians against the Crucifixion are such as the two following, which were adduced by a friend of the writer's. We will discuss them separately.

(i.) God showed His love for this great Prophet (Jesus) by saving Him from indignity and a cruel death.

Answer.—(*a*) We Christians regard it, in harmony with the Gospel, as a pre-eminent proof of God's love for man that He was willing to give up His own Son to die for us.* It is on account of the atoning death of Jesus that all created beings will bow before Him in adoration.† God might have delivered Him, and would have done so, had He requested it; ‡ but if the Father had done so, Jesus would not have won His peculiar title to the homage of the universe. There was no conflict in the Divine counsels as to the plan and the means of man's salvation.

(*b*) Most of the Jewish prophets were called upon to suffer for the Truth, many of them even unto death. § Why was an exception made, as you assert, in the case of Jesus?

(ii.) Christ had imparted His teaching, had brought the Gospel, and appointed His successors: what need had He to remain any longer, and suffer and die?

* St. John iii. 16.
† Phil. ii. 8–11.
‡ St. Matt. xxvi. 53.
§ Acts vii. 52.

Answer.—Passing over for the moment the erroneous Muḥammadan idea as to the origin of the book of the Gospel, it may be pointed out that Christ's work on earth was much more than that which is here mentioned. He was the true sacrifice for sin—'the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' * The Jews, like yourselves, † were familiar with the offering of sacrifices. One of the main ideas, though not the only one, underlying the sacrifices was that of expiation for sin. Now it is clear that the blood of the victim cannot cleanse the sinful heart: see Heb. x. 4, and compare ch. ix. 13, 14. The annual sacrifices offered by the Jews are only a type or symbol of the true and availing sacrifice, which God has appointed and which He accepts. This is the bloodshedding of Christ on the Cross, which atones for the sins of the whole world. ‡ Remove the antitype, and you rob that which prefigured it of its true import and significance. Take away the Cross of Christ, and you destroy the foundation on which the Gospel plan of salvation rests. And then, all those passages which speak of pardon and peace through Christ's death upon the Cross are emptied of all meaning and value, as *e.g.*, 'having made peace through the blood of His Cross'; § 'redeemed . . . with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ.' ‖

(5) *Additional arguments against the Muḥammadan view.*—(*a*) *The punishment of the Jews.*—The guilt of the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus were the cause of the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews, A.D. 70, according to the prediction of Christ Himself. ¶ The Jews deliberately incurred this blood-guiltiness by taking upon themselves the responsibility for the execution of Jesus, though He was pronounced innocent by the Roman Governor, ** with all the consequences that it might entail. †† St. Paul in like manner traces the loss by the Jews of their spiritual privileges and of the high honour of being the chosen people of God to their unbelief in their Messiah ‡‡; and connects their ultimate restoration to God's favour with the time when they shall turn to Christ in true repentance. §§

The above requires to be rather carefully stated, so that it may be clearly seen that the punishment of the Jews was on account of their rejection of Christ, and has nothing to do with Muḥammad. Otherwise the rejoinder may be made, that the Jews did not

* St. John i. 29.

† Cp. the *'Id-i-Qurbān*, or Festival of Sacrifice, also called *'Īdu'z-zuḥā*; and Sūr. 22 *Ḥajj*, 38, 39. It is also known as 'Idu Qurban in Turkey and Egypt.

‡ Heb. ix. 13, 14.

§ Col. i. 20.

‖ 1 St. Peter i. 18, 19.

¶ St. Luke xix. 41–44.

** St. Luke xxiii. 4; St. Matt. xxvii. 24; cp. ver. 19.

†† St. Matt. xxvii. 25.

‡‡ Rom. xi. 20.

§§ Ver. 28.

descend to their present level of degradation until after the time of Muḥammad because of their rejection of him: in his days, it is asserted, they were wealthy and powerful, with chiefs of their own who were heads of influential tribes in Arabia; so numerous were they, that on one occasion Muḥammad slew some hundreds of them in a single day. Such reasoning is perhaps not surprising in the mouths of Muḥammadans who heartily despise and hate the Jews, and are accustomed to see them reduced to an inferior social and political status wherever Islām holds sway. It is well then to confine the argument to the state of the Jews in the first age of the Christian era. Muḥammadan prejudice and ignorance of history and of the state of the world to-day, make it difficult to found an argument upon a more general and comprehensive view of the fortunes and conditions of the Jewish race during the Christian Dispensation.

(*b*) *The Christian hope.*—This may be illustrated from the speaker's own personal experience. I am a Christian: the Gospel message of salvation through the atonement wrought by Jesus is the ground of all my hopes of pardon and acceptance before God, as of all other Christians in this and every age. This confidence would be entirely destroyed by the denial of the Crucifixion of Jesus and the substitution of another in His place. Against the unanimous testimony of Apostles and eye-witnesses, how can you expect me to credit a biassed and prejudiced contradiction uttered more than five hundred years after the event, or adopt the opinion of certain heretics, which was rejected by the Christian Church at large? Is it reasonable to ask me to renounce my cherished hopes and belief, unless you can offer me something better in their place?

(*c*) *The argument from prophecy.*—Christ's atoning sacrifice is distinctly said by St. Peter to have been in accordance with 'the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.'* This purpose of God was made known to His people through the prophetic writings of the Old Testament, and its fulfilment is recorded in the New Testament, sometimes with an express intimation that the voice of prophecy was thereby fulfilled. A multitude of details concerning the rejection of Jesus by the Jews, and His sufferings and death, are thus foretold, and their literal fulfilment found in the New Testament. A few of these only, referring particularly to Christ's atoning sacrifice, can be given here. Daniel tells us that it was to take place at the first Advent of the Messiah.† St. John sees the fulfilment of prophecy in the piercing of the crucified Saviour's side.‡ Philip refers Isaiah's description of the sufferings of the meek and lowly servant of the Lord to Jesus.§ St. Peter and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews both speak

* Acts ii. 23.
† Dan. ix. 24.
‡ St. John xix. 37. See Zech. xii. 10; and cp. Ps. xxii. 16.
§ Isa. liii. 7, 8. See Acts viii. 32, 33, and 35.

of Jesus as the Sin-bearer in words clearly taken from the same chapter of Isaiah.* In another passage the second of these two writers develops the idea of the sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross being the one all-sufficient offering for sin in a passage, the keynote of which is derived from the Book of Psalms.†

With even greater authority and yet more unquestionable claim upon our acceptance the Lord Jesus Christ Himself not only on several occasions foretold His approaching sufferings and crucifixion,‡ but also afterwards referred to them as past events whereby the predictions of the prophets had received their accomplishment. §

(*d*) *The argument from history.*—Not only is the crucifixion of Jesus mentioned by the Roman historian Tacitus, ‖ and by Josephus, ¶ it is also intimately bound up with the records of the New Testament. No argument can be stronger that the plain historical one, drawn from the inspired Gospel narrative, of the deadly enmity of the Jews against Jesus; His arrest, trial, condemnation and death; the miserable end of Judas Iscariot,** and the election of another Apostle in his place; †† and the showing to the doubting Apostle Thomas by Jesus Himself of the actual scars of the wounds received on the Cross. ‡‡ Take away the cardinal feature of the Crucifixion, and this chain of facts becomes incoherent and unintelligible. As for the idea of the substitution of another in Jesus' place, there is not the slightest warrant in the New Testament for such a supposition, which is contradicted by the plain sense and obvious requirements of the narrative. Judas, moreover, appears to have hanged himself before the Crucifixion.§§ But whether his self-inflicted death took place before it or afterwards, in either case it is equally irreconcilable with the supposition of his having suffered in Jesus' place. And lastly, not only is the crucifixion of Christ an essential element in the narrative, it is also closely interwoven by argument, reference, or allusion with many other passages, which would be threadbare and meaningless without it.‖‖

3. **The Death of Christ.**—(1) This point is far less important with regard to the purpose we have in view than the preceding one, and as a matter of fact it is generally merged in it. For when

* 1 Peter ii. 24; Heb. ix. 28. See Isa. liii. 12, LXX.
† Heb. x. 1-17. See Ps. xl. 6-8.
‡ *E.g.* St. Matt. xx. 17-19; cp. St. Luke xxiv. 6-8.
§ *E.g.* St. Luke xxiv. 20, 26, 27, 46.
‖ *Ann.*, xv. 44.
¶ *Antiquities of the Jews*, Bk. XVIII., chap. iii. 3.
** Acts i. 18, 19.
†† Vers. 21-26.
‡‡ St. John xx. 27.
§§ St. Matt. xxvii. 5.
‖‖ *E.g.* St. Peter's sermons, Acts ii. 22-36; iii. 12-fin.; iv. 8-12; x. 34-43; St. Paul in the synagogue at Antioch, xiii. 29-41; 1 Peter ii. 24, 'Who His own self bare our sins in His body upon the tree'; and Rev. i. 7, 'They which pierced Him.'

the Christian alludes to the death of Christ, it is His atoning Sacrifice on the Cross which is uppermost in his thought and intention. And that which shocks and offends Muḥammadan prejudice, is not the *death* of Jesus as such, but the ignominy of His crucifixion by the Jews, which on the authority of the Qur'ān * is stoutly rejected. It is in sight of the Cross of Christ, that Muḥammadan and Christian differ—in more ways than one.

(2) It would seem scarcely possible for the Muḥammadan who is acquainted with his Qur'ān to deny the fact of the death of Jesus in face of the following passages: 'When God said, O Jesus, verily I will cause Thee to die, and I will take Thee up unto Me, and I will deliver Thee from the unbelievers'; † 'Peace *be* on Me the day whereon I was born, and the day whereon I shall die, and the day whereon I shall be raised to life.' ‡ The only questions that arise are, How and when did He die? and, if His death took place before His Assumption and is not still a future event to take place when He returns again at the end of the world, How is His death to be fitted in with the history of His delivery from the hands of the enemies who wished to crucify Him? The obvious meaning of the passages quoted above seems to be that Jesus' death preceded His assumption into heaven by the instrumentality of Gabriel. Some Muḥammadan divines, however, hold the contrary opinion, and believe that He was taken up to heaven without dying, and that the words which speak of His death have yet to receive their fulfilment before the Resurrection.

Both views find place in the Traditions. Thus in one place we read, 'His godless contemporaries will afflict and attempt to crucify Him; but Allah shall blind them, so that another shall be crucified in His stead; while He, like the prophet Enoch, is taken up into heaven without tasting death.' § And again, in another Tradition, the brief statements of the Qur'ān are amplified into a connected and circumstantial whole, in which the death of Jesus is made to fit in with His delivery from the Cross and His being raised to heaven by Gabriel. Thus: 'The further particulars of the last moments of this prophet are variously narrated by the learned. But most of them run as follows:—On the evening before the Passover feast, the Jews took Christ captive, together with His Apostles, and shut them up in a house, with the intention of putting Christ publicly to death on the following morning. But in the night Allah revealed to Him, "Thou shalt receive death from Me, but immediately afterwards be raised up to heaven, and be delivered from the power of the unbelievers." Christ gave up His spirit, and remained dead for the space of three hours. In the fourth hour the angel Gabriel appeared, and

* See the reference A, 2 (1).
† Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 54.
‡ Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 34. Cp. 5 *Mā'idah*, 117.
§ Weil, *Legends*, p. 146.

raised Him unperceived by any through a window into heaven.' * In this latter case it comes to this, that both the missions of Jesus viz., His first coming, and His return at the end of the world to fight with Antichrist and establish Islām thoughout the world *and then die*, are closed with His death, according to Muḥammadan opinion; and the distinction of dying twice is accorded to Him.†

(3) There does not appear to be any necessary contradiction between the passage of the Qur'ān which denies the crucifixion of Jesus and those which speak of His death, though some Muḥammadan writers seem to have felt a difficulty in reducing them to harmonious sequence.‡

(4) The death of Christ, apart from His crucifixion, is not a point which commonly or properly comes within the scope of controversy. Most Muḥammadans admit it. But there are important differences between the Muḥammadan and Christian views as to the details of the death of Christ and its connexion with and relationship to other component parts of the Gospel narrative. In the Muḥammadan version we find reckless statements, out of harmony with the facts, purport and spirit of the Gospel. And it is of the utmost importance to guide the Muslim to the true knowledge of the death of Jesus and all that it has achieved and represents for those who trust in Him. With the figment of Muḥammadan imagination that Jesus' second coming to the world will end with His death, we have nothing here to do; and between it and the historical fact of the death of Jesus there is no connexion.

(5) A possible objection that may be brought forward is that Christians, who call Jesus the Son of God and assert His death, are guilty of blasphemy, for God (as both sides admit) cannot die.

This is not an important objection, and can be easily answered as follows. When a man dies, what is it that perishes? It is only the elemental body (*badan-i-'unsurī*)—the shell or earthly covering of the immortal spirit—which dies. When Christ breathed His last, the *Kalimatu'llah* (Word of God) did not die. Moreover, His body did not even share the common fate of human bodies, which die and 'see corruption.' He merely laid it aside for a while like a robe put off, and took it again in a glorified condition. §

4. **The Resurrection of Christ.**—There seems at first sight to be a clear and distinct reference in the Qur'ān to Jesus' historic resurrection in the words, 'the day whereon I shall be raised to

* Weil, *Legends*, pp. 229, 230.

† Cp. Heb. ix. 27, 28, 'It is appointed unto men once to die, . . . Christ also having been once offered. . . .'

‡ Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 54 (but see Wherry, *in loc.*), and 4 *Nisā'*, 156.

§ Cp. the quotation and application of Ps. xvi. 8–fin. in St. Peter's speech, Acts ii. 23–31.

life.'* But this vanishes on further consideration; for some Muḥammadans deny that Jesus died before He was taken up into heaven, and there can be no resurrection without a previous death. And even in the case of those Muḥammadans who admit that Jesus did die before He was taken up, there is nothing in their version of the facts which can even be compared with the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. According to them, God causes Him to die, and after a few hours Gabriel raises him to heaven. There is no mention here as in the Christian narrative of His burial and the grave, no remaining three days in Hades, no earthquake, no rolling of the stone from the tomb, no terror of the 'watchers,' and no appearing to His followers at different times and places during the interval between His return from the world of spirits and His ascension to Heaven.

Perhaps the most important point to notice is that in the Muḥammadan travesty of the resurrection the agent, as already mentioned, is the angel Gabriel. It is not the Christ Himself who bursts the bonds of death and the grave by His own inherent divine power. And therefore the Muḥammadan loses here this most important evidence as to Who and what Jesus is, and misses all the consolation in view of death, whether his own or that of those dear to him, which the Gospel history of the resurrection of Christ imparts.

It is not the miraculous element in the resurrection as recorded in the Gospel which is likely to offend the Muḥammadan. His own traditions are more than sufficiently imbued with the marvellous. It is rather the supposition of the divinity of Jesus with all that is implied in it underlying the Christian narrative, and its hopeless irreconcilability with the Qur'ān and Traditions.

5. **The Ascension.**—The Muḥammadan version of the last events of Jesus' life, His death and His resurrection, as will by this time have become plain enough, is such a perverted one that it is sometimes difficult to identify the facts as presented by them with anything in the Christian history. The change of setting and the distortion are so great as practically to remove all resemblance to the historic original.

It is just so with the ascension. At the first glance one might think that the Qur'ān alluded to it in unmistakable language: 'I will take Thee up unto Me'; † 'God took Him up unto Himself.' ‡ But the words do not convey this meaning to the Muḥammadan, and he does not believe that Christ ascended by His own power into the heavens, but that He was merely borne up thither by the help of Gabriel, as Muḥammad was in his alleged night journey to heaven (*mi'rāj*). And so Christ's miraculous and triumphant return to His heavenly home, as we Christians

* Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 34.
† Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 54.
‡ Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 157.

regard it, is not, strictly speaking, an ascension at all according to the Muḥammadan, but only an assumption,* while it is left uncertain how far upward He was borne, whether it was to the second, the third or the fourth† of the seven heavens of Muslim belief.‡

6. **The Second Coming.**—When Jesus, according to Muḥammadan tradition, appeared from heaven to His mother to comfort her respecting His supposed shameful death on the Cross, He is represented as saying to her, 'Hereafter, at the approach of the last day, I shall be sent again upon the earth, when I shall slay the false prophet Dajjāl and the wild boar (both of which cause similar distress in the earth), and such a state of peace and unity shall ensue that the lamb and the hyena shall feel like brothers beside each other. I shall then burn the Gospel, which has been falsified by ungodly priests, and the crosses which they have worshipped as gods, and subject the whole earth to the doctrines of Muḥammad, who shall be sent in later times.'§ 'The second advent of Christ is differently described by Muslim divines; some say that he will appear near the white tower, east of Damascus; others that he will descend on a rock on Mount Moriah, confess Islāmism, destroy Christianity and every other creed, kill all swine, break every cross, pierce Antichrist with his lance at Ludd or Lydda, near Jaffa; after this he will marry and beget children, die after forty or forty-five years and be lamented by Musulmāns, who will bury him by the side of Muḥammad.'‖

Here again, for a full and circumstantial description of what, according to Muḥammadan belief, is to happen when Jesus Christ comes again we are indebted to the Traditions. The Qur'ān has only one brief and enigmatic allusion to it, 'and he *shall be* a sign of the *approach of the last* hour'¶—words that recall to our minds the Gospel prediction, 'then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven.'**

But there is really no comparison possible between the return of Jesus to earth, described in Muḥammadan tradition, and the Second Coming predicted in the Gospel. The latter takes place at the end of the present Dispensation, and Christ returns as the Judge of all men. In the Muḥammadan version, it is true, He overcomes Antichrist, but He also establishes Islām and destroys Christianity, and does other things, both extraordinary and commonplace, or worse, and then dies. But all this is only a 'sign' of the on coming of the Last Day, which is yet to arrive, and when it

* See Weil's *Legends*, pp. 146 and 230, already quoted.
† Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, p. 235, *s.v.* 'Jesus Christ.'
‡ Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 29; and 41 *Fuṣṣilat*, 11.
§ Weil, *Legends*, pp. 230, 231.
‖ Arnold's *Ishmael*, p. 193. See also Sale, *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 133; and on Sūr. 43 *Zukhruf*, 61; and Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Jesus Christ,' VIII.
¶ Sūr. 43 *Zukhruf*, 61.
** St. Matt. xxiv. 30.

does, Christ will rise from the dead like the rest of mankind whether ordinary mortals or prophets, and be examined by the Almighty like the rest of that noble company as to the manner in which He executed His commission.* Thus Muḥammadan prejudice again lowers the Son of God to the level of the prophets. And here it leaves Him, having with its last touch trampled finally upon the unique work and sublime prerogatives of the Word of God.

It is obvious that there is nothing here which can usefully be made the subject of controversy. The two versions are essentially distinct and different things. Nor, again, can we congratulate the Muḥammadan, or ourselves, on here possessing a common standing ground, when the main gist and bearing of the Muḥammadan account is directly contrary to the impressions and expectations which the Gospel narrative is designed to convey.

In conclusion, it may be observed that here, as elsewhere, when dealing with the Muḥammadan, the position holds good, that if the Injīl is true, which the Muḥammadan of course admits in theory, we must accept it with all that it contains, whether agreeable to our previous notions or not. A definite purpose and a comprehensive design underlie the whole, and will become manifest to the unprejudiced seeker after truth. The story and its message, when understood, are well calculated to touch the heart, whereas there is little or nothing in Muḥammadan tradition to do so.

(B) His Person and Work.

1. **Christ regarded by the Muslim as no more than a Prophet.**—The Christian doctrine of the nature and person of the Lord Jesus Christ, or perhaps we should rather say what the Muslim *supposes* that doctrine to be, constitutes one of the great stumbling-blocks to Muḥammadans through their ignorance of the true teaching and import of the Holy Scriptures. The statements made in the Qur'ān in reference to this subject may be gathered up under three heads. The Qur'ān expressly declares that Jesus was only a man, and denies that He was the Son of God, or God. For the sake of clearness, it will be convenient to deal with these three points separately in the three following sections. In the present one a number of considerations will be brought forward showing the pre-eminent dignity and glory of Jesus, and tending to prepare the way for what follows and dispose the Muḥammadan not merely to receive without surprise or offence the teaching of the Gospel about this wonderful Person, but to recognize the truths there taught as the fitting consummation of the expectations that have been aroused by the unique titles to honour

* Sūr. 33 *Aḥzāb*, 8, 'That *God* may examine the speakers of truth concerning their veracity.' Cp. 5 *Mā'idah*, 116, 117.

possessed by Jesus, son of Mary. The other two points will then be dealt with in succession.

The Qur'ān teaches that however great is the dignity of Jesus as a Prophet, He does not differ in His essential nature from the rest of the prophets. 'His name shall be Christ Jesus the Son of Mary honourable in this world and in the world to come, and *one* of those who approach near *to the presence of* God; . . . and He shall be *one* of the righteous.' *

This description, which soars so high, while yet it falls so far short of the Christian ideal, is not meant to convey that Jesus was not a mortal man like all the other prophets, as other passages clearly show. 'We have not sent *any* before thee *as our apostles* other than men, unto whom We spake by revelation.' † 'Christ doth not proudly disdain to be a servant unto God.' ‡ He 'is no other than a servant, whom We favoured *with the gift of prophecy*; and We appointed Him for an example unto the children of Israel.' § Though Jesus as a child created living birds out of clay, and afterwards healed the blind from birth and the leper, and raised the dead, all this, it is expressly stated four times, was only done by the 'permission' of God. ‖ 'Christ, the Son of Mary, is no more than an apostle; *other* apostles have preceded Him. And His mother was a woman of veracity; they *both* eat food.' ¶ And once more, 'It is not *fit* for a man that God should give him a book of *revelations*, and wisdom and prophecy, and then he should say unto men, Be ye worshippers of me, besides God.' **

A few general remarks may be made with reference to the considerations which can be profitably employed to help the Muḥammadan to rise to a loftier conception of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ than that which the Qur'ān allows, before we proceed to give them in detail. Of the twelve points mentioned below, all but Miracles (viii.) and the Foretelling of future events (ix.) are *peculiar to Jesus*. But the Muḥammadan will not always be ready to admit this. It is often argued that the coming of Muḥammad himself was foretold in the Bible (i.), and that he had the power of foretelling future events (ix.), both of which are with good reason denied by the Christian. And again, if Jesus has glorious titles (vi.), so too has Muḥammad. If the points below be examined, to see *how far they are common to Islām and Christianity*, it will be seen that the Muḥammadan is bound to accept them all, if he acknowledges the authenticity of the Bible now existing. But if he refuses to do so—and discussion is of little use while he continues in that frame of mind—three of the twelve considerations will be ruled out, viz. the Testimony of Prophecy (i.), the Evidence

* Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 46.
† Sūr. 16 *Naḥl*, 45; cp. 21 *Anbiyā'*, 7.
‡ Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 170.
§ Sūr. 43 *Zukhruf*, 59.
‖ The phrase, 'By my permission,' occurs in Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 110.
¶ Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 79.
** Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 78.

of the New Testament (ii.), and the Power of foretelling the future (ix.), to which must be added the Resurrection (x.) and the Ascension (xi.), in the Christian sense of those historical facts. A few of the points are *peculiar to Islām*, and either different from or contrary to the Gospel. As being part of the common stock of Muslim belief, they are well calculated to appeal to the Muḥammadan, though they are not altogether in line with Gospel facts. This applies to seven of the twelve points. The Muḥammadan accounts of the birth of Jesus without an earthly father (iii.), of His freedom from Satan's defiling touch (v.), of His being strengthened with the Holy Spirit (vii.), and of His present state of exaltation in the fourth heaven (xii.), are very different from the Gospel, and in comparison with it are quite inadequate statements of the truth. The Resurrection (x.) and the Ascension (xi.), in their Muḥammadan guise, are so distorted as to lose almost all their value. And the Qur'ānic description of Jesus as a spirit proceeding from God (vi.) introduces confusion into the New Testament conception of the Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

But with all these qualifications, the twelve points enumerated below should constitute a body of powerful and effective argument for the Christian's use. It is hardly necessary to say that it is not contemplated or suggested that all the twelve points should be brought forward at once, but, rather, that they should be kept ready in reserve for use on every suitable occasion, whether such occasion be friendly discussion, the instruction of inquirers, or public preaching.

Perhaps a word of caution is necessary, not to exaggerate the weight of the considerations advanced below. If the error is made of putting them forward as conclusive arguments, the Muḥammadan will readily and naturally refuse the inference. This is not, however, our object, but to dispose the Muḥammadan to weigh more carefully the claims of this great Prophet upon his allegiance, and to lead him to refer to the Holy Scriptures for fuller light and the only satisfactory explanation of the facts. None of the following twelve points, with one or two possible exceptions, amounts to a conclusive argument for the Divinity of Christ; but they are highly suggestive, and are only adequately explained on that hypothesis. Their effect, in brief, is rather of a cumulative nature. And the Muḥammadan, who has come to appreciate their force, and also realized that the traditional glorification of Muḥammad is against the clear sense of the Qur'ān and rests only on the unreliable basis of tradition, and is, moreover, through its wild extravagance opposed to sound sense and reason, ought to be already a long way on the road to the acceptance of that which is revealed in the Gospel as to the nature and person of our Blessed Lord.

The following considerations point to the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ was more than a mere prophet:—

(i.) *The testimony of Prophecy.*—This consideration is one of

great value. The pre-eminent dignity and glory of Christ shine forth clearly from the pages of the Old Testament, which foretell His coming and His work. The stream of prophetic intimation takes its rise almost from the beginning of God's revelation of Himself to man. Age after age it increases in depth and volume till the close of the Old Testament canon. How exalted must be the rank of that illustrious Personage, Whose coming was thus predicted so many ages beforehand, and Whose manifestation was the inspiring theme of the prophets,* and was destined to be the cause of blessing to all the true people of God! In sharpest contrast with this fulness and ever-growing clearness of prediction with regard to the coming of Christ, is the ominous absence of all allusion and the dead silence of Scripture as to the advent of any subsequent prophet. The value of the testimony of prophecy is shown by Muḥammad's eagerness to enlist this ally on his side, and the ill-advised zeal of many of his followers in the vain attempt to force the voice of Scripture to testify to their prophet. †

It is unnecessary to give here the references to Christ in the Old Testament. They can be obtained from any Bible hand-book. It may, however, be observed, with regard to the value of the argument from the testimony borne to Christ by the previous Scriptures—

(*a*) That they are appealed to by Christ Himself: 'These are they which bear witness of Me.' ‡

(*b*) That ignorance of, or disbelief in, them is a fruitful source of error both in the perception of truth and the recognition of the divine messenger: 'Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures'; § 'If ye believed Moses, ye would believe Me, for he wrote of Me.' ‖

(*c*) While, on the other hand, a correct knowledge and unprejudiced acceptance of Scripture lead to belief in Christ: 'We have found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write.' ¶

(*d*) That when the Scriptures are looked upon by inquirers as the necessary and proper test of the truth, there is good hope that their search will not be in vain. The Bereans' daily examination of the Scriptures was naturally followed by the belief of many of them.**

(*e*) That the argument from prophecy is consistently brought forward by the writers of the New Testament, from the first verse of St. Matthew, which introduces the genealogy of the promised Messiah of the seed of Abraham and David, to the closing chapter of Revelation, which again mentions the fact of Christ's Davidic descent.†† St. Matthew's Gospel is specially full of

* 1 Peter i. 10, 11, 'Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently,' etc.

† Cp. Ch. VII., C, ii.

‡ St. John v. 39.

§ St. Matt. xxii. 29.

‖ St. John v. 46.

¶ St. John i. 45.

** Acts xvii. 11, 12.

†† Rev. xxii. 16.

reference to that which had been written and foretold by the prophets.

(*f*) That it is the argument relied upon by the early teachers and Apostles of the Christian Church beginning from the Day of Pentecost; *

(*g*) and by the early apologists of Christianity, who 'though alluding to the miracles of Christ as substantiating their belief, yet vindicate their belief itself, not on this ground, but on the fulfilment of the Hebrew prophecies.' †

(ii.) *The evidence of the New Testament.*—The direct evidence of the New Testament to the divine Sonship and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ will naturally come under the sections specially dealing with those topics. The point emphasized here is that the Word of God, the highest possible authority, testifies to the more than human greatness of Jesus: whereas the Qur'ān, which carries at least equal weight with the Muḥammadan, declares in the clearest and most unmistakable language that Muḥammad was only man. ‡

(iii.) *The Birth of Jesus without a human father.*—The accounts of the conception and birth of Jesus in the Bible and in the Qur'ān § and Traditions are very different in character and complexion. They agree, however, in this, that Jesus was born without a human father from the Virgin Mary.

It is true that in another passage the Qur'ān places the birth of Jesus on a level with the creation of Adam, both being miraculous results of the word or command of God: 'Verily the likeness of Jesus in the sight of God is as the likeness of Adam; He created him out of the dust, and then said unto him, Be; and he was.' ‖ But there is really no comparison between the two. And the conception of Jesus by a special exercise of divine power surely indicates a 'special relation to the Deity.' ¶

(iv.) *The Birth of Jesus from the chosen and purified Mary.*—The greatness of Jesus may also be inferred from the unique honour accorded to His mother above all other women. The words of the Qur'ān, 'And when the angels said, O Mary, verily God hath chosen thee, and hath purified thee, and hath chosen thee above

* Cp. Acts ii. 25–28, 34, 35; iii. 22–25; iv. 25–28; viii. 35; x. 43; xvii. 2, 3; xviii. 28; xxvi. 22, 23.

† Dr. Wace, in the *Churchman*, June, 1903, referring to Dr. Lyall's *Propædeia Prophetica*. The former also quotes from the same source the illustration of a king sending a messenger to his subjects from a distant country. The messenger's credentials are at first regarded with some suspicion, but are afterwards amply confirmed by a sealed document in possession of the people, which was not to be opened until the messenger's arrival.

‡ Sūr. 18 *Kahf*, 110; 41 *Fuṣṣilat*, 5, 'Say, Verily I am only a man like you' (*Qul, innamā anā basharun miṣlu-kum*). The words are the same in both places.

§ Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 17–22.

‖ Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 58.

¶ *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 123.

all the women of the world,'* are quite in harmony with the evidence of the New Testament, as may be seen from the salutation of Gabriel, 'Hail, thou that art highly favoured,' from the inspired address of Elisabeth to her kinswoman, 'Blessed art thou among women,' and from Mary's own humble realization of the high honour conferred upon her, 'Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.' † The Qur'ān nowhere speaks in similar language about the mother of any other prophet. So then, not only in the circumstances of His birth, but also in the pre-eminent rank assigned to His mother, we perceive the transcendent dignity of Jesus.

(v.) *Jesus' freedom from the defiling touch of Satan at birth.*—The argument from the perfect sinlessness of Jesus is one which is very familiar to us Christians and carries great weight with us. We have nothing to do with it just now. Its value in discussion with Muḥammadans is vitiated at the outset by the fact that they consider all the prophets to have been without sin. This freedom from sin, however, is not of the same absolute and unqualified character as the sinlessness of the Lord Jesus Christ which we learn from the New Testament. Muḥammadans admit that their prophets did not always choose the better part, while yet at the same time they positively refuse to attribute to them any criminal violation of God's Law.‡ And this although the Qur'ān and Traditions supply abundant evidence to the contrary.

For the reason given, therefore, the argument from the sinlessness of Jesus is not a good one to use at the outset of discussion, or indiscriminately. There is, however, a remarkable testimony to the unique holiness and purity of Jesus, contained in the Muḥammadan tradition which relates that He and His mother alone of all mankind were free from Satan's defiling touch at birth, which makes all other human beings susceptible of sin. This may most suitably be brought forward. The peculiar prerogative thus ascribed to Jesus is supported by the noteworthy fact that neither the Qur'ān nor the Traditions supply a scrap of evidence to show that Jesus was guilty of sin, either in the lower or the higher sense. Unlike other prophets, it is never asserted of Jesus that He asked pardon for sin, or that God pardoned Him.§ In a remarkable tradition describing how the Muḥammadans on the Day of Resurrection will go first to one prophet, and then to another, intreating their intercession with God, each of the prophets approached by them—Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses—recalls his own sinfulness and pleads his consequent unworthiness

* Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 42; cp. 37, 'Therefore the Lord accepted her with a gracious acceptance.'

† St. Luke i. 28, 42, 48.

‡ In India the common technical term used in this controversy is *ẕanb* (sin); in Persia it is *ma'ṣūm* (innocent).

§ *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 124.

of so high a dignity; but not so Jesus, Who, although according to the tradition He points the suppliants to Muḥammad, yet in marked contrast with the others recalls no sinful act and makes no confession of sin or unworthiness, and recommends Muḥammad on the express ground that 'his sins God has forgiven both first and last.' * These considerations may properly be adduced, but without exaggerating their force, in order to prepare the way for the full New Testament doctrine of the sinlessness of Jesus and the necessary corollary of His divinity. The pure, spotless, unworldly life of Jesus is a point which the Muḥammadan admits and appreciates. Said a Muḥammadan disputant to Leupolt, when the latter pressed him to say whether he really believed that Jesus Christ was a sinner, 'I have read the New Testament attentively, and if there was a being without sin, it was Jesus Christ.' †

The tradition of Jesus' freedom from the touch of Satan at birth, a privilege which He shared with His mother, is found in several places. In the *Mishkātu'l-Maṣābiḥ* we are told on the authority of Abu Hurairah, one of the companions of Muḥammad, that 'The Prophet said, "there is not of the sons of Adam, except Mary and her son, one born but is touched by the devil at the time of his birth, and the child makes a loud noise from the touch." ' And again, on the same authority, 'The Prophet said, "the noise which a child makes at its birth is from the devil's touch." ' ‡

Two other versions of the tradition are given in *Sweet First-fruits*. 'There is, first, this tradition in the collection of the Imām Muslim: "One day Muḥammad told 'Āyishah that every child, born of the seed of Adam, received the prick of Satan at its birth, and was affected thereby, excepting only the son of Mary and His mother"; so that according to this saying of the Prophet, the sting of Satan affected all the prophets at their birth, himself not excepted, saving only the Messiah and His mother; and the absence of power in Satan, the accursed, to touch Him alone, is proof of His being above all others. Second, we find the following tradition as given by the Imām Ghazzālī: "When Jesus, son of Mary, on whom be blessing, was born, the devils came to Satan, saying, that in the morning the idols were all found hanging down their heads. Satan could not understand this, till in his rounds he discovered that Jesus had just been born, and that the angels were around Him, rejoicing thereat. So he returned to the devils and told them that the day before a prophet had been born; and that never had a mortal man been born before, at whose birth he had not been present, but only this; and

* *Mishkātu'l-Maṣābiḥ*, Bk. XXIII., chap. XII., quoted by Hughes, *Notes on Muhammadanism*, pp. 258–260.

† *Recollections*, p. 90.

‡ Bk. I., chap. III., pt. I., p. 23. Quoted by Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Devil.'

so the devils despaired of any idols being ever worshipped after that night, as they had been before."' *

The reason for this special favour accorded to the Virgin Mary and her Son, is supposed to be the prayer offered up by the mother of the former when her daughter was born. The story is briefly as follows: The wife of 'Imrān, whose name the commentators give as Anna or Hannah, prayed to God for a son, and vowed to dedicate him to His service. But when the child was born, it was found to be a daughter, not a son, to the great disappointment of Hannah, who thought she would not be eligible for God's service in the Temple. In her prayer at the time of the child's birth, she prayed to God and said, 'I have called her Mary; and I commend her to Thy protection, and *also* her issue; against Satan driven away with stones.' † It was in answer to this prayer that God interposed a veil, so that the touch of Satan should not reach either Mary or her son Jesus at their birth.

The unique circumstances attending the conception and birth of Jesus, which have been mentioned above, and which Muḥammadans themselves admit, viz. His birth without a human father, from the chosen Mary, chief of women, and His preservation by the special interposition of God from the touch of Satan at His birth, are such as attended the coming into the world of no other prophet; they warrant us in believing that Jesus must have had some peculiar relationship to the Deity, as will be still further borne out by the consideration of His glorious titles in the following section; and lastly, they not only prepare the way for, but also receive their only adequate explanation in the fuller account given in the Holy Gospel of the nature and person of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is interesting to compare with the foregoing the line of argument adopted by Paulus, a Persian convert, in his *Wasīlatu'n-Najāt*. Whereas the object of this chapter is to bring together the various considerations calculated to lead a thoughtful Muḥammadan to weigh with unprejudiced mind the claims put forth in the Gospel on behalf of Jesus, the writer just mentioned begins as it were at the other end of the chain, and starting with the unique title and glories of the Incarnate Word of God, argues that it was therefore appropriate and necessary that His human body in like manner should be of peerless excellence, born from the chosen Mary, and undefiled by the rust of sin, a fit robe to adorn His adorable Person.‡

(vi.) *Jesus' glorious titles.*—Names are of different kinds. The title (*laqab*) differs both from *kunyat* and *ism*. *Kunyat* is a name by which a person is designated as being the father, son, etc., of some one else, *e.g.* Abū Ṭālib, Ibn Mas'ūd. *Ism* is a general term, and commonly denotes the individual name distinguishing one person

* Pp. 124, 125.
† Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 36. See the notes on the whole passage.
‡ See *Wasīlatu'n-Najāt*, chaps. 15–17.

from another. But *laqab* denotes that the person so described is the possessor of the qualities or attributes named; and, therefore, it may express either praise or blame.

Jesus is spoken of under a number of different titles in the Qur'ān, such as the Messiah, the Apostle of God, the Word from Him, a Spirit from Him, etc.,* some of which are identical with, or correspond to, titles of the Lord Jesus Christ which are found in the New Testament. It might naturally have been supposed that these titles, when mentioned by Muḥammad, would bear the same meaning and have the same force as they possess in the religion and the book from which they are borrowed. But this is not the case, and as has often been pointed out, whether Muḥammad was aware of their full meaning or not, he categorically denies the Christian sense attached to them.†

The two most remarkable and expressive titles given to Jesus in the Qur'ān are the two last mentioned above, the Word from Him, and a Spirit from Him. And it is these two only which will be discussed here.

But before proceeding further it is well to ask, What is the force of the argument derived from these 'titles of distinction,' and how far are we free to use it? In reply it may be said that too much stress should not be laid upon them, as though they were enough to prove the divinity of Jesus out of hand. There they are for all to read on the pages of the Qur'ān; and the Christian rightly regards them as an echo of Gospel truth. But the Muḥammadan reads them only in the light of other passages in the same Qur'ān, which explicitly deny their Christian connotation. In another place the caution has been given not to make the Qur'ān itself supply the evidence for truths at variance with its whole teaching and spirit. Too much insistence here, then, would only irritate and alarm a novice, and throw him back on those other passages, the anti-Christian purport of which is evident. They may, however, be used with judicious tact, and as the hearer may be able to receive it, (i.) in order to show the pre-eminent dignity of Jesus;

* See Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, p. 229, *s.v.* 'Jesus Christ.' I cannot refrain from here giving the following anecdote in reference to our Lord's title, the Lamb of God. Mr. Morier, author of *The Adventures of Hajji Baba in England*, in an appendix to that work, mentions a certain 'Mirzā Bābā, a Persian, who gave us lessons in the Persian language,' who made a copy of Henry Martyn's translation of the New Testament into Persian, and used to be reviled by the Mullās for undertaking such a work. 'On reading the passage where our Saviour is called the "*Lamb of God*," they scorned and ridiculed the simile, as if exulting in the superior designation of 'Alī, who is called *Shīr-i-Khudā*, the Lion of God. Mirzā Bābā observed to them, "The lion is an unclean beast; he preys on carcases, and you are not allowed to wear his skin because it is impure; he is destructive, fierce, and man's enemy. The lamb, on the contrary, is in every way *halāl*, or lawful. You eat its flesh; you wear its skin on your head; it does no harm, and is an animal beloved. Whether is it best, then, to say the lamb of God or the lion of God?"' (quoted in the *Missionary*, Aug., 1852, pp. 229, 230).

† See, *e.g.*, Sale, on Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 86; 9 *Taubah*, 31; and Arnold's *Ishmael*, pp. 200, 201.

(ii.) to excite interest and inquiry, by drawing attention to what is the real implication of such transcendent titles; and (iii.) to point to the fact that the older teaching of the New Testament clearly and distinctly proclaims the truth, to which the Qur'ān itself thus incidentally, and perhaps unwittingly, bears testimony.

(*a*) *The Word from Him.*—There are two passages in the Qur'ān where the title of 'The Word' is given to Jesus: 'The angels said: O Mary, verily God sendeth thee good tidings, *that thou shalt bear* the Word *proceeding* from Himself (*kalimatin min-hu*); His name shall be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, honourable in this world and in the world to come, and *one* of those Who approach near *to the presence of* God.' * And, 'Verily Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, *is* the Apostle of God, and his Word (*kalimatu-hu*), which he conveyed into Mary, and a spirit *proceeding* from Him.' † In these passages a distinct personality is attributed to 'the Word,' and He is regarded as being of the Nature of God (from Him, *min-hu*).‡ They agree, therefore, with the Gospel of St. John, which tells us that 'the Word was with God' (distinct personality), and 'the Word was God' (divine nature). §

We may form some conception of the meaning of this title as applied to Jesus by recalling the ideas we associate with *the word of a man*. The power of speech, or intelligent utterance, is that which distinguishes man from other animals. It is that by which he makes known his will, and delivers his commands. And again, How do we come to realize a man's greatness and wisdom? What is it that makes these things manifest to us, but his words spoken or written? From this analogy we are able to comprehend in some degree the sense in which Jesus is called the Word of God.

And once more, Jesus as being the Word of God is the perfect Man—the source, fount, and origin of all things, in whom all things are comprehended and summed up. There is a passage in the *Jazawāt* of Mīr-i-Dāmād, who lived in the time of Shāh 'Abbās, in which the author says that all created things in the whole universe are summed up in the perspicuous Book of God (the Qur'ān), which has omitted nothing small or great from the reckoning; and that in a similar sense Christians call Jesus the Word of God (*Kalimatu'-llāh*), in accordance with the ascription of this title to Him in the Qur'ān. ‖

Jesus, the Word of God, therefore is the perfect Man, because

* Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 45, 46.
† Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 169.
‡ *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 119.
§ St. John i. 1.
‖ Maujūdāt-i-niẓām-i-jumalī maujūdāt-i-kitābu'llāhi'l-mubīn hast, kih hīch saghīreh wa kabīreh-i-wujūd-rāna guẓāshteh ast kih iḥṣā na kardeh bāshad. . . . Wa az īn jā'st kih 'Īsā-rā Kalimatu'llāh mī-gūyand, wa Qur'ān-i-'azīm mī-farmāyad, 'Inna'llāha yubashshiru-ki bi-kalimatiṉ min-hu'smu-hu' l-Masīḥu 'Īsā' bnu Maryam' (Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 45, 46).

He is the source (*mabdaʿ*) and origin of all things. Muḥammadans say that the Book of God, by which they mean their Qur'ān, contains the sum of all existence.* Philosophers, however, say that this epitome of the universe is man. Just as your Qur'ān, we may say to the Muḥammadan, claims to contain all sciences, and everything necessary to be known, † and is called the *Book of God*, in like manner, and with more justification from a philosophical point of view, Jesus is called the *Word of God*. And if we wish to know what this means, we must have recourse to the Holy Gospel.‡ If the objection be raised here that the perfect man is not Jesus, but Muḥammad, the answer may be given that this is not so, and for two good reasons. The birth of Jesus from a virgin mother § was miraculous (*kharq-i-ādat*); and secondly, the whole of His short life was pre-eminently devoted and unworldly (*zuhd, mujarrad būdan*). In both of these respects He is without compare.

Two other objections remain to be noticed.

i. No one but God, and the recognized authorities, can interpret the Qur'ān.

Answer.—God has given reason to man to enable him to distinguish between the true and the false. Away with the idea that the inspired Word of God can only be understood by a few inspired men! A letter to serve its purpose must be intelligible, and God's revelation of Himself in His word understandable by those to whom it has been given. The great commentators were only fallible men, and do not release us from the obligation of using our reason in the study of God's Word. After all, most of the sūrahs and verses of the Qur'ān are easy to understand, such as those which speak of Jesus as the Word from God. Your little son does not need a learned scholar to explain to him such expressions as 'milk from the sheep,' 'fruit from the tree.' A man should not be content with reciting the Qur'ān in parrot-like fashion, but should bend all his powers of mind and reason to the comprehension of the meaning of it. Have we not as much right as the commentators of old to apply our reasoning powers to the understanding of the Qur'ān? Moreover, if certain passages deny the Divinity of Jesus, that does not rob us of our right to inquire

* In accordance with Sūr. 6 *Anʿām*, 59, 'With him are the keys of the secret *things*; none knoweth them besides himself; he knoweth that which is on the dry land and in the sea; there falleth no leaf but he knoweth it; neither *is there* a single grain in the dark parts of the earth, neither a green thing, nor a dry thing, but it is *written* in the perspicuous book.' And verse 37 of the same Sūrah, 'There is no *kind of* beast on earth, nor fowl which flieth with its wings, but *the same is* a people like unto you; we have not omitted anything in the book *of our decrees*.' Shīʿahs usually explain 'the perspicuous book' as referring to 'Alī.

† In accordance with Sūr. 16 *Naḥl*, 91, 'We have sent down unto thee the book *of the Qur'ān* for an explication of everything *necessary both as to faith and practice*, and a direction, and mercy, and good tidings unto the Muslims.'

‡ See, for example, St. John i. 1–4; Col. i. 15–17, 19; ii. 8, 9.

§ Sūr. 21 *Anbiyā'*, 91; 66 *Taḥrim*, 12.

the meaning of those precious verses which agree with the teaching of the Old and New Testaments.*

ii. The expression 'from Him' (*min-hu*) does not mean 'of the nature of,' or an emanation from, 'God,' but simply 'from Him.'

Answer.—'Had the meaning been as you suppose, then in the announcement of the birth of Jesus, would not the ordinary form of speech have been used, as in the case of Abraham's guests, who addressed him thus: "We bring thee tidings of a wise son" (Sūr. 15 *Ḥijr*, 53); or of Zacharias, "The angels called to him as he stood praying in the chamber, Verily, God sendeth thee good tidings of (a son named) John, who shall bear witness to the Word (proceeding) from God, honourable, chaste, and one of the righteous prophets" (Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 39)? How different the tidings conveyed to Mary regarding One Who was Himself of the divine nature: "O Mary, verily God giveth good tidings to thee of the Word from Him"; not of a wise son, nor yet of a righteous prophet, as in the case of Zacharias and Abraham! How different also is the passage in Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 169! "Verily, Jesus, son of Mary, is the Apostle of God, and His Word, which He conveyed into Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from Him." What other prophet, I ask, is given such a descent? The verse is not content with the attribute of prophetical rank, but adds, "the Word of God"; and, lest we should understand this in any other way than was intended, there is added, as it were in explanation, "and a Spirit from Him"; to show that Jesus was not as other prophets, but as a Son sent by His Father into the world. Are not these verses in entire conformity with the Gospel? Then, what stress is laid on His birth, different from that of all other men, without an earthly father; and the heavenly relation to the Deity, different also from that of all other prophets and messengers. Is it not then with right that He is called "the Son of God," as we find it in the Gospel?' †

(*b*) *A Spirit from Him.*—The title, 'a Spirit *proceeding* from Him' (*rūḥun min-hu*), applied to Jesus, occurs in Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 169, already quoted. The essential dignity and suggestiveness of such a glorious designation is what we have now to consider.

i. This is the highest title given to any prophet. *Rūḥu'llāh* is the special title of Jesus among the greater prophets, who brought Laws, and introduced Dispensations. These are Adam the Chosen of God (*Ṣafiyu'llāh*), Noah the Deliverer of God (*Najiyu'llāh*), Abraham the Friend of God (*Khalīlu'llāh*), Moses the Converser with God (*Kalīmu'llāh*), Jesus the Spirit of God (*Rūḥu'llāh*), and Muḥammad the Messenger of God (*Rasūlu'llāh*). Muḥammadans, moreover, attribute to Christians the brief creed,

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 120, 121; and Dr. St. Clair-Tisdall's Persian translation, pp. 349–354.

† *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 121, 122.

'There is one God, and Jesus is the Spirit of God.' * Among Shī'ahs, it may be added, 'Alī is honoured with a variety of different titles, such as *Yadu'llāh*, *'Ainu'llāh*, *Uzunu'llāh*, *Lisānu-'llāh* (the Hand, Eye, Ear, Tongue of God). Others are *Zātu'llāh*, *Sirru'llāh*, *Bābu'llāh* (the Essence, Mystery, Gate of God). All of these are only traditionary, and not found in the Qur'ān. And further, 'Alī was not a prophet, but only an Imām, and brought no divine book. From a comparison of all these titles we conclude that Jesus is the greatest prophet of all. For whereas Muḥammad is only the Messenger of God, Jesus is His Spirit. And which is greater, the Spirit or the Messenger? †

ii. This title further implies that the possessor of it is not separable from the Deity. There is a verse in the Qur'ān which runs as follows: 'They will ask thee concerning the spirit; answer, The Spirit *was created* at the command (*min amri*) of my Lord: but ye have no knowledge given unto you, except a little.' ‡

Min amri may, however, be translated not 'at the command of' as above, but 'of the things of'; and the verse will then mean [according to this interpretation], 'The spirit is of those things, the knowledge of which thy Lord hath reserved to Himself,' § *i.e.* the spirit (*rūḥ*) is from the invisible world (*'ālam-i-malakūt*), and is not one of the visible (*badīhī*, *zarūrī*) existences, but of the higher order of speculative things (*naẓarī*, i.e. *naẓar-i-'aql mī-khwāhad*). In the same way as the spirit is the highest part of man, so Jesus the Spirit of God is the crown and chiefest part of the world of divinity (*'ālam-i-rubūbiyat*). 'This title then,' we may say, 'which you Muḥammadans have assigned to Jesus, is an even more exalted one than "Son of God" which the Christian Scriptures give to Him. A man and his son are separate individuals. Not so, however, a man and his spirit: these are inseparable and indivisible. "Spirit" denotes an even closer connexion than "Son." Hence in the same way, according to His title "Spirit of God," Jesus is not separate from the Deity.'

iii. The Rūḥu'llāh must be of the nature of the Deity. The argument may be put in this form. Is Jesus the Rūḥu'llāh? Yes; the title is based upon the express words of the Qur'ān. Now we cannot prove what spirit (*rūḥ*) is: it belongs to the unseen world, and no one has ever been able exactly to define it. Further, Muḥammadans affirm that their prophet was wiser than all other men or prophets. Yet even he, when asked about *spirit*, confessed his inability to explain what it is. (See the verse of the Qur'ān already quoted.) Spirit (*rūḥ*) is higher than reason (*'aql*), since it is beyond the power of reason to define. Hence the Spirit of God (*Rūḥu'llāh*) is that manifestation of God, Whose nature you cannot understand, since you cannot understand what spirit is: and it must be homogeneous (*ham-jins*) with the Almighty.

(vii.) *Jesus' unique endowment with the Holy Spirit.* — The

* Sale, on Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 86.
† *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 123.
‡ Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'īl*, 87.
§ Sale, on the passage quoted.

historical account of the bestowal of this endowment is recorded in St. John i. 32–34, where the Evangelist testifies, 'I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven; and it abode upon Him' (ver. 32). Very different is the 'strengthening' of Jesus 'with the Holy Spirit,' which is thrice mentioned in the Qur'ān,* and undoubtedly means only, as the commentators say, that the angel Gabriel 'sanctified Jesus and constantly attended on Him,'† giving Him the power, as God is represented as saying to Him in one of the passages alluded to, 'that Thou shouldst speak unto men in the cradle, and when Thou wast grown up.'‡ This attendance of Gabriel upon Jesus recalls a mysterious passage in the Gospel narrative, 'there appeared unto Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him,'§ during the agony in the Garden.

(viii.) *Jesus' Miracles.*—Jesus possessed the power of working miracles in a pre-eminent degree, and wrought miracles such as no other prophet wrought. Some thirty-seven of these are recorded with more or less minuteness of detail in the Gospels. They are not, however, to be regarded as a complete list of all the Lord's wonderful works, but rather as selected specimens or striking examples of His power, which was often exercised with the freest scope in healing and curing great numbers of the sick and afflicted who resorted to Him.‖

(*a*) Now one of the special signs which distinguish a prophet from other men is this very power of working miracles; and we may say to the Muslim, 'It is a remarkable thing that the same person (your prophet, Muḥammad), who admits that he was not sent with miracles and excuses himself for it,¶ is the same who bears testimony to the miracles of Jesus.'**

(*b*) The mission of Jesus may be said to have commenced, according to the Qur'ān, from the cradle, and His work was

* Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 86, 253; 5 *Mā'idah*, 109.

† Sale, on Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 86.

‡ Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 109.

§ St. Luke xxii. 43.

‖ *E.g.* St. Matt. iv. 23, 24; St. Mark i. 32–34; cp. St. John xxi. 25.

¶ Sūr. 13 *Ra'd*, 8, 'The infidels say, Unless a sign be sent down unto him from his Lord, *we will not believe*. Thou art *commissioned to be* a preacher only'; 17 *Banī Isrā'īl*, 61, 'Nothing hindered us from sending *thee* with miracles, except that the former *nations* have charged them with imposture.' See also 6 *An'ām*, 36, 109, 111; 17 *Banī Isrā'īl*, 92–95; 21 *Anbiyā*, 5, 6; 34 *Saba'*, 27.

** *E.g.* Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 109, 110, 'When God shall say, O Jesus, son of Mary, remember My favour towards Thee and towards Thy mother; when I strengthened Thee with the Holy Spirit, that Thou shouldst speak to men in the cradle, and when Thou wast grown up; and when I taught Thee the Scripture, and wisdom, and the law, and the Gospel; and when Thou didst create of clay as it were the figure of a bird, by My permission, and didst breathe thereon, and it became a bird, by My permission; and Thou didst heal one blind from his birth, and the leper, by My permission; and when Thou didst bring forth the dead *from their graves*, by My permission; and when I withheld the children of Israel from *killing* Thee, when Thou hadst come unto them with evident *miracles*, and such of them as believed not said, This is nothing but manifest sorcery.' Cp. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 48; and 19 *Maryam*, 30–34.

finished at an age when others had not received their call. Noah was about five hundred years old when he became a 'preacher of righteousness.' * Moses was eighty years old when he 'spake unto Pharaoh.' † Muḥammad, according to his followers, did not begin his prophetic career till he was forty years old, and died at the age of sixty-three.

(ix.) *Jesus' power of foretelling future events.*—This characteristic is not nearly so prominent in the Muḥammadan as in the Christian conception of the prophet. The histories of the prophets accepted by Islām describe them as inspired men endowed with the power of working miracles, sent to win tribes and nations to the knowledge of the One true God; even those who brought Laws and inaugurated new Dispensations do not essentially differ from the rest in this respect. The Muḥammadan, however, is not blind to the evidential value of this great gift of predicting the future, and will often try, although with conspicuous want of success, to prove that his Prophet possessed it.‡ On the other hand, a moderate acquaintance with the Gospel shows that Jesus exercised this power in an eminent degree, and not only foretold His own betrayal, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension, but events succeeding His death, the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the persecutions of His followers; and also His Second Coming and the Final Judgment.

(x., xi.) *The Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus.*—The triumph of Jesus over death and the grave, and His glorious Ascension to the highest heaven, whither He returns as the Son to His own true home,§ are transcendent proofs of His nature, power, and majesty, and have no counterpart in the career of Muḥammad, for there is really no comparison between the Ascension of Jesus and the alleged night journey of Muḥammad to heaven (*mi'rāj*). The facts are so distorted in the Qur'ān as to have practically lost all resemblance to the original events related in the Gospel.‖

(xii.) *Jesus is the Living Prophet.*—This is a very telling and effective argument to show the superior glory of Jesus.

(*a*) Muḥammad died, and his body was washed and buried in the ground. But Jesus, whether He died for a few brief hours or not, is now alive in Heaven. If you raise objection here, and say that Muḥammad too is alive, as the spirits of all men are, we answer that *Jesus is alive with that same body which He had here on earth*, since, as you yourselves admit, He was taken up into heaven. This sojourn of Jesus in heaven is not a flying visit, so to speak, like the alleged night journey thither of Muḥammad, which, after all, many (and with good reason too) believe to have been only a vision of the night. But the most honoured place in highest

* 2 Peter ii. 5.

† Exod. vii. 7.

‡ See, *e.g.*, Sūr. 30 *Rūm*, 1, 2; and Sale, *in loc.*

§ 'I leave the world and go unto the Father,' St. John xvi. 28; 'I ascend unto My Father,' xx. 17.

‖ See section (A), 4, 5.

heaven is the abiding dwelling-place of Jesus. Other prophets, as Abraham, will hereafter in the world to come be accounted of the number of the righteous.* But on Jesus this special mark of favour was bestowed that He was translated at once to heaven.†

(*b*) *Illustration from zarf and mazrūf.*—If a vessel (*zarf*) be a very precious one, that which it contains (*mazrūf*) will certainly be of precious value too. It is possible that the contents may be most precious, and the vessel itself not be so, while the converse is not probable. In like manner, since the body of Jesus was of such inestimable value that it was taken up straight into heaven, it follows that the soul and spirit (*jān, rūḥ*) which it contained must also needs be exceeding precious. But not so in the case of Muḥammad, who died, and his body perished like that of other mortals; wherein we have no indication that his soul and spirit were more precious in God's sight than those of other men.

(*c*) *Answer to Ṣūfīs and philosophers* (*ḥukamā'*), who deny the literal truth of the Ascension.—For the moment we assume what you say to be true. The view you hold is that the Ascension of Jesus is to be understood in a figurative sense. Then why do you not say the same about the night journey of Muḥammad? Jesus' nobleness is seen in this that you say something about His body (*sc.* His being taken up into Heaven, although you explain it figuratively), which you do not say about the bodies of other prophets.

(*d*) *Relation to Messiah's Everlasting Kingdom.*—In the light of these things we can understand the promises of an everlasting throne and kingdom made to David and his seed, *e.g.* 'Thine house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.'‡ In whom are these glorious prophecies fulfilled, but in Him Who ascended to the highest heavens, and sat down at the right hand of God, that is, in the place of supreme dignity, just as the wazīr at the Sultan's right hand occupies the position of closest intimacy as well as of greatest honour.§ Christ is the lineal descendant of David according to the flesh, and as He ever liveth, so His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. He is not only, as He was truly though derisively called, 'King of the Jews,'‖ but King of kings, and Lord of lords.¶ His genealogy, too, points in the same direction. For this pedigree of most noble names leads up to, and culminates in, His the greatest Name of all,** and proceeds no further. For He

* 'Surely we have chosen him in this world, and in that which is to come He shall be one of the righteous,' Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 130. Cp. 16 *Naḥl*, 122, 123; and 29 *'Ankabūt*, 26.

† Arnold's *Ishmael*, p. 192.

‡ The word of the Lord by Nathan to David, 2 Sam. vii. 16. Cp. Ps. lxxxix. 4, 29, 36, 37.

§ *Dalā'il-i-Īmān*, p. 135.

‖ St. Matt. xxvii. 29.

¶ Rev. xvii. 14; xix. 16.

** St. Matt. i. 16.

has no successor, and, since He ever liveth, that glorious and crowning culmination abides for ever.

(*e*) *A source of unspeakable comfort.*—The Saviour, Who once for all shed His blood for sinners, and is now seated on the throne, is He to Whom, as He Himself tells us, 'all authority hath been given . . . in heaven and on earth,'* and Who 'ever liveth to make intercession'† for His people, with perfect knowledge of their constant and varying needs (for has He not said that He is ever present with them?), and with perfect sympathy with all their infirmities.‡

Anecdote.—'A Smyrna native agent came across a Turk from some town in the interior, who showed considerable acquaintance with the Christian Scriptures. He said he had long studied the Gospel, and had once nearly got into trouble through it. He was called before the authorities for reading Christian books, but before judgment was passed upon him, he begged to be allowed to ask a question. Permission having been granted, he said, "I am travelling; I come to a part where the road branches off in two ways; I look around for some direction, and discover two men; one is dead, the other alive. Which of the two am I to ask for advice—the dead or the living?" "Oh, the living, of course!" all cried out. "Well," he added, "why require me to go to Muḥammad, who is dead, instead of to Christ, Who is alive?" "Go—go about your business!" were the words with which he was dismissed.'§

Concluding Remarks.—How may these considerations be brought home to the Muḥammadan? The general effect of the considerations urged above is to raise the rank of Jesus Christ infinitely above that of Muḥammad. And at the proper time our Muḥammadan friend should be earnestly and lovingly appealed to, to weigh the evidence without prejudice, and in the spirit of fairness which becomes the seeker after truth. 'Can these things be without meaning? No, by my life! And every mention of Messiah in the Qur'ān doth but lead you back to the Taurāt and the Gospel, "the Light and the Guide," as the Qur'ān calls them, which make all clear. How much, then, are we not indebted to Muḥammad for this invaluable testimony! And truly, . . . if I were a Muslim like yourself, I should give no rest to my soul until I found a solution to these momentous questions. It is a marvel to me to see your learned doctors casting these blessed Scriptures behind their backs, as if simply to ignore them were a sufficient answer.'‖

Illustrations.—The following illustrations may also be of service; remembering that the point is, that whereas both sides agree that Christ was one of the greatest prophets, we Christians affirm that no one greater than He has since appeared, while Muḥammadans

* St. Matt. xxviii. 18.
† Heb. vii. 25.
‡ Heb. iv. 15.
§ Nye, *Anecdotes on Bible Texts: St. John*, on chap. i. 12, pp. 12, 13.
‖ *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 125.

make the same claim for their prophet, and say, that now he has come, all men should believe in him. (*a*) *The mission* (*risālat*) *of the prophets* may be compared with the growth of a child, who develops one characteristic and quality after another till he becomes a full-grown man. So of the prophetic line. One was the friend of God, another conversed with God, another raised the dead, etc., till we arrive at the Word and Spirit from God the perfect revealer of the divine will. (*b*) *The person* (*haikal*) *of the prophets* may be likened to a mirror, reflecting the qualities and perfections of God. The larger and clearer the mirror, the larger and more perfect will be the image reflected in it. These illustrations are Ṣūfiistic in character. But the Muslim hearer will probably go along with us so far, and admit that Jesus was the most perfect (*akmal*) of the prophets that had appeared up to that time. But here the critical point is reached, for, leaving Christ, they go on to Muḥammad. They may, therefore, fairly be asked to show what are the superior excellencies they have found in him: for it is unreasonable to forsake that which is good, except for something which is demonstrably better. In accordance with this, the Rev. T. Davis, C.M.S., Bombay, relates that he has found the following challenge, 'if led up to in a quiet, friendly way,' most effective with some of the maulawīs, who, when discussing before others, are fond of extolling the character of Muḥammad: 'Mention *one thing only* in the life and character of Muḥammad whereby we should infer his superiority to Jesus Christ.' *

Objections answered.—(i.) *We say the same of Muḥammad.* This method of evading the force of the claims of Jesus is probably quite familiar to those who have engaged in discussions with Muḥammadans. You bring forward some particular point concerning the work or teaching of Jesus Christ, to which you believe Muḥammad can lay no claim; and, to your surprise, you are met with the retort, This is just what we say, or believe, about Muḥammad. Thus the writer was speaking one day of Christ as the Good Shepherd, when his visitor replied that this was also the way they thought and spoke of their prophets. When told of the sacrifice of Christ, Shī'ahs will often remark that Ḥusain in the same way gave his life for his people. The same general method of rejoinder was characteristic of another of the writer's friends, when Christian truth was presented to him.

However disappointing this may be, it is not surprising, especially when the character of much that finds place in Muḥammadan legend, tending to the exaltation of Muḥammad, is understood, and the common tendency to magnify the founders of religions and their work is remembered. The effect of this tendency in reference to Muḥammad himself is presented very clearly by Koelle, in his *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, Book II., Chapter I., entitled: 'The Biographies of Mohammed by Muslim authors, attributing to their Prophet an equality with, or even a

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1896-7, p. 249.

superiority to, the Prophet of Nazareth, appear in the light of a thinly disguised plagiarism of the Evangelical records, and Mohammed himself as an obvious parody of Jesus Christ.' Thus, to give a couple of instances at random, if a star heralded the birth of Jesus, ''Uṡmān ibn Abū'l-Ās narrates that Fātimah, 'Abdu'llāh's daughter, said, "I was with Āminah (Muḥammad's mother), when the symptoms of her approaching confinement set in; and, on looking up to heaven, I saw the stars to such an extent incline towards the earth, that I thought they must fall down"; or, according to another account, "the stars were so near the earth that I thought they would fall upon my head" (Rauẓat).' * Again, if on one occasion 'a certain woman out of the multitude lifted up her voice, and said unto Jesus, Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the breasts which Thou didst suck,' † this simple expression of adoration must needs be jealously eclipsed and overshadowed by the following puerility, 'Ibn 'Abbās states, all creatures, even birds, air, clouds and winds contended for and contested the privilege of suckling the Prophet.' ‡ As suggested by Koelle, the impression left upon the mind is that, in many instances at least, a deliberate attempt has been made to outdo and surpass that which is recorded in the Gospel about Jesus, by ascribing similar honours or experiences to Muḥammad without any restraint to the play of imagination and invention.—After this digression, the answer to the objection must be given.

Answer.—In general, we may reply that this is a rejoinder in the same terms (*mu'āraẓah-i-bih mis̈l*), and therefore not good. And further, granting for the moment that such things are related of Muḥammad, it is one thing to make a claim and another thing to substantiate it. Many persons make claims. Our duty here is to find out whose claim rests upon the surer foundation. The adherents of every religion are well pleased with that which they follow, as the Qur'ān itself says, '*Men* have rent the affair of their *religion* into various sects; every party rejoiceth in that which they follow.' §

(ii.) *The tradition*, 'The learned of my people are like the prophets of the children of Israel,' ‖ was on one occasion brought forward by a young Muḥammadan, in answer to the argument for the transcendent glory of Jesus from His Qur'ānic titles (Word, Spirit from God); not even Muḥammad himself being honoured with such titles as these.

Answer.—There are endless traditions, true and false. This

* P. 257.
† St. Luke xi. 27.
‡ Koelle, p. 258.
§ Sūr. 23 *Mu'minūn*, 55.
‖ *'Ulamā'u ummat-ī ka-anbiyā'i Banī Isrā'il.* There is another version of this tradition: *Ulamā'u ummat-ī afẓalu min anbiyā'i Banī Isrā'il*, 'The learned men of my people are more excellent than the prophets of the children of Israel.' Though widely known in Persia, the tradition in question is not considered to rest on good authority.

one may be from Muḥammad or it may not; we cannot be sure. What we have to do with is the Qur'ān itself, which you admit to be from Muḥammad, and in which the surpassing dignity of Jesus is made manifest.

(iii.) *The Baptism of Jesus.* If the reception of baptism by Jesus at the hands of John the Baptist be made a ground of objection to His heavenly dignity and glory, *the answer* may be given that 'in receiving baptism, Christ was to be made manifest by a heavenly sign, as John explains below (i. 29–34).' *

2. **The Sonship of Jesus.**—The Sonship and Divinity of Jesus are closely connected in the Christian mind. But to the Muḥammadan they represent distinct and separate ideas, and they must therefore be treated separately. This will be done in the present and following sections. The first deals with the supposed blasphemy of attributing a son to God; the second with what the Muḥammadan regards as the impious audacity of calling Jesus God and worshipping Him as such.

It is scarcely necessary to recall that the proper handling of subjects so profound requires reverence, restraint and a clear conception of the ideas we wish to convey, as well as a distinct realization of the limitations imposed upon us both by the Word of God and the nature of human speech and reason. It is more to the point, perhaps, to emphasize the patient sympathy needed towards those to whom these sacred mysteries are new and strange and contrary to all they have heard and been taught. We are so familiar with these truths from our earliest days that they have become part as it were of our spiritual being, and the growth of our Christian experience has but enhanced for us their precious and vital importance. The mystery is not done away with, but it has almost vanished in the background in presence of the help and blessing which humble faith derives from these mysterious truths. In the case of the inquirer who has neither this early and long familiarity with Gospel teaching, nor the same practical trial and experience of it, the demands on faith seem larger and harder. Our aim will be to help him to sound, intelligent views, taking care not to lead him to suppose that a point may at length be reached where the mystery will be laid bare in the clear light of reason, or the exercise of faith be no longer required.

(1) *Erroneous ideas to be removed first of all from the Muslim's mind.*—In approaching the Muḥammadan upon this subject, the first and most important thing is to remove his erroneous idea of what Christians mean by 'the Son of God.'

A few quotations from the Qur'ān will make the Muḥammadan error on this point quite clear. Muḥammad held a gross, carnal view of Christ's Sonship, and regarded it as being on a level with the Arabian idea that the angels were the daughters of God, and the belief, falsely attributed to the Jews, that Ezra was the son of God. In a word, 'the Muslim conception of Christ's divinity is

* W. R. Aikman's *Sulasut Tul Kutuub*, p. 20, note.

that His humanity was divine.' * What Muḥammad is at so much pains in his Qur'ān to deny is what no orthodox Christian ever said or believed. His denunciations are really quite beside the mark, for we Christians are at one with him touching that which he condemns. He is not the first who may be said to have set up only in order to throw down. 'They say, God hath begotten children: God forbid!' † 'They have set up the genii as partners with God, although He created them; and they have falsely attributed unto Him sons and daughters without knowledge. Praise be unto Him, and far be that from Him which they attribute *unto Him! He is* the Maker of heaven and earth. How should He have issue since He hath no consort?' ‡ 'The Jews say, Ezra is the son of God (*ibnu' llāh*), and the Christians say, Christ is the Son of God (*ibnu'llāh*). This is their saying in their mouths; they imitate the saying of those who were unbelievers in former times. May God resist them. How are they infatuated!' § 'Far be it from Him that He should have a son.' ‖ 'Praise be unto God, Who hath not begotten any child.' ¶ 'They say, The Merciful hath begotten issue. Now have ye uttered an impious thing; it wanteth little but that on occasion thereof the heavens be rent, and the earth cleave in sunder, and the mountains be overthrown and fall, for that they attribute children unto the Merciful; whereas it becometh not God to beget children.' ** And the most famous passage perhaps of all, 'Say, *God* is one God, the eternal God; He begetteth not, neither is He begotten, and there is not any one like unto Him.' ††

Muḥammad was not content, however, with these negative statements, but goes further, and sees in the birth of Jesus a resemblance to the creation of Adam, inasmuch as both were, in his opinion, miraculous and accomplished by the exercise of God's creative power. 'Verily the likeness of Jesus in the sight of God is as the likeness of Adam; He created him out of the dust, and then said unto him, Be, and he was.' ‡‡ 'This *was* Jesus, the son of Mary, the Word of Truth, concerning Whom they doubt. It is not *meet* for God that He should have any son; God forbid! When He decreeth a thing, He only saith unto it, Be, and it is.' §§

* Wherry, on Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 5. The same writer, in his note on Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 91–95, points out that the verb *walada* (beget) used in this connexion throughout the Qur'ān, unlike the equivalent word in the New Testament, *involves* the notion of sex, and fixes the carnal view of the Christian belief.

† Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 116.

‡ Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 101.

§ Sūr. 9 *Taubah*, 30.

‖ Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 169.

¶ Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'īl*, 111.

** Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 91–93.

†† Sūr. 112 *Ikhlāṣ*.

‡‡ Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 58.

§§ Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 35, 36; cp. Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 116, 117. With this contrast the Christian usage of the expressions, 'Jesus, the Son of God,' and 'Adam, the son of God' (St. Luke iii. 38).

That Muḥammad was unaware of the import of Christian phraseology is clear from another passage, where he says, 'The Jews and the Christians say, We are the children of God and His beloved. Answer, Why, therefore, doth He punish you for your sins? Nay, but ye are men, of those whom He hath created.' * 'This verse,' says Wherry, 'shows that Muḥammad, while using the phraseology of Christians, did not understand its import. *A Son of God* seemed to him to certainly express the idea of a divine nature; hence he says, "Nay, but ye are men," etc.'

(2) *Leading questions put by Muslims—how to be answered.*—Since the origin of the erroneous views of Muḥammadans as to the Sonship of Jesus is such as has been described above, and rests on the words of the Qur'ān itself, and is diligently inculcated by their teachers, it is not surprising that the missionary is often pointedly asked whether Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God; that is to say, whether it is really true that Christians do indeed hold those seemingly outrageous views with which Muslims credit them. When any question of this kind is put, it should not be unwelcome, nor be regarded as involving a more or less awkward predicament, but as affording a grand and precious opportunity for dispelling error, bearing witness to the truth, and showing that the gulf between Islām and Christianity is not so wide as was perhaps supposed.

There is no one answer to be given suitable to all cases. The one thing to be avoided is giving an unqualified assent. However large a measure of reverence and full and firm conviction might lie behind our affirmative, it would avail nothing, and would be indeed beside the mark. And this for the simple reason that the Muḥammadan question and the Christian answer differ categorically. Therefore to say 'Yes' to the Muḥammadan's query would be equivalent to assenting to those wrong ideas which he has in his mind, and be only too likely to lead to crude and distressing blasphemies.† For similar reasons, missionaries to Muḥammadans as a rule prefer not to give to inquirers the Gospel of St. Mark, because of the statement in the first verse, 'The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God,' lest the reader should think he finds the Christian error, or corruption, thus put in the very forefront of the Gospel, and be deterred from reading further.

When confronted, then, by the question whether we believe Jesus to be the Son of God, we may reply that we do *not* mean what *you* do by this expression, we entirely repudiate any such

* Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 21; and Wherry, *in loc.*

† *E.g.* 'How many sons has God?' which occurred in the writer's experience. The Rev. C. Grant, of the Divinity School, Calcutta, speaking of an itinerating visit to a place where Muḥammadans of a low grade, and very ignorant and bigoted, predominated, says that one of the questions that used to be asked was, 'Whose son is your Jesus?' and adds, 'If we answer plainly, "He is the Son of God," then at once comes the question, "Who is God's wife?"' (Annual Letter, dated Jan. 26, 1904).

idea; and then, after referring to the titles which the Qur'ān gives to Jesus (Word, Spirit from Him), we may explain briefly our belief in His eternal existence in the Godhead. Or we may decline to answer the question, which is the line advocated by some, on the ground that it is a mystery, and any explanation offered would be unintelligible until some progress has been made in understanding the teaching of the Christian religion. If the question put to us is in the form, Whose Son is Jesus? perhaps the best plan is to ask our questioners what they affirm about this. They call Him the Son of Mary. So do we. Here, then, is common ground. And we may go on to explain that the miraculous conception of Jesus, which they assign to the agency of Gabriel, is attributed by our Gospel to the operation of 'the Holy Ghost' and 'the power of the Most High,' * and He is called 'the Son of God,' not only because of His miraculous birth without a human father, as has just been mentioned, but also because of His eternal Sonship, who was from all eternity 'the only begotten Son . . . in the bosom of the Father.' † 'Not only as He is man, but as He is God, He is so related to the Father that in divine reality, eternally and necessarily, He is the Son; as such, truly possessing the whole nature of "His own Father" (St. John v. 18), and truly subordinate to Him, not in nature, but in order.' ‡

The following answer is suitable for Shī'ah Muḥammadans only. It is based upon a remakable phrase in a prayer addressed to Ḥusain, the son of 'Alī. The words are, 'Peace (be) upon thee, O Blood of God and Son of His Blood!' § We may with justice ask, If you call the title 'Son of God,' which we apply to Jesus on the authority of the Gospel, blasphemous, how do you explain and justify this address to Ḥusain? The life is in the blood. What do these words mean, but that the very life of God was in him? And when he died and his blood became corrupt, what then became of this *ulūhīyat* (divinity)? If the words be explained to mean only, 'O thou who hast purchased nearness to God with thy blood,' they are still so bold and striking as to require explanation and justification.—Similar use may be made of the Shī'ah tradition, which attributes to 'Alī the words, 'I am the creator of the heavens and of the spheres,' ‖ and of the belief that the Imāms were not only endowed with divine attributes, but

* St. Luke i. 35.

† St. John i. 18. Cp. xvii. 24, 'Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world'; i. 1, 'In the beginning was the Word'; and Augustine, *de Trin.*, XV. 19 (VIII., p. 993), 'Caritas quippe Patris . . . nihil est quam ejus ipsa natura atque substantia . . . ac per hoc filius caritatis ejus nullus est alius quam qui de ejus substantia est genitus' (quoted by Lightfoot, on Col. i. 13).

‡ Moule, *Outlines of Christian Doctrine*, p. 58.

§ *As-salāmu 'alai-ka yā ṣāra'llāhi wa'bna ṣāri-hi!* From the prayer entitled, 'Zīyārat-i-Wāris,' addressed to Ḥusain, in the *Miftāḥu'l-Janān*, by Majlisī (Mullā Bāqir), p. 371 (Bombay Ed.).

‖ *Anā ḳhāliqu's-samawāti wa'l-arazīna.* From the *Nahju'l-Balāghah.*

were each of them the manifestation (*mazhar*) in a special sense of some particular attribute.

(3) *The appeal to the Bible.*—It is unnecessary to give here the passages of the New Testament which may be brought forward in proof of the Divine Sonship of Jesus. They can be found in any handbook of Christian doctrine. It will be more to the purpose to draw attention to some general principles and facts, of which it may be helpful to remind the Muḥammadan when he approaches the investigation of this great truth. It is not only our privilege to assist him in comprehending the meaning of particular texts that cause difficulty, but also to inculcate at the outset right views in approaching the study of this mystery. The Muḥammadan will, as a rule, readily assent to the following propositions; it being taken for granted, of course, that he has advanced so far as to accept and be willing to read the Scriptures. (*a*) God only knows His own nature, so we need a revelation from Him;* in order to understand His divine nature, we must have recourse to His Word. (*b*) Laying aside all prejudice, we must carefully and prayerfully study the heavenly books, taking pains as far as in us lies to arrive at the understanding of what they really mean. (*c*) The expression 'Son of God' must not be taken to imply the ordinary human relationship of parent and offspring,† but must be understood in the sense (or senses), and that only, in which it is used in the Gospel. (*d*) The supposition that the passages which speak of Jesus as the Son of God have been foisted into the Sacred Book, is really an evidence showing that this idea of the Sonship of Jesus is *not* opposed to reason.‡ If otherwise, why was it inserted in the Holy Book? If men ventured to tamper with it at all, they would surely not introduce into it things contrary to reason and common sense! (*e*) It must not be forgotten, that these spiritual mysteries, which have to do with the nature and being of God, and are outside the range of our limited powers, can only be made intelligible through figures of the earthly things with which we are familiar, as son, word. The heavenly reality far transcends the earthly figure (else, what need of a figure at all?): but the figure conveys true and right ideas to our finite intelligence, otherwise it would be delusive and not a true figure at all. That which is thus imperfectly revealed to us has its perfect and sublime realization in the depths of the divine nature.

(4) *Illustration: The advantage of having the Son.*—A man pays me a weekly visit for teaching, or what not. He knows little or nothing about my circumstances and manner of life. My son, however, who grows up in my house with me, knows everything, just as the Shah's son is acquainted with all the arrangements of the Royal Palace and the habits of the king in a way that no

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 118.
† *Mizānu'l-Ḥaqq*, p. 48 (English trans.).
‡ *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 118.

outsider can possibly be. Jesus, the Son of God, in virtue of His eternal relationship to the Father, is qualified to reveal Him in His fulness, to tell us everything about Him that it is expedient for us to know. The prophets, on the other hand, know nothing until inspiration comes upon them, and then only so much as is then and there revealed to them. 'The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.' *

Tertullian has some very luminous remarks upon certain aspects of the subject of this section, and with his words we bring it to a close—

I have already said that God reared this fabric of the world out of nothing, by His word, wisdom, or power; and it is evident that your sages of old were of the same opinion, that the Logos, that is the Word, or the Wisdom, was the Maker of the universe, for Zeno determines the Logos to be the creator and adjuster of everything in nature. The same Logos he affirms to be called by the name of Fate, God, Mind of Jove, and Necessity of all Things. Cleanthes will have the author of the world to be a spirit which pervades every part of it. And we Christians also do affirm a spirit to be the proper substance of the Logos, by whom all things were made, in which He subsisted before He was spoken out, and was the wisdom that assisted at the creation and the power that presided over the whole work. The Logos, or Word, issuing forth from that spiritual substance at the creation of the world, and generated by that issuing or progression, is for this reason called the Son of God, and God, from His unity of substance with God the Father, for God is a Spirit. An imperfect image of this you have in the derivation of a ray from the body of the sun; for this ray is a part without any diminution from the whole, but the sun is always in the ray, because the ray is always from the sun; nor is the substance separated, but only extended. Thus is it in some measure in the eternal generation of the Logos; He is a spirit of a spirit, a God of God, as one light is generated by another, the original parent light remaining entire and undiminished, notwithstanding the communication of itself to many other lights. Thus it is that the Logos which came forth from God is both God and the Son of God, and those two are one. Hence it is that a spirit of a spirit, or a God of God, makes another in mode of subsistence, but not in number; in order of nature, but not in numericalness or identity of essence. And so the Son is subordinate to the Father, as He comes from Him as the principle, but is never separated. This ray of God then descended, as it was foretold, upon a certain Virgin, and in her womb was incarnated, and being there fully formed the God-man, was born into the world, the divine and human nature making up this person as soul and body does one man. The flesh being wrought and perfected by a Divine Spirit, was nursed and grew up to the stature of a man, and then addressed the Jews, and preached and worked miracles among them; and this is the Christ, the God of Christians.†

3. **The Divinity of Jesus.**—(1) The Unity of God is the most prominent article of the Muḥammadan creed; and, therefore the Divinity (*ulūhiyat*, *rubūbiyat*) of Jesus is utterly abhorrent to the orthodox Muslim. To him it is an impossible conception.

* St. John i. 18.

† *The Apology of Tertullian* (trans. by Wm. Reeve), pp. 62–64.

It is an offence against reason: for there can be no connexion between the Godhead and human nature. They are absolutely separate and distinct from one another (*tabāyun*). The man Jesus, therefore, cannot be God. A man like ourselves cannot be our Creator. It is also in the opinion of Muslims an offence against the revealed Unity of God. Words could hardly express this view more strongly than those of 'A Shaikh of Baghdad,' a member of a 'Holy League of Muḥammadanism.' 'Consent, then,' he says, 'to grant us this indisputable truth: between us and your belief in the divinity of Jesus is an abyss eternal and impassable. Understand that, penetrated as we are with a faith unbounded in the Unity of our God, it is to us an utter impossibility to admit, to support, to pardon whoever it may be, who, from far or near, is capable of offering insult to the absolute Unity of our God, incomparable, eternal, infinite.' *

(2) This idea is founded on the express words of the Qur'ān; and the Qur'ān being the absolute standard of truth for the Muslim, everything opposed to it must necessarily be wrong. The Muslim's choice, therefore, lies between accepting this view or giving up the book. The chief passages of the Qur'ān, in which the Divinity of Jesus is denied, are the following. Immediately after the passage in which Jesus is called 'the Apostle of God, and His Word,' we read, 'Say not, *There are* three *Gods*; forbear *this*; it will be better for you. God is but one God. . . . Christ doth not proudly disdain to be a servant unto God.' † 'They are infidels who say, Verily God is Christ the son of Mary. Say unto them, And who could obtain anything from God *to the contrary*, if He pleased to destroy Christ the son of Mary, and His mother, and all those who are on the earth?' ‡ 'And when God shall say *unto Jesus at the last day*, O Jesus, son of Mary, hast Thou said unto men, Take Me and My mother for two gods beside God? He shall answer, Praise be unto Thee! it is not for Me to say that which I ought not. . . . I have not spoken to them *any other* than what Thou didst command Me, *namely*, Worship God, My Lord and your Lord.' § 'They take their priests and their monks for *their* lords, besides God, and Christ the son of Mary; although they are commanded to worship one God only: there is no God but He; far be that from Him which they associate *with him!*' ‖ With these may be coupled such expressions as 'Christ the son of Mary is no more than an apostle,' ¶ and '*Jesus* is no other than a servant, Whom we favoured *with the gift of prophecy*.' **

In the face of these strong denials of the Divinity of Christ in the Qur'ān, it is useless to press into our service passages which

* From *Le Missionaire*, quoted in the *Missionary Review of the World*, March, 1904, p. 235.

† Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 169, 170.

‡ Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 19.

§ Vers. 116, 117.

‖ Sūr. 9 *Taubah*, 31.

¶ Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 79.

** Sūr. 43 *Zukhruf*, 59.

may be explained as possessing a different significance, and argue that the Qur'ān itself supplies proof of His Divinity. Muḥammad makes certain admissions and uses certain expressions, which at first might seem to *imply* the Christian doctrine. But he was probably unaware of their Christian significance, and certainly never intended any such thing, and takes the greatest pains to emphatically deny it. All the use that can be made of this evidence has been already indicated.* To lay greater stress upon such passages would only act as an irritant, and provoke the parade of those other verses, which from the Muḥammadan point of view would most naturally be brought forward on the other side.

It is interesting to observe how in the *Gospel of Barnabas*, which Sale supposes to be the work of a renegade Christian,' † the denial of the Divinity of Christ is repeated *ad nauseam*. For instance, 'Many, being deceived of Satan, under pretence of piety, are preaching most impious doctrine, calling Jesus Son of God.' And again, 'The leper answered: "Lord, give me health." Jesus reproved him, saying: "Thou art foolish; pray to God Who created thee, and He will give thee health; for I am a man, as thou art." The leper answered: "I know that Thou, Lord, art a man, but an holy one of the Lord. Wherefore pray Thou to God, and He will give me health." ' ‡

(3) It is not necessary to say much about the right spirit in which to approach the question with Muslims. Mere controversy is to be avoided if possible; and our Muḥammadan friend should be led to see that in such a momentous matter a humble, reverent desire to know the truth as revealed by God is the only right attitude. The two following are admirable instances of this spirit. A colporteur at Port Said, in conversation with two Muslims, one from Damascus and one from Beyrout, 'pressed upon them the truth that only by the study of the Bible with the aid of God's Holy Spirit can Jesus Christ be known.' § Colporteur Masaad Daoud, described as 'a cultivated Syrian,' working at Port Said, writes—

> Some time since I was invited to meet some Muḥammadan shaikhs. Fifteen persons were present, most of them shaikhs. Their object, I found, was disputation, especially concerning the Godhead of Christ. And what was I in such an assembly except God should help me? So I addressed them, saying, 'Sirs, I am not one of the learned, nor can I convince any one of this truth; it is the prerogative of the Spirit of God, as it is written in the Holy Book, saying, 'No one can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost.' But if ye desire to study the Holy Book, then ye will be able to discern, by the Spirit of the Book, satisfactory proofs of the nature of the Christian belief. For no man ever discerns without study; and

* See (B), 1, iii., iv., vi., vii., viii., xii.

† Preface to the Qur'ān, p. 11. In the Oxford Edition of the *Gospel of Barnabas*, by Lonsdale and Laura Ragg, 1907, the author is supposed to have most probably been a renegade Italian monk.

‡ The quotations are from Ragg's Edition.

§ Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1900, p. 147.

how is it possible to know the Word of God without studying it? If you wish to ask me the meaning of a passage, it will be my duty to explain it so that the truth may be made clear to you.' On this all became silent, and three of them took portions of me, namely, two Gospels and one Proverbs in Arabic.*

(4) As soon as possible, it is important to remove all misconceptions as to the nature of the Christian doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus, from the Muslim mind. We do *not* affirm that there are more gods than one. We do *not* say that a man is God, but that the Deity clothed Himself with a human body and nature. Or, perhaps better still, a clear and simple statement of Christian belief will of itself show that the charges made against the Christians are false, and the doctrine attributed to them, in the sense in which the Muḥammadan understands it, without foundation.

The Christian doctrine may still further be cleared from any imputation of involving a plurality of gods, in the following manner. By calling Jesus God, we do not mean to say that there was any division, or separation (*infiṣāl*) between the divine Nature (*zāt*) of Jesus and that of God, from which the existence of a plurality (*ta'addud*) of gods would necessarily follow: but that Jesus' divine Nature shone forth (*jilweh kard*) from this robe of humanity. There is no division of substance implied here, so that the essence (*zat*) of God the Father should be separate from that of the Son. On one side Jesus was connected with the world of Divinity, and on another with the world of humanity.† A friend of the writer's illustrated the point from a match-box lying on the table, one end of which he drew out a little way, but did not pull it out entirely so as to separate the two parts of the box. He added further, If many Ṣūfīs and mystics (*'urafā'*) have called themselves God, as for example, Manṣūr with his dictum, 'I am God' (*Anā'l-Ḥaqq*), or Bāyazīd-i-Bastāmī who said, 'There is nothing within my coat except the Deity' (*Laisa fī jubbat-ī siwā'llāh*), how is it that many among Muḥammadans admit their claim, and yet refuse to allow that of the great Prophet Jesus?

(5) *An argument from reason* (*dalīl-i-'aqlī*).—In order to bridge over the vast gulf between the unapproachable and ineffable majesty of God and His creature man, a connecting link (*rābiṭeh*) or means (*wāsiṭeh*) is required to be a channel of divine grace and instruct man perfectly in the way of God, so that he may obtain salvation and be fitted to enter and enjoy God's presence.

Jesus Christ was this *rābiṭeh* between God and man. He alone of all the prophets claimed this exalted prerogative. 'I speak the

* Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1898, pp. 147, 148.

† The actual words of the Persian friend to whom I am indebted for the above were, *Ek jaṇbeh bih 'ālam-i-rubūbiyat* (*lāhūt*) *muttaṣil būd, wa ek ṭaraf-i bih 'ālam-i-nāsūt* (*kih k̲halq bāshad*).

things,' He said, 'which I have seen with My Father.'* 'All things that I have heard from My Father I have made known unto you.'† 'If ye had known Me, ye would have known My Father also.'‡ 'I and the Father are one.'§ Muḥammad, on the contrary, according to tradition says, 'We do not know Thee according to the truth of Thy knowledge.'‖

Jesus could not have fulfilled this office unless He had been both divine and human. It was needful that He should be possessed of both qualities (*dārā-ye-do-ṣifat*), and partaker of the nature of the Deity as well as of humanity. (*a*) In the first place, it was absolutely necessary that this *wāsiṭeh* or *rābiṭeh* should possess divine qualities (*ṣifāt-i-ilāhī*), in order to impart God's grace and divine gifts to man. Otherwise He could not have acted as the *rābiṭeh*. Had he been possessed of our human nature only, what could He have done for us? Of necessity, He must be infinitely superior to us. A man cannot afford to give fifty tumans (about £10) to another, unless he has much more than this in his possession. (*b*) In the second place, the *rābiṭeh* must needs be possessed of human nature and qualities (*ṣifāt-i-insānī*) to perform His mission. If otherwise, how could He communicate with men, if he were not of the same nature (*ham-jins*) with them? *Illustration.*—I might have lived in Persia for many years, and still not be able to hold intercourse with the people, unless I had acquired the Persian language as a common medium of communication. In a word, Jesus could not have been the Saviour of men, unless He had been outwardly a man with them, and inwardly endowed with a nature infinitely superior to theirs. It is interesting to observe that, in the above argument, derived from Persian sources, for the necessity of the Incarnation, the point emphasized is the need of a channel of communication between God and man.¶ In Raymund Lull's discussions with the Muslims of North Africa the aspect of the Incarnation which he delights to set before them is that of the manifestation of a supreme love.**

Objections answered.—(i.) If the objection be made, that *it was the work of the prophets to do that which has been attributed above to the rābiṭeh*, the question may be put, Were the prophets perfect or

* St. John viii. 38.
† Chap. xv. 15.
‡ Chap. xiv. 7.
§ Chap. x. 30.
‖ *Mā 'arafnā-ka ḥaqqa ma'rifati-ka.*
¶ In his paper on the 'Presentation of Christian Doctrine,' read before the Cairo Conference, 1906, the Rev. S. G. Wilson, of Tabrīz, Persia, mentions the different Persian sects which believe in what they consider incarnations of the Deity, and regards this tendency of Shī'ah Muslims as inherent in the constitution of the Persian mind—'an expression of their religious consciousness.' 'Hence,' he says, 'I have no hesitation in presenting boldly to the Persians the Lord Jesus Christ as a Divine incarnate Saviour' (*Methods of Mission Work among Moslems*, pp. 182–185).
** *Raymund Lull, First Missionary to the Moslems*, by Dr. Zwemer, pp. 90, 140, 141.

not? Of course, they were not. Then they could not impart to us perfect instruction; but, just as a child requires to be gradually trained to eat different kinds of rich food, such as the yolk of eggs, and cannot do so at first, similarly the prophets were sent to instruct us gradually, till the coming of the perfect Teacher, the divine Son. If it had been possible for a prophet to be perfect, only one would have been necessary for all ages and all mankind.

(ii.) The coming of the divine Son was not necessary; a *book* would have suited the purpose as well.

Answer.—There are two other conceivable means of imparting this perfect instruction: (*a*) *A Book.* This, however, would not suffice. First, because in its interpretation people would disagree and make mistakes; and secondly, because the teaching of the book alone would not be enough: a living example is needed of such teaching, as, for example, that of turning the cheek to the smiter, without which it would appear extraordinary and impracticable.* (*b*) *An Angel.* Neither would this fulfil the object in view; for our teacher must needs be of the same nature as we are ourselves.

(6) *Arguments from what is handed down (dalīl-i-naqlī) in the Bible.*—The doctrine of the Divinity of Christ is a mystery; but it is to be received if the evidence is adequate. The only sufficient evidence for us is the Word of God, especially the New Testament, which no one can read attentively and with unprejudiced mind without seeing that it bears witness in the clearest manner to the divine Nature of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(i.) This is manifest from *a cursory survey of the whole.* That the coming Messiah was to be a divine Person was foreshadowed by prophecy, which the New Testament quotes to show its fulfilment in Jesus Christ.† John the Baptist, who was, as the Lord tells us, 'much more than a prophet,' ‡ bears witness 'that this is the Son of God.' § The angel Gabriel, ‖ the Apostles John ¶ and Paul,** evil spirits,†† and God the Father Himself ‡‡ give the same testimony. St. John also tells us that the test of a spirit's utterance being inspired by the Spirit of God is its witness to the

* St. Matt. v. 39. Cp. Isa. l. 6, 'I gave my back to the smiters,' etc.

† Ps. ii. 7, 'Thou art My Son' = Heb. i. 5; 2 Sam. vii. 14, 'I will be his Father, and he shall be my son,' and 1 Chron. xxii. 10, which are = Heb. i. 5; Ps. xl. 6, 7, 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever' = Heb. i. 8, 9. Cp. Isa. ix. 6, 'Mighty God.'

‡ St. Matt. xi. 9; St. Luke vii. 26.

§ St. John i. 34.

‖ St. Luke i. 32, 'The Son of the Most High'; 35, 'The Son of God.'

¶ St. John i. 1, 'The Word was God.'

** Rom. ix. 5, 'God blessed for ever.'

†† *E.g.* the Gerasene demoniac's address, 'Jesus, Thou Son of the most high God,' St. Mark v. 7 = St. Luke viii. 28. Cp. St. Mark i. 34, 'They knew Him'; St. Luke iv. 41, 'They knew that He was the Christ.'

‡‡ At the Baptism (St. Matt. iii. 17; St. Luke iii. 22) and the Transfiguration of Jesus (St. Matt. xvii. 5).

Incarnation.* Christ Himself consistently makes the same claim, or perhaps it should rather be said that He always assumes the fact. He constantly speaks of God as His Father.† He acknowledges, in answer to the question of the High Priest Caiaphas, that He is 'the Christ, the Son of the Blessed.' ‡ He claims the 'timeless existence' of the uncreated and the eternal. 'Before Abraham was, I am.' § He speaks of 'the glory' which He had with the Father 'before the world was.' ‖ He accepts worship as His proper due, which is inconceivable unless He both was, and knew that He was, what He claimed to be. Thus He accepts, without the slightest indication that it was inappropriate or unacceptable, the worship of 'those that were in the boat' with Him,' ¶ and of the 'man born blind from his birth,' ** as well as the adoring confession of the doubter Thomas, 'My Lord and my God.' †† Later on in the New Testament we find prayer addressed to the ascended Jesus by Stephen ‡‡ and by Paul.§§ And in the Revelation the worship of the whole creation is offered to Him.‖‖ In a word, the doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus runs through the whole of the New Testament, and underlies every part of it. It is the grand foundation upon which the whole edifice is reared. The facts and the teaching of the New Testament are alike unintelligible if robbed of this integral and essential feature. It is like the web of the entire fabric, which if taken away leaves nothing behind but a tangled heap of threads. These things must be taken into account by any one who objects to the teaching that Jesus is divine.

(ii.) *The enmity of the Jews.* We learn, both from the Gospel and the Qur'ān, that the Jews wished to kill Jesus. The Gospel explains the reason of their deadly enmity against Him; it was Jesus' claim, which the Jews thoroughly understood, that God was His Father, and that therefore He was partaker of the divine Nature.¶¶ This shows conclusively that Jesus really did lay claim to that relationship to the Deity which the Gospel attributes to Him. It was on this same charge that He was condemned to death by Caiaphas and the Sanhedrim.*** This also supplied the material for the ribald taunts of the passers by; the chief priests, scribes and elders; and the two robbers ††† who were crucified with

* 1 St. John iv. 2, 'Hereby know ye the Spirit of God.'
† St. John x. 30, 'I and the Father are one,' and *passim*.
‡ St. Mark xiv. 61, 62.
§ St. John viii. 58.
‖ St. John xvii. 5.
¶ St. Matt. xiv. 33.
** St. John ix. 35–38.
†† St. John xx. 28, 29.
‡‡ Acts vii. 59, 60, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;' 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. . . .'
§§ 2 Cor. xii. 8, 'Concerning this thing I besought the Lord thrice.'
‖‖ Rev. v. 8, 13, 14.
¶¶ St. John v. 18, 'The Jews sought the more to kill Him because He . . . also called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God'; x. 33, 'Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God.'
*** St. Mark xiv. 61–64.
††† St. Matt. xxvii. 39–44.

Him. And when all was over, and Jesus had breathed His last, the portents of that awful hour wring from the centurion and the watchers with him the confession that the charge of blasphemy which the Jews attributed to Jesus embodied the simple truth after all, 'Truly this was the Son of God.'*

(iii.) *The possession by Jesus of divine attributes.* (*a*) He was the divine Agent of Creation. 'All things were made by Him.'† In Him were all things created . . . all things have been created through Him and unto Him.'‡ 'Through Whom also He made the worlds.'§ He is, however, not only the *creative* Word, but the Sustainer and Upholder of all things. 'In Him all things consist,'‖ 'Upholding all things by the word of His power,'¶ which maintains the universe as an orderly 'cosmos instead of a chaos.'

(*b*) In the spiritual world, as in the natural, Jesus is the Life-Giver, raising the believer from the living death of ignorance and sin to the soul's true life, which is the knowledge of God in Christ. 'I came,' He said, 'that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.'** 'This is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him Whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ.'†† This life is a present possession. The believer in God as revealed by Christ 'hath eternal life,' 'hath passed out of death into life.'‡‡ The Lord Jesus Christ has this power inherent in Himself. He is 'a spring of life'; 'as the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself.'§§ Had He not been Himself the Lord of life, He would not have been able to impart life to others. The Persians have several verses of poetry which illustrate this truth—

The nature that has obtained no gift of life—
How is it possible for it to become a life-giver? ‖‖

From the dry cloud that is destitute of water
Will not proceed the quality of giving water.

How can the sleeper wake the sleeper?
How can the drunkard make the drunkard sober? ¶¶

* St. Matt. xxvii. 54.
† St. John i. 3.
‡ Col. i. 16.
§ Heb. i. 2; cp. ver. 10.
‖ Col. i. 17. See Lightfoot, *in loc.*
¶ Heb. i. 3.
** St. John x. 10.
†† St. John xvii. 3.
‡‡ Chap. v. 24.
§§ Chap. v. 26. See Westcott, *in loc.*

‖‖ From Niẓāmī—

Zāt-i-nā-yāfteh az hastī bakhsh—
Kai tawānad kih shawad hastī-bakhsh?

¶¶ Khushk abr-ī kih buwad zi āb tuhī,
Nāyad az wai ṣifat-i-āb-dihī.

Khufteh-rā khufteh kai kunad bīdār?
Mast-rā mast kai kunad hushyār?

I am indebted to the Rev. C. H. Stileman, Clerical Sec. C.E.Z.M.S., late C.M.S., for some of these quotations.

With these may be compared the verse of the Qur'ān, addressed to the Arabian idol-worshippers, 'Say, is there any of your companions who directeth unto the truth? Say, God directeth unto the truth. Whether is he, therefore, who directeth unto the truth more worthy to be followed, or he who directeth not, unless he be directed?' *

(*c*) Christ was without sin. 'Him Who knew no sin.' † 'Without sin.' ‡ 'Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth,' § etc. 'In Him is no sin.' ‖ Peter speaks of Him as 'the Holy and Righteous One,' ¶ and says that He 'suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous.' ** Stephen calls Him 'the Righteous One.' †† Compare, too, with this the description of our High Priest, as 'holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners,' ‡‡ and that of the victim who shed His 'precious' blood for our sins 'as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.' §§ This argument should carry great weight with those who have abandoned erroneous conceptions about the sinlessness of all the prophets, and know anything of the nature of the human heart. ‖‖

(*d*) The Forgiver of sin. 'The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins,' said the Lord on one memorable occasion'; ¶¶ and in virtue of this power 'He saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins are forgiven.' *** In saying these words the Lord did not express a past fact in the paralytic's moral history, but Himself then and there pronounced his pardon. That this was so is evident from the comments of the hearers,††† who clearly understood the nature of the claim involved in this exercise of a prerogative which appertains to the Deity alone. The Muḥammadan also has been taught this truth, that forgiveness of sins belongs to God only, as the Qur'ān says, 'He spareth (*lit.* pardoneth) whom He pleaseth, and He punisheth whom He pleaseth.' ‡‡‡ It would seem that the only way by which the force of this argument can be avoided is to charge the Gospel itself with actual verbal corruption (*taḥrīf-i-lafẓī*). The argument may be strengthened by adducing the following words of the Qur'ān from the famous verse of the throne, 'Who is he that can intercede

* Sūr. 10 *Yunus*, 36.
† 2 Cor. v. 21.
‡ Heb. iv. 14.
§ 1 St. Peter ii. 22, 23.
‖ 1 St. John iii. 5.
¶ Acts iii. 14.
** 1 St. Peter iii. 18.
†† Acts vii. 52. Compare the words of Judas Iscariot (St. Matt. xxvii. 4); the reiterated assertion of Pilate, that he found 'no crime' in Him (St. John xviii. 38; xix. 4, 6); and the witness of Pilate's wife (St. Matt. xxvii. 19), one of the malefactors (St. Luke xxiii. 41), and the centurion (ver. 47).
‡‡ Heb. vii. 26.
§§ 1 St. Peter i. 19.
‖‖ Cp. Jer. xvii. 9, 'deceitful above all things,' and 'desperately sick.'
¶¶ St. Mark ii. 10.
*** Ver. 5.
††† Ver. 7.
‡‡‡ Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 129.

with him but through his good pleasure?'* From this we perceive that even a prophet cannot intercede with God except by God's permission. Jesus, however, so far from needing *permission* to *intercede*, Himself forgives.

(*e*) Jesus knows the thoughts of the heart. This prerogative is claimed for the Deity by the word of God Himself: 'The LORD looketh on the heart,'† 'I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins.'‡ It is ascribed to God by David§ and by Solomon.‖ In equally clear terms it is claimed by the 'Son of God,'¶ in the words, 'all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts.'**

In each of the four Gospels we find specific instances mentioned of the exercise of this divine attribute by the Lord Jesus Christ. We read of Him as 'knowing,' or, according to many ancient authorities, 'seeing' the thoughts†† of the scribes, who within themselves accused Jesus of blasphemy for forgiving the sins of the sick of the palsy; as 'knowing' the thoughts of the Pharisees, who attributed Jesus' demon-exorcizing power to Beelzebub; and, again, as 'answering'‡‡ the unspoken thought of Simon the Pharisee (in St. Augustine's expressive phrase, 'He heard the Pharisee thinking'), who could not conceive of a 'prophet' wittingly permitting the touch of 'a woman which was in the city, a sinner.' And St. John sums up the matter in his impressive comment on the Lord's not trusting Himself to those Who believed on His name in Jerusalem at the Passover beholding His signs which He did, that 'He Himself knew what was in man.'§§ Whereas a human being does not know the thoughts of his nearest friend, Jesus, not by temporary flashes of intuitive or prophetic insight, but habitually and constantly knew all that was passing in the hearts of men.

(*f*) He is always present with His true followers. The promise of the Lord's abiding presence with His faithful disciples is not given only to the Church at large—'I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world,'‖‖ but is also vouchsafed to every little company met together in His name—'Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.'¶¶

(*g*) Christ's reign over all things. This was foretold in prophecy, 'The LORD saith unto my lord, Sit thou at My right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool'; *** and the words are applied by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews to Jesus to show His more than angelic dignity and

* Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 255.
† 1 Sam. xvi. 7.
‡ Jer. xvii. 10.
§ 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.
‖ 2 Chron. vi. 30.
¶ Rev. ii. 18.
** Rev. ii. 23.
†† St. Matt. ix. 4, R.V., marg.; cp. St. Mark ii. 8.
‡‡ St. Luke vii. 40; and Farrar, *in loc.*
§§ St. John ii. 25.
‖‖ St. Matt. xxviii. 20.
¶¶ St. Matt. xviii. 20.
*** Ps. cx. 1.

glory.* After His resurrection, the Lord Himself informed His disciples that 'all authority' had been given unto Him in heaven and on earth.† And St. Paul tells us that this reign must continue till the subjection of all His enemies, and the 'abolition' of the last enemy, death.‡

(*h*) His raising of the dead at the Last Day. 'The hour cometh,' says the Lord Himself, 'in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment.' §

(*i*) His judgment of all men. God 'hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom He hath ordained.' ‖ 'We must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' ¶

(7) *Some objections answered.*—(i.) How can Divinity be united with humanity?

Answer.—*How* this is so we cannot explain, neither are we anxious to know, nor do we wish to inquire. The Word of God clearly states the fact, while it leaves the mystery unexplained. The curiosity which would press for an explanation seems closely allied to the irreverence which with profane gaze would speculate on the nature of the Being of God. The Bible tells us that 'the Word became flesh and dwelt among us';** and that Christ Jesus, 'being in the form of God, . . . emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man,' etc.†† This is enough for the believer. 'If one should ask, "How is it possible for manhood to be united to Deity?" I also would ask, "How is it possible for spirit and flesh to be united in man?" The true answer is this: that whatever the absolute Ruler of all things in His infinite wisdom may will, He is also able to accomplish; and that to call in question the works and dispensations of God is simply arrogance and folly. It is quite enough for us to learn what is declared in the Word of God concerning these subjects. But, further, according to what we read in the Gospel, the relationship between the humanity and the divinity of Christ is of such a nature that the humanity is neither transmuted to divinity, nor is the deity confounded with the humanity. This peculiar relationship, inasmuch as it is a divine mystery, is incomprehensible by reason, and so can be known only by the Word of God. So much, however, is clear, that this union of deity and humanity in Christ was brought about in order that the high purpose of the glorious God might be accomplished; that by this means mankind might

* Heb. i. 13.
‡ 1 Cor. xv. 25.
‖ Acts xvii. 31.
** St. John i. 14.
† St. Matt. xxviii. 18.
§ St. John v. 28, 29.
¶ 2 Cor. v. 10.
†† Phil. ii. 6–8.

be saved from destruction, might be reconciled to God, and enjoy the blessings of a happy eternity.' *

Illustrations.—(*a*) A piece of red-hot iron (*ḥadīdeh-i-muḥmāt*). It is iron, yet it has not the usual appearance of iron. It possesses all the qualities of fire, has the appearance of fire, the heat, light, and burning of fire. In like manner, Jesus possessed the qualities of man, while at the same time He was really and truly God.

(*b*) 'You know, if a king were to take off his crown and royal robes and dress like a poor man and live with poor men, he would still be a king inside, although like a poor man outside; and there really was a king who did so.

'He loved his country, Russia, so much, he wanted to improve it, and found they had no properly built ships; so he came to England and dressed like a workman, and worked at shipbuilding himself, and then went back to his own country and taught his own people how to build ships, and he was considered so great a king that he is called Peter the Great to this very day. But he did not suffer like the Lord Jesus Christ. He came to friendly people, and when his day's work was done he might go to the King's palace and he would be received as the Emperor of Russia, and not as a ship's carpenter; and any Russians in England, his own people, would bow to him and obey him as if he were on his throne at home.' †

(ii.) Christ is distinct from God, and therefore cannot be God. This objection was brought forward by a Persian gentleman, on the ground that it is said of the Son that He 'sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.' ‡ He is therefore, he argued, distinct from God, and cannot Himself be God.

Answer.—This, like the following three objections, can best be met by quietly explaining what Christians really do believe as revealed in God's Word. Here it may also be pointed out that the expressions above mentioned ('the right hand,' etc.) are obviously figurative, for God has no hands or feet, and mean that Jesus rested after His earthly toils and sufferings in the place of supreme honour in highest Heaven. Figurative language of a similar kind is used by Muḥammadans, who say that God created the world by the hand of His power (*bih yad-i-qudrat*), and by Shī'ahs, who call 'Alī the Hand of God (*Yadu'llāh*); and the Qur'ān itself speaks of God's throne.§

(iii.) The Son, through Whom God created all things, is inferior to God Almighty. This objection was also brought forward by the same Persian gentleman just alluded to, and, like the former, was based upon a verse in the first chapter of the

* *Mīzānu'l-Ḥaqq*, p. 45 (English trans.).

† South Africa General Mission, Booklet Series, No. 9, 'I'll be there,' a true story, by M. Rambaut.

‡ Heb. i. 3.

§ *E.g.* Sūr. 69 *Ḥāqqah*, 17.

Epistle to the Hebrews, 'through Whom also He made the worlds.'* From this it was argued that, since God created all things by Christ, He is superior to Christ.

Answer.—In the beginning of St. John's Gospel, where the work of creation is ascribed to the Word, His Deity is expressly asserted.† The Athanasian Creed, which is of special value for Muḥammadans,‡ brings out clearly the relation of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Father, and the point of inferiority—'Equal to the Father, as touching His Godhead; and inferior to the Father, as touching His Manhood.' Moreover we Christians do admit 'the superior greatness of the Father' and the subordination of the Son 'in regard to the absolute relations of the Father and the Son without violation of the one equal Godhead.'§ Creation was called into being by almighty power and the creative fiat—it was the result of the joint operation of the two divine Persons: '*through whom . . . He made*';‖ '*God created* the heaven and the earth.'¶ Reference may also be made to the divine dignity implied in the title of 'the Word.'**

(iv.) God cannot be subject to human infirmities. And therefore it is a blasphemous error to affirm that Christ, Who eat, slept, was weary, etc., and who prayed to God, was Himself God.

Answer.—'In respect of the human infirmities of Jesus, they were all necessary to establish His perfect manhood; just as miracles and sinlessness were necessary to establish His divine claim. The union of the two natures was possible with God, with Whom nothing is impossible; and it became necessary when He desired that His Son should appear in the form of a servant, in order to effect the great purpose of man's salvation.'††

(v.) How could God suffer? Muḥammad himself felt the difficulty which is the ground of this objection and the last. On one occasion he received a visit from some Christians of Najrān. 'On being invited to join Islām, they professed their faith in Jesus the Son of God. To this Muḥammad replied that they were unable to receive the true religion because of their having attributed to the Deity the human relationships of wife and son. The Christians declared their belief in the Sonship of Jesus, saying, "If God were not His father, who was?" To this Muḥammad replied, that, according to their own religion, God was immortal, and yet they believed that Jesus would taste of death; that He

* Heb. i. 2.

† St. John i. 1–3.

‡ This was first pointed out to the writer by the Rev. Worthington Jukes, late of the C.M.S., Peshāwar.

§ See above, p. 284. Cp. St. John xiv. 28, 'The Father is greater than I,' and Westcott *in loc.*

‖ Heb. i. 2.

¶ Gen. i. 1.

** See above, pp. 271, 272.

†† *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 127.

ate and drank, slept and awoke, went and came, etc. This, he averred, could not be predicted of divinity.' *

Answer.—'Such language showed the grossest ignorance of what Christianity really taught. It was in His human nature that Christ died, without affecting the Divine, just as the golden tissue remains when the scarf is burned.' †

(vi.) Christ was not omniscient, and therefore was not God. This objection was once urged upon the Rev. C. B. Leupolt, C.M.S., Benares, by a learned Muḥammadan in the presence of a crowd: 'If Christ had known that only so few would believe in Him, He never would have died for the few; but as He did not know it, He died. This proves, however, that He was not omniscient; and His not being omniscient proves that He was not God.' Here the crowd gave three 'triumphant shouts.' ‡

Answer.—The way in which the objection was met will be best described in the veteran missionary's own words. 'Here,' he says, 'I did not know what to answer so as to come home to the heart of the Muḥammadan. I looked up to the Lord, therefore, and He fulfilled His promise (St. Matt. x. 19). "You have," I said, "argued the second point by way of questions and answers. I will follow your example. When God created the world, did He know that only a few would believe in Him, and that all the rest would be idolaters?" "Of course, God knew it," was the answer. "And yet He created the world. Thus God, before He redeemed the world, knew that only a few would believe in Him, as you say (although it will be an innumerable host, Rev. vii. 9), and yet He redeemed the world. The work of creation and that of redemption is the work of the same God. Had Christ been a man only, as we are, He would never have died for the few; but He was God, and God's thoughts and ways are far above ours." As they were satisfied with this answer also, I stepped upon a chair, and preached from St. John iii. 16, urging them affectionately not to resist the Spirit of God, but to believe.' §

When Mr. Leupolt had finished some of the hearers exclaimed, 'You are the best man we have seen. What a pity you are not a Muḥammadan!' He had no more arguments, he tells us, with these men; but the spokesmen and others who were present on the occasion just mentioned would 'frequently sit an hour and listen with the greatest attention' to the preaching.

(8) *A quotation from the poets.*—The Ascension of Jesus is employed by the poet in the following lines to illumine and enforce his appeal to the soul to free itself from the thraldom of this lower world. It may usefully be introduced to illustrate, if we may so speak, the divine nature and heavenward aspirations of Jesus, and

* Wherry, on Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 2, who refers to *Tafsir-i-Ḥusainī*, *in loc.*

† *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 26.

‡ The story will be found in full in Leupolt's *Recollections of an Indian Missionary*, pp. 93–96.

§ Leupolt's *Recollections of an Indian Missionary*, p. 96.

thus favourably dispose the Muḥammadan to consider the question of His Divinity.

The exalted Temple of Unity is the Soul's true home [*lit.* monastery],
The nest of the bird of immortality.
He who revealed this was the Spirit of God [Jesus],
Who was made manifest by the Holy Spirit [Gabriel].
Thou too hast from God a soul,
Which bears a mark of the Holy Spirit.
If thou obtainest freedom from thy human nature,
Thou wilt enter into the exalted Temple of Divinity.
Every one who becomes emancipated as an angel
Mounts up like the Spirit of God [Jesus] to the fourth heaven.
The sucking child may be imprisoned
In the cradle near his mother.
When he reaches full age and becomes a man of travel,
If he is a man, he accompanies his father.
The elements are to thee like a lower mother.
Thou art a child, and the sublime fathers [the nine heavens] are [thy] sire.
For that reason Jesus said, at the time of His journey [the Ascension],
I am resolved to go to My Father on high.
Do thou also, soul of the Father, go to the Father.
Thy fellows have gone forth—go forth thou.
If thou desirest to become a bird of flight,
Cast the carcase of the world to the vultures.
Give this treacherous world to the base,
For it is not fitting to give carrion except to a dog.*

4. **The Atonement.**—(1) The doctrine of an atonement for sin (*kaffāreh*) is conspicuous by its absence in the Qur'ān and orthodox Islām; and if man by God's appointment is not a free agent, the very idea of an atonement for his sins seems rather superfluous. Muḥammad was well acquainted with the institution

* From the *Gulshan-i-Rāz*, by Shaikh Maḥmūd i-Shabistarī.

Janāb-i-quds-i-waḥdat dair-i-jān ast,
Kih sīmurgh-i-baqā-rā āshīyān ast:
Zi Rūḥu'llāh paidā gasht īn kār,
Kih az Rūḥu'l-quddus āmad padīdār:
Ham az Allāh dar pīsh-i-to jān-ī-'st,
Kih az Rūḥu'l-quddus dar wai nishān-ī'st:
Agar yābī khalāṣ az nafs-i-nāsūt,
Dar-ā'ī dar janāb-i-quds-i-lāhūt.
Har ān kas k'oo mujarrad chūn malak shud,
Chu Rūḥu'llāh bar chārum falak shud.
Buwad maḥbūs ṭifl-i-shīr-khwāreh
Bih nazd-i-mādar andar gāhwāreh:
Chu gasht-oo bāligh-o mard-i-safar shud,
Agar mard ast hamrāh-i-pidar shud.
'Anāṣir mar-to-rā chūn umm-i-siflī'st,
To farzand-o pidar ābā-ye 'ilwī'st.
Az ān gufteh ast 'Isā gāh-i-isrā,
Kih āhang-i-pidar dāram bih bālā.
To ham, jān-i-pidar, pīsh-i-pidar sho,
Bih-dar raftand hamrāhān, bih-dar sho:
Agar khwāhī kih gardī murgh-i-parwāz,
Jahān-i-jīfeh pīsh-i-karkas andāz.
Bih dūnān dih mar-īn-dunyā-ye-ghaddār,
Kih juz sag-rā na-shāyad dād murdār.

of sacrifices from two directions, both from the Pagan Arabs and from the Jews; and himself offered sacrifices with his own hand. But the vicarious element in sacrifice was expressly excluded, though familiar to him as well as to the Jews and Arabs. These statements require some further elucidation before we come to the question of the presentation of this vital feature of the Christian Faith to Muḥammadan minds and hearts.

(*a*) Muḥammad's familiarity with the offering of sacrifices. This he derived from two sources, the Arabs and the Jews. The idolatrous Arabs used to offer sacrifices as a part of the concluding ceremonies of their annual pilgrimage to Mecca. The Jews had their Day of Atonement; and Muḥammad himself observed the Day, and offered sacrifices upon it in the first year of the Hijrah. In the second year of the Hijrah, however, he abandoned it, for he found it not so easy as he had supposed by such concessions to win over the Jews to his side; and in its place he instituted the 'Īdu'l-Aẓḥā, and sacrificed two sucking kids, one for his people and one for himself and his family, which recalls the double sacrifice of the Day of Atonement.* This offering of sacrifices has now become the concluding scene of the ceremonies of the Meccan pilgrimage, but it is observed as a festival wherever Muḥammadanism exists, and is known as the *'Īdu'l-Aẓḥā* (Feast of Sacrifice) and by other names. As to its origin, Muḥammad seems to have been indebted both to Jewish and Arabian practice. Its observance is founded on the words of the Qur'ān, 'This *let them do.* And whoever shall regard the sacred ordinances of God this will be better for him in the sight of his Lord. *All sorts of* cattle are allowed you *to eat,* except what hath been read unto you *in former passages of the Qur'ān to be forbidden.* . . . Ye receive various advantages from the *cattle designed for sacrifices* until a determined time *for slaying them;* then the place of sacrificing them *is* at the ancient house.'† Though there is nothing in the Qur'ān to justify the view, the sacrifice is commonly held to be a commemoration of the sacrifice of *Ishmael* (for so the Muḥammadans will have it) by his father Abraham. Muḥammad himself used very remarkable language in reference to this Feast of Sacrifice: 'Man hath not done anything on the 'Īdu'l-Aẓḥā more pleasing to God than spilling blood; for verily the animal sacrificed will come, on the day of resurrection, with its horns, its hair, and its hoofs, and will make the scale of his [good] actions heavy. Verily its blood reacheth the acceptance of God before it falleth upon the ground; therefore be joyful in it.'‡ The story of the command given by God to the Israelites through Moses to sacrifice

* Lev. xvi. 11, 15.

† Sūr. 22 *Ḥajj,* 32–35.

‡ *Mishkātu'l-Maṣābiḥ,* Bk. IV., chap. XLIX., sect. 2. See Hughes, *Dict. of Islām,* 'Īdu'l-Aẓḥā; and *Notes on Muḥammadanism,* pp. 173 sqq.; Wherry, on Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān,* 194; and Muir's *Life of Mahomet,* vol. iii. pp. 51–53, there quoted.

a yellow cow * is also commonly referred to as showing Muḥammad's acquaintance with the Jewish practice of sacrifice. And, taking a still wider range, we read in the Qur'ān, 'Unto the professors of every religion' (*i.e.* 'the former nations who were true believers,' as Jalālu'd-Din explains it,) 'have we appointed certain rites, that they may commemorate the name of God on *slaying* the brute cattle which he hath provided for them.' †

(*b*) Muḥammad was also well acquainted with the vicarious element in Jewish and Arab sacrifice. A curious instance of this occurred in his own family history. His grandfather, 'Abdu-l-Muṭṭalib, in his early days vowed, if he ever became the father of ten sons, to devote one of them to the Deity. In course of time his desire came to pass; and when lots were cast in the Ka'bah to decide which of the sons should be the victim, 'Abdu'llāh, Muḥammad's own father, was indicated. Lots were again cast between Abdu'llāh on the one side and ten camels as the ransom for blood on the other; but again 'Abdu'llāh was taken. At each successive appeal to the Deity through the casting of the lots ten camels were added to the ransom, but it was not until this had been increased to one hundred camels that it was accepted, and 'Abdu'llāh escaped from his impending fate.‡ In the Qur'ān, too, the vicarious nature of the sacrifice accepted in the stead of Ishmael is clearly recognized: 'We ransomed him (*faḍainā-hu*) with a noble victim.' §

(*c*) The vicarious element, however, is eliminated in Islām with the greatest care, although the word which denotes atonement by sacrifice is found in the Qur'ān: 'O Lord, forgive us therefore our sins, and expiate (*kaffir*) our evil deeds from us.' ‖ The famous passage adduced in support of this point is, 'The camels *slain for sacrifice* have we appointed for you as symbols of your obedience unto God; ye *also* receive *other* advantages from them. Wherefore commemorate the name of God over them *when ye slay them*, standing on their feet disposed in right order. . . . Thus have we given you dominion over them, that ye might return *us* thanks. Their flesh is not accepted of God, neither their blood, but your piety is accepted of Him.' ¶ No one single reason is adequate to account for this rigorous exclusion of any idea of vicarious atonement from the sacrifices of Islām. Consciously or unconsciously, Muḥammad was probably swayed by several motives. Such an idea in the first place seemed to him to be inconsistent with God's absolute sovereignty. It was, moreover, Jewish in a special sense, and this was enough to brand it as inadmissible into his system when he finally abandoned the hope of winning over the Jews.

* Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 66–70.
† Sūr. 22 *Ḥajj*, 36; and Sale, *in loc.*
‡ Muir's *Life of Mahomet* (abridged ed.), pp. xcix., c.
§ Sūr. 37 *Ṣāffāt*, 107.
‖ Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 194.
¶ Sūr. 22 *Ḥajj*, 38, 39.

'The adoption of the doctrine of atoning sacrifices as necessary to salvation would not only have contradicted Muḥammad's notion of God's sovereignty, but would logically have led to his adopting Judaism or Christianity as his religion, either of which conclusions would have rendered him unpopular with the Arabs,' * and would, moreover, have been ultimately fatal to his own claims.

(*d*) The need of the human heart for that which the doctrine of atoning sacrifice supplies has been emphasized in a remarkable manner by the reassertion of atonement by vicarious suffering among the Shī'ah Muḥammadans. It seems to correspond in some special manner with a striking instinct of the Persian mind, which manifests itself in various ways. 'An eminent man, Ḥabīb al Fārsī . . . is said to have bought his soul from the Lord at the price of 40,000 dirhems, and this he did four times. He would carry the bag thus filled with his wealth, saying, "O Lord! I buy my soul from Thee with this," and thereupon would give the money away in charity.' † Lady Sheil writes—

> Our entrance to Marand was distinguished by a most disagreeable ceremony, which was attempted to be repeated at every village at which we halted, not only on this, but on every succeeding journey during our residence in Persia. On approaching the town I observed an unfortunate cow in the midst of the crowd, close to the roadside, held down by the head and feet. When we came within a yard or so of the miserable animal a man brandished a large knife, with which he instantly, before there was time for interference, severed its head from its body. He then ran across our road with the head, allowing the blood to flow on our path in torrents, and we passed on to encounter a repetition of the same cruel rites performed on various sheep. This ceremony was called Qurbān, or sacrifice, these poor creatures having been immolated in order that all the misfortunes, evils and disasters which might overtake us should fall on them—and fall on them they assuredly did. So intent are the Persians on the observance of this mark of reverence to power and station that the most rigid prohibition could hardly prevent its fulfilment.‡

When a new Governor proceeds to his province, at every place of importance through which he passes similar ceremonies will take place. The foundations of a new house are consecrated in like manner.

Dr. Henry White, of the C.M.S. Persia Mission, on returning from a visit to the Bakhtiārī country, related that during his stay there he was called in to see a child belonging to one of the chiefs, which was in convulsions. While he was engaged in bringing it round, some men hurriedly brought in a lamb, placed the child's hand on its head, and then took it away to slaughter it; the life of the animal being the ransom for the life of the child. Perhaps the same idea underlies the common form of address to the mourner for the dead, especially when the deceased is young or only of middle age, 'He has given his life to you.' But it is in the

* Wherry, on Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 194. † *Torch of Guidance*, p. 29.
‡ *Life and Manners in Persia*, p. 82.

religious tenets of the Shī'ahs that we find these ideas and tendencies fully developed into the doctrine of an atonement for their people made by the House of 'Alī; and every one who has worked among the Persians will recognize the truth of the following remarks: 'When we are setting forth the story of the cross to Persians, they often reply, "In like manner the blood of Imām Ḥusain avails for us as an offering to God." Sometimes, too, they bring out the idea that Christ's death was but one, whereas Ḥusain and his retinue of the holy seed of the prophet all shed their blood for the salvation of their people. Extending the doctrine still wider, the sufferings and deaths of the Imāms 'Alī, Ḥasan and others are made to have expiatory efficacy. This comes out emphatically in the Passion Play of Muḥarram. Its dialogues are not historical, nor even approximately accurate representations of events, yet they may be relied upon as setting forth the doctrinal beliefs of the Shī'ahs at the present day. Pelly's translation of the Passion Play shows in scores of passages their adherence to a vicarious atonement by the Imāms. This condition of belief prepares them to hear and understand the Christian doctrine of the atonement. It can be presented to them as to a Christian audience.' *

(2) *Presentation of the Christian doctrine of the Atonement to Muslims.*—It is obvious that this cannot be done while any difficulty is felt as to the denial of Christ's crucifixion in the Qur'ān. The Rev. W. Hooper, D.D., has some thoughtful and weighty words on this subject—

> Let me at once say that I think it to be still a great mystery. Various have been the theories thought out by Christian theologians in explanation of it, but to my mind they are hardly more than *illustrations* of it. And the fact that it can be illustrated in such a variety of ways proves both how it agrees with the wants of human nature and also that no one of these illustrations can be taken as an explanation of it. I the rather make these remarks here because they show that the common objections which Christian preachers meet with in bazars and elsewhere, when they proclaim the most important truth of Christianity, are really directed against illustrations of the doctrine, and do not touch the doctrine itself. *All* illustrations, of every possible subject, are valuable only up to a certain point; and they may very easily be perverted and then refuted by an objector, who fancies he has refuted the dogma itself.†

The main aspects under which the blessed effects of the Atonement are represented to us in Scripture are thus enumerated by Dr. Moule: '*Redemption*, or deliverance by ransom (St. Matt. xx. 28, etc.); *purchase*, as by a price (1 Cor. vi. 20); *covering*, as by an interposition (Rom. iv. 7); *undertaking of responsibility*, as by a surety (Heb. vii. 22); *bearing*, in the sense of endurance of penalty (Heb. ix. 28; cp. Lev. xxiv. 15; Numb. xviii. 22, etc.);

* Rev. S. G. Wilson, Tabrīz, Persia, on 'Presentation of Christian Doctrine,' in *Methods of Mission Work among Moslems*, pp. 185, 186.

† *Seven Lectures on Great Truths*, p. 35.

acceptance, as of a propitiatory sacrifice by an offended God (see 1 St. John ii. 2, 3); *deliverance from the death-sentence of a law*, by virtue of one who has borne it (Gal. iii. 13).' * We may indeed be thankful that we have such a Gospel to proclaim. The fact that the sacred mystery of the atoning effect of the blood-shedding of Jesus can be pictured forth in so many different ways, the Word of God itself being our guide and instructor as to the representations used, and all of them in divine wisdom being calculated in different ways to meet the needs and allay the cravings of the heart, should inspire us with greater gladness and assurance in delivering the message.

In connexion with this supreme subject there are three great outstanding facts confronting us: (*a*) the just law and sentence of God; (*b*) man's inability to satisfy its demands; and (*c*) the soul's craving for the assurance of peace with God. Let us briefly ask what is the attitude of the Muḥammadan to these three in turn. (*a*) As to the first, take these three distinctive texts from the Bible: 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die'; † 'The Lord . . . will by no means clear the guilty'; ‡ and, 'Apart from shedding of blood there is no remission.' § The Muḥammadan will only go along with us as far as the first of these. He admits that God will punish sin unrepented of. But he will not allow that God exacts the punishment of all sin from either the sinner or his substitute; nor will he agree to the necessity for the atoning blood. The really damning error in his eyes is to remain outside the pale of Islām; within that fold all are ultimately saved.

(*b*) The Muḥammadan practically acknowledges man's inability to save himself by eking out the performance of his legal obligations and repentance and works of merit with reliance on the mercy of God and the intercession of the Prophet and the saints. The most thoughtful minds undoubtedly feel their poverty and unworthiness in God's sight; to instance which may be quoted a traditional prayer of the Shī'ah Imāms, 'My God, deal with us after Thy grace and deal not with us after Thy justice,' ‖ and the poet Sa'dī's prayer, 'Let them haply give to Sa'dī a single ear from the harvest of the great lords, for we have sown no seed,' ¶ in which he confesses that he has no merit of his own, and asks that a small portion of the merit of the holy men of old may be imparted to him. But though this is the case with a few of the more devout and earnest souls, the ordinary

* *Outlines of Christian Doctrine*, p. 78.
† Ezek. xviii. 4, 20.
‡ Nah. i. 3.
§ Heb. ix. 22.
‖ *Rabb-i, 'āmil-nā bi faẓli-ka, wa lā ta'āmil-nā bi 'adli-ka.*

¶ *Sa'dī magar az kharman-i-arbāb-i-buzurgān*
Ek khūsheh bi-bakhshand, kih mā tukhm na kishtīm.
From the *Ghazaliyāt* of Sa'dī.

careless or self-righteous Muḥammadan is probably not troubled with any compunctions about the matter. The whole tendency of his religion is towards a satisfying self-sufficiency. And his approach to such a subject as the Atonement of Christ, which is humiliating to the natural man, is hedged in and rendered more difficult by his low conceptions of sin and holiness, his ceremonial works and legal righteousness, the practical divorce of faith and works, and the easy means of salvation provided by his religion.*

(*c*) Long ago the poet Sa'dī wrote, 'He whose account is settled, what fear has he of a settlement?' † And from the earliest days of Islām there have been earnest souls who have craved for an assurance of peace with God and not found it in that religion. This is shown with great clearness by the author of the *Torch of Guidance to the Mystery of Redemption*, who brings together a number of sayings of the chief companions of Muḥammad, uttered by them when death was near, and with admirable force and pathos draws the conclusion that such expressions would never have escaped the lips of those great men if the consolations of the Faith of Christ had possessed their hearts. 'Oh that I were but a tree!' exclaimed Abu Bakr, 'of which you might gather the fruit and eat thereof!' and again, 'Would I had been as the green grass of which the cattle eat!' 'Alas, alas!' cried 'Alī, 'provision for the journey is small and its risks so dangerous!' When Sofian al Thurie was asked the reason of his distress at the approach of death, he denied it was the cold water that was being poured upon him, and said, 'It is because I am going on a way I know not of, and to appear before the Lord Whom I have never seen.' And, similarly, Omar Ibn al Khattab, 'Had I the whole East and the West, gladly would I give up all to be delivered from this awful terror that is hanging over me.' ‡

All this indicates for us the spirit in which to work and the lines on which we may proceed. We must lovingly and earnestly direct the Muḥammadan to the 'full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world,' pointing out, if need be, the futility of all other grounds of reliance. We must tell him that there is this all-availing remedy ready for his use, and show him how it meets his need as nothing else can. We may appeal to the immemorial institution of sacrifice among the Arabs, and, indeed, among almost all nations. Turning to our Old Testament, we may remind him that Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Aaron all offered sacrifices of animals, and that we find elaborate ordinances respecting them appointed by God in the Law of Moses. It is, further, obvious

* See Chap. VIII., G, 'Islām as a Means of Salvation.'

† *Ān-rā kih ḥisāb pāk ast, az muḥāsabeh cheh bāk ast?* *Gulistān*, bk. i.

I am indebted for this reference to the Rev. H. G. Grey, of the C.M.S., Punjāb Mission, late Principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford.

‡ *Torch of Guidance*, pp. 11, 14, 18, 21, 22.

that the blood of such victims can never satisfy the claims of divine justice nor cleanse the sinner's heart. They are, in fact, only emblematical, and the explanation must be looked for elsewhere. And when we come to the New Testament, to which the Old looks forward, while the New consistently points back to and illuminates the Old, we find the fulfilment and realization of all these types and shadows in the atonement made by Christ upon the Cross, when 'His soul' was made 'an offering for sin.' * This atonement is full, unique, universal. It is acceptable to God, and is the only means of salvation of which He has declared His acceptance. 'Himself man, Christ Jesus' is the 'one Mediator also between God and men.' † His is the 'one sacrifice for sins for ever,' ‡ the 'one offering,' by which 'He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' § 'In none other is there salvation,' for in His 'name' alone must we be saved.‖ 'Eternal life' is for 'whosoever believeth on Him.' ¶ Justification by Him is assured to 'every one that believeth.' ** The water of life is offered to 'whosoever will.' †† In one sense it may be true that there are as many roads to God as there are individuals,‡‡ but the Bible tells us of only one plan of salvation for all alike.

If this be so, and if the texts quoted above be true, it is incredible to suppose that God should set this apparently perfect plan aside, stultify Himself, and introduce another system which unlike the former leaves the sinner's pardon and acceptance doubtful and uncertain, without telling us in the alleged later revelation why the previous plan was faulty and another needed.

We must not, then, quarrel with our blessings, or raise objections, asking why the gift is not given in some other way: the offended party has surely the right to lay down the conditions on which he will pardon. No. Our part is meekly to accept God's way, which must needs be the best, and thankfully receive the inestimable blessings at His hands. If a man pays my debt, I gratefully accept his kindness without questioning the manner of it. If the judge releases a prisoner from gaol and offers to send him home and pay his expenses by the way, shall the prisoner not accept it? §§ And 'are we to sit in judgment on what the Lord reveals of Himself, and not come with meek and lowly heart

* Isa. liii. 10. Cp. Lev. xvii. 11, 'The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life.' See *Torch of Guidance*, pp. 3, 4.

† 1 Tim. ii. 5.

‡ Heb. x. 12.

§ Ver. 14.

‖ Acts iv. 12.

¶ St. John iii. 16.

** Acts xiii. 39.

†† Rev. xxii. 17, A.V.; cp. St. John vii. 37.

‡‡ *At ṭuruqu ilā'llāhi bi 'adadi anfusi'l-khalā'iq.* (Tradition of the Imāms.)

§§ *Memoir of Rev. J. J. Weitbrecht*, p. 388.

to learn His will? Does the patient refuse the medicine prescribed for him till he knows its nature? Rather, assured of the physician's skill and faithfulness, does he not without scruple follow his instructions? Even so with us; we must come to the divine Physician and accept the remedy, take the blessed Son as our Saviour, and refrain from asking as to the *how* or the *wherefore*.' *

(3) *Some helpful aspects of the Atonement.*—(*a*) He who has two natures alone can save us, and this is Christ. In this terse way the argument is briefly put by a colporteur of the B. and F. Bible Society working in Persia. At greater length it may be stated as follows: The Saviour of men must Himself be in the form of man, clothed in human flesh,† speaking words which we can understand, so that we may gather round Him and receive His message. 'He must be above the world's race, above and beyond it altogether, else how could He ransom them by His death?' 'No soul shall acquire *any merits or demerits* but for itself; and no burdened *soul* shall bear the burden of another,' says the Qur'ān. ‡ And furthermore, 'the Redeemer must be altogether free from sin, perfect in holiness and purity, otherwise how could He be accepted by the Most High as ransom for the wicked? Where in the whole universe could a Saviour be found to satisfy . . . these conditions?' § The Old Testament, however, foreshadows just such a Saviour, and the New Testament holds Him up to the eye of faith as One who did no sin and asked no forgiveness for sin, and is therefore worthy to be the ransom for sinful men.

(*b*) The Love of God is conspicuously seen in the Atonement of Christ. Muḥammadans will sometimes strenuously deny the crucifixion of Christ, because it is repudiated in the Qur'ān, and they think it derogatory to His dignity to have been put to a shameful death by the Jews. But there is no reason in the nature of things why they should not be gradually led to understand and appreciate the doctrine of the atonement made by Christ, and the love of God shown thereby. They are familiar with the sufferings of the prophets, and with the idea (especially among the Shī'ahs) that these were on behalf of the people to whom they were sent. In the same way Jesus was willing to be the ransom for His people. And God, who allowed the sufferings of Him Who was the Word and Spirit from Himself (as the Qur'ān says), thereby shows His love for the sinful race of men for whom Christ suffered. *Illustrations.*—(1) A father will do anything to shield

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 45, 46; cp. p. 26.

† Cp. St. John i. 14, 'The Word became flesh'; Rom. viii. 3, 'In the likeness of sinful flesh'; Phil. ii. 7, 8, 'Being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man.'

‡ Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 164. Cp. Ps. xlix. 6–9, where the words literally denote the inability of any human being to save another from death.

§ See *Torch of Guidance*, pp. 35–40. Cp. *Mīzānu'l-Ḥaqq*, p. 38 (English trans.).

and save his child from suffering. (2) An old man in India, whose son was about to be condemned for murder gave himself up, saying that he was the real murderer, in order to save his son who was young and had not yet tasted many of the pleasures of life.

(*c*) The justice and mercy of God both have free scope. God's justice demands the punishment of all sin: otherwise there will be a blemish upon it. In exactly the same degree the divine attribute of mercy has its corresponding demands. One of God's attributes cannot be exalted or diminished at the expense of another. His justice demands a propitiation, and His mercy requires that the door of Heaven should be opened for the repentant: and by the full and harmonious working of both the divine wisdom will be manifested. All this is accomplished in Christ. He became man (*bashar*), in order that He might become the bearer of good tidings (*mubashshir*) to men.*

Muḥammadans can easily be made to understand that the mercy of God cannot be exercised at the expense of His justice. For they themselves admit that for God simply to pass over and forgive sin would be oppression (*ẓulm*) and contrary to His justice (*'adālat*). The following argument suggested by a Persian friend may perhaps be useful. God cannot simply pass over sin: it would be *ẓulm* on His part. Mediators and intercessors are therefore needed. Pre-eminent among these are the six authoritative expounders of new laws—the possessors of command or purpose (*ūlū' l-amr* or *'azm*), who came with books, and who, the Muḥammadan believes, will be the intercessors for their people at the last day.† Of these Jesus is superior to all others. Moses, for instance, talked with God; but Jesus was the Word and Spirit from Him. Which of them was nearest to God (*muqarrab-tar*)? Jesus, of course. We have, then, arrived at this point, that Jesus is *ūlū' l-amr*, and *muqarrab-tar* than the others. If you say that Muḥammad is a better mediator, and that I ought to believe in him, you must prove it.

(*d*) The relation of the Atonement to God's Justice. If the penalty for sin God has ordained be not strictly exacted, the following evils would ensue: (i.) the Law would become contemptible; (ii.) God would be made a liar; and (iii.) sinners would be encouraged. The honourable atonement, however, made by Christ's sacrifice averts these three possible evils. (i.) Christ by yielding up His life in accordance with the sentence of the Law, and appearing in the sight of the angelic hosts 'with the wounds of the Law in His hands and feet,' has conferred such majesty upon the Law as it could have acquired in no other way. 'It pleased the LORD, for His righteousness' sake, to magnify the law, and

* *Wasilatu'n-Najāt*, chap. xiii. p. 197; and chap. xiv., from p. 213. It is the more necessary to emphasize this point, because the Muḥammadan entirely overlooks the justice of God. Cp. Capt. W. R. Aikman's *Sulasut Tul Kutuub*, chap. iv. p. 47.

† Sell, *Faith of Islām*, p. 209.

make it honourable.' * (ii.) God's Word, which threatens to punish sin, is fulfilled in the punishment borne by Christ for our sakes. (iii.) Nothing could have more clearly shown to sinners the awful nature of sin as a transgression of God's Law, than the necessity of Christ's death to make atonement. †

(*e*) Christ and the house of 'Alī: a contrast. (i.) The atoning sufferings of Christ were the subject of prophecy in the Old Testament; they were foretold by Christ Himself, they are recorded in the New Testament, and are set forth therein as the one and all-sufficient propitiation for sin, satisfying the claims of God's justice, and opening the door of His boundless mercy. All this is related in the Word of God, the truth of which we both acknowledge. The atonement alleged to have been made by 'Alī and his sons is only asserted by the Imāms or in the Traditions. Hence, the proof of Christ's Atonement is thoroughly satisfactory: not so that of the House of 'Alī. (ii.) Their calamities took place amid strife and contention, and the struggle for power and empire. Not so the sacrifice of Christ. If Ḥusain had intended to be a sacrifice for his people, why did he go towards Kūfah with a great deal of pomp so that his kitchen contained a golden mortar, except that he expected to be made Governor, and even sent his nephew Muslim before him as Deputy-Governor? When Muslim was killed, he did not proceed but fought with his enemies. He also asked leave to go with his wife to Zanzibar: but was told he must fight, or submit to Yazīd. (iii.) Christ's Atonement is of more avail, because He Himself is of such pre-eminent greatness.—It is obvious that it would not be wise to institute such a comparison as the above, unless we were sure of the liberal sentiments of our hearers.

Anecdote.—The truth apprehended. At a conference with Muḥammadans in Mauritius a remarkable incident occurred. 'One of the more educated Miajis' surprised all present by siding with the Christians against his co-religionists. He 'concluded by saying that according to the divine teaching, revealed both in the Qur'ān and the Injīl, it was evident that the Messiah was the only Saviour.' He then asked them the purport of 'the Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, illustrious in this world and the next,' ‡ and adduced the interpretation of the great commentator Al Baiẓawī that this denoted that he was a 'Prophet in this world, and an Intercessor in Heaven.' When the Muḥammadans asked the Miaji how long it was since he had embraced these opinions, 'he told them to search the Qur'ān and they would see for themselves that Muḥammad could not save them, and that the only One that could do so was Christ.' §

* Isa. xlii. 21.
† From *Sulasut Tul Kutuub*. See chap. iv. pp. 45–59.
‡ Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 46. Cp. *Torch of Guidance*, p. 49.
§ *C.M.S. Report*, 1899–1900, p. 357.

(4) *Objections.*—(*a*) Why is an atonement necessary at all? This is the most common objection. Why should not God in His mercy simply forgive sins? His sovereignty is absolute: what is there to hinder His exercise of the prerogative of forgiveness? Why does not God forgive sin without requiring an Atonement? Is He more hard and unforgiving than a master who forgives his erring servant? Said a Muslim to Dr. F. Johnson of Kerak, 'God hath made me, He also can save me; any means other than the observance of the ordinances commanded by the Prophet are superfluous.'

Such arguing rests upon a confusion of ideas and a false analogy. The *confusion of ideas* is between the *moral* and the *physical* possibility of God forgiving sin. Leupolt gives what he calls a 'sinful story' from the Traditions as follows. 'There was once a holy man who did nothing but works of righteousness, and a certain sinner who did nothing but sin. The two were friends. The holy man continually admonished the sinner to repent ere it was too late; but the sinner would not. One day he committed an enormous sin. The holy man said to him, "God will surely not pardon thee if thou actest thus." The sinner replied, "Leave this to God and me." At this moment they both died, and were placed before the throne of judgment. God asked the holy man, "Can I save this man?" He replied, "Thou art Almighty, and canst do what Thou pleasest." To this God replied, "Well;" and turning to the sinner, He said, "Go thou into heaven"; and to the righteous, "Go thou into hell."'* To this story the Editor of the *Missionary* appends the following footnote:—

This is certainly an extraordinary case; but does it not truly represent the Muhammadan theory of the forgiveness of sins? 'No atonement is needed, because'—such is the spirit of their argument—'God is *omnipotent*, and therefore He *can* forgive, if He please, and as He pleases.' It is a confusion of the ideas of moral and physical possibility. Divine justice is supplanted by arbitrary will. The Muhammadan has not in his scheme such expressions as 'God that *cannot* lie.' 'He *cannot* deny Himself.'

The *false analogy* involved is well brought out by Dr. Hooper:—

If, they say, a good man takes delight in simply forgiving and forgetting offences committed against himself, how much rather should God, the perfectly good, readily and easily condone all that weak human beings have done against Him? The comparison with a good man's forgiveness of his neighbours exhibits a total misconception as to the relation in which we stand to God and His law. We ought to forgive each other, because we are not one another's judges, but merely fellow-servants; and where the relation between man and man *is* that of judge and judged, there forgiveness is *impossible*.† .

* The *Missionary*, Nov., 1853: 'Fragmentary Hints on Missions,' VIII.; Leupolt's *Recollections of an Indian Missionary*. (Also quoted on p. 236.)

† *Seven Lectures on Great Truths*, p. 34.

God, Who has delivered judgment against sin, cannot reverse it any more than a *qāẓī* can, who declares the sentence of the law against a thief or a murderer. A king can forgive a personal injury against himself if he so wills, but not a breach of the law, for this would be *ẓulm* (oppression) in reference to his subjects, because would-be law-breakers would thereby be encouraged. A teacher who threatens and does not punish is weak and injudicious, and soon loses control over his pupils.

The following arguments may be used. (i.) Generally speaking, God accomplishes all His works by means (*asbāb*, *wāsiṭeh*), though He is not obliged to use this method of operation. The plant, for example, comes from the seed. Were God to act otherwise, the system of the world would be irregular (*bī-qānūn*). Similarly, God *could* forgive sin, but it would be contrary to His justice which has decreed the punishment of sin. If God wishes to act not merely according to the dictates of His justice, but according to His grace, He must ordain a mediator (*mīyānjī*, *wāsiṭeh*), one who can satisfy the claims of His justice, and be the means of man's obtaining forgiveness of sins.

(ii.) In the ransom of Isaac, with a ram provided by God Himself, we find a foreshadowing of the necessity of an atonement for the sins of men, and that an atonement divinely appointed. 'On this it may perhaps be asked, Could not God have remitted the sacrifice without the substitution of a ram? You may reply, that would be as the Lord desired. Very good; but would God desire a thing without a reason tending to His glory. Never! Does man do so in the common affairs of life? How much more must the All-wise Jehovah have had an object in view consistent with His exalted will!' *

(iii.) If an atonement is not necessary, and God only asks from us that which it is in our power to render Him, why is it that your Muḥammadan books are so full of the intercession (*shafā'at*) of Muḥammad?

(*b*) The doctrine of the Atonement is repugnant to God's justice or love. 'Against the salvation which is by the sacrifice and atonement of the Son of God, Muḥammadans incessantly object as follows, viz.: "If God should lay the sins of the world upon His innocent Son, and visit upon Him the divine vengeance, it would be altogether repugnant to justice."' † The Muslim asks, 'Why should God the Father require the death of what you Christians call His Son in order that sinners may be saved? If God is love, He must be a cruel Father.' ‡

These and such-like objections overlook the perfect harmony of purpose and working between the Father and the Son, and the voluntariness of Christ's sufferings. 'I and the Father are one,'

* *Torch of Guidance*, pp. 4, 5.

† Capt. W. R. Aikman's *Sulasut Tul Kutuub*, chap. iv.

‡ A. V. Liley, North Africa Mission, Tunis, in the *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904.

said Christ.* 'I delight to do thy will, O my God' † was the supreme principle that moved the Lord. It was His 'meat' to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to accomplish His Work; ‡ so that at the close of His earthly course He could say, 'I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do.' § His work and His sufferings alike were perfectly voluntary. He would not refuse to drink 'the cup' which the Father had given Him,‖ nor would He summon to His aid the 'more than twelve legions of angels.' ¶ He 'came . . . to give His life a ransom for many.' ** 'I lay down My life,' He says, 'that I may take it again. No one taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment received I from My Father.' ††

If it seems desirable to bring forward analogies from the natural world to support or explain the doctrine of vicarious suffering, and those usually given appear unsuitable to ordinary uneducated minds, the following, suggested by a Persian friend, may be used. A single *orange seed* contains the germ of a thousand trees, hundreds of thousands of pounds of fruit, and millions of leaves. A microscopic examination of the seed will reveal this potentiality. But to realize it the seed must be sown, and appear to die and become corrupt, in order that all that wealth of fruit and foliage may gladden the eyes of men. The gardener, however, is willing for this hope to part with his precious seed, though it seems hard to bury it in the ground with the immediate fate of corruption and death before it. But he looks beyond the present to the prospect of a beautiful succession of fruitful trees. Even so the sufferings and death of Christ were necessary to propagate all the blessings of His atoning and redemptive work; and God was willing that this should be the immediate fate of the precious seed, in order that the vast blessing might be made available for all mankind.

(*c*) How was it possible for the soul of one man to be an equivalent for the souls of all men? This question in reference to the efficacy of Christ's atonement was put to Dr. H. Martyn Clark at a public preaching in India by one of his hearers, and answered by an analogy. How many cowries make a paisa? And how many paisas go to a rupee? And how many rupees might the ring on your finger be worth? The equivalent of it in cowries would be a large heap. Thus it is evident that one small precious thing may be worth a vast number of others of less value.‡‡

(*d*) If Christ died for all, then all must be saved. *Answer.*—(i.) The reception of the blessing depends upon *faith* in the heart. There are many so-called Christians who will not be saved, because they do not possess a true faith. The Lord Himself tells us that

* St. John x. 30.
† Ps. xl. 8.
‡ St. John iv. 34.
§ St. John xvii. 4.
‖ Chap. xviii. 11.
¶ St. Matt. xxvi. 53.
** St. Matt. xx. 28.
†† St. John x. 17, 18.
‡‡ I am indebted for the above to the Rev. A. E. Day, Karāchī.

at the last great day even many notable Christians will be condemned to hell.*

(ii.) Obedience is necessary, not merely the possession of the name of Christian, or a confession with the lips which any one can make. *Illustration.*—A doctor says to a patient, I can cure you in twenty days. True. But it depends upon the patient's carrying out the treatment prescribed, and not merely upon the doctor's assurance.

(iii.) Divine justice requires a different treatment of the good and bad. It would be unfair to treat in the same way genuine believers and those who had only the name and nothing more. Even among the former there will be different degrees of reward. *Illustration.*—A master would not give the same reward to two pupils, one of whom was lazy and backward, while the other was industrious and promising.

(*e*) The Atonement is alleged to be a human invention. At one time the Rev. C. B. Leupolt had a good deal of controversy with a number of learned Muḥammadans about the chief points of religion, and a day was at length fixed for a final decisive discussion. Mr. Leupolt repaired to the appointed place in company with his catechist. The Muḥammadan spokesman's argument was that since Christ has paid the debts of all men as asserted by Christians, if God still confines in the prison-house of sin any whose debts have been thus paid, He is unjust; but if it be alleged that the benefits of the atonement are only for the elect, it is evident that God does not mean to save all men, and is therefore unjust when He punishes some for not being saved. 'Hence the doctrine of redemption, from whatever side we may contemplate it, makes God unjust. But whatever doctrine militates against one of His attributes cannot be of God, but must be of man; therefore, the doctrine of the Atonement is a human invention.' Upon the conclusion of this argument the Muḥammadans gave three cheers, calling out, 'Great is God, and Muḥammad His prophet!' and abused Mr. Leupolt and his catechist as lying and deceitful teachers. They remained silent. When his turn came to speak, Mr. Leupolt gives the following account of his answer to the Muḥammadan objections:—

'I grant your argument, and believe with all my heart the passages which you have quoted: that Christ died not for our sins only, but "for the sins of the whole world"; that God did not merely say that He wished all men to be saved, but that He made provision of salvation for all men; that Christ was "the Lamb of God," taking away the sins of the whole world; that He tasted death for every man. Moreover, that Christ opened the prison door, entered Himself into the prison, and told the prisoners that they could not get out of themselves, as they had neither power nor will to do so; but that He offered them both a willing mind to leave the prison and strength to do so. He was willing to gather them "as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings." After He had

* St. Matt. vii. 21–23.

ascended to Heaven He sent His Apostles, and after them a succession of ministers, all with the same message: "Be ye reconciled unto God." Those who believed this message, not only with the mouth, but with the heart, and who therefore followed Him, left the prison of sin, and were conducted by the king's son to liberty and glory.' I then continued, 'And now He has sent me also; and in the name of God, as an ambassador of Christ, I intreat you to be reconciled to God, to believe, and to be saved; and, as you have no strength of will to believe, pray for grace, and the Lord will grant it to you. But,' I proceeded, 'many say, We will not have this man to reign over us.' And I then mentioned, as the language of the prisoners, the chief objections of the Muhammadans. 'At last the king,' I said, 'arises to ascertain whether there are still prisoners in the prison, and then he finds the prison half full. After having done so much for the prisoners, the question now is, Has He a right to punish them or not?' When I commenced speaking, a learned Maulawī arrived on the spot. He was a fine, tall man, with a venerable countenance and long snow-white beard extending to his chest. He stood with his arms folded, the left foot somewhat advanced. He had not heard the Muḥammadan side of the argument. He now pressed through the crowd, and, with clenched fists and great indignation, said, 'Can there be any question whether he has a right to punish the rebels? Yes, he has! These fellows deserve a double punishment: in the first place, because they are the king's debtors and rebels; but, above all, because they despised the kindness and compassion of the king's son.' I looked around on my audience, and said, 'I have nothing to add to this: you yourselves have pronounced judgment. Are you satisfied on this point?' They replied, 'Yes.'

5. **Christ's Intercession.**—This idea is not foreign to the Muslim mind. There is a remarkable passage in the Qur'ān, in which the angels, when announcing the birth of Jesus to His mother, speak of Him as One Who should be 'honourable in this world and in the world to come,'* which the commentators explain as referring respectively to His dignity as a Prophet and as an Intercessor. But the exercise of His office in this latter capacity will be confined to the Christians who lived between His coming and that of Muḥammad;† nor will it be exercised before the end of the world; nor without the permission of God, for, as the Qur'ān says, 'On that day, the intercession *of none* shall be of advantage *unto another*, except *the intercession* of him to whom the Merciful shall grant permission, and who shall be acceptable unto Him in what he saith.'‡ Here, again, as has been noticed so often, all that appears in Islām of Christian doctrine is but a semblance and a shadow of the fulness of Bible truth. There is, of course, no allusion to the fact that the Christian's great Intercessor is even now at the right hand of God, making intercession;§ or that 'He is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.'‖

* Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 46. † See Wherry, on the passage just quoted.
‡ Sūr. 20 *Ṭā Ḥā*, 108. § Rom. viii. 34. ‖ Heb. vii. 25.

The instinct of the human heart may be truer than its creed, and one thing that it craves for when it contemplates the thought of its appearance before the Almighty is a strong helper on Whom to rely; consequently, the Muslim, without any warrant from the Qur'ān, places his trust in the intercession of Muḥammad. It is the Christian missionary's privilege to show him how his heart's need can be fully met and satisfied only by Him Who is 'the living Prophet' and the accepted Intercessor in the courts of the Most High.

6. **Christ's Judgment of the World.**—This idea is quite foreign to Muslim theology. So far from judging others, Jesus Himself, like the rest of the prophets, will be interrogated by the Almighty at the Last Day as to the execution of His mission. 'On a *certain* day God shall assemble the apostles, and shall say unto them, What answer was returned you *when ye preached unto the people to whom ye were sent?*'* 'And when God shall say *unto Jesus at the last day*, O Jesus, son of Mary, hast Thou said unto men, Take Me and My mother for two gods beside God? he shall say, Praise be unto Thee! it is not for Me to say that which I ought not.'† Here again the Christian evangelist has a grand opportunity of reaching the heart of the Muḥammadan, and removing his anxious fears of the great hereafter, by telling him that the divinely appointed Judge of all men is also their Saviour, Who has given the supreme proof of His love for sinners by dying for them. Their Advocate is seated on the Throne. The Judge has paid the Law's penalty in the sinner's stead, and has promised to reject no one who takes refuge in Him.‡

* Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 108. † Ver. 116. Cp. Sūr. 33 *Aḥzāb*, 7, 8.
‡ St. John vi. 37.

CHAPTER V.

THE HOLY GHOST.

JUDGED by the Christian standard, which is, of course, the only relevant one for us, Muḥammadan ideas on this subject exhibit the greatest confusion. This is sufficiently obvious from the bare fact that Islāmic theology contains both a 'Holy Ghost' and a 'Spirit of God,' with different significations. By the Holy Ghost (*Rūhu'l-quddus*) the angel Gabriel is denoted, and the Spirit of God (*Rūhu'llāh*) is the distinguishing title of Jesus.

The starting-point of these confused ideas is probably to be found in the Annunciation. 'It is clear,' writes the late Sir William Muir, 'that at a later period at least, if not from the first, Muḥammad confounded Gabriel with the Holy Ghost. The idea may have arisen from some such misapprehension as the following: Mary conceived Jesus by the power of the Holy Ghost, which overshadowed her. But it was Gabriel who visited Mary to announce the conception of the Saviour. The Holy Ghost was therefore another name for Gabriel.'* As to the precise way in which the mistake arose, may it not be that Muḥammad was aware of the address of Gabriel to Mary, 'the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee' (St. Luke i. 35), and understood the name 'the Holy Ghost' to have been used by the speaker in reference to himself? A Persian friend thus illustrates the possible origin of the misconception. A man comes late at night to a friend's house and knocks at the door. The friend within, being afraid, asks, 'Who is there?' and the person outside answers, describing himself in the third person, 'It is your friend who has come to see you,' without giving his name.

This Holy Spirit, or Gabriel, then, was *the messenger* sent to inform Mary of the coming birth of Jesus, as the Qur'ān says, 'We sent our spirit *Gabriel* unto her, and he appeared unto her *in the shape of* a perfect man.'† And in like manner, Gabriel was the messenger who 'sanctified Jesus and constantly attended on Him,' according to the Qur'ān, which twice over says, 'We . . . strengthened him with the Holy Spirit.'‡

* *Life of Mahomet.* See Hughes, *Dict. of Islām, s.v.* 'Gabriel'; and Wherry, on Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 253.

† Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 17.

‡ Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 86, 253; and Sale, quoting Jalālu'd-Dīn, on ver. 86.

Gabriel was, however, more than a mere messenger of tidings. He brought the spirit from God, which, according to the Muḥammadan view, when breathed into Mary caused the conception of Jesus. Thus we read in the Qur'ān of 'her who preserved her virginity, and into whom we breathed of our spirit'; * and again, 'Mary, the daughter of Imrān, who preserved her chastity, and into whose womb we breathed of our spirit.' † The transaction is further explained by the commentators, Baiẓawī, Yaḥyā, etc., from whom Sale derives the following: 'Gabriel blew into the bosom of her shift, which he opened with his fingers, and his breath reaching her womb, caused the conception.' ‡ Hence the appropriateness of the terms in which Gabriel made his announcement to Mary, 'Verily I am the messenger of thy Lord, *and am sent* to give thee a holy son.' § (Contrast the last six words with St. Luke i. 35.)

There seems to be no difference in the Qur'ān between this spirit (the *Rūḥu'llāh*) which was breathed into Mary, and the spirit breathed into Adam. No distinction is drawn between the breath of life which made Adam 'a living soul' (Gen. ii. 7) and the Holy Ghost which came upon Mary (St. Luke i. 35). Referring to the creation of Adam, the Qur'ān says, '*It is He* Who . . . formed him *into proper shape*, and breathed of His spirit (*min rūḥi-hī*) into him,' || and again, 'When, therefore, I shall have completely formed him, and shall have breathed of My spirit (*min rūḥ-ī*) into him, do ye fall down and worship him.' ¶ And in like manner, as the spirit was breathed into Adam, so was a holy or pure breath (*dam, nafkheh-i-pākīzeh*) brought by Gabriel and breathed into Mary. Muḥammad was willing to allow the miraculous element in the creation of both, but nothing more: 'Verily,' he says, 'the likeness of Jesus in the sight of God is as the likeness of Adam; he created him out of the dust, and then said unto him, Be; and he was.' **

While the accurate analysis of error, as far as it is possible, is important, it is not suggested that the right course to pursue here when this subject is mentioned is to attempt to disentangle truth from error, or show exactly how error has entered in, or balance the proportions of the one with the other. But their correct appreciation will insensibly suggest a more telling and appropriate way of presenting Christian truth, even though there is no direct allusion to the error we seek to expel. We may well be content to let the truth work, and this it assuredly will do, in proportion as it is lovingly and faithfully presented. Besides, the

* Sūr. 21 *Anbiyā'*, 91.

† Sūr. 66 *Taḥrim*, 12; cp. 4 *Nisā'*, 169, 'Verily Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, *is* the apostle of God, and His Word, which He conveyed into Mary, and a spirit *proceeding* from Him.'

‡ Sale, on Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 22.

§ Ver. 19.

|| Sūr. 32 *Sajdah*, 6–8.

¶ Sūr. 15 *Ḥijr*, 29; and, similarly, 38 *Ṣād*, 72.

** Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 58.

particular points of difference here would probably be outside the intelligence of ordinary hearers, and only suitable for the educated and thoughtful. Proceeding, then, on broad and general lines, we may show the Muḥammadans that the Holy Spirit is needed to guide. dispose and direct our hearts and wills, that they may accept and obey the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ. To this end He enters into and influences the heart. *Illustration.*—It is no use going to a doctor and getting medicine from him, if we place it on a shelf and do not take it.—In speaking of the Holy Ghost, too, the Christian worker has a grand opportunity of showing how He satisfies the longing of the human heart for a spiritual guide, present, authoritative, infallible.

Objection, —based upon the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Jesus; * How could the Holy Ghost become a body (*jasad*)?

Answer.—We have no need to answer this question. How did Gabriel, as Muḥammadans say, assume the form of a certain beautiful youth † when he brought the Qur'ān to Muḥammad? Or how did the angels appear to men, as we know they did?

* 'As a dove,' St. Matt. iii. 16; St. John i. 32; 'In a bodily form, as a dove,' St. Luke iii. 22.

† Named Diḥyeh-i-Kalbī, whose grave is to be seen near Dārābjird, in Fars.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

(A) Conciliatory Attitude of Muslims towards Christianity.

MUḤAMMADANS assume various attitudes towards Christianity according as they are friendly or unfriendly, bigoted or the reverse, and in proportion to the different degrees in which they are so disposed.

(1) We may begin by considering the attitude of conciliation, the attitude, that is, of liberal-minded persons who, though generally strong Muḥammadans and believing Islām to be the later and better way, desire to be on friendly terms with Christians. They are unwilling to offend them and have no wish to provoke a breach by the exhibition of religious differences. They perceive, moreover, that, whatever their Mullās may say and teach against the Christian religion, Christians, or at all events the best among them, are possessed of good breeding, culture, education and refined feelings, and in these respects, making due allowance for different forms of civilization, are at least not inferior to themselves; while in some others, and especially in truthfulness and honesty, in loving-kindness, sympathy and generosity, they are their superiors. Afterwards we may gradually advance to the consideration of other and more hostile attitudes assumed by the Muslim towards the rival creed.

This readiness to reconcile the two systems, and regard them as adjustable the one with the other, shows itself in many ways. A Persian schoolboy will tell you he reads both the Qur'ān and the Bible. The bias in favour of Islām appears more plainly in the following instance. Young medical students at Cairo will avail themselves of opportunities of religious conversation, and though they are attacking Christian doctrine, we are told it is without any bitterness or bigotry, because 'they are modern Muḥammadans—that is, they are attempting a synthesis between Islām and Christianity.' A very intelligent woman, a sayid, whose daughter was an inmate of the Julfā hospital for several months, and who, before she left, declared herself convinced of the truth of the Gospel, 'tried at first to prove that Islām and Christianity were

identical.' In the Srinagar medical mission, 'the attitude usually exhibited by the Muḥammadan patients is not one of fanatical opposition to the Gospel, but rather one of accommodation. Frequently the words are heard, "Your religion, Ṣāḥib, is the same as ours. You have the Law and the Gospel, which we also acknowledge, and we read the creed of the holy Jesus." If prevalent superstitions of popular Muḥammadanism are pointed out, one will say: "That is quite true; our people are very ignorant, Christians are more just and kind." . . . Even when doctrine is referred to many will acknowledge that Christ is both sinless and divine.' A Mujtahid of Shīrāz, whom Bishop French visited in 1883, accompanied by colporteurs with Arabic and Persian Scriptures, 'read out the first Psalm and the second, delighted with the similarity of it to the Qur'ān.' Of India, we are told—

> The reforming party among the Muḥammadans endeavours to see in the Qur'ān what they have learnt to appreciate through their contact with Christians. The Muḥammadan College at Aligarh has done more probably than any other institution to promote these opinions among the followers of Islām. The present Principal of that College, Mr. Theodore Morison, wrote in the *Spectator* of December 29, 1900, that these reformers 'believe that in their faith are enshrined the great truths of religion and morality, but that in the past they have misread the Word of God, and that narrow-minded Mullās have expounded it amiss.' It is asserted, for example, that 'in the Qur'ān are the clearest directions to marry but one wife and to free the slave, and that God, through His prophet, most emphatically forbade coercion in religion.' *

Such ideas may at first sight seem strange and difficult to account for, to those who have been accustomed to associate the extremes of bigotry and fanaticism with the name of Islām. *There is, however, that in Islām itself, which gives the reason and the explanation.* The true religion from the time of Adam down to Muḥammad, propagated by all the great succession of 124,000 prophets, is supposed to have been one and the same in essentials; in every age it contains the same great foundation truths and moral precepts; it is only the non-essentials, the outward and ceremonial observances, that have been changed from time to time to suit the exigencies of different ages and peoples. According to this view Islām and Christianity in its original and incorrupt form are both true; they are, indeed, identical in the fundamental principles of the knowledge of God, and of right and wrong.

Views like these leave much to be desired, they only contain an element of truth. It may possibly be felt that the proportion of revealed truth overlooked and neglected is so large, as to outweigh the value of that acknowledged as common ground. And yet there is much to be thankful for in this tolerant attitude. We trust it bespeaks a mind open to receive further enlightenment. We hope from it still better things, and welcome it with joy;

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1900–1901, p. 202.

while we wait and watch and pray for the rising of the Sun of Righteousness in his strength, making every lesser luminary wax faint and pale and at last vanish away.

(2) Some of the forms in which this conciliatory spirit shows itself may now be noticed with answers appropriate to them.

'Your religion is right for you, and ours is right for us,' the Muḥammadan will sometimes say. 'Your way is good for you, and ours for us.'

Answer (i.).—What we all desire is the nearest and shortest road. Our way we believe to be better than yours, because it *is* nearer and shorter. If you claim superiority for your road, you must bring forward arguments to prove it.

The following considerations show the superior excellence of our road:—(*a*) It is a nearer road than yours. It leads the believer at once to the assurance of pardon, acceptance and salvation. (*b*) It is a more excellent way, because the spirituality of our religion is more than that of yours. (*c*) The pre-eminence of Christianity follows from the greater dignity of Jesus Himself. We have received our holy religion from *'Īsā Rūḥu'llāh* (Jesus the Spirit of God), Whose essential nature is far superior to that of Muḥammad whom you regard as the *Rasūl* (Apostle) of God. The former is of sublimer rank than the latter, inasmuch as the Spirit is closely allied to the divine essence; whereas the Apostle is a messenger, who comes from God to man and must traverse the road appointed for him. As the Founders are, so are their respective religions. That one excels, whose Founder is more honourable in rank and dignity.

Answer (ii.).—The answer may be given in quite another way. It will be seen which is the better road to follow, Christianity or Islām, from a comparison of the Gospel and the Qur'ān. We have here only three courses open to choose from: (*a*) both are false; (*b*) both are true; (*c*) one of them is true.

(*a*) is inadmissible for us; for he who holds this opinion is outside the pale both of Christianity and of Islām; he is without religion. (*b*) 'Only the single can proceed from unity' (*Al wāḥidu lā yaṣduru 'an-hu ill'al wāḥid*), as the philosophers say. God is one and His commands are one. The commands of the Qur'ān differ from those of the Gospel. Both indeed teach us the unity of God. But there is a difference in their specific commands. Therefore both cannot be true. (*c*) The third alternative remains, viz.: that only one of them is true; and we must therefore believe in the one or the other. Now, we want to know which of the two we are to follow. In deciding this point, we shall naturally follow that which has obtained the larger acceptance. And if we are in doubt about the two, the testimony to the Gospel is greater, and its acceptance wider than that of the Qur'ān. For, whereas only Muḥammadans accept the Qur'ān, both Muḥammadans and Christians affirm the truth of the Gospel.

Illustration.—Standing opposite Fort William, a missionary

heard the Musulmāns and Chinamen saying, 'There are very many gates into Fort William—there is an hospital gate, a water gate, and others. Now, Ṣāḥib, it is just the same in regard to heaven. Chinamen get in at one gate, Musulmāns in at another, and Hindūs in at another!' 'Yes,' the missionary said, 'that is true; but there is a sentinel at every gate, and every sentinel has the same watchword, and you cannot get into it without that watchword. "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.' * This is quite in agreement with Muḥammadan thoughts and ideas. And the point may be followed up in this way. You allow that a mediator (*wāsiṭeh*) is necessary between God and man. The question is this, Who is the true one, Jesus or Muḥammad? *Before* Muḥammad's time, you admit that Jesus was an accepted mediator for His people, so that Christians in the ages before Islām are saved. But *after* Muḥammad's coming the case stands thus. Muḥammadans and Christians both acknowledge Jesus; but among those who are not followers of Muḥammad, doubt exists as to his (Muḥammad's) claims. Thus there is a greater consensus of opinion regarding Jesus than Muḥammad; we may therefore have greater certainty about Him, and regard Him as the more reliable mediator.

(3) Another way in which the same conciliatory spirit is manifested is by means of propositions like the following: Many roads lead to one place: many are the roads that lead to the city.

Answer (i.).—We do not admit this. Because—

(*a*) Jews, Christians, Muḥammadans, etc., say and believe many things directly contrary to one another. The Jews, *e.g.*, do not accept Jesus as the Messiah, whereas Christians acknowledge Him to be a Prophet, and Messiah and the Son of God. Muḥammadans again honour Muḥammad as the last and greatest of the prophets; while Jews and Christians do not admit his claims. How then is it possible to regard these as different ways of God's appointing, divers roads to the same place, while they are so opposed and contradictory to one another?

(*b*) And because in the second place it is denied in the Holy Scriptures; from which we learn that God is one, and His revealed truth is one, and the divinely appointed way of salvation is one. See St. John xiv. 6, 'I am the way—truth—life . . . but by Me'; Acts iv. 12, 'none other name'; 1 Tim. ii. 5, 'One God, one mediator'; and Eph. iv. 5, 6, 'One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.' Cp. The Thirty-nine Articles, Art. XVIII., 'Of obtaining eternal Salvation only by the Name of Christ.'

Answer (ii.).—We grant what you say, for the sake of argument; but only to find ourselves confronted with the following serious difficulties:—(*a*) The object of religion is to be a road to lead to God. The fruit of religion is to arrive at the presence of God.

* Nye, *Anecdotes on Bible Texts: Acts* iv. 12.

Now, we do not find that all these different roads lead to God, and bring a man to the object of his desire, by making him sure of acceptance with God and certain of having obtained salvation. (Cp. Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism.) Unless they give him an assured hope of salvation, and make him (in Christian phraseology) the son of God, we can have no confidence or joyful anticipation, as to whither these roads tend. The Muḥammadan, for instance, cannot positively affirm that he has secured God's favour and been accepted by Him, after all his religious observances. He performs all these things, merely because they are enjoined; like the commands of a king or ruler, which he is bound to obey, without knowing whether he will win the ruler's favour or no; or like the prescription of a physician which the patient must take, not knowing what the effect of it will be. But he does not know whether all these observances have obtained for him the object he has in view, viz. God's favour and salvation.

(*b*) We do not know that these other religions, these various roads, will really make us pure and holy in God's sight; and this is an essential condition of acceptance with Him. Take a few illustrations from the traditions of Islām. If a man omits his prayers, he is a *kāfir*; but who can go through life without omitting his prayers at some time or other? If there be any ceremonial impurity on a man's clothes when saying his prayers, even to the extent of a needle's point only, so long as that remains, his prayers and worship are not accepted of God; who then can be confident that his prayers are acceptable? If a man tells a falsehood, God and 70,000 angels curse him; after that how can he ever obtain forgiveness? Passing over wilful falsehood, who is there who has not at some time inadvertently said something that was not strictly true? Again, if a man neglects prayer, and any one gives him a piece of bread or a drink of water, the sin of the giver is as great as if he had killed all the prophets from Adam to the *Khātamu'l-anbiyā'*,—Muḥammad, the Seal of the Prophets. These things being so, a man can never know whether he is holy in God's sight, and not rather a great sinner. (Cp. more fully in Chap. VIII., 'Islām.')

(*c*) If all the roads lead to one place, how is it that you Muḥammadans apply such opprobrious terms to followers of other religions as *mushrik* (polytheist), *kāfir* (unbeliever), *najis* (unclean)?

Illustration.—If there be ten fever patients, all taking different medicines for fever, will one say to another, 'You are a fool for taking that medicine?' Of course not.

(*d*) Even if the other roads do lead to God, they do so with difficulty. Compared with them, the Christian road is straighter and more direct. *Illustration.*—Suppose there are two roads leading to a place, the one comparatively short and easy, say a ten days' journey, and the other long and difficult, there is no doubt which of the two a sensible man will choose.

All the chief religions of the world teach honesty, morality,

truthfulness, etc.; yet no single one of them, letting alone the fact that in other respects they differ so greatly one from another, points out so quick and certain a road as does Christianity, to pardon of sin through an all-sufficient atonement; victory over remaining sin in the strength imparted by our victorious, risen Lord; the acquisition of holiness and purity of heart and life by the indwelling of a divine Spirit; self-sacrifice and brotherly love as being members of one spiritual body; a sure and certain hope of everlasting life based on God's own express word; and the final destruction of all corruption and sin (1 John iii. 2, 'we shall be like Him'), a process which begins even here (ver. 3, 'purifieth himself'; 2 Pet. i. 4, 'partakers of the divine nature'). And if we ask, Why is this so? Whence comes this superiority of Christianity? the answer is, because, like a good physician, it goes to the root of the matter, and discovers to the man who will give ear the real and ultimate cause of all the untoward accidents of this human life of ours,—all the sin and misery and suffering which abound in the world. This cause is the universal corruption of human nature by the prevalent and deadly disease of sin, which brings down the just condemnation and punishment of God. All other systems of religion or morals, on the contrary, like a bad physician, treat the symptoms only, and fail to produce a radical cure (cp. Gen. vi. 5, 'evil continually'; Jer. xvii. 9, 'deceitful above all things'; Rom. iii. 9, 'all under sin'; ver. 10, 'none righteous, no, not one'; ver. 12, 'no, not so much as one').

(4) An attitude of mind kindred to the one we have just been considering is that which makes perplexity an excuse for indecision, and argues that, since so much can apparently be urged on both sides, it is difficult or impossible to arrive at the truth. As an instance of this, we may take the following from Mackay's journal, 1883,* and surely no better answer could have been given than the stirring appeal which was then and there made to conscience and the Gospel:—

> Mtesa then began with his usual excuses. 'There are these two religions,' he said. 'When Masudi reads his book, the Qur'ān, you call it lies; when you read your book, Masudi calls it lies. Which is true?' I left my seat, and going forward to the mat, I knelt on it, and, in the most solemn manner, I said, 'Oh, Mtesa, my friend, do not always repeat that excuse! When you and I stand before God at the great day of judgment, will you reply to Almighty God that you did not know what to believe because Masudi told you one thing and Mackay told you another? No; you have the New Testament. Read there for yourself. God will judge you by that. There never was any one yet who looked for the truth there and did not find it.'

This instance is that of a heathen African king halting between the rival claims of Christianity and Muḥammadanism. But somewhat similar cases are met with among Muḥammadans themselves.

* *C.M.S. History*, III. 411.

An Afghan, who was apparently convinced of the truth, resisted all persuasion to make an outward profession of his faith, by bringing forward doctrinal difficulties. Again, a man will sometimes tell you that he has been an inquirer for years! What a sad ring there is about such a confession! Happy indeed will it be for such as these, if, like the heathen king, they at last arrive at true repentance and conversion before the sands of life have quite run out, and become at length 'grounded and steadfast' in the faith,*—firmly established on the immoveable rock foundation which is Christ Himself.† Ziegenbalg's words, though apparently uttered in a different connexion, are appropriate here—

> It is of prime importance for the missionary to distinguish the errors of the *will* and those of the *understanding*. If the obstinacy and rebellion of the will were but in some degree removed, the intellectual part would soon be redressed, and influenced by a divine light. ‡

(B) UNFAVOURABLE CRITICISM OF CHRISTIANITY IN COMPARISON WITH ISLĀM.

1. **As being of a temporary character.**—(1) 'Six of them,' writes Sale, in the *Preliminary Discourse* to his Koran, p. 125, *i.e.* six of the 313 Apostles whom Islām believes to have been sent to mankind, 'brought new laws or dispensations, which successively abrogated the preceding; these were Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muḥammad.' Hence, *according to the Muḥammadan view, Christianity is of a temporary nature.* This characteristic is not regarded as affecting the essential truths of the religion, but concerns only the commands and ordinances enjoined by it.§

(2) The Muḥammadan theory that the dispensations before Islām, including the Christian, were successively appointed only for a time and that the commands of God are changed from age to age, is supported by the following arguments:—

(i.) *Different ages*, it is said, have *different requirements*: no two epochs are exactly alike; the divine commands suitable for one are not so for another. This view is substantiated by the analogy of the world and of man. The physical world, for example, is constantly changing. An infant, again, as it grows up to childhood, youth and manhood, requires change of diet appropriate to its growth and years. In the same way the commands of God have been changed to suit the requirements of different ages; in place of the commands of Jesus have now been substituted those of Muḥammad.

Answer.—We allow that before the time of Christ, *the prophets*

* Col. i. 23. † St. Matt. vii. 24, 25.
‡ The *Missionary*, vol. IV. pt. 2, p. 165.
§ Cp. Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, pp. 106, 116, 117.

n general did not bring perfect commands. Their commands could only be so considered in reference to this or that particular age.

When we further contemplate the nature of the divine commands, we find they are of two kinds: (*a*) *ceremonial and outward*, and (*b*) *inward and spiritual.* We may concede that those of (*a*), as, for instance, circumcision, sacrifice, etc., to which class belong most of the commands of the prophets previous to Christ, may be, and have been, changed, just as it is quite conceivable, if we may use an illustration from common life, that a hundred years hence a better remedy for fever than quinine may be discovered and the use of the latter abandoned. But it is not so with regard to the commands of the second class (*b*), and it is to this category that the commands of Jesus belong. They are spiritual, and contain all that was of this exalted nature in the commands of the preceding prophets, and in truth go far beyond them in scope and spirituality; just as we may say that 50 Rupees contain 20 Rs. and more.

Jesus came to *perfect* the spirits of men, and in like manner His commands are perfect, in order that men may perfectly know God's will, and be made fit to stand before Him. We cannot, for these reasons, admit that the commands of Jesus have been changed.

(ii.) Another argument used to support the alleged theory is that after lapse of time *the commands which God has given become established and customary, and so God changes them in order to test men*, and see who obey them from the fear of God, and who do so merely out of conformity to prevailing custom.

Answer.—This is quite a fanciful idea, not to mention its being somewhat derogatory to God. The testing which the prophets made of the peoples to whom they were sent was not effected by a change of the divine commands, but by the testimony they bore to the coming of Christ. The belief or disbelief of the age in God's revealed will was thereby sufficiently proved. But it was not a perfect test, any more than the examination of a little boy in his English Primer can be regarded as a 'final examination.' But when Christ came, He Himself was the great test, whether men would believe Him or not, and thus show their submission to the will of God or the reverse. As for His commands, their object was not to test the obedience of men in the above sense, but to make them perfect.

(3) *General answers to the whole question.*—Having now dealt with the two chief arguments by means of which Muḥammadans support their theory of the temporary character of the Christian Dispensation, we may next consider the best ways of directly meeting the charge itself.

(i.) *Let it be assumed, for the sake of argument, that the commands of Christ have been changed*, and others substituted for them. These new commandments, then, must either be inferior to the old, or equally good, or else better. The first is inconceivable. In the second case, what advantage would be gained? And if there were

no advantage to be gained, it would be a futile and unprofitable proceeding. The third alternative therefore remains as the only one possible. And as this, too, is contrary to truth, as will be immediately shown, it follows that our assumption was wrong, and Christ's commands have not been changed.

The superiority of the commands of Christ to those of the Muḥammadan and all other religions is manifest:—

(*a*) *From a comparison between their teaching and that of Christ.* We find that no other religion inculcates better and loftier precepts than those of Christ, and that none are even conceivable as better adapted than His to perfect the souls of men and renovate and restore their evil condition.*

(*b*) *When the test of results is applied* to the teaching of Christ and 'other masters.' *Illustration.*—We test a medicine and judge of its value by its effect upon the sick and not by looking at it only.

(ii.) For those who accept and acknowledge Christ *it is impossible to hold the above view in the face of His own words*, St. Mark xiii. 31, 'My words shall not pass away.' Cp. 1 Pet. i. 25, 'But the word of the Lord abideth for ever. And this is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you.'

The following verse of the Qur'ān has been quoted to show that the Christian revelation is final and that there is no place for any other religion in succession to it: Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 54, 'I will place those who follow thee [Jesus] above the unbelivers, until the day of resurrection.' But rightly understood, this verse will not bear this interpretation. The meaning intended is something quite different.

(iii.) *The burden of proof may be thrown on the Muḥammadan*, and he may be told that he cannot possibly expect his allegation to be entertained unless he brings forward strong arguments in its support.

'S. S.,' the writer of the article mentioned below, gives it as his opinion that in discussing with a Muḥammadan the subject of 'the relation in which the Qur'ān stands to the Gospel,' we shall have to rely chiefly on the *general* argument, viz. of the position occupied by the Gospel in the course of divine revelation, the finality of the Christian system and dispensation, and the relationship between the Law and the Gospel, of which there are no traces of a similar kind between the Gospel and the Qur'ān: and that 'to show *in detail* that there is no such connexion between the Gospel and the Qur'ān as between the Gospel and the Law, is as difficult as to *prove a negative*.' The Qur'ān reproduces, he adds, nothing essentially Christian. Hence the difficulty of the task is increased.

* 'The most striking contrast between Christianity and Muḥammadanism is seen in the comparative difficulty of attainment of their respective ideals. The Christian ideal of life is far above that which the average man thinks it possible to attain. . . . This lowering of the Christian standard of duty and morality is what Muḥammad unconsciously did.'—Canon Robinson, *Mohammedanism: Has it any future?* pp. 12, 13.

This is all very true and clearly put. And it is certainly desirable to have lucid views as to the relation of the Gospel to that which preceded and followed it, which we are ready to set forth at the proper time. Still, in the case before us, as so often, *the defensive position belongs to the Muḥammadan*, not to us, and we may rightly take the strong line of inviting him to prove his assertions as to the relation of Islām and the Qur'ān to the Christian dispensation and the Gospel.

The following would be a gentle way of leading up to the point. 'May I ask one or two questions?' The permission being granted, 'You believe in the Taurāt?' 'Of course.' 'Very good. So do we.' 'And in the Gospel?' 'Certainly.' 'And you believe the Gospel has abrogated the Taurāt?' 'Yes, that is my opinion.' 'Well, we Christians do not exactly say that, but we believe that in certain respects the Gospel has superseded the Taurāt. But be that as it may, let us go a step further, and let me ask you whether you accept the Qur'ān?' 'I am a Muḥammadan; of course I do.' 'And you believe it has abrogated the Gospel?' 'Yes.' 'Will you tell me on what grounds you hold that view?'

If there *has* been, as the Muhammadan supposes, a supersession of the one by the other in God's all-wise providence, there must be adequate reasons for it, which it rests with him to show, if he wishes to bring us round to his opinion. We are ready on our part to show him, if necessary, the nature of the succession of the Gospel to the Law. We feel no objection, but rather perceive a natural fitness according to the nature of things, when we see the outward and ceremonial giving place to the inward and spiritual. We cannot, however, so contemplate the reverse process, or conceive it possible that God's moral laws should be changed and altered. When the Muḥammadan asserts that Christianity was only a temporary phase and that the Qur'ān has superseded the Gospel, it is incumbent on him to explain *how* this has taken place. Is it in the same way as the Gospel has superseded the Law? If so, the evidence must be produced. And if not in this way, then in what other way? The burden of proof must be placed and kept on the right shoulders, and the weakness of Muḥammadanism, when placed on the defensive, once more demonstrated.

(4) *The finality of the Christian dispensation.*—The claims put forward by Christ's religion are directly opposed to the view under consideration, which would limit it by bounds of time and place. The Gospel of Christ knows no such limitations. On the contrary, so far from uttering a single word to indicate that its design was local and temporary, Christ Himself and the authoritative exponents of evangelical truth in the Gospel explicitly declare that Christ's religion is for all men without limitation, that His truth is the final and complete revelation of God's will to men, and that the present dispensation will last until the end of the world. These are truths which can only be learnt in their fulness from the pages of the New Testament. Our task therefore is not finished

when we have rebutted the erroneous Muḥammadan notion of the temporary character of Christianity by means of arguments such as those of (3). The true nature of the Gospel can only be rightly appreciated in this, as in other respects, by an accurate and comprehensive grasp of its teaching. We must, therefore, be prepared to help and direct our Muḥammadan friends to the attainment of this great end. And so, with reference to the special question now engaging our attention, it is well to have some definite lines of thought and teaching laid down ready for use as occasion serves.

In the following paragraphs free use has been made of an article by 'S. S.' in the *Missionary*, vol. IV. pt. 4, pp. 311 *sqq.*, entitled 'Account of a Public Discussion at Agra, between the Rev. C. G. Pfander and Moulvee Rahmut Ullah. Agra, 1854.' The writer considers the question of *The Finality of the Christian Dispensation* under the following heads: I. 'The Jewish dispensation *suggests* its own non-finality by the very nature of its laws and institutions; and there are many plain declarations in the O. T. that it was not intended to be a final dispensation.' II. 'The Christian dispensation is the substance of which the Jewish was the shadow; this substance is of such a nature that it *cannot* be abrogated; and the N. T. is full of intimations and declarations that it is to last for ever.' III. 'Granting that Christianity were to be abrogated, Islām *cannot* be its supersessor, if the analogy of the supersession of the O. T. by the N. T. is to be our guide (and what other guide can we have?) in deciding such a matter.'

(i.) *The New Testament is the complement of the Old*;—is as perfectly adapted as the key to its own proper lock to the opening and disclosing of its hidden things; and is the light which explains dark mysteries, and itself derives from their illumination fresh enhancements of its own essential glory. The New Testament contains the fulfilment of many things which had been foretold in the Old Testament. It gives no hint or foreshadowing of any other dispensation before the end of the world. If, on the one hand, many prophecies of the books of the Old Testament and the New Testament still remain unfulfilled, on the other hand Muḥammadanism is in no conceivable sense the fulfilment of a legacy of unfulfilled hopes and predictions of the Gospel.

Type and Prophecy.—The New Testament shows how these have been fulfilled in the Advent of the Messiah and the establishment of His everlasting Kingdom.

The Law and the Gospel.—Christianity abolished that which was not permanent in the preceding dispensation, not by abrogating it, but 'by expanding it into its full significancy.' The connexion between the Law and the Gospel can be clearly traced; the preparation for the latter by the former; the fulfilment of the former in the latter; the shadow giving way to the substance (Col. ii. 17; Heb. x. 1).

There is no such connexion between Christianity and Islām.

In the latter there is a manifest retrogression. The 'letter' overrides the 'spirit.' 'The most carnal of commandments is made to override the power of an endless life.' The Muḥammadan assertion, therefore, that the Qur'ān supersedes the Christian religion, as that superseded Judaism, is to one who has grasped the Christian point of view, simply inconceivable.

There were many indications under the Jewish dispensation, which would point thoughtful minds to the truth to be hereafter revealed, and indicated in 1 Sam. xv. 22 ('to obey is better than sacrifice'), and again and again subsequently (Ps. li. 16, 17; Prov. xxi. 3; Isa. i. 11, 13; Mic. vi. 6–8; Hos. vi. 6; Jer. vii. 22, 23), that the outward ordinance is nothing compared with inward devotion, and the costliest sacrifice is unacceptable without the offering of a humble, obedient heart.

And not only so, but under the Christian dispensation a point has been reached when further adherence to temporary, external ordinances after the arrival of the fulness of Truth becomes 'absolutely sinful,' as henceforth they only serve to obscure the fuller light that has been revealed: *e.g.* 'The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life' (2 Cor. iii. 6); 'The law made nothing perfect . . . a bringing in thereupon of a better hope' (Heb. vii. 19); 'The law worketh wrath' (Rom. iv. 15); 'If ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing' (Gal. v. 2); 'Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace' (Gal. v. 4). Henceforth, the knowledge of God's will is not to be obtained through the ordinances of Judaism, which is annulled for its 'weakness and unprofitableness' (Heb. vii. 18) in favour of Him, in Whom 'dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily' (Col. ii. 9); Who 'ever liveth to make intercession' (Heb. vii. 25); Whose priestly office is 'not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life' (Heb. vii 16).—'The blossom is thrust off by the fruit.' The dispensation of the letter gives way to that of the spirit. The 'living water' and the 'bread of life' (St. John iv. 10, 13, 14; vi. 35, 58) introduce 'a region of spiritual blessings of a totally different character from those carnal ordinances,' 'all which things are to perish with the using' (Col. ii. 22).

(ii.) *The New Covenant of the Gospel contains a unique and all-embracing plan of salvation.*—It tells us of the *one* all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ *in the end of the world*, which has obtained *eternal redemption* for us, and of His perpetual and prevailing *intercession*. 'But now once at the end of the ages . . .' (Heb. ix. 26); 'One sacrifice for sins for ever' (Heb. x. 12); 'By one offering he hath perfected for ever . . .' (Heb. x. 14); 'Having obtained eternal redemption' (Heb. ix. 12); 'He ever liveth to make intercession' (Heb. vii. 25).

But it not only shows how man may receive the forgiveness of his sins, it also points the way to holiness, likeness to God and nearness to Him, and power for service and sacrifice. All the

promises of the Gospel develop and expand these inspiring ideals. And in the glorious hopes set before the Christian there is nothing left to be desired.

Even here and now he becomes by grace 'an heir through God' (Gal. iv. 7), and the son of God by 'adoption' (ver. 5; Eph. i. 5). Believers in Christ are made 'a kingdom. . . priests' (Rev. i. 6; cp. the 'royal priesthood' of 1 Pet. ii. 9), 'to offer up spiritual sacrifices' (ver. 5), and 'partakers of the divine nature' (2 Pet. i. 4). Though 'perfect' (Col. i. 28 and Lightfoot *in loc.*) as those who have been admitted to the full sight of 'the mystery of God, even Christ' (Col. ii. 2; cp. i. 27), they look for continual growth in grace and knowledge (2 Pet. iii. 18) and gradual transformation into the image of the Lord 'from glory to glory' (2 Cor. iii. 18) as long as they are in the flesh; and hereafter for the consummation of their bliss in unbroken communion and fellowship with their Lord and Master (1 Thess. iv. 17), and in likeness to Him (1 John iii. 2). 'This inheritance (Gal. iv. 7), than which nothing can be considered more blessed, is represented as a consequence and a *continuance* of the state into which in this life true Christians are admitted by their Lord.' 'The entire promises of Christianity, . . . are grounded upon the permanence and growth of that divine grace which is of the essence of the Gospel, and the whole scheme of salvation by Christ would be nullified, (not fulfilled as the Jewish dispensation was by the Christian, but) absolutely and entirely nullified by the bringing in of any other Law to supersede the eternal Law of love. "Lord, to whom shall we go? *Thou* hast the words of *eternal life*."'

(iii.) *In the Gospel we have the final revelation in time of the will and purpose of God towards man.*—This does not imply that a clearer and fuller understanding of the truth that has been once for all revealed is not to be looked for under the ever-present guidance and enlightenment of the Blessed Spirit, or that ever fresh applications of the truth are not to be made to the ever-changing needs and eternal problems of life.

The truth of the Gospel is *final* in the sense that it neither knows of, nor leads us to expect any addition to 'the deposit' of revealed truth (1 Tim. vi. 20, marg.) or any further revelation beyond that of *Him* Who is 'the way, and the truth, and the life' (St. John xiv. 6), and Who is revealed to His own by the Holy Spirit (St. John xvi. 14, 'He shall take of Mine, and shall declare it unto you'; and verse 15). Cp. 1 Cor. iii. 11, 'Other foundation,' etc,; 2 Cor. xi. 3, 'The simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ'; ver. 4, 'Another Jesus . . . a different spirit . . . a different Gospel'; Gal. i. 8, 'Though we or an angel from heaven . . . any gospel other than that,' etc.; Jude 3, 'The faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.' *

* The Church Historical Society, Pamphlet No. X., 'The Teaching Power of the Church,' by the Rev. W. E. Collins, M.A., Prof. of Eccles. Hist. at King's Coll., London. S.P.C.K. 1896.

A fresh revelation is neither needed nor desired by those who possess not only the Sacred Volume containing God's final revelation, but a living, divine Commentator and Expounder thereof, even the Holy Spirit, Who is Himself the Author of it; and also an ever present divine Companion and Friend, even the Lord Jesus Christ, to guide and help them in every difficult path of life.

Even supposing a new revelation were wished for, those who have received the truth from the Son of God would scarcely be disposed to return to the method in vogue in the previous ages (Heb. i. 1, 'God, having of old time spoken. . . in the prophets'), 'to which the Qur'ān reverts for its type and model.' 'The plan of the Qur'ān as regards *the manner of communication* is utterly opposed to that of Christianity. The mere human prophets and teachers resume, under the Qur'ānic system, that position of authority which Christianity antiquated, and for which it has substituted the *divine* authority of the Son of God Himself. At the very outset, therefore, of our inquiry into the grounds on which the Qur'ān claims to be the complement of Christianity, we find a flaw in its pretensions which is absolutely fatal. "In these last days God hath spoken unto us *by His Son*;" the "lion of the tribe of Judah" has unsealed the records of Redemption; are we now to go back to a human prophet? When we are offered the teaching of Him Who speaketh from heaven, "shall we refuse" that instruction, and betake ourselves to one who "spake only on earth"?'

(iv.) *The Christian scheme renders impossible the supposition of another dispensation before the end of the world.*—The Bible contains a compendious history of the world from the Creation and the Fall, to the end of time. 'The Gospel precludes the introduction of any other scheme of religion by bridging over the entire space between the new birth of the Christian Church and the final consummation of all things.' This last age of the world, as the Gospel tells us, which extends from Christ's first Advent to His Second Coming to judge the world, is now in progress. It is the era of the Church Militant—of the great conflict between the Church and the World. All the elements in the struggle are now present. The opposing forces have entered the arena. The general course and varying fortunes of this vast spiritual contest are sketched in the Word of God, right down to the time of the end. This age, like the Jewish Dispensation, is preparatory. As *that* looked forward and prepared the way for the coming of Messiah, so *this* points onward to nothing less than His glorious return, the consummation of the ages, the end of the world and the final judgment.

The Kingdom of Christ has been set up, and His spiritual reign has begun on earth (Dan. ii. 44, 'A kingdom, which shall never be destroyed . . . it shall stand for ever,' and vii. 14, 'And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him: His dominion

is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed'). His mediatorial kingdom must last until 'all His enemies' are 'put under His feet' (1 Cor. xv. 25–28). Usurpers there may be to defraud or rob Him of His rights. But in this universal kingdom of Christ's no joint king or rival authority has any rightful place, and that which they now hold on sufferance is only for a time (Ph. ii. 9–11, 'that every knee should bow . . . and that every tongue should confess'; Rev. xvii. 14, 'Lord of lords, and King of kings'; xix. 16, 'King of kings and Lord of lords').

(v.) For the sake of completeness it may be added, that *this belief in the final character of the Christian revelation is that which has always governed the mind and councils of the Catholic Church.* Adherence to Apostolic teaching (cp. Acts ii. 42, 'continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching'), as recorded in the New Testament, has always in the Church been the proof of the truth; while novelty has been the mark of error and heresy. (Collins, *Teaching Power of the Church*, pp. 60 *sqq.* S.P.C.K.) 'The Church,' he says, '. . . . cannot reveal new truth; and, on the other hand, she has an unfailing touchstone by which to test the truth of any doctrine which may become current. That which is novel, or local, or partial, cannot be true.' The development of Christian doctrine in subsequent ages was not a new growth, but the clearer realization of the Apostolic 'deposit.'

'Ancient councils,' writes Browne,* 'settled many points of faith, and drew up creeds and confessions; but they professed them to be accordant with, and capable of proof from, Scripture.'

The contrast between Christian revelation and human science is well put by Littledale †—

The Christian religion, as a divine revelation, came perfect from God's hands, and . . . is not like human science, such as medicine or mechanics, which can be improved on and altered by man's skill.

Hence, also, the respective guarantees of the truth of science or revelation are directly opposed to one another. In the one case it is the modernness of the discoveries, in the other the antiquity of the truth, which challenges our assent. In human science, says Bishop Kaye, 'the most recent opinions are those which are most likely to be correct': but in the case of the communication of a divine revelation, 'the greater the distance from the fountain-head, the greater the chance that the stream will be polluted.' ‡

2. As deficient and imperfect in contrast with its alleged successor.—It is one of the boasts of the Muḥammadan that he possesses in his Qur'ān and the authoritative traditions of Islām a perfect law, which not only prescribes what should be believed, but

* *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, Art. VI., Section I. p. 129.
† *Plain Reasons*, pp. 13, 14.
‡ Quoted by Browne, *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, Art. VI., Section III, p. 179.

also lays down explicit rules and regulations for the right performance of all the duties of life both towards God and towards man. There is no such minute and elaborate law in the Gospel, it is true, and this fact is made the ground of the superficially damaging criticism, 'You Christians have no law,' 'You have no commands,' from which the imperfection and manifest inferiority of the Christian system as compared with Islām is supposed to follow.

The *ideas underlying these criticisms* are :—(*a*) That in the Gospel there is not found an elaborate civil and criminal code like that of Islām : 'You have no *law*.' (*b*) Or else, that Christianity compared with Islām is deficient in religious ordinances and precepts : 'You have no *commands*.' These may now be considered separately.

(*a*) *The conspicuous absence of a civil and criminal code of law in the Gospel.*—The force of this allegation lies in two directions. On the one hand, men derive satisfaction from being able to exalt and glorify the laws under which they live. They think that they both confer and receive honour, if they can attribute a divine origin to them and regard them as inspired. It is naturally thought a great privilege to live under such a *régime*, which has come direct from heaven and leaves nothing to be determined by man's weak and fallible judgment. It is a proud boast, to adhere to a religion which possesses this conspicuous mark of the Divine favour and regard. And on the other hand, the absence in any scheme of religion of such heavenly guidance in the complicated business and adjustments of human life is considered a sure sign of its inferiority and imperfection. Christianity, therefore, is thought to be poor and bare in this particular, not only in contrast with the voluminous and detailed law of Islām, but also when compared with the law of Moses which preceded it.

Answer.—(i) *The functions of the prophet and the ruler ought to be kept distinct from one another.* The former has nothing to do with civil and criminal law, which it is the Government's duty to administer. There are things which only concern the dignity of a prophet, *e.g.* the unity of God and the spiritual teaching founded thereon, and which it is highly objectionable for a king or ruler to interfere with. In like manner it is equally undesirable for a prophet to meddle with the matters and decisions which properly appertain to the Government, such as the administration of the civil and criminal code. The usurpation by the religious power of authority in these cases is the cause of the irregularity which prevails in Muḥammadan countries. How different it is in India!

To take a particular instance, the distribution of *alms* ought to be a function of the civil power. At present it is the subject of great abuse where Islām holds sway. If the Mullā to whom alms are given does not keep them himself, he gives them to friends, relations, supporters, acquaintances, neighbours, pupils, etc. But what does he know of the poor and needy in this or that quarter of the city? The matter should be in the Governor's hands. He is

in a position to be acquainted with the wants and claims of all, and take a comprehensive view. Contrast England. There exist there several channels for the bestowal of charity, and the surest guarantees for the proper expenditure of charitable funds. The chief agencies are (1) the Government Poor Laws; (2) the distribution and disbursement of monies entrusted to ministers of religion and to a host of charitable and philanthropic institutions, all of which submit their accounts for scrutiny; (3) private charity in individual cases. Hence, we see, the part played by the clergy is not excessively large.

Another illustration may be given from *theft:* the law of the Qur'ān is (Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 52) that a thief must suffer the amputation of his hand. But there are many degrees of criminality in theft, which cannot all be covered by any single law that ever existed, divine or human; and it is accordingly here that the part of the ruler comes in, who must decide every case upon its merits. There can be no absolute rule to meet all possible instances. So, too, with the law of inheritance, etc.

Another evil result of the 'politico-religious' constitution of Islām, and its making no distinction between civil and religious offences, rigorously punishing both alike, is that it often leads to hypocrisy. *E.g.*, a Muslim does not wish to fast during Ramazān, but, afraid of punishment, such as perhaps being sent about the town on a donkey, with its tail in his hand, he feels compelled to observe the fast, which thus becomes to him no longer a religious observance, but a hypocritical yielding to the fear of man. Similarly, a Muslim may wish to change his religion, but out of fear of the death penalty with which he will be threatened if he does so, he remains outwardly a Muhammadan, though in his heart he adheres to another religion. This again is hypocrisy. *

(ii.) Further, *a revelation from God is not needed for the regulation of matters such as these.* They are not in the region of abstract things, but within the domain of perception. In early times, such as the age of Moses, when mankind were rude and uncivilized, some divine guidance was needed to mark out the lines on which the performance of rights and duties should proceed, and their violation be punished. Thus in the Pentateuch laws are to be found, relating to inheritance, theft, murder, adultery, retaliation, etc. There is no longer any need for a special revelation of God's will in these matters. Rulers have their ministers and counsellors to assist them, if necessary, in their decisions. European nations are all under constitutional laws, and order and justice prevail there.

(*b*) *The supposed deficiency of Christianity in religious ordinances and precepts.—Answer* (i.). For the sake of argument we grant for the moment that this is so, and that Christianity does not contain such commands. This much having been conceded, we must next proceed to inquire, What is the object of religion? In religion there are two kinds of commands, those which are external

* *Food for Reflection*, by 'Abd 'Isā, pp. 74, 75.

and particular (*juz'i*) such as many of those in the Taurāt, and those which are fundamental (*usūl-i-aḥkam*) and spiritual. The main object and purpose of religion is to secure obedience to the latter, in order that good conduct and character may be the result; and the only use of the former is as aids to the attainment of spiritual worship and obedience.

Judged by this rule and standard, the Christian religion is more perfect than any other, because it contains the fundamental, spiritual commands of God in greater fulness than any other religion; *e.g.*, it enjoins holiness, purity, the fear and love of God, love to man, truth-speaking, obedience to the 'will of God.' These things, and only these, are the aim and object of outward ordinances. Thus, *e.g.*, ceremonial prayer (*namāz*) is of no value, unless leading up to, and accompanied by, a righteous life, which is the object of prayer.

In Christianity the absence of a multiplicity of rules for life and conduct is far more than counter-balanced by the spiritual and comprehensive nature of the commands we have. Thus we are commanded to 'do the will of God from the heart' (Eph. vi. 6), following the spirit and example of our Master, Who said, 'My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me' (St. John iv. 34). The 'whole duty of man' is summed up by the Lord Jesus Christ under the two great precepts of the Mosaic Law—love to God and love to our neighbour (St. Matt. xxii. 37–40; cp. the 'Golden Rule' of St. Matt. vii. 12).

Illustration from father and son. A young man may literally obey all the positive commands of his father, and yet be a very bad son, constantly causing him anxiety and vexation. A really good son, however, not only obeys his father's express commands, but also makes his unexpressed wishes the rule of all his conduct and behaviour; who in every case of doubt asks himself, 'What would my father *wish* me to do in these circumstances?' and acts accordingly. Thus a man may perform all the outward duties and ordinances of religion, and yet be at heart a very bad man.

This entirely accords with the teaching of the Qur'ān, which says, 'Verily the most honourable of you, in the sight of God, is the most pious of you' (Sūr. 49 *Ḥujurāt*, 13).

(ii.) Or we may deny our opponent's assertion, that the Christian religion is imperfect, as containing no commands. On the contrary, we have many commands of both classes, external and spiritual; and to deny this is to show a culpable ignorance, both of the Taurāt and the Gospel. We Christians accept the Taurāt, and therein we find many external laws and ordinances. Why they are not now binding on Christians is a different question. But the fact remains that we have them. As for the other class of commands, the moral and spiritual, you will find them in the Taurāt, as Ex. xx. 1–17, and still more abundantly in the New Testament, as St. Matt. v. 21–48; vi. 1–21, 31 *ad fin.*;

Rom. xii.; xiii. 1–8; 1 Cor. xiii. 1–10; Eph. v. 1–21; Col. iii. *passim*; iv. 1. (Pfander's *Mīzānu'l-Ḥaqq*, Eng. tr., p. 34.)

(iii.) It does not seem to be a right thing to accuse the gifts and grace of God of imperfection. *Whatever God gives is perfect.*

(iv.) It remains to consider the supposed deficiency of Christianity in the matter of commands, with reference to the eight obligatory duties (*wājibāt*) of Islām, the non-observance of which constitutes sin. Some of the latter the present writer has not heard actually brought forward to support the Muḥammadan contention. But they are briefly noticed below, to make the treatment of the subject more complete.

(1) *Ceremonial prayer* (*namāz*). This is the point most commonly alleged by Muḥammadans to show the poverty of Christianity. It cannot be denied that only too often there are ostensible grounds for making this objection, and constituting it a serious reproach against Christians.

Answer.—(i.) *The difference is one of form and name.* As you Muḥammadans have your private and ceremonial prayers, so the duty of prayer, both in public and private, is emphatically enjoined by the Christian religion. In both cases the object is to draw near to God. This is in no sense peculiar to Islām. All the great religions of the world recognize the duty of prayer, and prescribe methods for its performance.

(ii.) *Prayer from the heart is the only kind deserving of the name.* To think it necessary to pray in one particular direction and not in another, as though God were present in one place and not in another, is to treat Him as though he were a creature, which is blasphemy (*kufr*). Prayer should concern the heart, not the limbs. We may compare what the Ṣūfīs say: *'Īmān 'ibārat ast az iqrār-i-bih lisān, wa taṣdīq-i-bih jānān, wa 'amal-i-bih arkān,' i.e.* By faith is denoted confession with the tongue, the belief of the heart and outward (lit. with the limbs) action.

(2) *Fasting.—Answer.* The object of fasting is not simply hunger. The beasts of the field suffer much from hunger; but we cannot say they fast. The real object of fasting is the purification of the body and all its members from sin. To this end, fasting was enjoined upon Muḥammadans to be both an outward sign of repentance and a helpful discipline towards amendment of life. Our Christian fasting is of this spiritual kind.

(3) *Pilgrimage.—Answer.* (i.) This is easily answered. *You* take a long journey for the sake of circumambulation round a building made of mud. *We* Christians believe that those who go to the House of God, wherever it may be, and worship truly, receive the Holy Spirit to dwell in their hearts.

(ii.) In those old days travelling was not easy. The object of the command to go on pilgrimage was to induce people to take trouble and travel, instead of remaining at ease at home, in order that they might become experienced and well-informed.

(4) and (5) *Alms.* These are of two kinds, alms in general, and

the legal alms. This latter embraces the *khums*, or fifth given to Sayids, and the *zakāt*, of one-tenth given for the poor.

Answer.—Here, too, as in the case of prayer, the difference between the two religions is one of name. Christianity, just as much as Islām, recognizes the duty of succouring the poor and needy.

(6) *Religious war (jihād)* and slaughter of infidels.

Answer.—(i.) This is obviously not so deserving of praise as the other duties above mentioned, since it involves shedding the blood of our fellows-creatures.

(ii.) We Christians have a better 'jihād' viz. the warfare with ourselves—with our fallen and corrupt natures.

(iii.) The followers of Christ are bidden to love all men, even their enemies; it is partly on this account that His religion has spread abroad so widely in the world.

(7) and (8) *Commands and prohibitions*—commands to do what is good (*amr-i-bih ma'rūf*) and prohibitions against doing what is bad (*nahy-i-az munkar*).

Answer.—Both of these are found in the Christian religion.

(C) CHRISTIANITY AND ISLĀM IN CONFLICT AS RIVAL SYSTEMS.

'Christian Peoples:

'The hour is come to listen to us. The hatred of Islām against Europe is irreconcilable. After ages of efforts for a mutual understanding, we arrive at this decisive result: that we hold you in horror more than at any other epoch of our history.

'Understand, then, able men of Europe, a Christian, whatever otherwise may be his position, by the sole fact that he is a Christian, appears to us a blind man who has completely lost the dignity of man.'—*Le Missionnaire*, quoted in *Missionary Review of the World*, Mar., 1904, p. 284.

'We have not forgotten the Crusades. They continue to-day under forms a hundred times more accursed. You have combated and humiliated us by all the means at your disposal. You have at all the points of the globe caused the frontiers of Islām to recede, and by your diplomats as well as by your missionaries you seek constantly to break asunder that which remains of us.'—*Ib.*, p. 235.*

'With apparent friendliness,' wrote the Rev. Ruttonji Nowroji, 'a Muḥammadan said to me, "Oh, Padri Sāhib, you will be burnt with hell-fire, and I shall look on with great delight." "Will you?" said I. "Then, friend, let me tell you that I would be sorry if there was the slightest injury that you were to suffer from. See the vast difference between Christianity and Muḥammadanism! You are ready to rejoice at calamity, whereas a Christian will mourn over it. Which of the two religions is capable of softening the heart, and proceeds from God, Who is full of tender mercy and compassion?"'—*C.M.S. Report*, 1895-96, p. 243.†

* This and the previous extract are from the introduction to a proclamation by a Sheikh of Baghdād, a member of a 'Holy League of Muḥammadanism.' The first shows in its true colours the religious, and the second the political hostility of genuine Islām.

† Christians have not been guiltless of indulging similar anticipations.

'The strains of this Psalm [cix., 'the last of the Psalms of Imprecation'] are strains which have lingered even in the Christian Church, not softened by "the meekness and gentleness of Christ." Let any one read the closing

'I am more and more appalled,' wrote Mr. (afterwards Bishop) French, 'at the hostility and decided antipathy of Islām, falsely so called, to the Gospel, and the strong position they take up on a foundation so utterly weak and hollow.'—*Life*, I. p. 145.

The attitude of Islām towards Christianity to be considered in this and the following section is different from those already discussed. Islām has been seen ready to extend a sympathetic hand to Christianity, as not being essentially different from itself, or, if adopting a critical attitude, not going beyond the bounds of what may be called justifiable criticism, albeit it springs from ignorance and prejudice. In the present section we shall see indications of a spirit of hostility aroused by what is felt to be a conflict with a formidable rival. We shall find certain charges made against Christianity, some of which are decidedly curious, and we shall occasionally hear the boastful assertion of a proud confidence in Islām. Then in the following section the grave condemnation of Christianity as unfaithful and unblest will have to be confronted and confuted. After which, as forming an appropriate conclusion to the present branch of the subject, we must consider Christianity as a system placed upon its defence, and what answers suited to Muḥammadan minds may be given, when the Christian is asked 'a reason concerning the hope' that is in him (1 Pet. iii. 15).

(*a*) *Christian missionaries to Muḥammadans are accused of perverting people.*—A serious charge, indeed, if there is any ground for it!

Answer.—(i.) The same might be said of any teacher who tries to set before another the doctrines of his own religion.

(ii.) No personal advantage is derived by the missionary. (This is a very strong and suitable argument.)

If a man who invites people to embrace another religion derives some personal benefit from his proselytism, we are justified in saying he is a deceiver. Thus, if a prophet derives some worldly advantage from his prophetic office and mission, we shall naturally entertain and utter such opinions about him. But if, on the other hand, the prophet or preacher makes no gain and

passage of Tertullian's treatise, *De Spectaculis*, in which he does not hesitate to speak of the joy and exultation with which, at the day of judgment, he shall look upon the agonies of the damned, of the delight with which he shall see the kings of the earth, and the rulers who persecuted the Name of the Lord, melting in flames fiercer than those which they lighted for the Christians, philosophers burning with their disciples, tragic actors shrieking with real pain, the charioteer red upon his fiery wheel, and the wrestler tossing in the flames, till the fierce invective ends in a perfect shout of triumph as he thinks of the grandeur of the spectacle. Let any one, I say, read passages such as this, let him remember how long it was held a sacred duty by Christian Fathers and Bishops to persecute, and then let him pause before he passes a too sweeping judgment on "the fierce vindictiveness" of the Jew.'—Perowne, *The Book of Psalms*, Introd. to Ps. cix.

The difference is, that whereas the Muḥammadan utterance breathes the genuine spirit of Islām, the words of the Christian are utterly opposed to the mind and teaching of Christ.

secures no advantages for himself, we shall believe that his action proceeds from pure goodwill towards men and the desire to benefit them.

Apply this principle to the missionary. For what reason, or in hope of what advantage to himself, does he seek to persuade men? (*a*) *If it were for a temporal or pecuniary gain*, such as receiving money from the converts, it would be a fair accusation to call him a perverter. But if he obviously does it for God's sake, because he believes he is in possession of the true religion and is bound to proclaim it to others, in order to save his fellow-creatures from destruction, that is a very different matter. (*b*) And, again, *what difference will it make to the missionary himself* in God's sight, whether all the world become, let us say, Christian priests, or all become Muḥammadans? whether men choose the way of truth or of error? 'No burdened soul shall bear the burden of another,' says the Qur'ān (Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 164). The degree of favour and acceptance with God which he himself enjoys remains unaffected.

(iii.) Proofs are required for this assertion. Those who make it should be prepared to support it by proper auguments. All men, of course, are naturally pleased with their own religion in accordance with the verse of the Qur'ān (Sūr. 23 *Mu'minūn*, 55), 'But men have rent the affair of their religion into various sects: every part rejoiceth in that which they follow.' The teaching which the missionary brings is not his own, but that of Christ and His holy Apostles. He honestly believes it to be the truth of God's Word. If you consider the missionary—me or any other—not to be in possession of the truth but walking in paths of error, you ought to show us our dangerous position and prove to us our mistake.

(iv.) Duty to one's fellow-men requires from him who possesses the knowledge of what he believes to be the truth, that he should impart it to others. Sin is unhappily prevalent in the world, and as all men are sinners they are in danger of eternal punishment. The reason why missionaries take the trouble to come and speak to you is this, that in God's Word they find a remedy for this terrible disease of sin, which they believe to be most excellent—a remedy tried and proved and never known to fail if properly used, which they consider it their bounden duty to bring to your knowledge. You are free to accept it or not, as you please. No force is used to compel you. The missionary regards it only as his duty and privilege to lovingly tell you the good news of this precious remedy, and persuade you that you stand in need of it, and will be wise to accept it.

Illustrations.—(*a*) A benevolent Government does not wish to see its subjects decimated by plague. Hence it distributes medicine to the sick, and uses every possible means to stamp it out, although ignorant people may not appreciate the kind intentions of the Government, but may object and resist, and even kill some of its officers. In spite of this the duty of the Government remains the same.

(*b*) A European doctor thinks himself bound in honour to give to the world for the benefit of all any discovery he may make for relieving suffering or promoting the recovery of the sick, and not to keep it to himself for his own pecuniary advantage.

(*c*) The following is a still more elaborate illustration suggested by a Persian. A traveller going along a lonely road through a barren and uninhabited country, sees a ravenous wild beast crouching behind a rock, and ready to spring out upon him. He at once turns back and saves his life. As he is returning, he meets a man, an entire stranger to him, whom he has never so much as seen or spoken to before. The human nature within him is stirred to a fervour of compassion at the thought of the peril into which this unknown stranger is unwittingly running, and he entreats him to turn back. He is under a necessity to act in this way, and cannot do otherwise; and that, not for the sake of any advantage accruing to himself, but simply at the dictates of human fellow-feeling. He has saved his own life. What difference will it make to him whether the other goes on and perishes, or returns and escapes the danger? And yet he feels that if he does not earnestly warn him, blood-guiltiness will rest upon him. To this effect is the verse of the philosophers, which says, 'If I see that there is a blind man and a well—if I sit silent, it is a sin.' *

The fellow-feeling and fellowship which binds the human race together will not allow a man worthy of the name to remain unmoved and inactive in the presence of the danger or peril of his fellow-men; † constitution and natural instinct urge him to give warning of the risk that is being incurred, although the matter does not concern him in any shape or way. Man should not be inferior in this respect to the ant. Those wonderful little creatures tell each other of matters of common advantage or danger, and by their movements or their pauses, instead of words, convey the necessary information. Thus an ant which finds a lump of sugar will go and find another ant and bring him to it, and in like manner one ant will warn another of water or other dangers.

(v.) The teaching given is good. We can exercise our own judgment and common sense here, and see for ourselves what is

* Gar bīnam kih nābīnā-o chāh ast,
Agar khāmūsh bi-nishīnam, gunāh ast.—*Gulistān*, Bk. i.

I owe this and the following reference to the *Gulistān* to the Rev. H. G. Grey, late Principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford.

† As the poet Sa'dī says:

Mankind are members one of another,
Sprung by creation from one common origin:
When the course of the world afflicts one member,
The other members remain not at rest.
Banī ādam a'zā-ye ek-dīgar and,
Kih dar āfrīnish az ek jauhar and:
Chu 'uẓw-ī bih dard āwarad rūzigār,
Dīgar 'uẓwhā-rā na-mānad qarār.—*Gulistān*, Bk. i.

the nature of the teaching given. The missionary, on his part, too, is not one who cannot distinguish between right and wrong. He does not invite or exhort people to what is obviously bad, as lying, etc., but to that which is good. That the teaching given is good cannot be denied; and therefore it is impossible to say that the teachers are deceivers and lead people astray.

(vi.) The life of the teachers. A man is known by his deeds, as a tree is known by its fruit. If you see good deeds proceeding from them, you are right to regard their teaching, which produces such fruit in their own lives, as itself also of excellent character and not calculated to deceive men.

(vii.) The lives of the converts. The life and actions of those who accept the missionary's teaching are better than they were before. Now, if the teaching imparted were false, leading men into paths of error, the effect on those who embraced it would be of a correspondingly corrupt character; there would be seen in them a manifest deterioration and they would become worse men than before.

(viii.) The spread of the Christian faith. We draw the same conclusions from the success of the efforts of the missionaries to propagate the Christian religion. If they had been false deceivers, their craft and error would long ago have been detected, and people would soon have left them. But, on the contrary, the opposite of this is the fact.

(*b*) Muḥammadans sometimes say, that *many Christians really believe the truth of Islām, but through obstinate bigotry deny it.* A friend tells me he has actually heard a Muḥammadan say, that Christians have adopted all the commands of the Qur'ān, and yet through prejudice they will not become Muslims.

Answer.—This is simply incredible. If I, or any other Christian, really believe in Islām, my eternal happiness is at stake if I do not openly profess it; how then is it conceivable that I should deny it? Will a man be so foolish as to refuse the medicine on which his health and life depend?

(*c*) *Christianity is alleged to have defrauded Islām of its good things*, and appropriated them to itself. The foundation of this strange notion may perhaps be conjectured to be the allegation made against Christians (see (B), 2), that they have 'no commands.'

Thus, for instance, a Persian Prince remarked in conversation that we Christians had deprived them of many of their good things and taken them to Europe. When asked for an instance, he gave speaking the truth.

At first sight one might be excused for supposing that so curious a charge was not made seriously. But this did not seem to be the case; and the writer has since been told, on first-rate native authority, that the accusation is a well-known one, and that Muḥammadans assert that they themselves have forsaken these good things, such as truth-speaking, and that we Christians have stolen them from them.

Answer.—(i.) This imputation implies one of two things: (*a*) either that Christians had not these things in their own religion, and, therefore, wrongfully took them from Islām, which is the proper meaning of theft. But this is not the case, as we have this and other commands in Christianity. (*b*) Or else it implies that Islām has such commands and does not practise them, while Christians both possess them and obey them.

(ii.) There is *truth everywhere*, in a greater or less degree. But it is more manifest and more abundant where there is a suitable place and abode for it. Thus the sun shines everywhere, but more brightly on a white ground, or a polished surface. Again, remarkable growth and fertility argue natural adaptation. Truth-speaking and other virtues flourish so well in the congenial soil of Christianity that we must suppose them to be a native growth and not a foreign importation.

People everywhere know that truthfulness, justice, mercy, and the worship of God are good. But there is a great deal of difference among people, of whom some practise these things more than others, because of diversities of capacity and inclination.

(iii.) All the great religions of the world have such commands. The point of difference is in the amount of power they respectively give to obey them. Christ by His life in us and His indwelling Spirit gives to those who truly believe in Him the power to obey His commands, which is the distinguishing mark of Christianity as compared with other religions.

(iv.) Granting the assertion for the moment that Christians have derived these virtues from Islām, does that make Islām any poorer? Does lighting one candle from another put the first out?

(*d*) *A Muḥammadan will sometimes positively declare his firm belief in Islām or in the miracles by which it is supposed to be attested.*

Answer.—(i.) Your firm belief and positive assurance (*yaqīn*) is no proof of the truth of these things. *Yaqīn* is of two kinds, according to the facts (*muṭābiq-i-bā wāqi'ah*), or the reverse. The first constitutes knowledge (*'ilm*), the second ignorance (*jahl*), as if a man should say at noon, 'I am quite sure it is night.' He may fully believe what he says, but the only thing proved by his assertion is his ignorance—the offspring in this case of insanity or blindness.

(ii.) If certainty of belief is enough for you, it is in like manner sufficient for all others to whatever religion they may belong, who are no doubt equally with yourself convinced and positive of the truth of their respective religions.

(iii.) No doubt you believe this. I am equally convinced of the opposite. Both these 'yaqīns' are equally good or equally valueless. Till proof is brought forward, one 'yaqīn' is as good as another.

(D) CHRISTIANITY CONDEMNED.

1. **As unfaithful in practice to revealed truth.** —(1) *Islām and Judaism made by Muḥammadans the test of Christianity.*—Apart from the charges of corruption brought against the Christian Scriptures on the score of their contents (*vid.* Chap. I., C and D), other points of a more practical character are sometimes alleged by the Muḥammadan to support his contention, that Christianity can no longer be regarded as faithful to Christ's teaching. He observes certain differences in practice between the Christian on the one hand, and the Jew or himself, or both, on the other. Circumcision, for instance, binding on Jews and Muḥammadans alike, is comparatively seldom practised among Christians, and when performed is devoid of any religious significance. Alcoholic liquor is indulged in by Christians, contrary to the teaching of Islām, and, as Muḥammadans believe, of all the previous prophets. The command to observe the Sabbath was to be for all time (Ex. xxxi. 16) they say, yet Christians do not keep it (nor, for that matter, do Muḥammadans either). And again, it is alleged that Christians pay no heed to the prohibition against eating the flesh of strangled animals (Acts xv. 29).

Such objections would not be made unless Muḥammadans were labouring under a gross want of acquaintance with the true nature of Christianity and its relationship to Judaism and Islām. Unhappily, this state of ignorance is one which they have deliberately and advisedly chosen. They believe that Muḥammad, the last divinely commissioned prophet, now rightly claims the allegiance of all men, and the only exhibition of true religion on the face of the earth to-day is among the adherents of Islām. Jesus, they say, came for the Jews, and so Muḥammadans have no particular concern with Him and no obligation to study His teaching, because they have a later revelation through Muḥammad, the Seal of all the Prophets, who has told them all they need to know and observe. Hence the Muḥammadan, in spite of his vaunted acceptance of Jesus, does not usually read the Scriptures or know anything of the distinctive truths of His religion. His oft asserted belief in 124,000 prophets has not led him to study such of their supposed writings as exist, nor accept the chain of Biblical testimony leading up to, and culminating in Christ.

If the Christian religion, therefore, differs in any respect, either in doctrine or precept, from the Muḥammadan, the latter being regarded as the final revelation of divine truth, the Muslim is only too ready to consider every such divergence as a clear evidence of unfaithfulness or corruption; and every additional instance only serves to confirm the charge. If the Christian ventures to point to his New Testament, to show that he is loyal to what he finds written there, he lays himself open to the retort that the very fountain of truth, as he esteems it, has been

poisoned—that the Scriptures themselves have been corrupted, and are only a perverted version of the true Gospel which Jesus took up with Him into heaven.

In this way the question at issue is prejudged, and instead of saying, Let us hear what you have to say in support of your views and judge of their truth or falsity therefrom, the Muḥammadan virtually says, Your religion *cannot* be true because, contrary to its predecessor or successor, it contains or omits such and such things. His attitude towards everything that differs from his own belief and practice, if we except some few of the external ordinances of Islām, is that it must necessarily be wrong. In a word he begs the question.

(2) *General answers to such attacks.* Before examining the particular charges brought forward by Muḥammadans, we may first explain in general some of the ways in which these attacks may be met:—

(i.) The question may be referred to the Holy Books, in some such way as this—

(*a*) *The question really turns upon the genuineness of our Christian Scriptures.* These objections of yours are only allowable, if you can show that the practical corruptions you allege against the Christians are contrary to the teaching of the Injīl, or of the Injīl and the Taurāt. Now we confidently assert that these sacred Scriptures cannot be corrupted, because they have come from God. If you, however, aver the contrary and assert that they have been corrupted, we challenge you to prove it. And if you cannot do so, and if it is shown that we are obedient to their teaching, your case falls to the ground.

(*b*) *Your charges really rest upon supposed differences between the Injīl and the Qur'ān.* Here, again, we have the stronger case. For we both acknowledge the Injīl, while only Muḥammadans accept the Qur'ān; and your Qur'ān is a subject of debate and discussion between us and you. Our case, consequently, has the support of a sacred book to which we both subscribe, while your contentions rest upon the testimony of one which, as Christians, we do not accept. Any discrepancy, therefore, between the two throws more doubt on the Qur'ān than on the Gospel.

(ii.) If we have broken and are breaking the commandments of the true religion, on whom do you lay the blame, on Jesus or on us? Have we broken them, or did Jesus do so? There can be no third alternative.

(*a*) *If it had been we* who set at naught these ordinances, you might rightly make this a ground of objection. Take the observance of the Sabbath as an instance. When you turn to the Gospel narrative, you find that it was not the followers of Jesus but Jesus Himself who was accused by the Jews of breaking the Sabbath day (*e.g.* St. John v. 10, 11, 18). Further, with reference to the other points on which you lay so much stress, if these had been necessary, definite commands would have been given us with

reference to them, and if we had not obeyed them after receiving them, we should have been guilty of disobedience to God's Law. But that they are not of supreme importance, and therefore have not been given, is shown by the fact that when Jesus was asked on one occasion how eternal life might be obtained (St. Matt. xix. 16) He did not lay down commandments about such things as these, but inculcated the precepts of the moral law (vers. 18, 19) and practical charity (ver. 21), which we, therefore, see are of the essence of the Gospel.

(*b*) *But if it was not we, but Jesus Who broke these commands*, it is evident that no objection can be raised against Him, Who was so great a prophet, as we both allow—the Word of God and a Spirit from Him. In these, as in all other matters, we must follow His teaching without question or dispute, and obey His commandments. *Thus*, and thus only shall we be His true disciples, and through the knowledge of the truth escape the bondage of error (St. John viii. 31, 32, a very pertinent text for Muḥammadans, who, like 'those Jews which had believed Him,' profess to accept Jesus, though only as a prophet).

(iii.) These points to which you take exception are only of secondary, not of primary importance. These commands belong to the particular ordinances (*juzwīyāt*), not to the fundamental precepts (*uṣūl-i-aḥkām*) of religion. (This is a commonly received opinion, which the Muḥammadan will not venture to question, though he may sometimes find it convenient to ignore it, when making such attacks on Christianity as we are now considering.)

The prophet's work has to do with the essential principles of religion, *e.g.* the true knowledge of God, and obedience to Him, and not primarily with particular ordinances, such as those respecting circumcision, divorce, etc. (Cp. St. Luke xii. 14, 'Who made me a judge or a divider over you?') Occasionally, however, as the needs of the time required, they laid down suitable regulations for such matters as these also (*e.g.* St. Matt. xix. 8, 'Moses . . . suffered you . . . but from the beginning it hath not been so').

When Jesus said, 'one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished' (St. Matt. v. 18), He was referring to the great unalterable moral law, enshrined in the Ten Commandments of Moses, which are an essential part of the true religion. These cannot, and never will be altered in the least degree. We cannot conceive of a true Heaven-sent prophet coming and bidding men to commit murder or adultery, or to covet the property of others. But the secondary and particular commands of religion may be altered.* And we may, or may not be able to understand the reason for the change.

* Thus it is said in the Traditions that the Apostles went through Palestine preaching, 'and, according to the new revelation, permitting the eating of many things which had been prohibited to the sons of Israel.'—Weil, *Legends*, p. 229.

Illustrations.—(1) A doctor says, 'Do not take poison.' But afterwards we see that he prescribes small doses of it in treating certain diseased conditions. Has he then acted contrary to his own dictum? No! because when he laid down the law that poison was not to be taken, he was giving a general direction (*ḥukm-i-kulli*), and every general rule admits of exception in particular cases. If, on the contrary, he were to say, 'Take poison,' he would stultify himself, through reversing his original rule by the introduction of another in direct opposition to it. (2) The remedies of doctors may be different, and yet directed to the same end and suitable to the case.

(iv.) Objections such as these might be raised, not only with reference to these few points, but with regard to the non-observance by Christians of the whole of the ceremonial Law of Moses. And here we have the advantage of being able to refer direct to the teaching of Jesus Himself on this very point. He tells us expressly that He 'came not to destroy, but to fulfil' (St. Matt. v. 17). He came not to break and abolish these commands, but to perfect them by filling in the picture of which they are but the rough sketch, by unveiling the substance of which they are only the shadow, and by revealing, through His own teaching and that of the inspired writers of the New Testament, the truths themselves of which those were but outlines and fore-shadowings. The discovery of a better road naturally and inevitably results in the abandonment of the worse. The man who gives me a golden coin for my silver one has not cheated, but enriched me.

Illustrations.—In former times people used to boil quinine bark, or that of the willow, and give the decoction to patients suffering from fever. Now they commonly use the various pharmaceutical preparations of quinine, because of their acknowledged superiority. A similar illustration may be drawn from the use of tallow and composite candles, and naphtha. Both the latter are superior to the former, and being consequently preferred to it have very largely taken its place.

Bishop Wordsworth thus explains the 'fulfilling' of St. Matt. v. 17—

> Christ *fulfilled* the Law and the Prophets, by obedience, by accomplishment of types, ceremonies, rites, and prophecies, and by explaining, spiritualizing, elevating, enlarging, and perfecting the moral law, by writing it on the *heart*, and by giving *grace* to obey it, as well as an example of obedience; by taking away its curse; and by the doctrine of free justification by faith in Himself, which the Law prefigured and anticipated, but could not give. . . . He fulfilled the Law, as a painter fills up a cartoon. (Theophyl.)

(3) We must now proceed to the consideration of particular points.

§ 1. *The Sabbath.*—The text commonly adduced by Muḥammadans to prove that Christians are in error in not observing the

Sabbath is Ex. xxxi. 16, 'for a perpetual covenant.' We may meet the attack in the following ways:—

(i.) *The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath* (St. Mark ii. 28; St. Luke vi. 5), as He Himself says. He has therefore the right in reference to it to order or to forbid. Cannot the owner of a thing do what he likes with his own? Who shall forbid the owner of this room breaking the windows, if he is so minded? (This is a strong and forcible answer.) In another form it may be put as follows, provided that the ground has been so prepared, that the use of the title, Son of God, will not raise immediate objection. Thus: 'Not only does Christ Himself declare that He is Lord of the Sabbath; but in virtue of His being Son of God (*Ibnu'llāh*), He is not only Lord of that, but of everything else, and therefore has absolute right to command or refrain from commanding.' This line of argument is equally applicable to the cases of circumcision and eating the flesh of strangled animals.

(ii.) *This is one of the external ceremonial commandments;* and there is no objection to the abolition of one of these, if another be substituted in its place. There is no reasonable ground for exception to be taken, because the ordinance of keeping holy one day in seven has been transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week—the observance of Sunday substituted for that of the Sabbath. 'We celebrate with joy the eighth day—that is the first day of the week—on which Jesus rose from the dead' (*Ep. of Barnabas*).*

'The Christian day is to be subrogated into the place of the Jews' day: the Resurrection of Christ and the redemption of man was a greater blessing than to create him' (Jeremy Taylor).

(iii.) *Is the command in Ex. xxxi.* 16 *of* (a) *special or of* (b) *universal application?*

(*a*) If the former, then it applies to the Jews, and to none but them.

(*b*) If the latter, why do Muḥammadans not observe it? And why did Muḥammad change a 'perpetual' commandment of God? (But see Sūr. 16, *Naḥl*, 125, 'The Sabbath was only appointed unto those who differed with their prophet concerning it,' and Sale's note, where the verse is explained to mean, that the strict observance of the Sabbath was enjoined upon the Jews, because they refused to keep Friday as commanded by Moses—of all of which, it need scarcely be pointed out, there is not a trace in the Pentateuch.)

§ 2. *Circumcision.*—The opinions of Muḥammadans as to the origin of circumcision will enable us the better to understand the importance they attach to it, even for Christians. The rite is commonly supposed to date from the time of Abraham. According to some Muḥammadan doctors, Adam, Moses, Solomon, Jesus and Muḥammad were among the seventeen prophets who were born

* Quoted by Dean Spence in his Sermon on 'The Sabbath' in *Voices and Silences.*

circumcised.* In the *Gospel of Barnabas* † a different account of the origin of circumcision is put into the mouth of Jesus. He there speaks in the strongest terms of its necessity, and attributes the practice to Adam, who was instructed by Gabriel to fulfil in this manner the oath he had sworn that he would cut his flesh in atonement for his fall. In the same way, therefore, that all mankind inherit Adam's sinful nature, they are one and all supposed to be involved by reason of his oath in the obligation to receive the rite of circumcision.

The following is an example of the manner in which the question may be raised. A colporteur, itinerating in Persia, was hospitably received and housed in a certain village by the owner of the place, who happened to be there at the time. 'In the evening,' writes the colporteur, 'a large crowd gathered, and we had long public discussions and arguments about religion. For instance, they said that Christians ought to be circumcised, as Christ Himself was.' ‡

Here it may be sufficient to answer, as in the preceding case, that circumcision is one of the external ordinances, and that if another be substituted for it, there is no ground for objection to its abolition. In the present case, circumcision was the initiatory rite for admission into the Jewish Church, just as baptism is for the Christian. On the authority of Christ, and by His command, the latter has rightly taken the place of the former.

If it appears desirable to give a fuller answer, it may be pointed out (i.) That *Christ has nowhere commanded* us to practise the rite of circumcision;

(ii.) That the Apostles and Elders of the Christian Church decided that it was *not necessary for Gentile converts* to the Christian faith (Acts xv. 1, 19, 20);

(iii.) That it was the *sign and seal of the Old Covenant:* Gen. xvii. 10 (cp. Acts vii. 8; Rom. iv. 11); Lev. xii. 3 (cp. St. John vii. 22).

In its place baptism is now the appointed sign of the New Covenant, which God has made with mankind through Christ: St. Matt. xxviii. 19; St. Mark xvi. 16; cp. Acts ii. 38; xxii. 16. The former sign is worthless for those who have by baptism accepted the later covenant with God through Christ: Gal. v. 2, 6; vi. 15.

§ 3. *Wine.*§ The use of wine, like the other points discussed, may be treated as one of the non-essentials of true religion, or as depending on the genuineness and freedom from corruption of

* Hughes, *Dict. of Islām, s.v.* 'Circumcision.'

† The following account is taken from the Oxford edition, of which by the courtesy of Canon Ragg and the authorities of the Clarendon Press I have been permitted to read some of the proofs.

‡ B. & F. Bible Society's *Report*, 1902, p. 198.

§ Cp. Ch. I., E, 3, the use of wine by the prophets, which is sometimes pointed to by the Muḥammadan as a proof of the corruption of the Scriptures.

the Scriptures. See (2) (i.) (*a*). Or the following lines of argument may be used:—

(i.) That *wine has not always been unlawful and forbidden*, as Muḥammadans suppose, is clear from—

(*a*) The Old and New Testaments, where its use is often mentioned.

(*b*) Muḥammadan tradition. 'Several stories have been told as the occasion of Muḥammad's prohibiting the drinking of wine,' says Sale in his *Preliminary Discourse*. He quotes one of these in his note on Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 42, which tells how a 'shameful blunder' was made by a Muslim when reciting a passage from the Qur'ān, while under the influence of drink. Another instance is quoted in Hughes' *Dictionary of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Wine.' Muḥammad, it is said, on one occasion blessed wine after observing its cheering, convivial effects upon the company at a marriage feast. But on visiting the house next day, 'he beheld another face of things, as gore-blood on the ground, a hand cut off, an arm, foot, and other limbs dismembered,' which were the results of the maddening effect of the liquor. Accordingly, 'he turned his former blessing into a curse, and forbade wine ever after to all his disciples.' Yet another explanation is given in the following verse of 'Umar Khayyām:—

> A certain Arab hamstrung Ṣāliḥ's she-camel:
> Our prophet made wine unlawful for him.*

(*c*) The Qur'ān. Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 218, 'They will ask thee concerning wine.' The question would not have been raised if wine had always been unlawful.

(ii.) *If wine had originally been unlawful* in the Jewish and Christian religions, and afterwards by a common consent made lawful, it is impossible but that some at least would have been found, who would still have declared it to be unlawful.

(iii.) *In this matter we Christians regard the teaching of the Qur'ān as erroneous*, because contrary to that of the previous Scriptures.

If desired to press the attack further, it may be added:—Similarly erroneous, too, is the teaching of the Qur'ān about pardon and repentance. See Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 161; 4 *Nisā'*, 15; 25 *Furqān*, 71. It is quite contrary to the teaching of the Gospel to imagine that merely saying 'I repent,' or the shedding of a few tears will procure pardon. Such an easy way of obtaining forgiveness for sin lessens the fear of God and hell and the sense of the guilt of sin, and thus actually becomes a cause and encouragement thereto. We Christians make a similar objection to the command that unbelievers should be killed. The case of Moses and the Israelites cannot be made to countenance or extenuate this: for the inhabitants of Palestine were slain for their iniquities (Gen. xv. 16, 'the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet

* Shakhṣi zi 'Arab nāqah-i-Ṣāliḥ pai kard:
Paighambar-i-mā ḥarām mai bar wai kard.

full'; Deut. ix. 5, 6, 'Not for thy righteousness . . . but for the wickedness of these nations . . .'). But the proper way of dealing with unbelievers is by producing conviction in order to bring them to a better mind. The results of such erroneous teaching are manifest in what you Muḥammadans yourselves see and deplore in your midst—bad deeds, lying, hypocrisy, want of progress, cruelty, robbery and oppression.

(iv.) *There is no proof to be derived from the Qur'ān*, that the absence in the Injīl of any prohibition against drinking wine constitutes a defect therein.

(v.) *The New Testament condemns the drunkard even more strongly than the Qur'ān does.* The Gospel teaching condemns all excess of whatever kind, and in the most emphatic terms excludes drunkards from heaven (1 Cor. vi. 10). See there, in what miserable company of reprobates and sinners they find themselves included. With this contrast the places in the Qur'ān where wine is mentioned, and the sentence of the Law of Islām upon drunkards:

(*a*) 'O true believers, come not to prayers when ye are drunk, until ye understand what ye say' (Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 42).

(*b*) Wine is condemned as very sinful in Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 218, 'In both (wine and lots) there is great sin, and *also some* things of use unto men; but their sinfulness is greater than their use.'

(*c*) The condemnation of wine is still stronger in Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 92, 93, 'O true believers, surely wine, and lots and images, and divining arrows *are* an abomination of the work of Satan; therefore avoid them that ye may prosper. Satan seeketh to sow dissension and hatred among you by means of wine and lots, and to divert you from remembering God and from prayer: will ye not therefore abstain *from them?*'

Abū Ḥanīfah says that the prohibition against drinking wine is founded on the following precept of Muḥammad: 'Whoever drinks wine, let him suffer correction by scourging as often as he drinks thereof.' * According to the Law of Islām the extreme punishment for wine-drinking or drunkenness, between which no distinction is made, is only eighty lashes for a free man and forty for a slave.†—The Gospel came to perfect the Jews' religion and all other religions, and contains commands superior to those of every other religion.

(vi.) We admit that there are many Europeans, especially among the poorer classes in large cities, who in defiance of the precepts of the Christian religion drink to excess. But there are also many who never touch intoxicating liquors at all, and band themselves together in societies, the members of which both abstain themselves and do all they can to encourage others to do the same. In Muḥammad's time some even of the most respectable

* Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Wine.'
† *Id.*, *ib.*, *s.v.* 'Drunkenness.'

of the pagan Arabs abstained totally from wine because of its injurious effects, 'or, more especially, from the fear of being led by it into the commission of foolish and degrading actions.'* Most Europeans who use wine do so in moderation. Unhappily, Muḥammadans, if they indulge in it, as a rule only drink in order to bring about a state of intoxication, and appreciate wine or spirits just in proportion to their inebriating effects. For such as these, absolute prohibition is the only remedy, which nevertheless many transgress.

§ 4. *Strangled Animals.*—A pupil of the writer's in Shīrāz told him that it is commonly supposed that Christians eat the flesh of strangled animals, though forbidden to do so. This prohibition (Acts xv. 20), it may be explained, was given to the Gentile converts as a concession to Jewish feelings. The eating of the flesh of strangled animals, however, is not prohibited in so many words in the Pentateuch. But the Jews were strictly forbidden both from the time of Noah (Gen. ix. 4) and in the Law of Moses (*e.g.* Lev. xvii. 10) to eat blood. In the latter place (vers. 14 and 11) the reason is given, viz. that the blood is the life, and the blood is devoted to God to make atonement on the altar. What then is the connexion between blood and the flesh of an animal that has been strangled? In the case of a strangled animal 'the blood is not allowed to issue from it when killed,'† and is therefore consumed when the flesh is eaten. The same commentator appositely quotes from Hooker (*Ser.* iii. p. 619) the distinction he draws between *positive* and *natural* laws. The former, such as the 'Church Constitutions concerning *strangled* and *blood*,' are of limited force and temporary application. But as regards the latter, 'there is no *person* whom, nor *time* wherein, a law *natural* doth *not* bind.'

If this explanation does not satisfy, the following considerations may be urged:—

(i.) As Christians, *we have to do with Jesus*, and obey Him in all that He commands us to observe. Our chief concern is with the Prophet Himself, and not in the first instance with His commands. The greater prophets came with books and changed the externals of religion. And if we accept the prophet, it follows as a matter of course that we are under an obligation to receive his teaching. Either you accept Jesus, or you do not. If you do not, you are unbelievers; and if you do, of course you accept His teaching and commands.

(ii.) In this particular matter, the slaughter of animals for food, *we have no special commands from Jesus*, and therefore regard it as our duty to kill animals for food in the most humane way. They, too, are God's creatures, and it is a sin to treat them cruelly. When required for food they should be killed in such a way as to

* *Lane's Arabian Nights*, vol. i. pp. 217, 218, quoted by Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Wine.'

† Bp. Wordsworth on Acts xv. 20.

secure for them as easy and painless a death as possible. Apart from this, your Muḥammadan regulations for the slaughter of animals have no virtue in God's sight.

2. **As, through its unfaithfulness, lacking the promised signs of the divine favour and blessing.**—*The grounds on which the accusation rests.* This contention is usually supported by a reference to (*a*) St. Mark xvi. 17, 18, or to (*b*) St. John xiv. 12, and the Christian is asked to point to the miraculous 'signs', or the 'greater works' promised, if his religion be true and faithful to the divine original. A verse of Ḥāfiẓ is sometimes quoted to give point to the criticism:

> Rūḥu'l quddus ar bāz madad farmāyad,
> Dīgarān ham bikunand āncheh Masīḥā mīkard.

(If the Holy Spirit again grant His aid, others, too, may do what Christ did.) This verse primarily has no special reference to Christians. It is a favourite one with Ṣūfīs, who hold that a man may rise to any degree of spiritual distinction and insight by means of mortification and austerities. But though not specially applicable to Christians, it is, however, used against them in Persia at all events and especially by the Bābīs.

The best way of meeting this controversial use of the texts above mentioned we have now to consider, and shall deal with them separately, and then (*c*) with the demand sometimes made for a miracle to be wrought.

(*a*) *St. Mark xvi.* 17, 18.—(i.) Undoubtedly the best answer to the charge made on the strength of these verses is the natural explanation of the passage according to its literal and obvious meaning. The words have a special, not a universal application. The promise received a definite fulfilment. The signs foretold really and truly did 'follow' them that believed (ver. 17). It is not asserted or implied that the same would always hold true of all Christians everywhere. We find evidence of this literal fulfilment of Christ's promise given in the last verse of this chapter of St. Mark, 'the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed,' in the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles, in the Epistles, and in the writings of the early Fathers of the Church.

The following references taken from Maclear's Commentary, *in loc.*,* may here be given for the sake of convenience. *Casting out devils:* Acts viii. 7; xvi. 18; xix. 15, 16; *Speaking with new tongues:* Pentecost; Acts x. 46; xix. 6; 1 Cor. xii. 10; *Taking up serpents:* Acts xxviii. 5 (cp. St. Luke x. 17–20, the miraculous powers conferred on the Seventy); *Drinking deadly things:* 'As is related of St. John that he drank the cup of hemlock which was intended to cause his death, and suffered no harm from it. . . . (Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.*, III. 39)'; *Healing the sick:* Acts iii. 7; xxviii. 8. '"Gifts of healing" are mentioned both by this last

* Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges.

Apostle [Paul] (1 Cor. xii. 9) and by St. James (v. 14, 15) as remaining in the Church.'

For the patristic evidence the following may be quoted. 'Among other stories he [Papias in *An Exposition of Oracles of the Lord*] related, apparently on the authority of these daughters of Philip [the Apostle], how a certain dead man had been restored to life in his own day, and how Justus Barsabas, who is mentioned in the Acts, had drunk a deadly poison and miraculously escaped from any evil effects.'* And in a note Bishop Lightfoot adds that 'It will be remembered that even Irenaeus mentions similar miracles as occurring in his own age (*Haer.*, ii. 32. 4).' Wordsworth, on St. Mark xvi. 17, writes, 'On the continuation of these miraculous gifts to the Christians of the second century, see *Tertullian*, de Spectaculis, 26, and ad Scapulam, c. 2, "daemonas de hominibus expellimus, sicut plurimis notum est," and *Irenaeus*, v. 6.'

(ii.) These miraculous powers were only granted for a certain time and for a special purpose, and only continued until the Christian religion was firmly established. If the Lord Jesus Christ had thought good, He could easily have ordained that these miraculous powers should remain permanently in force until His second coming. But this was not necessary and He did not do so. The permanence of these miraculous gifts is nowhere asserted. But in contrast with love the temporary nature and character of the gifts of prophecy and tongues is declared in 1 Cor. xiii. 8: 'shall be done away . . . shall cease.' The object for which the display of these supernatural powers was needed, was the establishment of the Christian Church. As soon as the edifice rested on a secure foundation, there was no further necessity for them. And so they have ceased for many centuries, and we do not need them to-day, neither do we possess them.

'Haec necessaria *in exordio Ecclesiae* fuerunt. Ut enim fides cresceret, miraculis fuerat nutrienda: quia et nos cùm arbusta plantamus, tamdiu eis aquam infundimus, quousque ea in terrâ jam convaluisse videamus; et si semel radicem fixerint, in rigando cessamus. Hinc est enim quod Paulus dicit: *Linguae in signum sunt, non fidelibus, sed infidelibus* (1 Cor. xiv. 22).' †

A similar criticism might be made by the Christian as regards the supposed miracles of the successors of Muḥammad. But to this the Muḥammadan would probably reply that outward and visible miracles have *not* ceased in Islām, as they are admitted to have done among Christians, and he might point to the miracles believed to be wrought at sacred shrines as well as by living saints.

To this again the following answer may be given. The only proof of these reported miracles is the assertion of Muḥammadans.

* Lightfoot's *Colossians*, Introduction, p. 47.
† Wordsworth on Mark xvi. 17, quoting *Greg. M.* in Ev. hom. xxix.

No confidence can be placed in them. If the deceased saint really works such wonderful miracles as are attributed to him, why does he not punish those who go to his shrine and drink wine there, or the guardians who steal the offerings made? (For further discussion of this point, see Chap. X., 2, 'Miracles of Saints.')

(iii.) The passage is capable of a different explanation. The promised signs may be interpreted in a metaphorical manner, and understood in a spiritual sense. The scope of the promise will then be unlimited and universal, instead of special and circumscribed as in the literal explanation given above.

This interpretation was suggested by a Persian convert. According to his view, the casting out of devils denotes the ejection of an evil spirit of mind, love of the world, etc., from those who believe; speaking with new tongues will be the result of the new spiritual instruction imparted; to take up serpents means preventing wicked persons from injuring others, by making them believers in Christ; to drink any deadly thing refers to the poison of sin, which will not hurt those who trust in their Saviour; to lay hands on the sick, etc., must be explained as referring to the fatal malady of sin, which will be remedied by faith in Jesus.

That this is no novel interpretation will appear from the extract from *Greg. M.* in Ev. hom. xxix., given by Wordsworth, *in loc.* It is worth quoting here for its intrinsic value, and for comparison with the similar explanation just given.

Sancta quippe Ecclesia quotidie *spiritaliter* facit quod tunc per Apostolos *corporaliter* faciebat. Nam sacerdotes ejus cùm per exorcismi gratiam manum credentibus imponunt, et habitare malignos spiritus in eorum mente contradicunt, quid aliud faciunt, nisi *daemonia ejiciunt!* Et fideles quique qui jam vitae veteris secularia verba dereliquunt, sancta autem mysteria insonant, Conditoris sui laudes et potentiam, quantùm praevalent, narrant, quid aliud faciunt, nisi *novis linguis loquuntur!* Qui jam bonis suis exhortationibus malitiam de alienis cordibus auferunt, *serpentes tollunt.* Et dum pestiferas suasiones audiunt, sed tamen ad operationem pravam minimè retrahuntur, *mortiferum quidem est quod bibunt, sed non eis nocebit.* Qui quoties proximos suos in bono opere infirmari conspiciunt, dum eis totâ virtute concurrunt, et exemplo suae operationis illorum vitam roborant qui in propriâ actione titubant, quid aliud faciunt, nisi *super aegros manus imponunt, ut bene habeant.* Quae nimirum miracula tantò majora sunt quantò spiritalia; tantò majora sunt, quantò per haec non corpora, sed *animae suscitantur*: haec itaque signa, fratres carissimi, auctore Deo, si vultis, vos facitis. Ex illis enim exterioribus signis obtineri vita ab haec operantibus non valet. Nam corporalia illa miracula ostendunt aliquando sanctitatem, non autem faciunt; haec verò spiritalia, quae aguntur in mente, virtutem vitae non ostendunt, sed faciunt.

(*b*) *St. John xiv.* 12.—When this text is brought forward, and the Christian is asked to point to the 'greater works' which Christ promised His followers should perform, it must be pointed out that this interpretation, which would make the 'greater works'

mentioned mean greater miracles than those of Christ, is incorrect, and we cannot allow it, nor admit the Muḥammadan's right to interpret our Scriptures as he will. For him to act in this way would be like a man claiming to know what I have in my pocket better than I do myself. In a word, as the criticism here made springs from a misunderstanding, so the answer will depend upon correct interpretation. Two reasons may be given for the comparatively greater character of the works which Christ's disciples were told that they should perform :—

(i.) *Wider spiritual effects.* The disciples' works are called greater in comparison with those of their Master 'as including the wider spiritual effects of their preaching which followed after Pentecost.' Augustine, commenting on the passage, says, 'Evangelizantibus discipulis . . . gentes etiam crediderunt; haec sunt sine dubitatione majora.' *

Here it is also desirable to point out the reason and the source of this increased power, 'because I go unto the Father.' 'The elevation of Christ in His humanity,' says the same commentator, 'to the right hand of God carries with it the pledge of the greater works promised . . . His going increases their power (xvi. 7; comp. Eph. iv. 8 ff.; Phil. iv. 13).'

(ii.) *The absence of external aids.* The disciples' works, secondly, are called 'greater,' as destined to be performed after the withdrawal of their Master's visible presence, and in the absence of miracles after the first age of the Church. The text has no reference to the performance of miracles; for could there be any others greater than those of Jesus? What it does refer to is the work of Jesus in bringing people into the way of truth. This was difficult enough in the time of Jesus, although He possessed the power of working miracles (St. John xiv. 11, 'or else believe me for the very works' sake'). But in later times to bring believers into the fold without the help of Christ's visible presence or miraculous signs is a greater work.

Or the argument may be put rather differently, thus. In Jesus' time, before His religion had taken firm root, miracles were presented to the eye; later ages beheld the fruits of Christ's teaching, indeed, in the spectacle of an established religion, but without the aid to faith afforded by wonderful manifestations of supernatural power. The evidential force of miracles actually witnessed is greater and more striking than the mere fact of the existence of a religious system. Hence belief in that which is attested by actual visible miracles is easier than the belief which comes through contemplating the result of miracles in the existence of a settled religion. Of this latter nature is the faith of those who without the assistance of miracles have in later ages believed the words of Christ's disciples; and it is a greater work than the conversion of those before whose eyes the miracles of Christ were performed. In a word, faith without sight, belief

* Westcott, *in loc.*

without beholding actual miracles is a greater thing than belief through that which is actually seen and present. A special blessing is pronounced on those who, unlike Thomas, 'have not seen, and yet have believed' (St. John xx. 29).

(*c*) *Miracles demanded.*—Sometimes the Christian is challenged to perform a miracle. (i.) The reply may be of the following nature. You Muḥammadans, like ourselves, believe that the prophets, and among them Jesus, worked miracles. But it is not necessary that all their followers should do so. Some of the Muḥammadan saints and holy men, and the Imāms of the Shī'ahs, are credited with the performance of occasional miracles (*karāmāt*). Whether they are true or not, it is difficult for us who have never seen them to say. And similarly some Christians have performed miracles, as is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.

(ii.) Leupolt's way of dealing with the demand. The demand for a miracle was at one time frequently made from Leupolt. His opponent does not seem to have been a Muḥammadan but a Hindū. But as the case is one of a class which might arise anywhere, the story may be given at some length. Both Leupolt's treatment of the challenger, and his subsequent reflections upon the best way of meeting the challenge are worthy of consideration. The full account is given in his *Recollections*, pp. 97–100.

> One man's favourite argument was to call upon us, before a crowd of people, to perform a miracle. One day I was much annoyed by him. He constantly called upon me to perform a miracle. 'Show a miracle! Show a miracle!' and having so said, he pushed a blind man forward, and bawled out, 'Here, here is an object for you to operate upon!' I remained quiet. He seized my book, pulled my coat, and used the worst possible language towards me. After he had gone on for some time longer, I called out, 'I have just performed a prodigious miracle!' 'What, what,' he cried, 'what can you do, fool?' 'The miracle,' I said, 'which I have just performed is, that I have listened to your reviling, and borne your shameful conduct, without becoming angry.'

This little story happily does not stop at the most interesting point; but has a proper sequel:

> 'True,' the multitude cried out; and, turning to the man, they said, 'Now, no more of such conduct.'

Leupolt subsequently worked up the arguments that seemed to him most suitable for such an encounter. It may perhaps be admitted, that they are too elaborate, that they take the captious critic too seriously, and that few listeners would have the patience, if the intelligence, to follow all of them. They may thus be summarized. It is not stated that *all* true Christians must perform miracles; the Word of God contains other similar *general statements*; as, 'Ye shall be hated of all men' (St. Matt. x. 22). If 'these signs following' are the only mark of a true Christian, *women and children* will be excluded from heaven; for we never read of their performing miracles. Many of *the first Christians*,

called *saints*, cannot enter into heaven, because they were unable to raise Tabitha from the dead, and had to send for St. Peter (Acts ix. 36–42). The *Apostles themselves*, judged by this test, were not true Christians, because they were not always able to perform miracles; 2 Tim. iv. 20, Trophimus left sick at Miletus; Ph. ii. 27, Epaphroditus sick unto death. [We may add St. Matt. xvii. 14–20, the cure of the epileptic boy.] Many will perform miracles, and yet be *no true Christians*, St. Matt. vii. 22, 23. Christ Himself has given us *the sign of a true Christian*, and that is love, St. John xiii. 35. Leupolt says further:

> I might have added, that it never was the will of God that all should perform miracles, for His Church is His body; but a body has many members, and not every member the same functions; but every one that which the Lord has appointed. Thus 'God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings,' etc. Thus I am a teacher, and not a performer of miracles.

(E) CHRISTIANITY ON ITS DEFENCE.

1. Perhaps the missionary seldom more strongly feels the responsibility of his position, and the need of answering wisely and faithfully, than when he is asked for a reason for his faith: 'Why are you a Christian?' or 'Why are you not a Muḥammadan?' Such a question imperatively demands a satisfactory answer. And the answer should depend on what appears to be the frame of mind of the questioner, bigoted and hostile, or truth-loving and sincere.

(i.) Suppose our inquirer to be obviously unfriendly, it will be well to let him see that we are determined not to be placed in a wrong position through his question, by accepting the burden of proving the truth of Christianity. If we unwisely accept the question in this sense and begin to produce our proofs, it is more than likely that the other side will either refuse them or declare that these are the very arguments they themselves use to prove the mission of their own prophet. We shall thus appear in the awkward position of being unable to establish our point.

With such an opponent, a better course would be as follows: 'Do you accept Jesus or not?' (The reply, of course, will be in the affirmative.) 'We Christians do so, too. We believe in the one prophet (*i.e.* Jesus), and you in two (*i.e.* Jesus and Muḥammad). We cannot accept Muḥammad until we are convinced by satisfactory proofs.' This argument rests upon the idea that the religion of Jesus was true for that age and until it was superseded, as the Muḥammadan supposes, by a later revelation. Those who believe in the latter must prove their case before they can expect the adherents of the Christian religion to forsake their own and embrace another.

Or thus: You believe in Jesus, and therefore in the religion of

Jesus. You believe in my religion as well as your own. You acknowledge the truth of the two religions, and I that of one only. If you say that mine is null and void, you must prove it. The burden of proof rests with you. 'Islām is only strong when it is not put on the defensive.' *

The Christian here holds a strong position, which he must take care to maintain. He must not allow himself to be talked down, or give his opponent the opportunity to play a piece of argumentative trickery upon him, and inveigle him into attempting to prove what every Muḥammadan admits, whereby he will find himself placed in a manifestly weak and disadvantageous position. This will afford perhaps an interesting spectacle to any sympathizers with the opposite side who may happen to be present; but will go far to discredit anything further the missionary may wish to say.

(ii.) There are, however, proper occasions for judiciously bringing forward the reasons for our Christian faith (1 Peter iii. 15), and we must be ready and prepared to use them. To this end it is desirable to have clear and definite reasons for being a Christian, that have been carefully thought out beforehand and are available at any time and at a moment's notice, and which are calculated to favourably commend the religion of Christ to our Muḥammadan brother. Such a suitable occasion for setting forth the grounds of our Christian belief would arise, when we are asked 'a reason concerning the hope' that is in us by one who appears to be dissatisfied with his own religion and seeking something better, and really desirous of knowing what, and why the Christian believes. Or, when the missionary has the tables turned against him, and is himself urged to accept Islām. For instance: 'Two days ago,' wrote Bishop French from Muscat, 'a large party of Arabs (ladies and gentlemen, the former standing, the latter sitting) made almost a dead set at me to induce me to turn Muḥammadan.' † Or, in the face of taunts which Muḥammadans make sometimes, that their opponents obstinately refuse to embrace Islām, though the truth of their own faith is challenged and its ungroundedness exposed. Or, once again, in circumstances such as the following, where a missionary was the guest, for the time being, of an Afghan chief, and, the question of religion being to the fore, a compact was made between him and the village Mullā, obviously not too seriously or to be pressed too far, that whichever was worsted in the discussion about to be held as to the truth of their respective religions, should embrace that of the other.

2. *Reasons for being a Christian.* This may be stated either negatively—because there is no sure and certain means of obtaining salvation in Islām; or positively—because of what the Christian religion does for me, because it can help me in my need, and give me a sure ground and hope of present and future

* Dr. S. M. Zwemer, *Missy. Rev. of the World*, p. 721, October, 1904.
† *Life*, Vol. II. p. 373.

salvation. The negative side, the powerlessness of Islām to give peace to the awakened and anxious soul, will be found in Chap. VIII., 'Islām.' It remains to give here the positive side.

The following suggestive reasons for being a Christian are those which a convert from Muḥammadanism or, more correctly, from Bābism, gave by request and after time allowed for consideration.

(i.) The Gospel tells of a *recompense made for sin*. God's ordinance requires the punishment of sin. If a man steals your book, or breaks your window, you do not forgive him until he restores the book, or repairs the window. Similarly, there must be satisfaction offered and accepted for God's violated law, and this has been accomplished by Christ, who became accursed for us, and our Sin-bearer.

(ii.) Those who believe in Christ become *sons of God by adoption*, as is clear from the Christian Scriptures. Now there is no relation more tender and loving than that of father and child. Hence, just as between father and child there is no fear, so it is with us in relation to God. Though we are sinners, we have no fear but full and sure hope in His love and mercy.

Illustration.—If a man commits a fault against a friend, he has no fear or uneasy apprehension, because he knows his friend and is sure of obtaining forgiveness. But if his offence be against any one else, his fear will be in proportion to his want of knowledge of and acquaintance with the man whom he has wronged or injured. (Cp. 1 St. John iv. 18, 'There is no fear in love.')

(iii.) *Power to overcome sin* is imparted by Christ, who gives it to those who fight under His banner. This is a distinguishing mark of the Christian religion, and we do not find it in any other. No other religion possesses such a mighty Captain and Leader as we do, able to give to His followers this prevailing and conquering power.

(iv.) *Inward purity and holiness* is required from the Christian and may be obtained by him. The origin and fount of sin are in the thoughts of the heart. [St. Matt. xv. 19, 20.] When the heart is pure, the man will be pure and holy. Muḥammadans practically take account only of outward actions. But Christ's teaching goes to the root of the matter,—to the heart, which is the source and spring of good and evil. In so far as Christians realize this, their lives are pure and holy.

An *illustration* may be drawn from a bad surgeon, who merely looks at the surface, and, without probing and cleansing the wound, contents himself with cleaning up the skin and sewing up the wound or applying a plaister. The impurities which remain in it will cause it to swell and fester, and break out again worse than before, and more serious mischief may result. God's Word does not act in this way, like a careless surgeon, but searches the heart, and discovers to us the source of sin, and teaches us to cleanse the root and stock. When we have corrected these, the

whole man will become spiritually pure and healthy, and free from sin.

(v.) The Gospel contains *clear promises of pardon and salvation*, which set the soul at rest. Such are not found in Islām. These promises are a sure ground of certainty, because they rest on the unchangeable Word of God.

(vi.) *Christ's righteousness is imputed to us.* We are accounted righteous for His sake. No other religion tells us of one able to confer such a boon as this upon us. But on the contrary the founders and leaders of all other religions were themselves sinners.

Illustration.—If an offence is committed against the Governor, till the culprit knows that he has an intercessor who will be accepted, he is in danger and fear. Similarly, those who believe in Christ are delivered from their guilty fears, because they know that in Him they have an all-sufficient and all-prevailing Advocate, altogether worthy and acceptable before the Most High.

(vii.) *Good works hold their proper place in the Christian scheme.* In other religions they are done for the sake of merit, from one of two motives, either to escape the terrors of hell, or to secure the certainty of the joys of heaven. Not so is it with the true believer in Christ. When he accepted Him as his Saviour, he became His purchased bond-servant; and faithful and devoted service to Him is nothing more than his bounden duty.

Illustration.—When a servant only does his work from a desire to obtain something, a present for instance, or from fear; if he be disappointed of his expectation, or finds he is not punished as he anticipated for his faults and omissions, but can neglect his duties with impunity, he will soon cease to render praiseworthy service. But a good servant will recognize that faithful obedience is due on his part, and his master has a right to expect it from him, and in the discharge of it he will be actuated by a spirit and motives very different from those of the other. In a similar way the Christian recognizes Christ as his rightful Lord and Master, and acknowledges the simple duty of serving Him apart from any hope of reward or fear of punishment.

(viii.) *Hopes and fears.* The Christian religion does not encourage undue hope of reward or excessive fear of punishment, either of which may be a cause of sin, the one through an unjustifiable assurance of salvation, the other through an unwarranted despondency.

(*a*) The Shī'ah Muḥammadans believe that if any one weeps at the recital of the sufferings of Ḥusain, or causes any one else to do so, heaven becomes his due. If a man entertains such an unwarrantable hope, he will not take any further thought about securing salvation, when it is to be had on such easy terms; the sense of guilt is weakened, and encouragement to sin is increased.

Illustration.—A servant who entertains an unreasonable confidence that his master will never actually punish him, is sure to be found guilty of faults.

(*b*) If, on the other hand, it is believed that God will rigorously punish any one who commits the smallest sin, gloom and dread take the place of a buoyant hope, and the man who despairs of obtaining pardon is only too likely to plunge recklessly into sin.

Illustration.—A man who knows he has offended the Governor, and will certainly be severely punished, is very likely to become reckless and more wicked.

CHAPTER VII.

MUḤAMMAD.

(A) Introductory. The Glorification of Muḥammad in the Traditions.

THE alleged divine mission of Muḥammad is a delicate subject to handle with Muslims, and will not be rashly taken up. Thus in *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 136, 'Alī at first tries to excuse himself from entering on a discussion of the prophetic claims of Muḥammad, but at length yielding to pressure consents to debate the question with one who seemed to be a sincere inquirer after the truth. On proper occasions, however, the Christian view must be upheld with suitable arguments, and the error of the Muḥammadan position demonstrated.

That tact and discrimination will be needed in the treatment of such a subject will be manifest to any one acquainted with the exaggerated opinions held about Muḥammad and his supposed prophetic mission, derived from the Traditions, where the freest scope has been given to the play of exuberant fancy. A few instances of this are subjoined.

Before the creation, the name of Muḥammad together with the Muslim creed was inscribed upon the great throne of the Almighty. At the creation of Adam, when his soul at last pervaded all his limbs and he rose to his feet, he was dazzled by a light shining on him from the throne of the Lord, and on asking, 'O Allāh! what flames are those?' was informed, 'It is the light of a prophet who shall descend from thee and appear on earth in the latter times. By My glory, only for his sake have I created thee and the whole world.' On Adam's asking Gabriel what marriage gift would be demanded from him for Eve, the angel brings him this message from God, that he is to pray twenty times for Muḥammad, 'His beloved, whose body shall one day be formed out of thy flesh and blood, but whose soul has dwelt in Allāh's presence many thousand years before the creation of the world.' When the pair, mounted on Maimūn the winged horse and a fleet she-camel, were conducted by Gabriel to Paradise, all the angels and animals present saluted them with the words, 'Hail! ye parents of Muḥammad!' After Adam's transgression, his repentance was accepted by the Almighty on his repetition of the following prayer, which Gabriel taught

him at God's command: 'There is no God besides thee. I have sinned; forgive me through Muḥammad, Thy last and greatest prophet, whose name is engraved upon Thy holy throne.' The special privileges reserved for the people of Muḥammad were revealed to Moses, who, when he offered the following fantastic prayer to his Lord, 'Reward tenfold the good deeds of my people, and visit sin but once; let also each good intention, though not carried into effect, obtain a recompense, but pass by each evil thought unpunished,' was told by Allāh, 'These are privileges accorded to those only who believe in Muḥammad, in whose name even Adam prayed to me.'

Solomon gained dominion over the kingdom of spirits by means of a jewel brought to him by an angel, which bore as an inscription the Muslim creed, 'There is no God but one, and Muḥammad is his messenger.' At the suggestion of Abraham, who appears to him in a dream by night, Solomon visits Jathrib (the ancient name of Medina) and Mecca, places afterwards to be associated with the life and work of Muḥammad: at the former he performed his mid-day devotions, and at the latter he went through the ceremonies obligatory on pilgrims, and after that 'pronounced in the Ka'bah a long discourse, in which he predicted the future birth of Muḥammad, and exhorted all his hearers to enforce faith in him upon their children and descendants.' When Christ appeared from heaven to Mary to comfort her in her grief at His supposed shameful death, He informed her that He would return again at the approach of the last day, and 'subject the whole earth to the doctrines of Muḥammad, who shall be sent in later times.' And after Christ departed again from her, it is related that 'Mary lived yet six years in the faith of Allāh, and of Christ her son, and of the prophet Muḥammad, whom both Christ as well as Moses before him had proclaimed.' Samuel, when describing Muḥammad's celebrated night-journey to the assembled Israelites, tells them that he will be 'at last conducted through many oceans of light, into the vicinity of the holy throne itself,' and will 'gaze on the glory of Allāh at the distance of a bow-shot.' Muḥammad will be the first to rise from the dead. He is the chief of Paradise, which he will enter first of all mankind, mounted upon the winged steed Burāq, and bearing on his head the crown, and in his hand the heavenly standard brought to him from Allāh by Gabriel. Concerning him was the prediction given, 'By the Lord! no sooner shall thy Lord see thee, than he will hasten in the heavens to meet thee.' He is, moreover, the intercessor for his people: and so prevailing will his intercession be, that not one of his followers will remain for ever in hell-fire.*

But most curious of all, perhaps, are the Traditions relating to Muḥammad's last sickness and death. Three days before his death the angel Gabriel came to him and thus addressed him, 'O

* From Weil's *Legends*; the *Torch of Guidance*; the *Apology* of Al Kindī; and St. Clair-Tisdall's *Religion of the Crescent*.

Aḥmad! the Lord hath deputed me thus as an honour and peculiar favour unto thee, that He may inquire concerning that which indeed He knoweth better than thou thyself: He asketh, *How thou findest thyself this day?*' This inquiry was repeated on the two following days. On the third day Gabriel descended with the Angel of Death, accompanied by the angel Ismā'īl, the last mentioned in command of 70,000 angels, each of them in command of 70,000 more. The Angel of Death through Gabriel asks permission to enter the room where Muḥammad is lying: 'He hath asked permission of no man before, neither shall he ask it of any after thee': and when inside the chamber he declares that he will either take the soul of Muḥammad or leave it, just according to the prophet's bidding. On the interposition of Gabriel, who says to Muḥammad, 'O Aḥmad! verily the Lord is desirous of thy company,' the prophet commands the Angel of Death to do the work for which he is come; and Gabriel bids him farewell in these words, 'Peace be on thee, O Prophet of the Lord! This is the last time that I shall tread the earth; with this world I have now concern no longer.' *

(B) CHRISTIAN ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE ALLEGED DIVINE MISSION OF MUḤAMMAD.

Answers to Muḥammadan interrogations.—It is well for the Christian teacher to have short answers ready when asked such questions as 'Do you believe in Muḥammad?' as well as more detailed arguments for use in regular controversy, or when dealing with inquirers. Some of these are now given.†

* Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, pp. 479, 480, n. (See also Koelle's *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, bk. II., ch. II., 'Sundry sketches of Mohammed, under various aspects, drawn by Moslem hands,' especially pp. 422–434, giving his sixty excellencies.)

† It does not fall within the scope of these pages to discuss the question of Muḥammad's sincerity. But it does cause surprise that English writers should have spoken of him as 'a genuine prophet' (at least while he still remained at Mecca), 'a very Prophet of God.' It is difficult to see on what grounds the title is given to Muḥammad other than those on which it might equally well be applied to other religious reformers. That he introduced reforms of religion and morals among the Arabs may be allowed; but as regards Christianity, the supposed corruptions of which in doctrine he claimed to correct, his teaching was retrograde and gives him a better title to be regarded as a heretic.

Those who, *deliberately standing outside the pale of Islām*, have the best opportunity of acquiring a practical acquaintance with the system, viz. Oriental Christians, never think of according this honour to its author.

If it be here alleged that Christians in the East do from time to time go so far to show their belief in the genuineness of Muḥammad's mission as to embrace Islām, it may be granted that on rare occasions Christians have become Muḥammadans, but almost if not quite invariably, not on religious grounds, but with some worldly purpose to serve, usually connected with *zan, zar, zamin* (women, money, land), or actuated by motives of spite or revenge. Oriental Christians have a very poor opinion of Islām and its founder, enhanced by a far-reaching remembrance of wrongs, and certainly not relieved by any excess of tolerant, sympathetic charity.

A well-known colporteur of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Persia, when asked, 'Do you believe in Muḥammad?' answers, 'If I did, I should not be a Christian,' *i.e.* my being a Christian is quite incompatible with belief in Muḥammad. The reply is a final one, and moreover causes no offence.

Another colporteur in Persia thus relates one of his experiences: Then the *mujtahid* looked at me and began to question me, saying, 'What idea have the Christians about Muḥammad? We believe him to be a prophet sent from God.' Then I said, 'The Christians do not believe Muḥammad to be a prophet sent from God,' and I read from St. Matthew xxiv. 23–28.*

§ 1. *Absence of Scriptural warrant.* It is, of course, very much to the point to quote the passage just mentioned, or St. Mark xiii. 21–23, in order to show that we Christians are strictly forbidden to follow any other prophet; and further to compare with it the prophecy in Dan. ix. 24, which is universally admitted to refer to the Messiah, and which tells us that 'vision and prophecy' would be 'sealed up' after His coming. (This is better than saying, 'We are warned against *false prophets*.' Even Moses in the Qur'ān was bidden to speak 'mildly' unto Pharaoh, though 'excessively impious,' Sūr. 20 *Ṭa Ha*, 45, 46.) 'The Son Himself' (as we Christians believe) 'having come and made known the Father, it is self-evident that higher revelation by a mere servant is for ever superseded.' The Christian dispensation, moreover, is spoken of as 'the ends of the ages,' 'the last hour,' 'the end of these days,' 'the end of the times' (1 Cor. x. 11; 1 St. John ii. 18; Heb. i. 1, 2; 1 Peter i. 19, 20).†

§ 2. Or the answer to such questions may take this form. If you wish to persuade me to admit Muḥammad's claims, you must bring me adequate proof. These proofs must be derived from the books we both acknowledge, *i.e.* the Old and New Testaments: otherwise I decline to accept them.

Or thus: You Muḥammadans have practically superseded Christ by Muḥammad. If you wish us to accept your position, you must show us satisfactory reasons for doing so. And if you invite us to embrace Islām, you must first convince us that your prophet's perfections and claims upon our allegiance are superior to those of Christ, which we have, or can exhibit to you. (*Vide* Chap. IV., (B), 1. But note the caution in Pt. II., Chap. VII., iv.)

§ 3. The absence of any prediction of Muḥammad in the previous Scriptures is a strong argument against his claims. A Muḥammadan woman, who was a fellow-passenger on board ship between Aden and Mombasa with a missionary lady, after having heard most of St. Luke's Gospel read and talked over, asked, 'Then who is Muḥammad, our prophet?'‡

The conflicting use of the Bible by the Muḥammadan shows

* Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1904, p. 203.
† 'Abd 'Isā, *Food for Reflection*, pp. 43, 44.
‡ *C.M.S. Report*, 1895-96, p. 100.

the weakness of his position. At one time he denies its genuine-ness and authority. At another he is most anxious to find in it proofs of his prophet's mission.

H The Muḥammadan holds the Christian principle (St. John v. 45; St. Luke xxiv. 27, 44, 46, 47) that the records of one divine dispensation foretell and foreshadow the succeeding one. The later revelation finds one of its strongest supports in these prophetic intimations. The Old Testament Scriptures prepared the way for the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of His kingdom upon earth, and stand as one of the strongest proofs of His divine mission that can be adduced. But the Gospel not only does not sound a single note of preparation for the advent of another God-sent prophet, but finally closes the door of revelation through these human mediums. The Muḥammadan is quite right according to the above view to try—and he often does try hard—to find a 'praeparatio' of Muḥammad in the Old and New Testaments, but with conspicuous want of success. Moreover, in passing over Christ and transferring Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah to Muḥammad, the Muslim violates the above-mentioned principle; and this constitutes one of the strongest arguments with which to demonstrate to him the error of all such applications of Scripture. (*Vide* (C), § 2.)

The weakness of Muḥammad's claims are thus seen from the solitary position of the Qur'ān in reference to the previous revelation, as contrasted with the intimate mutual relation of the Old and New Testaments. The latter are related as lock to key. The New Testament shows the fulfilment of the Old Testament. The Old Testament derives light and illumination from the New Testament. The Qur'ān, on the other hand, explains no previously dark mysteries, fulfils no earlier prophecies, contains no intimation or anticipation of a later and fuller revelation, and has been confirmed by none.

§ 4. The fact that Muḥammad showed no sign places him at a great disadvantage as compared with Moses (*Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 137), and with Christ. The three signs which Moses was commissioned to show before the children of Israel are related in Ex. iv. 1–9. Besides the special sign appointed by Christ Himself when one was demanded from Him, viz. His resurrection on the third day, described in St. Matt. xii. 39, 40 as 'the sign of Jonah the prophet,' and in St. John ii 18–20 as the 'raising up' of 'this temple' (cp. the attempt of the Jews to frustrate it, St. Matt. xxvii. 62–*fin.*), other wonderful signs attended His advent and ministry, viz. the annunciation through Gabriel to the Virgin Mary (St. Luke i. 26–38); the appearance of angels to the shepherds at His birth (St. Luke ii. 8–14); the descent of the Holy Ghost and the voice from heaven at His baptism (St. Matt. iii. 16, 17; cp. John the Baptist's testimony to the former, St. John i. 31–34); the ministry of angels at and after the Temptation (St. Mark i. 13; St. Matt. iv. 11); the appearance of Moses

and Elias, and the heavenly voice at the Transfiguration (St. Matt. xvii. 1–8); 'the voice out of heaven' mentioned in St. John xii. 28–30; the manifestation of the 'strengthening' angel during the Agony in the garden of Gethsemane (St. Luke xxii. 43); and the wonders beheld at the Crucifixion of Christ and after His death and resurrection (St. Matt. xxvii. 45, 51–53).

Neither did Muḥammad work any miracles, as both Moses and Christ did. We can assign no weight whatever to the numerous traditions of Muḥammad's miracles in view of his own clear assertions in the Qur'ān (*e.g.* Sūr. 13 *Ra'd*, 8). Nor can we regard the Qur'ān itself as a miracle for the reasons given elsewhere ((C), § 1).

The miracles and signs of Moses and Christ rest upon the testimony of the very Word of God, while those of Muḥammad have only the flimsy basis of tradition, and are nowhere mentioned in the Qur'ān.

§ 5. Muḥammad denies the essential truths of the previous Scriptures. It is quite true that he attests the Scriptures. But this testimony is of no value, nay, it is hard to assign any intelligible meaning to the words, if it turns out that he denies the most important truths found in those Scriptures, such as the incarnation, crucifixion and atoning death of Jesus. Not only are these truths found in our authentic Scriptures, but long before Islām they were distinctly acknowledged by the Christian Church, as in the case of the Council of Nicea, held under the first Christian monarch and attended by a multitude of bishops from Christian lands, which after prolonged discussion unanimously condemned the teaching of Arius, who denied the eternal generation of the Son, and equality with the Father in essence and dignity. 'A glance at the Scriptures, as extant in every country and language of the world, old and new, shows that their great object is to represent the Messiah as divine, God and man, and His death as an atoning sacrifice. You might as well deny the sun's light as this their acknowledged purpose. What, then, was the advantage of the prophet confirming the Scriptures revealed before, when he denied these their essential truths?' This is all the more surprising, because there were 'thousands and thousands of copies of the Book extant at that time, all bearing testimony with clear voice to these precious truths.' 'Truly, . . . had Muḥammad really accredited the Scriptures in the hands of Jews and Christians around him, he had without doubt been himself a Christian.'*

§ 6. The prophets who came after Moses called the children of Israel back to the true religion of Moses. Why, then, do you Muḥammadans say that the Qur'ān of your prophet has superseded and abrogated all the other previous Scriptures, if he was a true prophet, and the last and greatest of the prophets?

§ 7. Muḥammad never claimed to be a Saviour. The very

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 138, 139.

object of the Gospel, on the contrary, is to tell the good news of Christ, the Saviour of sinners, Who cleanses the penitent from all guilt, gives power to live righteously, and *ever lives* to make intercession for His people (Heb. vii. 25; see also Chap. VI., (E), 2). Why should I forsake the Good Physician Who heals my grievous wounds and cures my every ill, for one of whose ability and skill I have had no experience?

'But,' a Muḥammadan once argued, 'at the intercession of Muḥammad, the door of heaven will be opened to all who can repeat the Kalimah.' To this the answer was returned, 'Can a verse from the Qur'ān be quoted to support your statement? if so, please produce it.' 'The plea that the speaker was "unlearned" was all that could be adduced in reply.' *

§ 8. The blessing promised to all the nations of the world in the line of Abraham and his seed can point to none other than Christ. The chief passages bearing upon this point in the book of Genesis are the following: In xvii. 7 God establishes His covenant with Abraham and his seed after him 'for an everlasting covenant.' From this covenant Ishmael is specifically excluded, vers. 19–21, where God twice over declares that He will establish His covenant with Isaac, though Ishmael too shall be blessed and become 'a great nation.' † And again, xxi. 12 (cp. Rom. ix. 7; Heb. xi. 18), 'In Isaac shall thy seed be called,' after the permission had been given to Abraham to cast forth Ishmael and his mother out of his family.

Now the essential part of this covenant, as far as it concerns us Gentiles and all who are not of the seed of Isaac, is that given in the promise to Abraham in xxii. 18, 'in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' This promise was given him as a reward after he had shown his readiness to obey God's command by the sacrifice of Isaac, and has therefore nothing to do with Ishmael. In xxvi. 4 *the same promise* is repeated to Isaac, and in xxviii. 14 to Jacob (cp. Heb. xi. 9, 'Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise'). From all this the conclusion follows, that 'the promise of that seed in which all nations of the earth were to be blessed ran not in the line of the Arab nation, but in the line of Isaac and Jacob; the promise, namely, of Jesus, son of Mary, the Saviour of the world.' ‡ How this blessing is realized through Christ is explained in Galatians iii. See the whole chapter, and especially vers. 7–9, 13–16, 29.

The Qur'ān in like manner speaks of the children of Israel as the channel of spiritual blessing. 'And we gave him Isaac and Jacob; and we placed among his descendants the gift of prophecy and the Scriptures' (Sūr. 29 *'Ankabūt*, 26).

* *Punjāb Mission News*, April 15, 1905.

† The Shī'ah Muḥammadans are very fond of referring the 'twelve princes' of Ishmael's seed (Gen. xvii. 20) to the twelve Imāms, not aware of the fact that they are the twelve sons of Ishmael himself, a list of whom is given with their names in ch. xxv. 13–16 (see ch. X. 5, p. 492).

‡ *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 144. Cp. the whole passage, pp. 143–146.

Objection.—And if any one should say, 'The promise to Abraham's progeny might have been in more than one line,' the answer to this objection is found in Sūr. 45 *Jāṡiyah*, 15, 'We gave unto the children of Israel the book of the law, and wisdom, and prophecy; and we fed them with good things, and preferred them above all nations.' 'All nations blessed in them. Why, then, another revelation from one of another nation, one strange to the Israelites?' *—A Persian gentleman suggests two other arguments to show why Isaac, not Ishmael, was chosen to be the channel of blessing to the race:

(*a*) *From his sacrifice.*—The privilege was given to Isaac in reward for his submission to his father's command and the will of God. (For the fact that it was Isaac, not his brother as Muḥammadans say, whom Abraham was to sacrifice, see the narrative in Genesis, and cp. the confirmation of it in Heb. xi. 17. See also Ch. I., (E), 4, p. 201.)

Granted that Ishmael and Isaac were both children of Abraham, through which of the two is it to be expected that the promised blessing will be given? Of course, through the one whose rank and dignity are the greater, *i.e.* Isaac, in virtue of his noble submission and splendid self-sacrifice.

(*b*) *From his birth.*—Isaac, the son of the true and noble-born wife, is naturally preferred to the son of the bondwoman Hagar; just as a king sometimes chooses as his successor not his eldest son, but the offspring, though younger, of her who is herself of royal birth. Thus Nāṣiru'd-dīn, Shah of Persia, passed over his eldest son, the Ẓillu's-Sulṭān, in favour of his brother Muẓaffaru'd-dīn, and the latter has again for a similar reason appointed a younger son Heir Apparent of the Persian Crown.

§ 9. Muḥammad's alleged revelation is incomplete according to his own dying words. We have, therefore, no assurance that Muḥammadans have not been in the past, and are now in error.†

Muḥammadans are bound to accept Muḥammad's words as inspired, according to Sur. 53 *Najm*, 3–5, 'Neither doth he speak of his own will. It is nc other than a revelation, which hath been revealed unto him.' Whoever does not allow this is an unbeliever. Both Sunnīs and Shī'ahs agree, that shortly before his death Muḥammad asked for writing materials, in order to write something for his followers, which should prevent their falling into error after his death. According to Bukhārī and Muslim he said, 'Come here, that I may write for you a writing, that you may by no means go astray after me' (*i.e.* after my death).‡ According to a tradition of Āmadī in the *Sharḥ-i-mawāqif* he said, 'Bring me paper that I may write a writing for you, that after me ye may not

* *Sweet Firstfruits, loc. cit.*

† This and the following arguments (9, 10) are derived from a paper drawn up in Persian by an Indian convert and given by him to a missionary who was about to proceed to Persia, that it might be shown to the Mullās of that country.

‡ Halummū aktubu la-kum kitāban lan taḍillū ba'd-ī.

go astray.' * On those words the following remarks may be made:—

(i.) If these words have any meaning at all—and there is nothing in them necessarily to bear out 'Umar's suggestion that Muḥammad was wandering in mind—they must refer to some of the first principles of religion, the imparting of which would be a sure safeguard, and their non-delivery leave the followers of Muḥammad exposed to error.

(ii.) The Sunnī Muḥammadans explain these words as referring to commands and prohibitions (*amr-o-nahy*), which Muḥammad desired to give. But, not to mention the fact that this is an altogether inadequate explanation of words of such tremendous import, many commands and prohibitions had already been given by Muḥammad to his people.

(iii.) Shī'ahs refer the words to the succession of 'Alī, which they say Muḥammad wished to re-affirm. But this had already been amply provided for, according to the tradition of Ghadīr-i-Khum, which is well attested, and accepted by both Shī'ahs and Sunnīs, being agreeable to their commentaries and histories.

The tradition alluded to is as follows: † When Muḥammad was returning to Medina from the farewell pilgrimage, as he was in the way, on the 18th of the month Zī-Ḥijjah, verse 71 of Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah* descended to him, 'O apostle, publish the whole of that which hath been sent down unto thee from thy Lord; for if thou do not, thou dost not in effect publish any part thereof.' Thereupon he alighted at the place called Ghadīr-i-Khum and made a halt there in the middle of the noonday heat, and commanded that the camels' pack-saddles should be piled up to form a sort of pulpit. This he mounted so that all the people could see him, and made an oration, bidding the people hold fast to the Qur'ān and to the family of Muḥammad. After that he said, 'Am I not better for you than your souls? Am I not better for the believers than their souls?' ‡ To which all the people answered, 'Yes! it is even so.' Muḥammad then took the hand of 'Alī and said, 'He whose lord I am, 'Alī is his lord. O God! befriend whoever befriends him, and be an enemy to whoever is an enemy to him, and help whoever helps him, and forsake whoever forsakes him!' § Thereupon this verse of the Qur'ān came to Muḥammad, 'This day have I perfected your religion for you, and have completed my mercy upon you; and I have choson for you Islām to be your religion' (Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah* 4). Of all those who were present, first came

* Ītū-nī bi-qartāsin aktubu la-kum kitāban lā taẓillū ba'd-ī.

† The same tradition with differences of detail is given in Hughes' *Dict. of Islām*, p. 573, *s.v.* 'Shī'ah,' from the *Hayātu'l-Qulūb*. The version in the text was given by the Indian convert already alluded to.

‡ A-lastu aulā bi-kum min anfusi-kum? A-lastu aulā bi'l-mū'minīna min anfusi-him?

§ Fa-man kuntu maulā-hu fa-'Alīyun maulā-hu. Allāhumma wāli man wālā-hu wa 'ādi man 'ādāhu, wa'nṣur man naṣara-hu, wa' khẓul man khaẓala-hu.

'Umar and congratulated 'Alī in these words, 'Good luck! good luck to thee, O son of Abū Ṭālib, thou art my lord and the lord of every believing man and woman.' * After that all those present came and pledged their loyalty to 'Alī. There are besides many other traditions about this transaction, a detailed account of which would be both unnecessary and tedious.

In conclusion, according to the saying, 'But the questioner repulse not!' † you must give me a satisfactory explanation of Muḥammad's words, or face the inevitable conclusion.

(The above argument, so a Persian gentlemen tells me, will be very suitable on proper occasions for those who are not bigoted. Shī'ah Muḥammadans, however, as above mentioned, will say that Muḥammad wished to confirm the succession of 'Alī. And hence they will infer that the followers of 'Alī are not in the state of error against which warning is given. We might say, he added, that perhaps Muḥammad wished to abjure Islām and free his people from its yoke! not, of course, as a serious argument; or to bid them read and obey the Old and New Testaments.)

§ 10. We have no assurance that the Qur'ān is free from suggestions of Satan.

First of all, from the following considerations we might believe that Satan would not be able to tamper with the Qur'ān.

(i.) In Sūr. 16 *Naḥl*, 100, Muḥammad is bidden, 'When thou readest the Qur'ān, have recourse unto God, that he may preserve thee from Satan driven away with stones.' Now, this is an absolute command of God to Muḥammad, which it is incredible that he would not obey, because disobedience to it would be a following of Satan, while obedience to it would give security against his power.

(ii.) From the next two verses (101, 102) of the same Sūrah it appears, first, that Satan 'hath no power over those who believe, and who put confidence in their Lord'; and if this be true of believers in general, much more does it hold good of Muḥammad himself; and secondly, that Satan's 'power is over those only who take him for their patron, and who give companions unto God,'—of neither of which was Muḥammad guilty.

(iii.) In Sūr. 72 *Jinn*, 27, 28, we are informed that when Gabriel brought a revelation from God to Muḥammad, a company of angels remained in front of and behind the prophet, in order to guard the delivery of the revelation so that Satan might not tamper with it. If, even after this precaution, Satan succeeded in introducing any 'diabolical suggestions,' the angels' presence was clearly of very little avail.

(iv.) And besides this, the angel who from time to time imparted the Qur'ān to Muḥammad and remained with him the while was Gabriel, 'one mighty in power' (*shadīdu'l-quwā*; Sūr.

* Bakh, bakh li-ka, yā ibna Abī Ṭālib, aṣbaḥtu anta maulā-ī wa maulā'a kulli mū'mini wa mū'minati.

† Wa ammā's-sā'ila fa-lā tanhar.

53 *Najm*, 6, 7); so that Satan at such a time could have had no opportunity of obtaining influence over Muḥammad.

To sum up, with all these precautions how is it credible that Satan could have introduced blasphemous words into the mouth of Muḥammad when reciting his Qur'ān?

And yet, in spite of all this, there is good authority for asserting that this is what actually took place. The author of the *Ma'ālimu'-t tanzīl*, who is in agreement with Ibn 'Abbās and Muḥammad Ibn K'ab al Qaraṭī and other commentators, tells us that on the day when Sūr. 53 *Najm* descended, at the very time when Muḥammad was reciting it, Satan introduced certain blasphemous words, namely, praise of the idol goddesses, into his mouth, so that after the words, 'What think ye of Al Lāt, and Al 'Uzzā, and Manāt, that other third goddess?' (vers. 19, 20), he said, 'These are the most high and beauteous damsels whose intercession is to be hoped for.'* The error was subsequently made known to Muḥammad by Gabriel, and the words cancelled, and the true reading as it is now in the Qur'ān revealed.

This story of the commentators is quite at variance with the passages from the Qur'ān previously cited, from which it would appear that Muḥammad was so effectually protected against Satan, that not merely the devil's tampering with the revelations given to the prophet, but his presence at all at such a time would be incredible.

But from Sūr. 22 *Ḥajj*, 53, 'We have sent no apostle or prophet before thee, but, when he read, Satan suggested some error in his reading. But God shall make void that which Satan hath suggested; then shall God confirm His signs; for God is knowing and wise' (see also the next verse, 54), it is manifest that the devil really did tamper with the revelation, so that the commentators are right after all. And it is not surprising that the idolators made such a charge as that mentioned in Sūr. 16 *Naḥl*, 103, 'When we substitute in the Qur'ān an abrogating verse in lieu of a verse abrogated (and God best knoweth the fitness of that which He revealeth), the infidels say, Thou art only a forger of these verses.' There is nothing of the kind said in the Holy Scriptures about any one of the prophets, that unlawful words were put into his mouth by Satanic agency. (Compare Balaam's inability to curse Israel, Num. xxiii., xxiv.)

Again, in the matter of the Qiblah, we see a similar suggestion of the devil, in that Muḥammad approved as his Qiblah and place of worship for his followers the idol temple at Mecca with its 360 idols. Cp. Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 115, 'Whithersoever ye turn yourselves to pray, there is the face of God,' with verse 145 of the same Sūrah, which is said to abrogate it, 'We will cause thee to turn

* Tilka'l-gharānīqu'l-'ulyā wa inna shafā'atu-hunna la-turjā. Cp. Sale's note on Sūr 22 *Ḥajj*, 53; Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, pp. 79, 80; and Hughes, *Dict. of Islam*, *s.v.* 'Lāt,' who quotes the same tradition on the authority of al-Wāqidī and aṭ-Ṭabarī.

thyself towards a Qiblah that will please thee. Turn, therefore, thy face towards the holy temple of Mecca.'

In conclusion, we ask, Was Muḥammad really guarded from the power of Satan according to the verses of the Qur'ān quoted above? Or rather, did he not thus speak in order to secure the credence and confidence of those present? And further, which verses of the Qur'ān are free from the suggestion of Satan?

(C) MUḤAMMADAN ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF MUḤAMMAD'S MISSION.

Introductory.—When this question comes up for consideration, we must not allow ourselves to be led away from the point by side issues or bare assertions on the authority of the Traditions as, *e.g.* of Muḥammad's supposed pre-existence, etc., but keep the main question to the front: Was he a genuine prophet or not, and on what grounds?

The burden of proof rests with the Muḥammadan. The chief arguments relied upon are the ten following (1–10),* of which the first four apply to other prophets as well as Muḥammad, and the last six are peculiar to him.

§ 1. **Miracles.**—The first and most important argument for Muḥammad's divine mission is his alleged miracles, of which (*A*) something must be said generally, before we come to deal with (*B*) some of them in detail, and (*C*) with the supposed miracle of the Qur'ān.

(*A*) *Muḥammad's miracles considered generally.* As to the nature of miracles a few words may be said, first of all.† A miracle is something strange and unusual; but all such things are not miracles. Things strange and unusual may be divided into three classes: (1) Arts and crafts (*ṣan'at*), as *e.g.* watch-making, printing, photography; (2) conjuring tricks and jugglery (*limmīyat*), by which the performer discovers what is hidden, makes that which is seen to disappear, puts hen's eggs under his robe and forthwith hatches a brood of chickens, etc.; (3) things contrary to custom (*kharq-i-'ādat*), a term which we do not apply to either of the previous. This, again, may be subdivided into three classes:—

(*a*) Magic (*sihr*), which is wrought by foolish and degraded men with Satanic help. It is a sort of craft, and is learnt from a master. Its exercise is confined to particular times and places, and may always be rendered null and void by the intervention of a true miracle-working prophet, as, for instance, Moses' serpent devouring those of the Egyptian magicians, in order to prevent people from being deceived. Magic employs potions, aliments, liniments, etc., to produce its wonderful results, *e.g.* a certain oil

* Cp. Sayid 'Abdu'l-Ḥusain's *Kitāb-i-mubin dar uṣūl-i-dīn* (printed in Bombay).

† From *Wasīlatu'n-Najāt*, ch. 5, p. 74 *sqq.*

rubbed over a man's body will, it is said, keep him from drowning; even if he should fall into the sea, the waves will cast him up upon the shore. It also uses talismans, charms, and such like things, to obtain power over persons or secure possession of their goods.

(*b*) Wonderful works (*karāmat*). These are special miracles wrought by saints and devout persons (*zāhid*), who, however, do not possess the power of working miracles at all times.

(*c*) Miracles (*mu'jizah*). This is the special power of acting contrary to experience which belongs to prophets and their successors. It is not learnt from a master, nor is its exercise confined to particular times and places. It cannot be rendered null and void; but by its means the false claims of others can be demonstrated; and it can at all times be exercised to confirm the truth and remove doubt.

To return to Muḥammad,—extravagant opinions are held by most Muḥammadans about the miracles of their prophet. 'Some 'Ulamā' affirm that that prince had performed 1000 miracles; others, 3000' (Koelle, *loc. cit. infra*). An Indian gentleman asserted in controversy 'that the miracles of Muḥammad far exceed in number all the miracles performed by all the other prophets, one writer alone giving a list of upwards of 2000.'* Some of the chief are given in *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 137, 138: 'the moon split in two parts, one part over Mount Qubais, the other over the hill Qainuqā',—raising his parents for a season to life, so that they professed their faith in Islām, and then returned to the dead,—bringing forth water at Majāz,—raising to life the son of a woman of Medina,—multiplying viands out of a little, and such like.' Longer lists are given by Hughes, *Dictionary of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Miracles,' and Koelle, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, pp. 434–446.

If it be urged, as sometimes is the case, that the miracles of Muḥammad are far more numerous and wonderful than those of Christ, a summary and sufficient answer is, that those of Muḥammad are related in tradition only, while those of Christ rest upon the far more reliable foundation of the Word of God, the Gospel. (See further, below, 4, p. 380.)

There are four reasons why we cannot accept Muḥammad's alleged miracles as a proof of his mission.

1. *From Muḥammad's words in the Qur'ān it is absolutely* clear by his own admission that he was not sent with miracles.†

'The infidels say, Unless a sign be sent down unto him from

* Twenty-third Report of Calcutta Diocesan Committee of S.P.G. for 1854, pp. 36 *sqq.*, giving a long quotation from the Report of the Rev. W. O'B. Smith, Calcutta, containing an account of a controversy carried on by him, apparently by correspondence, with a person who is styled 'the Amir.' Use has been made of this in several places below.

† *The 'signs' (āyāt) which Muḥammad sometimes refers to (e.g. Sūr.* 2 Baqarah, 98) as sent down to him, allude to the verses of the Qur'ān supposed to have been revealed to him from heaven. (See Sale, *in loc.*)

his Lord, *we will not believe*. Thou art *commissioned to be* a preacher only.' Sūr. 13 *Ra'd*, 8.

'No apostle had *the power* to come with a sign, unless by the permission of God.' *Ib.* 38.

'The unbelievers will say, Thou art not sent *of God*. Answer, God is a sufficient witness between me and you, and he who understandeth the Scriptures.' *Ib.* 43.

'They say, unless a sign be sent down unto him from his Lord, *we will not believe*. Answer, Signs are in the power of God alone; and I am *no more than* a public preacher.' Sūr. 29 *'Ankabūt*, 49.

'Nothing hindered us from sending *thee* with miracles, except that the former *nations* have charged them with imposture.' Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'il*, 61 (cp. 95).

The meaning of these passages is sufficiently clear, and is confirmed by the remarks of Baiẓawī, commenting on the last-quoted verse, who says, 'That is to say, "We have only abstained from sending thee with miracles," as the Quraish demand, "because the former peoples"—those of like temper with them, as the tribes of 'Ād and Ṣamūd—"gave them the lie," and so likewise would these men of Mecca; "and they would otherwise have been destroyed, according to our wont" (*i.e.* if they had rejected the miracles); so "we determined not to destroy them," seeing that there are amongst them those that believe, or will have believing seed.' *

Objection (1). Muḥammadans allege that the verses quoted above refer to miracles of a special nature, which the unbelievers asked Muḥammad to perform.

Answer.—The words are quite general in their scope. The word *āyāt* (= signs, miracles) in the last verse quoted (Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'il*, 61) is also absolutely general, and not limited in any way.

Objection (2).†—Jesus was like Muḥammad in this respect, that he had not the power of working miracles at all times. In support of this 'the Amir' adduced St. John vi. 30, 31, where, he asserts, Jesus, instead of showing the miracle asked for, put the Jews off with an argument.

Answer.—I admit that unbelief sometimes hindered the Lord Jesus from working miracles (St. Matt. xiii. 58; St. Mark vi. 5), but I deny that Muḥammad possessed this power at all, until you can bring satisfactory proofs to the contrary.

(Mr. Smith's chief arguments in answer to the objection are, that Jesus' not granting the request does not prove that He did not possess the power to do so; that it is unreasonable to expect a prophet to be obliged to work a miracle for every one who chooses to demand one; that the request proceeded from unbelief and was sinful, a sufficient number of miracles having already been shown

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 140, 141.

† From Mr. Smith's controversy with 'the Amir.'

by Jesus to amply testify His mission; and that Jesus was unable to work miracles for those who rejected His mission, their unbelief being a bar to the exercise of His power, as it proved that they were not fit subjects (*nā-qābil*) to have a miracle vouchsafed to them.—All of these arguments appear open to the objection that the Muḥammadan might easily retort, These are the very reasons which we give in explanation of our 'prophet' not working miracles at all times to satisfy the unbelievers.)

Objection (3).*—The first demand for miracles is always refused by the prophet. 'When any people demand a miracle for their satisfaction,' averred the Qāẓī, 'and yet, notwithstanding the appearance of the miracle, will not believe, the wrath of God falls upon them. Therefore every prophet, at the first demand of a miracle, has always refused. When he afterwards consents and performs a miracle, they who disbelieve it do so at their peril. Inasmuch as God was pleased to show mercy on the Arabs, He informed them of the unbelief of which former people had been guilty, and of the punishment which had ensued, and then, at their repeated request, gave them the miracle of the Qur'ān.'

Answer.—To say that miracles have always been refused on the first demand, because the wrath of God would fall on those who disbelieved them, is an error. And further, the Hindū 'denies that the wrath of God has ever come upon any people for their refusing to believe miracles performed before their eyes. The contrary is implied in St. Matt. xi. 20–24' (the judgment of Bethsaida, etc.).

Objection (4).*—To particular passages.—(*a*) The Hindū had brought forward this verse, 'The unbelievers say, Why has no sign descended on him from his Lord? Answer, Thou art to cause them to fear, and to be a guide to all people.' (Cp. Sūr. 13 *Ra'd*, 8, 27.) Of this the Qāẓī gave the following explanation. The occasion of this verse was as follows: the unbelieving Quraish demanded miracles like those of Moses and Christ; but God tells the prophet, Thou art only to cause them to fear, and to be a guide for every people by means of the Qur'ān. The miracles of Moses and Jesus are not suitable for you. Overcome the Arabs in their special forte of eloquence.

Answer.—The verse quoted does *not* say this. It merely says, thou art to be *a guide*; and asserts nothing about the Qur'ān being a miracle.

(*b*) Another passage brought forward by the Hindū * was Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'il*, 61 (quoted above).

The Qāẓī explained it in the following way. This does not mean, that Muḥammad was altogether forbidden to work miracles. The occasion was when the Quraish had asked Muḥammad to turn Mount Ṣafā into pure gold, and to remove the mountain of Mecca

* From an account of a controversy between a Hindū and the Qāẓī of Delhi, given in the *Missionary*, Apr., May, 1853. The Hindū is supposed to have been a teacher in the Government College, Amritsar.

in order that the land in the neighbourhood of the city might be open and fit for cultivation. Muḥammad's answer to them was a warning that former peoples had drawn down God's wrath on themselves by asking for miracles and not believing them. God knew many believers would spring from the Quraish, and so was not willing to destroy them. 'But let no one,' he cautiously adds, 'object to the miracle of the moon-splitting, that it would necessitate the destruction of the Quraishites, for the party who demanded that miracle was Abu Jahl and his companions, and they *were* destroyed.'

Answer.—Granted for the moment that this verse means that the power of working miracles was sometimes withdrawn from your prophet, what passage in the Qur'ān can you bring forward to show that the power and permission to work miracles was ever given to him?

2. Miracles are never brought forward by Muḥammad in support of his mission, though they would have constituted his strongest proof. As a matter of evidence, there can be nothing stronger than the words of the prophet himself. We naturally ask in reference to his claims, What proofs did he himself bring forward? What did he say himself? On what did he rely to attest his mission?

Now, we never find that Muḥammad based his prophetic claims upon the evidence of miracles. Even granted that he really performed them, he never adduced them for this purpose. And so, even though we were able, as we might think, to prove his miracles, this would not help our purpose, and we should not be able to bring them forward to substantiate his claims, because the prophet himself never made use of them for this purpose.

Illustration.—If a man tells me he is a *pahlawān*—a strong, athletic man—and, in answer to my request for evidence of the fact, says he can lift up a little table with one hand, I am convinced that this is the best proof he has to offer, and my belief in his wonderful strength is but small. Similarly with Muḥammad, his assertion of the miracle of the Qur'ān was the best evidence for his claims that he could produce, and so he relied upon that alone. If he had wrought other miracles he would surely have alleged them. It is simply in accordance with reason that a man who seeks to establish any claim or contention should bring forward the strongest proof he can.

Objection.—Miracles were not alleged by Muḥammad to prove the divine nature of his mission, because former prophets had been sent with them, and people did not believe them.

Answer.—(1) If Muḥammad never asserted them as proof of his mission—and his word might have been believed—how can they be asserted and believed in now on the mere testimony of tradition? (2) And if Muḥammad's miracles were not performed in evidence of his mission, of what use or value were they to him?

3. The people of Muḥammad's own time did not believe his miracles. Thus Abū Jahl is reported in the Traditions to have declared that the famous splitting of the moon (*shaqqu'l-qamar*) was only a piece of magic (*siḥr*). This and similar accusations were made against Muḥammad; compare Sūr. 34 *Sabā*, 42 *fin.*, 'The unbelievers say of the truth when it is come unto them, This is no other than manifest sorcery.'

Now, here we have only two alternatives. The alleged splitting of the moon either (*a*) was *not* a miracle, or (*b*) it was a miracle. If the first be true, of course the people of that time did not believe it, and our argument is proved; but if the latter alternative be the true one, and the splitting of the moon was really a miracle, then again two alternatives present themselves.

(*a*) Either Abū Jahl believed it, or (*b*) he did *not* believe it. In the former case, if he believed it, he could not conceivably have been so wicked and perverse as knowingly to choose the path of error by denying it. But if he did *not* believe it, it is clear that he was not convinced by the supposed miracle, and it failed of its purpose. And our contention accordingly is established. (See (*B*), 1, p. 383 *sqq.*, for a fuller discussion of this alleged miracle.)

Objection (1).—The disbelief of people in a prophet's miracles is no argument against them. The disbelief of the Jews in the miracles of Jesus is similar to the case of Muḥammad and the unbelieving Arabs.

Answer.—The two cases are not parallel. The miracles of Jesus were never attributed by the Jews to magic, but to the help of the chief of the devils. (Contrast Simon *the sorcerer*, Acts viii. 9–11, 18, 19.) The suggestion of Satanic aid is moreover an inconceivable one, because we nowhere find that God has given such power to the devil. If God had done so, He Himself (which God forbid!) might be regarded as the deceiver of men.

Objection (2).—It may be alleged that many did believe in Muḥammad's miracles.

Answer.—The fact that some persons attested and acknowledged them (*taṣdīq*) is not an adequate and sufficient proof. They doubtless had their own reasons or their own purposes to serve. It is absurd to allege that Abū Bakr, for example, became a Muḥammadan simply through witnessing Muḥammad's miracles; rather, he had an eye to the Caliphate, as others among the chief Arabs had. And as for the common people, they blindly followed their leaders.

4. The miracles of Muḥammad rest only upon the authority of tradition. Muḥammad's miracles are not mentioned in the Qur'ān, but only in the Ḥadīs (the Traditions), which are in this respect diametrically opposed to the testimony of the Qur'ān, and are therefore not worthy of credit. Both Sunnīs and Shī'ahs are agreed that any traditions contrary to the Qurān are not to be

considered trustworthy. Muḥammad has himself by his own words cut away the ground from those who repeat such tales; 'There hath been no prophet,' he said, 'but his people have told lies about him, and I am no exception that my people should not tell lies about me. Wherefore, whensoever ye shall hear aught about me, then turn to the Book which I have left with you; and if it conform thereto, and there be mention of the same in it, then it is true that I said or did what is related of me; but if there be no mention of it in the book, then I am free therefrom, and that which is related of me is a lie, and I neither said nor did it.' *

Objection (1).—The number of Muḥammad's miracles which were wrought by supernatural power overcoming natural and physical impossibilities, as recorded in the Ḥadīṣ, and the multitudes of eye-witnesses preclude the denial of them. If any particular miracle is not capable of absolute proof, we cannot believe that thousands of miracles, attested by so many persons, are all untrue.

Answer.—(i.) The assertion of Muḥammad's miracles is contrary to the Qur'ān, and is therefore not deserving of credit. (This is conclusive.)

(ii.) We do not believe various natural impossibilities recorded in the Ḥadīṣ, such as the splitting of the moon, although attested by several people. Similarly, it is impossible to credit those other miracles, though related in the Ḥadīṣ.

(iii.) There was a great tendency in the first ages of Islām to relate and pass on without investigation anything calculated to glorify the prophet and so please the hearers.

Objection (2).—Muḥammad wrought miracles of very various kinds, which shows him to have been a true prophet and no sorcerer. (This argument rests upon the distinction drawn between miracles and works of magic, that the former are not limited in range, whereas the latter are.†)

Answer.—When Muḥammad, as related in the Qur'ān, was asked to perform certain wonderful works, he declined, and denied that he had the power, thus showing that he was not able to work miracles. (See Sūr. 17 *Bānī Isrā'īl*, 92–95.)

This argument cannot be affected, even though a hundred traditional miracles of Muḥammad be brought forward on apparently good authority.

NOTE.—Discussion of evidence and tradition in the Hindū's controversy with the Qāzī.—The Qāzī, in his controversy with the Hindū alluded to above, had a great deal to say about the nature of *evidence in general* and *the comparative value of that available for Muḥammad's miracles.*‡ The present writer thinks such discussions

* *The Apology of Al Kindy*, p. 61.

† As, for example, in Sayid 'Abdu'l-Ḥusain's *Kitāb-i-mubīn dar uṣūl-i-dīn*, printed in Bombay. I am indebted to a native friend for this reference.

‡ Cp. the canons elaborated by Muḥammadan doctors for the reception or rejection of traditions (Hughes, *Dict. of Islam*, *s.v.* 'Tradition').

should be studiously avoided as inexpedient and injudicious. They withdraw the mind from the main issue, and give the Muḥammadan an opportunity of making a great parade and show of authority for his traditions which it is difficult to rebut or refute. Moreover, if the Christian agrees to enter upon a discussion of evidence, it is most difficult to show conclusively, from the mere comparative weight of testimony, that the truths believed by the Christian about Christ rest on superior authority to the traditions which the Muḥammadan holds to be true in reference to his prophet. For example, in answer to the argument from the sufferings of the Christian confessors for the truth, the Shī'ah Muḥammadan will at once draw a parallel with the sufferings of 'Alī and his family. And truly the persecutions of martyrs of any religion are no proof of its truth, but only of the constancy and heroism of the sufferers.

Among other things, the Qāẓī lays down certain conditions as requisite for information to command assent. Again, he asserts that there is the same degree of evidence for Muḥammad's miracles as for those of Christ. He affirms the testimony of a succession of persons, all worthy of credit, to be more trustworthy than the testimony contained in books. To which the Hindū aptly replied that the whole point is this, Are all the narrators trustworthy? Why have the Traditions been committed to writing if the oral method of transmitting information is the best? And why is the Qur'ān itself contained in a book? The existence of books makes comparison and correction easy. And, once more, the Qāẓī lays down the conditions necessary for the attainment of knowledge, viz. senses in proper order, intelligence, and information. This last may be conveyed either by the universal assertion of a whole people whose agreement in a falsehood is not to be supposed possible, or through a prophet and attested by miracles. The Hindū pertinently replies that the consent of a whole people is unproven; and further, by this rule the miracles alleged to have been performed by the various *avatars* of the Hindūs must be accepted, as they are attested by the current report of a people much more numerous than the Arabs.

With respect to the untrustworthiness of tradition, the Hindū had some very forcible remarks to make. It is unworthy of credit, because it contains so many variations, not to say contradictions, both as compared with itself and also with the Qur'ān, *e.g.* in asserting the sinlessness of Muḥammad. Before the traditionary information respecting Muḥammad was written down, he says, 'it had already passed through three or four generations, who inquired eagerly after every scrap of knowledge [about their prophet] which their fathers could supply them with, and the consequence was that, in a century or two, these traditions had increased immensely. The first notice we have of their being collected in a book is at about the beginning of the second century of the Hijrah, when a number were committed to writing by Ṭabri, who died

A.H. 124.* But his work is not extant. The earliest collection of traditions is that made by Mālik ibn Anas, who died A.H. 179. We may therefore conclude that these traditions had been floating in the current talk of the Arabs for at least a century and a half after Muḥammad's death. The sort of material that these tradition-collectors had to work upon may be judged of from the fact that Bukhārī, the second traditionist whose collection is extant, is said to have discovered as many as 600,000 traditions in various countries, out of which he was obliged to reject 596,000 as utterly unworthy of credit.'† ‡

(*B*) *Some of the wonderful miracles attributed to Muḥammad* (*āyāt-i-iqtirāḥiyah*).—1. *The splitting of the moon* (*shaqqu'l-qamar*).—Several versions of the story are given from the Traditions by Koelle.§ A much more wonderful account than any of these was related by a Persian Sayid, of which the substance is as follows. One day Muḥammad ascended a mountain in the day-time, and at his command the sun set, and the full moon came into the middle of the heavens. At the prophet's word it descended from the sky, and circumambulated round the Ka'bah. It then became divided, and entered the neck of Muḥammad's shirt. One half came down one of his sleeves, and the other half down the other: thereupon they joined again, and the restored moon departed to heaven and set, and the sun rose again.

This, the most striking of Muḥammad's miracles, is the one for which the evidence is most deficient. The Qāẓī, in his controversy with the Hindū,‖ had *asserted that there was contemporary evidence for the miracle* on the strength of the statement in the *Rauzatu's-Safā*, that 'Alī ibn 'Alī 'Abbās and Ibn Mas'ūd, who were contemporaries of Muḥammad, testified to its truth. The Hindū rejoined that there is *no* contemporary evidence for the miracle. The nearest written testimony is that of a book written by one Ibn 'Īsā, about 100 years after Muḥammad's death, in which are mentioned the names of three contemporaries of Muḥammad who testified to the fact. The Qāẓī had also asserted that it was stated in several books that a certain Rajah had seen the phenomenon with his own eyes. To this the Hindū replies that he has made

* 'About a hundred years after Muḥammad, the Caliph 'Umar II. issued circular orders for the formal collection of all extant traditions' (Muir). The task was committed to Abū Bakr ibn Muḥammad, who died A.H. 120, aged 84. 'Abdu'l-Malik ibn Juraij of Mecca, who died A.H. 150, is by some mentioned as the first collector and compiler of traditions, while others say it was Imām Mālik, who died A.H. 179, and whose collection is still extant. Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Tradition.'

† The *Missionary*, May, 1853, pp. 143, 144.

‡ 'Abū Dāūd, out of 500,000 traditions which he is said to have amassed, threw aside 495,200, and retained as trustworthy only 4,800.'—Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, p. xxxvii.

§ *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, p. 437.

‖ See the Article on a recent publication, '*Baḥṣ Mufīd ul 'Ām fi Taḥqiq ul Islām*,' in the *Missionary* for April, 1853.

diligent search and can find no such statement, and asks where it is to be found.

The following arguments may be used against accepting as true the story of the moon-splitting:—

(i.) It is an impossibility (*muḥāl*), and God cannot do impossibilities. For example, God cannot put this garden into a match-box. It is an impossible thing.

God can of course do everything. Both reason and religion forbid us to set bound or limit to His almighty power. But He works through means (*asbāb*). This, which is the common belief of Muḥammadans and the opinion of philosophers, is contained in the well-known tradition, *Abā' llāhu an yajrīya'l-umūra illā bi-asbābi-hā*, 'God willeth not to bring things to pass except through their (appropriate) means.'

To return to the illustration just given; for bringing about the accomplishment of such a thing means are required, either the enlargement of the match-box, or the reduction of the size of the garden. But then the case will have been changed. It will not then be this garden or this match-box, with which we have to do.—Similarly with Muḥammad and the moon. Either his sleeves must have been wonderfully expanded, or the moon marvellously diminished in size. But in either case this is something different from the miracle alleged.

(ii.) It is incredible that all the world should not have seen it, everywhere at least where it was day at the time, *i.e.* half the world; whereas it is alleged that only the seven companions of Muḥammad, who were with him on the mountain at the time, witnessed it.

(iii.) If the moon-splitting really occurred, why did Muḥammad make no mention of it when asked for a miracle?

(iv.) It is not mentioned in the Qur'ān, which certainly would have been the case had it been a real miracle.

(v.) Abū Jahl, one of the seven companions of Muḥammad on the occasion, declared that it was magic.

(vi.) The assertion of this miracle is moreover contrary to the Qur'ān, for Muḥammad there says to the unbelievers that he is only a man like them, which he would not have been, if he had been able to perform such a wonderful miracle.

(vii.) Muḥammadans themselves are not agreed as to whether it is to be regarded as a miracle or not. Baiẓawī, commenting on Sūr. 54 *Qamar*, 1, states that some are of opinion that it was not a miracle performed by Muḥammad, but a sign of the last day, the past tense being used prophetically of future time: 'and Wāqidī in his traditions does not even allude to the Shaqqu'l-qamar as among the miracles of Muḥammad.' How then can it be appealed to as an undoubted miracle, since Muḥammadans themselves are divided in opinion on the point, 'many writers, with the text of the Qur'ān in their favour, holding it to be only a sign of the last day'? *

* Rev. W. O'B. Smith's controversy with 'the Amir,' 23rd Report of Calcutta Diocesan Committee of the S.P.G. for 1854.

Objection (1), against (iv.), *supra*. It may be asserted, on the strength of Sūr. 54 *Qamar*, 1, that the miracle of the moon-splitting is mentioned in the Qur'ān.

Answer.—(i.) The two verbs *iqtarabat* and *inshaqqa* in the verse alluded to, are both in the past tense, and are joined together by the conjunctive particle *wa*. They must both therefore refer to the same time. 'The meaning of the Arabic word Sā'atu,' says the Rev. O'B. Smith, already quoted, 'is Qīyāmat or resurrection, and . . . it is so rendered in the Tafsīr Ḥusainī. If, then, the moon has been already split, then has the resurrection also taken place, for the one event is coupled with the other.' But since the first, the resurrection, is still in the future, so also is the latter, the splitting of the moon, which is only one of the signs of the last day.

(ii.) Muḥammad in the Qur'ān, *loc. cit.*, does not attribute the miracle, if it be one, to himself.

(iii.) There is nothing in Sūr. 54 *Qamar* to lend support to the notion of a miracle. The words do not admit of this interpretation. The verse which is supposed to allude to it (ver. 1) is brief and compendious (*mujmal*), and gives no authority to the elaborate tradition mentioned above.

(iv.) The same phrase (*inshaqqa'l-qamar*) occurs in a poem of the Arab poet Imra'u'l-Qais, which was written before Sūr. 54 of the Qur'ān.

All the Arabs admitted that there was no one before Imra'u'l-Qais so eloquent as he was. The ode alluded to was one of the seven poems suspended in the Ka'bah (*sab'u mu'allaqāt*), which the Arabs themselves preferred as superior in eloquence to the Qur'ān.

Since there are many resemblances in Muḥammad's Sūrah to the ode of Imra'u'l-Qais,* the story is told that, after the appearance of that chapter of the Qur'ān, Imra'u'l-Qais declared that Muḥammad had stolen his words. It is also said that the following story is to this day current among the Arabs. Fāṭimah, the daughter of Muḥammad, was one day going along and repeating

* References to the poet Imra'u'l-Qais are also made in (*C*), p. 391, and Ch. IX., (A), 2, p. 464. Freethinking Persians bring forward his authority to prove the charge of plagiarism against Muḥammad, or of inelegancy in the composition of the Qur'ān. And on the other side the same authority is sometimes alleged to rebut the latter charge. As the poet died A.D. 540, thirty years before the birth of Muḥammad (Wherry's note to Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 103, quoting Muir's *Life of Mahomet*), the question arises, Can his name be used in this connexion in controversy with Muḥammadans?

The Rev. W. St. Clair-Tisdall, D.D., writes, 'The existence of the latter (the stories foisted upon Imra'u'l-Qais) is important as showing that Arabic scholars among Muslims have perceived certain defects (*i.e.* in the Qur'ān). They have ascribed their own objections to Imra'u'l-Qais, because of his fame. . . . The anachronism does not injure the argument that inelegancies do occur in the Qur'ān, though it lessens its authority.' He thinks it may be brought forward in discussions with Muslims, with the mention of Imra'u'l-Qais' name, but with some such prefix as, 'Learned men among yourselves have said,' etc.

the first verse of Sūr. 54, when she happened to meet the daughter of Imra'u'l-Qais, who exclaimed, 'O that's what your father has taken from one of my father's poems, and calls it something that has come down to him out of heaven.' *

The verse of the poem from which the plagiarism is alleged to have been made is as follows :—

Danati's-sā'atu wa'nshaqqa'l-qamar,
'An ghazālin ṣāda qalb-ī wa nafar.

'The resurrection is near, and the moon is split by means of the gazelle, who took captive my heart and fled.' The mention of the moon-splitting and the resurrection is here made in a figurative sense, to denote the excitement which agitated the poet's heart on the appearance of his beloved. He was not a Musulmān. There is no suggestion of a miracle in his words, nor in the similar verse of the Qur'ān. Muḥammad's words may possibly have just the same meaning as the poet's and be expressive of wonder and perturbation, or merely allude to the resurrection.

Objection (2) against (v.). An important difference between magic and miracles is this, that the former can only affect earthly things, while the latter are not so limited. In accordance with this distinction Muḥammad's splitting of the moon, since it did not affect earthly things, is a true miracle.†

Answer.—We grant that the magician has no real power over things in the heavens. But he is able to deceive the eye, and may, therefore, seem to be able to exercise his power even over these. He can do many wonderful things by the use of the means proper to his craft. The things which he *appears* to do, in reality do not take place at all, but are simply due to ocular deception, *e.g.* causing a single fountain to send forth streams of different coloured water, or making us imagine that we are now sitting in a garden, then in a desert, and again on a field of battle. Though the splitting of the moon were attested by many witnesses, which it is *not*, it would not thereby be proved to be a genuine miracle, and not magic.

2. *The night-journey* (*mi'rāj*).—The evidence of the Qur'ān for Muḥammad's night-journey is to be found in Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'il*, 1, 95. The latter verse ('neither will we believe thy ascending'), as Wherry in his edition of Sale's Qur'ān remarks *in loc.*, 'proves beyond reasonable dispute that the night-journey was represented to the Quraish as a real journey and not as a vision.' Hughes, in his *Dictionary of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Mi'rāj,' gives a full description of it, as it is related in the *Mishkātu'l-maṣābīḥ*. And in Weil's *Legends* will be found the long account of it as destined to take place in a later age, which Samuel is supposed to give to the assembled Israelites (pp. 146 *sqq.*).

* Dr. St. Clair-Tisdall's *Sources of Islām*, tr. by Sir W. Muir, p. 9; cp. the same author's *Original Sources of the Qur'ān*, pp. 47–50.

† Sayid 'Abdu'l-Ḥusain, *Kitāb-i-mubīn dar uṣūl-i-Dīn*.

The night-journey of Muḥammad from Mecca to the temple at Jerusalem and thence to Heaven, was one of the miracles of the prophet alleged by the Amīr in his controversy with the Rev. W. O'B. Smith, to which reference has several times been made. The following is Mr. Smith's reply :— *

There are so many contradictions and inconsistencies in the narrative of this journey, so many additions in later traditions which are not to be found in earlier ones, and such confusion of dates, that some writers to remove the difficulties have been under the necessity of supposing two night-journeys, while others again reckon four; but many hold that Muḥammad performed but one journey.

In my answer, after slightly touching on the improbability of the Mi'rāj, I pointed out to the Amīr :—

1st.— That it could not properly be said to be a *miracle* performed by Muḥammad. There was no supernatural effect wrought evident to the senses.

2nd.—There was no evidence for it beyond Muḥammad's own assertion. A miracle, to be credible, should be performed publicly, and in the presence of competent witnesses; but what sort of a miracle was this which was performed in the dead of night, and without a single witness? If such miracles are deserving of credit, then any impostor may claim to have performed a thousand miracles in secret.

3rd.—Every miracle must have an important end. What important end was served by this miracle?—and how comes it that Muḥammad never appealed to it in answer to the infidel Quraish, but answered their challenge by declaring, 'Verily miracles are with God alone'? (Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 109).

4th.—It is a disputed point, even among Muḥammadans, whether the Mi'rāj was a real occurrence, or only a dream, or a vision, and they who hold the latter opinion allege an express tradition of Mu'āwīyah (the fifth Caliph), who maintained that Muḥammad had told him it was a vision.†

5th.—It is stated in some traditions that Muḥammad passed the night on which it is supposed he performed the night-journey under the roof of Aurun Harri (? Omm Hani), and she declared that he had never once quitted the house during the whole night. She looked upon the Mi'rāj as a dream, and, though a firm believer in Islām, she yet strongly dissuaded Muḥammad from relating his dream, and drawing down ridicule on himself. ‡

6th.—Many of Muḥammad's followers were so scandalized at the Mi'rāj that they forsook him. So that the night-journey was not even credited by many at the time.§ How then could he [the Amīr] appeal to it as one of the indisputable miracles of Muḥammad?

* Twenty-third Report of Calcutta Diocesan Committee of the S.P.G. for 1854, pp. 40 *sq.*

† For a discussion of the point, see Sale and Wherry on Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'il*, 'According to 'Abdu'l-Ḥaqq, there are some divines who have regarded this miraculous event as a mere vision, but, he adds, the majority hold it to be a literal journey' (Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Mi'rāj').

‡ 'He was going forth to make the vision known, when she seized him by the mantle, and conjured him not thus to expose himself to the derision of the unbelievers' (Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, p. 117).

§ 'Though his Arabs were given to the marvellous, yet this staggered even their credulity, and would have proved his utter ruin but for the resolute interposition of Abū Bakr' (English translator's note to Weil's *Legends*, p. 146).

(C) The miracle of the Qur'ān (āyāt-i-kitāb).

From my own intimate acquaintance with the book, for I am an Arab, I know that it contains corruptions, that it is destitute of order, style, elegance, or accuracy of composition or diction. It contains contradictions from first to last; one sentence abrogates another, and the whole is puerile and weak; yet it is said that men and genii together could not produce its equal. The writings of Al Qais, and other poets and learned men, who lived at, or before the time of Muḥammad, are clearer, more eloquent, more elegant, and more subtle. Their discourses are deeper and plainer, and with them Muḥammad contested, when they questioned his rights and rejected his claims. I have read a so-called Qur'ān, written by Musailamah al Hanafī, without any of the aid and assistance which your friend (Muḥammad) received in his book. Had the former appeared before his, it would have been accepted and received as the orthodox revelation, supposing even it were brought forward on the plea of the beauty of language, elegancy and order alone.—Al Kindī, quoted in Arnold's *Islām and Christianity*, p. 325.*

On what grounds do Muḥammadans consider the Qur'ān to be miraculous? (1) First and foremost, because of its supposed inimitable eloquence; and further, because of (2) the absence of contradictions in it; (3) its acceptance; (4) its style; and (5) its prophetic utterances.

Before proceeding to the discussion of these in detail, we may pause for a moment to consider the inconclusive nature of the alleged miracle of the Qur'ān, as compared with the Gospel regarded as an evidence for the mission of Jesus. We should not think of resting the claims of Jesus upon the miraculous style and character of the Gospel viewed as a composition, and that only; but upon the many miracles recorded in the sacred volume. It cannot be said of Jesus, as of Muḥammad, that He relied upon the solitary miracle of His book. Suppose it were asserted of Jesus, as we Christians on the authority of the Qur'ān say of Muḥammad, that He had no other miracle beside His book, the obvious rejoinder would be that *He had*, because the miracles of Jesus are mentioned both in the Gospel and the Qur'ān. But if you Muḥammadans say that Muḥammad had other miracles beside the Qur'ān, we deny it, because they are not mentioned in that book.

(1) *The eloquence (faṣāḥat) of the Qur'ān.*—The inimitable eloquence of the Qur'ān is the chief argument put forward by Muḥammadans in maintaining its miraculous character. The Qur'ān itself distinctly asserts the same: 'Verily if men and genii were purposely assembled, that they might produce *a book* like this Qur'ān, they could not produce *one* like unto it, although the one of them assisted the other' (Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'il*, 90). See also 2 *Baqarah*, 23; 6 *An'ām*, 94; 10 *Yūnus*, 39; 11 *Hūd*, 14.

The chief counter arguments that may be brought forward are the following:—

(i.) A literary composition, however wonderful, is not a miracle.

* A note states that the above extract 'is copied from a manuscript version, which the Rev. A. Tien made from the Arabic original of Al Kindī.'

'A miracle is that which is outside the course of nature and its laws, such as raising of the dead. The composition of a book, however beautiful and grand, is not a miracle, but a wonderful work of man's genius, like those of the old Arab poets, as Imra'u'l-Qais, Mutanabbī, Harīrī, Ghaus, and Luqmān, who produced poems and tales of exquisite pathos and eloquence; and as these are not miracles, no more is the Qur'ān. Moreover, the greatest part of the stories, and the finest, are taken from the Old Testament; and certain of them, as the narrative of the creation, the flood, Abraham offering Isaac, the histories of Lot, Joseph, Moses, and Pharaoh, etc., are repeated over and over, some even as many as ten times, in different parts of the Qur'ān. If all these were taken away, what of the miracle would remain?' *

(ii.) This is a defective proof (*dalīl-i-nāqiṣ*). It is one which appeals only to the learned, and can only be appreciated by Arabic scholars, who are competent judges of eloquence and rhetoric. It can have little or no weight with the uneducated or those only moderately acquainted with Arabic. Such as these require miracles of a different order, which are within the scope of their comprehension. In short, the Qur'ān is no miracle at all to the vast majority. A miracle should be striking, unmistakable, self-evident, and capable of being tested.†

(iii.) There is practically no limit to the possibilities of eloquence, and, therefore, any previous effort may be surpassed in the future. A writer may arise in this age more eloquent than any before him; and the same thing may happen ten years hence, and again twenty years afterwards. Therefore, as there is no limit to possible attainment, we cannot call any exhibition of literary excellence a miracle, however wonderful it may be and surpassing all previous efforts, because it may in its turn have to yield the first place.

(iv.) The recognized eloquence of a book can only have reference to the particular language in which it is written. Granted the unsurpassed eloquence and perfection in style of the Qur'ān, what after all does it prove? This admission of excellence can only refer to the Arabic, not to other languages, in which it is possible that more elegant and eloquent compositions have been, or may yet be written. All that is intended to be conveyed is that it is regarded as superior to all other *Arabic* works. The highest productions of genius in any language can only be properly compared with other works in the same tongue, and, however unique, cannot be considered miraculous or divine.

In every country some man at one time or another arises with incomparable gifts of eloquence. That he should surpass and outstrip all his contemporaries, and even those of preceding and subsequent ages, is no miracle, nor is he looked upon as a prophet. But, if he were able to produce compositions of unmatched

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 141, 142.

† Cp. Rev. W. O'B. Smith's controversy with 'the Amīr.'

eloquence in every human language, as the 12,000 volumes of the Zendavesta are said to have been revealed in every human tongue,* that would be a miracle indeed.

(v.) If unsurpassed eloquence were the sign and proof of a prophet, we should not only have to allow the claim of Muḥammad and his Qur'ān, but be obliged to concede the same to the most eloquent writer in every language. In every art and science some men rise superior to others. Superiority of skill is not regarded as a proof of its being of divine origin. If literary beauty and elegance of composition constitute a miracle, then there are such in every language, *e.g.* Sa'dī's works in Persian, Kālidāsa in Sanskrit, Milton and Shakspeare in English, Homer in Greek, Virgil in Latin, etc.†

(vi.) Eloquence has to do with words; and we cannot admit that this alone, without reference to the meaning, is a proof of prophetic claims. For a true prophet might come and utter his prophecies in rude speech and inelegant language (cp. St. Paul, 2 Cor. x. 10); and on the other hand a false prophet might arise, speaking in language of inimitable force and beauty; and yet for all that be an impostor.

(vii.) Eloquence is an acquired accomplishment, and cannot, therefore, be reckoned a miracle. It is the result of learning, study, and converse with those renowned in this branch of art.

Illustration.—If a man claims to be a prophet, and when asked for proof alleges his power to heal the sick, which he proceeds to do by the administration of medicine, there is no miracle here, and consequently no proof, because the same knowledge and skill is in the power of any one else to acquire and use.

(viii.) Those who first accepted this proof were either not Arabs, as Salmān the Persian, or not educated Arabs as Miqdād, 'Ammār, Yāsir, or Maisam. How was it that this proof did not, generally speaking, commend itself to those who were renowned for eloquence, but chiefly to such persons as those just mentioned?

(ix.) At first only a small portion of the Qur'ān was delivered to Muḥammad's followers, and the whole was not collected into a book until after his death. How then could its eloquence be satisfactorily proved from only a small portion of it?

(x.) The eloquence of the Qur'ān is not unsurpassable. Those who were eloquent affirmed that they could, if they wished, bring passages like the Qur'ān; as in Sūr. 8 *Anfāl*, 31. 'And when our signs are repeated unto them, they say, We have heard; if we pleased we could certainly pronounce *a composition* like unto this.' They said further, that these words have been already uttered; they are stories and fables, and are foolish (cp. Sūr. 21 *Anbiyā'*, 5; 8 *Anfāl* 31, *fin*).

In this matter the masters of rhetoric and eloquence are the authorities to be listened to. (If a Persian is supposed to know

* *Apology* of Al Kindī, p. 99.

† Cp. Rev. W. O'B. Smith's controversy with 'the Amīr.'

English, who will be the best guarantee for him,—another Persian or an Englishman?) In a case of this kind we cannot properly judge for ourselves, but must defer to the opinion of experts, *e.g.* Imra'u'l-Qais,* who is said to have asserted that his verses were superior to the Qur'ān.

We grant that the beauty of the Qur'ān was acknowledged by Labīd ibn Rabī'ah, a poet, and 'one of the greatest wits in Arabia in Muḥammad's time.' † But others, whose judgment carries at least equal weight, have declared that it is possible to equal or surpass the Qur'ān. This was the opinion of the unbelievers in Muḥammad's own time (Sūr. 8, *Anfāl*, 31). The same view was shared by Ismā'īl ibn 'Alī, by the author of *Sharaḥ al Mukāf*, al Nudhām, the sect of the Mu'tazilahs, al Muzdār, the eminent Arabic scholar Sharestānī, and Al Kindī. The last mentioned argued in his *Apology*, 'that there were poets, such as Imra'u'l-Qais, and men of eloquence and oratory, without number before Muḥammad, whose productions surpassed his, both in conception and language.' ‡ This verdict is endorsed by European scholars, such as the late Dr. S. Lee, Professor of Arabic in the University of Cambridge, who held that the Qur'ān had been surpassed by the *Maqāmāt* of Hamadānī and the *Maqāmāt* of Harīrī.

(xi.) Objections raised by masters of rhetoric to some of the verses of the Qur'ān, on the score of their not being eloquent, (*a*) to (*d*), or as containing mistakes (*e*) to (*g*).

(*a*) *Tastahzi'ūna* (Sūr. 9 *Taubah*, 66) is inelegant, because difficult to pronounce (*taq'īd dārad*). This is according to the rules of the *'ilm-i-ma'ānī bayān*, or the science of adapting language to clear and accurate expression of thought.

(*b*) Kubbāran (Sūr. 71 *Nūḥ*, 21). This word is here used to express a very high degree of the quality (*mubālaghah dar ṣifat*), and not merely the comparative degree of it, which would be *akbar*. The word only occurs in this passage of the Qur'ān. In other places *kabīr* is used, which is the eloquent word to express the same meaning.

(*c*) *'Ujābun* (Sūr. 38 *Ṣād*, 4). The word occurs in the Qur'ān in this place only. It ought to be *'ajīb* for a similar reason to that given under (*b*).

(*d*) *Am abramū amran fa-innā mubrimūna* (Sūr. 43 *Zukhruf*, 79). According to the rules of the science above mentioned, this sentence is inelegant (*tanāfur-i-kalimāt dārad*), owing to the repetition of the letters *m*, *b*, and *r*.

(*e*) *In hāzāni la-sāḥirāni* (Sūr. 20 *Ṭā Hā*, 66), where the original reading was *inna*, afterwards altered to *in*. *Inna* requires the subject which follows it to be in the accusative case, which here

* See note on p. 385.

† Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 108.

‡ Cp. Arnold's *Natural History of Islāmism*, p. 425; Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, pp. 108, 113, and on Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 23; the Hindū's reply to the Qāzī (see *The Missionary*, for April and May, 1853); and Al Kindī's *Apology*, p. 80.

would be *hāzaini*. But as the text has *hāzāni*, the nominative, which is wrong according to the rules of grammar, *inna* was altered to *in*.

(*f*) In Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 177, *ṣābirīna* should be *ṣābirūna*, because it is joined by *wāw-i-'aṭf*, the copulative conjunction *wa*, to *mūfūna*.

(*g*) In Sūr. 12 *Yūsuf*, 29, *khāṭi'īna* should be *khāṭi'āṭin*, because it obviously refers to females.

(xii.) The use of foreign words in the Qur'ān. The following examples are given in the *Apology* of Al Kindī (pp. 79, 80 and the note), *namāriq* (Pers.) carpets or cushions; *mishkāt* (Abyssinian), a lamp; *sundus* (Pers.), silk; *istabraq*, satin, brocade; *abārīq*, plural of *ibrīq* (for the Persian *āb-rīz*), goblets. With reference to the force of this argument, Muir says, 'to the Arabs, who piqued themselves on the fulness and purity of their language, it would have a force of its own.' *

'Here is a defect,' says Al Kindī, 'either in the messenger or the message. If there be in the Arabic language no words to express the ideas, then the medium of communication, and therefore the message itself, is imperfect; if otherwise, the messenger.'

Objection to (1) (xii.).—In reply to the objection that might here be urged 'that the Arabic language was embodied in its poetry; that its vocabulary, drawn from that source, was limited thereby, and that the word (*e.g.*) for carpets (*namāriq*) was unknown,' Al Kindī answers, that this arose from the simplicity of the Arabs, who were innocent of such luxuries, but that in time the language became depraved by the introduction of foreign words, which surreptitiously, as it were, made their way into the literature of the country.†

Objection (2).—A learned man (so a Persian Sayid avers) once attempted to answer the argument drawn from the use of the words mentioned in xi. (*a*) to (*c*) above, by quoting the following story. Several persons having come to Muḥammad and objected to these words as not being eloquent, the Prophet asked them whom they regarded as the most eloquent man among the Arabs. They answered, Imra'u'l-Qais. ‡ So Muḥammad sent for him and made him sit down. But as soon as he had taken his seat, he told him to get up and sit in another place; and this he did several times, upon which Imra'u'l-Qais said, *A-tastahzi'ūnī yā rasūla' llāhi, wa anā min kubbāri'l-Quraishi? inna hāzā la-shai-un 'ujābun* (= 'Dost thou mock me, O prophet of God, whereas I belong to the great men of the Quraish? verily this is indeed a wonderful thing'), in which sentence occur the very three words adversely criticized above.

Answer.—(i.) We do not know that the story is true. It must first be proved to be so.

* Muir's edition of *The Apology* of Al Kindī, p. 80, note.
† *Apology*, p. 83.
‡ See note to p. 385.

(ii.) If an eloquent man uses language contrary to the rules of eloquence, this does not make his words correct. *Illustration.*—Educated people often do this, especially when speaking to the ignorant and uneducated, in order to make their meaning better understood. But this does not prevent their words being a transgression of the rules of correct and elegant language.

(iii.) Even if the words occurred in a written composition, the same would hold true.

Objection (3).—The unbelievers were challenged to bring a book or chapter like the Qur'ān; and since they could not do so they became the enemies of Muḥammad and fought with him. Had they been able, of course they would have done so, and not fought with the Prophet. From which we conclude that the Qur'ān is inimitable and miraculous.*

Answer.—The unbelieving Arabs did not recognize the force of the argument. Muḥammad was charged by them with receiving help from foreigners (see Sūr. 16 *Naḥl*, 105). His enemies declared that they could bring other words like the Qur'ān (Sūr. 8 *Anfāl*, 31). The question at issue, moreover, was the most important one of religion—not a matter to be settled offhand and carelessly. Hence they naturally preferred to fight, sooner than change their religion on the ground of proofs, which they did not believe or accept.

Objection (4).—Muḥammad was uneducated and illiterate (*ummī*), and his bringing such a wonderful book as the Qur'ān is therefore a miracle.

Answer.—Granted that Muḥammad was no scholar, in the ordinary sense of the word, and that there were few opportunities for a man to become one in that age and country; still his eloquence was no miracle, because it was in his own mother tongue. Had it been in a foreign language, the case would have been quite different, and there would have been some ground for looking upon his performance as a miracle. Eloquence can be acquired from the conversation and society of the learned and eloquent; and that Muḥammad had peculiar opportunities for this is clear from the fact that the Quraish were famous among the Arabs for the purity and excellence of their speech.

'Everything conceded, it is still within the limits of human intellect. The Taurāt and Gospel are not *miracles*, but a revelation; and miracles are given to prove the revelation. And then we all know in what way the various Sūrahs and verses of the Qur'ān were collected, and how difficult it would be, were we to demand legal proof, to make certain what portion of them really came from the Prophet himself.'†

Objection (5).—If the Qur'ān cannot as a mere composition be considered a miracle, it may still be argued that 'its elevated

* This and the following objection are from Sayid 'Abdu'l-Ḥusain's *Kitāb-i-mubīn dar uṣūl-i-dīn.*

† *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 142.

teaching and sentiment altogether surpassed the range and ability of the men of the time.' *

In answer to this 'Alī, one of the Christian respondents in *Sweet Firstfruits*, first of all admits that 'the intellectual power and spiritual elevation of Muḥammad are marvellous,' and then he gives a new turn to the discussion and asks, 'Wherefore was it that the Prophet fell back on the testimony of the Taurāt and the Gospel?' From this he goes on to show that Muḥammad omitted the most important truths contained in those Scriptures, and that the blessing promised to the world through Abraham's seed runs in the line of Isaac, not of Ishmael and the Arab nation.†

Objection (6).—'Each prophet had a peculiar gift bestowed on him of working only a certain class of miracles, adapted to the requirements of the time, and the particular science in which the people to whom he was sent excelled'—sorcery and magic in Moses' time; healing diseases in that of Jesus; rhetoric, eloquence and composition in Muḥammad's.‡

Answer.—The answer proceeds on false assumptions.

(i.) It is not true that the miracles of Moses and Jesus were limited to some one class or other, as the Pentateuch and the Gospel abundantly prove: *e.g.* in the latter are recorded the turning of water into wine, the feeding of multitudes, the walking on the sea and the stilling of the storm, over and above the healing of the sick and the raising of the dead.

(ii.) It does not appear either that the Egyptians 'devoted themselves exclusively to magic, or that it formed their highest accomplishment,' or 'that in the time of our Lord the science of medicine formed the chief subject of study, or that the Jewish physicians were more skilful then than at any other period.'

(2) *The absence of contradiction (ikhtilāf) in the Qur'ān.*—This is asserted in the book itself: 'Do they not attentively consider the Qur'ān? If it had been from any besides God, they would certainly have found therein many contradictions' (Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 81). It is one of the proofs alleged by Sayid 'Abdu'l-Ḥusain, in his *Kitāb-i-mubīn dar uṣūl-i-dīn*, to show that the Qur'ān is the word of God.

Answer.—(i.) On the contrary, there are a great number of contradictions in the Qur'ān, so that any one can prove anything he wants from it, *e.g.* Shī'ahs, Sunnīs, Ṣūfīs, which is rather a proof of its not being from God.

(ii.) The existence of abrogated and abrogating passages shows that it is not the word of God.

(iii.) But even granting the absence of contradiction, which is not the case, this will be no proof of its miraculous character.

(3) *The acceptance of the Qur'ān.*—The effect produced by the

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 142.

† *Ib.*, pp. 142 *sqq.*

‡ This objection and the answer are from the Rev. W. O'B. Smith's controversy with 'the Amīr.'

Qur'ān upon people (*taʾṯīr-āsh dar nufūs*) was so great, it is said, that they accepted it and its commands, and regarded it as the word of God.*

Answer.—(i.) It is true that at the first some people accepted it (*taṣdīq*), but many more rejected it as false (*takẓīb*). And so how are we to know that the opinion of the former is more worthy of acceptance than that of the latter? especially since those, generally speaking, who rejected it were themselves expert critics (*ahl-i-khibrah*), and much more numerous than those who accepted it.

(ii.) Most of those who accepted it, moreover, had some personal aim or object to serve, or some ambition, selfish or political, to further.

Objection to (i.).—In the *uṣūl-i-fiqh*, or first principles of law and theology, the principle is laid down that assertion is more worthy of credit than denial (*qaul-i-muṡbit bar nāfī muqaddam ast*) in a case where there is no contradiction involved between the two. Thus, for instance, a man says, I went into a garden and saw a donkey; and another man says, I went into the same garden and saw no donkey. Both may be right, because they may have gone different ways and the one seen the donkey whereas the other did not. There is, therefore, no hopeless contradiction here. Similarly, in the case before us, the opinion of those who accepted the Qur'ān is to be preferred to that of those who rejected it.

Answer.—This rule is not applicable to the question under discussion, because the two views, viz. the acceptance or rejection of the Qur'ān because of its divine character or the reverse, are diametrically opposed. Each side seeks to establish its own opinion and overthrow the opposite one by argument.

(4) *The style* (*uslūb*) *of the Qur'ān.*—It is asserted that the style of the Qur'ān is different from ordinary Arab diction, and from the usual nature of human speech.

Answer.—(i.) Its rhythmical style.—In Arabic and Persian there are three kinds of style: (1) simple prose, (2) rhyming poetry, and (3) a kind of jingling rhyme without metre, as, *e.g.* *ʿalīm*, *karīm*, etc., which frequently appear at the end of sentences in the Qur'ān.† This last is very common in Persian, but less so in Arabic.

The argument above is probably founded upon this feature in the style of the Qur'ān. (Compare also the charge that the Qur'ān was *ʿajamī*, foreign, a word applied by the Arabs more particularly to Persian, and Muḥammad's supposed indebtedness to Salmān the Persian; Sūr. 16 *Naḥl*, 105 and note.) This particular feature, which is found in other Arabic works besides the Qur'ān, as, *e.g.* the *Maqāmāt* of Ḥarīrī, the *Maqāmāt* of Ḥamīdī, and the *Maqāmāt* of Badīʿu'z-zamān, is not a novelty, and is in no sense miraculous.

(ii.) In most, if not all, writers and speakers there is something

* From *Kitāb-i-mubīn dar uṣūl-i-dīn.*

† Cp. Sale, *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 104.

special and peculiar to be observed in their diction and phraseology. This is not miraculous in their case; nor can it be so regarded in the case of the Qur'ān.

(iii.) Granted, however, that it is miraculous; then in all other languages every author who develops a special style, and every matchless writer, must be looked upon as inspired and his book divine.

(iv.) This proof is defective (*nāqiṣ*). As Muḥammad claimed to be sent to all people, the proof offered for his mission should be one which appeals to all, and all can understand. Whereas, on the contrary, the above argument is one which only Arabs are capable of justly weighing and appreciating; and not all Arabs either, but only the learned among them. For this reason the proof is an unsatisfactory one.

(v.) The style of the Qur'ān was not at the time regarded as unique. The experts among the Arabs, who were far better qualified than we are to judge of this point, said they could bring words like those (Sūr. 8 *Anfāl*, 31); they were *'ajamī* (cp. Sūr. 16 *Naḥl*, 105). They were probably referring to this special characteristic in the style of the Qur'ān, though they may also have referred to its general style or substance. (This is a strong argument.)

(vi.) Style (*uslūb*) refers to words only, not to the substance and meaning, and therefore cannot amount to a proof of miraculous origin without taking the latter into account also. It is possible (to take an extreme case) that a blasphemous book might be written which yet, as far as its literary form and style was concerned, might be a perfect composition.

(5) *Prophecies of future events* (*ikhbārāt-i-ghaibīyah*).—Four chief passages are brought forward from the Qur'ān to support this:—

(*a*) Sūr. 30 *Rūm*, 1, 2, which is supposed to allude to the 'remarkable victory' gained by Heraclius over the Persians in A.D. 625, and his subsequent successes against Khusrau Parvīz, which followed a previously uninterrupted course of victory maintained by the Persian king against the Greek empire for a period of twenty-two years (Sale, *in loc.*).

(*b*) Sūr. 54 *Qamar*, 45, and note—'The multitude shall surely be put to flight, and shall turn *their* back,' which prophecy, it is alleged, was 'fulfilled by the overthrow of the Quraish at Badr.'

(*c*) Sūr. 48 *Fatḥ*, 27, and note. The 'vision' refers to the entry of the Muslims into Mecca in security, and the 'speedy victory' to 'the taking of Khaibar' (Sale), or rather (Wherry suggests) to 'the conquest of Mecca and the establishment of Islām instead of the national religion.'

(*d*) Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 54, and note—'I will place those who follow thee [Jesus] above the unbelievers until the day of resurrection.' In this verse 'the allusion is . . . to the final and constant victory of Islām, and the followers of Jesus are here regarded as true Muslims.'

Answer.—(i.) Many such sayings have been uttered by generals similar to (*b*) and (*c*), in order to encourage their soldiers in face of superior forces. But they are not prophecies or miraculous.

(ii.) Clever, sagacious persons can sometimes accurately predict the course of future events where less discerning persons are at fault; as, for instance, in estimating the relative strength of two opposing nations, and the victory of one of them. (Wherry, on Sūr. 30 *Rūm*, 1, also adduces the frequent forecasts of political events made by our daily newspapers.)

(iii.) In one of the above passages (Sūr. 48 *Fatḥ*, 27) Muḥammad uses the expression 'if God please' (*in shā'a 'llāh*), which is quite contrary to the idea of its being a prophecy. It often happens that this pious phrase is used in reference to future events which turn out not to be in accordance with the will of God and do not take place.

(iv.) The assertion that the Qur'ān contains prophecies is rendered nugatory by the express words of the book itself, as, for example, 'Say, None either in heaven or earth knoweth that which is hidden, besides God' (Sūr. 27 *Naml*, 66). In both Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 49, and 7 *A'rāf*, 188, Muḥammad disclaims the knowledge of 'the secrets' of God, clearly denying his possession of prophetic insight. In the first of these two passages, the words 'that which is revealed unto me' cannot be pressed to include prophetic intimations of the future, which would be contrary to the former part of the verse. 'That which is revealed' here denotes nothing more than the commandments and directions of God, as shown by the words 'I follow.'

Muḥammad's assertion that no prophet would come after him has also been alleged as a prophetic utterance. This is based upon Sūr. 33 *Aḥzāb*, 40, where the title *khātamu'n-nabiyīna*, 'seal of the prophets,' *i.e.* last of the prophets, is given to Muḥammad; and upon passages in the Traditions, as, *e.g.*, those which assert that the ordinances of Muḥammad touching things lawful and forbidden (*ḥarām*, *ḥalāl*) will remain in force until the Resurrection.

Answer.—(i.) Then, if any other prophet should come the followers of Muḥammad will of course reject and refuse him!

(ii.) *Till when* does Muḥammad's assertion hold good? What is the time limit up to which it is declared that no other prophet will come? The Day of Judgment. Therefore, until then no one can know whether the prophecy has been fulfilled or not. Why should it be considered inconceivable that another prophet should arise after Muḥammad? In literature or the arts it is always possible that some one may arise superior to all who have preceded him.

(iii.) The argument in (iv.), immediately above, is equally applicable here, as well as to all the alleged prophecies of Muḥammad.

§ 2. **Predictions of Muḥammad in the former Scriptures (naṣṣ-i-amb̤iyā'-ye-dīgar).**—(1) *The origin of the idea.*—The part played by the Jews of Arabia at the time of the rise of Islām,

whether we regard them as witnesses for truth or sufferers of cruel injury and wrong, is a most unfortunate one.

How different the course of a considerable portion of the world's history might have been, had some earnest Christian, or even Jew, done for Muḥammad what Priscilla and Aquila did for the insufficiently developed religious views of the learned and enthusiastic Apollos, and taken him unto them, and 'expounded unto him the way of God more carefully' (Acts xviii. 24–26)!

After some hesitancy as to whether a true prophet might not arise from a branch of Abraham's seed other than the line of Isaac, the Jews generally dismissed Muḥammad's prophetic claims as not worthy of serious attention. Some of them, while outwardly professing a respectful acquiescence, secretly reviled and ridiculed them. No one then foresaw the vast political and national forces which the master mind and influence of the Prophet of Arabia were to rally round him for the support and extension of his system. The magnitude of the danger was not, and perhaps could not at that time have been foreseen.

On account of the influential position of the Jews and those of the Arab tribes and chieftains who had embraced the religion of Moses,* it seemed to Muḥammad well worth while to spare no pains to win them over to his side. And his efforts were rewarded with a certain measure of success. There were some among the Jews who accepted him (Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 160) and his alleged revelation (Sūr. 26 *Shu'arā'*, 197; 46 *Aḥqāf*, 9); and who further 'either believed or pretended to believe in Muḥammad as the promised Messiah' (Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'il*, 108, 109, and Wherry's note on the former verse). Hence Muḥammad says that the Jews of Mecca knew him, 'even as they know their own children' (Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 20), and that 'the wise men among the children of Israel' knew that his revelations were genuine (Sūr. 26 *Shu'arā'*, 197). *On the Jews, therefore, rests the grave responsibility of putting the idea into Muḥammad's mind, that the previous prophets foretold his coming*, of thus furnishing him with a valuable suggestion as to how he might buttress up his claims; and of placing this argument in the hands of Muslim controversialists for future ages.

But if a few Jews accepted Muḥammad, the greater number rejected him (Sūr. 98 *Baiyinah*, 3), to his chagrin and bitter disappointment, while indications of an insolent and contumacious spirit (cp. Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 14; 4 Nisā', 44) still further embittered his mind against them (Sūr. 58 *Mujādalah*, 21). Hence they are accused of obstinately refusing to believe (Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 147 *fin.*; 6 *An'ām*, 20 *fin.*), and of rejecting Muḥammad out of envy (2 *Baqarah*, 89; 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 19). And over and above this, the serious charges are preferred against them of concealing the truth (Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 41), perverting the words of Scripture (*taḥrīf*; Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 74; 4 *Nisā'*, 44), magnified in later times into the accusation of actual falsification of the Scriptures; reading out

* Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 64.

passages which they pretended were in their Scriptures (Sūr. 3 *Al 'Imrān*, 77); or bringing forward legends and traditions and assigning to them a divine authority (Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 78).*

(2) *The Qur'ān and Traditions perpetuate it.*—The idea having once taken root in Muḥammad's mind, that the Scriptures of the Jews and Christians could be made to attest his claims, proved far too valuable to be abandoned. We therefore find the notion carefully instilled into the minds of his followers both in the Qur'ān and the Traditions, that Muḥammad's advent is foretold both in the Law and the Gospel, and that he is even mentioned by name;—'the apostle, the illiterate prophet, whom they [the people of Moses] shall find written down with them in the law and the gospel' (Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 158); and again, 'Jesus the son of Mary said, O children of Israel, verily I *am* the apostle of God *sent* unto you, confirming the law which *was delivered* before me, and bringing good tidings of an apostle who shall come after me, *and* whose name *shall be* Aḥmad' (Sūr. 61 *Ṣaff*, 6).

Tradition, not content with these comparatively meagre allusions, enlarges upon the topic and attributes a number of different names to Muḥammad, which it alleges are to be found in the Scriptures of the Jews and Christians. 'According to a tradition of Ibn 'Abbās, the Propet said: "My name in the Qur'ān is Muḥammad, and in the Injīl Aḥmad, and in the Taurāt Aḥyad (from the root *ḥūd*, to shun), and I am called Aḥyad because I shun hell-fire more than any of my people"' (*An-Nawawī*, Wüstenfeld's edition, p. 28).† 'In the *Biography of the Prophet*, by Mian Aḥmad Zaini, of Mecca, there are given traditions from certain of the Companions of Muḥammad, who tell us that in the Taurāt there is a prediction of a great prophet to arise out of the seed of Ishmael, called Aḥmad; and that in the Psalms a variety of names are given to this coming prophet (as Hamyāt, Tāb-tāb, etc.); and in the Gospels, Baraklete, meaning Aḥmad, or "the Praised"; and further, it is said that Muḥammad himself told 'Umar that he had been foretold by these names.' ‡

The author of the Shī'ah work, the *Ḥayātu' l-Qulūb*, (Merrick's translation, p. 86), says, 'It is well known that his (the Prophet's) name in the Taurāt is *Mūādmūād*, in the Gospels (Injīl) *Tābtāb*, and in the Psalms (Zabūr) *Farakleet*.' And again (p. 308), 'God said to Jesus, O Son of My handmaid . . . verily I will send the chosen of prophets, Aḥmad, whom I have selected of all my creatures, even *Farakleet*, my friend and servant.' §

These traditions have not even the small merit of being in harmony with one another. In the passages above quoted 'Aḥmad' is said to occur both in the Pentateuch and Gospel, 'Tābtāb' in the Psalms and Gospel, and 'Paraclete' also in the Psalms and Gospel.

* Cp. Wherry on Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 44, quoting Muir's *Life of Mahomet*.
† Hughes, *Dictionary of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Muḥammad,' *ad fin.*
‡ *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 149, 150.
§ Hughes, *Dictionary of Islām*, *s. v.* 'Fāraqlīṭ.'

With regard to the curious title *Mūā'dmūād*, a Jew of some education in Shīrāz, when asked if it occurred in the Pentateuch, at once referred to Gen. xvii. 20, 'And as for Ishmael, I . . . will multiply him exceedingly,' where the word translated 'exceedingly' is in the original Hebrew *bi meod meod*.

A Persian gentleman in Shīrāz asked the writer whether Muḥammad had not been foretold in our Scriptures under the names *Qartāṭīlīyā* and *Ūqīqīlīyā*, which he said he had seen in one of his books. He promised to produce the passage, but never did so, and not very long afterwards died of cholera. Several other Persian friends were consulted, but none could give any information on the subject.

Do not the above throw some light on the sort of imaginary allusions in Scripture to Muḥammad with which he was favoured by his Jewish friends, and suggest that on one or both sides ignorance or disingenuousness played a considerable part? *

(3) *Muḥammadan arguments in justification of their position.*—Muḥammadans justify their assertion that their prophet' is foretold in the previous Scriptures by two arguments.

(*a*) If these prophecies, they say, had not been in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, the Jews and Christians would have accused Muḥammad of falsehood (*takzīb*), when he referred to them. But since they did not do so, it is clear that these prophecies were to be found in the Bible.

Answer.—(i.) It was not necessary that the Jews and Christians should come before Muḥammad and point this out. Their non-acceptance of him was sufficient proof of their disbelief in his claims. People would act in the same way now-a-days if any one came falsely claiming, on the ground of the Qur'ān, to have been entrusted with a divine mission. There is no *necessity* for those who reject the claimant to come forward and show the groundlessness of the proofs on which he relies. The very fact of their refusal to accept him shows that they do not admit the validity of his title.

(ii.) The Qur'ān was not collected into a single volume in Muḥammad's lifetime. The Jews, therefore, were largely unaware of its contents, and on this account unlikely to come forward and accuse Muḥammad of falsehood.

* The tendency among the Jews to discover names of an expected prophet or deliverer in the Hebrew Scriptures is not peculiar to the case of Muḥammad. I am indebted to the Very Rev. A. F. Kirkpatrick, Dean of Ely, for the following illustration of the way in which a word is turned into a sort of mystical name.' He writes, 'In Ps. lxxii. 17 occur the words . . . (Yinnōn shmō) "His name shall endure" or more literally "have issue." In Sanhedrin the Messiah's name'—with reference to Ps. lxxii. 17 and a play on their 98 b (a Talmudic treatise) 'we read The disciples of R. Yannai said "Yinnon is master's name." In Midrash Tillim (a kind of commentary on the Psalms) we read, "Why is the Messiah called Yinnon? Because he will make those who slumber in the earth spring up." See Levy-Fleischer, *Neuhebr. Wörterbuch*, ii. 246.'

(iii.) The force of this argument depends upon the proof of a negative (*idda'ā-ye-nafy-i-amr*), which is very difficult to establish. The Jews and Christians *may* have raised objections to the tracing of allusions to Muḥammad in their Scriptures, without our having any knowledge of the fact, and the contrary assertion is impossible to prove.

(*b*) It is said, again, that if these allusions had not been in the Scriptures, Muḥammad would not have made the assertion that they were, and so given the lie to himself (*mukazzib*).

Answer.—(i.) Muḥammad did not know Hebrew or Greek, so as to be in a position to examine the original authorities. His information rested on hearsay. He may have been told when travelling in Syria, or at a later time, that there were such and such expressions in the Bible. Or he may have been informed of it by friends, whose words he would naturally accept as true, and all the more readily because he hoped by this means to gain over the Jews and Christians; or perhaps by enemies, or flatterers, who pointed out to Muḥammad the existence of these supposed predictions of himself.

'The fact seems to be,' says the author of *Sweet Firstfruits*, (p. 155), 'that the Jews, knowing the Prophet to be unlearned, and wishing to curry favour, told him such-like stories, or rather, perhaps, told them to his Companions, and made them take it all in; and they, to aggrandize Islām, gave currency to the fictions; as if, forsooth, they were of the nature of evidence.' (The subsequent pointing out by the Jews of the mistake, or their denial of the existence of the supposed predictions, would be a most natural explanation of the charge of *taḥrīf*.)

(ii.) The great majority of 'the faithful' were not well acquainted with the Qur'ān; so that Muḥammad could safely make such assertions, without fear of their being challenged. And besides that, those who had a thorough knowledge of the Qur'ān were of course staunch believers in Muḥammad, and never doubted or questioned what he said.

(4) *General answer to the whole question.*—(i.) Prove our Scriptures to be false, or else accept their contents as they stand.

(ii.) In a matter of this kind it is right and reasonable to consult the guardians of the books in question as to their contents.* If, then, you ask us about these predictions of Muḥammad supposed to be found in our Scriptures, we answer, It is certain they are not in any of the present copies or of the most ancient ones that we possess. Take these Scriptures of ours in any language you please (Hebrew, Greek, Persian, Hindūstānī, Arabic, etc.) and you will not find Muḥammad's name in any of them.

* Cp. the words put into the mouth of the Muftī (*Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 154), 'Thinking that possibly they [predictions of Muḥammad by name in the Bible] might have been expunged by the Christians, I once referred to a Jewish rabbi of known probity, who assured me, on the most solemn of Jewish oaths, that there was no mention of such things in their Scripture.'

(This straightforward definite pronouncement is better than to attempt to put the Muḥammadan in a corner by pressing him to point out the particular passage or passages containing Muḥammad's name. We know it cannot be done. And our friend, even if able to read, will most probably not have read the whole Bible. His only resource, then, will be to shirk the challenge, and the question will be shelved, and no satisfactory conclusion arrived at.)

Objection (1).—Why, then, is it said in the Qur'ān that these predictions *are* in the Law and the Gospel?

Answer.—Naturally Muḥammad felt that if he came in Jesus' name and with His authority, he would have greater influence; just as an earthly messenger's prestige is increased if he can produce the authority and commission of a provincial governor or, still more so, of his Sovereign. No doubt Muḥammad had heard, or been told by designing people, that his name was in the Scriptures, and he gladly seized the opportunity of enlisting such strong evidence on his side as that of Jesus.

Objection (2).—The present Bible is corrupt.

Answer.—When did this corruption take place, while our earliest copies have no trace of it? We have the testimony of the Qur'ān that those existing in Muḥammad's day were genuine. If you know that these we now possess are corrupt, produce the genuine Book that we may compare the two side by side.

(iii.) If God designed to give this testimony to Muḥammad, it is extraordinary that He should have allowed the Book containing it to become corrupted, and the testimony lost.

(iv.) If God is just, how can He hereafter execute vengeance upon Christians for not believing in Muḥammad, when there is no evidence for the truth of his claims, in spite of the assertions of the Qur'ān, to be found in their Gospel? This being so, how could God justly punish them?

(v.) These allegations about Muḥammad's having been foretold in the Bible and even alluded to by name, lose all force when we consider to what length of extravagance tradition has gone. In the passage preceding that quoted from the *Biography of the Prophet* (p. 399, *supra*), 'the Prophet is represented as telling 'Umar that it was he who gave the Taurāt to Moses, the Psalms to David, and the Gospel to Jesus; foolish things, opposed both to Scripture and reason, which unscrupulous people have foisted upon Muḥammad, to magnify him in the eyes of the simple and credulous. Can any faith be put in such effusions? What thinkest thou, my friend?' *

Conclusion.—The general inference which may be drawn from the above considerations is this. If the predictions, distinctly asserted by Muḥammad to be found in the Scriptures, are not really there, what are we to think of his prophetic claim? If deceived by the Jews of Mecca, how can he be any longer regarded as a true prophet? And, 'if liable to be deceived in other

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 151.

matters, why not in the Qur'ān itself, which contradicts both the Old Testament and the New, especially as regards the nature and the death of the Messiah?'* (It will be obvious that such telling inferences are only to be set forth with prudence and judgment.)

(5). *Consideration of particular passages.*—(*a*) Deut. xviii. 15, 18. This passage and the references to the Paraclete (*b*) are the most famous texts which are pressed into the service of Islām to justify the allusions in the Qur'ān to supposed predictions of Muḥammad in the Law and the Gospel. For this reason they claim our first attention.

Muḥummadan tradition says that 'Moses, who now anticipated his approaching end, pronounced a long discourse before the Israelites, in which he enforced on them the most important laws. At the close he warned them against falsifying the law, which had been revealed to them, and in which the future appearance of Muḥammad, in whom they were all to believe, was quite clearly announced,'—obviously alluding to the passage in Deuteronomy.†

The crucial point is the interpretation of the words '*of thy brethren*' (ver. 15; cp. 'from among their brethren,' ver. 18), which Muḥammadans explain to mean Ishmael and his descendants. The Muḥammadan case is well put by the Qāẓī, in *Sweet Firstfruits* (pp. 147, 148), thus: 'The prophet was to be "of thy brethren," *i.e.* not of the Banī Isrā'il. Moses is addressed in person; and so also the race of Moses, the Banī Isrā'il, signifies a single race; and the prophet was to be of their brethren, not one of themselves. Again, he was to be a prophet like unto Moses, a lawgiver, leader and commander, to execute judgment on the heathen; not like Jesus, the meek and lowly. Who could this be but Muḥammad, the Quraishite, who answers every way to the description?'

Answer.—(i.) '*Of thy brethren*' (ver. 15). In ch. xvii. 15 the same expression is used about the king whom the children of Israel should appoint over them, 'one *from among thy brethren* shalt thou set king over thee,' *i.e.* the king was not to be a stranger but one of themselves; and the same applies to the coming prophet.‡ Cp. too, ch. xv. 7 and xxiv. 14.

(ii.) '*From the midst of thee*' (ver. 15). These words can only mean the children of Israel. As though the expression just mentioned might not be sufficiently precise, this phrase is added still further to define and emphasize the limitation conveyed by the words '*of thy brethren*.' The reference is therefore made in the strictest manner to the Banī Isrā'il. Was Muḥammad a Jew? No. But Jesus, son of Mary, was, according to the flesh.

(iii.) '*Like unto me*' (ver. 15; cp. 'like unto thee," ver. 18). This refers to the race (*khānah-wādah*) of Moses. It cannot refer to the Law of Moses: if so, the law of Muḥammad would have had to be in all respects similar to that of Moses; whereas they

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 155. † Weil, *Legends*, p. 189.
‡ *Ib.*, p. 148.

are different. This being so, the words must refer to Christ, who like Moses sprang according to the flesh from the children of Israel.

(iv.) Christ alludes to this prophecy of Moses and refers it to Himself (St. John v. 46). After this, no one can dare to give a different interpretation. It was similarly referred to Christ by the Apostles Philip (St. John i. 45) and Peter (Acts iii. 22), and by their companion Stephen (Acts vii. 37).

(v.) We have in the Scriptures various other predictions, which tell us expressly that the Messiah was to come of Isaac's seed. If any one objects that Deut. xviii. 15, 18 is brief (*mujmal*) and vague, and has no particular detailed reference (*bayān*) to Christ, this is the answer we give.

(vi.) Granting that the verses are *mujmal*, this alone is not enough to show that they refer to Muḥammad, for this very reason that they *are mujmal*. Muḥammadans also acknowledge the prophetic office of Jesus, and that he was the successor of Moses and foretold by him. They cannot, therefore, consistently with their own approved opinions, deprive these verses of their reference to Christ and apply them to Muḥammad. *Illustration.*—Suppose I ask a friend to give me one of two books lying on the table near him, but do not specify which of them I want; and he knows that one of them is a book I am devoted to and in the habit of constantly reading: which of the two will he give me? The latter, of course.

(vii.) In accordance with the received opinion of Muḥammadans, that a prophet foretells the one who is to succeed him, Moses foretold Christ, and had no need to foretell Muḥammad. Had he predicted Muḥammad's coming, and passed over Christ, there would have been a break (*fāṣalah*) in the prophetic chain. If Muḥammad was to be foretold at all, it was for Christ, not Moses, to foretell him.

(The arguments given above are quite sufficient for ordinary purposes. A detailed working out of the points of resemblance between the two great prophets of the Jewish and Christian dispensations is only useful for persons of good education or exceptional intelligence.)

The most striking resemblances are the following: (1) Moses spoke with God* (hence his title of *Kalīmu'llāh*) and was the mouthpiece of God to the Israelites; Jesus is the 'Word of God,'† and giver of the Gospel; (2) Moses was mediator of the old covenant between God and the Israelites; Jesus, the mediator of the new—that is, of grace and mercy, between God and man; (3) Moses was the leader of his people to the promised land; Jesus, to the rest above; (4) Moses delivered his people out of the bondage of Pharaoh; Jesus delivers from Satan; (5)

* Ex. xxxiii. 9, 11; cp. Deut. xxxiv. 10.

† *Cp.* Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān, 39,* '*the Word (which cometh) from God*'; 4 *Nisā', 169,* '*the apostle of God, and His Word, which He conveyed into Mary.*'

Moses fought against the enemies of the Lord; Jesus will shortly destroy His enemies, and put all things under His feet.*

Objection.—'These similarities are all, excepting the first two, spiritual, whereas what we are led to expect is an outward and material likeness.'

Answer.—'Surely the spiritual similarity is what is meant. But now, as regards Muḥammad, there are these points of essential difference: Moses showed wonderful miracles, Muḥammad none; Moses fed his people forty years in the wilderness with bread from heaven. Wherein is there any resemblance here?' †

(*b*) St. John xiv. 16, etc.—The promise of the Paraclete, Arabicized into *fāraqlīṭ* (see the quotations from Muḥammadan writers, p. 399, *supra*) is referred by Muslims to their prophet.

Much ignorance, however, prevails among them about the meaning and history of the word, the author of the *Ḥāyātu'l-Qulūb*, for instance, asserting that it is to be found in the Psalms. The most commonly received opinion is that it denotes *Aḥmad*, 'the most praiseworthy,' a derivative from the same root from which Muḥammad, 'highly praised' comes. Muḥammadans do not as a rule affirm that the word Aḥmad itself (Sūr. 61 *Saff*, 6) occurs in the Injīl, but Fāraqlīṭ with the meaning Aḥmad. Hughes tells us that 'in the *Majma'u'l-Biḥār*, a work written three hundred years ago, the word *fāraqlīṭ* is said to mean a distinguisher between truth and error.' ‡ This derivation evidently connects the word with *farq* = splitting, separating, from which come *fāriqāt*, 'angels who distinguish the lie from the truth,' and *furqān* = any sacred book as distinguishing truth from error, a name specially applied in the Qur'ān to the Pentateuch (Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 52; 21 *Anbiyā'*, 49) § and to the Qur'ān itself (Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 185; 3 *Al 'Imrān*, 3; 25 *Furqān*, 1). The meaning of the word Paraclete, as will be seen later, is a crucial point here, just as the signification of 'of thy brethren' (Deut. xviii. 15) was in the previous case.

The origin of this curious perversion of Scripture is obscure. Hughes ‖ thinks it 'not improbable' that the word Paraclete in St. John xvi. 7 was erroneously written *periclyte* (περικλυτός) = 'famous,' 'renowned,' in some imperfect copies, and that this latter was translated Aḥmad in some early Arabic version of the Gospel. It was then eagerly caught hold of by Muḥammad and his followers as a prediction of his coming. And so all the Muḥammadan doctors say that Aḥmad, *i.e.* Muḥammad, is the promised Paraclete.

Muir says that Aḥmad was employed as a translation of

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 148, 149.

† *Ib.*, p. 149.

‡ *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Fāraqlīṭ.'

§ The same expression is uniformly applied to the Pentateuch in the Commentary of Ephraim the Syrian on the Old and New Testaments (Wherry on Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 52).

‖ *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Fāraqlīṭ.'

Paraclete in some Arabic version of the Gospel.* But, says 'Abd 'Isā, it is 'a supposition which has never been proved,' and had it occurred, 'this would have been a wrong translation, arising either from want of knowledge or good faith.'†

Wherry‡ gives quite a different explanation. He thinks that 'Muḥammad probably got the notion that he was the Paraclete from Christian perverts to Islām, who had previously been adherents to some form of the old Manichean heresy, such heretics having sought refuge from persecution by flight to Arabia.'

Sale§ apparently traces the insertion of *periclyte* for *Paraclete*, not, as Hughes, to imperfect copies of the Gospel, but to an Italian or Spanish version of 'a gospel in Arabic, attributed to St. Barnabas.' Of this the Moriscoes in Africa have a Spanish version, and an Italian translation also exists. The Spanish copy seen by Sale was said on the title page to be translated from the Italian. He considers it to be 'a most barefaced forgery' in the interest of Muḥammadanism, put together by a renegade Christian only imperfectly acquainted with his new religion, as he gives the title Messiah in several places to Muḥammad, whereas it is in the Qur'ān a title of Jesus, and is never applied by Muḥammadans to their own Prophet.‖

As to the date and original language of the *Gospel of Barnabas*, Canon L. Ragg thinks that the original was written in Tuscany in the Italian language during the thirteenth or early part of the fourteenth century, and that the compilation in that case probably must be the work of a Christian renegade, perhaps an apostate Templar.¶ The Arabic *Gospel of Barnabas* alluded to by Sale (*v. supra*), and Hughes** who says that, 'The Muḥammadans assert that a gospel of Barnabas existed in Arabic,' will be a translation into that language of this Italian original, or a version of it.

Further, as to the application of 'Paraclete'* to Muḥammad, Canon Ragg says, 'Whatever Toland may have found in the complete Spanish version, we have not found in the Italian text the title Paraclete ascribed to Muḥammad, who is most often entitled *il splendore* and *il nontio*.' In a note to this passage he adds, 'Toland's remark seems to be based upon the *Arabic gloss* on p. 46b, which runs thus: *in the Arabic tongue* Aḥmad, *in the Amran tongue* Anointed, *in the Latin tongue* Consolator, *in Greek* Paracletus.'††

The mistaken reference of the Paraclete to Muḥammad may be met in the following way:—

(i.) If you say that Muḥammad's name is in the New Testament, you must show me chapter and verse to prove it.

* *Life of Mahomet*, p. 5.
† *Food for Reflection*, p. 41.
‡ On Sūr. 61 *Ṣaff*, 6 (Sale's Qur'ān).
§ *Prelim. Disc.*, pp. 123, 124.
‖ Preface to Sale's Qur'ān, pp. 10, 11.
¶ *Journal of Theological Studies*, April, 1905, pp. 431–433.
** *Dict. of Islām, s.v.* 'Barnabas, Gospel of.'
†† *Journal of Theological Studies*, April, 1905, p. 425.

And if you refer me to the texts where the Paraclete is spoken of, it rests with you to prove that Paraclete = Aḥmad. It is a pure and simple mistake to say so. *We* know that Paraclete means Comforter. Those who said that it = Aḥmad, did not know Greek. Those who do, translate it Comforter (or Advocate, or Helper, R.V. *marg.*). *Illustration.*—If you are studying an English reading-book, and your teacher tells you that horse = *asp*, and you deny this and say, No, it means *sher* = lion, you must bring forward proper arguments to prove it, viz. the use of the word by *English* speakers and writers. Similarly, if you wish to prove that Paraclete = Aḥmad, you must do so from authentic books, not written by Muḥammadans; for in this matter I cannot accept what your Muḥammadan books say.

(ii.) If you say that Muḥammad is the Paraclete, read the passages which tell you about this Paraclete, His coming and subsequent work, in the Gospels (St. John xiv. 16, 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7, cp. St. Luke xxiv. 49), and Acts of the Apostles (i. 4, 5; ii. 33), and in the Epistles; and you will then be able to judge for yourself whether Muḥammad can possibly be meant by the promised Paraclete or not. The following are the chief points in the Gospel and Acts:—

'*That He may be with you for ever*' (St. John xiv. 16). Muḥammad did not remain with his followers for ever.

'*It* (*the world*) *beholdeth Him not*' (ver. 17). Hence He had no visible outward form. How then can these words be applied to Muḥammad?

'*He abideth with you*' (*ib.*). But the Apostles did not even see Muḥammad.

'*And shall be in you*' (*ib.*). This is manifestly an impossibility.

'*He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you*' (ver. 26). Christ told His Apostles that the Paraclete would do this for them. How is it possible to apply the words to Muḥammad, who came so many years afterwards, when the Apostles had been dead hundreds of years?

'*He charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father*' (Acts i. 4). The Apostles then ought not to have left Jerusalem, but stayed there till their death. And further, the command of Christ, on the supposition that He was speaking of Muḥammad, was a futile one. To accomplish its fulfilment Muḥammad should have come in those days.

All the above particulars, which were *not* fulfilled if the words be applied to Muḥammad, received an actual and literal fulfilment in the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, and the subsequent work of the spirit-filled Apostles.

Objection.—The following objection was made by an educated and thoughtful Persian. Christ's promise of the Paraclete cannot refer to the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, as the Holy Spirit (as was admitted) was already in the world, and was possessed by Apostles, etc. Hence it must refer to some one who

was to follow, *i.e.* Muḥammad. It is a simple question, so it was urged, of being or not being. If the Holy Ghost was already *in the world*, the promise could not have been given that He should *come*.

Answer.—(i.) The Holy Spirit's being manifested or not manifested has nothing to do with His already being or not being in believers' hearts. He *was*, of course, in the world before; but He was manifested at the time promised. In a similar way, God always *is* in the world, and has manifested Himself from time to time. We cannot say that He was *not* in the world, because He afterwards manifested Himself. *Illustration.*—There are apples every year. They grow on the trees and ripen. We cannot argue that there were no apples previously, because this year's crop grows and ripens. They always *are* in the nature of the trees, and appear at the yearly season.

(ii.) All the commentaries I have ever seen take this view. If you put forward something different, you must adduce proof for it from our recognized Christian writers.

(*c*) Psalm xlv. 3.—This cannot be applied to Muḥammad for the following reasons:—

(i.) The words are *quite general*. It is not clear whether they refer to past or future time.

(ii.) The speaker is God, and on the Muḥammadan's supposition, such an expression is only used here of Muḥammad. And being the sole passage, and so vague and doubtful as to its reference to him, we cannot safely draw any such conclusion.

But, on the contrary, there are various other places (*e.g.* Ps. ii.) where Christ is thus spoken of without any ambiguity or doubt as to the reference.

(iii.) Muḥammadans take the words 'thy sword' literally, but are wrong in so doing. All the expressions, 'mighty,' 'sword,' 'glory,' 'majesty,' have a metaphorical, not a literal meaning. The 'glory' for instance is of a spiritual kind, not of this world, but that which Jesus essentially had. Muḥammad's might was of this world; not so that of Christ (cp. St. John xvii. 5, 'the glory which I had with Thee before the world was'; xviii. 36, 'My kingdom is not of this world. . .').

(iv.) In Heb. i. 8, 9, verses 6 and 7 of this Psalm are quoted and applied to Christ.

(*d*) Isaiah xlii. 1–4.—(i.) The not breaking of the 'bruised reed,' and the not quenching of the 'smoking flax' ('dimly burning wick,' R.V. *marg.*) refer to the patience and gentleness of Christ, and apply naturally to His mild and compassionate character, but not to Muḥammad.

(ii.) In St. Matt. xii. 18–21 these verses are applied to Christ by the Apostle St. Matthew; and we cannot therefore give them a different interpretation.

(*e*) St. Matt. iii. 11, '*He that cometh after Me*'; xi. 3; '*He that cometh.*'—(i.) Muḥammad did not possess the signs which John the Baptist predicted should characterize the coming One, viz. the

descent and abiding upon him of the Holy Spirit (St. John i. 33), and baptizing with the Holy Ghost and with fire (St. Matt. iii. 11; cp. St. John i. 33).

(ii.) If you say that John in these words is referring to Muḥammad, you pass over Jesus. 'The coming one' means the next to come, and, if applied to Muḥammad, excludes Jesus. And thus His right to claim the prophet's office and give commands to men is done away with, contrary to the Qur'ān and the common belief of Muḥammadans.

(iii.) St. John expressly points to Jesus as the One Whose coming after him he had foretold (St. John i. 29–34).

(*f*) St. John i. 21, '*Art thou the prophet?*'—This passage refers to the prediction of the Messiah in Deut. xviii. The Jews were clearly expecting some one. Now, every prophet, as you believe, gives intimation of the next one following him in order (*bih tartīb*). If this and similar prophecies refer to Christ, there is no difficulty in their interpretation. But if you say that they refer to Muḥammad, whereas all Muḥammadans know that Christ came after Moses, then what becomes of Jesus? You rob Him of His dignity and office, and, by thus passing Him by, reduce Him to the level of a mere man.

(*g*) St. John xiv. 30, '*The prince of the world.*'—A similar expression, 'the prince of this world,' occurs in ch. xii. 31; xvi. 11, and evidently refers to Satan in both these places. And, therefore, in the former also it must have the same signification.

A few general remarks may be made on the application of such passages of Scripture as those given above to Muḥammad.

(i.) They cannot be interpreted of Muḥammad, because of the particular references they contain to Christ.

(ii.) A good general argument against their application to Muḥammad is that they are brief (*mujmal*) and vague; and contain nothing of such a special nature as to fix with certainty their reference to him.

(iii.) If the Muḥammadan urges the same argument, viz. that the passages are *mujmal* against interpreting them of Christ, it may be answered that such vague solitary references cannot, at least with any confidence, be regarded as pointing to Muḥammad; while their reference to Christ is borne out by many other passages.

(iv.) Lastly, the attempt to find predictions of Muḥammad in the Scriptures is, to say the least, based on ignorance of their true scope and purpose. Such discussions, therefore, should be avoided or cut short. What above all is to be guarded against is unsatisfactory and inconclusive discussion of particular details as to whether they can or cannot be referred to Muḥammad rather than to Christ.

(*h*) A few other passages (gathered from different sources) brought forward by Muḥammadans with the same object may be briefly mentioned in conclusion:—

Gen. xvii. 20, 'In which God gives a promise of blessing to Ishmael, is made to apply to Muḥammad.'* **Deut. xxxiii. 2,** 'In this passage Sinai means Moses, while Seir means Galilee, in a village of which the Messiah dwelt. Mount Paran means the Revelation of Muḥammad, because "Paran" is a mountain in the neighbourhood of "Mecca"!'† The 'fiery law' is the law of Islām. **Deut. xxxiv. 10,** 'There hath not arisen a prophet since *in Israel* like unto Moses.'‡ **Ps. l. 2,** 'Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined forth.' '"Zion" means "Mecca" and "perfection of beauty" should be translated "a desirable crown" (*Iklaila Mahmudan*), meaning "Muḥammad."'§ **Isaiah ix. 6,**‖ 'The government shall be upon His shoulder' was explained of the *muhr-i-nubūwah, khātimu'n-nubūwah*, or seal of prophecy, said to have been upon Muḥammad's shoulder, described by Tirmidzi as a fleshy tumour the size of a pigeon's egg, the surface extremely rough, and covered with hair, and the edges surrounded with moles. 'Everlasting Father' was said to mean that Muḥammad was the father of the Qur'ān which was eternal. 'Prince of Peace': after all the admissions previously made by 'the Amīr' about Muḥammad's warring and killing, this expression caused him some difficulty, but was considered to mean that 'the authority of Muḥammad's religion should be permanent.' **Isaiah xxi. 7–9,** 'A troop of camels' was declared to point clearly to Muḥammad, while it was admitted that there was some reference to Jesus in the passage on account of the expression, 'a troop of asses.'¶ 'All the graven images of her gods are broken unto the ground,' is referred to Muḥammad as a destroyer of idols. 'He shall hearken diligently with much heed' is also applied to Muḥammad and said to mean, 'he was instructed as a true prophet.'** Muḥammadans have also brought forward the LXX version of **ch. xxi. 7,** 'a rider on an ass and a rider on a camel,' and said that 'we are to understand the rider on the ass to refer to Jesus, who so entered Jerusalem, while the rider on a camel refers to Muḥammad.'†† **Isaiah xlii., lxi.**: In the Traditions of the Secretary of Wāqidī, accommodations of passages from these two chapters are strung together and referred to Muḥammad; while 'in one set of traditions from 'Āyishah, she speaks of them as prophecies from the Gospel, in ignorance that they are quoted there (St. Matt. xii. 18) as applying to Jesus.'‡‡ Thus we see how fruitful at an early date was

* Wherry's *The Muḥammadan Controversy*, p. 4.
† *Id., ib.*
‡ Wherry's note to Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 126.
§ Wherry's *The Muḥammadan Controversy*, p. 4.
‖ Rev. W. O'B. Smith's controversy with 'the Amīr,' 23rd Report of the Calcutta Diocesan Committee of the S.P.G. for 1854.
¶ But compare the tradition of the Secretary of Wāqidī; 'Muḥammad's humility was shown by his riding upon asses' (Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, p. 509).
** Rev. W. O'B. Smith's controversy with 'the Amīr.'
†† Wherry's note to Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 126.
‡‡ Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, p. 508.

Muḥammad's idea of pressing Scripture into his service. **Isaiah liii.**: Indian Musulmāns of late seem rather fond of trying to see allusions to their Prophet here. The Rev. H. D. Goldsmith relates that this chapter was on two different occasions and by two different Maulawīs applied to Muḥammad; 'the "dry ground" being Arabia; the death being metaphorical; "dividing the spoil" referring to the warlike character of Muḥammad's mission; "seeing his seed" being fulfilled in the numerous natural descendants of the False Prophet; and "made his grave with the wicked" alluding to his burial at Medina!' * 'With the Muḥammadans of the other sect, too,' writes the Rev. A. D. Henwood, Junnar, W. India, † 'I have had many discussions which centered round **Isaiah liii.**, which they do not allow to refer to Jesus Christ, and concerning the true interpretation of which lengthy extracts from a Muḥammadan commentary were read.' **Isaiah lxiii. 1–6,** 'Who is this that cometh from Edom?' etc. **Habakkuk iii. 3,** 'God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran,' which the Muslims declare to be Mecca. ‡ The Rev. S. G. Wilson speaks of the kalāntar or 'chief alderman' of a Persian town, who 'found in the prophecy of Habakkuk of the Holy One from Mount Paran, who drove asunder the nations, a prediction of Muḥammad.' § The same verse is also said to refer to Muḥammad by name, in the words 'the earth was full of his praise,' for this reason, that 'the Hebrew word translated "Praise" is the same as Aḥmad (meaning *Praise*),' or rather, 'more or most praiseworthy.' ‖ **Haggai ii. 7,** here the word for 'desirable things' (Heb. *desire*, R.V. *marg.*) is חֶמְדָּה, which is translated 'beloved' in Cant. ii. 3; the radicals of the word are the same as those of Muḥammad and Aḥmad. ¶ **Revelation vi. 4,** the rider on the red horse.

§ 3. **Muḥammad's supposed sinlessness ('iṣmat).**—'One of Lull's arguments, given in his controversial books, consists in presenting to the Saracens the Ten Commandments as the perfect law of God, and then showing from their own books that Muḥammad violated every one of these divine precepts.' ** We have, however, no need to revert to this crude method of showing that Muḥammad was a great sinner, and therefore no prophet. And it is, moreover, an unsuitable argument, because it is open to the obvious retort, 'You Christians attribute sin to Balaam, David, etc., and yet you regard them as prophets!' The obvious answer is that there is all the difference in the world between the moral attitude towards sin of the prophet of Islam and that, for instance, of the inspired King of Israel. The former uses his alleged

* C.M.S. *Report*, 1901–2, p. 286.
† Annual Letter, 1903.
‡ Wherry's note to Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 126.
§ *Persian Life and Customs*, p. 249.
‖ Wherry's *The Muḥammadan Controversy*, p. 4.
¶ Wherry's note to Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 126.
** Zwemer's *Raymund Lull*, p. 108.

inspiration to justify and cover up his sins: the latter openly acknowledges them with the deepest contrition of heart.* But this is a distinction which it would be difficult to bring home to the conviction of an ordinary Muḥammadan.

(1) Speaking generally, it is impossible to prove that a prophet is sinless (*ma'ṣūm*), because—

(i.) A man may sin in secret, though he does not do so before men; and

(ii.) He may be deceived into an erroneous belief in his own sinlessness, while all the time he allows himself in things which are really sinful, though unknown by him to be of that nature.

(2) Both Sunnīs and Shī'ahs admit that up to the age of forty years Muḥammad was ignorant of the Qur'ān and the Faith. 'Thou didst not understand *before this* what the book *of the Qur'ān* was, nor *what* the faith *was*,' God is represented in the Qur'ān (Sūr. 42 *Shūrā*, 52) as saying to Muḥammad. And again, 'Did he not find thee wandering in error, and hath he not guided *thee into the truth*?' (Sūr. 93 *Ẓuḥā*, 7). Without doubt, up to the age mentioned he followed his fathers and forefathers, who were idolaters.

(3) The Qur'ān shows Muḥammad as a sinner and conscious of his sinfulness. (*a*) 'Ask pardon for thy sin (*li-zambi-ka*), and for the true believers, both men and women' (Sūr. 47 *Muḥammad*, 21). (The use of the verse in this connexion may, however, be met by the rejoinder that the pronoun 'thy' (*ka*) embraces the believing men and women mentioned afterwards by supposition (*taqdīr*). To this again may not the answer be given that the conjunction 'and,' 'for thy sin *and* (*wa*) for,' shows that the two clauses are not in apposition, but correlated?) 'Verily we have granted thee a manifest victory, that God may forgive thee thy preceding and thy subsequent sin, and may complete his favour on thee,' etc. (Sūr. 48 *Fatḥ*, 1, 2). See also 4 *Nisā'*, 104, 105; 9 *Taubah*, 43; 40 *Mū'min*, 57; 110 *Naṣr*, 3. (*b*) Sūr. 33 *Aḥzāb*, 37, shows Muḥammad to have yielded to the fear of man, 'Thou . . . didst fear men; whereas it *was* more just that thou shouldest fear God,' referring to the incident of Zainab. In Sūr. 29 *'Ankabūt*, 45, is the command, 'Dispute not against those who have received the Scriptures, unless in the mildest manner'; and yet entirely contrary to the spirit of this verse Muḥammad attacked and slaughtered the Jews of Khaibar. In Sūr. 9 *Taubah*, 74 and Sūr. 66 *Taḥrīm*, 9, Muḥammad is bidden to wage war against the hypocrites, which he never did, and therefore in this matter he acted contrary to the Qur'ān and the command of God. (*c*) Moreover, Muḥammad expressly declares that he is only a man, 'Say, Verily I am only a man (*basharun*) as ye are' (Sūr. 18 *Kahf*, 110, and 41 *Sajdah*, 5). Cp. 6, (ii.), (*f*), *infra*, p. 416.

* See Hughes' answer to the objection as to 'the manner in which Christian divines have attacked the private character of Muḥammad' (*Notes on Muḥammadanism*, pp. 3, 4).

(4) There are many traditions to the same effect.* On the authority of Imām Ja'far it is related that Muḥammad one night in the house of Ummu Salamah while engaged in prayer was weeping and saying, 'O Lord, turn me not back in any wise to evil, although Thou hast given me deliverance from it.' At this Ummu Salamah said to him, 'Since God has forgiven thee thy past and thy future sin, why dost thou speak thus and weepest?' †

It is related that on one occasion Muḥammad delivered the Friday oration to his followers, and after praising and blessing Almighty God he delivered an exhortation to men, and at the end of it he made confession of his own sins, crying repeatedly, 'O Lord, forgive me and my people,' and said, 'I seek forgiveness from God for myself and for you.' ‡

The following tradition is related by Fāṭimah, the daughter of Ḥusain, on the authority of her grandmother Fāṭimatu'z-zuhrā' (the beautiful Fāṭimah) the daughter of Muḥammad. When the prophet entered the mosque, he said, 'My Lord, forgive me my sins and open to me the doors of Thy mercy (*Rabbi' ghfir lī zunūb-ī wa' ftaḥ lī abwāba raḥmati-ka*)'; and when he left the mosque he said, 'My Lord, forgive me my sins and open to me the doors of Thy grace (*Rabbi' ghfir lī zunūb-ī wa' ftaḥ lī abwāba faẓli-ka*).'

Abū Hurairah tells us that Muḥammad, when prostrating himself in prayer, said, 'O God, forgive me my sins all of them, the small and the great, the first and the last, the open and the secret.' §

We are indebted to Bukhārī for the following tradition of Abū Hurairah, that Muḥammad said, 'I indeed verily ask forgiveness of God and return penitently to Him more than seventy times a day.' ‖

Muslim relates a similar tradition, that Muḥammad said, 'I indeed verily ask forgiveness of God one hundred times a day.' ¶

Muḥammad is also said to have used the following words in his prayer: 'And forgive me that which I did formerly, and that which I did latterly, and that which I did secretly, and that which I did openly, and that which Thou knowest better than I.' **

'Āyishah tells us the Prophet used to pray, 'O God, wash

* Some of the following may be seen in Pfander's *Ṭarīqu'l-Ḥayāt*, pp. 120–122.

† *Ḥayātu'l-Qulūb*, vol. ii., leaf 75, 2nd p.

‡ *Ib.*, leaf 301.

§ (Allāhumma' ghfir lī ẓunūb-ī kulla-hu, ẓaqqa-hu wa julla-hu, wa awwala-hu wa ākhira-hu, wa 'alānīya-hu wa sirra-hu.) Quoted from *Mishkātu'l-maṣābīḥ*, bk. IV., 'On Prayer,' chap. XV., pt. 1, 'On the nature of prostration and its excellence,' p. 184 (Eng. trans.).

‖ Innī la-astaghfiru' llāha wa atūbu ilaihi fī'l-yaumi akṣara min sab'īna marratan. *Ib.*, bk. X., chap. III., 'On asking pardon and repentance,' p. 554 (Eng. trans.).

¶ Innī la-astaghfiru' llāha fī yaumin mi'ata marratan. *Ib.*, p. 554 (Eng. trans.).

** Fa'ghfir lī mā qaddamtu wa mā akhkhartu, wa mā asrartu wa mā a'lantu, wa mā anta a'lamu bi-hi minnī.—*Ḥiṣnu'l-ḥasīn*, Chapter on Prayer.

my sins with snow-water and hail-water, and cleanse my heart like a white garment is cleansed from impurity, and put a space between me and between my sins as Thou hast set a space between the East and the West.' * (Cp. Job ix. 30, 31; Ps. ciii. 12, and contrast the greater spirituality and confidence in God's forgiving mercy of the inspired Hebrew writers.)

The following are also on the authority of 'Āyishah. The Prophet used to say, 'O Lord! I seek protection with Thee, from the badness of the actions I have done, and from those I may do.' †

One night she found him prostrating himself and heard him say, 'O God! verily, I seek protection in Thy good pleasure against Thy indignation; and in Thy beneficence against Thy vengeance.' ‡

Tradition further tells us that some of his last words were, 'Lord, grant me pardon.' 'Pardon!' §

(5) What has already been said may be summed up as follows: The arguments adduced above are sufficient to every unprejudiced mind that Muḥammad was not without sin. But if the contrary opinion be still held, the following difficulties arise:—

(i.) If you consider Muḥammad sinless, the Qur'ān (see (3), *supra*) is wrong; and if that goes, Muḥammad's prophetic office goes along with it.

(ii.) To represent Muḥammad as sinless is to make him a liar in face of the traditions (v. (4), *supra*) in which he acknowledges his sinfulness, and of his admission of humanity, as in Sūr. 18 *Kahf*, 110, 'Verily I am only a man as ye are,' which carries with it the liability to sin. For both reason and tradition (*'aql*, *naql*) teach us that all men are sinners.

Or the case may be put thus. The Qur'ān is either the word of God, or it is not. If it is not, the evidence for Muḥammad's mission disappears at once. But if it is the word of God, then it is impossible to deny that Muḥammad, like all other men, was subject to human infirmity and sin.

(6) It remains to notice the several ways in which Muḥammadans are wont to explain away Muḥammad's confessions of sin, or minimize his sinfulness.

(i.) Muḥammad, it is alleged, made confession of sin out of

* Allāhumma'ghsil khatāyā-ī bi-mā'i's-ṣalji wa'l-bardi wa naqqi qalb-ī ka-mā yunaqqā's-ṣaubu'l-abyaẓu mina'd-danasi wa bā'id bain-ī wa baina khatāyā-ī ka-mā bā'adta baina'l-mashriqi wa'l-maghribi.—*Mishkātu'l-maṣābiḥ*, bk. X., chap. VII., 'On asking asylum,' p. 588 (Eng. trans.).

† *Ib.*, p. 589. In the same chapter tradition represents Muḥammad as seeking protection 'from the punishment of the fire, and from that thing which is a cause of it' ('Āyishah), 'from the punishment of the grave' ('Umar ibn al Khattāb), 'from my oppressing or being oppressed' (Abū Hurairah), 'from infidelity' (Abū Sā'īd), etc.; all of which shows him to have been conscious of sin and infirmity.

‡ *Ib.*, bk. IV., 'On Prayer;' chap. XV., 'On Prostration,' p. 184 (Eng. trans.).

§ Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, p. 480.

humility, or in order to give to his people an example of penitence and turning to God.

Answer.—This cannot apply to Sūr, 48 *Fatḥ*, 2, where it is distinctly said, 'that God may forgive thee thy preceding and thy subsequent sin.' In the original of these words the pronoun of the second person singular is twice repeated, and can only refer to the person addressed. Nor can this explanation be given of Sūr. 47 *Muḥammad*, 21: 'Ask pardon for thy sin, and for the true believers, both men and women.' Here again the same pronoun is used, and the three classes for whom Muḥammad is to ask for pardon (viz. himself, believing men, and believing women) are joined together by the simple connective particle *wa*.

(ii.) Muḥammad in his penitent utterances recorded by tradition was attributing the sins of his people to himself.

Answer.—(*a*) If with unreasonable and unfounded prejudice you exalt Muḥammad's excellencies (*e.g.* that he was specially chosen by God above all creation, and therefore sinless, for he was the cause of the creation of all existing things; and the seed from which he sprang was from water made by God to flow under His throne into a green pearl, as related in the *Maṣā'ibu'l-m'aṣūmīn*), and explain away by *ta'wīl* ('expounding,' 'turning language from its obvious meaning') his confessions of sin, and say that he was transferring the sins of his people to himself (or if the Shī'ahs act similarly with regard to 'Alī and the Imams) you contradict the Qur'ān itself, which says, 'If God should punish men according to what they deserve, He would not leave on the back of *the earth* so much as a beast' (Sūr. 35 *Malā'ikah*, 44). If you deny the existence of this verse, you attribute falsification and alteration (*taḥrīf*, *tabdīl*) to the Qur'ān, and deprive it of all further weight or authority. But if the Qur'ān is uncorrupt, Muḥammad and all other men are sinners in God's sight.*

(*b*) If in the passages where Muḥammad is told to ask for pardon, the meaning is said to be not that which they bear on their face, namely, that the Prophet was asking forgiveness for himself, but that he was interceding for his people, whose sins he was attributing to himself; this interpretation is contrary to the opinions of some of the Muslim commentators themselves, who hold that certain passages of the Qur'ān refer to sinful actions or conduct of Muḥammad himself. (*Vide* Sale's notes on Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 105; 40 *Mū'min*, 57; 48 *Fatḥ*, 2.)

(*c*) It is, moreover, incredible that God should have left so important a point doubtful or obscure. *Illustration.*—If I am hungry, and want food for myself, I should not say, Give this, that, or another one food, and then expect to receive it myself. (Contrast the words of Christ on the Cross, St. Luke xxiii. 34, 'Father, forgive them.' And compare the remark of Webster, the great American statesman, quoted by Guthrie in *Speaking to the Heart*, p. 78 *n.*, 'I cannot persuade myself that a book intended

* From *Wasīlatu'n-Najāt*.

for the instruction and conversion of the whole world should cover its true meaning in such mystery and doubt that none but critics and philosophers can discover it.')

(*d*) In the traditional supplications of Muḥammad himself it is incredible that by *me* he meant *my people*, when it would have been so easy for him to substitute 'my people' (*ummat-ī*) for 'me' (*-ī*), and by this simple change remove all doubt about a question of so great importance.

(*e*) Muḥammadan commentators are put to such straits to explain Sūr. 48 *Fatḥ*, 2, satisfactorily to themselves, that some even say that perhaps *Taqaddama* refers to the sin of Adam and Eve. Further, the author of the commentary on the Qur'ān entitled *Majma'u'l-Bayān* explains this passage in seven or eight different ways. From which it is evident how much stress they laid upon showing that the word *zanb* (sin) here has no reference to Muḥammad, and how difficult they found the task to be.

(*f*) Surely the Muḥammadan has seen passages in the Qur'ān like Sūr. 18, *Kahf*, 110, 'Verily I am only a man as ye are.' Being a man means that he was connected with the world of desire and appetite (*'Ālam-i-shahwat*, *'Ālam-i-akl wa shurb*). The difference between him and other men, if difference there was, lay in this, that inspiration (*waḥy*) came to him from the side of the invisible world (*Dar janbah-i-malakūtī*).

(iii.) Muḥammad, so it is asserted in order to avoid contradicting the verse of the Qur'ān just cited, was only so far sinful (like the rest of the prophets) as to be guilty of *tark-i-aulā* (='neglecting the worthier part'). (On this see Ch. X., 1, (4), (v.), p. 480.)

(iv.) Recourse should be had to reason, and especially to the teaching of the Imāms,* in explaining such passages as the traditions quoted above, which are seemingly difficult and at variance with other truths.

Answer.—(*a*) We have to do with the Word of God, not with the Imāms.

(*b*) We cannot believe that God would have left so important a point as this obscure.

§ 4. **His inspiration (waḥy).**—If inspiration be only given in isolated instances or comparatively unimportant matters (*dar juz'ī*), it is not regarded as a characteristic and sign of the prophetic office; and the recipient of this endowment, though properly speaking a prophet in virtue of the gift, is not considered to be such on this sole account. The distinctive inspiration of a prophet is that whereby he gives religious guidance (*hidāyat*) to men, and expounds God's Law (*tashrīḥ-i-shari'at*)—either that which has previously been given or a new revelation of it.

The proofs which Muḥammadans are able to bring forward for the inspiration of their Prophet are only verses of the Qur'ān and corroborative sayings from the Traditions. Thus, it is said in the former, 'Neither doth he speak of *his own* will. It is no other

* The objection, as given, was made by a Shī'ah.

than a revelation, which hath been revealed *unto him*' (Sūr. 53 *Najm*, 3–5); 'It [the story of the behaviour of Iblīs and the other angels at the creation of man] hath been revealed unto me only *as a proof* that I am a public preacher' (Sūr. 38 *Ṣād*, 70). In other words, Muḥammad was inspired because the Qur'ān, the word of God, was imparted to him; and (according to the Shī'ahs) the testimony of the Imāms, who were sinless (*ma'ṣūm*), is a further proof of it.

Should the *objection* be made on the Christian side that it is not clear from the above whether this alleged inspiration is of the sublime order and distinctive of a prophet or of the lower kind (*dar khuṣūṣ-i-kullī* or *dar khuṣūṣ-i-juz'ī*), the Muḥammadan may conclusively reply that, since the inspiration mentioned is not limited or defined, it may properly be taken to include both kinds.

Consideration of the Muḥammadan argument in detail.—A prophet's inspiration, they think, may be proved by any one of the three following:—

(i.) *The word of God* (*kalām-i-khudā*), *i.e.* God's declaration to any one that He has given inspiration to such and such a prophet.

Answer.—This does not exist in Muḥammad's case outside the Qur'ān. And in order that this proof from the Qur'ān may be effective, it must *first* be proved that it *is* the inspired word of God (which has already been, or may be, shown not to be the case). Those who bring forward this argument assume or believe the Qur'ān to be the word of God. But for us who are not Muḥammadans this point must first be proved. The testimony of Traditions and the Imāms is of much less value, in fact, of no value at all, unless the truth of the Qur'ān and Muḥammad's prophetic office and that of the Imāms (in the case of the Shī'ah sect) be first proved.

(ii.) *Visions* (*ru'yat*), in which other persons see the angel who is the medium of the inspiration, as Gabriel in the case of Muḥammad, and hear his voice, and thus perceive that he has inspired the prophet.

Answer.—No one has ever made this claim in the case of Muḥammad. Suppose one or more persons had done so, the proof would only hold good for them.

(iii.) The *testimony of a sinless prophet* to the fact.

Answer.—We do not possess this testimony in the case of any previous prophet, or of Muḥammad. For this argument to hold good, it would be necessary both to mention the prophet's name, and to prove that *he* was inspired.

Muḥammad's preaching of the doctrine of the Unity of God in the midst of idolatrous Arabia is also brought forward to prove his inspiration. Since he was 'unlearned, unable even to read or write, a poor, needy, solitary orphan, alone in the faith,' he could not, it is alleged, have learnt this wonderful doctrine otherwise than by direct instruction from on high.

Answer.—'Muḥammad's proclaiming the Unity was proof, not

of his prophetic claim, but of his power and sagacity of intellect; for the conception was clearly within the scope of human knowledge. Nor was the doctrine itself unknown in Arabia. It was held by the Jewish tribes, which occupied a prominent position in the land, as well as by the Christians, such as the inhabitants of Najrān, the Banī Kinda, and others. The Prophet himself also repeatedly passed from Hejāz into Syria, and there saw monasteries and churches, and must have met monks and clergy, from whom he may have learned much; for in the Qur'ān many of the monks and clergy are spoken of as patterns of virtue and piety.*

§ 5. **The Law of Islām.**—It is regarded as being of such exceeding excellence, that *no human being could have invented it.* Moreover, Muḥammad himself was without education (*ummī*).

Answer.—(i.) Were his commands and ordinances novel or had they been previously given? In the former case only can this argument have any weight. As a matter of fact, all were taken from existing religions, either of the Jews (cp. Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 95, 'Follow ye, therefore, the religion of Abraham, the orthodox'; and Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 124), or of the Christians, or the Hindūs (as shaving the head and ablutions), or of the Arabs themselves (as circumcision, retaliation (*qiṣās*), etc.).†

(ii.) The commands of Muḥammad have nothing to do with his being educated or uneducated. Whatever he heard or found anywhere and approved as suitable for his purposes, that he adopted and incorporated into his system.

§ 6. **Muḥammad's character and virtues.**—*Answer.*—Any one who claims the prophetic office, or any kind of pre-eminence among men, such as that of leader or chieftain, must possess special characteristics and qualifications; otherwise the position he aspires to occupy will not be recognized or conceded. Granted that Muḥammad possessed certain good qualities, he showed bad ones as well, as, *e.g.* he condemned captives to death, stopped caravans and robbed them, etc., so that the good and the bad both found place in his character. We cannot, therefore, allow the force of the argument.

§ 7. **His phenomenal success.** — Muḥammad succeeded against infinitely superior forces and influences arrayed against him. He had, it is asserted, but little wealth and few adherents at first. The Quraish, on the contrary, who were his bitter opponents, were numerous, rich and powerful. Yet he triumphed after all, either by the slaughter or conversion of his enemies. The whole world besides was sunk in godlessness and infidelity at that time, and therefore opposed to any preacher of righteousness.

Answer.—(i.) This argument cannot be sustained, because it was 'the sword of the Prince of the Faithful ['Alī] and the riches of Khadījah' (*shamshīr-i-Amīru' l-mu'minīn wa māl-i-Khadījah*), as is well known and recorded in tradition, that first helped Muḥammad

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 135, 136.

† See St. Clair-Tisdall's *Sources of Islām, passim.*

to make headway against opposing forces. His first followers belonged to the wealthy and influential tribe of the Quraish: and afterwards he was assisted by other members of the same tribe from regard to tribal loyalty, or relationship, or from ambitious aims. Such was Ḥamzah, Muḥammad's uncle, who did not at first believe in him, and yet sided with his nephew. Such too was 'Abdu'l-Muṭṭalib, whose support was of the greatest moment to his grandson.

'Nor can evidence be drawn from the rapid spread of Islām, for its success was due to the sword; not like Christianity, which prevailed with the help neither of sword nor spear, but by the power of God, and in spite of persecution. Moreover, Islām has long been declining in its power, while Christianity ceases not to wax and grow marvellously in every land and clime.' *

(ii.) Further, it is not true to say that at the time of Muḥammad's appearance ungodliness and error were rife throughout the whole world. Outside Arabia there were very many Jews and Christians. And within the borders of Arabia itself, though it is true that the majority were idolaters, there were also both Jews and Christians and also Ḥanīfs, a name given to those who previous to the rise of Islām and in its early stages were seekers 'for the truth among the mass of conflicting dogmas and superstitions of the religions that existed in Arabia.' †

§ 8. **Muḥammad's being the only Prophet for that dark age.**—When the whole world wanders from the knowledge and worship of the true God, so it is said, He sends prophets to guide people and lead them back to the truth. No one else was sent for that age. Hence Muḥammad was a true Apostle of God.

Answer.—(i.) It is not the fact that the whole world was in the deplorable condition described (*v. supra*, § 7, (ii.)).

(ii.) God did not leave the world without prophets from the time of Moses. According to your theory, God ought to send a prophet everywhere every day, because in all places the majority of people live in forgetfulness of Him. It is, we admit, necessary for God to impart guidance to men, otherwise He would be unjust in punishing them. God has, however, done so through Moses, Jesus, and the rest of the prophets. How many idolaters are living to-day in India, China, or Africa? If your position is correct, God ought to send them prophets, or rather to have done so long ago.

§ 9. **The growth and permanence of Islām.**—Muḥammad claimed to be a prophet and brought a new law and religion, which, it is said, will grow and continue until the Resurrection. Had they not been true, God, it is affirmed, *must* have destroyed them.

Answer.—(i.) As to its being a new Law, see above, § 5 (i.).

(ii.) We cannot fathom the plans and designs of the Deity, and

* *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 136, 137.

† Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Ḥanīf.'

decide what is fitting and necessary for Him to do. Subjects cannot instruct the King as to his duty.

(iii.) We cannot speak of *necessity* in the case of God, and affirm that He must, or must not act in some particular way. If God had been obliged to destroy Islām, supposing it had been false, why does He not annihilate the Hindū religion, and bring those idolaters to the light of truth?

(iv.) Even if Islām remains till the end of the world, that is no proof of its truth, and the divine origin of Muḥammad's mission For we see that religions which are admitted by both of us to be false continue to exist to this day.

§ 10. **The agreement of all Muḥammadan sects as to this fundamental truth.**—They are all agreed as to the genuineness of Muḥammad's mission and prophetic office; from which the conclusion is drawn that it is impossible to suppose they should all have unanimously agreed to accept what was not true.

Answer.—This is no proof whatever. For in the same way the adherents of other religions, as the Jewish, Christian and Hindū, of course accept the doctrines and beliefs of their several religions but this of itself is no proof of their truth.

In conclusion, we may ask the question On what did Jesus rest as proof of His divine mission? From St. John's Gospel we learn that it was on the manifestation of Himself through His words (xvii. 63, 'the words that I have spoken unto you,' etc.); His works (x. 25, 37, 'the works that I do in My Father's name'; 'If I do not the works of My Father,' etc.); His predictions of His suffering and departure (xiii. 19, 'that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am He'; xiv. 29; cp. xvi. 4); and the testimony of Himself in the Scriptures of the Old Testament (v. 39, 'these are they which bear witness of Me'; ver. 46, 'Moses . . . wrote of Me'; cp. St. Luke xxiv. 27, 44–47). With this contrast Muḥammad's claim to be an inspired prophet, based solely upon the eloquence of the Qur'ān and imaginary references to himself in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures.

CHAPTER VIII.

ISLĀM.

One of their own [Arab] writers, in an argument to prove that Muḥammad's religion was never intended for them, says, 'It enjoins ablution, but we have no water; alms, but we have no money; a fast, but we are always fasting; pilgrimage, but God is everywhere.'—Canon C. H. Robinson's *Mohammedanism: Has it any future?* p. 29, referring to Dozy, *L'Islamisme*, p. 527.

The Arabs, instead of becoming a civilized, prosperous people, under the influence of Islām, are still, after enjoying for twelve centuries all the benefits of their religion, the same semi-barbarous, ignorant, and marauding Bedouin tribes they were before Muḥammad was born.—'Abd 'Isā, *Food for Reflection*, p. 35.

(A) Its Vaunted Superiority.

'ONE day I had been speaking about the "Water of Life," and pointed to a fountain close by where people were drinking and filling their *chatties*, *i.e.* pots. A Muslim bystander said, "Your religion may be compared to a little stream of water, and Islām is like a great sea." I replied, "Yes, but there is just this difference: men drink of salt-water and die of thirst, while they drink of the living water and live!" The crowd seemed quite satisfied with my answer, and my opponent was silenced.' *

'But so goes the proverb, "Every youth swears by his father."' †

1. Just as the objection is sometimes urged against the Christian religion, that it contains no law and no commands (Ch. VI., (B), 2, pp. 334, *sqq.*), in like manner one of the proud boasts of the Muḥammadan is that Islām possesses an admirable civil and criminal code of laws, whereby God has given His true followers guidance suited to the times.

Answer.—Even if it be granted, that the laws of Islām were advantageous for the pagan Arabs and fire-worshippers, the former of whom at all events were in a lamentable state of ignorance and degradation, the present age of the world is very different. And if it be allowed that Muḥammadanism was suited to those early times, it by no means follows that it is specially adapted to the needs of to-day. If you hold the contrary opinion, it rests with you to establish it.

2. The superiority of the law of Islām is sometimes made out

* Rev. H. D. Goldsmith, Madras, *C.M.S. Report*, 1902-3, p. 274.

† *Sweet Firstfruits*, p. 43.

in the following way. The commands of the Law of Moses, it is said, consist of outward ordinances and those of Christianity are spiritual: but Muḥammadanism combines the two, and is in consequence superior to both those religions.

This point of view is illustrated by what we are told of the attitude adopted towards Christianity by the more educated classes in Kerak, Palestine, as 'depicted in a typical case of a man fairly well versed in the Christian religion, who admitted that it excelled all others, but added that in his view its precepts were unattainable whilst in the flesh, and that Muḥammadanism was consequently more suitable for men in this present world.' *

Answer.—(i.) The spiritual commands of God are not limited as to their binding force to any particular country, race or age, but are incumbent on all without exception. *Illustration.*—The fact that poison is deadly is of universal application.

(ii.) This division and distribution of commands is not actually correct. The Jewish and Christian religions, as well as the Muḥammadan, contain both classes of commands—the external and the spiritual. The Law of Moses, *e.g.*, enjoins the cultivation of the spiritual graces of mercy, and the Christian religion contains many definite commands and prohibitions, *e.g.* with regard to prayer, theft, murder, etc., besides its more spiritual injunctions. The real point of difference between the Jewish and Muḥammadan religions on one side and the Christian on the other is that the former as contrasted with the latter pay excessive attention to the external ordinance to the neglect of the moral and spiritual sphere. It was on this very account that the Jews incurred the severe condemnation of Jesus, *e.g.* St. Matt. xxiii. 23–28; St. Mark ii. 23–iii. 6. The Muḥammadans are equally misguided in believing, *e.g.* that in their ceremonial prayers if a single Arabic letter is mispronounced the prayers are rendered null and void, whereas what God requires is not the word (*lafẓ*) but the meaning (*ma'nī*). Both the Jew and the Muḥammadan are in bondage to the letter of the law and the external ordinance, while the Christian acknowledges not only the binding obligation of the outward command, but also the absolute necessity that the heart and spirit be right before the all-seeing eye of the Eternal. All of which shows not the superiority but the inferiority of Islām to Christianity.

(B) MUḤAMMADAN INQUIRIES AS TO THE CHRISTIAN'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS ISLĀM.

Inquiries of this nature may be accounted for in two ways. They may arise from genuine curiosity as to the religious views of the person interrogated, and more particularly as to his attitude towards their own religion. The meaning of such questions will then be, Do you acknowledge the divine mission of our prophet and allow that our religion is just as true for us as yours is for

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1899–1900, p. 168.

you? Or the query may be prompted by the not uncommon idea, among Persian Muḥammadans at all events, that there are secret believers among professing Christians, who though Muslims at heart will not avow it. This opinion seems clearly to underlie the second of the two questions now to be considered—

(1) *Do you accept Islām? Answer.*—(i.) No! When proved to me to be true, then I will accept it.* (However strongly the Christian may feel the utter impossibility of his ever being convinced of the truth of Islām and accepting it, the mild answer just given is better than any forcible or heated reply.)

(ii.) No! because I have not found truth and reality (*ḥaqīqat*) in that religion. (This is a very strong answer, and is also not disrespectful, nor one at which any offence can be taken. The word *ḥaqīqat* here is full of meaning, and denotes both that the words of Muḥammadans are not right and also that the foundation of their religion is not firmly laid and its proofs are weak.)

(iii.) The following argument may also be used with judgment, in order to press home the antiquated inferiority of Islām. A humble man fearlessly addressing his countrymen tells them, 'Your religion is the same Heathenism your fathers practised. They worshipped golden idols, you a stone in your pockets (holy earth from a shrine). They prayed to an image, you to a dead prophet.' † The first part of this argument has also been heard used in Persia with unanswerable effect. It should be explained that Persians who are accustomed to perform the ceremonial prayers of Islām usually carry in their pockets a little tablet of compressed earth from Karbalā, which place they hold in great veneration 'as the scene of the martyrdom of . . . Ḥusain . . . and the place of his sepulchre.' ‡ This tablet they place on the ground before them at the time of their devotions and touch with their foreheads when prostrating themselves.

(2) The following question was once put to the writer: '*Would you become a Musulmān, if Islām was proved to you to be true and you could not refute the arguments adduced?*'

Answer.—(i.) Of course, if you can prove it. I am a seeker after truth and therefore gladly accept whatever I find to be true. (If I had wings, should I not fly? If it was night, should I not sleep?) Were it otherwise, I should render myself liable to the punishment of hell-fire. Every one, unless he is bigoted, accepts the truth when proved. Cp. the similar line of argument taken by the crafty delegates from the Muḥammadan side sent to the Christian perverts (*Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 81, 82): 'Indeed,' say

* Cp. Raymund Lull's first entry into Tunis 'as a wandering scholar who was prepared to enter into philosophical discussions with the men of learning of the city. He professed himself anxious to discover the truth, and declared himself willing to be converted to Muḥammadanism if he could only be convinced.'—Barber's *Raymond Lull*, p. 54.

† Quoted from 'Woman's Work for Woman,' in *The Missionary Review of the World*, Feb. 1904.

‡ Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Karbalā.'

they, 'we should be ready even to go with you, if you could but show that the path ye have chosen is the right way; for the life to come is ever to be preferred to this present life.'

(ii.) I have read your holy book, and have not found anything in it to convince me or to make me wish to change my religion and become a Muḥammadan. The verities of the Christian faith give me such peace and happiness, that I would not for the world exchange them for anything else. They exactly meet my heart's needs as a lost and perishing sinner. I have not found in Islām any plan of salvation able to give me similar consolation and assurance! (This is not an answer to the question, of course. But it is quite legitimate to give the reasons why a true Christian would think it impossible that he should ever arrive at the position suggested; and such a question gives a natural and inviting opportunity for doing so.)

(C) THE PRESENT DECAY OF ISLĀM—ARGUMENTS FOUNDED THEREON NOT RECOMMENDED.

We have to show in this section that the present state of weakness affecting Islām and most Muḥammadan states may suggest other inferences to a Muslim than those it does to a Christian, and that consequently arguments founded upon this condition of things are not generally satisfactory or advisible.

A Muḥammadan once thus addressed a colporteur at Alexandria: 'Do you know aught of Al Imām 'Alī?' 'Yes, I know something; but what do you wish to say of him?' 'There is one thing in his book of which I would tell you. Al Imām 'Alī long ago predicted that when the appointed time came, Al Qur'ān would be done away and the Cross would be lifted up. Methinks the time draws near, for now I see that many Muslims are buying the Bible.' *

The decadence of Islām is clearly foretold in the Traditions. For example, in the *Biḥāru'l-anwār* of Majlisī, in the chapter describing the virtues and excellencies of Imām Mahdī, there is a tradition of Abū Baṣīr, who relates that 'Alī said, 'Verily Islām began as a stranger, and it will return to the condition of a stranger: blessed then are the strangers,' *i.e.* those who accept Islām when in the state of decline which is to precede the coming of Imām Mahdī. In the same chapter there is a tradition of Muḥammad himself, who said, 'A time will come upon my people when nothing will remain of Islām except its name, and naught of the Qur'ān except its writing.' Canon Robinson, quoting Max Müller, thus gives the continuation of what appears to be the same tradition, 'and the mosques of Musulmāns will be destitute of knowledge and worship, and the learned men will be the worst people under the heavens, and contentions and strife will issue

* Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1900, p. 144.

from them, and it will return upon them.' * Infidelity (*kufr*) will be rife at that time, and the fortunes of Islām at their lowest ebb. But this will not lead to its extinction, but to its glorious victory over all rivals. For Imām Mahdī will then appear to kill all opponents and re-establish Islām so widely and securely, that there will be no other religion in the whole world. According to the Muḥammadan view, then, the temporary eclipse of Islām is only a passing phase in its existence, and a prelude, however humiliating and distressing at the time, to its ultimate and universal sway. It is, therefore, difficult to see how any profitable use can be made of it in controversy. To suggest a parallel case, it would not offer the slightest inducement to a true Christian to forsake his religion as false, if any one was able to point to the manifestation of any of the signs of the great apostasy from the faith which are to precede Christ's second coming and final triumph.

(D) ISLĀM AND COMPULSION IN RELIGION.

Be ye . . . harmless as doves.—*St. Matt.* x. 16.

The Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing, in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves.—2 *Tim.* ii. 24, 25.

We may now pass on to the consideration from a controversial point of view of certain features and aspects of Islām, on account of which the Christian is obliged to reject its claim to be a divinely ordered system. In accordance with the design of this book, the object aimed at is only to give those arguments and considerations which have weight with Orientals. The first of these is the use of compulsion in religion, in which we recognize the true spirit of Islām. Its most conspicuous manifestation is that of the *Jihād* or religious war, 'which all commentators agree is a duty extending to all time!' 'It is an incumbent religious duty, established in the Qur'ān and in the Traditions as a divine institution, and enjoined specially for the purpose of advancing Islām and of repelling evil from Muslims.' † It may be true, and we may certainly share the hope, that 'the standard of the 'Jihād', or holy war, will probably never henceforward be raised on an extensive scale, except in a war of self-defence, and unless the lives and liberties of Muḥammadans, as well as their religion, are at stake.' ‡

Although liberal-minded Muslims may profess to believe that the era of *jihāds* has passed away, the majority hold a different opinion. But one condition of the duty of religious war which has at least in one quarter been authoritatively laid down (and the same opinion is probably shared by most Muḥammadans, even if

* *Mohammedanism: Has it any future?* p. 6. Also cp. Sale's Qur'ān (Wherry's Edition), *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 134; No. 10 of the greater signs preceding the Resurrection.

† Hughes, *Dict. of Islām, s.v.* 'Jihād.'

‡ R. Bosworth Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, p. 284.

not openly expressed), is that *jihād* is only obligatory when there is a reasonable prospect of success. Happily, this condition is nowhere realized to-day to any large extent. But who would be so bold as to declare, that if the present position of Christian and Muḥammadan nations in respect of power and might were reversed, the twentieth century would not witness the same horrors as those which disgraced the first ages of Islām?

If the danger of *jihād* on a large scale may be dismissed as an imaginary one, compulsion in religion still plays a large part wherever the question of forsaking Islām comes to the front. This is, of course, the case in countries under Muḥammadan rule, such as Turkey (although there the law theoretically allows freedom in religious matters *) and Persia, where the would-be convert is in danger of persecution, imprisonment or death. And even in countries under British rule, as India and Egypt, the social and domestic pressure that can be brought to bear, short of infringing the law, is so great, as to justify the same general charge that Islām in its essential character, as well as by the express dictates of the Sharī'at, knows nothing of freedom in religious matters. 'According to Muslim law, a male apostate, or *murtadd*, is liable to be put to death if he continue obstinate in his error.' † When Ibn 'Abbās heard that the Caliph 'Alī had burnt alive some apostates from Islām, he said that 'Alī had not acted rightly, because of the saying of Muḥammad, 'Punish not with God's punishment (*i.e.* fire), but whosoever changes his religion, kill him with the sword.' ‡

1. When the question of the use of force in religion arises, there are several ways in which it may be shown how grievously Islām has erred in this matter. First of all, *on general grounds*,

* See the Qāzī's exposition of 'the law and code of the Empire,' in *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 75, 76.

† Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Apostasy from Islām.'

‡ Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Apostasy from Islām.' The Traditions reproduce the same intolerant spirit, *e.g.* that of Solomon and Bilqīs, Queen of Sabā, who was a worshipper of the sun. The first arrogant letter of Solomon, conveyed to the Queen by the Hoopoo, ran as follows: 'From Solomon, the son of David and servant of Allāh, to Bilqīs, Queen of Sabā. In the name of Allāh, the All-merciful and Gracious, blessed are they who follow the guidance of fate! follow thou my invitation, and present thyself before me as a believer' (Weil, *Legends*, p. 197). And again, when Solomon had successfully passed all the tests imposed upon him by the Queen, he dismissed her ambassadors with the peremptory message, 'Return to her, together with the presents destined for me, of which I do not stand in need, and tell her that if she do not accept my faith, and do homage unto me, I shall invade her country with an army which no human power shall be able to resist, and drag her a wretched captive to my capital' (*Id.*, *Ib.*, p. 202). Similar to this was his treatment of Djarada, daughter of King Nubara, who governed one of the finest islands in the Indian Ocean. Solomon slew him with his own hand, and when about to leave the palace saw his daughter Djarada, a maiden of surpassing loveliness. Thereupon, 'he commanded her to be led to his carpet, and, threatening her with death, forced her to accept his faith and his hand' (*Id.*, *Ib.*, p. 207). Can we wonder at the intolerant spirit of Muslims, thus justified by religious law and tradition?

compulsion in religion is a bad thing, because of its evil effects. It prevents troubled souls from finding the solution of their doubts and difficulties. Where it is in vogue, a man is afraid to inquire and investigate matters of religion, though he may be tortured with doubts and be anxious to find the way of salvation. He is afraid for his wife, his house, his property, his life, lest they should be taken away from him. And so he conceals his thoughts and never arrives at a satisfactory conclusion as to the truth. Then again, force is powerless to alter or change conviction. 'The light which shines upon and around me,' said a Persian, 'is the proof of its own existence,* and I cannot deny it. If I deny it with my mouth, through fear or compulsion, my heart still owns and acknowledges it.'

Sweet Firstfruits supplies several instances of the adoption of this line of argument. 'They would be still more indebted,' says Sheikh 'Alī, as spokesman for the little company of Christians, in reply to the Muḥammadan deputation, 'if, instead of bidding them leave the path they had entered on, they would point out wherein it erred and led astray. A plaintiff was not rejected till his complaint was proved groundless, nor a defendant condemned till his evidence had been heard. Equally unjust was it to threaten them with the law until they had heard their reasons. Suppose they recanted, it would be but a changing of the outward garb, their convictions still remaining. Where, then, would they be in that day when neither son nor father would be of any avail?' (p. 57). And again Maḥmūd speaks as follows in his address to the Muslim Wālī or Governor, 'Faith and conviction are matters of the heart, and go not forth but by evidence and reason. . . . It is not in our power to change conviction, nor in that of men to force it. . . . We cannot, even on your Excellency's command, do violence to our conscience, nor obey otherwise than on clear evidence' (p. 74).

It is of little use to argue from the different spirit shown in this matter by the Gospel and Islām, that the latter, by its approval of force and compulsion in the propagation of religion *after* the former had preached the tender doctrines of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, bears on its face the stamp of declension and falsehood. The Muḥammadan may point to the persecutions carried on in the name of Christ by Christians themselves. Or, if not sufficiently acquainted with history to be able to do this, he will reply that God has different ways of summoning people to the true faith, and different epochs require different treatment, and the Islāmic method was the divinely appointed one for that age.

But it is to the purpose to show that it is contrary alike to reason and to humanity to suddenly command people to change

* In allusion to the famous verse of the *Maṣnawī*—

The sunshine has come the proof of the sunshine,
If thou needest proof, turn not thy face from him.

Āftāb āmad dalīl-i-āftāb:
Gar dalīl-at bāyad, az vai rū ma-tāb.

their religion. What tyranny and oppression can be greater than this? 'Nothing *can* be more tyrannical: nor in the end, more ineffectual and vain. That it is tyrannical is seen from the fact that in the Day of Judgment no man can possibly be responsible for his fellow, nor render God a ransom for his soul. And since no man can be responsible for his brother in the Day of Judgment (moreover, if he could, would not be willing), how monstrous the oppression which in lifetime would constrain him, in despite of evidence, conscience, and truth!' * And it cannot but carry weight to quote to the Muḥammadan the beautiful description of the loving, patient Heavenly Father, showering the gifts of nature on good and bad alike, and the command to imitate His tenderness and mercy (St. Matt. v. 44, 45; St. Luke vi. 31, 36); and to ask how it is conceivable that God, having so ennobled human nature as to send His own Son, or if more appropriate to the occasion we may say the *Rūḥu'llāh* (the Spirit from Him), to take it upon Him, should afterwards give a command to destroy and enslave that same human nature, thus ennobled and allied with the Divine? †

2. Next, the use of force in religion is contrary to the teaching of the Qur'ān in many passages, the gist of which is that moral suasion is the only form of compulsion allowable in religion, that religious guidance is from God, and Muḥammad is only a preacher. Thus, 'Let there be no violence in religion' (Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 256). 'But if thy LORD had pleased, verily all who are in the earth would have believed in general. Wilt thou therefore forcibly compel men to be true believers? No soul can believe but by the permission of God' (Sūr. 10 *Yūnus*, 99, 100). 'Say unto them who have received the Scriptures, and to the ignorant, Do ye profess *the religion of* Islām? Now, if they embrace Islām, they are surely directed; but if they turn their backs, verily unto thee *belongeth* preaching *only*; for God regardeth his servants' (Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 20). Other pertinent passages are Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 253, 272; 10 *Yūnus*, 108, 109; 11 *Hūd*, 119; 16 *Naḥl*, 126; 21 *Anbiyā'*, 107: 'We have not sent thee, *O Muḥammad*, but *as* a mercy unto all creatures; cp. 28 *Qaṣaṣ*, 46; 29 *'Ankabūt*, 45; 109 *Kāfirūn*, 6.

Objection.—To this the Muḥammadan will of course reply, that these passages have been abrogated by others, such as Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 190–193; 9 *Taubah*, 5. (For the three kinds of abrogation, see Sale's Qur'ān, *Prelim. Disc.*, pp. 110, 111.)

Answer.—(i.) 'Which cancelleth, and which is cancelled, that thou canst not show. Thou hast confessedly neither proof nor certain knowledge in this matter; and it may be that thou mistakest the one for the other. How are we to discriminate the true from the false, for the two sets of passages, both being in thy Book,

* *Sulasut Tul Kutuub*, p. iv.

† *Al Kindi*, p. 101. See the whole passage on Religious War, pp. 95–103, to which this section is much indebted.

are directly opposed the one to the other? and there is this risk, that the one which thou regardest as true, and on which thou art bound to act, may be the one that is false and therefore to be abandoned; so that really each doth counteract the other, and neither can be the command of the Lord.' *

(ii.) Abrogation cannot take place in the case of the fundamental commands of religion (*uṣūl-i-aḥkām*), one of which is not to shed human blood.

European writers trace the gradual development of intolerance in Muḥammad, † and show that the tolerant spirit of the earlier years of his mission was only due to his want of power and resources, and the hope of conciliating his enemies. Such a change of view at the dictates of policy and convenience is no doubt in Western eyes a very strong argument against the truth of Muḥammad's claims. But it is otherwise with Muslims, familiar with the doctrine of abrogation just mentioned, and accustomed to argue that the commands given through the prophets may be changed from time to time, as need requires.

3. No other prophet has been sent with such a commision as this. No other was commanded to summon men to believe against their conscience, by sword and threats. No other prophet was told to kill people simply because they refused to accept his message. 'Even the abhorred Magians claim that inspiration descended on Zerdasht, at the hill Sailan, and that Kashtasaf and his people believed on seeing the miracle of the dead horse brought to life again, and that the twelve thousand volumes of the Zendavesta were revealed in every human tongue (which yet if ye ask the meaning thereof no one can tell it).' ‡ 'And so, my friend, thou wilt find in history mention of no teacher, true or false, who did not advance some kind of proof, to be weighed in the scales of right and wrong, excepting only thy Master; for he used no other argument, that I can see, but the sword. Nor wilt thou hear of any other but he, standing up and saying, *Whoever doth not accept me as a Prophet and the Apostle of God, the same shall be slain, his goods seized, and his women and children carried off captive;*—and all this without a tittle of evidence!' §

Objections.—(1) It is sometimes urged by Muḥammadans that the slaughter of infidels and heathen by their Prophet is on a par with that of the Amalekites by Moses and the Canaanites by Joshua. On the supposition of Muḥammad's belief in his divine inspiration, even Christian writers regard the cases as parallel, and the later one as being capable of defence on the same grounds as the earlier. ‖ But that the cases are not really analogous, and the

* *Al Kindī* p. 99.

† *E.g.* Sale's *Preliminary Discourse*, p. 83; St. Clair-Tisdall's *Religion of the Crescent*, pp. 186–189.

‡ *Al Kindī*, p. 99.

§ *Id., Ib.*, p. 100.

‖ R. Bosworth Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, p. 117; Sale's Qur'ān, note on Sūr 2 *Baqarah*, 191.

example of Moses and Joshua affords no justification for the procedure of Muḥammad, is clear from the following facts :—

(i.) Muḥammad performed no miracles in justification of the commission to fight, such as Moses and Joshua did.* In the case of Moses, witness the whole series of miracles attending the delivery of Israel from Egypt and their establishment in Cânaan in fulfilment of the promise given to Abraham (Gen. xv. 13-*fin.*), and renewed to Moses (Ex. iii. 6–8, 16, 17), and more particularly the victory at Rephidim, 'When Moses held up his hand' (xvii. 11); and in that of Joshua, the crossing of Jordan (Joshua iii.), the capture of Jericho (ch. vi.), and the battle of Beth-horon (ch. x. 11–13).

(ii.) 'They [Moses and Joshua] fought against idolaters; but here [*i.e.* in the case of Jews and Christians] the horrors of war, bloodshed, rapine and slavery are hurled against the innocent, nay, against the very people of God, those who observe His ordinances, devote soul and body to His service, believe in His Messiah, worship Him and are guided into the right way, those whose leaders are blessed and renowned both in this world and that which is to come.' †

(iii.) The Canaanites were not invited to embrace the religion of the Israelites and accept Moses as a prophet, and they were not slain for their rejection of his divine mission, but on account of their wickedness, as is twice asserted in Deut. ix. 4, 5; and hence no mercy was to be shown to them, and no respite allowed them.‡

But Muḥammad's treatment of those who opposed him and would not acknowledge his claims was very different from this, and not in harmony with any one definite rule. Sometimes he forgave prisoners of war, at the intercession of the Companions, *e.g.* Zuheir, an aged Jew, for whom Thābit interceded. § After his withdrawal to Medina he made a treaty in cordial terms with the neighbouring Jewish tribes by which they were confirmed in the practice of their own religion. ‖ On another occasion a tax of half the produce of their lands was exacted by the conqueror from the Jews of Khaibar.¶ On yet another occasion, in the case of the Banī Quraiẓa, war or Islām were the only alternatives.** Now, if the command to kill the unbelievers had been from God, it

* *Al Kindi*, p. 97.

† *Id.*, *Ib.*

‡ 'Joshua is here reported to have made three proclamations: (1) Whosoever wishes to escape death shall leave Palestine of his own free will. (2) Whosoever wishes to conclude peace with us shall be received amicably. (3) Whosoever wishes for war, he shall have war. Thereupon one part emigrated *to Africa*, another asked for peace, and thirty-one kings made war and were conquered' (The *Talmud* (Jerusal. Jesimoth), quoted in Stanley's *Jewish Church*, I. p. 246, note). May this be the original of Muḥammad's famous three-fold offer—conversion, tribute, or war?

§ Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, p. 308.

‖ *Id.*, *Ib.*, pp. 177, 178.

¶ *Id.*, *Ib.*, p. 367.

** *Id.*, *Ib.*, pp. 304–309.

ought to have been obeyed in all circumstances; and how could Muḥammad have acted as he did? As Al Kindī says, 'The aim of it all was the aggrandizement of himself and his fellows, and the establishment of his kingdom according to his own words, *Until they pay tribute with their hand and are humbled.* Seest thou not, my clear-sighted Friend, that his desire was not to bring them from infidelity to faith, nor had it any regard for their well-being and happiness, but like other conquerors, the object was simply to extend his empire?' (pp. 102, 103).

Objection.—(2) If it be urged that religious war is a divine remedy, and, when ordered and ordained by God, is analogous to His sending death, famine and such-like calamities on mankind, the *answer* may be given that God does not send calamities upon mankind because He hates them and seeks to injure them; else why did He create them and declare His purpose of grace and mercy towards them? but 'as a probation to prepare for the reward hereafter,' in the same way as the measures of a skilful physician or surgeon are not prompted by the desire to hurt and injure, but to restore the blessings of health. And if it is here urged that '*God might have made men happy without these trials*,' we reply that this is true. 'But in His sovereign wisdom He hath made the world, and this life a pilgrimage, and us as 'sons of the road,' resting for the night as it were in a khān or hostelry, that He might, after proving us for a while with trial and hunger, translate us to our reward in the Home above of endless peace and happiness.' *

(E) ISLĀM AS A MORAL FORCE, NEGATIVELY, IS DEFICIENT IN MORAL AND SPIRITUAL POWER.

Students of Muhammadanism . . . have not distinguished with sufficient care between Muhammadanism in theory and Muhammadanism in practice.

Nothing is easier than to draw an attractive picture of the benefits Muhammadanism ought to confer upon its converts, and of the high morality which its teaching ought to produce . . . nothing is more impossible than to find any Muhammadan country of which such a picture would be other than a caricature.—Canon Robinson *Mohammedanism: Has it any future?* pp. 30, 32.

§ 1. *Islām, as a religious system, is deficient in moral power.*—'Why does Muhammadanism not produce good men?' asked a European living in Persia. Another, who knew the Persians well, and had an exceptionally penetrating insight into the depths and by-ways of Oriental character, used often to remark half-humourously, that money was at the bottom of everything. Whether it be oppressive treatment of the Jews, or riots against an unpopular Governor, or the devious paths of the administration of justice, or the petty incidents and intrigues of everyday life, the determining factor is generally money,—either to be gained or held, without the least regard to right or justice. So high an authority as Lord

* From *Al Kindī*, pp. 101, 102.

Curzon, speaking of the 'huge bureaucracy' of Persia, says that 'cupidity, open, shameless and universal seems to have been raised into the guiding principle of human conduct.' *

And this is not the opinion of Europeans only. Persians have said to the writer, 'We tell a thousand lies for a halfpenny'; 'We have an excellent Law, but we do not keep it.' One of them testified of his co-religionists, that they say, Our religion is better than any other, but we are the worst people on the face of the earth.

We may not care to endorse this verdict in all respects, but rather believe that Muḥammadans often set an example, particularly in matters of sobriety, thrift and patient toil, worthy of imitation by many Christians. And further, the remarks above quoted only refer to Persia. And even there, there are no doubt honourable exceptions. Good men are to be found in every religion deserving of the name. And yet it is true that, as a system, Islām has not the same power as Christianity to raise its followers to a high spiritual level. The testimony of Muḥammadans themselves to the failure of Islām as a spiritual force is good to bear in mind when we recall certain favourable judgments passed upon the system.

§ 2. But the point which concerns us particularly now is this, that when Muslims make such admissions as those cited above as to the weakness of Islām to impart moral power, *we should be ready to improve the occasion, and suggest clear and intelligible reasons for this sad state of things.* It would not usually accord with the dictates either of duty, policy, or charity, to point to the faults and failings of the professors of another religion. But there are occasions when, actuated by feelings of pity and compassion, it is both right and profitable to indicate in a kindly spirit what seem to be the causes of the failure admitted. The following notes represent in the main the substance of conversations on this topic with two enlightened Orientals:—

(i.) Islām was embraced in the first age of its existence in most cases from unworthy and inadequate motives, along with a great deal of ignorance of its nature and credentials, (*a*) by those who accepted it at the sword's point; (*b*) by those who regarded it as calculated to weld together and strengthen the scattered, disunited Arab tribes, and thus serve their worldly and ambitious interests; and (*c*) by those who became its adherents merely because their chiefs and leaders had done so. In all cases it was accepted from interested motives, and not for the sake of the religion itself, which consequently did not become an ennobling, elevating force in their lives. Naturally, therefore, the professors of a religion adopted in this fashion made no great progress morally or spiritually. The great majority of their followers and descendants up to the present time are in this same state of

* Quoted in *C.M.S. Report*, 1902–3, p. 144, from one of the articles on 'The Middle Eastern Question' in *The Times*, October, 1902, to January, 1903.

ignorance. The most part cannot read so as to understand the Qur'ān; their knowledge of Islām is derived chiefly from the preachings of their Mullās, which largely consist of stories and traditions of saints and prophets; and their observance of religion goes little further than the performance of a round of ceremonial observances and various superstitious practices.

(ii.) Muslims proudly place the utmost reliance on Muḥammad and the Qur'ān, regarding their religion as the best in the world and their holy book as the best of all the heavenly books, and thinking that their acceptance of these is enough for them. Most Muḥammadans believe that the merit of the good deeds of infidels and idolaters will be imputed to them by God at the Day of Judgment, because *they* are the true believers, and good deeds are proper to them. And in the same way they consider that evil deeds belong to infidels and heathen, and therefore God at the last day will take the evil deeds of the Muslims and assign them to the infidels, and punish them accordingly. Such notions are admirably calculated to foster and develop spiritual pride, and withdraw the thoughts of the Muslim as far as possible from the sense of inward depravity and constant need of that strength and guidance which is ready to be as constantly supplied from above to every earnest seeker for it, which is one of the essential conditions of the attainment of holiness.

(iii.) Persians may be divided into three classes: (*a*) those who observe the requirements of the religious law (*sharī'at*) but offend in other ways, as by oppression, taking bribes, etc.; (*b*) the law-abiding, who obey the law of the land (*qānūn*), but are practically without religion, as they do not practise the ordinances of the religious law, viz. prayers, almsgiving, fasting, etc., thus robbing God of His due; (*c*) those who observe neither the law of the state nor that of their religion, and are entirely ignorant and irreligious, such as are many among the villagers and tribespeople.

The low state of the moral tone is in one word due to the want of training and education (*tarbiyat*). And to go a step further—and this brings us to the root of the matter—this arises from the fact that their religion, like a tottering and insecure building, rests upon no firm and proper foundation. The point may thus be illustrated. There are two sets of people. The one build good, strong houses, and are safe from robbers, wild beasts, snakes, scorpions, etc. They have the leisure and security necessary for agricultural pursuits. They sow and plant, they cultivate the land well and have plenty to eat and drink. The other set live in an open plain and build houses of reeds and branches, and fence them round with thorns, and have no security against robbers, fire, wild beasts, and noxious insects and reptiles. They are a low-lived set, and do not cultivate the land well and are generally short of food and steal from one another. These evils are mainly the result of their not possessing strong, well-built habitations. So, too, is it with religion, which cannot flourish

and powerfully affect the life, unless its foundations be well and truly laid.

On one occasion Sir John Malcolm made an unanswerable retort to adverse strictures passed by a Persian upon the morality of Farangīs in some such words as these: 'Where are your good men in Teheran?' The writer's Persian friend, to whom this was mentioned, approved of the retort, and further suggested, that in European countries people show what they are, and do not sail under false colours, whereas in Persia a person's real character is disguised and concealed, so that the bad often appears as good, thus adding hypocrisy to wickedness.

(F) ISLĀM AS A MORAL FORCE, POSITIVELY, IS KNOWN BY ITS FRUITS.

§ 1. 'A favourite argument of Lull's with Muslims was to portray the seven cardinal virtues and the seven deadly sins, only to show subsequently how bare Islām was of the former, and how full of the latter.' * In the Sermon on the Mount, which the Muslim listens to with such marked signs of approval, and finds it so easy to illustratrate from the religious life of his own people, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself propounds the nature of their fruits as the test of false prophets, † and twice over enforces the lesson. ‡ So that we have the highest authority of all for employing this touchstone. And while its use will be regulated by Christian love and tactful good sense, loyalty to the truth may from time to time require us not to shrink from the task of showing that Islām is not conspicuous for 'righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.' § This course may sometimes be felt as in God's sight—and without this conviction it had better be left alone—to be necessary and salutary, as a medicine for sick and erring souls, either to open the eyes of those who though still in error are willing to learn, or to confute the adversaries whose mouths must be stopped. An instance of the latter is the following narrative, ‖ where the challenge made by the Muḥammadans to Dr. H. Martyn Clark to substantiate his charge, threw him back upon the evidence to be gleaned from authoritative writers of Islām as to the fruits of that system, and afforded him an opportunity of proving his point up to the hilt from a recognized Muslim writer.

The incident occurred in the Nārowāl District. 'After the varying fortunes of an hour's talk,' writes Dr. Clark, 'I summed up the position as regarded their perversity [viz. that of two Muḥammadans who had 'made themselves very obnoxious' in a certain village 'in consequence of the baptism of the chief Muḥammadan resident'] by saying, As was the root, so was

* Zwemer's *Raymund Lull*, p. 108.
† St. Matt. vii. 15-20.
‡ Vers. 16, 20.
§ Rom. xiv. 17.
‖ *C.M.S. Report*, 1898-9, pp. 225, 226.

the fruit. Islām was responsible for their state of mind—bad fruit of an evil stem. They were but worthy followers of the example which had been set them by the great men of Islām. Pressed to justify my words, I instanced a particularly brutal assault on Fāṭimah, the daughter of Muḥammad, after her father's death, by his successor, Abu Bakr, during a squabble over the disposal of her father's property. This was furiously denied, and I was challenged to prove my assertion, and after much talk, in solemn form an agreement was drawn up, by which I bound myself to prove this thing from reliable books of Islām.' After a great deal of trouble and search to no purpose, the timely arrival of a native friend led to the discovery of the long sought for passage, to the Doctor's great relief. This was printed and distributed, and the results are thus summed up in the *C.M.S. Report:* 'Inquiry was stimulated by this controversy, and although no conversions or baptisms directly resulted from it, yet the Muḥammadans were at least shown that Islām would not really bear close investigation.'

§ 2. The strength and weakness of arguments of this nature were discussed by the writer with a native friend in the light of the above incident, and the following notes are chiefly derived from it.

The argument from the 'fruits' of a religion is a very good one for a fair-minded man who honestly desires to know the truth; otherwise it will not command assent or carry conviction. And the reason of this lack of convincing force is that any statements of this nature are not universal truths (*kulliyat na-dārad*), and cannot be asserted absolutely without any exception. For there are good and bad men in every religion; and the existence of some such proves nothing either way. *Illustrations.*—(*a*) As a pupil may be incorrigibly lazy or stupid and remain a blockhead without fault on his teacher's part, so a man may be wicked in spite of the excellent teaching of his religion. (*b*) Patients may derive no benefit from the best of physicians, because they consult him too late, or do not follow his instructions. And in like manner the best religious teaching will be wasted on those persons, who do not follow it because they are so immersed in the affairs of the world and their own lusts as to be incapable of receiving any benefit from it.

A person of open and unprejudiced mind will attach due weight to this argument. And why? Because he looks to the majority, and thence forms his opinion. A religion is commonly and rightly judged by the results seen in the lives of its professors. *Illustrations.*—(*a*) If a teacher's pupils all make the same mistake in their English, the blame is naturally and properly laid at the teacher's door. But if the mistake is only made by one or two of the scholars, it is clear that it arises from their own indolence or incapacity. (*b*) Or, suppose it were observed that all a doctor's patients became worse after his treatment, it would not be surprising

if it were inferred that he was responsible.* Similarly, in the case of Islām, we do not merely witness isolated instances of wickedness among Muḥammadans, proceeding from an individual's own depravity, but we see evil deeds enjoined or done in the name of religion itself, or proceeding from it as its natural fruit, and the wholesale corruption of moral nature resulting in consequence.

§ 3. This statement requires illustration and justification. (*a*) The taking the lives and seizing the property of infidels † and heathen, the enslavement of prisoners taken in religious war, and the buying and selling of slaves, destroy respect for human nature and the inalienable rights of others, and promote want of kindness, cruelty and, in part, the corruption of justice. Of this last it may be said that the usual course of justice (?) in civil cases concerning property and money is something of the following kind, and resembles a contest for the booty more than anything else. The plaintiff greatly exaggerates his claims, and is pressed to abate them, while the judge and culprit each strain every nerve to secure or retain as large a share of the spoils as possible; so that the person who probably comes off worst is the unhappy plaintiff. The Arab wandering tribes, who are constantly making raids on one another, give the appointed legal alms from the plunder to their sheikh, and he devotes it to the maintenance of guests in the guest-house. And this is regarded as justified by the example of their prophet. (*b*) From the treatment, both in war and peace, ordained as right and proper for all non-Muslims, bigotry and fanaticism naturally follow, and so it comes to pass that all who refuse to acknowledge the mission of Muḥammad are looked upon as enemies, hated, despised and considered unclean and fit recipients of abuse; the indiscriminate giving of which becomes an established habit with them. In both these cases we see that the evil treatment of non-Muslims prescribed by Islām or inspired by its spirit reacts upon the authors, who come to form a habit of such actions in their treatment both of Muslims and non-Muslims. And further, this proud exclusiveness leads to the

* The point may be further illustrated by the following lines from the *Maṣnawi*:

Lik chūn aghlab bad and o nāpasand,
Bar hameh mai-rā muḥarram kardeh and.
Hukm ghālib-rā'st: chūn aghlab bad and,
Tigh-rā az dast-i-rahzan bi-stādand.

But since most (men) are evil and un-pleasing,
Wine has been made unlawful for all.
The commandment is for the majority: since most are evil,
The sword is taken from the highway robber's hand.

† Cp. the august example of Solomon, as related in tradition. 'Which of you,' he is represented as saying to his hosts, on the near approach to his encampment of Bilqīs, Queen of Sabā, with her army, 'will bring me the throne of Queen Bilqīs before she come to me as a believer, that I may rightfully appropriate this curious piece of art while yet in the possession of an infidel?' (Weil, *Legends*, p. 208).

bigoted Muḥammadan not caring to mix with others, from which he might learn something of his own deficiencies and the progress of knowledge; and so he remains backward in science and education. (*c*) The same might be illustrated from the frequency of adultery and the low conception of womanhood in general, which is mainly due to polygamy, the ease and frequency of divorce and, among Shī'ahs, the permission of temporary marriages. (*d*) It may be added that many things in the Traditions are of a most corrupting nature. And leaving the worst of these on one side, an instance may be given from lying. Abraham, when summoned by Pharaoh and asked who Sarah was, 'from fear of being put to death if he avowed the truth, replied, "She is my sister!" At the same time he told no falsehood, for in his mind he meant, "She is my sister in the faith."' * With such an illustrious example before them, we cannot wonder at Sa'dī's maxim that 'the politic falsehood is better than the mischief-making truth,' or at the prevalence of the vice.

If the possible retort is made, Look at your fellow-Christians, —they are far from perfect, it may be replied that the sins enumerated are not so common among them as among Muslims, and receive no countenance or justification from their religion. This last is the main point of difference. All depends upon whether the evil practices condemned are commanded by the religion or at least are the natural fruit of it, or no. *Illustration.*—A boy is taught by his master not to utter impolite language. If on some occasion he forgets himself and abuses another, the fault is not his teacher's, but that of his own bad temper.

Most of the evil deeds and practices of Muhammadans, it may be said in conclusion, ultimately proceed from, and are directly traceable to their religion. Illustration.—We cannot discover whether a man is learned or not by merely looking at him, but by holding conversation with him. Then it becomes plain. Similarly, we know the thoughts and state of a man's heart by his actions, and not till we see his actions; as Christ says, 'each tree is known by its own fruit' (see Luke vi. 43–45). When we see evil deeds commonly proceeding from a man, we conclude that his heart is evil and depraved; and conversely, when he acts in a right and good way, we infer that his conduct is the fruit of a good and true heart.

Anecdote.—A teacher once had a pupil, whom he was instructing in the Alphabet, but his own pronunciation was not correct, and for *alif* he could only say *enef*. The pupil therefore copied him, and said *enef*, too. 'No,' remonstrates the teacher, 'Don't say

* Weil's *Legends*, pp. 58, 59. Cp. St. Clair-Tisdall's *Religion of the Crescent*, pp. 212, 213, note, where, after describing the stratagem by which Idrīs obtained entrance into Paradise, and then refused to leave it, he adds, 'Thus the learned and pious Idrīs managed to circumvent the Angel of Death, and by his fraud he succeeded in remaining in the enjoyment of eternal bliss. This is a fair specimen of the ideas which the generality of Muslims entertain about the prophets.'

enef, but *enef*.' The scholar still says *enef*, repeating correctly enough what he hears. At last the teacher tells him, 'Don't say *enef* as I say it, but as other people say it!'

The inference is plain; the Muḥammadan follows that which he has heard, learnt and seen.

(G) ISLĀM, AS A MEANS OF SALVATION, OFFERS NO SATISFACTORY GROUNDS OF ASSURANCE.

'There is one verse in the Gospel which would alone be enough to make me wish to be a Christian,' said a Muḥammadan. 'It is the words in St. Matthew, "Come unto Me, I will give you rest." "You shall find rest to your soul." I know the books of Islām, and there is no promise of rest there. I want that rest.'—The Rev. T. Bomford.

The testimony of the late Rev. Maulawī 'Imādu'd-dīn, D.D., a distinguished Christian convert, is as follows:—'I found nothing in Muhammadanism from which an unprejudiced man might in his heart derive true hope and real comfort, though I searched for it earnestly. Rites, ceremonies, and theories I found in abundance; but not the slightest spiritual benefit does a man get by acting on them. He remains fast held in the grip of darkness and death.'

1. **The Qur'ān and Traditions support this view.**—One of the fruits of true religion should be an assurance of salvation. Islām does not give this. Neither do the books of Islām warrant it, nor do the traditional accounts of some of its greatest men encourage the hope of it.

(*a*) *The Qur'ān.*—This confidence of having obtained salvation cannot be derived from a perusal of the Qur'ān, *e.g.*—

Sūr. 39 *Zumar*, 5, 'Surely God will not direct him who is a liar *or* ungrateful.'

Sūr. 42 *Shūrā*, 45 *fin.*, 'Whom God shall cause to err, he shall find no way *to the truth*.' (Cp. ver. 42, and Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 179, 180.)

Sūr. 48 *Fatḥ*, 14, 'God . . . forgiveth whom He pleaseth, and He punisheth whom He pleaseth.'

Objection.—If the many promises to believers written in the Qur'ān be alleged to prove the contrary, we may *answer* that they did not satisfy even the chief Companions of the Prophet (see *infra*).

(*b*) *The Traditions.*—The same uncertainty results from the persual of the Traditions by an attentive reader. The instances given below are from Shī'ah traditions. 'Woe is me! again, Woe is me! if the infernal tree * be my meat. Woe is me! again, Woe is me! if boiling water be my drink' † (Majlisī's *Zādi'l-ma'ād*. The words occur in the well-known prayer which goes by the name of 'the prayer of Abū Ḥamzah-i-Ṣamālī,' which was given to him by Zainu'l-'Ābidīn, the fourth Shī'ah Imām). 'Fear the

* Called Zaqqūm. It is described in Sūr. 37 *Ṣāfāt*, 60–64; and the following verse mentions the boiling water, the drink of the inhabitants of hell.

† Al-wailu lī thumma'l-wailu lī in kāna zaqqūmuṭa'āmī al-wailu lī thumma'l-wailu lī in kāna-'l-ḥamīmu sharūb-ī.

day when all the prophets and apostles are afraid of the divine displeasure and wrath'* (Tradition of 'Alī in the *Sharḥ-i-Nahjī'l-Balāghah*).

Another instance may be added. After Muḥammad's resurrection and entry into Paradise, so runs the tradition, 'the rest of mankind shall be called to life. They shall all be brought to Palestine, where the great tribunal shall be held, and where no other intercession than that of Muḥammad is accepted. That will be a fearful day, when every one shall think only of himself. Adam will cry, "O Lord, save my soul only! I care not for Eve, nor for Abel." Noah will exclaim, "O Lord, preserve me from hell, and do with Ham and Shem as thou pleasest!" Abraham shall say, "I pray neither for Ishmael nor Isaac, but for my own safety only." Even Moses shall forget his brother Aaron, and Christ His mother, so greatly shall they be concerned for themselves' (Weil, *Legends*, pp. 213, 214).

(*c*) *The chief Companions.*—Had they enjoyed a sure hope of salvation, they would hardly have uttered such words as the following, which are attributed to them by tradition.† *Abū Bakr* was called Ṣiddīq, or the faithful witness to the truth, because he attested the truth of Muḥammad's alleged night-journey to heaven. He also received the title 'Atīq, or Free, because the Prophet once said to him, 'Thou art Free (saved) from the Fire (of hell).' He was the chiefest among the Companions. 'And yet he was so fearful of the future that he used to say: "O that I were but a tree of which you might gather the fruit and eat thereof!" and again, "Would I had been as the green grass of which the cattle eat!" and once more, "Blessing on thee, O little bird, who sittest on the tree, eatest its fruit, and enjoyest innocently its shade,—O that Abū Bakr had been like thee!" He so laboured under fear and distress that his breath was often as of a roasted liver. On the day of his death he said to 'Āyishah: "O my Daughter; this is the day of my release and obtaining of my desert; if gladness it will be lasting; if sorrow, it will never cease"' (*Torch of Guidance*, p. 11).

Concerning *'Alī* there is a tradition of Anas in the *Mishkātu'l-anwār*, that '"Alī the son of Abū Ṭālib fainted seventy times a night from fear of God.'‡ Now 'Alī was the first cousin and son-in-law of Muḥammad, and the first after Khādījah to attest his prophetic call, and believe in him. Yet one who knew him well

* Bi-tarsīd az rūzī-kih tamām-i-ambīyā' wa mursalīn az sakhaṭ wa ghaẓab-i-ilāhī khā'if and.

(I am indebted for the quotations from the Traditions in this chapter, except those from *The Torch of Guidance* and Weil's *Legends*, to a Persian friend.)

† These quotations with one exception are taken from the *Torch of Guidance to the Mystery of Redemption*, translated from the Arabic by Sir W. Muir. In the original the references are given to the authorities quoted.

‡ 'Alīyi'bni-Abī Ṭālib shab-ī haftād martabah az khauf-i-Khudā ghash mīkard.

gives this sorrowful account of him: 'I have seen 'Alī in some of his distressing states. As he lay restless in his chamber, the curtain let down to gaze upon the stars, he would seize his beard, toss about in anxiety and fear, weeping sadly. Lying thus, I once heard him cry, "O world! art thou turned from me, or still believed in by me? Alas, alas! Woe's me! Thrice have I cast thee off; there can be no return again of thee to me. Thy days are short, thy joys contemptible, and thy dangers great. Alas, alas! provision for the journey is small and its risks so dangerous!"' (*Torch of Guidance*, pp. 13, 14).

Of *Mu'āwīyah*, son of Abū Sufyān, the following account is given: 'When near his end, he called his son Yazīd, and said to him: "My son, I am in great fear before the Lord as to dealing with thee now. For, my son, being out with the Prophet on a certain occasion, while washing his hands, he observed my shirt to be torn about the neck, and said, O Mu'āwīyah! shall I clothe thee with another shirt? And I consenting, he put upon me a shirt which he had worn but once, and it is now with me. So one day I took a small piece from off it, with a little of the Prophet's hair, and some parings of his nails, and put them in a little flask. Now my son, when I die, after thou hast bathed my body, take some of the hair and nails, and place them upon my eyes and in my throat and mouth; then spread the Prophet's shirt along the coffin, so that lying upon it, if anything could bring a blessing to me, this would." Then follow two touching verses, longing that he had never fallen under the temptations and pleasures of the world, but lived as a bird upon the fruit around him, till placed in the narrow grave' (*Ib.*, pp. 15, 16).

With reference to *Sufyān*, 'Al Faẓl ibn 'Ayaẓ tells us that no one of the Companions was more troubled as death approached than he was. "We asked him what was the cause of his distress. Is it the cold water that is poured upon thee?" "Nay," he replied, "it is because I am going on a way I know not of, and to appear before the Lord Whom I have never seen"' (*Ib.*, p. 18).

About *'Umar*, concerning whom Muḥammad once said, 'O 'Umar, if I had not been sent a Prophet from on high, surely thou wouldest,' and again, 'When I visited Paradise, I saw a Palace and a Castle; and was told it was for 'Umar; so I was about to enter when they said, It is for another than thee!' (*Ib.*, p. 23). We learn as follows from Ibn 'Abbās, who visited 'Umar in his sickness: 'Verily,' said 'Umar, 'I am longing for the salvation of myself, and of you also,' addressing the Companions of the Prophet by whom he was surrounded. '"I am none other than as a drowning man, who seeth possibility of escape with life, and hopeth for it, but feareth he may die and lose it, and so plungeth about with hands and feet. More desperate than the drowning man is he who at the sight of heaven and hell is buried in the vision. . . " So saying he wept, and those around wept with him. "O Amīr of the Faithful," said I (Ibn 'Abbās), "thou shouldest rejoice; for the

Prophet of the Lord was pleased with thee; and Abu Bakr died pleased with thee; and the whole body of the Muslims are pleased with thee." "Whom are ye trying to deceive?" cried the unhappy Amīr. "Had I the whole East and the West, gladly would I give up all to be delivered from this awful terror that is hanging over me"[*] (*Ib.*, pp. 21, 22). Bukhārī has it thus: 'If the whole East were mine, by the Lord I would surrender it all to be delivered from the wrath of the Most High, before that I should see Him' (note on p. 22). The following is from Qutāda: 'When 'Umar fell grievously sick, he bade his son 'Abdu'llāh place him with his cheek upon the ground. The son shrinking from it, 'Umar did so himself, and with his cheek resting on the earth, cried thus aloud: "*Alas for 'Umar, and alas for the mother of 'Umar, if it should not please the Lord to pardon him!*"' (*Ib.*, p. 22).

And all this, in spite of the great services to Islām rendered by these men,* their good deeds and piety, and in spite too of their knowledge of all the joys of Paradise promised to believers. From this we learn that (i.) there can be no refuge for an awakened soul, even a pious believer and a chief Companion, from the fear of God's wrath, except in the knowledge of a perfect and sufficient sacrifice; and (ii.) that there is need of pardon from the Most High; which pardon signifies the free gift of His grace, and cannot be purchased with any price. Or the question may be put in this way, These men either believed Muḥammad to be the Prophet of God or they did not. If the former, why their dread and apprehension at the thought of the great Day of Account? But if the latter, they were not true believers, and were Muslims simply out of policy (*Ib.*, pp. 12, 13, 19, 26, 27).

Objection.—The sayings quoted were uttered from fear of God, which is not to be wondered at, since Muḥammad himself uttered somewhat similar things.

Answer.—This is the very point at issue. *Why* did they have this excessive fear of God? If they had surely known that they were pardoned and accepted and beloved of God, there was no ground or reason for such fears. *Illustration.*—A child does not fear a loving, tender father. It does not shrink from him, nor is unwilling to go to him, nor trembles at his voice.

(*d*) *Muḥammad.*—'We read in Bukhārī, the tradition of Khalīd's daughter, that Muḥammad prayed thus: "O Lord, I seek refuge in Thee from the torment of the grave, and from the torment of the Fire!" The same tradition is repeated by Abū Hurairah, and another from Mālik is as follows: Muḥammad used to say: "O Lord, I flee to Thee for refuge from infirmity and sloth and

* Sc. in the opinion of the Sunnī Muḥammadans. The Shī'ahs, however, regard with more or less aversion all the great men of Islām mentioned above, except 'Alī; and might agreeably to their own special views argue that Abū Bakr, Mu'āwīyah, and 'Umar were stricken with remorse for the evil and injustice they had done to the house of Muḥammad in the person of 'Alī and his descendants.

decrepitude and fear, and from the terror of the grave I seek refuge in Thee!'"* And 'Āyishah said, 'I always observed the Prophet, at the end of every prayer, implore God to defend him from the sufferings of the grave' (*Mishkātu'l-maṣābīḥ*, Eng. tr., bk. I., ch. V., pt. 1, p. 39). Muḥammad's sense of the need of forgiveness is also shown in his prayer, of which Muslim tells us, as follows: 'O Lord, forgive me for my sins, all of them; sins small and sins great, the former and the latter; sins open and sins secret.' We find the answer to this prayer in the Qur'ān, as under—

'God is reconciled unto the Prophet, and unto the Muhājjirīn and the Anṣārs, who followed him in the hour of distress' (Sūr. 9 *Taubah*, 118).

'Verily we have granted thee a manifest victory, that God may forgive thee thy preceding and thy subsequent sin' (Sūr. 48 *Fatḥ*, 1, 2).

'Have we not opened thy breast; and eased thee of thy burden, which galled thy back . . .?' (Sūr. 94 *Inshirāḥ*, 1–3).

'These passages show that although the fear of God's judgment might not be constant in Muḥammad's mind, there was still the sense of a reckoning for sin, or, in other words, fear of its consequences. So he was earnest in seeking pardon, and these verses of the Qur'ān may be regarded by the Muslim as an answer to his earnest prayer.'

If such, then, were the feelings of Muḥammad, who you suppose to have been so highly honoured by the Almighty, that the prediction was given concerning him 'By the Lord! no sooner shall thy Lord see thee than He will hasten in the heavens to meet thee' (which we have on the authority of Muslim and Bukhārī), 'is not this sufficient to make you withhold the trust you are otherwise disposed to place in the words of Muḥammad, and to weaken your faith in his revelations and promises?'—in a word, to prevent your arriving at the blessed certainty of having obtained salvation?

2. The grounds of assurance severally considered.

When God—so runs the tradition: I had better said the blasphemy—resolved to create the human race, He took into His hands a mass of earth, the same whence all mankind were to be formed, and in which they after a manner pre-existed; and having then divided the clod into two equal portions, He threw the one half into hell, saying, 'These to eternal fire, and I care not;' and projected the other half into heaven, adding, 'and these to Paradise, I care not.' (See *Mishkātu'l-Maṣābīḥ Bābu'l-Qadr.*) †

The chief grounds on which Muḥammadans base their assurance of salvation are the following:—

* *Torch of Guidance*, p. 31. See also pp. 32, 33, from which the contents of this section are mainly derived.

† Hughes, *Dict. of Islam*, *s.v.* 'God,' quoting Palgrave's *Central and Eastern Arabia*, vol. i. Cp. the famous tradition of the good man dismissed to hell and the sinner exalted to heaven by the mere exercise of God's sovereign prerogative.

(*a*) The performance of good works;
(*b*) The intercession (*shafā'at*) of Muḥammad, and (in the case of the Shī'ahs) of the Imāms also;
(*c*) The mercy and compassion of God;
(*d*) Charitable deeds and almsgiving;
(*e*) Faith;
(*f*) The rehearsal of prayers and invocations (*aurād, azkār*);
(*g*) Asking pardon from God (*istighfār*);
(*h*) Repentance (*taubah*).

The unsatisfactory nature of each and all of these with reference to the object in view is next to be considered.

(*a*) *Works.*—These are of two kinds, (*α*) obligatory (*wājib*), as the performance of the ceremonial prayers, pilgrimage, etc., and (*β*) approved and desirable works (*mustaḥabb*), which do not possess the binding obligation of the former, such as reading the Qur'ān, listening to orations in honour of Ḥusain, etc., and weeping for the sufferings of the House of 'Alī (these two last among the Shī'ahs only).

That even good works are an unsatisfactory ground of assurance of salvation may be shown in two ways, either by (i.) proofs addressed to the reason, or from (ii.) the Law of Islām.

(i.) (*α*) God accepts a man for purity of heart, not for the works he does, such as fasting, pilgrimage,* etc., for God has no *need* of any of these things from man. From the mere performance of these works purity of heart and forgiveness and acceptance with God will not be obtained. God will not forgive the sinner till his heart be right and true in His sight. *Illustration.*—If I do a good deed out of compulsion (*jabr*), because I feel myself obliged to do it, it is not acceptable with God. For example, if I give to a beggar because I am ashamed to refuse him in the presence of others, or because I desire the praise of men, this act of mine is not done from a right motive, viz. for the sake of God, and will not be pleasing in His sight. Similarly, the works enjoined by Islām are done because God has commanded them, but they do not necessarily secure that purity of heart which He requires. For a man may, *e.g.*, be actually indulging thoughts of transgression against God during the repetition of his prayers, or may go on a pilgrimage with the aid of money unjustly or fraudulently acquired. The inference to be drawn is that a man cannot derive the assurance of salvation from the mere performance of good works.

(*β*) God must punish sins committed against His creatures, otherwise He will be an unjust tyrant (*zālim*). For instance, if a man, who has performed all the works enjoined by the Law of

* For the high estimate of the value of pilgrimage, compare the following: Some Damascenes on pilgrimage to Mecca passing through Port Said, asked the colporteur what his books were. He replied, 'They are the holy books which conduct us to salvation.' The immediate rejoinder was, 'that pilgrimage was the true and only road to salvation.'—Br. and For. Bible Society's *Report*, 1900, pp. 146, 147.

Islām, kills or robs one of his fellow-men, and God does not punish him, He will be *zālim*, *i.e.* unjust and oppressive to His creatures in not avenging the death or injury of one of them. But, on the other hand, *if God punishes* the murderer or robber, his good deeds have availed him nothing, and our point is proved.

The above argument depends upon the distinction drawn between sins against God and those against man. God may, if He will, pass over the former which are committed against Himself; but He will not overlook the latter which are done to His creatures, for this would be oppression (*zulm*). The Traditions confirm this sentiment, that God will not pass over offences committed against the rights of mankind. *Illustration.*—A king is at liberty, if he so pleases, to forego the arrears of taxes due to him, but not to allow the murder of one of his subjects to pass unpunished.

(γ) In the Qur'ān good deeds are joined with faith as necessary to salvation, *e.g.*—

> God hath promised unto such of them as believe and do good works pardon and a great reward (Sūr. 48 *Fath*, 29 *fin.*).
>
> Verily man *employeth himself* in *that which will prove of* loss: except those who believe and do that which is right (Sūr. 103 *'Asr*, 2, 3).

Now you must say whether it is necessary to perform all these good works, or only some of them, in order to obtain salvation. If only some, then this is entirely contrary to reason. If a man should tell his servant to do ten things, and he only does one and neglects the rest, will his master be pleased with him and forgive him? But if you say all are required, this is impossible for mortal man.

(ii.) Turning now to the Law of Islām, it will be seen that this affords little comfort or encouragement to the anxious and awakened soul.

(α) So severe are the penalties pronounced against sin in the Qur'ān and Traditions that the sinner may well tremble, and ask in dismay what hope or assurance of salvation can possibly be derived from them. How can he feel any confidence that he has not at some time or other fallen into some of these grievous sins? And how will he avoid suffering the most painful suspense and uncertainty as to whether his evil deeds may not be found at the last to outweigh his good actions?

In the Qur'ān, besides the numerous passages which speak of the condemnation of the wicked, we read that every one shall be rewarded according to his deeds (Sūr. 39 *Zumar*, 70; 40 *Mū'min*, 17; 46 *Aḥqāf*, 18). All deeds, first and last, will be brought to account at the day of judgment (75 *Qiyāmah*, 13), and their merits accurately weighed (99 *Zilzilah*, 7, 8; 21 *Anbiyā'*, 48). Lying and impiety (45 *Jāsiyah*, 6), neglect to feed the poor (69 *Ḥāqqah*, 34), swerving from righteousness (72 *Jinn*, 15), turning aside from the admonition of the Lord (ver. 17), and disobedience to God and

His Apostle (ver. 24) will be among the damning sins, even as the wicked themselves will attribute their condemnation to neglect of prayer, omission to feed the poor, and wading in vain disputes (74 *Muddaṯṯir*, 43–46). The performance of a few good deeds will not be enough to save a man from hell, for he whose balance is light will be condemned (101 *Qāri'ah*, 8, 9).

The following Shī'ah traditions are to the same effect:—

Whenever any one utters a falsehood, the Lord blessed and almighty with seventy thousand angels curse him * (Majlisī's *Mi'rāju's-sa'ādah*).

Whenever any one dies in such a condition that one drop of wine is in his stomach, of a surety his dwelling-place is hell † (Traditions of Imām Ja'far-i-Ṣādiq in *Manāqibu'l-A'immah*).

The perfume of paradise extends as far as a journey of seventy thousand years, but an avaricious person will in no wise smell it‡ (Tradition of Imām Ja'far-i-Ṣādiq in *Mi'rāju's-sa'ādah*).

He who purposely neglects prayer, verily he is an infidel (Tradition in *Kāfī*).

Whenever any one slanders his brother in the faith, the Lord almighty will not accept seventy days' prayer and fasting from him (*Mi'rāju's-sa'ādah* and *Abwābu'l-Janān*).

Whosoever slanders his brother in the faith is as though he devoured his dead flesh ¶ (Tradition of Muḥammad related by Ummu Salamah. From the two works just mentioned).

Whoever assists a forsaker of prayer with one morsel of bread or with one draught of water, is as though he had slaughtered all the prophets, the first of whom is Adam and the last of them Muḥammad ** (Tradition of Imām Muḥammad Bāqir in *Kāfī*, related by Abū Baṣīr).

A liar is the enemy of God and His Apostle †† (Tradition of 'Alī in *Mi'rāju's-sa'ādah*).

Whenever a person utters a falsehood, a foul stink ascends from his mouth to heaven, and all the angels of heaven abhor it and curse him ‡‡ (Majlisī's *Biḥāru'l-anwār*).

The Lord blessed and almighty on the day of resurrection will assemble the proud and raise them from the dead in the form of ants in order that they may be crushed beneath the hands and feet of men. And, after that the true God almighty has taken an account from all creation.

* Hargāh kas-ī durūgh bi-gūyad, Khudāwand-i-tabārak wa ta'ālā bā haftād hazār malā'ikah ū-ra la'n mī-kunand.

† Hargāh kas-ī bi-mīrad dar ḥālat-ī kih ek qaṭrah sharāb dar dil-i-ū bāshad albattah mā'wā-ye-ū jahannam ast.

‡ Bū-ye Bihisht haftād hazār sāl rāh mī-rawad, walī shakhṣ-i-bakhīl hargiz bū-ye-ān-rā na-mī-shinawad.

§ Man taraka'ṣ-ṣalāta muta'ammidan fa qad kafara.

‖ Hargāh kas-ī ghaibat-i-barādar-i-dīnī-ye-khud-rā bi-kunad, Khudāwand-i-ta'ālā haftād rūz-i-ṣalāt wa ṣaum-i-ū-rā qabūl na-mī-kunad.

¶ Har kih barādar-i-dīnī-ye-khud-rā ghaibat kunad, miṣl-i-ān ast kih gūsht-i-murdah-i-ū-rā khurdah bāshad.

** Har kih tārikuʾṣ-ṣalāt-rā bi-yek luqmah-i-nān yā bi-yek sharbat-i-āb i'ānat namāyad, miṣli-ān ast kih tamām-i-amḥbiyā'-rā kih awwal-i-ānhā Ādam wa ākhir-i-ānhā Muḥammad ast bi-qatl risānidah.

†† Durūgh-gū dushman-i-Khudā wa rasūl ast.

‡‡ Hargāh shakhṣ-ī durūgh bi-gūyad bū-ye-gand-ī az dahān-i-ū bi-āsmān bālā rawad, kih jamī'-i-mala'ikah-i-āsmān az ān mutanaffir gardand wa ū-rā la'n kunand.

He will command the angels of punishment to take them away to hell * (Tradition of Imām Riẓā in *Mi'rāju's-sa'ādah*).

The Lord almighty created paradise for whoever obeys Him, although he be an Ethiopian slave, and created hell for whosoever disobeys and rebels against Him, although he be a Sayid of the tribe of Quraish † (Tradition of Imām Zainu'l-'Ābidīn in *Biḥāru'l-anwār* and *Kāfī*).

The Lord blessed and almighty has no comparison with any one of His servants: and He created all of them for the sake of knowledge of, and obedience to Himself: and He sent prophets and apostles for their guidance. Whosoever, therefore, does not hearken to and obey Him, and being deceived by Satan acts contrary to the Divine commands, the true God most holy and almighty will send him to hell ‡ (Tradition of Imām Muḥammad Taqī in *Kāfī*).

Fear the day when nothing is of any avail for your condition except praiseworthy and good deeds. Fear the day when the Lord seals your mouths, and your members and limbs give testimony concerning you. Fear the day when your goods and children profit you nothing at all § (Tradition of 'Alī in *Sharḥ-i-Nahj'l-Balāghah*).

The Lord blessed and almighty on the day of resurrection will weigh the good and evil deeds of men (lit. servants) in the balance of justice: therefore every one whose evil deeds exceed his good deeds, He will give commandment for him to be taken away to hell ‖ (Tradition of 'Alī in *Biḥāru'l-anwār*).

To the above may be added the following terrible description of the Ṣirāṭ, or 'the *bridge* across the infernal fire.' 'They that are risen will then be conducted over the bridge Ṣirāṭ, which is composed of seven bridges, each of which is three thousand years long. This bridge is as sharp as a sword, and as fine as a hair. One third of it is an ascent, one third is even, and one third is a descent. He alone who passes all these bridges with success can be admitted into paradise. The unbelievers fall into hell from the

* Khudāwand-i-tabārak wa ta'ālā dar yaum-i-qīyāmat mutakabbi rān-rā bi-ṣūrat-i-mūrchah maḥshūr wa mab'ūṯ mī-farmāyad tā ān-kih dar zīr-i-dast wa pā-ye mardum pāyemāl gardand wa pas az ān-kih Ḥaqq ta'ālā ḥisāb-i-tamām-i-khalā'iq-rā kashīd, amr mī-farmāyad bi-malā'ikah-i-'aẕāb kih ānhā-rā bi-jahannam bi-barand.

† Khudāwand-i-ta'ālā Bihisht-rā khalq farmūdah az barāy-i har kas-ī iṭā'at-i-ū-rā bi-namāyad agarchih ghulām-i-Ḥabashīy bāshad, wa khalq farmūdah jahannam-rā az barāy-i-har kih nafarmānbardārī wa ma'ṣīyat-i-ū-rā bi-kunad, agarchih sayyid Qurashīy bāshad.

‡ Khudāwand-i-tabārak wa ta'ālā nisbat-ī bā hech ek az bandagān-i-khud na-dārad, wa jamī'-i-ānhā-rā barāy-i-ma'rifat wa ṭā'at-i-khud āfrīdah, wa ambīyā' wa rusul-rā barāy-i-hidāyat-i-ānhā mab'ūṯ farmūdah; pas, har kas-ī kih iṭā'at wa farmāndārī-ye-ū-rā na-namāyad wa farīb-i-shaitān-rā khwurdah mukhālifat-i-awāmir-i-ilāhī bi-kunad, Ḥaqq subḥāna-hu wa ta'ālā ū-rā bih jahannam firistad.

§ Bi-tarsīd az rūz-ī kih hech chīz bi-ḥāl-i-shumā nāfi' nīst, magar a'māl-i-ḥasanah-i-ṭayyibah: bi-tarsīd az rūz-ī kih Khudāwand dahān-i-shumā-rā muhr kunad wa a'ẓā' wa jawāriḥ-i-shumā dar ḥaqq-i-shumā shahādat dihad: bi-tarsīd az rūz-ī kih amwāl wa aulād-i-tān ṣamar-ī barāy-i-shumā na-dāshtah bāshand.

‖ Khudāwand-i-tabārak wa ta'ālā dar rūz-i-qīyāmat ḥasanāt wa saiyi'āt-i-'ibād-rā dar mīzān-i-'adl mī-sanjad: pas har kas-ī kih saiyi'āt-ash az ḥasanāt-ash zīyādatī kardah bāshad amr mī-farmāyad kih ū-rā bih jahannam bi-barand.

first bridge; the prayerless, from the second; the uncharitable, from the third; whoever has eaten in Ramaẓān, from the fourth; whoever has neglected the pilgrimage, from the fifth; whoever hath not commended the good, from the sixth; and whoso hath not prevented evil, from the seventh' (Weil, *Legends*, p. 214).

(β) Still further, it is expressly asserted on the authority of Muḥammad himself that no one will be saved merely on account of good works which he may have done.

'It is related of your Prophet that he once said to his Companions: "Good works cannot admit any one into paradise." "Not even thee, O Prophet of the Lord?" "Not even me," he replied, "unless the Almighty shield me with His grace and mercy."' Three traditions slightly varying are given to the same effect by Muslim and Bukhāri.* 'For man is a sinner, and works, however earnest, cannot justify him in the heavenly court; even as the repentance of a murderer, or good deeds done by a robber, could not justify them in a court of law from the charge of murder or robbery or avert its punishment. And it was just this which Muḥammad said (as above), that works cannot save the sinner, or secure his entrance into paradise. Is not the slave bound to obey his master? and if he rebel, subsequent submission will not avail to justify; how much more, then, must it be with the sinner who every day of his life offends the great and glorious Maker! . . . for even the penitent can be pardoned in court only in accord with the demands of justice' (cp. St. Luke xvii. 10, 'unprofitable servants').†

(γ) Of works by which Muḥammadans think to obtain salvation, the most important is prayer, upon the acceptance of which the acceptance of all other works (both *wājib* and *mustaḥabb*) depends. The insecurity of this foundation for building upon it the assurance of salvation, may thus be shown. ‡

The importance of prayer may be seen from the Shī'ah addition to the call to prayer, 'Come to the best of works!' § and from the following tradition of Muḥammad, 'Prayer is the pillar of the faith, and he who establishes it verily establishes the faith, and he who neglects it verily destroys (the faith).' ‖ Muḥammad used to call prayer the key of Paradise.¶ If prayer be not accepted, other good works also are not accepted; and instead of obtaining nearness to God, a man is punished by remaining far off from Him. But if his prayers are accepted, he is pure and blameless in God's sight. See the following traditions of Muḥammad to this effect:—

* See also *Mishkātu'l-maṣābīḥ*, bk. IV., ch. XXXVIII., pt. 3, p. 280, where a tradition of 'Āyishah to the same effect will be found.

† *Torch of Guidance*, pp. 6, 7.

‡ From *Wasīlatu'n-Najāt*, ch. ix. pp. 133 *sqq*.

§ Ḥayya 'alā khaira'l-'amali.

‖ Aṣ-ṣalātu 'amūdu'd-dīni, wa man aqāma-hā fa-qad aqāma' d-dīna wa man taraka-hā fa-qad hadama.

¶ Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 169.

The first thing for which a man is called to account is prayer: and if it be accepted, all else is accepted, and if it be rejected, all else is rejected.*

The prayers of that man whom they do not restrain from abominable sins and iniquity, will not bring him nearer to God than afar off from Him.†

Consider again, whether according to the Qur'ān and the Traditions it is possible to offer acceptable prayers to God, remembering that upon them depends the acceptance of all other good deeds.‡ There is a story of Muḥammad, that once upon a time two camels were brought to him as an offering, and he proposed to give them to any one who would perform two acts of prayer (*rak'at*) without wandering thoughts. But none of the Companions were able to do this—not even 'Alī, of whom these words were spoken by Muḥammad: ''Alī is the best of mortal men, and he who denies it, verily he is an infidel.'§

The Qur'ān too pronounces its sentence against those who allow distracting thoughts to disturb their prayers: 'Woe be unto those who pray, *and* who are negligent at their prayer' (Sūr. 107 *Ma'ūn*, 4, 5).

This pit of woe (*chāh-i-wail*) is described by Muḥammad in the Traditions as at the bottom of hell. In this well is a serpent on account of whose noisomeness hell cries aloud to God several times a day because of the stink of its mouth. This serpent's mouth is the habitation of those whose minds wander at prayer.

If then you accept the Qur'ān and the Traditions (for you cannot say that Muḥammad told a lie in the Traditions, or that the above verse is not in the Qur'ān, for it is), the only possible conclusion is that your prayers are utterly worthless and indeed sin. Since even the best of the Companions could not pray without the world entering into their thoughts, much less can you. And so your prayers, on which the acceptance of all your good deeds and your salvation depend, is found to be but a broken reed. (Two illustrations are given,‖ (1) of a lame man who, when asked who

* Awwalu mā yuḥāsibu-hu'l-insāna bi-hi's-ṣalātu, fa-in qubilat qubila mā siwā-hā, wa in ruddat rudda mā siwā-hā.

† Man lam tantahi ṣalātu-hu 'ani'l-faḥshā'i wa'l-munkari, lam turid-hu min allāhi illā bu'da-hu.

‡ 'The Muhammadan doctors enumerate no less than twelve requisites to a true and acceptable prayer, and maintain that if any one of these is wanting, the whole prayer is useless, and rejected by God.' 'The twelve requisites are divided into seven external conditions and five internal pillars, or essentials.' The former are, 'the observance of the Qiblah, the previous ablutions, the cleaning of the place of prayer, the proper time of beginning, the actual purposing to prayer, the body being decently covered, and the beginning the prayer by the exclamation, 'Allāh akbar'.' The five latter are, 'the standing erect, the rehearsal of portions of the Qur'ān and other forms, the bending forward with the whole body, the prostration in which to touch the earth with the forehead, and the sitting on the thighs after prayer.'—'Abd 'Īsā, *Food for reflection*, pp. 58, 59, 62.

§ 'Alīyun khairu'l-bashari, fa-man abā, fa-qad kafara.

‖ Viz. in the passage in *Wasīlatu'n-Najāt*, whence the above is taken.

he was, gave his name as 'Alī the *pish-rau* (the leader or forerunner), and (2) of an untidy woman, who said she was going to arrange the hair of a bride—replies in strange and ludicrous contradiction to their own appearance.)

(*b*) *The intercession of Muḥammad, and* (*in the case of the Shī'ahs*) *of the Imāms also.*

The skull found one day by Christ on the shores of the Dead Sea, and recalled by Him to life at the desire of His disciples, thus addresses Him, in response to His request for a more minute description of hell than that already given by him, 'The seventh [floor of hell is] for the sinners of the people of the prophet Muḥammad, who shall appear in later times. The last mentioned abode is least terrible, and sinners are saved from it through the intercession of Muḥammad.'—Weil, *Legends*, p. 224.

'It is well for the people of Muḥammad; he will intercede for us.'—Remark often heard from women in Jerusalem, quoted by Miss A. M. Elverson: C.M.S. *Report*, 1902–03, p. 153.

Muḥammadans regard Muḥammad's intercession (*shafā'at*) on their behalf on the day of resurrection as a most efficacious means of their salvation. On account of the pre-eminent excellencies of Muḥammad, who is the best and chiefest of all creation, himself sinless and the cause of the creation of all things, they believe that God will never reject his intercession, but it will even avail to bring souls out of hell; and Muḥammad will wash them in the well of purification at the door of Paradise, and cause them to arrive there.

But this is a very uncertain ground of reliance, for it is not clear that Muḥammad can be the intercessor of a single soul. *This idea derives no confirmation from the Qur'ān.* Such traditions as those mentioned above are contrary both to others in which Muḥammad admits his own sinfulness * and to the similar testimony of the Qur'ān. The two positions are hopelessly antagonistic. They cannot be reconciled together (*ijtimā'*), nor can they both be disallowed (*irtifā'*). Muḥammad did not possess the qualifications essential for an intercessor, and it is quite uncertain how far his intercession will prevail.†

(1) No one of the descendants of Adam can be an intercessor for others. For all of them have inherited a sinful nature from him; and are more guilty than Adam himself, since Adam was free from the 'infection of nature' which we call 'original sin,' having been created and not born of sinful parents like the rest of mankind. Of Adam, moreover, we are only told that he disobeyed one command of God in eating of the forbidden tree, and no other sin of his either against God or man is recorded. All men are under the dominion of Satan (Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'il*, 65, 66); and their sins are the cause of God's displeasure; and no transgressor can be an

* The treatment of this topic comes more appropriately under Ch. VII. (C) § 3, pp. 411 *sqq.*

† The following pages are chiefly compiled from notes derived from two converts, one an Indian and the other a Persian.

intercessor or saviour for others. Compare Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 47, 'O children of Israel . . . dread the day *wherein one* soul shall not make satisfaction for *another* soul, neither shall any intercession be accepted from them, nor shall any compensation be received, neither shall they be helped;' and ver. 123.

(2) There is no authority in the Qur'ān for looking upon Muḥammad as an intercessor. For acceptable intercession can only be made by the permission of God; and indeed there is no intercessor except Him:—

O true believers, give *alms* of that which we have bestowed unto you, before the day cometh wherein there shall be no merchandising, nor friendship, nor intercession. . . . Who is he that can intercede with Him, but through His good pleasure? (Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 254, 255).

There is no intercessor, but by His permission (Sūr. 10 *Yūnus*, 3).

Say, intercession is altogether in the disposal of God (Sūr. 39 *Zumar*, 45).

Preach it unto those who fear that they shall be assembled before their Lord: they shall have no patron nor intercessor except Him (Sūr. 6 *An'am*, 50; cp. 32 *Sajdah*, 3).

When did Muḥammad, then, receive this permission to be the intercessor of his people? Obviously you cannot be certain till the Day of Judgment whether this privilege will be accorded to him or not.

(3) The words of Muḥammad himself forbid us regarding him as an intercessor between God and man, as the *'ulama'* maintain. See Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 39, 'O true believers, fear God, and earnestly desire a near conjunction with him.' * Those addressed and bidden to seek a *wasīlah*, were not unbelievers, but followers of Muḥammad, whom he addresses as 'true believers.' But as this was not sufficient for them, as they might perhaps have supposed, they are bidden to seek another *wasīlah*.

In the text of the Qur'ān Muḥammad is never spoken of as the intercessor or saviour of his people, but only as a warner and preacher. Thus, 'Verily I am no other than a denouncer of threats, and a messenger of good tidings unto people who believe' (Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 188); and, 'I am *no more than* a public preacher' (Sūr. 29 *'Ankabūt*, 49; cp. 46 *Aḥqāf*, 8).

These verses throw light on the preceding one, in which Muḥammad tells his people that following him is not enough for them, and they require another means of salvation.

More clearly still he says in Sūr. 46 *Aḥqāf*, 8, 'Say, I am not singular among the apostles; neither do I know what will be done with me or with you,' which shows how he himself was conscious

* The original word for a 'near conjunction' is *wasīlah*, which literally denotes a helper or means. The means of this near approach to God, say the Muslim commentators, is obedience to His commands. (Sale, *in loc.*) The point of the following argument depends upon giving *wasīlah* the meaning of helper or mediator.

of his need of an intercessor for himself as for them. How could a man, ignorant of the future by his own confession, be an intercessor for others?

With this agrees the speech of Muḥammad on one occasion to 'Alī and his wife Fāṭimah, 'Work out your own soul's safety; as for me, I cannot help you in anything.'*

We Christians are not ignorant of your religion. The ignorance and shame belongs to you Muḥammadans, who put forward pretensions on behalf of Muḥammad contrary to the truth. Do not indulge fatal error, like that of a man taking poison or opium by mistake, or shameful ignorance!

A few words may here be added as to the intercession of the Imāms, in whom the Shī'ahs place such strong confidence. If there is no sufficient reason for relying on the intercession of Muḥammad, still less is there for trusting to that of the Imāms. The Traditions themselves give warning against proudly and confidently relying upon them:—

'Fear the Divine punishment and be not presumptuously confident in the intercession of us, the Imāms' † (Tradition of Mūsā ibn Ja'far in *Abwābu'l-Jinān*).

'Be afraid, that haply you may not arrive near to us on the day of Resurrection, and the Lord send you to hell' ‡ (Tradition of Imām Ja'far-i-Ṣādiq, *ibid.*).

'Be not proud and confident because of your relation to us, for the Lord has created hell for every one who rebels against Him although he be a Sayyid of the Quraish, and has created Paradise for every one who obeys Him although he be an Ethiopian slave' § (Tradition of Imām Ja'far-i-Sādiq, *ibid.*).

(4) Muḥammad did not possess the knowledge of hidden things. This is an essential condition of a true Apostle (*rasūl*), well-pleasing to God:—

Nor is God *disposed* to make you acquainted with what is a hidden secret, but God chooseth such of His apostles as He pleaseth (Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 180. But see the conflicting opinions of the Comm. quoted by Sale, *in loc.*).

He [my Lord] knoweth the secrets of futurity; and He doth not communicate His secrets unto any, except an apostle in whom He is well pleased (Sūr. 72 *Jinn*, 26, 27).

Muḥammad clearly denies his possession of this knowledge:—

Say, I say not unto you, The treasures of God are in my power: neither

* *Torch of Guidance*, p. 16.

† Bi-tarsīd az 'azāb-i-ilāhī wa bi-shafā'at-i-mā a'immah maghrūr mashawīd.

‡ Bi-tarsīd az ān-kih bi-mā na-rasīd dar rūz-i-qīyāmat, wa khudāwand shumā-rā bih jahannam bi-firistad.

§ Az intisāb-i-khud-i-tān bi-mā maghrūr wa mutma'inn na-bāshīd, zīrā kih Khudāwand jahannam-rā khalq farmūdah az barāy-i-har kih ma'ṣīyat-i-ū-rā bī-kunad, agarchih Sayyid-i-Qurashīy bāshad wa Bihisht-rā āfirīdah az barāy-i-har kih i'ṭā'at-i-ū-rā bi-namāyad agarchih ghulām-i-Habashīy bāshad.

do I say, I know the secrets *of God*: neither do I say unto you, Verily I am an angel: I follow only that which is revealed unto me. Say, Shall the blind and the seeing be held equal? (Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 49).

Say, I know not whether *the punishment* with which ye are threatened *be* nigh, or whether my Lord will appoint for it a distant term (Sūr. 72 *Jinn*, 26).

He compares himself in this respect to the blind in contrast with the seeing. Let every soul, then, that is seeking salvation, choose a messenger of God that sees and knows the hidden things! And again:—

Say, I am able neither to procure advantage unto myself, nor to avert mischief *from me*, but as God pleaseth. If I knew the secrets *of God*, I should surely enjoy abundance of good, neither should evil befall me. Verily I am no other than a denouncer of threats, and a messenger of good tidings unto people who believe (Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 188).

What will such a one, able neither to procure good, nor avert evil from himself, be able to do for others?

He who possesses the true knowledge of hidden things * is able to form all creatures from the dust of the earth and breathe the breath of life into them. He furnishes each one with bodies and organs, eyes, ears, etc., appropriate for their several existences and works; and enables the spider without a flaw to weave and suspend its wonderful web from firm foundations. The true Apostle of God must have this knowledge and be a perfect man, and yet not needing man's advice or being in expectancy of inspiration and revelation; but, possessed of this knowledge of hidden things, be able to create from the dust † and vivify, to raise the dead, give sight to those born blind and cleanse the leper; to know all about every one, *e.g.* what each eats, ‡ stores or possesses, even to their secret thoughts, and this at all times, and be able to testify to the good or evil deeds of every one; and to give commands and prohibitions (*amr wa nahy*) as to things lawful and unlawful. Such an one, according to the rule of the Qur'ān, is worthy to be the intercessor and saviour of sinners.

(5) Many people will not be qualified (*qābil*) to receive benefit from the intercession of Muḥammad.

(i.) We do not know for certain that intercession will be made by him for any individual. All are sinners. And, in fact, we are told that for those guilty of certain sins intercession will not be made: but they will be deprived of any helper or intercessor at the

* The following description of him who is endowed with this knowledge can only apply, as it is meant to do, to the Word of God, eternal and incarnate.

† In allusion probably to the legend of Jesus in His childhood making birds of clay, and enduing them with life so that they flew away.

‡ Doubtless in allusion to the tradition that, 'Christ was able to tell the people what food they had taken, and what provisions they had laid up in store' (Weil, *Legends*, p. 221, note).

Judgment Day. (*Vid.* (*a*) (ii.) (*α*), pp. 444 *sqq.*, and the quotations from the Qur'ān and the Traditions there given.) Compare also the following Shī'ah tradition, which shows that there is no hope of intercession for liars :—

A certain man asked Imām Ja'far-i-Ṣādiq, 'Son of the Apostle of God, do your Shī'ahs commit theft?' His Excellency answered, 'Yes.' After that he asked, 'Do your Shī'ahs take usury?' His Excellency said, 'Yes.' After that he asked, 'Do your Shī'ahs commit murder?' His Excellency replied, 'Yes.' After that he asked, 'Do your Shī'ahs utter slanders?' His Excellency said, 'Yes.' After that he asked, 'Do your Shī'ahs utter falsehoods?' His Excellency answered, 'No.'* (That is to say, liars are not true Shī'ahs, and, as such, have no hope of the intercession of Muḥammad and the Imāms.—(Tradition related by Majlisī in *Biḥāru'l-anwār.*)

(ii.) Nor do we know that the intercession, if made, will be accepted. Compare, 'Whom God shall cause to err, he shall afterwards have no protector' (Sūr. 42 *Shūrā*, 42; compare ver. 45). 'The intercession of the interceders shall not avail them' (Sūr. 74 *Muddassir*, 49 (see also vers. 42–48). We have no assurance from the Qur'ān that the intercession of Muḥammad will necessarily procure the pardon and salvation of the sinner.†

(*c*) *The mercy and compassion of God.*

Perhaps you will say, as a Muslim friend said one day to me: 'If the Lord take me to Paradise, it will be by His mercy; and if He cast me into hell, it will be by His justice.' True; but wherein the solution? If it be in accord with his justice to cast thee into hell, it would not accord with His justice to enter thee into Paradise. And where then, my friend, the room for mercy? That God is merciful and gracious is the truth; but it does not relieve us of our difficulty so long as He is everlastingly just and holy also (*Torch of Guidance*, pp. 8, 9).

(1) There are many passages in the Qur'ān where God is spoken of as forgiving all sin, *e.g.* Sūr. 4 *Nisā'* 46; 39 *Zumar*, 54. But there are very many others which tell us that God is the punisher and avenger of sin. Now which of these abrogates the other (*nāsikh*)? Or which of these explains and qualifies the other? The latter, of course, modifies the former; because the particular

* Shakhs-ī az Imām Ja'far-i-Ṣādiq sū'āl kard kih Yā 'bna rasūli'llāh, āyā Shī'ayān-i-shumā duzdī mī-kunand? Ān Ḥaẓrat jawāb dād, Balī. Pas az ān sū'āl kard, Āyā Shī'ayān-i-shumā ribā' mī-khwurand? Ān Ḥaẓrat farmūd, Balī. Pas az ān sū'āl kard, Āyā Shī'a-ān-i-shumā qatl-i-nafs mī-kunand? Ān Ḥaẓrat jawāb dād, Balī. Pas az ān sū'āl kard, Āyā Shī'ayān-i-shumā ghaibat mī-kunand? Ān Ḥaẓrat farmūd, Balī. Pas az ān sū'āl kard, Āyā Shī'ayān-i-shumā durūgh mī-gūyand? Ān Ḥaẓrat ja wāb dād, Nah.

† Wherry (see Sale's Qur'ān; notes on *Sūr.* 9 *Taubah*, 81; 20 *Ṭā Hā*, 108) says, 'We may therefore boldly say to Muslims, that Muḥammad's intercession can be of no use to any one,' since all believers will be saved, as they consider, and all others are irrevocably doomed to hell. But though this is true, the Muslim looks upon the intercession of Muḥammad as an indispensable aid to his entry into Paradise. On this account may not the line of argument in the text be found more suitable?

(*khāṣṣ*) qualifies the general (*'āmm*). *Illustration.*—If a teacher says, 'I will not beat my pupils,' and afterwards declares that he will give ten blows with the stick to every boy who does not learn his lessons, it is clear that his later words modify the earlier, and constitute an exception to the master's rule. In books which treat of first principles (*uṣūl*) the law is thus stated, *Mā min 'āmmin illā wa qad khuṣṣa*,—'There is no general rule that is not particularized,' there is no universal law without exceptions: *e.g.* a man says, 'I never take poison' (the general rule), but in sickness he may have to take medicines containing small doses of it (the particular exceptional case).

(2) The verses of the Qur'ān which speak generally of God forgiving sin are either (i.) of universal application (*bih 'umūm-i-khud-ash bāqi'st*), or (ii.) liable to exception in special cases (*khuṣūṣiyat dādah mīshawad*). In the former case God will forgive all the sins of every sinner, though he neither observe the law, pray nor give alms, but steal, murder, take bribes, make unlawful gain (as by usury), and even commit suicide; which, of course, is not true. But if the second alternative be the right one, and it be not certain that every sin will be pardoned, our point is proved, and God's mercy alone is no sure ground of confidence for pardon and salvation. Compare the words of Yazīd addressed to the assembly at the funeral of his father Mu'āwīyah: 'But I will not magnify him before the Almighty, in Whose presence he has gone to appear. If He forgive him it will be because of His mercy; if He take vengeance upon Him, it will be for his transgressions' (*Torch of Guidance*, p. 17).

(3) If God is merciful and compassionate towards sinners, this can only refer to sins committed against Himself, not to those against men. These latter how can God forgive, without the satisfaction and compensation of the injured? In these cases He must punish, otherwise He would be an oppressor. (Compare *supra*, (*a*) (i.) (β), pp. 443 *sq.*)

(4) The following is another line of argument.* (i.) God's mercy, which is one of those things on which Muḥammadans rely for salvation, is of course boundless, and one of His affirmative attributes (*ṣifāt-i-ṣubūtīyah*).† To deny this is to be a heretic or unbeliever.

But we must not hold this in such a way as to involve on God's part the negation (*salb*) of His justice. This, too, like the other, is one of God's affirmative attributes, which are His very essence (*'ain-i-zāt*). And it is therefore erroneous to hold any opinion about these affirmative attributes of God which involves the

* From *Wasīlatu'n-Najāt*, ch. 12, pp. 179 *sqq.*, by a Persian convert, now deceased.

† The attributes of God are of three kinds: (i.) *essential*, viz. Life, Knowledge, Power, Will; (ii.) *affirmative* (*ṣubūtiyah*), Hearing, Seeing, Speech, 'the privation of which would imply loss'; and (iii.) *privative* (*salbiyah*), *e.g.* God has no form (Sell's *Faith of Islām*, p. 172).

privation of any one of them.* Yet if God assigns less importance to His justice than to His mercy, and simply in the exercise of His mercy gives saving faith to one and not to another, this is to bring a blemish upon His justice, and exalt one attribute at the expense of another, and render the second idle and nugatory. It cannot be that one of the divine attributes, which, as already remarked, are the very essence of the Deity, should be lower or weaker or less than another. God's divine and essential attributes cannot be dealt with in this piecemeal fashion.

Go to the root of the matter. God cannot simply forgive sin by His mercy. For His justice too has its requirements (*taqāẓā*), and demands the punishment of the sinner. And when justice is about to proceed to inflict punishment, can God's mercy then step in and accept the guilty?

(ii.) Further, you do not really speak the truth when you profess this reliance on God's mercy. This you may easily perceive, if you will look at the matter fairly. Imagine yourself arraigned at the bar of justice before yourself as judge in private assize, and cross-examine yourself on this wise:—

(*α*) Are you not angry and reproach a servant or friend, who displeases you? And have you no fear of the Most High whom you are constantly provoking to wrath? Do you really mean to say that you are relying on His mercy?

(*β*) If you say you can bear hell-fire, test yourself by holding one of your limbs in the fire for a short time, or by spending an hour in the blazing sun. Is your boldness to sin in proportion to your supposed power to endure the flames of hell?

(*γ*) If you fondly rely on God's benevolence and neglect His worship, and think to obtain salvation and reward without effort, why do you not act similarly in the comparatively easy and trivial affairs of this world? You scheme and plan to repel an enemy; you scrape money together with a thousand toils and troubles to spend it on your pleasures; you strive to make a livelihood like dogs running after a scrap of bread. Why s it that you do not simply rely on God's benevolence for all these things? If you do not rely on God for the one, it is hard to believe that you rely on Him for the other. The Qur'ān teaches the same lesson. 'There is no *creature* which creepeth on the earth but God *provideth* its food' (Sūr. 11 *Hūd*, 7). And, 'nothing *shall be imputed* to a man *for righteousness* except his own labour' (Sūr. 53 *Najm*, 40). Why, then, this hard struggle for the sustenance which God has promised freely to all His creatures, and this carelessness about your destiny hereafter, which you are forewarned depends upon your conduct in this life?

We may illustrate the same point again from winter. Why don't you simply *trust* God for food, clothing and fuel, if, as you

* 'The Ṣifātians, according to Sharastānī (p. 67), taught that the attributes of God are eternally inherent in His essence, without separation or change' (Sell's *Faith of Islām*, p. 173).

say, you rely on His kindness? Is the severity of winter more severe than the claims of God's offended justice? The cold of winter can only be averted by fires and warm clothing, and salvation in like manner can only be attained by the fire of God's love kindled in the heart, and the robe of righteousness and piety. In the one case the mercy of God is shown by providing, and teaching you to obtain, fire from the heart of stones by means of iron (*i.e.* flint and steel), and in the other case by giving you intelligence and sending prophets and guides, that you may practise their teaching and attain to the means of salvation. The law of God's justice requires that mercy should be very justice, and justice very mercy, in accordance with the relation of the divine attributes to the divine nature—God's attributes being His very essence, and His essence His very attributes.

A thousand points finer than a hair are here:
Not every one who shaves the head knows the *rôle* of the itinerating dervish.*—Ḥāfiẓ.

(*d*) *Charitable deeds and almsgiving.*

'Fasting conducts a man up to the gate of Heaven; prayer opens it; but almsgiving brings him within,' said the prophet.—W. G. Palgrave, *Essays on Eastern Questions*, p. 70. †

Jacob was so absorbed with the meaning of this dream [Joseph's], that he left a poor man who stood before him holding out his hand for alms unobserved, and allowed him to depart without a gift. It was this transgression that brought on him all those sufferings by which he was soon to be visited.—Weil, *Legends*, p. 76.

The giving of alms (*ṣadaqāt*) and charitable deeds (*khairāt*) such as building mosques, bridges and caravanserais, and feeding and clothing the poor, are held in great honour by Muslims. Their insufficiency as a ground of hope for salvation may thus be shown.

(i.) God is of course pleased with these things. But the point is, will they remove past sin? We cannot certainly say so. Nor can we affirm that they will atone for sins subsequently committed. Thus, if I confer a favour on a man, and afterwards beat his son, will the bad deed done to the latter be atoned for by the good deed done to the former? No! Each of the two actions is good or bad in itself and upon its own merits. Or, again, if a carpenter makes me two chairs, one very good and another bad, I praise the one and criticize the other. I don't overlook the badness of the faulty one because of the excellence of the other. It is the same with actions. A good action is meritorious in virtue of its excellence, and an evil deed is reprehensible because of its own badness.

* Hazār nuqṭah-i-bārīktar zi mū īn-jā'st:
Na har kih sar bi-tarāshad qalandarī dānad.

† Cp. a similar tradition of the Caliph 'Umar ibn 'Abdu'l-'Azīz, who used to say, 'Prayer carries us halfway to God, fasting brings us to the door of his palace, and alms procures us admission.'—Sale's *Prelim. Disc.* p. 178.

The goodness and badness of actions are independent qualities, and the one cannot be a recompense for the other.

(ii.) If charitable works and almsgiving suffice to remove sin, it must be either (*α*) independently, or (*β*) in connexion with the observance of the law and commands of God. If the former, then a man has no need to observe the law of God, and do righteousness —which obviously cannot be admitted. If the latter, there is no one who has ever perfectly obeyed God's law and commandments; and so the argument falls to the ground.

(iii.) These meritorious actions can only atone, if at all, for sins against God, not for those committed against men. If I am guilty of murder, theft, wounding, contemptuous treatment of others, these sins will not be atoned for by my giving alms to a beggar.

(iv.) These things are only accepted by God from those who are pious and upright—as the Qur'ān says, 'Abel answered, God only accepteth *the offering* of the pious' (Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 30 *fin*)—not from those who do not possess these qualities: therefore alms and charitable works have no independent value to save the soul. (Cp. (ii.).)

(v.) That almsgiving is not a satisfactory means of obtaining salvation, and, moreover, does not give peace and contentment to a man's heart, may be seen from the story of 'an eminent man named Ḥabību'l-Fārsī, who is said to have bought his soul from the Lord at the price of 40,000 dirhems, and this he did four times. He would carry the bag thus filled with his wealth, saying, "O Lord! I buy my soul from Thee with this"; and thereupon would give the money away in charity.' * (*α*) If Ḥabīb had found rest to his soul from this payment, why did he repeat it four times? (*β*) How could permission come from above for a man to say, 'O Lord, I have bought my soul from Thee with this,' and the Lord reply by an angel or prophet, 'Yea, I have accepted thee?' 'a thing besides altogether against the Law.' Contrast Acts viii. 20, 'thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money.' (*γ*) Since works cannot win heaven (*v. supra*), it follows that salvation cannot be obtained by purchase. If Ḥabīb's idea had been a right one, the Companions could not have been ignorant of it; but we never find them attempting such a thing. 'And so also what would have prevented Abraham from buying off his son? He thought nothing of the kind, but went on to offer up Isaac, till the ransom came from God Himself; a lesson that the ransom of the soul is from the Lord and not from man.' Cp. the beautiful prayer of the Arab who cried, 'O Thou Who art the Pillar of them that trust in Thee, Helper of the weak, Redeemer of the perishing, the Giver of hope and compassion and peace; I ask Thee not for good in return for any good that I have done, but I ask of Thee for mercy.' (Quoted in *Torch of Guidance*, from *'Aqdu'l-Farid.*)

(*e*) *Faith.*—Muḥammadans say, we who believe in Muḥammad, etc., shall be saved, although we commit sin, because we are the

* From *Torch of Guidance*, pp. 29, 30.

people of salvation (*ahl-i-najāt*), and know the way of truth: but an unbeliever, on the other hand, even though he does all good works, will not be saved, because he has not found the right way.

(i.) This is contrary to the Qur'ān.

(*α*) We learn from it, that not faith only but also all good works are required to be done as necessary for salvation. • 'God hath promised unto such of them as believe and do good works pardon and a great reward' (Sūr. 48 *Fatḥ*, 29 *fin.*); 'Verily man *employeth himself* in *that which will prove of* loss: except those who believe and do that which is right' (Sūr. 103 *'Aṣr*, 2, 3).

(*β*) Faith is not even mentioned in several places, where it would have been, if it were such an essential condition of acceptance and salvation. For example, 'Surely God will not pardon the giving Him an equal, but will pardon any other *sin* except that, to whom He pleaseth' (Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 46). Here faith is not mentioned as necessary for obtaining the forgiveness of sin. And again, 'But if they [the idolaters] shall repent, and observed the appointed times of prayer and pay the legal alms, dismiss them freely' (Sūr. 9 *Tauḥah*, 5), where faith is not mentioned as one of the prescribed conditions for the dismissal of the idolaters.

(*γ*) A verbal profession of faith without the true belief of the heart and action corresponding thereto, is of no avail. The distinction between the two is clearly seen in Sūr. 49 *Ḥujurāt*, 14, 15, 'The Arabs of the desert say, We believe. Answer, Ye do by no means believe; but say, We have embraced Islām: for the faith hath not yet entered into your hearts. . . . Verily the true believers *are* those only who believe in God and His Apostle, and afterwards doubt not; and who employ their substance and their persons in the defence of God's true religion.' The first are nominal Muslims, the latter are true believers (*mu'min*). Cp. *'Ālim-i-bī-'ilm*, and *mullā-ye-bī-sawād*, a learned man (so-called) without knowledge, and a mullā without learning.

If a man acknowledges the unity of God (*tauḥīd*), the prophetic mission of Muḥammad (*nubuwwat*), and among the Shī'ahs, the office of the imāms (*imāmat*); and recites the confession of faith (*kalimah*) in which they are contained, he is reckoned a Musulmān and will be treated as such in all the transactions of life. *But*, unless his life be in accordance with his creed, and he obey the precepts of Muḥammad and the Traditions, he will not be a genuine Muḥammadan. His religion must be of the heart, and not merely one of words and of the tongue.

(ii.) It is also against reason.

(*α*) Faith may be compared to a bottle of medicine, which will do no good to the sick person unless he takes it. Similarly the profession of faith, unless accompanied by the fruits of right and proper conduct, is of no value, and will not be the means of a man's salvation.

(*β*) Muḥammadans themselves will admit, that a Muslim who, for instance, commits murder and neglects to observe the precepts

of the law, will not be forgiven, at least not without severe punishment in the purgatorial fires of *jahannam* (*vid.* Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Hell'; and Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 72, and Sale's note).

(*f*) *The rehearsal of prayers and invocations.*—*Zikr* is an invocation or prayer repeated a few times or occasionally. *Wird* is often rehearsed a great number of times. Dervishes sometimes assemble and recite some of their religious formulas as many as a thousand times; *e.g.* the Muḥammadan confession of faith, *Kalima tu'shshahādah* = the word of testimony; *subḥāna'llāh* = praise be to God; or *lā ilāh illā'llāh, astaghfiru'llāh rabb-ī wa atūbu ilaih* = there is no God but God, I ask for pardon from God my Lord and turn penitently to Him; or *Ḥaqq* = truth, the true God.

These things are either obligatory (*wājib*) or approved (*mustaḥabb*). If the former, they alone cannot be considered sufficient for salvation any more than other good works, notably prayer. (*Vid.* (*a*) (ii.), (*β*) and (*γ*), *supra*.) But if they are only of the second class, *much less* can they be the means of salvation.

(*g*) *Asking pardon from God* (*istiqhfār*).—It is clear that this may be either the mere utterance of the words and nothing more, or accompanied by true repentance of the heart. If it be the first, it is obviously of no value in God's sight. (Cp. (*e*), and (*f*), *supra*.) And even if it be the latter, it must be accompanied by recompense, which is not always possible as in the case of murder or backbiting, and by forsaking all sin hereafter, which is impossible, as no man is sinless.

(*h*) *Repentance.*—(*a*) Of the Israelites who sinned in the matter of the golden calf, and were stricken with a terrible malady for their wickedness, we read in the Traditions that, 'Many repented really of their sins; but from others only pain and the fear of death had extorted these expressions of repentance.' * Repentance, then, must in the first place be sincere. But even so, it will not necessarily secure the forgiveness of sin. To this effect is the following verse from the Qur'ān, 'O true believers, turn unto God with a sincere repentance: peradventure your Lord will do away from you your evil deeds' (Sūr. 66 *Taḥrīm*, 8). Here there is *a hope* held out, but no clear promise. Those to whom such words are addressed have grounds for hoping that God will not put them to shame before mankind, not that He will not punish them. The conditions of acceptable repentance according to the Qur'ān may be gathered from Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 16, 17. (i.) Repentance will be accepted for sins done in ignorance, and (ii.) where it speedily follows the transgression; but (iii.) not from life-long sinners, who defer their repentance till their death-bed.

(*β*) The subject may also be treated in the following way. † (i.) Repentance is one of those works, the acceptance of which depends upon prayer being accepted (*vid.* (*a*) (ii.) (*γ*), *supra*). But the subject may also be discussed independently. In Sūr. 24

* Weil, *Legends*, p. 128.

† From *Wasilatu'n-Najāt*, ch. 10, pp. 149 *sqq*.

Nūr, 31 *fin.* 'And be ye all turned [in penitence] unto God, O true believers, that [perhaps] ye may be happy,' the word translated 'that' (*la'alla*) indicates the possibility, but not the certainty of forgiveness. Again, in Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 109, 'Yet he who doth evil or injureth his own soul, and afterwards asketh pardon of God, shall find God gracious *and* merciful,' there is no clear promise of the forgiveness of all sin. We only understand from this, that God will not put the penitent to shame, but have mercy upon him. But even if the sin repented of be forgiven, there is here no mention of atonement and expiation for other sins. (And besides this, who can be sure that he has adequately repented for every single sin committed by him?) (ii.) The opinion of Muḥammadans, that any sin however gross is forgiven merely on repentance, which according to tradition must take place within seven hours after (*Wasīlatu'n-Najāt*, p. 208), is supposed to be substantiated by reason, though this is but an imperfect guide. It has no support either from tradition or justice. If the punishment of sin were to be removed by repentance only, no sinner under the sentence of God's condemnation would be found, nor would there be any punishment of sin. God would have been in error concerning this matter, and there would be no execution of equity and justice proceeding from Him.

This, of course, is a monstrous belief. Compare the payment of debt. The mere *admission* of indebtedness does not *pay* the debt. And the payment of one debt has no effect upon other debts past or future. So, too, is it with repentance, which becomes void if the sin is repeated: and, though excellent in itself as a kind of worship, it has no efficacy to be a means of salvation. This erroneous opinion about repentance, is born of oblivion to the traditions of Islām. If you believe them, you must believe too, that if prayer be not accepted, repentance also will not profit the sinner (*vid. supra*).

This repentance of Muḥammadans, by which they think every sin can be blotted out as it is committed, is like that of the man of whom the *anecdote* is told, that he heard a preacher proclaiming that the door of mercy is open; you can repent; don't be afraid of sin. So he proceeded to steal a pair of shoes, and repented of it as soon as he arrived at home. Finding this a very easy means of earning a livelihood, he made a regular practice of it, and abused his wife for reproaching him with it. She finally summed up the case in this pertinent speech, 'Do not steal, and *do not repent!*' If repentance *be able* to remove a sin, beware of overrating its efficacy and making it an atonement for all sin, by which you destroy God's justice.

CHAPTER IX.

THE QUR'ĀN.

(A) The Muslim and his Qur'ān.

MUḤAMMADANS regard their Qur'ān with unbounded veneration. 'They dare not so much as touch it without being first washed or legally purified; which, lest they should do by inadvertence, they write these words on the cover or label, "Let none touch it but they who are clean." They read it with great care and respect, never holding it below their girdles. They swear by it, consult it in their weighty occasions, carry it with them to war, write sentences of it on their banners, adorn it with gold and precious stones, and knowingly suffer it not to be in the possession of any of a different persuasion.' * The following is a practical instance of the esteem in which it is held by a pious Muslim. Dr. St. Clair-Tisdall gives this description of an inquirer, a native of Shīrāz:—

> He told me that at one time he was entirely devoted to the Qur'ān, rising in the night and reciting it, carrying the book everywhere in his bosom to read whenever he had a spare moment, and thus endeavouring to obtain peace with God. †

Hence we can without any difficulty admit the truthfulness of the exciting scene in *Sweet Firstfruits*, ch. viii., where 'Umar al Ḥāriṣ is inveigled by his foes into uttering language which implied his belief that the Qur'ān was not inspired nor given by God to Muḥammad. His words were immediately taken up by his crafty enemies, who had carefully laid their plans in the hope of such a *dénouement* as this, and made the occasion for stirring up so violent a riot in the city, that, it is quaintly asserted, 'you might have fancied it an attack of Tamerlane or Bonaparte'!

This exalted opinion of the book arises from the nature of its contents, and from the belief in its divine origin and method of communication to mankind. As to the former of these, the contents of the Qur'ān, its central doctrine is the unity of God; and Muḥammad believed he had a mission to recall the Arabs to the one orthodox religion. Whenever the true faith becomes neglected

* Sale, *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 114.
† *C.M.S. Report*, 1897–98, p. 161.

or corrupted in its essentials, God sends a prophet to recall mankind to their allegiance to Him: such was Muḥammad's belief. In order to dispose the Arabs the more readily to accept his teaching, a large portion of the Qur'ān is filled with stories of the former prophets, derived from the Scriptures or from apocryphal books and traditions, relating the punishments inflicted by God on those who refused to hearken to them. The rest of the book contains laws, and admonitions to virtue, the worship of the one true God and resignation to his will. The credit of the book is yet further enhanced by the supposed divine nature of its origin and its miraculous communication to Muḥammad. The general and orthodox belief is 'that it is of divine original; nay, that it is eternal and uncreated, remaining, as some express it, in the very essence of God; that the first transcript has been from everlasting by God's throne, written on a table of vast bigness, called the Preserved Table, in which are also recorded the divine decrees past and future; that a copy from this table, in one volume on paper, was by the ministry of the Angel Gabriel sent down to the lowest heaven, in the month of Ramaẓān, on the night of power [*vide* Qur'ān, Sūr. 97 *Al Qadr*]; from whence Gabriel revealed it to Muḥammad by parcels, some at Mecca, and some at Medina, at different times, during the space of twenty-three years, as the exigency of affairs required.' *

Any one who will read a few pages of the *Mishkātu'l-maṣābīḥ*,† will see how the fancy of tradition has played round and amplified this fertile and congenial theme, and will be better able to understand the lofty ideas entertained by the Muḥammadan about the sacred volume of Islām. The following are traditions of Muḥammad from the work just mentioned:—

Read the *Qur'ān*; for verily it will come on the day of resurrection, an intercessor for its reader (Pt. I., p. 500).

It will be said to the reader of the *Qur'ān*, 'read, and ascend the steps of paradise, in number equal to that of the revelations you read,' Then, if he reads the whole *Qur'ān*, it will bring him to the utmost summit of paradise (Pt. II., p. 504).

The *Qur'ān* is a strong rope of God: the person who has seized it, has arrived at the near court of God (Pt. II., p. 505).

Verily God disclosed the chapters entitled *Ṭā-Hā* and *Yā-Sīn* [Sūrahs 20 and 36] before creating the regions and the earth, by one thousand years; and when the angels heard them, they said, 'happy be the tribe to which the *Qur'ān* shall be sent down . . . and happy be the tongues which speak it' (Pt. II., p. 507).

Repeat a chapter which is a redeemer from the world and futurity, and that chapter is that which begins '*Alif, Lām, Mīm*, The Revelation,' [Sūr. 32] because verily it was reported to me that there was a man who repeated it, and no other thing besides it, and he was a great sinner; and this chapter spread its wings upon him; and interceded for him, and said, 'Verily that man repeated me very much'; then God accepted its

* Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 108.

† The extracts given below are from Bk. VIII., ch. I. of the Eng. trans.

intercession for the man; and God said to his angels, 'Write for this man a good action in place of every sin; and exalt him to a high station' (Pt. III., pp. 511 *sq.*).

Such being the Muslim's high opinion of his Qur'ān, and since he is naturally sensitive to anything of the nature of an adverse judgment concerning that which he holds to be beyond praise and above all criticism, the Christian controversialist will do well not to attempt the unenviable and unprofitable task of winning over the Muslim to his side by direct attack upon the book which claims and receives from him such utter reverence. Yet the Christian must be prepared to demonstrate on proper occasions the groundlessness of the particular excellencies believed by the Muḥammadan to reside in the Qur'ān. These, then, have next to engage our attention.

1. **The Eternity of the Qur'ān.**—It is a natural instinct on the part of man to seek to attribute a sublime origin to the sacred books of his religion. This tendency is not peculiar to the Muḥammadan, nor among Muḥammadans is it confined to the Qur'ān. The Hindus maintain a somewhat similar view about their Vedas. 'The *Vedas*,' wrote Leupolt in his *Recollections*, 'are considered the most sacred, written by Brahm in Heaven, in the language of the gods, the Sanscrit, and also in their characters, the *Devanagara* [from *Deva*, "God," *nagari*, "character"]. . . . These four books, [the four Vedas; viz. Samaveda, Atharveda, Rickhveda, and Yadshurveda] when bound together, are not quite so thick as a Bible, and are considered by the Hindūs to be eternal.' Among Muslims, the Pentateuch, Psalms, and Gospel, as well as the Qur'ān, are spoken of in the latter as 'given,' or 'sent down' by God to His apostles;* other expressions used are 'revealed,' 'brought,' 'taught.' All this appears to allude to transcription from heavenly originals, as may be seen by the following tradition; said Adam to Moses, 'When thou copiedst the Pentateuch from the original, which is kept in Heaven, pray how many years before my existence was it written that Adam should sin?'†

'The idea that many things existed before the creation of the world is purely Jewish. The Musulmāns adopted it.'‡ Their application of it to the Qur'ān and their contention that it is eternal arises from a confusion between the eternal existence of the word of God and the committal of His word to writing at some particular time for the instruction and guidance of men. The differences of opinion on this point between the orthodox Sunnīs and the sect of the Mu'tazilahs caused much disturbance and bloodshed under some of the 'Abbāside Caliphs.§ The crucial passage on which the controversy turns is Sūr. 36; *Yā Sīn*, 82,

* *E.g.*, Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 92; 4 *Nisā'*, 162 *fin.*; 57 *Ḥadīd*, 27; 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 3.
† *Mishkātu'l-Maṣābīḥ*, quoted by Leupolt, *Recollections*, pp. 21, 22.
‡ Weil, *Legends*, p. 6, note.
§ Sale, *Prelim. Disc.*, pp. 111, 112; Sell, *Faith of Islām*, pp. 176 *sqq.*

'His command, when He willeth a thing, *is* only that He saith unto it, Be; and it is' (*Kun fa yakūnu*). The orthodox maintained that God created all things by means of the word *Be;* and since one created thing cannot create another, the word *Be* must be uncreated and eternal. The Mu'tazilahs rejoined that if this is so, then there are two Eternals. * The two opposing views are reconciled by Al Ghazzālī, who says, 'that the Qur'ān is read and pronounced with the tongue, written in books, and kept in memory; and is yet eternal, subsisting in God's essence, and not possible to be separated thence by any transmission into men's memories or the leaves of books.' †

Answer.—The assertion of the eternity of the Qur'ān may be met in the following way. *If* it is the word of God, it is eternal. The same holds good of the other holy books. It makes no difference, whether they have always been written or not. The very word of God must be eternal.

This is the real point at issue, whether it is the word of God or not. As a Christian, of course I do not believe that it is. It contains true words, just as a preacher's discourse contains true words, but we do not on that account claim for his sermon the dignity of being the inspired Word of God.

This point having first been settled, viz. whether it is the word of God or not, the question of its being eternal or accidental (*qidam, ḥudūs*), can then be approached.

2. **The eloquence (faṣāḥat) of the Qur'ān.**‡—Does this refer to (*a*) the words (*lafẓ*) of the Qur'ān, or (*b*) to the meaning (*ma'nā*)?

(*a*) If to the *words*, we answer—

(i.) The Arabs themselves said, as stated in the Qur'ān, Sūr. 8 *Anfāl*, 31, that they could bring compositions as good as the Qur'ān if they wished to do so.

(ii.) Imrau'l'-Qais, § a poet of Muḥammad's time, and recognized by all as the most eloquent man of the age, was not convinced by this proof and did not become a Muslim, and pointed out many mistakes according to the rules of eloquence in the Qur'ān, some say in at least 105 verses.

(*b*) But if it be said that this eloquence depends upon the *meaning*, then how can this be reconciled with the following in the Qur'ān?

(i.) The placing by God of a seal upon the hearts and hearing of unbelievers, and a veil over their eyes, and afterwards punishing them (Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 6, 7). Is not this injustice and oppression?

* Wherry *in loc.* Further Mu'tazilite arguments against the orthodox party are given by Sell, *Faith of Islām*, p. 188.

† Sale, *Prelim Disc.*, p. 112.

‡ Missionaries themselves, as the Rev. A. E. Day, formerly of Peshāwar, and now of Karāchī, have testified to the impression produced upon them when the Qur'ān in its original Arabic has been rehearsed in sonorous tones by a mullā, who at the close of his reading breathes upon the congregation.

§ But see note to Chap. VII., p. 385.

(ii.) The hopes of a paradise of sensual enjoyment, with cups of wine, houries, etc.

(iii.) The praise of Lāt, 'Uzzā, and Manāt as excellent intercessors. (See Sūr. 53 *Najm*, 19, 20, note.) Words to this effect were put by the devil into Muḥammad's mouth, but were afterwards abrogated by God, who, as the Qur'ān says, allowed the devil thus to tempt all His prophets, by suggesting errors in their reading, though of course He did not allow the error to remain.

Objection (1) to (iii.).—If the truth of the story be questioned,

Answer;—It is related in your own Muḥammadan books, as in the *Mawāhibu'l-ladūniyah*, a Shī'ah book, and by the orthodox Sunnī writers, Ṭabarī and Ibn Hishām.

Objection (2) to (iii.).—The words alleged are not to be found in the Qur'ān.

Answer.—True. But Sūr. 22 *Ḥajj*, 53, in which Muḥammad defends himself (see the remarks of the commentators on the passage), proves its previous existence there.—With reference to the distinction between the words and the meaning of the Qur'ān, we may admit the eloquence of the Qur'ān as far as the former is concerned; but not as concerns the latter, because much of the contents and substance (*ma'ānī*) of the Qur'ān has been taken from other places (an argument which, the writer is informed, educated Muḥammadans will understand).

Objection (3).—If unfavourable comparison is made between our Scriptures and the Qur'ān in point of eloquence, this reply may be given: 'The Scriptures are translations from the originals. How would the Qur'ān appear to you if translated, for example, into French?'

3. **Plurality of meanings in the Qur'ān.**—Some Muḥammadans say that every verse has seventy inner meanings (*baṭn*); others, that each verse has seven such meanings, and each of these again seven more.

Answer.—Have these meanings all been written down, or not? (*a*) If the answer to this is 'No,' then reply, Of what use is it to make such assertions? There is no advantage gained by doing so. (*b*) But if the answer be 'Yes, the Imāms have written them down,' ask for the production of the seventy or 49 meanings of any one verse.

4. **The Qur'ān is said to contain all arts and sciences.**—(1) This is supported by the verse of the Qur'ān, 'Neither *is there* a single grain in the dark parts of the earth, neither a green thing, nor a dry thing, but it is *written* in the perspicuous book' (Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 58).

Answer.—We see that there are many sciences not mentioned at all in the Qur'ān.

Objection.—It may be said that allusion is made to them briefly (*bih sabīl-i-ijmāl*), not in detail (*mufaṣṣalan*); not explicitly, but enigmatically (*ramz, sirr*).

Answer.—What is the use to us of a vague, compendious

statement or epitome of an extensive and growing science? We can receive no benefit thereby, unless we are able to deduce the whole science from it.

Rejoinder (1).—The wise and the learned can do this.

Answer.—Then how is it that for more than 1,300 years they have not done so?

Rejoinder (2).—It was not necessary, with regard to the object in view, that the science mentioned should be fully developed. The mere allusion is enough to manifest the excellence and truth of the Qur'ān.

Answer.—How is it that, before railways were made, the verse supposed to allude to them (Sūr. 36 *Yā Sīn*, 42; see below) was by a different interpretation made to refer to horses, etc.? In the future, perhaps, yet another explanation will be given, and the verse will be said to refer to balloons!

(2) Some of the particular arts and sciences supposed to be alluded to in the Qur'ān are the following:—

(*a*) It is sometimes maintained that the whole of the science of medicine is contained in Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 32: 'Eat and drink, but be not guilty of excess.'

Answer.—How can we derive from this short sentence the many thousands of books which have been written on medical science?

Rejoinder.—The sum of medical science is contained herein, because, if a man is moderate and abstemious, he will not fall sick.

Answer.—(i.) But if he falls from the roof of his house, and breaks a limb, what help does he derive from this verse?

Answer.—(ii.) The sick man who wants medicine, or the man with a broken limb needing surgical aid, will no more be satisfied with the modicum of 'science' contained in a single verse of the Qur'ān than a hungry man will be content with a morsel of bread or the smell of food.

(*b*) When asked where railways are mentioned in the Qur'ān, Muḥammadans sometimes bring forward Sūr. 36 *Yā Sīn*, 41, 42: 'We have made for them *other conveniences* like unto it, whereon they ride.'

Answer.—(i.) This is quite laughable and ridiculous, because the verse was supposed to denote horses, camels and mules before the making of railways.

(ii.) And how could all the different related parts of the engine, not to speak of the train and the permanent way, be constructed and adapted to one another, by means of the vague allusion contained in a single short verse?

5. **Laws and regulations for all occasions and requirements to be found in the Qur'ān.**—The passages of the Qur'ān upon which this assertion rests are Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 58, quoted above; verse 37 of the same Sūrah, 'We have not omitted anything in the book *of our decrees*'; and Sūr. 16 *Naḥl*, 91, 'We have sent down unto thee the book *of the Qur'ān*, for an explication of everything

necessary both as to faith and practice.' 'This verse,' says Wherry, *in loc.*, 'was quoted by the Imām Abū Ḥanīfah to prove that all law was provided for in the Qur'ān by anticipation.'

Thus provision is made for inheritance, lawful and unlawful food, ceremonial ablutions, fasting, etc., etc. What Muḥammadans say is that general rules have been laid down in the Qur'ān from which everything may be inferred.

Answer.—(i.) First prove the Qur'ān to be the word of God. If it is God's word, how is it that scope has been given for all the differences and divergencies which have arisen in practice?

Or thus, You naturally hold this opinion because you are a Muḥammadan, and, as such, regard the Qur'ān as the word of God. Before you can expect me to agree with you on this point, you must prove the Qur'ān to be the word of God. At present, one main reason why I do not share your opinion about 'the noble Qur'ān' is the existence in practice of so many differences among those who all profess to be guided by the same book.

Answer.—(ii.) Some things are clearly laid down in the Qur'ān, but many others are not, and these have to be elucidated by means of the Traditions (*Ḥadīs*). Hence it is that the rites and usages, the worship and ordinances of Muḥammadans contain many differences (*ikhtilāfāt*), from which it is patent that the Qur'ān is obscure and indeterminate (*mubham*); and that which is so cannot be genuine (*aṣl na-dārad*).

To give a few instances of what is meant. In their ablutions before prayer the Sunnīs wash the arm from the hand to the elbow, the Shī'ahs from the elbow downwards; the Sunnīs wash the feet up to the ankles, the Shī'ahs pass the wet hand over the upper side of the foot. In their prayers, again, the Sunnīs pray with the forearms and hands raised, the Shī'ahs with the arms down. At the burial of the dead the Sunnīs utter the *takbīr* (*allāhu akbar*) four times with prayers, the Shī'ahs only three times. (Hence the scandal to the latter from the words of Ḥāfiẓ, that when he relinquished the world, regarding it as dead and buried, he uttered *four takbīrs.**) In Ramaẓān the Sunnīs break their fast at sunset (*ghurūb*), the Shī'ahs at *maghrib*, which is about a quarter of an hour later.

Objection.—There are differences among Christians, as, for example, about baptism and Church government.

Answer.—There are admittedly no distinct regulations laid down in the Gospel concerning these matters; and for this reason the evidence of history and tradition is called in. But in the case of Islām the difference sometimes occurs with reference to matters where the Qur'ān makes an express and explicit statement. For example, why is *ilā* = 'to' sometimes explained to mean *min* = 'from,' or *min* to mean *ilā*? Or why is *fī* = 'in' translated as though it were *'alā* = 'upon,' or the reverse? Thus in Sūr. 5

* Man hamān dam kih wuẓū' sākhtam az chashmah-i-'ishq,
Chahār takbīr zadam eksarah bar har-chih kih hast.

Mā'idah, 7, 'When ye prepare yourselves to pray, wash your faces, and your hands unto (*ilā*) the elbows,' Sunnīs give to the preposition *ilā* its proper meaning 'to,' while Shī'ahs explain it to mean *min* = 'from.' The differences among Christians are not like this, which turns upon the meaning of a simple word.

6. **The sufficiency of the Qur'ān for Muslims.**—'The Qur'ān is sufficient for us'; 'All we need to know is in the Qur'ān,' Muḥammadans will sometimes say.

Answer.—'How can it be so, since the Qur'ān itself leadeth to the Taurāt and Gospel,' which are spoken of in the highest terms in the Qur'ān? The book of Moses is thus described as 'a perfect rule unto him who should do right, and a determination concerning all things *needful*, and a direction and mercy' (Sūr. 6 *An'ām*, 154); and the Gospel, as 'containing direction and light, confirming also the light which *was given* before it, and a direction and admonition unto those who fear *God*' (Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 50). This testimony should lead those who read it to study the Bible, and accept that which is revealed therein.*

(B) THE CHRISTIAN AND THE QUR'ĀN.

1. **Independent proof for the Qur'ān required.**—The Christian has no need to be in any way perplexed by the formidable array of evidence which is adduced for the divine excellence of the Qur'ān. There is one general answer which may be made to all such arguments, which is thoroughly in accordance with Muḥammadan ideas, and therefore weighty and easy to be understood. And this is, that for non-Muḥammadans independent proofs for the Qur'ān, *i.e.* other than those drawn from the book itself, are required.

The Muḥammadan, who already is convinced that the book is inspired, is easily persuaded of its manifold excellencies. But for others who are not persuaded that it is the word of God, proofs from reason must be adduced to bring them round to that opinion. You are a Muḥammadan, it may be said to our Muslim opponent, and naturally hold these opinions which you have been brought up to regard as true; but with us the case is different. Any one who wishes to prove his point must verily bring arguments from reason and convincing proofs. The words and writings which a man has in his hands or has received from the founder and leaders of his religion cannot be accepted as proof of his contentions.

Illustration.—If a Muslim asks a Hindū for arguments in favour of cow-worship, and the latter brings forward the words of Brahma, the Muslim will not be satisfied with this, but will demand further proofs that appeal to reason. Similarly, if I ask the Muḥammadan for proof of the Qur'ān, it is no use to say it is

* Cp. *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 67, 68; Muir's *The Corān*, chaps. XLI. and CXXIV.

the word of God or contains such and such excellencies, because I am not a Muḥammadan and do not accept the book, and these considerations have no weight with me. You must bring me some other independent proof from outside the book itself (*az khārij*).

Muḥammadans themselves allow that if a man comes to inquire about their religion, proofs drawn from the Qur'ān are not suitable for him, because he does not yet accept it. Proofs from reason are required in this case. Reference to the Qur'ān to support the Muḥammadan position leads to 'begging the question.' A favourite verse of Muḥammadans is Sūr. 17 *Banī Isrā'il*, 90, that men and genii together could not produce a book like the Qur'ān. To the Muḥammadan this is merely a statement of what he regards as a fact. But to bring this forward to prove the truth of the Qur'ān to one who does not accept it is to take for granted the very point in dispute (*dalīl 'ain-i-mudda'ā*).

The same error is committed if the following verse be adduced to prove that, if Jews and Christians refuse to accept the teaching of Islām, as being different from what is found in their own books, this by itself shows that they are wrong and their Scriptures are corrupt; 'If they believe according to what ye believe, they are surely directed; but if they turn back they are in schism' (Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 137). This no doubt expresses what the Muḥammadan considers to be the simple truth. But the Christian answers, This depends upon the truth of the prophet who brought the Qur'ān. This point must first be established.

2. **Direct questions as to the Christian's opinion of the Qur'ān, and how they may be met.**—(*a*) *Do you accept the Qur'ān?* *Answer* by a plain denial, which can give no reasonable offence. Or, if desirable to give a milder and more conciliatory reply, it may be said: There are good instructions and advice in it, which of course I accept. Or, It contains good things derived from the Holy Books, which I believe. But as for the rest, that depends upon the truth of the master of the book (*ṣāḥib-i-kitāb*). If this first be satisfactorily proved, then the acceptance of the whole book will naturally follow.

(*b*) *What do you think of the Qur'ān?*

Answer—(i.) I do not profess to be a judge of its literary merits.

(ii.) Having read both the Bible and the Qur'ān, I much prefer the former to the latter.

(iii.) I find exalted spiritual teaching in the Gospel which is not to be had in the Qur'ān, *e.g.* the Sermon on the Mount. (On one occasion love to enemies was adduced as an instance of the higher spiritual tone of the Gospel, when a sāyid present at once joyfully exclaimed that they had the same teaching in the Qur'ān, *viz.* in Sūr. 20 *Ṭā Hā*, 46, 'speak mildly unto him' (Pharaoh), the purport of which is really quite different. With this contrast the following:—Dr. Pennell speaks of a Mullā in the Tochī Valley,

Bannū, who 'admitted that however long any one read the Qur'ān he would never learn mercy or pity.' *

(iv.) The Gospel points out a way of salvation which satisfies the heart. It gives rest and peace.

3. Differences (mukhālifāt) between the Bible and the Qur'ān: how far available for controversial purposes.—All the differences and contradictions that may be noted between the Bible and the Qur'ān are not suitable for bringing forward in controversy with Muḥammadans, but only such as (*a*) relate to the first principles of religion and morals, or (*b*) are concerned with matters of fact in the histories and stories of the prophets related in the Qur'ān. In the case of matters which pertain to what the Muḥammadan considers the non-essentials of religion, he will contend that no objection can be raised on the ground that Islām herein differs from the previous religions, because the Qur'ān came to abrogate the former books in respect of these non-essential things. In an article entitled, 'An Examination of certain statements in the Qur'ān (Sūrah 5), which, as being irreconcilable with the statements of the Gospel, affect the relative credibility of the two documents,' † *viz.* because the author of the former either did not know or overlooked the fact, the doctrine of retaliation is brought forward as superseding in the Qur'ān (Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 49; 2 *Baqarah*, 178) Christ's higher law of the forgiveness of injuries (Mark v. 38 *sqq.*). But such a point of difference between the two books as this is not a suitable one to adduce, according to the rule suggested above, because the Muḥammadan will immediately reply that this belongs to those non-essential matters, in reference to which every prophet had authority to lay down regulations suited to the needs of the times.

That an earnest and thoughtful Muslim may be perplexed and distressed by the obvious difference between the Bible and the Qur'ān in matters of the first importance, may be granted. Were this not so, we should not find such a passage as this in *Sweet Firstfruits*, pp. 32, 33, where Sheikh Maḥmūd, one of the Christian converts, in giving a history of his religious opinions, says:—

> Comparing the Scriptures with the Qur'ān, I found them to agree in certain points, such as where, in the latter, Jesus is styled 'the Spirit of God,' and 'the Word from Him,' but to differ in others, as in the divinity of Christ, His death and atonement, etc. It distressed me beyond measure, seeing the Old and New Testaments to be at one in respect of these doctrines, and yet to find them denied in the Qur'ān.

The missionary, then, may well be on the look out to discover and minister tender consolation to such distressed and anxious souls; or to use this argument with judgment and discretion to awaken in others a spirit of inquiry and arouse them from their sleep of fancied security, and deluded dreams of the possession of a final and perfect revelation.

* *C.M.S. Report*, 1902-3, p. 252.

† *The Missionary*, vol. IV., pt. 3, pp. 220 *sqq.*

But the argument from the discrepancies between the Qur'ān and the Bible is not expedient for ordinary use as a weapon of offence. To point out and insist upon the contradictions between the two, and to argue therefrom for the falsity of the later book, can only irritate and provoke a bigoted Muḥammadan. His reply might well be: *You* say that this is right, and *we* say that; proof is wanted to establish what you say. And indeed, to prove conclusively the existence of a real contradiction would not be so easy a task as might be imagined, especially if the opponent was perverse and determined not to be persuaded. In fact, the attempt to force the admission from him by weight of argument would be a mistake.

But should the question arise, as it may do, in discussion with an actual or possible inquirer, the case may be stated in this way, taking care to throw the burden of proof for what he holds to be truth upon the Muḥammadan:—We have such and such things in our Holy Books: in questions of this kind we believe the older to be the truer account. If you claim that yours is the true one, not ours, it rests with you to bring forward adequate proofs. If you fail to do so, we cannot but regard this as fatal to the authority of your book.

The following is a list of some of the chief contradictions between the Qur'ān and the Bible. The six first mentioned were pointed out by a native convert.

1. In the Qur'ān the Virgin Mary is called the daughter of 'Imrān (Sūr. 66 *Taḥrīm*, 12; cp. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 35, 36), and addressed as the sister of Aaron (Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 29); from which passages the conclusion has sometimes been drawn, that Muḥammad believed Mary the mother of Jesus to be the daughter of 'Imrān the father of Aaron. This conclusion, however, does not *necessarily* follow from the evidence supplied by the Qur'ān, and it may be rebutted by the Muḥammadan in several ways. (See Sale and Wherry on Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 35, and the former on 19 *Maryam*, 29.) Whence it is clear that this supposed contradiction is not a suitable one to bring forward.

2. The narrative of Jesus' birth (Sūr. 19 *Maryam*, 16–36) differs in many particulars from that of the Gospels; especially His birth under a palm tree (ver. 23), and His speaking in the cradle (vers. 30–34; cp. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 46).

3. The miracle of Jesus giving life to the clay figure of a bird (Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 48) is not mentioned in the Gospel narrative, and, like the speaking in the cradle, is contrary to St. John ii. 11. The account in the Qur'ān is borrowed from the *Gospel of the Infancy*, where Jesus is said to have performed this miracle at the age of seven years (Sale, *in loc.*).

4. In Sūr. 5 *Mā'idah*, 19, the divinity of Christ is denied.

5. In vers. 112–115 of the same Sūrah is given the account of the descent of the table from heaven at the prayer of Jesus in response to the request of the Apostles. This is not related in the

Gospels, and is contrary to the Gospel narrative, where the Apostles are never said to have asked for a sign from heaven, as did the unbelieving Jews (St. Matt. xvi. 1; cp. St. John ii. 18; vi. 30, etc.).

6. In Sūr. 4 *Nisā'*, 156, it is asserted that Jesus was not slain or crucified.

7. The alleged prophecy by Jesus of another apostle named Aḥmad to come after Him (Sūr. 61 *Ṣaff*, 6) is not found in the Gospel, and is directly opposed to it.

(The remaining contradictions given below, concerning matters of fact in the histories related in the Qur'ān, are from Dr. Murdoch's *Selections from the Koran*, p. 129.)

8. In Sūr. 11 *Hūd*, it is said that one of Noah's sons was drowned in the Flood, whereas from Gen. vii. 13 we learn that all were saved; cp. ch. v. 32.

9. In Sūr. 12 *Yūsuf*, 11–15, Joseph's brethren ask their father to send him with them, whereas it was his father who sent him to inquire after their welfare (Gen. xxxvii. 13, 14).

10. In Sūr. 2 *Baqarah*, 249–252, the story of Saul is confounded with that of Gideon (Judges vii.).

Some other instances of contradiction in the Qur'ān compared with the Bible are given in the work above referred to, but, as seeming to be capable of possible reconciliation with the Bible narrative, do not appear to possess the same weight as those just mentioned.

4. **Holy Scripture in the language of the people—different policy of Islām and Christianity.**—Our learned men possess and study the Bible in the original languages in which it was written. All other persons except scholars read it in their own language, in order to understand the meaning and profit by the reading of it. The mere mechanical utterance of the original words we regard as of no value or merit. The proper standard to aim at we believe to be, that all should be able to read intelligently the blessed Word of God. It is not the actual recitation of the words, but the comprehension of the sense and meaning which is all-important. It is the aim of one of the greatest of our religious societies, the British and Foreign Bible Society, to place the Word of God in the hands of every people and tribe in their own language. How different the ideal of Islām, which regards its Qur'ān as untranslatable into any other tongue, and any attempt to do so as sinful! (Cp. Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 7, 'None knoweth the interpretation thereof, except God.' How, then, can it be safely subjected to translation or the meaning adequately represented?) If it be here objected that the dissemination of the Word of God in the vernacular is the cause of schisms and heresies, Islām, it may be replied, with its almost untranslated Qur'ān, exhibits the same sad spectacle.* In the case of

* The late Rev. 'Imādu'd-dīn, D.D., translated the Qur'ān into idiomatic Urdū. But this was not a voluntary effort of Islām to bring the contents of its 'Bible' within the grasp of its many millions of followers in India, but a

Christianity it is not the divine revelation, but the human recipients and exponents who are at fault. The cause of divergence and 'unhappy divisions' is that the truth in all its bearings has not been fully realized (cp. St. John xiv. 6, 'I am . . . the truth,' xvii. 21, 22, 'that they may all be one,' 'that they may be one,') and that the aid of the Holy Spirit the Illuminator and Guide has not been in sufficient measure sought and appropriated.

5. **An argument against the integrity of the Qur'ān (for Shī'ahs).**—As to those chapters of the Qur'ān, which in the opinion of the Shī'ah Muḥammadans were among the genuine Sūrahs but were expunged and burnt by the third orthodox Caliph, Osmān, for which act the Shī'ahs execrate his memory and accuse him of mutilating the Word of God, the dilemma occurs:

(*a*) If these Sūrahs were *genuine*, the Qur'ān has been mutilated;

(*b*) If *not genuine*, the Qur'ān was corrupted in the first ages of Islām, and who can say how far the corruption extended?

6. **Literary criticism of the Qur'ān.**—(*a*) Muḥammad's indebtedness to others in the composition of the Qur'ān. On this point the student may consult among other authorities Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 107, and his notes on Sūr. 16 *Naḥl*, 105, and 25 *Furqān*, 5; Weil's *Legends*, Introd., p. xi.; Arnold's *Natural History of Islamism*, p. 426 and the note; and the Rev. Dr. St. Clair-Tisdall's learned work, *The Original Sources of the Qur'ān*.

It seems to the present writer that this subject is of more interest to the European student and critic, than useful to the controversialist among Muḥammadans. As with the differences between the Bible and the Qur'ān (3, *supra*), so here there may be suitable persons and occasions for the discussion of this question, namely, in intercourse with those of whose liberal sentiments we were well assured. For, we may ask, what should we be seeking to establish by the employment in this way of the argument under review? Would it not be tantamount to trying to show that the Qur'ān was a forgery, and that the reputed copy of a heavenly original was nothing more than a human composition in which the author received assistance from different quarters? Such a line of argument could not be otherwise than unpalatable, not to say offensive to any one who had not practically shaken off the trammels of Islām.

(*b*) Very similar remarks apply to the question of the various readings in the Qur'ān. Several are noted by Sale in his commentary on Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 115, 165; 6 *An'ām*, 62; 22 *Ḥajj*, 38; 30 *Rūm*, 1. In his *Prelim. Disc.*, p. 110, he remarks that much the greater part of the various readings in the Qur'ān has to do with the vocalization, it being alleged that the Qur'ān was revealed in seven dialects of Arabic (the *haft qirā'at*). Some of those given above contain variations in the persons of the verbs.

compassionate Christian attempt to lighten the eyes of those who sit in darkness.

Wherry on Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imrān*, 115, records his opinion that, 'A careful collation of any considerable number of ancient manuscripts would no doubt bring to light many such various readings.'

But the point which concerns us is this, How far is it useful and advisable to bring forward the question of these various readings to be found in the Qur'ān with a controversial object?

All very ancient books labour under this defect, and the Qur'ān is no exception to the rule, although all the copies in use now are uniform. But on this very account, the charge that there are variations in the Qur'ān is one which it would be difficult to bring home to the average Muḥammadan, however certain of the fact the Western critic sitting in his study may be.

To go a step further, What would the charge amount to? and what would be gained by making it? If it meant anything at all, it must mean that the present Qur'ān is corrupt and unreliable. The charge, therefore, labours under two grave disadvantages:—

(i.) It goes directly counter to the strongest Muḥammadan prejudices and the express words of the Qur'ān itself in Sūr. 15 *Ḥajr*, 9, 'We have surely sent down the Qur'ān, and we will certainly preserve the same *from corruption*,'* and 11 *Hūd*, 2.

(ii.) And, in the second place, since corruption can only occur in that which is originally free from the taint of it, those who make this accusation practically admit the existence of an uncorrupt Qur'ān; and whether they succeed or fail in proving their point, they place themselves in rather a doubtful position.

It may be questioned whether the ordinary Musulmān will be able to appreciate the force and purport of the charge, so complete is his veneration for his Qur'ān, and so utterly opposed would he be to the bare notion of subjecting it to literary dissection and criticism. One thing, however, he would perceive with enough distinctness, viz. that something was being attempted that seemed to him both very unreasonable and highly objectionable.

An incident which occurred during the reign of Rāẓī, A.H. 322–329, will show the strength of Muḥammadan feeling where the honour of the Qur'ān is supposed to be at stake. 'A famous doctor . . . was badly handled for affirming some various readings of the Qur'ān, of no apparent moment in themselves; and, notwithstanding that he submitted written recantation, had to fly Baghdād lest he should be torn in pieces by the angry mob.'† Sir William Muir, in another place, after paying a tribute to the 'almost incredible purity of text' which characterizes the Qur'ān, 'owing mainly to Osmān's recension and the official enforcement' of his one edition,' adds that 'to countenance a various reading was an offence against the state, and punished as such.'‡

(*c*) The collection and recension of the Qur'ān during the

* See, however, Wherry's note *in loc.*

† Muir's *Caliphate*, p. 565.

‡ *Id.*, *Life of Mahomet*, Introd., Vol. I., p. 15, quoted by Sale on Sūr. 22 *Ḥajj*, 88.

caliphates of Abū Bakr and Oṣmān. The Christian may sometimes be tempted, when hurt by imputations levelled against the purity and genuineness of his Scriptures, to bring these matters forward by way of retort in order to show that the Qur'ān labours under a disability of a similar kind, and to lead up to the inference that 'people who live in glass houses should not throw stones.' Little, however, is to be gained by '*tu quoque*' arguments of this nature, except perhaps, when the need arises, to check the arrogant assertiveness of an opponent. Those who use them must only do so with kindliness, tact and skill.

CHAPTER X.

SUNDRY MATTERS.

1. The Sinlessness of the Prophets.

THE Prophets are regarded by Muslims as having been without sin, the utmost that they are allowed to have been guilty of being the forsaking of the better part (*tark-i-aulā*). This idea of theirs derives no support whatever either from the Bible, the Qur'ān or the Traditions.

(1) **The Bible clearly indicates the sinfulness of all men.**—See Gen. vi. 5, viii. 21; Psa. xiv. 1–3 = liii. 1–3; Rom. iii. 10–12, 23, v. 12. With this contrast St. Matt. xix. 17, 'One there is Who is good,' and the express exception of Jesus from the universal taint of sin. The prophets themselves confess their sins: Ps. li.; Isa. vi. 5–7, 'thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged,' lxiv. 6, 'we are all become as one that is unclean'; Dan. ix. 4–19, and especially verse 20, 'confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel'; 1 Tim. i. 15, '. . . sinners; of whom I am chief.'

(2) *Let us first take the six prophets distinguished by special titles among the nine greater prophets of Islām*, viz.:—Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad (Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Prophet'). **If the Qur'ān be consulted it will be found that every one of them except Jesus asks for forgiveness from God, thus owning his sinfulness.** See the following passages:—For Adam Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 20–24 (esp. 24); for Noah, Sūr. 11 *Hūd* 47; 71 *Nūh*, 29; for Abraham, Sūr. 14 *Ibrāhīm*, 42; for Moses, Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 150, 151; 28 *Qaṣas*, 14, 15; * see also ver. 17, 'he was afraid,' and ver. 20, 'in great fear'; and for Muḥammad, see Ch. VII., (C), § 3, p. 411 *sqq.*, which deals with his supposed sinlessness as a proof of his divine mission.

Of the lesser prophets, the sins of Aaron, David, and Solomon and their requests for pardon are mentioned in the Qur'ān:—Aaron, Sūr. 7 *A'rāf*, 148–151; David, Sūr. 38 *Ṣād*, 20–25; Solomon, *Ib.*, 29–32 and 33, 34.

In the case of Joseph (Sūr. 12 *Yūsuf*, 24; *vid.* Sale *in loc.*) the Shī'ah Muḥammadans do not admit that Joseph entertained

* The above references are taken from *Tracts for Muhammadans* by the Rev. G. H. Rouse, D.D., No. 3, 'The Sinless Prophet,' pp. 21–23.

the guilty desire, whereas the Sunnīs do, in accordance with Jewish tradition. The words of the Qur'ān are, 'But she resolved within herself *to enjoy* him (*hammat bi-hi*), and he would have resolved *to enjoy* her (*hamma bi-hā*) . . .' The Shī'ahs, in order to save Joseph's reputation, maintain that *hamma bi-hā* means 'desired to kill her,' or 'to strike her.' But this is to give it a totally different signification from what it has when applied to *Zulaikhā'* earlier in the same sentence, which is altogether unreasonable.

(3) **The Traditions agree both with the Old Testament and the Qur'ān in representing the Prophets as compassed with sin and infirmity.**—In reference to some of those above mentioned we read as follows in Weil's *Legends*: '*Adam* resisted long—our doctors say, a whole hour of paradise, which means eighty years of our time on earth.' But at length overcome by Eve's importunity, he ate 'the second grain of wheat which she had had constantly with her, and presented to him three times every day.' Each of these grains was 'white as snow, sweet as honey, fragrant as musk, and as large as an ostrich's egg.' After his expulsion from Paradise, when the time arrived for God to have mercy on him, Gabriel instructs him to repeat the words, 'There is no God besides Thee. I have sinned; forgive me through Muḥammad Thy last and greatest prophet, whose name is engraved upon Thy holy throne' (pp. 12, 13, 17). When *Abraham* travelled in Palestine, Syria, Egypt, and Arabia to preach the true faith, he always carried Sarah in a chest that her surpassing beauty might not be seen. On one occasion on the banks of the Jordan he was obliged to pay tithes on all his property. But not wishing to open Sarah's chest, he offered first of all to pay duty on it as containing silk, and then, as this was not accepted, as though it contained gold and jewels. This, too, being refused, when the chest was at last opened and Sarah's beauty seen, the tax-gatherer at once ran to inform Pharaoh. 'The king immediately summoned Abraham, and inquired of him, "Who is the maiden whom thou carriest with thee?" Abraham, from fear of being put to death if he avowed the truth, replied, "She is my sister!" At the same time he told no falsehood, for in his mind he meant, "She is my sister in the faith"' (pp. 58, 59). Of *Moses* is related his murder of the Copt, who was cruelly ill-treating an Israelite named Sāmirī (p. 106). Also that 'when Moses returned again to his own people, and found them worshipping before the golden calf, he fell upon Aaron, caught him by the beard, and was on the point of strangling him, when Aaron swore that he was innocent, and pointed out Sāmirī as the prime mover of this idolatry' (p. 127). On one occasion Moses was boasting of his wisdom to his servant Joshua, whereupon God commanded him to go to the Persian Gulf, 'where the seas of the Greeks and the Persians commingle,' where he would meet the prophet Khiẓr, and find that his wisdom surpassed his own (p. 130). And once

more, 'when Gabriel announced to him his approaching dissolution, he ran hurriedly to his dwelling, and knocked hastily at the door. His wife Safurija opened it, and beholding him quite pale, and with ruffled countenance, inquired, "Who pursueth thee, that thou runnest hither *in terror* and *lookest dismayed?* who is it that pursueth thee for debt"' (p. 140). (The italics are ours.) After *David's* sin had been brought home to him by Gabriel and Michael, who appear before the king in human form, and state their case for justice, Gabriel representing himself as a poor man with only one sheep, which the other, who possesses ninety-nine, ceaselessly desires to take from him; 'he tore the crown from his head, and the royal purple from his body, and wandered through the wilderness wrapt in simple woollen garments and pining with remorse,' etc. 'But it was not until he had spent three full years in penitence and contrition that he heard a voice from heaven, which announced to him that the All-compassionate Allāh had at length opened the gate of mercy' (pp. 160, 161). When *Solomon* was convicted of permitting idolatry in his very palace by allowing one of his wives, Djarada, to have in her apartments an image of her deceased father, which she secretly worshipped, he first of all 'shivered the idol to pieces, and punished the princess,' and 'then put on new robes, which none but pure virgins had touched, strewed ashes on his head, went into the desert and implored Allāh for forgiveness. Allāh pardoned his sin; but he was to atone for it during forty days,' for which time the wicked spirit Sakhr craftily usurped his crown and kingdom (pp. 208, 209).

(4) **Other arguments and considerations are as follows**:

(i.) *We have to do with the books of the prophets.*—They are either true or false. Either they have been given by inspiration or not. If we believe the former and hold the Bible to be God's inspired Word, we must accept it with all that it contains. And the same argument may be applied to your Qur'ān.

(ii.) Prophets belong to mankind. They have never said, We are angels, or We are free from sin. *They have never put forward such a claim as this.*

(iii.)* *On the contrary the prophets are partakers of our common human nature* (*basharīyat*). They declare that they are but men, *e.g.*, 'Their apostles (Noah, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ) replied unto them, We are no other than men (*basharun*) like unto you' (Sūr. 14 *Ibrāhīm*, 13). Muḥammad himself makes a similar declaration (see Ch. VII., (C), § 3, p. 412). There are three sides to their nature, the natural (*ṭabī'ī*), the practical (*'amalī*), and the bestowed (*mauhūbī*). In accordance with the first of these, they share the appetites and infirmities of mankind, as eating, sickness, death, etc. Because of the second, they voluntarily perform all God's commands. With reference to the third, they possess the power bestowed on them by God of working miracles. Any one who denies these three sides to the nature of the prophets is an infidel (*kāfir*).

* From *Wasilatu'n-najāt*, chaps. 5 and 6.

But what is this common humanity, which is one side of the prophet's nature? Man has various powers, bodily and mental, which exist in all alike. If he had not been endowed with these, like a stone or other inorganic substance, he would have been incapable of pleasure and pain, obedience and sin, etc. With his existing nature, no man can be sinless, for no one is able perfectly to obey all God's commands and prohibitions. Further, according to the sublime teaching of the Bible, sin is not confined to omission or commission, to good left undone and evil done, but extends also to the thoughts and intents of the heart, which are known only to God.

It is this sinful infirmity of nature which is shared by all men, not excepting prophets and apostles. This is denied by Muḥammadans. For, not understanding what secret sin is, and not considering that evil thoughts and intentions constitute sin until they have become manifest in wicked actions, they refuse to attribute sin to the prophets. But if they deny that the prophets were sinful, they either (*a*) make God ignorant of secret things, or (*b*) destroy the pillars of His justice (because He does not, according to their view, punish secret sin), or (*c*) they deny the common human nature of the prophets.

(iv.) The prophet, besides touching the world of humanity on one side (*jambah-i-nāsūtī, basharīyat*) *touches also the unseen world* on another (*jambah-i-malakūtī, ulūhīyat*). Because of the former, he shares all the appetites and passions of men and like them is liable to sin. But in virtue of the latter, inspiration (*waḥy*) comes to him, and he is nearer to God and commits less sin than other men. A holy man may be engaged in devotional exercises, praising God and rehearsing His adorable attributes, when stress of hunger comes upon him. This is a thing strictly appertaining to his human nature, and does not vitiate his pious character. Or again the point is very well illustrated by what Shī'ah Muḥammadans say about some of their Imāms, and by a story of Abū 'Alī al Ḥusain 'Abdu'llāh ibn Sīnā (Avicenna). 'His mind was early developed by the study of theology, philosophy, and medicine, and in his youth he had already written a scientific encyclopedia.'* The story told of him is as follows. A learned man went to Avicenna's house when he was a boy, to put a difficult question to him, and to his surprise found him playing with some other boys. So he said to him, 'I came here to ask you a question; but now my one question has become two.' Invited to state them, the learned man put his first question, which was satisfactorily answered. His second question was, 'If you are so learned and clever, why do you engage in play like other boys?' The young Avicenna replied that it was because his youth demanded it (*iqtiżā-ye-ṭufūlīyat*).

But the sins of the prophets did not render their office void, because they repented towards God and fully accomplished their

* Hughes, *Dict. of Islām, s.v.* 'Philosophy.'

prophetic mission with the Holy Spirit's assistance.* *Illustrations.*—It is not the purse or money-bag that we value, but its contents. A precious gem is of equal value, whether it has fallen into the mire, or adorns the crown of a king. Pure water from the spring is as delicious from an earthenware vessel as from a golden cup. Cp. Stanley on 2 Cor. iv. 7, 'this treasure in earthen vessels,' where he traces the figure to the ancient practice of keeping gold and silver in earthenware jars, as was the custom of the Persian kings described by Herodotus (iii. 96). Wordsworth, however, commenting on the same passage, sees an allusion to the vessels filled with gold and silver coin carried in the triumphal procession and distributed by the conqueror.

(v.) It is often said that the prophets were only guilty of *tark-i-aulā* or neglect of the better course, not of sin in the ordinary sense. We cannot accept this for several reasons.

(*a*) If the sins into which some of the prophets fell (*e.g.* idolatry, drunkenness, murder, adultery) are only *tark-i-aulā*, why are they condemned in other places as heinous transgressions?

(*b*) And what is the difference between *tark-i-aulā* and *gunāh* (sin)? For is not the latter in like manner the choosing of our own path and forsaking God's way?

(*c*) *Tark-i-aulā* is a degree of sin. It is commonly regarded as a great fault even in the case of ordinary people. How much worse then must it be in a prophet of God! In seeking to arrive at a conclusion as to this matter we require proofs. We don't want stories of the prophets, of which there are very many, true and untrue. If we accept these stories we must believe all of them, and how are we to discern the true from the false, and distinguish the prophet's praiseworthy from his culpable actions?

(*d*) There is a tradition to this effect: 'the good deeds of the pious are sins of the saints.' † Surely the *tark-i-aulā* of the latter is a thousand times worse than it would be in the case of the former; for even the pious will do good to the uttermost and never willingly forsake the better to choose the worse. To treat religion in this way, by bringing forward contentions like this of the prophets' sinlessness, is to make sport of it, and resembles the boys' game of *Khush-ammīy-āyad* (lit. I am pleased). ‡

The following illustration suggested by a Persian friend may make the above argument clearer. Suppose a man has two servants, the one confidential and the other menial. The latter's work is good in itself and in its proper place. But if the confidential servant were to do the menial's work before his master's face, that would be a grave fault. And obviously neglect of duty on the part of the confidential servant is infinitely worse in him than it would be in the menial.

Conclusion.—No one, except the Muḥammadan denies that all

* From *Wasīlatu'n-najāt.*
† Ḥasanātu'l-abrāri sayyi'ātu'l-muqarrabīni.
‡ From *Wasīlatu'n-najāt.*

men, whether they are in the way of truth or error, even the prophets themselves, are not without sin. Muḥammadans alone do so, because they are ignorant of the revered Scriptures and the clear indications contained therein. Such denial is blasphemy (*kufr*), for it is equivalent to affirming either that (i.) the prophets were not human, or that (ii.) they did not acknowledge their sinfulness, which is false and contrary to the Traditions and the Qur'ān.*

2. MIRACLES OF SAINTS.

The wonders that are believed to have been wrought by the saints and holy men of Islām either in life, or after their decease, are not unfrequently brought forward by Muḥammadans, with a view to showing that a faith thus continually honoured by God must be true, and is superior to one that cannot now, at all events, claim these manifest tokens of divine favour. A Persian gentleman on one occasion told the writer a long story of the miraculous way in which the sons of 'Alī were directed to the particular spot in which their father was to be buried, and how in a later age the place of his interment was in a similarly marvellous manner revealed to Hārūnu'r-Rashīd, who was so much impressed that he erected an edifice over the grave. Could it be questioned that a history so minute and circumstantial carried on the face of it the stamp of truth, and justified its acceptance? The narrator's purpose, in short, was to show that Muslims were not merely led astray by ignorant, unreasoning prejudice, but had good ground for holding their cherished beliefs.

To all such narratives the general and conclusive answer that may be given is, that these are stories and legends. We have a more serious purpose in view than listening to these things. We require well-considered arguments, not gossiping tales.

It may, however, be not out of place to give one or two instances, where special miracles were brought forward, with the answers suggested by a native gentleman.

(*a*) One afternoon two young Persians were boasting of the miracles wrought by their saints and Imāms, and asserting their unquestioning belief in them, and challenged the writer to get up a test case, *e.g.* to take a blind man to the European doctor, to be examined by him and certified as blind, and after these preliminaries have him taken to a shrine for the saint to cure him. They further asserted that a miracle of this description had recently taken place at the Mosque of Shāh Chirāgh in Shīrāz. And one of the young gentlemen related a personal experience of a persistent pain in the side which had been cured in a wonderful manner by a visit to the famous Shī'ah shrine at Karbalā. Two days after his arrival there he saw a vision of a saint,

* From *Wasilatu'n-najāt*.

who came and stroked his side, and said to him, 'Your pain is gone.'

All this, perhaps, sounds very trivial, and one might be tempted to dismiss it as scarcely deserving a serious answer. It is easy enough to make some sort of rejoinder. But surely the point to aim at is to deal with the question in such a manner as to render apparent the weakness of the case so lightly formulated on the other side. Effective, decisive treatment is needed just in proportion to the reckless confidence with which unproven facts are asserted or unwarrantable deductions made. With this in mind, the following answer may be given:—

(i.) Many such cases have been investigated, and proved to have been got up by the guardians of the shrines, in order to increase their popularity and augment the profits. When the éclat of a fresh miracle is thought desirable some man is induced to stay in the shrine for a few days, pretending to be blind or paralyzed, and at the end of the time he gives out that he has been cured and takes his departure.*

(ii.) Many persons have feigned themselves ill, and pretended to receive cure at a shrine, in order that the matter may be noised abroad, and they may be brought before the Governor and receive a present from him.

(iii.) There are some cases of infirmity or sickness which are easy to heal. How is it that we never hear of cures wrought by the same agency in such cases as diseases commonly regarded as incurable, the loss of limbs, destruction of sight, deadly wounds, etc.? The power of the saint would be much more conspicuous if exercised in emergencies like these!

Objection.—These require certain means and appliances (*asbāb*), as, *e.g.*, for joining a severed finger to the hand.

Answer.—But in other cases, as that of a man deaf and dumb from birth, the means are all at hand. The eye is there; the vocal organs exist; the power to use them only is wanting. Similarly in the case of a knife thrust into the eye, or a sword into the body.

(iv.) Many diseases come to a crisis (*buḥran*); and it has often happened that this has occurred while the sufferer was at a shrine.

(v.) If the saint desires to heal a man, why does he keep him waiting three, five, or ten days before curing him, instead of doing so at once?

(*b*) Another extraordinary miracle related to the writer in the most positive manner was the miraculous death of a Turkish

* Thus on a certain occasion a miraculous cure of blindness was reported as having taken place in a mosque at Tabrīz. 'The news of the event,' says the Rev. S. G. Wilson, 'was heralded through the city, and for three nights the roofs were aglow with bonfires, and for three days there was rejoicing, because God had visited His people. It turned out that the man had merely fixed his eyes blind, and had them conveniently relieved within the precincts of the mosque' (*Persian Life and Customs*, p. 143).

Effendi, who it was said sacrilegiously attempted to enter the tomb of 'Alī.*

Answer.—(i.) I have more accurate information about this alleged incident than you possess. It occurred in the time of the Ḥisāmu's-saltanah. When informed of it, he begged the people to wait, until the certainty of the matter was fully ascertained; but they would not, and forthwith illuminated the bazaars. As one party after another arrived from the shrine, they were eagerly interrogated as to the reported miracle, but denied all knowledge of any such occurrence. Finally came Ḥājī 'Alī Riẓā, the commissioner (*amīn*) of Ḥājī Mīrzā Muḥammad Ḥasan, Ḥujjatu'l-Islām, and he too could give no confirmation of the alleged occurrence. Whereupon the Ḥisāmu's-saltanah struck his hands together, and said he had been made a laughing-stock throughout the world.

(ii.) People constantly die in all sorts of places. And out of some sudden death this story was doubtless made up.

Note.—In the Rev. S. G. Wilson's *Persian Life and Customs*, two instances of fraudulent miracles are given, one of which failed at the critical moment, and the other was persistently credited in spite of the denials of the miracle-monger.

Many of the Sheikhs and pīrs among the Kurds, 'Alī-Allāhīs, and others, pretend to cure diseases, barrenness, etc., by touch and prayer. A reputation for holiness and power to work miracles is a great source of gain, as well as fame, to them. A sheikh thus wished to increase his reputation and influence. He gave out that on a certain day he would kill and raise to life one of his pupils. A great crowd assembled. According to previous arrangement, a drug which would put him into a heavy sleep had been given to the pupil. He was commanded to enter the room and die. The word was given to the people. They entered, found him lifeless, and prepared him for burial. The grave was dug, the body deposited, a little earth placed upon it, and the people were told to come in the morning. At sunrise a crowd assembled, the earth was removed, and the body called upon to rise. No answer came. He had not correctly calculated the time when the effects of the drug would pass off. The pupil had awakened in the night, and, after trying to escape, had died. The sheikh was arrested for fraud.†

A shrine in Karadagh, which was visited much for the healing of the sick, originated in the following manner: One morning a man told his neighbours that during the night a heavenly light—a manifestation of an imām—had appeared on a certain hill. The report spread, and people began flocking to the shrine. It was a time of an overstocked melon market, and the bazaar was distant. The story brought a throng of purchasers near, and the man sold his melons at a good profit. Then he told the people of his deceit, but they declared his confession a lie and held to the fable as truth.‡

* Cp. S. G. Wilson's *Persian Life and Customs*, p. 219, where it is related that in 1883 a Turkish Pasha sent soldiers to forcibly take a beautiful carpet from the shrine of Husain at Karbalā. On attempting to enter, they 'fell down on the threshold, and, spitting blood, died on the spot'! This looks very like another version of the same story.

† Pp. 219, 220.

‡ P. 218.

3. Philosophical Arguments, and how to Deal with them.

§ 1. **Philosophy and its relation to Ṣūfiism.**—Philosophy (*'ilm-i-ḥikmat*) is supposed to help the man instructed in it to the understanding of the mysteries and dark sayings of the inspired word of God; and is, of course, inferior to the words of the prophets themselves. The philosophers, like the Ṣūfīs, theoretically honour the word of God, but explain away what does not suit their purpose by means of figurative and allegorical interpretations (*ta'wīl*). It is well for the missionary to have such an acquaintance with the point of view of philosophical Muslims as to be able readily to recognize them, and be prepared to deal with them from their own standpoint.

The true philosophers are those who adhere to the philosophic teaching of the Greeks. But there are those who are not content with this mode of inquiry and have gone far beyond it. These are the Ṣūfīs, whose religious leaders (*murshid*) invent various formulas to be repeated by their followers (*zikr*). Besides these mysterious formulas the novices are instructed in the performance of ascetic practices in order that by these two means their hearts may be enlightened by visions of the unseen world, of prophets, etc. They believe in the existence of numerous worlds, the world of humanity (*'ālam-i-nāsūt*), the invisible world (*'ālam-i-malakūt*) which is the abode of the angels, the highest heaven (*'ālam-i-jabarūt*), the world of divinity (*'ālam-i-lāhūt*), and the world of essence (*'ālam-i-zāt*). There are according to them many degrees of the knowledge of God and approach to Him; the final stage being that of reality (*ḥaqīqat*), in which individuality is lost (*fānī*), and the soul becomes absorbed (*wāṣil, muttaḥid, mustaghraq*) in the deity. The main difference between the philosophers and the Ṣūfīs in their search for truth is this, that the former confine themselves to reason and argument and have nothing to do with the ascetic practices of the mystics. The beliefs and tenets of both are the same. The philosophers, for example, prove the existence of the above-mentioned worlds by reasoning (*istidlāl*): the Ṣūfīs say that they actually behold them (*mushāhidah*), and speak disrespectfully of mere reasoning as compared with sight. Thus the author of the *Maṣnawī*, himself a Ṣūfī, says, 'The foot of the reasoners (*i.e.* the philosophers) will be wooden; the wooden foot will be exceedingly feeble.' * The following story is told of the Ṣūfī, Abū Sa'īd-i-Abū'l-khair and the philosopher Abū 'Alī Sīnā, Shaikhu'r-rais. The Ṣūfī remarked, 'I am traversing the worlds,' and he began to describe them. The philosopher rejoined, 'I too was traversing them.' To which the Ṣūfī replied, 'Quite right; you were doing so. But I was going along quickly, while you were hobbling along behind me with a stick.' The Ṣūfīs practically

* Pā-ye istidlālīān chūbīn buwad:
Pā-ye chūbīn sakht bī-tamkīn buwad.

consider themselves as the religious guides of the age and the successors of the prophets. All the philosophers of the present day follow the teaching of Mullā Sadrā, whose system, an eclectic one, called the 'exalted philosophy' (*ḥikmat-i-muta'ālīyah*), and expounded in a work named *Asfār*, aims at reconciling Greek philosophy, Ṣūfiism, the Qur'ān and the Traditions.*

§ 2. **A few instances may be given of the way in which the missionary is sometimes confronted with Muslim philosophical ideas.**

(*a*) It is sometimes argued, for instance, that since God is a creator, the world is eternal; the possession of an attribute being inconceivable apart from its exercise. Since creative power has always existed in the deity, there must always have been the outward results of its working.

Answer.—All things are either necessarily existent, *i.e.* self-existent, as God; or their existence is possible; or it is impossible (*wājibu'l-wujūd; mumkinu'l-wujūd; mumtani'u'l-wujūd*). It is obvious to which of these three classes the world belongs.

(*b*) Similarly with the eternity of man, which is also sometimes asserted in direct opposition to Gen. i.

As to the cavilling objection with reference to the wives of the sons of Adam, both Muḥammadan and Jewish tradition make mention of sisters of Cain and Abel. 'Eve had borne him [Adam] two sons, whom he named Qābīl and Hābīl [Cain and Abel], and several daughters, whom he gave in marriage to their brothers.'† 'R. Huna teaches, They contended for a twin sister of Abel's; the latter claimed her because she was born with him; but Cain pleaded his right of primogeniture.'—*Midrash*, p. 11.‡

(*c*) To the denial of the literal truth of the miracles in the Bible, the answer may be made:

(i.) How is it that you attribute thousands of miracles to religious guides, leaders (*pīr, murshid*) and saints, and deny those of the prophets, Moses, Jesus, etc.?

(ii.) A good argument may be drawn from the miracle recorded in St. Matt. ix. 1–8 = St. Mark ii. 1–12 = St. Luke v. 17–26. The outward and visible miracle was performed to justify Jesus' claim to possess the power of forgiving sins. The outward sign is the guarantee of the inward and spiritual deliverance. If the healing of the paralytic did not describe an actual fact, but was only a figurative way of describing the growth or perfecting of the man's faith, there would have been no need for Jesus to say, 'Thy sins are forgiven.' (Cp. Acts ii. 22, 'a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you.')

In addition to the answers appropriate to particular arguments,

* I am indebted to a learned Persian gentleman for the above brief account of the relationship of philosophy to Ṣūfiism.

† Weil, *Legends*, p. 23.

‡ *Ib.*, p. 23, note.

the weakness of the philosophers' standpoint should also be made clear on the following grounds.

§ 3. **Reasons for rejecting the arguments of the philosophers.**—1. *Metaphorical interpretation* (*ta'wīl*).—Everything literally true in the Bible which the philosopher does not wish to accept, he explains away by the unrestrained and unregulated use of figurative and allegorical interpretation. In its application no definite, scientific lines are followed. A new school might arise to-morrow which by adopting other principles at the will of the founder would arrive at different conclusions. The Christian cannot allow this method of using the Word of God to pass unchallenged, and may support his case by the following arguments:—

(i.) Is the Bible the Word of God, or not? If not, there is an end to the discussion. If you deny its divine origin, bring forward a better book. But if it is, and if the writers were prophets and inspired by God, we must not explain their words away but accept them as God's words and obey them without question. It is incredible that the writers should not have said what they wished to say and were commissioned to deliver, in clear and distinct language, but instead of that have said one thing and meant another. If this were the case, there would be injustice, deceit, and oppression on the part of God.

Objection.—There *are* metaphors and figurative language in God's Word.

Answer.—Certainly there are, and it is good too in appropriate places in accordance with the saying of the learned, 'Metaphor is the most effectual explanation' (*Al-kināyatu ablaghu mina'l-taṣrīh*). Actual facts are described in perspicuous language, and things of an abstruse or recondite character in metaphorical terms. But it is quite wrong to give a metaphorical interpretation of definite and direct statements of fact. This would be to meddle with God's Word. *Illustration.*—On a rainy day a man might describe the weather in three different ways. He might say, *Bārān āmad* (lit. = rain came), or *nāvdān āmad* (lit. = the spout came), or *āsmān ma-rā tar kardah ast* (lit. = the sky has wetted me). The first is a simple direct statement of the fact: the two latter are indirect ways of saying the same thing. It would be an error to give a figurative interpretation of the former. Metaphors are helpful, or rather necessary, to bring out the contrast between them and statements of fact. If God has wished to make such an extensive use of figurative language as you would attribute to Him in His Word, why did He not also express these obvious matters of fact in figurative language? If you interpret the latter in a figurative sense, you destroy the distinction between the two.

(ii.) *Ta'wīl* has no limit, and no reliance can therefore be placed upon it, because every one is at liberty to explain any passage of Scripture according to his own ideas and preconceived bias..

(iii.) In explaining passages where the meaning is admittedly metaphorical or figurative, regard should be paid to the opinion which Christian commentators have always entertained about them. They are more likely to know the true meaning than adherents of other religions. *Illustration.*—Do you know better than I myself what is in my hand?

If necessary, the Christian point of view may thus be briefly explained. The best key to the understanding of the Scriptures is the Scriptures themselves—the comparison of Scripture with Scripture. 'The Fathers acknowledge the Scripture to be sufficiently plain, if expounded by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Irenæus tells us to solve the more difficult parts of Scripture by having recourse to those which are easy.' * In mystical interpretations, as *e.g.* of passages which mention life, death, bread, water, eating, drinking, etc., things which have both a physical and a spiritual significance; or of others which speak of analogies in the believer's spiritual experience to facts in the history of Christ, as His Death, Burial, and Resurrection, two safeguards must be observed, viz. (1) not to give a metaphorical meaning to that which is obviously to be understood in a literal sense (*vid. supra*), and (2) only to give a metaphorical interpretation where it can be justified by other passages of Scripture.

2. *Contradictions.*—The commands, statutes and laws of the prophets must be so clear and evident that all may understand them. If there are some few parts requiring thought and consideration for their proper comprehension, no objection can be raised on this score.† Most men do not understand everything that is clear and evident, although it is so; how, then, should they understand the words of the prophets if they were full of mystery? There must not be an excess of mystery in their utterances: otherwise they would fail of their purpose.

We must not let go the words of the prophets because they contain some difficult passages, and trust the words of the philosophers; for we see that in the conclusions of different philosophers there is often the most complete contradiction (*ikhtilāf-i-kullī*), even though on both sides they are supported by proofs. With self-evident truths we are not now concerned, as that the sun is bright or honey is sweet. All are of course agreed upon these. But the divergent conclusions of the philosophers appear in many other matters which are of the greatest importance. Thus, for example, with the same data before them some say that existence (*wujūd*) is real (*aṣīl*), others that qualities (*māhiyat*) are: some maintain that the heavens and the earth are created, others that

* Browne, *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, p. 140.

† 'There is no question,' says Jer. Taylor, 'but there are many places in the divine Scriptures mysterious, intricate, and secret; but these are for the learned, not for the ignorant; for the curious and inquisitive, not for the busied and employed and simple.' *Dissuasive from Popery*, part II., bk. I., par. 2. Quoted in Browne's *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, p. 140.

they are eternal: space is supposed by some to be limited, by others to have no limit: quite contrary opinions are entertained as to the nature of eyesight, some saying that a ray comes forth from the eye (*khurūj-i-shu'ā*) strikes the image and carries back the impression of it to the organ of sight, others that a picture of the object is imprinted on the eye (*intibā'*): some, again, admit the eternity of the soul (*tajarrud-i-nafs*) while others deny it. The resurrection (*mi'ād*) is regarded by some as a spiritual one, by others as the rising again of these actual bodies. These views are diametrically opposed to one another. Both sides support their conclusions by arguments, and yet it is obvious that both cannot be true.

We maintain that the words of the prophets must be clear and without mystery, except in the limited degree mentioned above, and not subject to the possibility of being forced to substantiate opposite and contradictory conclusions, in the hands of philosophers. 'When both sides disagree,' say the learned, 'both are discredited' (*izā ta'ārazā, tasāqaṭā*). No reliance can be placed on either, although one of the two must be right. *Illustration.*—One man says there is a cat outside, another affirms that there is not. While the one must be right and the other wrong, our minds are in suspense between them, and we are unable to give credence to either.

3. *Futility of unaided reason* (*'aql*).—We cannot arrive at the knowledge of the things of God by the aid of reason alone, because the instrument itself is but an imperfect and defective one (*juz'ī, nāqiṣ*). Cp. Job xi. 7, 'Canst thou by searching find out God?'

> Imperfect reason is like a flash and a gleam:
> How can one penetrate the darkness by the aid of a gleam?
> *Maṣnawi.**

The fitful glimmer of the light of reason can aid you but little in your search after the knowledge of God.

> The curse of imperfect reason is imagination and ideas:
> Because the true home of reason is shrouded in darkness.
> *Ib.*†

The evil influence of ideas was thus illustrated by a Persian. We sit and talk with a person gladly. But when he is dead, we shrink from the very sight and presence of the corpse, though we well know that this poor remnant of humanity can do us no harm. Whatever injury the man may possibly have been able to inflict upon us in life, he can do so no longer, and yet we are more afraid of him now than we were then.—We must learn the knowledge of God from the Book of God. If you wanted to learn English you

* 'Aql-i-juzwī hamchu barq ast-o darakhsh:
Az darakhsh-ī kai tawān shud sū-ye dākhsh?

† 'Aql-i-juzwī āfat-ash wahm ast-o zann:
Zānkih dar ẓulmat shud ū-rā waṭan.

would use English reading-books; to acquire a knowledge of geography and arithmetic you would study books which treat of those subjects. *Illustration.*—A person would not go into a dark room with a candle to read his book if the sun were shining brightly outside. Cp.

> The nature that has no share of life,
> How can it become the bestower of life?
> (? *Jāmī.*)*

How can human reason be a guide to the divine? *Illustration.*—He who knows not the number of yards in his own turban, or the number of the hairs of his head, how can he presume to know about God?

Objection.—God has given me reason, and therefore He surely intends me to find Him out thereby.

Answer.—Our reason cannot do this. It is but imperfect (*juz-ī*), and therefore cannot comprehend the universal (*kullī*). It rightly tells us there *is* a God, but this is all it can do. The Greek philosophers, though the wisest of men, could get no further than this. (Cp. 1 Cor. i. 21, 'In the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God.')

Illustrations.—(*a*) My reason tells me this is a house. It has windows and doors. It was constructed by an architect and builders. But reason does not inform us who the architect was, or when the house was built—ten, or ten and a half, or thirty years ago.

(*b*) We are like mosquitoes in a garden, which are born and die there, but know not to whom the garden belongs or who planted it, or how long it has been a garden, or will continue to be one.

> How does the mosquito know how long this has been a garden?
> It was born in the springtime and it dies in the winter.†

(*c*) Our position may be compared with that of countrymen or villagers who come into a garden. They know that it is a garden, and that it must have been planted at some time by somebody, and be owned by a master, and that it will bring forth certain fruits and flowers. But they do not know who first laid out the garden, or who the present owner is, or how long the garden has been in existence. The prophets may be compared to dwellers in the city near the garden, who come into the garden from the presence of its master, and tell the simple country folk all about it, to whom it belongs, how old it is and when the buildings were erected, and which fruits are good and which bad. But Christ is the Son of the Lord of the garden; He knows every detail about the garden; He shows us everything; He opens for us the doors

* Zāt-i-nā-yāftah az hastī bakhsh,
Kai tawānad shawad hastī-bakhsh?
† Pashshah kai dānad kih īn bagh az kai ast?
Dar bahārān zād-o marg-ash dar dai ast.
Maṣnawī, p. 155, line 25 (Pers. ed.).

of the building, and allows us to enter and invites us to remain. (The town-dwellers in Persia are very fond, during the spring and summer months, of paying visits to the gardens and orchards in the vicinity. This last illustration is a variation and elaboration by a Persian gentleman of the previous one.)

Concluding remarks.—The following are suggestive questions, which may be used to show up the weakness of the philosophers' position, or serve as an introduction to the bringing forward of Christian truth: What is the object (*mauzū'*) of philosophy? Who formulated its rules and principles? What topic should be discussed? What is the advantage of this science? Lastly, whether we feel competent to propound and follow up such questions or not, we will not let our philosopher go without pointing him as clearly as possible with the Holy Spirit's assistance to Christ 'the wisdom of God' (1 Cor. i. 24), and the repository of 'all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge' (Col. ii. 3); to 'a wisdom not of this world' even 'God's wisdom in a mystery' which hath now been made known to His servants by the Spirit (1 Cor. ii. 6–13); and to an answering wisdom on the human side, namely, that of the man who through study of 'the sacred writings' becomes 'wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus' (2 Tim. iii. 15).

4. The Alleged Spread of Islām and Bābism in England and America.

(*a*) When this is brought forward, as is sometimes done, it will not be of much use to deny that this is the case except to an infinitesimal degree, or assert that we have never met English Muḥammadans or Bābis, or emphasize the unlikelihood of a Christian becoming a Muslim. It is better to argue as follows:—

(i.) There are in every religion those who hold what they believe to be true as the result of conviction following investigation (*taḥqīq*); and others who with a weaker grasp merely adhere to that which they have received by tradition (*taqlīd*) from parents and teachers. The latter will always be liable to be disturbed in mind and alter their opinions. They have neglected the duty, which Muḥammadans admit is incumbent upon all after arrival at years of discretion, of personal scrutiny of the grounds of their belief, and have in consequence never arrived at a strong position of assurance and conviction (1 Pet. iii. 15; cp. Rom. xiv. 5).

(ii.) As to Bābism, the learned Professor of a famous American University, when questioned by the writer as to the existence and number of Bābis in his country, said that unfortunately there were those who were always ready to take up any novelty.

(*b*) All such statements by Muḥammadans as those just noticed labour under the suspicion of designing exaggeration and deliberate misrepresentation. A false story, however far removed from truth, if diligently circulated and appealing to deeply rooted prejudices,

will sufficiently accomplish the purpose for which it was set going, although it may afterwards be completely disproved and discredited. The truth will never succeed in so overtaking the falsehood, if once well started, as to banish it entirely from the field. The result intended by those, who aim thus to manipulate and modify public opinion on their own lines, will have been attained. Certain impressions will have been stamped on the minds of the masses, and no subsequent contradiction will do much to efface them. The fabricated story industriously disseminated by willing dupes has reached the ears of a larger circle than its later refutation is ever likely to do. The pleasing and flattering original was passed from mouth to mouth with far more readiness than its unwelcome revision and correction, received only with doubt and hesitation, will be. The people are more than ready to believe anything redounding to the credit of their saints or their religion, and unhesitatingly accept the most wonderful inventions. Here all the force of prejudice and inclination is on one side. No searching investigation will be made by the hearers, nor indeed is it within their power. They will, therefore, be obliged in case of doubt to content themselves with the pious reflection that God knows where the truth lies.

A curious illustration of the above remarks occurred at the time of the cholera outbreak at Shīrāz in the summer of 1904. It was commonly reported in the city that cholera had attacked London, and that the inhabitants of the latter place, on hearing how quickly the scourge had abated in Shīrāz, telegraphed there to inquire by what means this happy result had been brought about. The reply came, 'It is because we have an Imām (Ḥusain), and celebrate public lamentations for the misfortunes of the House of 'Alī, and recite eulogies in their honour.' The people of London, therefore, on the receipt of this message requested the Persians living in their midst to perform the same ceremonies for them. This they obligingly did from day to day in different quarters of the city, until within the space of four or five days the epidemic was stayed. Out of gratitude for this deliverance, 40,000, or as others say, 500,000 Londoners became Muḥammadans! The story was not only circulated but believed, and preparations were begun for the illumination of the city in honour of the great event. The writer's informant actually saw poles for lamps erected for this purpose in one of the mosques. On a Sāyid's relating in all good faith the gratifying news of what had occurred in London to the mīrzā of one of the European merchants, he could not repress a smile. The other was quite disposed to take offence, and asked the reason of this unseasonable amusement. The mīrzā replied that he was only smiling with delight at the thought of so many Europeans embracing Islām! The circulation of the fable could not be without effect on unreflecting minds. Besides being calculated to afford some measure of consolation to those labouring under the pressure of a recent calamity, its direct tendency was to

minister to the vanity of the Persian, and magnify his religion together with the observances connected with it. Bearing all this in mind, there can be little doubt as to the origin of the ingenious fiction.

When asked how it came to pass that such ridiculous stories were believed, a friend replied that currency gave credence, and assurance resulted from frequent repetition as the news was passed on from one to another, and he illustrated his statement by an anecdote of Ash'as the miser (Ash'aṣ-i-tammā'), a well-known character in ancient Arabia, whom the street boys used often to pester and annoy. On one occasion in order to get rid of them, he falsely told them that walnuts were being distributed free at a certain place. So off they went and left him. On turning the matter over in his mind, the miser thought it a pity to miss the possible chance of walnuts gratis, and determined to go to the place himself, in case the imaginary dole should really turn out to be a fact after all!

5. A Favourite Shī'ah Argument.

The Shī'ahs are fond of finding a reference to their twelve Imāms in the sons of Ishmael, the 'twelve princes' whom God promised Abraham that Ishmael should beget (Gen. xvii. 20). This cannot be so for the following reasons:—

(i.) Gen. xxv. 12–16 distinctly states that they are sons of Ishmael himself and heads of tribes: 'These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their villages, and by their encampments; twelve princes according to their nations.' Their names can still be distinguished among the tribes famous in Muḥammadan history, and some of the names exist to this day.*

(ii.) If the 'twelve princes' foretold in Gen. xvii. 20 are not those mentioned in chapter xxv. 12–16, but the twelve Imāms of the Shī'ahs, we should have a secret and an enigma (*sirr*, *ramz*) in the Word of God, which is incredible. The names of the 'twelve princes' are distinctly given in the Pentateuch: yet you say these princes are 'Alī, Ḥasan, Ḥusain, and the rest of the twelve Imāms. You must therefore explain this, and show how it is so, and why the names have been changed. *Illustration.*—Such a thing is unknown in human history. In any statement, as for example, 'The Arab armies came to Shīrāz,' the names would be carefully preserved, though the sentence were translated into a hundred different languages. If the names were changed, all semblance of truth and historical accuracy would vanish at once.

* Hughes, *Dict. of Islām*, *s.v.* 'Ishmael.'

APPENDIX I.

SPECIMENS OF BAZAAR BARGAINING, DESIGNED TO THROW A SIDE-LIGHT ON ORIENTAL CHARACTER.

EXPLANATORY NOTE.—The following pieces were composed at my request by two Persian friends to throw some light on one aspect of the inscrutable Oriental mind. They have been translated rather freely, to preserve the force and spirit of the dialogue, which would have been frequently impaired by a more literal rendering.

The following is a table of the money used:—

20 shāhīs = 1 krān;
1 krān, 5 shāhīs = 1 rīyāl;
10 krāns = 1 tomān.

(The present value of the krān (March, 1904) is nearly 4¼*d.* The rate is constantly changing.)

Dialogues between Shopkeepers and Customers.

I.

Between two strangers (*which accounts for the somewhat brusque tone of the piece*).

Customer. Have you such and such a thing to sell?

Shopkeeper. Yes! I have.

C. Bring it here. What's the price of it?

S. 5 krāns!

C. 2 krāns!!

S. I myself bought it for 4 krāns: how can I give it for 2 krāns? This is the truth, by God!

C. Please yourself, whether you sell it, or not.

S. No! I won't sell it.

C. I'll put on another 10 shāhīs, to make it 2 rīyāls.

S. I represented to you that I bought it for 4 krāns. If you are willing, give me the 4 krāns: I don't want any profit.

C. (*Departs*).

S. (*Calls out after him*). Come here! Let's see!

C. (*Comes*).

S. I'll reduce the price by another 10 shāhīs, and bear the loss of half a krān, as it is my first sale to-day. (There is an allusion here to the superstitious idea, that it is an unlucky omen for the day's business to let the first customer depart without making a purchase.)

C. Since you have taken your oath (*supra*), I'll offer 5 shāhīs more, to make up 2 rīyāls and 5 shāhīs.

S. Begone! and may God protect you!

C. (*Goes away*).

S. (*Calling after him*). Come here! Don't spoil my day's first business!

C. (*Returns*). What do you say?

S. Produce your money! Let me see it!

C. (*Produces his money, and offers* 2 *rīyāls and* 5 *shāhīs*).

S. No! I won't accept it. If you wish, put down another 5 shāhīs, to make up 3 krāns.

C. By God! I'll give no more.

S. (*Taking up the money*). God bless you!

II.

Between two persons who have some acquaintance with one another (*as shown by the rather more familiar tone than that of the previous piece*).

Customer. Have you a certain article?

Shopkeeper. Yes! I have.

C. How much is it?

S. 1 tomān.

C. 6 krāns.

S. I won't take it. I myself bought it for 9 krāns; how can I give it for 6?

C. (*Departs*).

S. (*Calls to him*). Come here! I'll pledge myself with an oath by His Excellency 'Abbās (paternal uncle of Muḥammad).

C. How much profit do you want?

S. I'll be content with 1 krān.

C. That's too much.

S. No! it's not too much.

C. I'll give it.

S. Well! I bought it for 8 krāns: give me 1 krān profit, which will make up 9 krāns.

C. (*After long consideration offers* 8 *krāns*).

S. Hallo! Where's my profit?

C. God bless you! Be content with that, and think you've made me a present. (*Lit.* suppose I've given you nothing at all.) (*Departs*).

S. Begone! and good luck to you and your purchase!

III.

Between a shopkeeper and a Lur (*name of one of the mountain tribes of Persia*), *or a villager.*

Customer. Have you such and such a thing?

Shopkeeper. Yes! I have. (*Brings it*).

C. I don't want this. It's a bad one.

S. (*Brings another sort*). This is another one.

C. This, too, is not good.

S. Better than this cannot be had. Goodness gracious! You're giving a lot of trouble this morning.

C. I want a good article.

S. (*Brings another kind*). If you search the whole bazaar, you won't find another like this.

C. What's the price of it?

S. 2 tomāns!

C. 12 krāns!!

S. May the father's tomb of every jackass be——

C. (*Departs*). Well! What's the use of getting abusive?
S. Come here! Let us see. I'll take off two krāns.
C. I keep to what I first said.
S. Upon your father's soul——. Begone! (*Customer departs*).

IV.

Between two friends.

(*After interchange of friendly greetings.*)

Shopkeeper. In the name of God, come in, be seated. Will you smoke a qalīān (hubble-bubble or water-pipe)?
Customer. I won't put you to any inconvenience. I have some business and must be going.
S. Have you any commands?
C. I want a Bushire 'abā (a sort of cloak).
S. (*Tells his servant to bring one. The servant brings it*).
C. (*Takes it and looks at it*). This is not a bad 'abā; but I want one of superior quality.
S. (*Tells his servant to bring such a one. The servant brings it*).
C. (*Taking and examining it*). This is a very good one. Kindly tell me the price of it.
S. That is of no consequence. Whatever you please, be good enough to give me. My shop is yours.
C. You are very obliging. I know your Honour's kindness. But please tell me how much I am indebted to you.
S. By my child's life, this 'abā cost 14 tomāns by the time it arrived here.
C. What's that you say? Why, last year I bought this same quality of 'abā from your own self for 11 tomāns.
S. What you are pleased to say is true. But this year 'abās have gone up a great deal in price.
C. Yes! it is so; but not to such a degree.
S. Would you like me to show you the invoice, so that your Honour may know the truth of my representations?
C. It is not necessary. I know that your Honour would not utter a falsehood.
S. (*Producing the invoice*). See here; your humble servant is not playing any trickery.
C. (*Looking at it*). Yes! But there should be some difference in your dealings with me and other people.
S. By thine own head! Indeed I would not sell this 'abā to any one else for 16 tomāns.
C. (*Counts out and offers* 14 *tomāns*). That being so, I won't inflict any great loss on you.
S. Impossible! By thy dear life! I must have just a small profit.
C. (*Gives* 5 *krāns more*). By God! I won't give any more.
S. As you please. If you had not been so kind as to give *this*, it would have been no matter.
C. The Lord bless your Honour!
S. Whenever you require anything, send here, that I may render my services.
C. Many thanks! Certainly: should there be any occasion, I will trouble you. (*Wishes good-bye, takes up the 'abā and departs*).

Remarks.

In the above dialogues it will have been noticed, that it is the common rule for the dealer to begin by asking more than he is really willing to take; and for the purchaser in like manner to offer less than he is actually prepared to give; and that a bargain is finally struck somewhere between these extreme limits, after each party has gone through the form of conceding a certain amount to the other. It appears too, that it is a common trick for the seller to state the price which he professes to have himself paid for the article; and after confirming his statement with oaths, he ultimately sells for less than what he declares he gave. We may also observe the unreality of the *ta'āruf* or complimentary speeches (see particularly the last piece); the grossness and vileness of Oriental abuse, although in the third dialogue the most objectionable terms are not actually uttered, only plainly hinted at, in the original; the frequent breaking of the Third Commandment through the light and irreverent use of the divine Name; the levity of swearing by sacred objects (St. Matt. v. 36, 'Neither shalt thou swear by thy head'); and lastly, we recall what the highest authority has told us about the sinister origin of all asseveration that goes beyond the simple assertions of sincerity and truth (ver. 37, R.V., 'Yea, yea; nay, nay: . . whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one').

APPENDIX II.

The Science and Amenities of Controversy.*

A.—Definition of terms.

'It is to be understood, that if two persons hold a discussion in a friendly spirit merely for the sake of arriving at truth and ascertaining the fact of the matter, that is called controversy; but if the aim and design be not to arrive at truth, but to confute an opponent, that is called altercation, wrangling, and contention.

'Conjecture, reasoning, cause, necessary connexion, conditional connexion, counter-argument, authority, and the initial and intermediate stages and conclusions, are among the technical terms of the science of controversy.

'*Conjecture* (*imārah*) is a statement conveying an opinion, whether by way of assertion or of denial; and is, moreover, called an argument (*dalīl*).

'*Reasoning* is an act of the intelligence, which infers the cause from the sight of the effect, as *e.g.* the presence of fire is known by beholding smoke. But the smoke is the effect, and the fire is the cause, and this effect is called an equivalent effect. And if by the sight of the cause the effect becomes known, that is to say, by beholding the cause, fire, the intelligence arrives at the effect, viz. the presence of smoke, that is called an inverse inference.

'*Cause* is of two kinds, sufficient and insufficient. A sufficient cause is something, the existence of which is adequate to produce the thing caused. Insufficient causes are of four kinds: (i.) the *material* cause, as *e.g.* the existence of wood for a couch; (ii.) the *formal* cause, as the square shape of a couch; (iii.) the *efficient* cause, as the existence of the carpenter, the worker's tools being subservient to the efficient cause; and (iv.) the *final* cause, viz. sitting, which is the object for which the couch is made.

'*Necessary connexion* is when one statement implies another; as *e.g.* "man" involves the idea of "animal," because the idea of "animal" is implied in that of "man," that is to say, "man is an animal." The first term is called the implication, the second the implied.

'*Conditional connexion* is the capacity of a thing to cause something else. The first is called the antecedent, and the second the consequent. The cause is either positive or negative; positive, as *e.g.* the existence of day depends on the sunrise, or negative, as the non-existence of day depends on the absence of sunrise.

'*Counter-argument* is when the first party (interrogator) sets up arguments diametrically opposed to the arguments and proofs of his adversary.

* The extract, of which the following is a translation, is taken from the *Maṭla'u'l-'Ulūm wa Majma'u'l-Funūn*, compiled by Wājid 'Alī Munshī, native of Hugli, of the House of Timur, 1261 A.H.

'*Authority* means adducing the sayings of trustworthy persons by way of argument, in order to rebut the arguments of the opponent.

'The *initial stages* denote the theses.

'The *intermediate stages* are the arguments and proofs, which the controversialist brings forward in support of his contentions.

'The *conclusions* are the obvious inferences finally established by the course of the argument. The observance of these initial and intermediate stages and conclusions is incumbent on the disputant. In case of neglect to observe and guard these three salutary things, the controversy will be marred, and by degenerating into contention and wrangling will fail to confute the adversary.

B.—Rules to be followed.

'The observation of the amenities of controversy embraces the following particulars:—

'(1) The principles, rules, and technical terms of every science, which is brought into the arena of controversy, are to be carefully safeguarded, because every science has its separate principles and technical terms.

'(2) Such brevity in speaking is not to be employed, as would leave the meaning obscure and vague; nor yet a wearisome prolixity.

'(3) Obsolete and unusual expressions should not be introduced into writing or speech.

'(4) Controversy should not be held in assemblies with an unworthy antagonist because victory would be easy, while defeat would be most humiliating.

'(5) Avoid joining issue with an awe-inspiring and imposing person, because his presence would overawe you, and his dignity would weaken your capacity for controversy.

'(6) The opponent should not be lightly esteemed and despised, lest, through careless over-confidence and negligence, some action should be committed, or some word pass the lips, or some expression escape the pen, which will strengthen the opponent's cause and give him the victory.

'(7) Be mild in controversy; and eschew rage, anger, and laughter, because these practices characterize those who perceive themselves to be overmatched, and try to conceal their feebleness and ignorance beneath such ill-judged behaviour.

'(8) Do not hastily begin to reply, till you fully understand your opponent's meaning; and if interrogation be necessary, do not avoid it, as the advantage thereof outweighs the evil of plunging into a discussion, the bearings of which you have not mastered.

'(9) Whenever you criticize your adversary's argument, first of all clear the point in question from everything redundant and superfluous, and then bring your objection, that it may go right home to your adversary's contention.

'(10) Irrelevant and impertinent remarks should never be introduced, because the question at issue will be thereby obscured.

'(11) When conclusive arguments are produced, they ought to be accepted unchallenged and undisputed, and without any shirking of their due acknowledgment; because disputatious obstinacy (*lit.* strengthening the neck of argument) after decisive proofs and clear conclusive arguments is an indication of ignorance and folly.

'(12) Whenever you are aware that your opponent is in difficulties, do not try to make it too manifest; and carefully avoid scornful and humiliating treatment of your foe.—Such are the amenities of controversy. "*And God is the Lord of Grace.*" '

APPENDIX III.

Instruction of Muslims in the Scriptures.

The following paragraphs make no claim to a complete treatment of the subject. Every missionary who has been engaged in the work for any length of time will have thought out for himself the best lines on which to proceed in the light of experience. There are perhaps four chief classes of recipients of Christian teaching, who may be considered separately.

1.

For *catechumens under instruction for baptism* every missionary doubtless already possesses, or can soon provide himself with a scheme to follow (and what can be better than the Prayer-book Catechism?) in imparting what is necessary to teach as to Christian faith and duty.

2.

In *schools and classes of all kinds* the reading of the Scriptures according to a well-chosen plan will probably be the rule, embracing the historical portions of the Old Testament, as well as parts of the New. The obvious course to adopt with reference to the latter is to begin with a course of lessons on the Life of our Lord, or to read one or two of the Gospels, say one of the Synoptic Gospels and St. John, after that the Acts, and then go on to the Epistles, beginning with some of the easier and shorter ones. As to the choice of which Gospel to read, opinions may vary. Perhaps St. Mark is least commonly chosen, and with adequate reasons, because of the mention of the divinity of Jesus in the opening verse of chap. i., and of His Temptation a little later (ver. 12). Both are stumbling blocks to Muḥammadans, but need not be regarded as insuperable ones.—The difficulty arising from the first may be avoided by simply deferring the consideration of the question; or the sublime signification of the words may be briefly touched upon; or the expression may be compared with the exalted descriptions of Jesus in the Qur'ān—'the Word *which cometh* from God' (Sūr. 3 *Āl 'Imran*, 39, cp. ver. 45), and 'a spirit *proceeding* from Him' (4 *Nisā'*, 169).—With regard to the second, Muḥammadans sometimes find it difficult to accept the statement that One so high and holy was tempted by Satan. Each of the other Gospels has special features to recommend its use in Muḥammadan work. St. Matthew gives a brief history of the birth of Jesus, which always seems to interest Muslims; and his account of the Sermon on the Mount invariably wins their attention and admiration, and is one of the best passages of Scripture to read in the early stages of instruction. In St. Luke we have a fuller account of the birth and early years of Jesus, a shorter version of the Sermon on the Mount, and some of the most touching of the Lord's Parables. The assigning of the title 'the Word'

to Jesus in St. John i. at once recalls the description in the Qur'ān; the new Birth and salvation through the uplifted Saviour are soon reached in ch. iii., and the subsequent discourses are admirable for thoughtful minds and the leading ideas intelligible to the most simple. Miss A. Montgomery, of the American Presbyterian Mission, Hamadān, writes, 'With the young men who have studied English with me, I have always begun with the first chapter of the Gospel of John, and, without intending it, simply thinking of learning the English words, they have the blessed truths fixed in their minds. The third chapter brings us to the core of all our teaching: the necessity of the new birth, the possibility of obtaining eternal life by all through faith in the crucified Christ *because* of God's love for the world, and the awful alternative of the wrath of God on those who believe not, and love the darkness rather than light. Thus, tho' pupils only remained a short time, they learned of the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sin of the world, that He is Creator and the Son of God.' *

3.

Earnest inquirers. The same plan may be followed with them as in the case of catechumens. If the inquirer is not fairly well acquainted with the Scriptures, the study of a particular book or books, or of a series of selected passages may precede more definite instruction. Much will depend on whether the individual is able to read and think for himself, or is exclusively dependent on the oral teaching given. It will, therefore, be necessary to take account of education, intelligence, knowledge of the truth already acquired, ability to read or not, and whether opportunities for home study are, or are not available.

The Epistle to the Galatians is rich in topics specially suitable for Muslims. The following remarks are condensed from an article by 'S.' entitled 'The Epistle to the Galatians as bearing on Muhammadanism.' † Not only, he says, are the doctrines of the Bible to be taught, but where possible the Bible lines and modes of argument are to be followed. The particular points brought forward are the following:—

(1) The '*other Gospel*' (i. 6)—a return to the Jewish Law, while not entirely setting aside Christ; a change which involved them in the necessity of rejecting St. Paul's apostleship. In like manner Muhammadanism is practically a return to Judaism, while at the same time it acknowledges Christ as a great Prophet, the truth of His revelation and the authority of the Scriptures (as the Qur'ān at all events does).

(2) *Ceremonialism*, as of moral value and necessary to salvation (iv. 10, the observation of times and seasons; v. 2, 3, circumcision). These things are not wrong in themselves, but only if reliance be placed upon them for salvation. The Qur'ān does not, as a matter of fact, lay very great stress on ceremonial, less even than the Mosaic Law. But we have to do with Muhammadanism as it is found to exist to-day, based on tradition and later theological writings, as Pfander points out. And there is no doubt as to the prominence given to the ceremonial element.

(3) *Bondage and freedom* (ch. iv.). The Galatians did not understand the nature of the two systems, typified by the son of the handmaid and the son of the free woman. The first symbolizes the Law which beareth children unto bondage, the second the freedom and the promised blessing bestowed by Christ. The Muhammadans consciously or unconsciously have placed upon their necks the yoke of Ishmael and bondage.

* *Missionary Review of the World*, Oct., 1904, p. 784.

† *The Missionary*, Aug., 1852, vol. ii., No. 10, pp. 218 *sqq.*

(4) *Justification by works* (v. 3, 4). The Qur'ān is full of proofs that Muḥammadans have rejected the doctrine of the atonement. In it the very idea of sacrificial atonement is ignored; *e.g.* 'Their flesh' (*i.e.* of the camels sacrificed) 'is not accepted of God, neither their blood, but your piety is accepted of Him' (Sūr. 22 *Ḥajj*, 39). The judgment of each man at the last day is decided by the preponderance of his good and evil deeds, 'calculated by the merest mechanical or arithmetical standard.' It will not justify the Muḥammadan position to urge in its defence, that the former revelation has been abrogated, because the Qur'ān itself expressly declares that it confirms the former Scriptures.

(5) *Carnalism* (v. 19–21), which is the natural result of a carnal, literal religion. What is more degrading than a literal understanding of the promised delights of a sensual Paradise? In the case of the Galatians what is the result of ceremonialism and the assertion of human merit? Is it increased spirituality of mind and holy obedience to the will of God? No! the reverse.

Two lists of selected subjects and passages of Scripture are here subjoined. In *the first* (*a*) the attempt is made to point out that what was foreshadowed in the Old Testament receives its fulfilment under the New Covenant of the Christian Dispensation, in order to manifest the unity of design and completeness of fulfilment which characterize the revelation contained in the Christian Scriptures, and also to show by implication that no further revelation is needed or was contemplated. *The second* list (*b*) consists of subjects which have suggested themselves as specially likely to commend the truth to Muslims.

(*a*) (i.) A perfect creation; a disastrous fall; a full restoration (Gen. i. 26–ii. 3, especially i. 31; ch. iii.; Rev. xxi. 1–8; xxii. 1–5).

(ii.) The Flood; saved to serve. A great deliverance (Gen. vii. 18–20; viii. 18, 19) and a still greater one (1 Pet. iii. 21, 22). A material sacrifice (Gen. viii. 20) and a spiritual one (Rom. xii. 1; cp. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20).

(iii.) Faithful Abraham: a covenant of universal blessing (Gal. iii.; cp. Gen. xxii. 18).

(iv.) The Passover and the true Paschal Lamb (Ex. xii. 21–32; 1 Cor. v. 7, 8).

(v.) A chosen people (Ex. xix. 5, 6; Deut. vii. 6; xiv. 2) and a holy nation (1 Pet. ii. 9, 10; Tit. ii. 14).

(vi.) Access to God. The Law, the 'shadow of the good things to come' (Heb. x. 1). The 'new and living way' through Christ (ver. 20).

(vii.) The earthly Tabernacle and the heavenly Temple.

(*a*) The legal sacrifices and the perfect sacrifice of Christ (Heb. ix. 11–x. 25).

(*b*) A perfect High-Priest (Heb. vii. 11–*fin.*).

(viii.) The Prophets and the Master's Son (St. Matt. xxi. 33–44; Heb. i.).

(ix.) The word of God which came to the Prophets, and the Incarnate Word (St. John i.).

(x.) The penalty of sin (Is. liii. and the narrative of the Crucifixion).

(xi.) Life for a look (Num. xxi. 4–9; St. John iii. 14, 15).

(xii.) Justification by works (Lev. xviii. 5) and by faith (Rom. iii. 19–*fin.*; Gal. iii. 10–12).

(xiii.) The outpouring of the Holy Spirit foretold (Joel ii. 28–*fin.*; cp. Matt. iii. 11) and fulfilled (Acts ii. and the subsequent history of the Church).

(xiv.) The Prince of Peace (Is. ix. 6; St. John xiv. 27; Acts x. 36;

Rom. v. 1; cp. 'the peace of God,' Phil. iv. 7, and 'the God of peace,' Rom. xv. 33, etc.).

(*b*) (i.) The one true God, as revealed in the Scriptures (cp. The Thirty-nine Articles, Art. I.), and the right attitude towards Him.

(ii.) The Lord Jesus Christ, His name and titles, and His Person, office and work.

(iii.) The keynote of the preaching of John the Baptist and of Jesus —Repent (St. Matt. iii. 1, 2; iv. 17).

(iv.) Roads to heaven: superiority of the scriptural one.

(v.) The New Birth (St. John iii. 1–12; cp. Ezek. xi. 19; xviii. 31; xxxvi. 26).

(vi.) Formal and true righteousness (Isa. i. 10–17; lviii. 3; and the Sermon on the Mount).

(vii.) Carnal and spiritual (Rom. viii. 5–11; Gal. v. 16–24).

(viii.) The Father and the children (with Jer. xxxi. 1, 9, contrast 2 Cor. vi. 18; Gal. iv. 4–7; Rev. xxi. 7).

(ix.) A present Helper and Guide (St. Matt. xxviii. 20; St. John xiv. 16, 17).

(x.) Fatherland and Home (St. John xiv. 1–3; Heb. xi. 13–16; xiii. 14; iv. 8, 9).

4.

There remain those cases which do not come under any of the previous heads, where the opportunities of speaking the word and giving a message are but casual, perhaps solitary. Such chances chiefly occur during itinerating tours, and also, to mention only a few of the varied openings, in intercourse with occasional visitors, among out-patients in hospitals, and when paying calls upon native gentry. How shall the best use be made of the precious opportunities which *may* seldom or *never* recur? What message shall be given? What need is here of tact and sympathy and loving earnestness to create something more than a passing interest, to foster a sense of need, and to rouse the hearer to a sense of the importance of the issues involved! This is a field calling for the highest and most devoted energies of heart and soul; in which, to sum up all in a single word, success depends on personal consecration and closeness of intimacy with the Master Himself.

There are two aids of firstrate importance to be mentioned in this connexion.

(*a*) Nothing in its way is comparable to the insight into the wants and yearnings of Muhammadan hearts that may be gained from a study of the various aspects of the truth which have been found by others to be specially attractive to Muslims, and the reasons why converts from Islām have been led to embrace the Christian faith. And as the missionary of to-day seeks to minister to those who have been trained up in similar surroundings, he may reasonably expect to find the same needs and unsatisfied longings; and, if he follows the lines that experience seems to indicate, he may set forward with more than usual confidence that the good news of God and the message of salvation, divinely framed to meet the cravings of the human heart, will again prove their fitness and their power. (Cp. the instances collected in Pt. I., Chap. III., 3, 4, pp. 54–77.)

(*b*) The records of the work of others should prove invaluable as a confirmation, corrective, or supplement of our own methods. Every later worker among Muhammadans ought to make himself familiar with the chronicles of the labours of such as are entitled to honour as wise master-builders (1 Cor. iii. 10) and experienced physicians of the soul;

whether the immediate end in view be to conciliate and attract, or to unfold and declare the whole counsel of God.

As an appropriate conclusion to this chapter, we may pass under review French's procedure in two widely different sets of circumstances, (i.) first of all as an itinerating missionary in India, and (ii.), secondly, after the resignation of his bishopric, as a missionary pioneer during the last months of his life at Muscat in Arabia.

(i.) After one of his tours in the Punjāb he wrote as follows in May, 1855: 'I am trying to embody all the notes I used in preaching during my tour in a tract, which may be entitled, perhaps, "The Mirror of the Character of Jesus Christ." It will be an attempt to illustrate the character, offices, and disposition of our Lord, from the *prophecies* of Him, the *titles* ascribed to Him, the nature of His *teaching* and of His *works*; from the main *types* of Jewish history, the *character* of converts to His faith, and generally the *effect of His Divine truth in the world.*'*

(ii.) The following list of the chief subjects chosen for instruction and discourse by the veteran Bishop while at Muscat, has been gathered from his letters and diary, as given in his *Life* by Birks; and cannot fail to be of the deepest interest.

In a company of educated and thoughtful Arabs with their sheikh at their head French took as his subject the coming kingdom of God and Christ (2 Sam. xxiii. 3-5); some characteristic features of it from Is. xxxv. and Ps. lxxii., 'the kings of Sheba and Seba' (quoted also on another occasion); and Christ's kingdom set up in the heart. With ten or twelve adults and a few intelligent boys, he went carefully through St. John iii., and most of Rom. vi. St. Luke xxiii., xxiv. was read through with a Muḥammadan schoolmaster on Palm Sunday. The same subject was taken on another occasion in the chief mosque of a suburb of Muttra before the most learned and aristocratic audience the Bishop had hitherto addressed. During two hours with 'my aged sheikh,' as the Bishop calls him, he tries to bring home to him Daniel's witness to our Lord—the 'stone cut out without hands,' 'the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.' To five or six men whom he brought home from the streets one morning, he explained the imagery of baptism, 'A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness.' To a rather violent and abusive company of women he read various passages of Scripture to secure their attention, as Ezek. xxxvi., 'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit . . .,' 'I will take away the stony heart.' He also explained to them how 'Abdu'l-Qādir's two prayers for (1) the death in which there is no life, and (2) the life in which there is no death, can only be fulfilled through union with Christ; and, as it was Easter Eve, told them of the Marys coming and finding the grave empty on Easter morning. On Easter Day he gave an address suitable to the festival 'to several men evidently of learning and distinction.' He visits the lepers' village, and dwells especially on the incident of the ten lepers in St. Luke. To a small audience of 'several well-educated and thoughtful gentlemen' he expounds Rom. iii., iv., 'God's righteousness and man's unrighteousness, and God's plan, the only perfect and effectual one for passing over from one to the other.' He presses a learned hearer 'on the weakness of the Cross as God's power,' and on the foolish attempt of the Muslims by one word of their Qur'ān to think to root out the whole foundation of Gospel truth (cp. Sūr. 112 *Ikhlās*, 3, 'he begetteth not, neither is he begotten'). With 'a sheikh of very wild description'

* *Life*, vol. i. p. 85. French's project was carried out and the tract was published in 1856 under the title *Sri Yesu Christ Charite Darpan.*

he read passages about our Lord's Second Coming. And with two educated gentlemen, he tells us, he had a pretty long setting forth of the main truths of the Gospel. The Bishop also notes, that the Parable of the Ten Virgins appeared especially attractive to the wild-looking sheikh just mentioned; Rev. xxi. and xxii. to an audience of educated and thoughtful Arabs; and portions of the Psalms, and especially Ephesians v. and part of vi. to two men in the company he addressed on another occasion.

APPENDIX IV.

A New Weapon for the Muḥammadan Controversy.*

'We are sure that the day will come, however little we may as yet discern its signs, when the fiery sword of Muḥammad will grow pale before the ever-brightening lustre of the Cross of the Son of Man, when the Scriptures will show themselves, over all the dark places of the earth, mightier than the Qur'ān. We are sure of this because those Scriptures maintain all which is there of truth—are as jealous and more jealous of the incommunicable name of God—say, and say far more clearly, "Our God is one God"; and, in addition to this, affirm that which is there denied, but which the spirit of man will never rest till it has found and known, a Son of God, and Him also the Son of Man.'—Trench's *Hulsean Lectures for* 1845 (quoted in *The Missionary* for August, 1853).

I.

The late Rev. 'Imādu'd-Dīn, D.D., in a memorable article in the *C.M.S. Intelligencer* for September, 1875, sums up 'The Results of the Controversy in North India with Muḥammadans' carried on during the previous quarter of a century, describes the condition of the controversy at the close of that period, and explains the duty of Christians in view of the facts stated. Among other things he tells us that 'during this period of twenty-five years many books have been written by both parties,' and mentions the chief of them, including three works written by himself. He further gives it as his opinion 'the controversy has virtually been completed, and that, too, successfully,' and 'through God's grace the Christians have obtained a complete victory, while our opponents have been signally defeated, and the vanity and emptiness of their arguments have been clearly demonstrated.' Towards the close of his article he uses these suggestive words:—

'There is little use now in spending our time in preparing other books for the controversy with Islām. Why tread on the body of a fallen enemy? Let us now go on and work with all our heart and mind. Yet, if any of our brethren would still turn back to controversy, let him make a digest of all the books that have been already written, and put objections and their answers side by side in a short and concise volume, which would prove a handbook to the Muḥammadan controversy, and be of use to all who have to do with Muḥammadans. In this way the Christian arsenal may yet be furnished with a weapon which would be more accurate in its aim than any we have at present. If such a book were compiled wisely it might be translated into Pushtu, Persian, Arabic, and Turkish, and used in the conflict with Kabul, Persia, Arabia, and Turkey. Let us not in India sit idle whilst the battle is raging in other Muḥammadan countries, but let us try in this way to help others.'

* Reprinted, with corrections, from the *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, Nov., 1903.

The present writer believes that no such digest of the literature of the Muhammadan controversy as is described above has ever been made or translated into other languages. It is his earnest conviction (which had been gradually growing upon him for a good while before he read the article here alluded to) that some such work should be undertaken, only with a larger scope; that the whole literature of the subject on both sides, as far as possible, should be examined, and the results made available, once for all, for future missionaries entering upon their high and holy and difficult calling in Muslim lands. When this has been done, it would then be time enough to consider whether the whole or portions of the work embodying the results of the investigation were suitable for translation into other languages, in accordance with the suggestion in the article above quoted. This, then, is the subject of the following pages—the duty of the Church and the obligation of the missionary body to prepare such an up-to-date handbook of the Muḥammadan controversy; which, if accomplished with the help, and put forth with the blessing of God, might be a powerful aid to some who will hereafter go forth to Muḥammadan lands as soldiers of the Cross, and, if God will (should the further suggestion of translation into other languages also be carried out), be a means of comprehensively presenting the truths of the Christian religion to Muḥammadan minds and hearts in a way calculated to disarm prejudice.

If at first sight it appears surprising that the work has not been done already, it must be remembered that an adequate knowledge of two, if not three, languages (Urdu, Arabic and Persian) is indispensable, and the honourable task would be both long and laborious, so large has the literature of the subject now become. If the work would be a long one, comfort may be drawn from the reflection that Dr. Pfander was forty years perfecting his controversial works.* When, on the other hand, we remember that events move quickly nowadays, we feel that there should be no unnecessary delay in taking up and accomplishing the work, if it is to be done at all.

II.

There are certain reasons why this work should be undertaken now.

1. We stand in *a very different position to-day* towards the followers of Muḥammad from what was the case fifty years ago.

(*a*) *Christian and Muḥammadan are in closer contact with one another now than then*, and better acquainted with one another. The political status of many millions of Muḥammadans has changed. A large portion of the Muḥammadan world has passed under Christian rule or protection, so that in the countries in which this is the case religious bigotry and fanaticism can no longer excitedly appeal for prejudiced support and intolerant vengeance to the fleshly arm of the secular power. In 1898 it was calculated that of the 200 millions of Muḥammadans more than half are under the rule or protection of Christian powers.†

(*b*) This closer contact of Christian and Muḥammadan is not merely one of political relationship and subordination. After so many centuries

* Dr. Pfander's missionary career lasted from 1825 to 1865 A.D. (*C.M.S. History*, ii. 151, 155). 'He devoted forty years to the study of the Muḥammadan controversy, and took infinite pains in the production and perfecting of a few great controversial works' (Birks, in his *Life of Bishop French*, I. 70).

† *The Student Missionary Appeal* (Report of 3rd Convention S.V.M.U., 1898), p. 89, 'The Problem of Muḥammadanism,' with a Chart, by the Rev. S. M. Zwemer, D.D., F.R.G.S.

of neglect to evangelize the Muslims, signalized here and there by the splendid efforts of noble pioneers and skirmishers, *the attempt is at last being made*—however unworthy of the vast resources of Christendom—*to set the battle in array against Muhammadanism in the loving spirit of the Master*. A large band of missionaries are at work in nearly all Muslim lands, in daily personal touch with Muhammadans of all classes, teaching in schools, paying and receiving friendly visits, instructing inquirers, preaching, itinerating in country districts, and last, but by no means least, healing the sick in hospitals and dispensaries, and proclaiming the good news of the Physician and Healer of the soul. In these and other ways a great deal of experience has been gained, prejudices removed, closed doors opened, and friendly relations established.

(*c*) *The literature dealing with Islām has largely increased during the last fifty years*; so much so, that any fresh work on the subject seems to require some justification for its appearance (cp. Koelle, Preface to *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, 1889). The life of the founder, the sources and composition of the Qur'ān, the history of Islām in different countries and at different epochs, as well as the nature of the system itself, have all been the subject of accurate research; and the mutual relations of Islām and Christianity are now well known and understood.* Islām and Christianity have more than once or twice joined issue in the arena of public controversy.

(*d*) During the same period *the literature of the Muhammadan controversy on both sides has increased* to a large extent. Not to mention in detail Dr. Pfander's works and the replies they called forth, the latest catalogue of the Punjāb Religious Book Society contains among its 'publications for non-Christians,' nine pages of books and tracts especially for Muhammadans. One of the missionaries of 'The American Mission in Egypt,' writing from Cairo on January 20, gives a list of Arabic works on the controversy, which does not pretend to be complete, but which contains no less than eleven publications on the Muhammadan side, and sixteen on the Christian. In addition to these should be mentioned the large crop of Indian vernacular literature on the Muhammadan side, and a much smaller number in Persian. From this brief and imperfect survey it will be seen that not only are the means available for the thorough study of the Muhammadan religion in general, but also, that abundant material is ready for the study of the controversy between it and Christianity, *prepared and set forth by native minds*, from which it would be possible to compile a book thoroughly Oriental in matter and spirit, for the guidance and assistance of future missionaries, and the enlightenment of native inquirers.

This material, though doubtless not all of it in equal degree, deserves careful study. The results of the latest and most fruitful period of the long controversy between the Muhammadan and the Christian are recorded in its pages. As the military officer studies the history of battles, sieges and campaigns, or the naval captain draws lessons for the present from the sea-fights and tactics of the past, in the same way there is no room to doubt that valuable information and instruction may be derived from the attentive perusal of these works, comprising histories of

* We may, for instance, contrast the uncertain tone of the following, written fifty years ago, with the accurate knowledge of the present day. A writer in *The Missionary* for May, 1853, says: 'If the position here assumed be correct [viz. the high testimony of the Qur'ān to the Old and New Testaments, and the absence of all allegation that they are abrogated, or "so much altered as to be devoid of authority"] the whole dispute with the Muhammadans must assume a different aspect from what it has hitherto done.'

controversies, attacks and rejoinders, apologies for, and defences of the Faith.

If the results of such an investigation were embodied in a handy, comprehensive volume, it should make easier for missionaries of the future the duty of so equipping themselves as to be able to make full and effective use of the opportunities afforded by closer contact and freer intercourse, for direct dealing with inquiring spirits among Muslims. For the aim and object of our work is not merely the prosecution of various forms of philanthropic effort; nor can we rest content to let Muhammadans know, as they will often readily admit, that there *is* something to be said on the Christian side, and that our holy faith is *not* a flimsy, blasphemous perversion of revealed truth—but we must also be prepared to give them an appropriate answer to every objection or difficulty that may arise, besides showing them the glorious and unique power of the Gospel to meet the deepest needs of sin-stained hearts.

2. *A new century has dawned.* If the last was one of unparalleled progress and development, *we may not unreasonably expect that this has yet greater things in store*, and that the chariot-wheels of the world's progress will roll on with ever-accelerated speed. Like everything else, the conditions of missionary work will be affected by the changed and changing course of events. The retrospect of the past invites us to look forward to a time when the means of communication and intercommunication throughout the world will be greatly multiplied, resulting in freer and wider intercourse between different nations and peoples; when the power and influence of the leading Christian nations will be continually increasing, and that of the majority of the remaining Muhammadan kingdoms as steadily and surely declining; when widespread education and freedom of thought will give wider scope to the growing spirit of inquiry; when traditionary beliefs will no longer be accepted simply because they are old and hoary; when dissatisfaction with that which fails to satisfy and bears on its face the stamp of inferiority or falsehood will no longer fear to express its doubts and yearnings; and when the inalienable right of every man to liberty of conscience will be recognized, and religious freedom gradually secured and extended to all. And may we not also hope to see an ever-increasing number of Christ's faithful soldiers and servants buckling on their armour and preparing to go forth to fight the Lord's battle in distant parts of the earth?

Such considerations may well stir the heart and rouse the spirit to a greater enthusiasm in the holy cause of Missions to Muhammadans, and stimulate an earnest longing and purpose to make suitable preparation beforehand for the coming conflict. If the above remarks have any truth and force, the present would seem to be the right time to attempt to review the past course and history of the controversy, and to glean wisdom from the experience and records of the past, to gather together, especially from native sources, every well-tried and approved argument and convincing evidence which has been found acceptable and forcible by Oriental minds and instincts, and thus render the fullest assistance both to the demands and cravings of awakened intellect and free inquiry, and also to those to whom will belong the privilege and duty of guiding these aspirations to find their only adequate satisfaction in the knowledge of the 'truth . . . in Jesus' (Eph. iv. 21).

III.

Apart from these general considerations, there are *other particular reasons* for the attempt to forge a new weapon for the Muhammadan controversy.

1. It may be taken for granted that *argument and discussion with Muḥammadans cannot be wholly avoided by the missionary.* He will often have occasion to explain the truth he holds, and maintain it against Muḥammadan error. This holds true, although the Bible itself is the 'Great Missionary,' the great silent witness to truth and antidote for error; although public controversies may in future, perhaps, better be left to native Christian champions;* and although mere argument will never effect a soul's conversion.† But until there are strong and vigorous native Christian Churches, that is to say, until the presence of the European missionary is no longer needed, so long will it be his bounden duty to master the great controversy between the followers of Christ and Muḥammad.

2. To attain this end, an unsystematic *reading of anything that taste and inclination may suggest, or that comes in the way, about Islām, is not enough.* We do not entrust our own lives, nor the health and lives of those we love, to unqualified practitioners, in their hour of weakness and need. Nor should we think of employing an untrained hand to unravel for us the intricacies of the law. No matter what the natural ability and intellectual powers of the individual may be, he is not, therefore, excused from the obligation of special training and study. If such mental and practical endowment is required in the case of the learned professions, it is at least equally important for the missionary to Muḥammadans. He is brought face to face with a gigantic, carefully elaborated system of error; he has to contend against deep-rooted prejudices, instilled and imbibed from childhood, not to mention the natural depravity and enmity to God of the unregenerate soul. His work has to be mainly carried on in a foreign language. The methods of thought and argument are different from what he has been used to.‡ His opponents are often deeply read in their own religious books,—an advantage which the European worker cannot hope to possess, at least for years; having usually, perhaps, to content himself with a general view of the whole subject. He will often be surprised at the shrewdness and subtlety of his opponents, not to say their unscrupulousness, in argument; for, what is to him a serious combat for the Truth he loves is frequently to them only a wordy contest for an argumentative victory, which they will certainly not be slow either to claim or to boast of. The best and most talented advocate of the Truth will be all the more effective for careful previous preparation, and, in the case of all, it is a necessary and indeed a sacred duty. A holy cause is committed to us. We may well be zealous for our Master's honour, and righteously indignant against every false and erroneous system which robs Him of the loyal devotion of human hearts, which is His right, and His alone.

* 'For the future, French thought, the English missionaries would, as a rule, leave such battlings [as those of "the Agra days"] to native Christian mullās, who, when supplied with the materials, would be more qualified to meet the marked peculiarities of Oriental minds' (Birks' *Life of Bishop French*, I. 204).

† 'I lay not much stress upon *clear arguments;* the work of God is seldom wrought in this way.' 'Frigid reasoning with men of perverse minds seldom brings men to Christ' (Geo. Smith's *Henry Martyn*, pp. 233, 364).

‡ Henry Martyn, writing to the Rev. C. Simeon from Tabrīz on July 12, 1812, says: 'Let not the book written against Muhammadanism be published till approved in India. A European who has not lived amongst them cannot imagine how differently they see, imagine, reason, object, from what we do. This I had full opportunity of observing during my eleven months' residence at Shīrāz' (Geo. Smith's *Henry Martyn*, pp. 474, 475).

Nor, again, can zeal and enthusiasm, however earnest and elevated, or personal piety and holiness, in any way justify the absence of thorough preparedness and the best equipment. What reason have we to suppose that the best and most convincing lines of argument will suggest themseves on the spur of the moment, in the midst of discussion in which there may be many elements present to distract and disturb mind and heart? We do truly rely on the Holy Spirit, and on His grace alone, to guide us, and soften and enlighten the hearts of those we meet. His sanctifying influence will be sought at all times, both in the stress of conflict, and beforehand with earnest supplication in quiet retirement. The Master will clothe His unworthy servant with a portion of His own Spirit. He will make him wise to speak 'a good word' for Him. He will make him more patient, more sympathetic, more loving, and give him a stronger but not overwhelming sense of the responsibility of the humblest ambassador for Christ, and renewed confidence in the Truth which must prevail. But how brave soever, and cheerful and obedient the soldiers of an earthly army may be, they stand no chance of winning the victory against their foes, unless they are provided with the latest and best weapons of their warfare. And similarly, whatever the devotion and enthusiasm of the Christian warrior may be, it is quite certain that he will wield the weapons of argument and controversy with untold greater effect if they have been carefully tested and selected beforehand.

Once more, the missionary must not only be fully persuaded in his own mind of the well-founded stability of the truths he holds, but also *fully informed of the positions already won, and well acquainted with the peculiar difficulties likely to perplex the Muhammadan when Christian truth is first presented to him, and the arguments and objections he will probably bring forward, with the most suitable replies.* For as every missionary to Muhammadans well knows, the same points are brought forward over and over again. If, when war was declared, the arsenal was found empty, or filled only with useless weapons, we should feel that somebody was guilty of treason or unpardonable negligence. Let our Christian armoury be well filled and stored with the latest and most approved weapons—ready for immediate adoption and use by the latest recruits.

3. If we would secure this end, *the attempt should be made to gather together and systematize the records of experience* which have for many years been accumulating, but which are not generally available in a compact form. It is scarcely necessary to remark that the preparation of such an aid to immediate effectiveness would not be intended to supersede on the missionary's part the necessity for independent thought and application, which would always be necessary for the development of individual power and for a thorough grasp and mastery of the subject. But it would assuredly save an immense amount of labour to new missionaries who went forth with the high and proper ideal of mastering the controversy. It would save each one the necessity of having to traverse again for himself all the ground already gone over. It would also save many painful lessons, and dearly, sadly bought experiences, and prevent much loss and damage to the Cause of our Blessed Master through feeble advocacy and ignorance of the best methods.* What culpable waste of

* Bishop Kidder's third rule for the conversion of Jews, applicable *mutatis mutandis* to the conversion of Muhammadans, is, '*To avoid weak arguments*,' which only harden opponents and cause loss of ground (Sale's Preface to his translation of the Qur'ān, Wherry's Edn., pp. 4, 5). Cp. too, French's advocating the employment of small bands of specially trained evangelists for

time and force, what reckless disregard of advantages already gained, would be implied if every fresh corps that marched to the front had to recapture the positions already taken! The arguments that have proved persuasive and unanswerable in former encounters should be available for appropriation by the new missionary. He should be able to begin where others have left off, to occupy from the first the most advanced positions, and adopt from the outset of his career the best and most successful tactics.

IV.

1. Some of the *material available* has already been indicated. The indigenous literature of the controversy in Urdu, Arabic and Persian, together with the history of particular controversies, and the books which have been the outcome of them, appear to be the most important.* The Qur'ān is, of course, of first importance, and hardly less so the Traditions. Valuable assistance might be derived from native Christians, or friendly non-Christian natives, either by discussing various points with them, or submitting questions to them for written answers. In intercourse with non-Christian natives their objections and criticisms and acceptable answers to them will be carefully noted, and every fresh opportunity taken to test again the conclusions arrived at. It is hardly necessary to speak of the value of the experience and published works of veteran missionaries. Biographies, missionary reports, reports of conferences, magazines, and annual letters, etc., will repay perusal. Quotations from native poetry are also useful and sometimes better than any other argument.

2. As these different sources of information are explored, it would become necessary to formulate *a scheme for the tabulation of results.* (In the Summary of Contents, at the beginning of this book, Pt. III., such an outline will be found.) *The object to be borne in mind* may thus be described:—From an Oriental point of view to (i.) answer Muḥammadan objections to, and errors and misconceptions concerning the Christian religion; (ii.) to refute the false claims of Muḥammad and Muḥammadanism; and (iii.) to set forth Christian truth. *The treatment of each particular topic*, where it admited of it, would include:—

(i.) A concise statement of Muḥammadan belief;
(ii.) Christian truth proved from the Scriptures;
(iii.) The evidence of the Qur'ān and the Traditions;
(iv.) Other arguments and considerations specially adapted to Muḥammadans.

It only remains to add that the writer earnestly asks for, and will most gratefully welcome, any suggestions or criticisms of the views expressed above and the scheme just alluded to, from those interested in the subject.

the large towns of Northern India—'not having all to begin afresh and make many blunders from inexperience and ignorance, but able to maintain the antagonistic position from the very commencement' (*Life*, by Birks, I.

* For the history of the controversy previous to Henry Martyn's time, see the Preface to 'Controversial Tracts on Christianity and Mohammedanism,' by the Rev. Henry Martyn and eminent Persian writers, translated by Professor Lee; and George Smith's *Henry Martyn*, pp. 399, 400.

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