

Mohammed, The Prophet of Islam

**A Popular Essay on the Life
of the Prophet of Islam**

by Herbert Edward Elton Hayes, 1882-1960

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Table of Contents

Preface
Introduction
Tradition
Mohammed's Conception of God



Chapter I ...	Early Life
Chapter II ...	The „Call“ to the Prophetic Office.
Chapter III ...	Birth of the Islamic Society.
Chapter IV ...	Growth and Progress.
Chapter V ...	World Conquest.
Chapter VI ...	Mohammed and Women.



*There is no God but Allah,
and Mohammed is the Apostle of Allah.*
[Moslem Creed.]

Preface

So-called Moslem missionaries are spreading through the Press such idealistic and false views of the religion and character of Mohammed, that we need to be on our guard against them.

Unbiased historians have stated that there is much that is deplorable in the life of the prophet of Islam. And it is certain that his teaching has increased the degradation of the nations that have come under its influence.

Much of the literature that is being circulated in England by the »Moslem missionaries«, claims that Moslem women are better off, so far as property rights go, than their Christian sisters. However true this may be, it does not lift them out of the degradation of polygamy and concubinage, with a capricious system of divorce, which makes them the victims of the selfish baseness of their husbands and masters, which Mohammed himself sanctioned.

The following essay, it is hoped, will help to counteract the false ideas that are being scattered abroad, and lead those who read to study more deeply the problems and sorrows of millions of the Moslem subjects of our Gracious King.

The prayers of all Christians are asked on behalf of these millions, and for those who labour to preach the „unsearchable riches of Christ“ amongst them.

H.E.E. HAYES.

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Introduction

Just as the character of Jesus is stamped upon the religion which originated in His Person, so is the character of Mohammed impressed upon the system which he, with marvellous ingenuity, founded. The practical influence of Islam upon individual lives produces results that reflect unmistakably the character of its founder, and a careful study of the tenets of the system in relation to its history enable the student to estimate the real worth of the man.

As the Apostle of God, Mohammed is the ideal of every true Moslem. His life is the standard by which the lives of his followers are tested, although he himself confesses that his life was not holy. In the Koran, and the earlier traditions, he is pictured as being in no way better than his fellows, and as weak and liable to error as the poorest of his contemporaries. Yet later tradition minimises his faults and weakness, and surrounds his person with a halo of glory that makes him appear sinless and almost divine. All the doubtful incidents of his life are either eliminated and ignored, or assiduously supported and defended by his pious, misguided followers.

It is a point in his favour that he never claimed infallibility for his actions or opinions; and his habit of attempting to cover or justify his glaring faults by suitable revelations, although indefensibly immoral, reveals the fact that he was conscious of his own shortcomings. When he was at the zenith of his power, „revelation“ became merely an instrument of self glorification, licensing him in every whim and fancy, because it gave him, as the prophet of God, exemption from all law and order. His scheme was characteristically ingenious and immoral. Had he known of the divine effulgence with which he was afterwards encircled by his fanatical followers, he would, in all probability, have strongly discountenanced it. The incongruous sanctity with which his commonplace utterances and petty actions were invested would have caused fear lest it became derogatory to his creed of divine unity.

Tradition

As a source of information, the traditions are obviously unreliable, for they are coloured by the excessive zeal and irrational bias of men whose judgment was warped by irrepressible fanaticism. They attributed to their hero elements that are grotesquely impossible. His advent was in their estimation, so portentous that it was celebrated by events which, for the time, upset all natural law. And his whole life has been linked with miraculous happenings of a most ludicrous type. More reasonable men have exalted the prophet because they have convinced themselves that he was what he ought to have been. This may account for the pious confidence of some of the more intelligent, who, accepting tradition as historical, have exalted their hero to the ideal, and have received the imagined glory as real. This tendency to exalt their master is well illustrated by the maxim of Shafy—„In the exaltation of Mohammed it is lawful to exaggerate“—a maxim invaluable to men who were seeking to glorify the prophet, and the usefulness of which was fully appreciated by the legislators and doctors when they were called upon to cope with the new relations and exigencies that came into being after his death. The conquests and progress of Islam necessitated almost daily the framing of new rules, while in the

application of the old, constant modification and adaptation were required. To meet these needs, actual or supposed sayings and actions of the prophet were eagerly sought after, and, in time, with the growth of a professional body of traditionalists, all legitimate sources being exhausted, that which was doubtful, and even disputed, was accepted as authentic and reliable. Imagination augmented the legitimate springs of information, and the result was an exhaustive accumulation of precedents for every possible circumstance.

Sprenger, in his essay on »Tradition«, regarding the value and nature of the material needed for compiling a life of Mohammed, says:

„During the stir and activity of the first sixty years, thousands and thousands occupied themselves with handing down traditions. In every mosque they committed them to memory, and rehearsed them in every social gathering. All such knowledge was the common property of the nation; it was learned by heart and transmitted orally. It possessed, therefore, in the highest possible degree, the elements of life and plasticity. Bunson has discovered the divinity of the Bible in its always having been the people's book. If this criterion be decisive, then no religion has better claim to be called the »vox Dei«, because none is in so full a sense the »vox populi«. The creations of the period we have been considering possess this character for hundreds of millions of our fellow men; for modern Islamism is as far removed from the spirit in which the Coran was composed, as Catholicism is from the spirit of the Gospel; and modern Islamism is grounded upon tradition. But in tradition we find nothing but the Ideal, Invention, Fancy, Historical facts, however they may have been floating among the people in the days of Ibn 'Abbas, and the other founders of genealogy, were trodden under feet, because men wished to remove every barrier which stood in the way of self-glorification. And of the thousand inventions which every day gave birth to, only those were recognised as true which most flattered the religious and national pride ...“

He also goes on to say:

„The time of creative activity, the gestation era of Moslem knowledge, passed away. Hajjaj choked the young life in its own blood, and the Abbaside dynasty, with kingly patriotism, sold the dearly-bought conquests of the nation, first to the Persians, and then to Turkish slaves, with the view of procuring an imaginary security for their throne. And thus there arose for the spiritual life also a new period. Already Wackidi had begun to work up into shape the mass of his traditionary stores, and busy himself in the department of scholastic industry. In the schools one could as little affect now the material tradition, or alter its nature, as attempt to change the organism of the new-born child. However arbitrary might be the invention of the »Miraj« (Mahomed's heavenly journey), and other fabrications of the first century, they still formed in this way the positive element and soul of religious, political and social life. The schools, as always, confined their exertions to collecting, comparing, abbreviating, systematising, and commenting. The material was altogether divine; and any unprejudiced historical inquiry, any simple and natural interpretation of the Coran, any free judgment on tradition or its origin, was condemned

as apostasy. The only task that remained was to work up, in scholastic form, the existing material; and in this way was developed a literature of boundless dimensions, which yet at bottom possessed nothing real. The whole spiritual activity of the Mohamedans, from the time of the prophet to the present day, is a dream; but it is a dream in which a large portion of the human race have lived; and it has all the interest which things relating to mankind always possess for man.”

Sir William Muir agrees with these views, subject to two considerations. He says:

„The tendency to glorify Mohammed and the reciters of the traditions was considerably modified by the mortal strife which characterised the factions that opposed one another at the period, where, in attempting to depreciate one another, they would not be averse to perpetuating traditions in support of their contentions; such partisanship secured no insignificant body of historical fact, which otherwise would have been lost.”

He also points out that in a state of society circumscribed and dwarfed by the powerful Islamic system, which proscribed the free exercise of thought and discussion, tradition can scarcely be said to be the »vox populi«. The growth and development of tradition, the flagrant distortion of historical fact, the ethical code of Islam, may well give rise to a questioning of the validity of the prophet's arrogant claims, and by their very methods of defence the apologists of Islam exhibit its weakness and inadequacy to meet the religious needs of man. The natural bias of Mohammed is evident throughout the Coran. His conceptions of God, of the future life, and of the duty of man, are all influenced by his consuming master passion. In all his writings there are lacking those characteristics which distinguish the true prophet—the messenger of God—from those to whom he is sent. This will be apparent by contrasting his views with those of any of the Old Testament prophets. They were eminently men prepared for their high calling by lofty yet practical communion with God—men whose message was inspired by a vision of Divine Majesty, and an impressive conception of the justice and awful purity of Jehovah. Men who called the nation to righteousness of life by a stirring appeal to conscience, and an unfaltering denunciation of the evils of the time. Their spiritual aspirations, therefore, by far surpass the loftiest ideals of the prophet of Islam, while their ethical conceptions infinitely transcend all that Mohammed dreamed of. The voice of the Eternal is clearly heard in the earnest utterances that fell from their lips, and through all their prophecies the willingness of Divine Mercy to reason with men in spite of their erring ways, is apparent.

Three characteristic elements are perceived in their preaching—a very keen and practical conscience of sin; an overpowering vision of God; and a very sharp perception of the politics of their day. Of these elements, Mohammed's teaching possesses only the last.

Mohammed's Conception of God

His conception of God is essentially deistical. The intimate personal communion, so characteristic of the Old Testament, is unknown and unrealised: hence there is little, if anything, in his system that tends to draw men nigh to God. Attempts to remedy this characteristic defect have been vainly made by the dervish orders, which, while acknowledging the claims of Mohammed and his book, have introduced methods not sanctioned by the system, by which they attempt to find the communion with the Unseen, for which their souls crave. These methods are very much akin to the efforts of the devotees of Hinduism. There is, therefore, lacking amongst Moslems that need which grows out of personal relationship with the Divine—that need which leads to moral transformation and spiritual intensity on the part of those who enjoy such fellowship. The Creator exists apart from His handiwork. He has predetermined the actions of men. They are destined to eternal bliss or destruction by an Inflexible Will, so that there is no need for Divine Interference in their affairs. “God is in His heaven, and the world is working out its end according to His unalterable decree.”

Because of this gross conception, Palgrave has designated the system *The Pantheism of Force*, and says:

„Immeasurably and eternally exalted above, and dissimilar from all creatures, which he levelled before Him on one common plane of instrumentality and inertness, God is One in the totality of omnipotent and omnipresent action, which acknowledges no rule, standard or limit, save His own sole and absolute will. He communicates nothing to His creatures, for their seeming power and act ever remain His alone, and in return He receives nothing from them; for whatever they may be, that they are in Him, by Him, and from Him only. And, secondly, no superiority, no distinction, no pre-eminence, can be lawfully claimed by one creature over its fellow, in the utter equalisation of their unexceptional servitude and abasement; all are alike tools of the one solitary Force which employs them to crush or to benefit, to truth or to error, to honour or shame, to happiness or misery, quite independently of their individual fitness, deserts, or advantages, and simply because ›He wills it,‹ and ›as He wills it...‹

„One might at first sight think that this tremendous Autocrat, this uncontrolled and unsympathising Power, would be far above anything like passions, desires, or inclinations. Yet such is not the case, for He has, with respect to His creatures, one main feeling and source of action, namely, jealousy of them, lest they should perchance attribute to themselves something of what is His alone, and thus encroach on His all engrossing kingdom. Hence He is ever more prone to punish than to reward; to inflict pain than to bestow pleasure; to ruin than to build. It is His singular satisfaction to let created beings continually feel that they are nothing else than His slaves, His tools, and contemptible tools also; that thus they may the better acknowledge His superiority, and know His power to be above their power, His cunning above their cunning, His will above their will, His pride above their pride—or, rather, that there is no power, cunning, will, or pride save His own.

„But He Himself, sterile in His inaccessible height, neither loving nor enjoying aught save His own and self-measured decree, without son,

companion, or counsellor, is no less barren of Himself than for His creatures, and His own barrenness and lone egoism in Himself is the cause and rule of His indifferent and unregarding despotism around. The first note is the key of the whole tune, and the primal idea of God runs through and modifies the whole system and creed that centres in Him."

Contrast this summary with the teaching of the Old Testament prophets, the following quotations of which are but a small sample:

"Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

"Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned."

"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me: because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek. He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, etc."

"As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, saith the Lord."

"Who is a god like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again; He will have compassion upon us. He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all our sins into the depths of the sea."

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

"The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him."

In the light of such lofty teaching, the conceptions of Mohammed appear gross and degraded. His asceticism and contemplation never brought him a vision of God that overwhelmed him and purified as by fire. He knew the Creator only from what he heard from the lips of sinful, ignorant men, whose ideas of Deity were base and ignoble. These ideas, and the passions that made up such a large portion of his life, obscured his vision, warped his judgment, and led him to postulate a God that inhabited not a Holy Spiritual Realm, but a grossly carnal and sensuous paradise.

Millions have been brought beneath his sway because his system panders to the natural inclinations of man. Spiritual insight is blinded by carnal desire; conduct is influenced by unbridled license; bigotry and hatred are fostered by his policy of intolerance; and his followers are enslaved by a tyranny that blights the reason, because it discountenances inquiry, and places an insurmountable barrier in the way of all human progress.

In studying the life of Mohammed, the cause of his failure to uplift humanity will be clearly seen. His early sincerity, if sincerity it can be named, was absorbed by his consuming ambition. Had it been otherwise he might have had his name inscribed with the honourable ones of the earth—those men whose

claims are ratified by their happy effects. As it is, his name is linked with those whose deeds cause a shudder of horror and repulsion to all who love honesty, purity, and truth.

Chapter I

Early Life.

Mohammed was born in Mecca, a town in Arabia, about seventy miles inland from the Red Sea. His father, who died 570 A.D., a few months before the child was born, was a member of the Banu Hashim clan. His family, although well connected, was a humble one, possessing but little wealth. On the death of his mother some six years later, the child was taken by his grandfather, 'ABD-EL-MUTTALIB, who took care of him for two years. Then he was adopted by his uncle, ABU TALIB, who employed him to look after his flocks and herds.

From his earliest years, Mohammed must have been brought into contact with the religious life of Mecca, for his grandfather was custodian of the Kaaba, or temple, and would frequently take the boy with him on his official visits to the place. The numerous images of the gods set up in the temple would be familiar objects to the future prophet, whose iconoclastic zeal was eventually to bring about their destruction. His lonely shepherd life favoured the cultivation of the contemplative habits of his manhood, and played no unimportant part in the development of those characteristics which eminently fitted him for the life he was to lead. Nature had endowed him with the essential abilities of a commander of men, and his early environment provided a training that enabled him to exercise those gifts most advantageously.

The population of Arabia at this time consisted of numerous independent nomadic tribes, who were often at enmity one with another. Political unity there was none, while each tribe had its own patron, or god, which was considered to be responsible for everything concerning the tribe's welfare. Where tribes were united, or at peace, there the individual gods were supposed to be friendly. Even in Mecca, which for many years had been occupied by a settled community, there was no political or judicial organisation. The existing order was maintained by a form of patriarchal government, under which system it was possible for the head of a tribe or clan, to protect the life of any individual he chose to befriend.

The religious beliefs and customs were evidently gross materialistic corruptions of what had once been a purely spiritual worship. Mohammed had been preceded by men who had from time to time, in spite of the moral and intellectual darkness, been so endowed with spiritual perception as to recognise and bewail the hollowness and degradation of the Pagan system. Some, indeed, had been conscientious enough to utter words of condemnation; others had gone so far as to despise and ridicule its claims. So that when Mohammed was born the people were in a condition of religious uncertainty. Many elements contributed to this unrest. Travellers learned that the more prosperous nations had rejected the age long sanctions of Paganism; earnest, thoughtful men could not but recognise its inadequacy to satisfy the religious aspirations of their fellows; Jews and Christians, who had settled in the country, had introduced

views that appealed to those who were dissatisfied with the old methods of thought; while the need for social and political unity called for a force that would unite the scattered tribes in the pursuit of common ideals. Thus was the land prepared for the mighty revolution that was to come—a revolution that made one great nation of the various tribes, and turned their warlike instincts and characteristic fanaticism, which before had been dissipated by wasteful internecine strife, into one definite channel, until it became a menace to the whole world. A change so potent, that, in the lifetime of one man, it was able to obliterate partly by absorption, and chiefly by annihilation, the sanctions and beliefs of centuries, and which fostered a hatred so bitter, and a brotherhood so strong, between man and man, that by its sanction the dearest, tenderest, and strongest ties of humanity have been broken, while those who for years had lived in enmity were united in bonds stronger than death. Under its malevolent influence, children have ruthlessly slain their parents, believing that thus would they merit heaven. And men of different race have fought side by side under one banner, hurling themselves with fanatical heroism upon their enemies, believing that to die in such a way meant the winning of an immortal crown.

During his boyhood, Mohammed had plenty of opportunities for observing the condition of affairs, and, thanks to his privilege of travelling with the caravans, was even able to notice the contrast between the conditions of his own people and those of the more peaceable, prosperous nations. He frequently attended upon his uncle in the fighting that often occurred between the tribes, and so gained the knowledge of military strategy which proved to be so useful at a later time. Margoliouth suggests that the two most important lessons the »prophet« learned at this time were the necessity of settling affairs of blood by some expedient less wasteful, and more satisfactory than that which was illustrated by the war of Fizar, and that war should be regarded not as a game, but as a mode of obtaining decisive results.

The varied experiences he passed through on his caravan journeys did much to influence his future policy; indeed, it appears that all influences brought to bear upon his early life were forces that moulded and equipped him for the office he was to fill. He was keenly observant, and wonderfully accurate in his inferences, especially in his estimate of the characters of men with whom he had to deal. He seemed to lack initiative, for he was always reluctant to take action in any important undertaking; but once the initial step was taken, he pressed forward with indomitable courage. In his business transactions he proved himself to be shrewd and tactful, and by his fidelity, patience, and self-confidence, gained the respect and esteem of his immediate fellows.

Khadijah, a rich widow, having entrusted Mohammed with the control of an important caravan, and finding how admirably he had performed his part, wisely concluded that her interests would be furthered if he had a share in them. Hence their marriage, which happy arrangement proved to be mutually blessed and successful. It vastly improved Mohammed's social standing, raising him to a position of equality with the leading men of the city. For many years he was content to live quietly as an ordinary citizen, engrossed in the accumulation of wealth by legitimate trading.

Chapter II

The „Call“ to the Prophetic Office.

It has not been recorded how first he began to yield to the impulses that eventually led him to assume the role of reformer, but it is certain that at the age of forty he was the leader of a secret society, which had for its object the political and religious unity of the Arab people. He knew that far-reaching changes were necessary in every department of national policy before his ideal could be realised. Unity was the secret of power and prosperity. This he had learned through contact with other nations. His dealing with Jews and Christians had given rise to a deep appreciation of the value of a monotheistic faith in the consolidation of a people, and he was convinced that political unity would be achieved only where there was religious unity. With masterly insight he laid his plans accordingly, and because of the extreme conservatism was obliged to formulate them in strict secrecy. Unfortunately, owing to his untrustworthy sources of information, his policy was founded upon false bases. His distorted conception of truth led him to establish a system of false philosophy and theology so framed as to allow of no alteration or adaptation. In his elaboration of the system, he depended much upon his own meditative habits, and no doubt thought it all out in the loneliness of the mountains, to which he frequently retired for the observance of certain ascetic customs of the Pagans. Thus his scheme of reform crystallised into definite shape, and his call to the prophetic office became a fixed idea.

He felt certain that success lay in the determined proclamation of one god as opposed to the many of the Arab pantheon, and the more he pondered over this Being, of whom he had heard from the Jews and Christians, the greater became his certainty. God was supreme and omnipotent; of that there could be no doubt. But how to convince the people was a difficulty that needed much careful thought and cautious propagation. Jews and Christians could boast of prophets—of men inspired to speak with the voice of God—but the Arabs had had no one who had spoken with such authority. Why had they been so neglected? Surely they needed to hear the Divine voice, and that need was never greater than now, when all was unrest and dissention. Where was the man who would fill the office? Who would be willing to face the odds, and declare against evil by proclaiming the good and the true? Such must have been the questions that exercised Mohammed's mind. Then came the thought—„Why should not I be the messenger?“ And this so grew upon him that he was convinced of his »call«. The possession of this idea made him sincere in his purpose at first, but after the tide had turned in his favour, that sincerity was marred—nay, eclipsed—by an inflated notion of self-importance, and a consuming ambition to which every virtue and good feeling was subordinated, until at last he was able, with superb arrogance, to bracket his name with Deity, making the confession of his claim as important as the confession of the Unity of God. Wherein his inconsistency and falsity is chiefly apparent, for confession of Unity is insufficient without recognition of Mohammed's apostleship!

Ascetic practices tend to lead to physical disorders, which generally upset the mind and lead to mental and moral distemper. Judgment is warped because

the functions of the mind are thrown out of gear. The varied departments of consciousness act with ungoverned caprice, with the result that fantastical fancies and visions are interpreted to be realities, which become misleading and deceptive. Thus may be explained the visit of the Archangel Gabriel to Mohammed, but it can hardly be conceived that it will account for the ingenious method of revelation which he received. Some people believe it to have been inspired by Satan; it must ever remain a matter of speculation.

The necessity of a „piecemeal“ revelation could not at this time have been apparent to the prophet. But we may give him the credit of the policy of abrogation which he afterwards adopted, for such a policy was necessary to enable him to cover or justify his actions which, like those of even the best of men, were marked by inconsistency.

Chapter III

Birth of the Islamic Society.

Being firmly convinced of his call, Mohammed, with characteristic caution, began to propagate his principles, for years being content to deal secretly with individuals, beginning with those of his own household. His wife acknowledged and encouraged his claim, and gradually he gathered around him an increasing circle of devoted followers, some of whom had more confidence in him and his pretensions than he had himself. This was particularly true of ABU BAKR, a rich and popular merchant of Mecca, who, having acknowledged the claims of the prophet, followed him with implicit obedience and unwavering devotion. He threw himself whole-heartedly into the work of proselytising, and the progress of early days, although slow, was largely due to his indefatigable energy.

As the membership of the new society increased, rules were framed, based upon the „revelations“ which Mohammed now periodically received, and each member was compelled to subscribe to the most stringent regulations. Idolatry was strongly condemned and the unity of God emphatically asserted. Certain Jewish and Christian religious ordinances were imposed as a condition of membership, while unswerving loyalty to the prophet was demanded. License was given to the members to practice outwardly the old rites and ceremonies of Paganism, in order to arouse no suspicion, but the existence of such a society, in spite of all precautions, could not long remain unnoticed, and the time came when the prophet and his followers were compelled to make public confession of their faith. Persecution followed, in which the poorer members suffered more than their richer brethren. Mohammed himself received the protection of the head of his clan, and for eight or ten years carried on a campaign of words. Margoliouth, in his »Life of Mohammed«, likens the prophet to a player in a game of cards, who, having received a good hand, plays his cards with consummate skill. He took advantage of every opportunity in strengthening his position, and having a clear-cut policy before him, subordinated everything to its furtherance. He was a powerful preacher, but owing to his ungovernable temper, was not so successful in debate; hence he produced a „revelation“ forbidding him to engage in public controversy! He showed great diligence in seeking information that enabled him to produce his revelations in a style

consistent with his claims. Being entirely dependent on hearsay, he obtained but a sadly distorted account of truth. The Koran is full of glaring errors, which, for centuries, have baffled the ingenuity of the Moslem doctors. Yet the prophet presumptuously claimed that his, being the last „revelation,“ was the most important, and more reliable, and the differences that were apparent were due to the corruption in time of the text of the former „revelations“—i.e., the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures!

He was evidently much perplexed by the divisions and controversies that existed within the Christian Church, and considered that the images and pictures then in use were little better than the idols of his own people. With no means of testing and verifying his knowledge, he accepted all that tended to enhance his own position, and his chief regret seems to have been his inability, in reply to the taunts of his enemies, to point to any element of the miraculous in his career. In the revelations, he frequently expressed views and opinions which flatly contradicted what he had formerly stated, and when challenged as to his inconsistency, defended it by claiming that it was not he who had changed his mind, but God, whose ways no man could question or understand!

In time, the position of the new sect became so intolerable that many were compelled to flee, and numbers went into Abyssinia, where they were well received. Mohammed himself, thanks to his relatives' protection, could still afford to remain in Mecca. In spite of the opposition, his influence gradually increased, and was considerably strengthened by the conversion of Omar, a citizen famed for his skill in military strategy and courage. Not long afterwards, Khadijah, the prophet's wife died. She had wielded a strong, healthy influence over her husband, and had cheered him on in times of discouragement and failure. Islam owes not a little to her life and influence, and were it more widely recognised, might possibly lead to an improvement of the position of the poor unfortunate daughters of the system, who are enslaved and degraded to a saddening degree. After Khadijah's death, Mohammed took full advantage of the polygamous sanctions of Paganism, and even abused the privilege when it conflicted with his own inclinations. Margoliouth attempts to defend the many marriages on the ground of political expediency, which may be conceded in only a few cases. In most instances they were due to selfish desire and inordinate affection. Particularly is this true in the case of the prophet's marriage with his adopted son's wife, which was a gross violation of Arab law.

On the death of his protector, Mohammed was compelled to seek refuge elsewhere, but not before he had made inconsistent concessions to the pagan leaders. In these concessions he retreated entirely from the strong iconoclastic attitude he had hitherto adopted, going so far as to produce a revelation that claimed to reconcile the One True God to the gods of the Pagan pantheon. This compromise, no matter how wise and statesmanlike it may appear to be, clearly indicates the falsity of Mohammed's claim, and enables us to estimate the value of his pretensions. His action was strongly condemned by many of his followers, and probably under the influence of their opinion, he produced an apologetic revelation abrogating the concession, and admitting it to have been a mistake!

He endeavoured to escape the persecution in Mecca by taking refuge in Taif, but was so badly treated there when his views became known, that he was glad to return, and upon promising to confine his proselytising efforts to strangers, was allowed to stay under the protection of one of the leading citizens. He carried on his work among strangers with such success, that before long a

strong community had grown up in the town of Medinah. The rapid increase of this section of his disciples may be accounted for by the very unsettled condition of the place. Civil and religious strife had been for a long time aggravated by the aggressive attitude of a large section of Jews, so that circumstances were more favourable to the reception and growth of Islam than in Mecca, where there was more peaceful organisation, and where the existence of the ancient Kaaba, or dwelling place of the gods, made men more jealous of their old religion.

In the appointment of a man to lead the new community, Mohammed exhibited his characteristic insight into the abilities of men. He selected a follower thoroughly convinced of his master's claims, whose zeal in the earlier days had led him to forsake friends and family by flight into Abyssinia—a man full of enthusiasm and energy. In a comparatively short time the new religion became quite popular, and idolatry was despised. An incident indicative of the progress is seen in the visit of seventy of the Medinah disciples to Mohammed in Mecca. They met him secretly in the mountains, by night, and made solemn, binding vows of allegiance, in which they promised „to fight men of all colour in order to defend the faith.“ It is highly probable that at this meeting the prophet was invited to join them in Medinah, but for the present he preferred his native town.

Somehow the story of the night meeting leaked out, with the result that persecution was redoubled, and many of the less wealthy followers were forced to flee to Medinah. They were there well received and cared for, and were afterwards honoured by being designated the »refugees«, while those who received them were similarly honoured in being named the »helpers«. Thus the brotherhood of believers insisted on by Mohammed began to assume practical form, and men of different tribes were united in one common bond—a brotherhood so powerful that its enemies in Mecca were filled with alarm. They had no longer to deal with a man whose views could be despised. They were menaced by a growing force that threatened to overwhelm them. Steps were taken to overthrow the danger, and elaborate arrangements were made for the assassination of the prophet. He somehow obtained news of the plot, and escaped the would-be murderers, who came while he was supposed to be in bed, by climbing through a window. Accompanied by the faithful Abu Bakr and a few of his more intimate followers, he made his way to one of the mountain caves, where he stayed until the immediate danger had passed. Then the little company commenced the journey to Medinah, a task so fraught with danger and hardship that Mohammed shrank from it, in spite of the Meccan evil, and was compelled to attempt it only by the pressure of his friends.

The facts concerning his entry into Medinah are obscure and uncertain, but there is no doubt that his advent was hailed with delight by the »helpers« and »refugees«. Hospitality was freely offered, and, owing to the prophet's independent spirit, reluctantly accepted. One of his earliest actions after arrival was to consolidate his forces by strengthening the brotherhood, making the obligations of his followers to one another, and himself, more binding than the ties of blood.

Chapter IV

Growth and Progress.

He now found himself the acknowledged head of a large growing community, which looked to him for guidance in all its affairs—religious, social, and political. Proudly, and with true Eastern despotism, he took upon himself the dignities of prophet, priest, and king. He needed no one with whom to share these functions. His was the sole right—his alone. His ambitions were being realised. The striving of years, the disappointment, doubts, and fears that had so tormented him were well repaid, and could be forgotten in the glamour that now surrounded him. Enthusiastic and fanatical votaries crowded around him with loyal acclamation. Pampered and petted with excessive adulation, can it be wondered that he had visions of power hitherto undreamed of? His scheme of national reform paled into insignificance in the light of possibility. He saw himself the leader of a world-wide conquest—the promoter of a prodigious scheme of universal reform. He was not merely the messenger of the Arab people, but the mouthpiece of God to the whole wide world. And by the Divine Power that possessed him would receive the humble homage of proud and mighty nations, whose haughty monarchs would bow in lowly submission to his imperious will! Prophetic insight, regal authority, judicial administration were his by divine right, to be enforced, if needs be, at the point of the Islamic sword.

As his position improved, so his ideals deteriorated. His early piety was modified by the lust of worldly power. In place of patient pacific methods of propagation, he adopted a cruel, ruthless, warlike policy, and it was not long—perhaps owing to the extreme poverty which afflicted the new community—before the would-be prophet became the leader of a robber host. Yet even in spite of the glamour that surrounded him, and the questionable behaviour that characterised this period of his life, we catch occasional glimpses of that which reveals the working of nobler instincts in his mind. Had his environment been other than it was, Mohammed had been indeed a hero in the world's history. Ignorance of truth led him to place himself under the mysterious power of hallucination. The lonely brooding of the cave had produced that which had urged him into a position of bondage. He was the slave of a false idea, which so possessed him that he pressed onward, in spite of all that stood in his way, whether it was good or bad. It exerted an irresistible influence over all his impulses, leading him into actions in every way indefensible. When fair means failed, he adopted foul, and so succeeded beyond his highest dreams.

The first Mosque, or meeting place, was built very soon after his arrival in Medinah, and he entered upon his priestly functions. As a matter of policy, he adopted many of the Jewish rites. These, however, he soon changed, for as the number of his followers increased, and he grew more and more independent of Jewish aid, he made every effort to show his natural aversion to the ancient people, who scorned his prophetic pretensions. In place of praying towards Jerusalem, his followers were commanded to turn their faces towards Mecca. The Fast of Atonement was abolished in favour of the month of Ramadan, while in substitution for the Jewish rite of sacrifice, the pagan slaying of victims was observed.

A considerable difference is to be noticed between the „revelations“ of this period and those of Mecca. The latter were concerned with denunciations of idolatry; proofs of the Divine unity and attributes; legendary stories, and

occasional lurid pictures of heaven and hell. The former are generally of a legislative character, mingled with the domestic affairs of the prophet, and guidance as to his military policy. The method of recording them, too, seems to have been systematised, for it is certain that a body of professional scribes were engaged in this work, and evidence is not wanting to show that these scribes were allowed to express the revelations in their own particular style. Discrepancies and inconsistencies abounded, but Mohammed seems to have allowed that he was not responsible, and to have stated that God had a perfect right to alter as He pleased, and even to apologise for errors! The policy of abrogation has its sanction in the text, „Whatever verses we cancel or cause thee to forget, we give thee better in their stead, or the like thereof.“

In his warlike policy, the prophet's strategy reflects most discreditably upon his character, everything that was honourable and virtuous being sacrificed to the passion for conquest. When he needed help, he pretended friendship to those he hated; and then, becoming strong enough to be independent, did not hesitate, upon the slightest provocation or pretext, to turn his sword against them. This is particularly true of his treatment of the Jews, whom he at first befriended, but afterwards treated with barbarous injustice.

Within a very few months of their arrival in Medinah, the need of some method of support, other than the charity of the helpers, presented itself. The number of refugees was still increasing, and the demand for the ordinary necessities of life exceeded the supply. Mohammed, to his credit, shared the misery of his followers, and proved himself to be generous even when in want. In order to meet the need, the policy of despoiling the wealthy Meccan caravans was conceived, and carried out with some degree of success. The prophet at first exhibited a feeling of repugnance against such warfare, especially when the ancient pacific regulations of certain sacred months were violated. But the benefits of the revenue accruing led him, some time afterwards, to produce revelations sanctioning hostilities even in the sacred months. The early successes provided the community with more wealth than was needed, and, arousing the avarice of many of those who were opposed to the prophet, led them to throw in their lot with him. Having seared his conscience by acknowledging the righteousness of the robber policy, it was easy for him to persuade himself that it was all part of the purpose of God to prosper his claims. All who would not acknowledge him were the enemies of God, and had no rights to property or to life. He began to preach the holiness of war against all unbelievers. He fanned the avaricious fanaticism of his followers into a flame of religious enthusiasm, and they became soldier priests, whose deaths on the battlefield were glorious martyrdoms, which gave them immediate entrance into a paradise where all their inclinations could be indulged to an unlimited degree. It is not to be wondered that an army of such men could put three times their number of Meccans not so inspired to flight. This is what actually happened in the battle of Badr. Mohammed had received news of the possibility of capturing a particularly rich Meccan caravan, and decided to make the attempt. News of his plans reached the Meccans, who determined to frustrate, if possible, the designs of their enemy. A thousand men were rapidly organised into a defensive and punitive force, and sent out to overwhelm the three hundred Moslems. They were by no means skilled in military strategy, little better than a disorderly horde; whereas the Moslems, under the masterly guidance of Mohammed, seem to have exhibited clever organisation. It has been said that

the rigid prayer ritual enforced by Mohammed, at the risk of Divine punishment, had a disciplinary effect, and produced results very similar to those obtained by military drill. The Meccan host was put to flight, discipline, and steadfastness of purpose determined the victory. The Moslems returned to Medinah, carrying in triumph many prisoners, and considerable booty. The revelation produced after this, speaks of it as the »Day of deliverance«, and Mohammed rejoices because the stigma of powerlessness to show evidence of miracle in his life, is removed, for he accounts for the victory by direct intervention of God in his favour. The effect of the victory on the surrounding tribes was highly favourable to the prophet. Many of the chiefs sought to ally themselves to him, but he received their offers solely on condition that they would embrace Islam. Few accepted, and those who did not before long regretted it.

For about a year after his success, his power and influence increased, until the whole of the tribes between Mecca and Medinah had been won over. Then came a defeat. The Meccans had been nursing their bitterness, and at last, just over two years after the victory of Badr, it found its outlet in an expedition again Mohammed. The Moslem forces were rallied, and under the prophet's leadership sallied forth to meet the Meccans. A fierce battle ensued, in which at first the Moslems had the advantage, and the Meccans were forced to fly. But they had learned many lessons in the fight at Badr, and had posted some of their cavalry in such a position that, when the Moslem order was disturbed in their pursuit of the enemy, they made a charge upon their rear. The fleeing Meccans turned, and the Moslems found themselves between two attacks. Then came the cry that Mohammed was killed! Instead of increasing the Moslem disorder by discouragement, it made them fight more doggedly, for the majority were so committed to Islam that they cared not for life if their prophet was dead. This prevented what must otherwise have meant absolute victory on the part of the Meccans, and a number of them, with Mohammed, who was only wounded, were able to retire to Medinah. The Meccans were quite satisfied with the result, considering that the stigma of their defeat at Badr had been wiped out. Later on, when Mohammed had sufficiently recovered of his wounds, he made a public appearance in the Mosque, where he was able to persuade his followers that their apparent defeat was really a victory! The general who is able to persuade his forces that there is victory, even where there seems to be defeat, is one who will inspire them to fight against apparently impossible odds. They will, indeed, never suffer defeat, but will fight on until annihilated by capture or death. The secret of success even in the more pacific engagements of life lies in this principle—to be undaunted in ardour, in spite of failure; to recognise in failure a step towards ultimate success. Let a man be possessed with these, and victory is within his grasp, whether he recognises it or not.

After this, Mohammed did not scruple to employ the system of warfare by assassination, if warfare it can be called. Some tribes, emboldened by the report of the Meccan success, began to treat Moslem emissaries with scant courtesy, and went so far as to murder some. Mohammed retaliated by sending men to balance the scales in the same criminal way, particularly in treating with the Jews. An idea had grown up in his mind that these people had determined to murder him. This, with matters of minor importance, already referred to, at last led to an organised attempt to subjugate them. A large, influential tribe was besieged; their date trees, lands, and property wantonly destroyed. Eventually

the whole tribe surrendered, and were glad to march away with what possessions their camels could carry. This led to a combination of other Jewish tribes, which laid siege to Medinah. The siege was not successful, and barbarous treatment was meted out to the besiegers. After much skirmishing and general fighting, a number of the Jews who had been captured were decapitated, while their women and children were enslaved. Those who were unwilling to embrace Islam, were compelled to pay tribute. So the prosperity and success of Islam was assured. The Jews were no longer bold enough to cause the prophet any anxiety as to the validity of his prophetic claims, nor were they of a mind that would arouse fear as to their fighting abilities. They were true descendants of Isaac and Jacob, who were both men of peace, and were not qualified for success in war against the posterity of the active warlike Ishmael and Esau.

Freed from all anxiety in this direction, the prophet, realising that the security of Medinah could never be assured while the Meccans were opposed to him, began to formulate plans for the conquest of their city. His first step was to try and conciliate them, with a view to sending a pilgrim band into the city, but the citizens were far too cautious and suspicious to allow that. At last, however, they were prevailed upon to receive his son-in-law, Omar, who succeeded in persuading a section of the Meccans of the injustice of barring the Holy Temple to those who, although their enemies, were, after all, their kinsmen. This led to a treaty, in which Mohammed brought shame upon his followers because of his concessions. The arrangements were that for ten years, peace between the prophet and the Meccans should be maintained, and that within a year a party of the Moslems were to be allowed to make a pilgrimage to the Kaaba.

The humiliation to which the prophet compelled his followers to submit gave rise to considerable indignation, which was allayed only when he himself submitted to the shaving of his head and the offering of sacrifice. He knew that the humiliation was worthy of the advantage gained—indeed, it was but the furtherance of his policy, in which no action that was expedient could possibly be disgraceful. To him such a treaty involved no sacred obligation to his enemies. He was God's prophet, and as such was free of all obligation to those who did not follow him, a principle deeply rooted in Islam, which makes the violation of all virtuous relations with unbelievers highly meritorious.

Chapter V

World Conquest.

Not long after the treaty with the Meccans, Mohammed revealed the fact that he had elaborated a scheme of world conquest, by sending representatives to earthly monarchs of whom he had heard. His messengers carried letters bearing the seal, »Mohammed, Prophet of God«, and urging the addressees to acknowledge his claims by embracing Islam. These overtures were in some cases favourably received; in others with contempt; but, of course, did not lead to compliance with the demands, except, perhaps, on the part of a few of the rulers of some Arabic tribes.

The eighth year of the flight is famous in the history of the prophet's life, because his followers, for the first time, came into conflict with the forces of the Christian empire. The battle of Mutah resulted in defeat of the Moslems, and, consequently, details have been suppressed. It was part of Mohammed's policy to counteract the demoralising influence of defeat by immediately attempting a fight in which victory was assured. This, to my mind, justified war on any pretext or grievance. In this case he conceived the idea of invading Mecca, and, although minor incidents justify his decision to a slight degree, his breach of the treaty adds to the evidence that is derogatory to his character.

The pilgrimage of the year before had been organised by him with the view of impressing the Meccans of his power, and was decidedly successful. When he with his ten thousand troops approached the city, fear caused submission on the part of the leader of the city forces, and after some slight skirmishing with a section of the community, which preferred to show active disapproval of the ignominious surrender, the city was won. Every idolatrous element of the Kaaba worship was swept away, and, although its pagan associations were negated, it was sanctified to the service of Islam, and is still its only altar. The city was invested with a more sacred significance than it had ever occupied under the pagan system. It was never again to be defiled by the spilling of human blood, the prophet insisting upon this with admirable inconsistency! He showed his gratification in many acts of statesmanlike condescension, and seems at this time to have considered himself to be the ruler of all Arabs. Although it is improbable that Mohammed was aware of it, the significance he attached to the Holy City, by teaching that the Kaaba was a heavenly built edifice, was to become the means of consolidating his system, in spite of national and racial distinctions. In its precincts, pilgrims from India, Persia, China, Russia, Turkey, and other lands where Islam has its devotees, mingle with the wild Bedouin of the desert in one common brotherhood, and worship, in unity of faith and form, Allah, the great and merciful.

After its capture, the fierce warlike Bedouin nomadic tribes made strenuous and courageous attempts to win back the city, but the Moslem forces were invariably successful, and, in time, Mohammed returned to Medinah more triumphant than ever. Eventually Taif, which had successfully resisted a siege, submitted peacefully to the prophet's claims, and the subjugation of the whole of Arabia followed.

An ingenious system of taxation was imposed upon all tribes submitting to Mohammed. The natural prejudice that universally exists against taxation (!) was overcome, because it was instituted as a religious rather than a statutory obligation. Thus the regular payments of alms became one of the five acts of faith imposed upon all believers. The other acts are: confession of creed, prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage.

Chapter VI

Mohammed and Women.

The prophet's domestic life exerted considerable influence upon his religion; effects of which are to be seen in the Mohammedan home of to-day. His

numerous marriages afforded experience which led to the framing of many „divine“ laws referring to women. As has already been hinted, Kadijah, his first wife, exercised considerable influence over his prophetic career. She evidently had a strong affection for him, which feeling was heartily reciprocated. She had a personality strong enough to curb his natural passion, and to preserve her place in spite of it in his regard. Her encouragement and support when success and failure were trembling in the balance, urged him to persist in the development of his ideas. He was faithful to her during their married life, and to her memory afterwards, and promised her, upon her deathbed, that she should share his heavenly chamber after his death, with the Mother of Jesus and the sister of Moses. Within a month of her death he was betrothed to Ayesha, a child of seven. He did not actually marry her until she was nine years of age, and during the interval consoled himself by wedding a widow who had acted as nurse to one of his daughters. This marriage seems to have been more a matter of convenience than of affection on his part, and in later days she was able to keep her position as his wife only by the yielding of certain of her privileges to other members of the harem.

Seven months after his arrival in Medinah, during the time of poverty, the marriage with Ayesha was celebrated, the child of nine being united to the man of fifty-three! a marriage defended on the ground of political expediency, whereby the devotion of Abu Bakr, the child's father was strengthened. She seems to have been second only to Khadijah in the prophet's affections, and exercised a petty tyranny over him, which was submitted to even when it affected his revelations. She excited the envy of the other wives because of her privileges, and in spite of intrigue, was able to hold her own. She was extremely sarcastic in regard to some of the revelations, and even went so far on one occasion as to jeer the prophet on his faithfulness in recording them. This sarcasm was prompted by jealousy, because of Mohammed's marriage with Zainab, which was so illegal as to cause him to throw the responsibility on God. Zainab was the wife of the prophet's adopted son Zaid, who, having discovered his foster-father's love, thought it wise to divorce her in his favour. The revelation Mohammed produced seems to have been held over until his critics had been mollified by some victory—hence the sarcasm!

During the raiding of the Jews, Mohammed was considerably disturbed by the desire of the wives to accompany him on the expeditions. He eased the difficulty by arranging that one only should go with him on each expedition, and should obtain the favour by lot. Ayesha got into difficulty on one of these expeditions. She dropped a necklace and remained behind the returning party in order to seek for it. A youth who, too, had loitered behind, found it, and accompanied her back to the camp. Her enemies were not slow to take advantage of this incident to prejudice her before the prophet. He was deeply hurt, and in face of the surge of public opinion, sent her back to her parents. The complications arising out of the divorce would probably have alienated the sympathies of Abu Bakr, her father, so with his usual diplomacy, Mohammed produced a revelation, in which God declared Ayesha innocent of any cause for divorce! It was through Ayesha, too, that the prophet conceived the idea of praying for deliverance from the torment of the grave, for she casually remarked one day that she had heard a Jewish woman speaking about torment after death. Through all her life with the prophet she proved herself to be strong in character, and a fitting mate for a man of Mohammed's type.

Other wives did not play such an important part in the prophet's life work. He seems to have exhibited his taste for beauty in all his selections. Keud was the daughter of a man of considerable wealth and influence, and, like Zainab, was one of the Abyssinian refugees. In the expedition against Khaibah, Mohammed's greed was excited by the sight of some valuable ornaments belonging to one of his vanquished enemies. He sought to gain possession of them by marrying the daughter of the owner, Safiyyah, whose husband and brother had both been killed in the battle that had been fought. She accepted the prophet's offer, and contented herself for her losses in the squabbles of his harem. His other wives were Juwairijah, Hafsa, Um Salmah, Um Kabibah, another of the Abyssinian refugees, and Zainab, widow of his cousin. The last wife was Maimunah, who is said to have offered herself to him when he was considering the invasion of Mecca. A Coptic (Christian) slave girl, Mary, and Rihanah, a Jewess, were added to the harem, but went through no form of marriage with him. Mary was sent as a present from one of the Coptic rulers in answer to the prophet's letter, urging the claims of Islam; while Rihanah, whose husband was one of the many who were cruelly slaughtered by decapitation after a victory over the Jews, was at nightfall, almost immediately after the massacre, taken to the prophet's tent. It is evident that the prophet had many opportunities of still further increasing his harem, for many women offered themselves; while the relatives of handsome widows would make no arrangements for the re-marriage of the bereaved ones until they had been offered to the prophet and refused.

It cannot be expected that things could always run smoothly with so many women possessing rights to his attention, and there is much evidence to show that Mohammed was often disturbed by the difficulty of pleasing all. His relations to the feminine sex, as may be expected, led to a very low estimate of the position of women. Hence the utter degradation to which they are subjected in Islam. Although he did not practice it, he sanctioned wife beating. Divorce was made easy for the men, who could cast off their wives any time they so desired. Thus it is quite common to-day for women to steal from their husbands in order to provide for themselves in case of divorce. The evil of such a system is apparent. It makes the women mere slaves at the mercy of the caprice of their husbands. The polygamy and concubinage which is sanctioned in the Koran, has degraded the women to a degree that may be imagined, and certainly has not, as some authorities contend, abolished other evils. It is true that he improved slightly the condition of women in his day, giving them privileges they had not up to that time enjoyed, and by those who endeavour to picture him as a hero, his failure to arrive at a true estimate of the position of women is covered by the statement that it was impossible for him to grapple with a hopeless problem. It is encouraging to know that, with the growing influence of Western Christian civilisation, the condition of women in Moslem lands is gradually improving, although the village folk still consider us to be weak in character because we are courteous in our behaviour to them. In Egypt, Government schools for girls are being organised, and throughout the whole Moslem world education is spreading. The religion of Mohammed is so clearly defined that it can never be reformed. The only hope for the nations that are under its sway is that with the advance of western civilisation there may be a yielding to the influence of Christianity. It cannot be possible to enjoy the

blessings of the West while men are tyrannised by a non-progressive religion of the East.

Just before he died Mohammed organised an expedition against the Romans, and this in spite of sickness unto death. He had made his last pilgrimage to Mecca, and had delivered what may be termed his final charge to his followers. The whole tone of his address seems to have been influenced by the thought of the proximity of death. He emphasised the doctrines he had inculcated, showing that the Islamic brotherhood removed all that tended to social inequality. The rich man was no better than the poor; the aristocrat who boasted of his ancestry, no more important in the sight of God than the lowliest beggar. The only difference that could exist between man and man was a difference in degree of piety. Property rights he recognised as regarding believers, and evidently implied that unbelievers possessed no such rights. He asked respect and humane treatment for women, and undoubtedly manifested a desire for a better condition of affairs than he in his lifetime had been able to establish. The subsequent illness was probably due to the strain and anxiety of this pilgrimage. Ayesha, the girl wife, tended him. The many stories that have been told of these last days are not at all reliable, but it is certain that for five days he was quite helpless and delirious. On the 7th of June, 632 A.D., ten years after the flight from Mecca, he died in the arms of Ayesha, leaving a work that wrought havoc in the Christian Church for centuries, and which, inspired by his immortal spirit, still exists in unyielding enmity against the faith of the meek and lowly Nazarene, whose native soil, in the providence of God, is owned by Islam's son. Never again will be heard the clash of steel on steel as Christian tries to vanquish Moslem. Those days are happily past and gone. Carnal weapons cannot avail against spiritual forces. The eternal, peaceable Spirit of Jesus is slowly but surely permeating the gloom of Islam. We see the resultant disintegration, and hope for that great day when, led by the broken and contrite spirit of their leader, the hosts of Islam shall bow before the King of Kings, recognising what, in time, they were impelled to deny—Unity in Trinity, the at present unrevealed mystery of Deity.

Britain, the greatest Moslem power of the world, needs to change her policy in regard to Christian missionary work amongst Moslems, if she is desirous of promoting the welfare of those benighted people. She must give freedom to the heralds of the Cross who labour in the lands of the Crescent. And the prayers of her people must ascend on behalf of the sons and daughters of Islam who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ