

The Islamic Call

BY: Mohamed Moustafa Ata

Table of Contents

	Page
CHAPTER I	
THE ART OF PREACHING A CAUSE.	4
CHAPTER II	
EARLIER BELIEFS	8
1 - Idolatry.	8
2 - Judaism.	12
3 - Christianity.	14
4 - The Call of Monotheists.	17
CHAPTER III	
MUHAMMAD, THE PROPHET.	20
CHAPTER IV	
FAITHFUL ADHEREPENTS	
1 - Lady Khadigah.	27
2 - Abu Bakr El Seddik (The Faithful).	30
3 - The Defenceless Strong.	33
4 - Omar Ibn Al Khattab.	36
5 - The Believing Youths.	39
6- Al-Ansar (The Helpers).	42
CHAPTER V	
THE QUR'AN	
1 - Its language - Arabic.	46
2 - Its Eloquence.	52
CHAPTER VI	
THE MANNER OF THE CALL	
1 - Utilisation of National Feeling.	65
2 - Faith in Revealed Books.	72
3 - Gradation in Reformation.	80

	Page
 CHAPTER VII	
SLOGANS OF THE CALL	
1 - Faith.	84
2 - Good Deeds.	90
 CHAPTER VIII	
SAFEGUARDING THE CALL	
1 - Against Meccan Danger.	94
2 - Against Jewish Danger.	98
 CHAPTER IX	
CERTAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL	103
1 - Liberation From Bondage.	103
a - Liberation From Slavery.	103
b - Liberation From Poverty.	110
c - Liberation From Rigidity.	117
2 - Spirit and Matter Reconciled.	123
3 - Struggle For The Faith.	128
4 - Establishing a Unified Muslim Nation.	136

CHAPTER I

THE ART OF PREACHING A CAUSE

Preaching a cause or a reform is an art with its own principles, plans and method. It cannot successfully be undertaken by any who is only anxious to figure in history. It is mastered only by those who are well grounded in its principles, experienced in it, and have a natural talent for it. To miss any of these conditions is to miss success in this very difficult art. Failure of any one call for reform may be traced to the lack of the gifted expert preacher.

Successful calling for any new faith or ideal presupposes certain qualities inherent in the man who takes it upon himself to propagate such an ideal or faith. He should be a man of acumen and judgment so that he may choose the right circumstances for declaring his reform and successfully challenging the already established system. He should be a man of foresight, guarding against all eventualities.

Consider, for example, how factious differences between the early leaders of Islam at Madiinah threatened the Islamic cause with disaster had the situation not been saved every time by the prudent action of the Prophet. His tact and resource were definitely instrumental in suppressing the factious tribal spirit which threatened to flare up, as it would have done between the Immigrants (Al Muhagireen) and the Helpers (Al Ansar) after the battle of Banil-Mustaliq. Foresight in a reformer entails a good deal of premeditated contrivance against unforeseen eventualities or sudden changes.

Again, a caller for reform must be a man of insight, capable of reading the human heart, seeing through men, and willing to unfold his secrets only to those of his close adherents whom he could trust, and who could share his convictions. A leader must be qualified for leadership in the sense of surpassing his fellow-country- men in sound reasoning and comprehension. He should be endowed with a sharper intellect, and a skill unequalled by his contemporaries. He should be the master of sound argument, able to scrutinize all sides of an issue; and in possession of the power of persuasion that would facilitate the propagation of his ideals amongst his followers and close adherents.

He must be able to express himself with exactitude and rationality, so that he may be able to convince his opponents more easily than he should his adherents. Such were the outstanding callers for reform mentioned in history, as may be seen from the fact that Moses who, conscious of his linguistic deficiency, enlisted the aid of his brother Haroun to fill up the gap and supplement him in the would-be role of a leader and God's messenger. This he himself admits in the Quranic words to the effect:

وَأَخِي هَارُونُ هُوَ أَفْصَحُ مِنِّي لِسَانًا فَأَرْسَلْهُ مَعِيَ رِدْءًا يُصَدِّقُنِي
إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يُكَذِّبُونِ ﴿٣٤﴾

"And my brother Haroun is more eloquent than me in speech. Therefor send him with me as a helper to confirm me. Lo ! fear that they will give the lie to me". (verse 34, Surah Al Qasas).

And we get the Divine answer:

قَالَ سَنَشُدُّ عَضُدَكَ بِأَخِيكَ وَنَجْعَلُ لَكُمَا سُلْطَانًا فَلَا يَصِلُونَ إِلَيْكُمَا
بِأَيِّتِنَا أَنْتُمَا وَمَنْ اتَّبَعَكُمَا الْغَالِبُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

"We will strengthen thine arm with thy brother and We will give unto you both power so that they cannot reach you from Our portents. Ye twain and those who follow you will be the winners." (Verse 35, Surah Al Qasas).

An able caller for reform then should be psychologically capable of understanding men, and of knowing how to select a group of helpers and be able to manage them to advantage, assigning to each the task to which he is most suited. He may be conscious of all this, but he may be impressionable and pliant to the extent of allowing his likes and dislikes to overrule his judgment, thus failing to put the right man in the right place. This mixing of matters and putting friendship before

duty will surely lead to the failure of the call, or would seriously undermine the cause.

Moreover, an able caller for reform should also be acquainted with the psychology of the peoples and the mentality of the masses. He should know how to reach the innermost feelings of the people and be able to control them. To secure popular support or mass response in this connection is a very difficult matter, especially in view of the fact that the masses are so emotive that one mistake may result in their renunciation of a course they had already begun to accept. Matters may then develop into an anti-climax, and the ship may drift from its haven into dangerous seas.

The caller for reform must also be tolerant and patient, and should not force the issue, particularly when the new call involves a major change in the life of the community. He should not attempt wholesale transformations of the established order of things, but should gradually introduce such changes as are needed but could not be realized by the masses for fear of the ruling powers.

This means that reform must be preceded by a long preparatory stage. The French Revolution did not break out until matters had degenerated to an intolerable state. Revolutionary writers had already paved the way by their various progressive publications despite many threats of punishment which invariably meant imprisonment within the dark walls of the Bastille. Outstanding reformers believed in the Revolutionary principles, and pledged themselves to advocate their cause secretly and openly until the masses could demonstrate their full response. No sooner was the Revolutionary signal given, than the uncontrolled masses took matters in their own hands, and forcibly imposed the Revolutionary principles which were destined to shake the very foundations of the existing regime.

But first and foremost, the caller for reform must be a staunch believer in his mission, a man of determination, ready for the bitter sacrifice. Here we get the essential difference between a genuine and a quasi reformer. Every successful call has been sustained throughout its history by sacrifice, firm belief, and strict conformity to principles. Such were the inspired calls or missions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Every mission is in part a continuation and refinement of a previous one. It is not merely a displacement of the old by the new, for the present cannot be completely dissociated from the past, and the reforms proposed should be built on all that is good and sound in the legacy received. Lastly, a true call is one which utilizes and mobilizes national feeling to further its purposes.

And now we are in a position to raise the question could the Muhammadan mission, throughout the years of its propagation, utilizes this art long before it was born? Did it follow the principles hitherto known only to Providence? The reader of this work will see the art completely and minutely applied during the call by the bearer of the Divine Mission. Modern science has achieved remarkable success in almost every field particularly in psychology and the arts of preaching for a cause, including propaganda for both good and evil purposes. Yet not in any respect was modern civilization able to introduce new principles or improve upon what the Divine Messenger had done. His mission was successful because it did not overlook one single item of value instrumental in bringing about success.

It was consequently an ideal achievement, as may be evidenced by those millions of Muslims who were converted to the new faith throughout the centuries Islam was challenged on all sides by able adversaries, powerful and resourceful, but it successfully withstood the challenge, and will continue to do so. It is so firmly believed in by every Muslim that it challenges almost any persuasion, provocation or menace. The Divine Islamic Call will endure as long as humanity itself. It is the call of and Good. It is God's call in God's Earth.

CHAPTER II

EARLIER BELIEFS

1 -Idolatry

Heathenism prevailed amongst the Arabs despite the conversion to Judaism and Christianity of neighbouring nations. These two religions are admittedly monotheistic in nature, and are positively opposed to Heathenism and polytheism. The protracted adherence of the Arabs to their idolatry practices may be explained by their attachment to the tribal system which regarded each tribe as a separate entity with its own traditions and beliefs. The individual was merged in the tribe representing the ideal for which he would be ready to live and die. This subjectivistic attitude sprang from the fact that every tribe worshipped a certain deity peculiar to itself and unrecognized by others, and hence the plurality of idols.

Each tribe had its own idol to which sacrifices and offerings were made, and whose worship involved certain rituals and ceremonials intended to win the idol's blessing and favour. Hence the idol Manat that was worshipped by the Aus and Khazrag; Ozza worshipped by Quraish; Lata worshipped by Thaqif, and Hubal worshipped by Khoziman. There were in fact as many idols as there were tribes, and it is said that the Kabah contained 360 idols when Mecca fell to the advent of Islam.

The Arabs were not the only idolatrous people, since idol worship pervaded other communities in their early history. That is why Judaism condemned the erection of statues, lest they should again be worshipped by those converted to monotheism. It was for this reason too, that Islam condemned similar practices particularly during the early days of its mission.

The popular names designating different idols formerly worshipped in Arabia, seem to suggest their foreign origin, and this, in a sense, may have been the implication of the Quranic text:

إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءٌ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ مِمَّا أُنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ

"They are but names which ye have named, ye and your fathers, for which Allah has revealed no warrant". (Verse 23 Surah Al Najm).

Idolatry may have come to the Arabs from Yemen and the Levant or through other channels, and was taken up by the Arabs because it suited their emotional and mental makeup at a time when they were a backward primitive community, preferring the concrete to the abstract, and a tangible idol to the unseen God. The idol was the form which their primitive mind could conceive as God. Al Kalby (well known historian) relates that the idol Wud represented the statue of a majestic man dressed in two uniforms, armed with a sword, a bow on his shoulder, and in front of him a lance standard and a bag of arrows. Such, at least, was the picture of the idol as seen by the masses. The more enlightened, however, approached the conceptual level, and supposed the idols to be angels of God through whom mediation and supplication was possible. This perhaps explains the hymn sung by those of Quraish while practising their devotion : ((Al Lat and Al Ozza... and Manat... these are the three super beings through whom we seek mediation)). They claimed that these were God's daughters through whom mediation was possible. Hence the scathing ridicule of this monstrous assumption in the Divine verse:

أَلَكُمُ الذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ الْأُنثَىٰ ﴿٢١﴾ تِلْكَ إِذًا قِسْمَةٌ ضِيزَىٰ ﴿٢٢﴾

"Are yours the males and His the females? That indeed were an unfair division" (Verse 22, Surah : Al Najm).

In a subsequent text God says :

وَمَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا ﴿٢٨﴾
إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ لَيَسْمُؤْنَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ تَسْمِيَةً لِلْأُنثَىٰ ﴿٢٧﴾

"Lo ! it is those who disbelieve in the Hereafter who name the angels with the names of females. And they have no knowledge thereof. They follow but a guess, and lo ! a guess can never take the place of the truth." (verse 28, Al Najm).

Again:

وَلَيْن سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ

"and should they be questioned who created heaven and earth, their answer is God" (Verse 25, Surah Luqman).

And further :

وَلَيْن سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ

"Should they be questioned who created them, their answer would be God." (verse 87, Surah Al Zukhruf).

In another direct expression

مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ

"We worship them only in so far as they serve our approach to God". (Verse 3, Surah : Al Zumar).

Idolatry is perhaps the phase through which must pass every community before it comes to monotheism and the worship of one God. This phase may be prolonged or shortened according to the circumstances and influences moulding every community in its social setting. A community like that of the Arabs, living in a tractless desert almost in complete isolation, confined to tribal traditions and practices, and glorifying its ancestry, must abide by idolatry for generations, to the exclusion of higher religions. Further, it must resist the call of monotheism for long, whether it originates in its homeland or somewhere else.

2 - Judaism

Idolatry, as has been stated, was the predominant religion in Arabia. But another religion, too, co-existed with heathenism in this area. This is Judaism which was really adaptable to the Semetic race and Semetic mentality. It was the religion of a big number of Jewish settlers who had been driven to Arabia in their endeavour to escape from Roman persecution especially under the emperor Hadrian. The contention of Noldke that those jews were Arabs converted to Judaism seems unwarrantable in view of the fact that their attitude to Muslims in Yathreb, their adoption of the institution of usury, in addition to the Jewish tradition inherent in their behaviour, support the former claim.

Those jews or those converts to Judaism lived for generations in different parts of Arabia such as Yathreb, Taima, Fadakard, Khaiber, where they managed their concerns and devoted themselves to accumulating fortunes. They mixed with the Arabs and participated with them in commerce and otherwise; they even intermarried with them but within narrow limits. The reason is that the jews prided themselves on their descent, and believed themselves the chosen people of God. It would therefore be very difficult for them not to insist on keeping their nationality so exclusively jewish as not to extend it to other peoples.

This mingling with the Jews broadened the religious views of the Arabs through familiarising them with Judaism and its rituals, and so in a way shook the foundation of their heathenism, and prepared them for the new monotheistic religion.

They heard much about the Prophet Moses and his tempestuous rage against his people when they worshipped the golden idol, or the golden Calf, to the entire forgetfulness of Monotheism. They learnt from the Jews much about resurrection, paradise and hell, and about the unseen world of which they had known so little that many of them were atheists who believed only in time and matter. So they said ((ultimately there exists no more than this life where we die and live and are consumed by the Spatiotemporal)).

Their cognitive and imaginative faculties did not lift them up to the sphere of higher concepts and forms of belief in the other world such as were held say, by the ancient Egyptians. Their eyes were opened to such an outlook only after living for generations in close contact with some such religion as Judaism.

It may be that some Arabs used to discuss with the Jews their Jewish beliefs, either from curiosity as to their nature and extent, or with the idea of partaking of them, or explaining the religious narratives and parables then being circulated by narrators and bards. Despite the fact that such Jews lacked sufficient knowledge of the books and theology of their creed, and despite the reserve which they would naturally observe towards their neighbouring majority, they must have given the Arabs an idea about the Jewish religion, or the monotheistic religion which denies and abhors heathenism. This must have done much to shake the idolatrous beliefs then rife, and pave the way for the new religion to be preached by Muhammad. (We shall discuss in a later chapter why Judaism failed to replace idolatry).

3- Christianity.

Christianity was second to heathenism amongst the religions prevailing in the Arabian Peninsula. Its ascendancy over Judaism may have been partly due to its being the creed adopted by two great states bordering Arabia - the Roman and the Abyssinian States. Military power was undoubtedly one important factor in the protection and propagation of early religions. Take for instance the history of the Jewish Zi Nawass, and how when he had tried to conquer Yemen, a certain Yemenite appealed for aid to the Roman Emperor who, in turn, referred the matter to the Christian King of Abyssinia. The latter answered the call for help, and Yemen was subsequently conquered and converted to Christianity.

These Northern and Southern tribes which adopted Christianity had already reached an advanced intellectual standard which made it almost impossible for them to adopt heathenism, particularly since the Christian missionaries had been hard at work propagating their faith and doing much to shake the foundations of Magian and heathen beliefs. Moreover, the Christian religion is not in any sense based on the factious spirit or national prejudice traceable in the Jewish religion, but rather did it come to be propagated on a universal scale and to embrace all humanity.

Another group which contributed to the spread of Christianity was the Mawali or liberated slaves who were remarkable for their comparative cultural standard and knowledge of Christian theology. Some of them attained a certain dignity and prestige through ability and talent which they demonstrated in the Arab cultural gatherings wherein many a religious topic was often touched upon. Whatever may be said of their efforts, they undoubtedly stimulated the interest in theology and prepared the way for the Arabs to accept monotheism and the worship of one true God.

Nor should we forget in this connexion the influence of Arab poets converted to Christianity, chief among whom are Adi son of Zaid ; Qis, son of Saeda, and Omayah son of Abi Sult, who very often recited their religious poetry in forums and market places, especially Okaz, where they were heard by multitudes rejoicing in this mystic vein which deepened and refined their religious emotion.

There is however no stronger evidence of the influence exerted by Christianity on the Arab mentality than the treatment It received in the Qur'an. Mention therein was frequently made of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Christ, and of Christ himself. In the context there occurs a mention of religious sects believing in the crucifixion of Christ:

وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ

"They slew him not nor crucified, but it appeared so unto them " (Verse 156, Surah : Al Nisa).

Prominent in this connexion, too, is the steadfast denial both of the tenet that Jesus is the son of God, and of the trinitarian belief held by the majority of Christians:

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿٣﴾

"He begotteth not nor was begotten". (Verse 3, Surah Al Samad).

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَاثَةٍ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ

مَّا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ
مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُ صِدِّيقَةٌ ۖ كَانَا يَأْكُلَانِ الطَّعَامَ

"They surely disbelieve who say: Lo! Allah is the third of three, when there is no God save One God... The Messiah, Son of Mary, was no other than a Messenger messengers (the like

of whom) had passed away before him. And his mother was a saintly woman. And they both used to eat (earthly) food". (Verse 73, and 75, Surah Al Ma'ida).

The treatment which these and similar subjects received in the Qur'an, provided the Prophet Muhammad with proofs with which he was able to defy the opposition of Christian masses.

It may be that some inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula were induced to Christian conversion through the efforts of the numerous monasteries scattered along the Sinai route to Syria. Those monasteries were like landmarks to caravans, and afforded rest and shelter to travellers, weary and exhausted after their long journey across the storm-stricken desert tracks.

The monks who lived in those monasteries - while providing food and hospitality to weary travellers and to Arabs wandering in search of a living - must have mingled their material hospitality with a certain amount of persuasive theological discussion, and stories of the expected Messiah who, on his return into the world, would restore justice and mercy. They may have told of his miraculous achievements, his resurrection of the dead, his healing of the deaf the blind and the leper, and his patience and philosophical resignation in the face of persecution and torture by the Jews. The Arabs could not have objected to such discourse since, to them, it was nothing more than classical entertaining narrative with a certain charm of its own, but in no way derogatory to their heathenism or idolatry.

Perhaps some of their Arab hearers were not consciously affected by the Monks' talks and discourses, but they could not have escaped being subconsciously affected in favour of the high morale which characterised the theological debate of these monks.

Yet Christianity, like Judaism, did not triumph in Arabia because Arabia was waiting for a guide of a different type, a guide near its heart, springing from its own environment.

4. - The Call of Monotheists.

Monotheists, according to books of tradition, are those Arabs who in pre-Islamic days persisted in the religion of Abraham (Ibrahim) and of his son Ismail without drifting into heathenism in imitation of other Arabs. They were called Hanifites or men of the orthodox creed, but sometimes are wrongly named Sabeans.

The Call raised by Abraham had largely influenced the Arab world and was undoubtedly monotheistic. strongly condemning idolatry. Indeed the Call raised by Muhammad was essentially only an extension or continuation of Abraham's call of which we know no more than what is recorded in the Quran. It is there clearly mentioned that the religion of Muhammad, is the same as that of Abraham .

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِلَّهِ حَنِيفًا وَلَمْ يَكُ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

شَاكِرًا لِأَنْعَمِهِ أَجْتَبَنَاهُ وَهَدَيْنَاهُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١٢١﴾

وَعَاقِبَتُنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ

الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١٢٢﴾ ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ أَنْ اتَّبِعِ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ

حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

" Lo ! Abraham was a nation obedient to Allah, by nature upright, and he was not of the idolaters. Thankful for his bounties; He chose him and guided him unto a straight path, and he gave him good in the world, and in the Hereafter he is among the righteous. And afterwards we inspired to thee (Muhammad, saying) : Follow the religion of Abraham, as one by nature upright. He was not of the idolaters" . (Surah, Al Nahl, Verses 120-123).

وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى تَهْتَدُوا قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا

كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

"And they say Be Jews or Christians, then ye will be rightly guided. Say (unto them, O Mohammed) Nay but (we follow) the religion of Abraham, the upright, and he was not of the idolaters" (Surah, Al Baqara, Verse : 134).

In further corroboration of this, it is declared that he who deviates from the religion of Abraham will be self-stultifying and mean:

وَمَنْ يَرْغَبْ عَنْ مِلَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِلَّا مَن سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُ

وَلَقَدْ أَصْطَفَيْنَاهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلِمْ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾

"And who forsaketh the religion of Abraham save him who befoolteth himself ? Verily We chose him in the world, and Lo ! in the Hereafter he is among the righteous. When His Lord said unto him: Surrender he said : I have surrendered to the Lord of the Worlds" . (Surah, Al Baqara :Verse 130-131).

Historical literature frequently mentions four of those monotheists who lived in Mekka : Waraka Son of Noufal, Zeid son of Nofile, Khalid son of Senan, and Omeyya son of Abil Sult. Only the first two of these will here be considered.

The first Waraka, was relative of Khadiga, wife of the Prophet, Peace be upon him. He was the first to speak to him of the new mission, confirmed his belief therein, and gave him valuable encouragement and support. Of the second, Zaid, much has been written by historians especially those of the West who maintained that he denounced the gods of Quraish, the idols they worshipped and exhorted the people of Mekka to be monotheists and to worship God only. In one of his statements he says : ((what can be said of a stone round which we go - a stone which neither hears nor sees, neither is useful, and can do harm? O ! people, seek some religion for, by God, you have none)). It may be that the Prophet before the mission, when in conflict with himself according to certain writers, had an opportunity to talk to Zaid, listen to his preaching, approve and accept his tenet.

But Zeid was not given much rope. Quraish saw in him a real danger to themselves and to their idols enshrined in the Kabah,

their holy place, which gave them enormous prestige over other Arab tribes.

Unable to withstand the atmosphere, and not being in possession of the political skill and spiritual force of Muhammad the Prophet, Zeid was forced to leave Mekka. He left to the cave of Hera, which was later to acquire such great importance.

This cave was possibly the place of worship for the pious, the orthodox Hanifites who found heathenism contradictory to Reason, degrading to humanity and leading far away from true religion, from genuine spiritual devotion.

There is even some tradition that Quraish in the days of Ignorance in pre-Islamic days, used to spend one month yearly at the site of the cave as an act of devotion to God and in the interest of Divine communion. If so, such sejour would not be peculiar to Hanifites as some writers maintain

But finally who of Quraish was most active in driving Zaid out ?

Tradition mentions that it was Omar Ibn Al Khattab the very man destined to become the staunchest supporter of the Muhammadan call and the defender of the Islamic faith; he who gave his sister in marriage to Zeid son of the very Zeid son of Nofile whom he drove out; and lastly, he who through Saied, was converted to Islam to become the Prophet Muhammad's biggest support. Just consider the sweeping tide of events.

Zeid continued his devotion in that Cave for a time, Did the Prophet, upon whom be peace, ever see him in the cave before his death and burial in that sanctified spot ? This tradition neither confirms nor denies.

Whatever may be said, of that possibility, Zaid's call was not in vain. Its echo extended far and was no ill introduction to Muhammad's denunciation of atheism. That is why the Prophet, upon whom be peace, was careful to point out that on the Resurrection Day Zeid would be resurrected as an entire nation.

CHAPTER III

MUHAMMAD, THE PROPHET

A call may be there, strong and sound in principle, but lacking the man able to propagate it and carry it through. Such a call will inevitably fail. At the start, the requisite personality for advocating a call is more important than a written programme or a worked-out scheme. To succeed in his mission, the advocate of a new call must be in possession of those rare qualities which are essential elements of success. Now, did the personality of Muhammad, the Prophet, possess such traits?

It may be important in this connection to point out that many Muslim historians attributed to revelation all the wonderful traits of the Prophet. Revelation, it is claimed, guided him in big and little, in the trivial as well as in the momentous, to the entire exclusion of any inborn personality in Muhammad himself. The influence exerted by revelation can in no way be denied, the Qur'an being the main source. But the Messenger, upon whom be peace, could not have properly delivered the divine message without having been endowed with the proper personality for carrying such a tremendous task through. He had to use his initiative in adapting the manner of delivery to the mentality of the various peoples addressed, so widely divergent in class and character.

Had he lacked the necessary intellect, wisdom and foresight, he would not have been able to carry out his mission with such conviction and success. Nor could he have been the man chosen by God and sustained throughout by the Divine Spirit. This point was amply expounded by all biographers who had written about Islam and the life of the Prophet Muhammad.

Muhammad did not see his father who died while his mother was in pregnancy. This may have influenced him only very little on account of the care and patronage extended to him by his fond mother and his large influential family. He grew up in the untractable sandy desert which makes one lonely and impressionable, inclined to self-criticism and self-contemplation. This introvert trait would grow stronger the more the child felt his loneliness in the absence of immediate kin who should have sympathised with him. When the Child is brought up among children, his linguistic expression develops,

and his vocabulary multiplies, for undoubtedly the child learns more through mixing with children. Moreover, desert life engenders in a child muscular strength, stiffness of bone, and agility.

When back from the desert to the bosom of his mother and the sympathy and affection of his grand father Abdul-Mottalib, his mother took him on a visit to Yathrib (Medina), the dwelling place of his uncles "The Naggars", and the burial place of his father Abdullah. There he passed one month with his mother and uncles, and on their return home were accompanied by Um-Eiman, his nurse. That was fortunate, for his mother fell ill on the road, and the child, only seven years old, was destined to see a very sad and oppressive sight to see his mother succumbing to her illness and dying in his presence. With his impressionable nature, this would touch him very deeply, and throughout life remain a bitter memory.

Grief seems to have deeply touched his heart and inclined him more to mysticism and contemplation. His now complete orphanage speeded up his experience in life, developing his sense of responsibility, and maturing his judgment. He returned to Mecca to his grandfather Abdul Mottalib, to tell him of the tragedy.

It seems that this old chief, now in his eightieth year, was deeply affected by his grand-son's calamity, since Muhammad was, to him, the dearest of descendants - the son of Abdullah who had been offered as a sacrifice to God, narrowly escaping his doom in much the same way as Isaac of old in one version, or Ismail in another, namely by a timely redemption. On his death bed, Abdul Mottalib earnestly committed Muhammad to the care of his uncle Abu Talib.

What sore trials the boy was destined to meet his father dies before he is born. His mother expires before his eyes. His grandfather, his kind and affection ate guardian, is soon consigned to the grave.

These tragic events he meets successively without relief. Man is affected most by his childhood's impressions. That may be one reason why Muhammad, the Apostle, appeared sad, his face suggesting a shade of sorrow. In this connection, it is said by Abu Halah that "The Messenger of God was in continual

sorrow, continual contemplation, restless and silent, save when the situation pressed for an answer". That also is probably why he was aloof when young, and did not take part in youthful entertainments, though his biographies, reporting the fact, did not give it such a natural explanation.

The guardianship of his uncle was another factor in the development of this aloofness on his part, this tendency to loneliness. His uncle was of strained means, having a big family to support. He had, in one phase to send his sons, including his nephew, to work as shepherds. Muhammad shepherded his flock at the outskirts of Mecca, near the vast desert. This gave him leisure and opportunity to enjoy the company and conversation of some shepherd slaves of diverse experience and some knowledge of border civilizations.

These talks might have done something towards the enlightenment of the boy-shepherd concerning certain already existing peoples and religions, countries and cities, outside his Arabian home. Since, as has been stated above, he was of a contemplative bent of mind, such various bits of information, must have speeded up his intellectual maturity far above that of his mates. It was inevitable that such a boy would not be left behind by his uncle when on his trading journeys to Syria, not only because of the training and experience that would be acquired by the boy through such a journey, but also because of the benefit which would accrue to the uncle through his talented nephew, since on such travels certain services are better done by boys like Muhammad than by men.

He left with his uncle for Syria when he was only twelve years old. He, along with his uncle and the other travellers, met Bahira the monk at his convent where they rested. According to tradition, Bahira discovered in Muhammad the physical marks foreshadowing his prophethood. This is probably true, though the writer personally thinks that the boy's talents and intellectual maturity did not escape the monk who was so impressed by them as to prophecy for him a brilliant future. In Syria he could see new types of people, and come in contact with religions he had previously heard of but not seen. Perhaps owing to his young age and his overcautious uncle, Muhammad was, at that stage, of limited knowledge, because he seldom mingled with people, could see more than he could hear, and could hear more than he could converse.

With his return he, like other boys of his age, got well trained in horsemanship and marksmanship with bow and arrow. His first experience in warfare was gained in the war waged between the Quraish tribes and the tribes of Kais - the second Figar war. He was barely fifteen years when he was first able to participate in the battles which his uncles fought, and although he was assigned the task of supplying the fighting men with bows and arrows on the battlefield, he soon gave vent to his fervour, and took an active part in the fighting. Young though he was, he soon developed into a capable fighter. Indeed, the boy of the desert grew into a courageous warrior, and it is no wonder that Ali, son of Abu Talib, himself a famous warrior, said of Muhammad's courage : "When the battle grew hot and thick, we used to find protection in the Prophet, peace be upon him, than whom no other man was nearer the enemy". Later the Prophet remarked : **"Only three kinds of sporting are recommended : training one's how playing with one's folk, and shooting with one's bow and arrow. These are true. To give up shooting willingly after having learnt it is to forego a blessing"** .

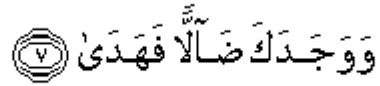
On attaining age, Muhammad seems to have confined himself to Mecca, mixing with the Meccans, frequenting their consultation "House" and performing pilgrimage. This I say because the probability is that Muhammad in this period did not show signs of detracting from Quraish's worship or of denouncing their gods. He was named the "Trusty" and lived comfortably in conformity with the established traditions and institutions sanctified by the Arabs. So he lived on until he became a young man of twenty five. It then happened that Khadigah, daughter of Khowailid, wanted to send a trading caravan to Syria. His uncle Abu Talib suggested to him that he should be the head of this caravan, Muhammad accepted, Khadigah consented, and so he travelled to Syria for the second time accompanied by Maisarah, one of the retainers of Khadigah. One tradition says that he there met Nestor the monk. If so, Muhammad is now the young man who can appreciate what he hears, comprehend the speech of the Christian monk, learn what the latter might say about the essentials of his religion and discuss it with him. Nestor probably felt more admiration for Muhammad than Bahira. It will be understood that during his long residence in Mecca he had the opportunity of meeting many people, especially such monotheists as Zaid son of Nofile and Waraka son of Noufal, in addition to some of the freed Christian slaves. If then he

argued with Nastor, his argument would be not without some knowledge and experience. It is probable that he had the opportunity of meeting with other people in Syria through whom he acquired further experience.

His trade having prospered, he went back home safe to render to Khadigah a full account, restoring to her capital, profits, and property, in the best condition possible, having protected all against marauders or fraud. She found in him the man of youth and vigour, whose talk was that of the experienced old, whose right opinion and deep thought was beyond his age, of charm and power in speech and exposition. Khadigah was impressed; and proceeded to plan something. She secretly sent some one who praised and recommended to him his marrying her. To this he did not object. It is possible that he saw in the offer an opportunity to obtain leisure to settle with the conflicting thoughts which might have been started in him by his journeys, his knowledge, and keen intellect, a possible inner conflict which might have been akin to that state of enquiry and doubt which usually attacks youths at that stage of life, leading sometimes to atheism if not met in time.

Muhammad's marriage to Khadigah contributed largely to the success of the Islamic call when it came. He remained Khadigah's husband for 15 years before he received the divine mission, and became the father of her children. During this period he developed again the tendency to live in isolation. He was yearning to go back to desert-life where he would be alone with his own thoughts. Where would he then go? To the place where was buried the martyr Zaid son of Nofile, to that place where the Hanifite monotheists of Quraish used to meet, to the Cave of Hira. There, tradition says, he used to stay one month every year. This recurrent solitude might have converted his doubt into conviction. He looked into what his people worshipped, and found it degrading to man's reason. He might have looked into Christianity and found it a religion that devotes most care to the hereafter, and little concern for the present world. He might have looked into Judaism, and found it narrow, the religion of a class whose book bears many a contradiction to Arab tradition and ethical usage. From this tumult he was only relieved by the Angel Gabriel coming to him in one of his contemplation moments to give him a new

message and reveal a new religion. So runs the divine text, to the effect:



"Did He not find thee wandering and direct (thee)" The personality of the honoured Prophet, then, combined both moral and physical courage, both deep thinking and awful doubt, till he was thus divinely delivered and guided to the Right Faith.

The tragic events and trials he had undergone, the bereavements he had suffered, and the long periods he remained away from home, seem to have stirred in him the deepest springs of love and mercy, as may be evidenced by the kind treatment he used to accord to slaves, liberating whom he could, and by his habitual relief of the poor and the wretched Khadigah who knew him best, told him on the famous occasion : "God will never foresake you. You never foresake your relatives, you always carry the weary, relieve the distressed, honour the guest, and give help in misfortune".

This undoubtedly, is the type of personality capable of delivering the Call, discharging the big Mission, and transferring the Beduin Arabs to a state where they could carry the big trust, the trust of establishing the Faith. Such a personality is capable of discharging the trust, as indeed was done by the Prophet despite his illiteracy. But what sort of illiteracy. The illiteracy of letters, of reading and writing, not of mental awareness or intellectual initiative Muhammad, in the nature of the case, could not have been illiterate in the mental and spiritual sense, since he was to be charged with so sacred a mission. He should have been the foremost of his nation, and the best of his time in enlightened capacity to be equal to the task. And such was Muhammad. He was endowed with an eloquent tongue, a charming power of expression, and a broad mind. This is illiterate Muhammad as the writer conceives him - illiterate as regards the alphabet and the symbols used in writing:

وَمَا كُنْتَ تَتْلُو مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَلَا تَخُطُّهُ بِيَمِينِكَ

"And thou (O Muhammad) was not a reciter of any scripture before it (the Qur'an) nor didst thou write it with thy right hand" (Surah, Al Ankabout verse 48).

He was not a writer nor a reader, it is true, but he was a preacher, indeed a genius in every sense of the word. A man may read and write and yet not understand or learn. Another may be good at reading and writing and yet be not cultured. A third may have read much without being able to assimilate what he has read, or make use of what he has learnt. Life teems with these varieties of people. But history tells of a different type of people, like Muhammad, of illiterate geniuses, like Jesus. Such, through divine guidance, are the rare makers of epochs, the moulders of history despite their ignorance of reading and writing. Such are the extra ordinary product of time very rarely presented to the world.

That is Muhammad the Messenger whom God sent to an illiterate but clever nation, a nation believing in her right of existence:

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٢﴾

"He it is who hath sent among the illiterates a messenger of their own, to recite unto them His revelations, and to make them grow, and to teach them the Book and Wisdom, though heretofore they were in error manifest" (Surah, Al Gum'a, verse 2).

Illiteracy is not a blemish in the Prophet, but rather a miracle, another of the miracles of his Mission.

CHAPTER IV.

FAITHFUL ADHERENTS

1.- Lady Khadigah

No preacher of a cause however physically and mentally strong, can alone carry the burden without staunch adherents to help. His close advisers and helpers must be very well chosen or they may do the cause great harm. Muhammad the youth was wise to the verge of inspiration when he consented to marry Khadigah, though she had married twice before, and was fifteen years his senior. The story of his orphanage must have been mutual since their first meeting after his return from Syria as the leader of her caravan, though his bashfulness and self-respect would have made it very difficult for him to ask for her hand in marriage. She might have refused; he could not tell. The question, however, was settled when Khadigah suggested the match through Nafisah, daughter of Allayed. They married, and their matrimonial life lasted nearly twenty five years full of happiness. She died in the tenth year of his Mission.

A quiet happy matrimonial life affords the best possible help that a great man with a great task ahead of him, can have. To feel that he is trusted, obeyed and believed in by his wife will add to his vigour and courage in his struggle for the triumph of his cause. Mutual loyalty and trust will do away with all distinction between them in respect of riches and poverty. He or she may expend but neither can think of humiliating the other in return. With mutual love and trust, the rich wife will not thinkless of her husband for his poverty, but will feel rather happy and proud of his manhood, his protection, and his manly guardianship of her honour.

Loyalty and love between husband and wife are then the holiest of links-the highest blessing that God bestows on the elected great, on the Prophets and Messengers He chooses to send for guiding humanity to Truth and Right.

Khadigah never made Muhammad feel the stern bond of marriage, or the obligations entailed thereby. Their marriage gave him, before his prophethood, the time and opportunity to

contemplate other creeds, and, after his prophethood, to devote himself to his Mission and the supreme good of humanity.

When he received the first revelation in the cave of Hira, and felt rather overawed by his tremendous mission, he returned to his folk, to Khadijah who noted his new condition and the transformation worked on him by his experience with the Angel, and asked what the matter was. He told her what he saw and what he feared, and her concern changed at once into smiles of encouragement, making her famous remark, quoted above, that God will never disappoint or forsake him. She took him to her relative Warakah son of Nufal to whom he revealed his secret - the vision in the cave and the words he received. Warakah immediately congratulated him on these happy tidings - on the Divine Mission he received, and the new position to which he would rise. When this was heard by Khadijah, she instantly declared her belief in Muhammad and his mission and henceforth lavished on him the wise counsel and encouragement she had given before.

She began her staunch support of him and of his Call, challenging his heretic opponents, when the time came, with her prestige and means. They were cowed so far, by this and other factors, as not to take against him the severe measures they adopted against Zaid son of Nufal. They were content for a good while with threatening and maltreating his weaker adherents when the time came for the Prophet to publicly send forth his Call.

Khadijah was not an ordinary wife, a mere accident in the life of Muhammad. She had a unique role. She did the Islamic Call the greatest service, and contributed to its success through incessant effective effort.

She was the first woman believer, who devoted life and property to the establishment of the newly begun Islamic Call. No wonder, then, that tradition records the great grief of the Prophet Muhammad on the occasion of the death of Khadijah, his wife and helpmate. After Khadijah's death, Quraish waged against him unremitting struggle, molesting and maltreating him, and almost forcing his expatriation from his home town

No wonder also that he loved her so far as not to take to himself any other wife throughout her life. Even after her death he kept loving her and cherishing her memory¹

If it is true, what Carlyle says, that in the life of every great man there is some woman who encourages, guides, and inspires him with his classic work, then the nearest to this dictum in the life of the noble Apostle Muhammad would be Lady Khadigah.

¹ His wife Ayesha once told him, " Khadigah was no more than an old woman in place of whom God gave a better wife". "No"! answered he angrily, (God gave me no better. She believed in me when others disbelieved, had faith in my word when others gave me lie, helped me with her money when others offered none, and through her God gave me children, and not through any other wife."

2. ABU BAKR EL SEDDIK (The Faithful)

Islamic tradition maintains that Abu Bakr was the first of men believers in the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace. He supported him from the start and was molested and persecuted more perhaps than was the Prophet himself. The reason may be that Abu Bakr, though a member of the tribe of Quraish, belonged to the branch of Teim who had not the honour, prestige, and power of the branch of Beni Hashim, to whom the Prophet, peace be upon him, belonged.

Tradition seldom mentions Muhammad without also mentioning Abu Bakr, who followed the Prophet as his shadow, and was nearer to his heart than the nearest of his kin.

How did this close noble friendship begin? They first belonged more or less to one profession - Abu Bakr was a merchant, and Muhammad did some trading. This would bring them nearer to one another in out look. They were approximately of the same age with a difference not more than two years, and were brought up in the same environment - even in the same town.

A careful study of the two personalities brings out the striking resemblance between them as if they were offshoots of the same branch. Friendship between the two originated therefore before the Muhammadan mission, and it is reasonable to suppose that they discussed the question of their ancestral religious beliefs. More, they must have gone beyond that in their talks. This is natural enough between friends; the contrary is rather unnatural.

This must have cemented their friendship beyond disruption. Muhammad the Apostle, therefore, must have had Abu Bakr as the first man believer Muhammad the persecuted must have had Abu Bakr as his defender; and Muhammad in triumph must have had Abu Bakr, the Faithful, the nearest of the near.

Not only did Abu Bakr believe in Muhammad's Divine Mission, but he was very energetic and resourceful in calling many into the Faith To him is due the credit of the conversion of a group of early, now famous, disciples, such as Osman, son

of Affan, Zobair son of Al Awam, then still young, Saad son of Abi Wakkas, Abd El Rahman son of Awf, and Talha son of Obidallah. Islamic history relates of their respective great contributions to the Islamic cause, and how they did their part in finally establishing the Faith, sacrificing power, prestige, property and life. They materially helped to make it dominant not only in Arabia but also North and West, reducing the Persian, and violently shaking the Roman Empire. Abu Bakr himself saved Islam from collapse after the death of the Prophet by declaring relentless war against apostate tribes till they were reduced to acknowledge Islam again.

Those tribes, only recently converted, had not yet been touched by the spirit of Muhammad's teachings, nor had they grasped the cardinal principles of the Islamic creed with the death of their Faithful Shepherd, they were led astray into arid heathenism again. No sooner was Abu Bakr proclaimed Calif than he took drastic measures to reclaim them back to the Faith, to its green pastures and clear springs. Having restored the integrity of Islamic union and knitted the Arab tribes into one powerful whole, he sent their echelons into neighbouring countries to carry the call of Islam far and wide.

Before his Caliphate, Abu Bakr was the exemplary man, living up to his principles in the face of persecution. Once when he was preaching the new religion at Mecca, he was fiercely attacked by Otba, son of Rabi'a, so fiercely and determinedly, one report says, that he fell speechless on the spot. He bought and emancipated some slaves who were tortured by their masters, among whom may be mentioned the males: Bilal Ibn Rabah, Amer Ibn Fahira, and Abou Fakiha; and the females mother of Gobais, the she-slave of Bani Moamel, and Hamama mother of Bilal.

He converted his parents to the Islamic Faith. He emigrated with the Prophet in person, thereby exposing himself, in case of detection, to all the wrathful revenge of the idolaters. For all these considerations and more. He was the Prophet's first counsellor amongst the Prophet's disciples.

There is no doubt whatever that the Islamic Call gained immensely through Abu Bakr who from all men was the Call's main support and bulwark in peace and war alike. No historical narrative of the Islamic Call would be complete without the

mention of its second man Abu Bakr. This fact had been demonstrated by western historians as well as Muslim biographers. The well known historian, H. G. Wells, gives his own interpretation of this fact when he writes "The true embodiment of the spirit of Islam was not Muhammad, but his close friend and supporter Abu Bakr. There can be little doubt that if Muhammad was the mind and imagination of primitive Islam, Abu Bakr was its conscience and its will "2

It is the eternal honour of Muhammad to have carried the burden fully, to have faithfully and ably interpreted into practice the Islam Call, the Divine Mission, in all its ramifications It is the eternal honour of Abu Bakr to have helped without stint, and followed without a swerve - to have so completely identified himself with the Great Call from its very start.

² "The Outline of history". P. 608

3. - THE DEFENCELESS STRONG

Amongst those who were first to embrace the new faith was the class of "slaves" or bondmen, liberated or not, known as Mawali, to whom Quraish gave the appellation "the fenceless". They had some slight acquaintance with monotheistic religions and were brought up in civilizations higher than that of the Arab chiefs in whose hands they were destined to fall.

Such persons were undoubtedly potential revolutionists who could never acquiesce in the established order of master versus slave, and must have welcomed any change which promised to better their life, and give them some measure of freedom. Any radical change in the then prevailing social order would have been welcome, for it might have bettered their condition but could not have made it worse.

Further, such slaves were completely disposed to monotheism, and longed for a spiritual life that had nothing to do with idolatry, with the disgraceful worship to which the Arabs then adhered. This class has been accredited with having prepared the way for the Muhammadan mission. No wonder then that they surrounded the Prophet and were among the first believers in Islam. Their attachment to the Prophet was so strong that they stood firm in their faith despite their long drawn sufferings and persecution by polytheists and masters. History records both their exploits and their martyrdom for the Islamic cause. That is why I call them " the strong ".

Wanton persecution caused their emigration twice to Abyssinia along with others. They were subjected to every sort of brutal torment. They were whipped, branded, burned maimed and killed to make them recant, but in vain. They persisted in their faith in spite of all. Chief among those heroes of the Faith is Khabab, son of Al-Arutt, whom his mistress repeatedly branded with red hot iron on the head to make him forego his Faith, but he stood firm. Chief also are Ammar Ibn Yaser, Abu Fakiha, a serf of Safwan son of Omeyyah, Sohaib the Greek, and Amer son of Fahirah.

These, when they got the opportunity, used to sit with the

Prophet, and when seen thus by the Quraishites the latter would ridicule them. They could ask how it could be that these, from amongst all the people, were alone blessed by God with guidance and, the truth, arguing that if there were any good in the Mission of Muhammad these would not have been the first to accept it in preference to themselves, as if the choice of God would have fallen on such alone. The sitting and the scoffing are both depicted in God's address to His prophet concerning the demand of the Quraishites that the Prophet should dismiss the bondmen that they might themselves sit with him. The entire picture found expression in the holy text. rendered thus:

وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ
 مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
 فَتَطْرُدَهُمْ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَكَذَلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُمْ
 بِبَعْضٍ لِيَقُولُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ
 بِالشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾ وَإِذَا جَاءَكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِنَا فَقُلْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ
 كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ عَمِلَ مِنْكُمْ سُوءًا بِجَهْلَةٍ ثُمَّ
 تابَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَإِنَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

"Repel not those who call upon their Lord at noon and evening, seeking His countenance. Thou art not accountable for them in aught, nor are they accountable for thee in aught, that thou shouldst repel them and be of the wrong-doers. And even so do We try some of them by others, that they say: `Are these they whom Allah favoureth among us ? Is not Allah best aware of the thanksgivers? And when those who believe in Our revelations come unto thee, say : Peace be unto you ! Your Lord hath prescribed for Himself mercy, that whoso of you doeth evil and repenteth afterward thereof and doeth right, (for him) Lo ! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful". (Surah Al An'am; verses 52-54).

Those slaves contributed greatly to the success of the Muhammadan mission through their extraordinary heroism, and their martyrdom, so remarkable and striking in the annals of persecution in history. Their persistency, their sufferance, attracted many to Islam and made possible their assimilation of the creed.

Most of them participated in preaching Islam to others, aiding the Prophet considerably thereby. Many of the Prophet's utterances have come to us through some of them, and to some is due the credit of lending a hand in social organisation in Medinah.

They proved to be one important factor in disseminating the Islamic creed. They were its heroic silent preachers, carrying its burden and serving its cause when things looked black.

4- OMAR IBN AL KHATTAB

Islam was something in the breasts of its believers, to be discussed in whispers, and practised in secret, for fear of persecution. When Omar became a convert, it was preached openly and unreservedly. He challenged Quraish, not only, like Hamzah before him, by declaring his conversion fearlessly, but also by practising it openly. No wonder, then that the Prophet of the Faith had prayed God :- "O Allah ! strengthen Islam by the conversion of either Omars"

Preaching a cause publicly by its adherents is the first stage of the struggle. That was the step taken by Omar, and by it he inscribed the first line in the history of the open fight for the Islamic cause. It is as if he wanted, by such a step, to atone for having been tardy in joining it. The prestige of Omar, added to that of Hamzah, uncle of the Prophet, sufficed to make the faithful, then about forty, to practise the Faith openly. It is to the credit of Omar that he first proposed it. It will, then, be no exaggeration to maintain that Omar's conversion was the separating line between two stages in the history of the Mission : the stage of secretly, and the stage of openly, practising and struggling for the Faith by its followers.

To his influence, moreover, were due two things of cardinal importance in the post Apostolic history of Islam, the first saving it from collapse, and the second ensuring its lasting triumph.

The first took place with the death of the Apostle himself, Peace be upon him, which threatened to revive the factious spirit and thus disrupt the unity of the Arabs at Madinah. Omar saved the situation by his strong attitude at the Sakifa (or shed) meeting. He supported Abu Bakr, and did not hesitate to be the first to swear allegiance to him as Caliph, causing the others to do the same, thus avoiding division at that critical moment in Islamic history.

The second is Omar's propagation of the Islamic call itself, and the establishment of the Islamic cause beyond any possible threat during his long happy reign, remarkable for the series of brilliant martial successes of the Arabs, their territorial expansion, and the high morale and prestige they enjoyed everywhere.

His personal character as a ruler, remarkable for austerity, asceticism, moderation and justice, afforded an exemplary type of refined leadership, and an ideal Islamic type well worth emulation. Not only did he preach the rights of man liberty, fraternity and equality but made them a realised fact, and enforced them as the working principles of his rule.

Throughout the then vast Islamic Empire, he established justice and fair play, for he maintained equality between governor and governed, shepherd and shepherded both getting their due, with strict control over local governors lest they should deviate from Islamic standards, and abuse the power vested in them, with the result that they feared his question, and ruled with right and justice.

To this great man is due a big share of the credit for the later propagation and success of the Muhammadan Call. Under the Romans and Persians, the masses suffered from unjust irresponsible governors. Islamic rule presented an entirely different picture, characterised with justice and exceedingly humanitarian administration, honest and pure. That is why multitudes were converted to the Islamic faith, and were ready to sacrifice much for its sake.

Omar was the embodiment of humility and continence, never corrupted by riches or made vainglorious through power. He remained throughout the true spiritual Successor, the Calif true to his Master, the Prophet.

His asceticism afforded a practical example for his local governors to follow. When he travelled to Jerusalem to take over the keys of this holy city, he was attended by no train of retainers except his henchman. For this tedious journey he was provided only with loaves of barley, some dried dates, a skin of water, and a wooden plate. When the Patriarch of Jerusalem saw him, he did not recognise him until he was pointed out. Perhaps he had thought of Omar as or some Caesar or Khisroe of the day, till the picture of finery and pomp gave place to that of humility and asceticism.

Omar's life was one continual chain of unremitting activity. He believed, I think, that governance was a holy trust, to be preserved from frivolity and corruption, and safeguarded by justice and counsel, if security and satisfaction are to prevail.

To him constant activity was a pleasure. He was, in truth, a holy torch that Providence raised to illuminate in after years the road of the Islamic Call for every true believer in generations to come.

The Apostle of God, upon whom be peace, gave twenty three years of his life to establishing the call of Islam in Arabia, addressing it to rulers of neighbouring states and through them to their peoples, and to the training of his train of faithful disciples that they might maintain and safeguard the Cause against any possible disruption or collapse. Then came the first disciple, the first Caliph, Abu Bakr, who cemented it beyond division in Arabia, and started sending its legions abroad. But it was Omar, the second Caliph, nominated by Abu Bakr, who following in Abu Bakr's steps, completed the great work of establishing the Call abroad to an extent that still stands without compare; conquering the Roman and Persian empires in Africa and Asia, and, through his exemplary justice and humility and continence, enlisting in the end their vast populations under the banners of Islam. He and Abu Bakr stand, after the Prophet, as the deal rulers of Islam, for humanity to look up to and follow. It was a bad day for Muslims when their rulers lost this ideal.

5 - THE BELIEVING YOUTHS

By these are meant the body of young men under twenty who were converted to the faith in the early stage of the Call, and who were numerous enough to constitute a remarkable feature worthy of record. They believed in the Prophet, upon whom be peace, at his critical moments when he stood almost one, and when the battle between belief and disbelief, between truth and falsehood, was pending

Those young converts were never slighted or disregarded by the Prophet. On the contrary he used to welcome them, give them room to sit, spiritually dominating and regenerating them, himself being their exemplary practical ideal. He educated them and completed their bringing up as nobody else could. Muhammad in conformity with the then established Arab tradition, honoured and valued youth and assigned for young men the appropriate status expressed by the Arab poet in the words:

"A proper youth copes with adversity;

He is not born for endearment by mates".

In search for a secret place for their meetings where they could neither be detected nor suspected, one of those young men, Al Arkam by name, offered his house to become the first hall for the Islamic Call. This he presented to his brothers in the faith willingly, though he knew that the unbelievers would pull it down stone by stone if they could detect the purpose for which it was used. No earthly menace, however, could have made the young man change his mind, given devotedly as he was to the way of God. Yet Al Arkam was then only twelve years of age.

One of those young was Ali, son of Abu Talib, the earliest boy believer, the valiant hero destined to be the fourth Calif. He was a steadfast warrior when valiant warriors gave way under strain. His duel with the veteran Arab knight, the hero of the idolaters Amr Ibn Wud, in the battle of the Moat, is famous in Islamic history, and no better example of heroism can be cited. He killed the famous knight, though only a youth of twenty six. He killed Amre, the experienced, the hero of many battles, and the victor of many duels.

He was the man who forced the fort of Naim in the battle of Khaiber, after it had successively resisted the efforts of Abu Bakr and Omar. The occasion is famous for, having lost his shield, he wielded a door as a buckler and fought on till he forced his way into the fortress in the face of the desperate resistance of the Jews. His notable physical strength was aided by a spiritual power arising from his deep faith.

Like Ali in courage was Zobair Ibn Al Awam who highly distinguished himself in the first two battles fought by the Prophet, upon whom be peace. He defended the Prophet very heroically in the battle of Ohod, where he was commissioned by the Prophet to lead the right wing against the great commander Khalid Ibn El Waild who then led the enemy's left. He, much to the satisfaction and encouragement of the Muslims, killed in a duel a noted adversary who stood in the lists challenging the whole Muslim army.

Some of these young men emigrated to Abyssinia after having been subjected to painful persecution and torture in property and limb.

But the young believers were not all males; some were females remarkable for their patience, and fortitude in the struggle for the Cause. Amongst these may be mentioned Asma daughter of Abu Bakr, Fatimah daughter of Al Khattab, sister of Omar that is, and Asma daughter of Omise.

The teachings of Islam could reach and dominate the hearts of those young believers because they had not yet imbibed the heathenish spirit, or developed into rigid followers of abhorrent custom and wrong tradition. They were tutored by the Prophet himself, who instilled into them of his spirit, opened to them his great heart, widened their horizon, enlivened their right emotions, moved them to seek godly honour, and was to them a teacher and a guide. And what tutor for the young could be better than the master teacher, the Apostle o whom God Himself testifies:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾

"Thou art surely of great morality and noble nature". (Surah Al Qalam, verse 4).

And what can we expect of such young men brought up in such a school under such a tutor ? Nothing less than the heroism and glory alluded to. From amongst them arose such a rightly guided Caliph as Ali Ibn Abi Talib, such distinguished savants as Abdullah Ibn Massoud, such eminent commanders as Zobair Ibn Al Awam and Saa'd Ibn Abi Wakkas, and such faithful believers as Al Arkam and Taiha Ibn Obeidillah.

Some of them were the first to die martyrs for their convictions in the Islamic battles, and some worked hard to instil their own true spirit in others who were thus spurred on to great efforts under the banner of Islam. To quote in effect, a divine verse:

إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ آمَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَزِدْنَاهُمْ هُدًى ﴿١٣﴾

**"They were young men who believed in their Lord and We increased them in guidance".
(Surah. Al Kahf, verse 13).**

6- Al-Ansar (The Helpers)

What might have become of the Islamic Call had it not been for the Helpers, the Muslims of Madinah, who sponsored and gallantly defended it? Careful analysis shows that the Call then would have been diverted into different channels of perhaps uncertain or unfavourable results, and history would have taken a different aspect.

During: pilgrimage days, the Prophet used to address Arab tribes - particularly Thakif, Kindah, Kalb, Bani Hanifah and Bani Amer, telling of his divine mission and asking each in turn to accept and defend him. They turned their backs to him, returning rather uncivil answers.

With the death of Khadigah and his uncle Abu Talib, the Prophet met with more cruelty and more stubborn resistance at Mecca, so much so that it became clear that there was no use in his continuing to stay in that city God, however, sent His prophet due help in the form of a small group of pilgrims from Yathrib, of the Aus and Khazrag tribes, who responded to his teachings, and swore allegiance to him at Al-Aqabah. Next pilgrimage season, a larger more representative group met the Prophet at the same place, swore allegiance, and undertook to defend him if he would go to their city. These are the two famous pacts of Al-Aqabah.

The researcher would have to pause and consider the reasons why the Arabs of Yathrib, contrary to other Arab tribes, came to believe so readily in the Prophet's mission.

One possible reason is that Muhammad was not a total stranger to Yathrib and the Arabs there. A noted Yathrib family, the family of Banil Naggar, comprised his uncles. His father's grave was in Yathrib (Madinah) and his mother, as mentioned before, used to take him as a child to visit his uncles and the grave, in memory of the father and husband who died in his youthful prime. His mother died while returning to Mecca from one such visit, and was buried at Abwa', between Mecca and Madinah. These happenings had probably something to do with the mental and spiritual approachment which led to the immediate response which the Prophet's call met with from those people. In his own words

الأرواحُ جنودٌ مُجَنَّدَةٌ ما تعارفَ منها اُتلفَ و ما تنافَرَ منها اُعتلفَ

"Souls are organised into groups, affection developing between the similar, disaffection between the dissimilar".

Another probable reason why they were so easily converted to Islam was the prominent existence of Judaism at and around Yathrib. They had for neighbours the Jews of Khaiber, of Beni Koraizah, of Beni Kinakaa and of Banil Nadaer, who believed in Monotheism, and decidedly and steadfastly condemned idol worship. This undoubtedly familiarised them at least with monotheism, and prepared mind and heart to accept a monotheistic call for the worship of the true God, should it arise through an Arab and not through a Jew.

There was also that relentless internecine war between their principal tribes, the Aus and the Khazrag tribes, who were equal in valour, almost equal in strength the recurring war between them, therefore indecisive, threatening to bring them both ultimately to destruction, leaving their city free to the Jews. Would it not be natural for their representatives at Al-Aqabah to think of the benefit of accepting such a neutral fair authority as the Prophet himself, who could bridge the gap between them and realize their ideal of peace?

Moreover, it is recorded that they thought Muhammad to be the prophet expected by the Jews to come and make Israel dominant, unifying the world under Judaism. They sought, therefore, to forestall the Jews, and believe in him first that they might have the precedence over the Jews.

It may also be that the incessant war between them made them long for a life, for a spiritual life, based on Faith and communion with God.

Whatever may have been the reason, Muhammad found in them a way out of the narrow circle in which he was then labouring, and they found in him the able arbiter and leader who could rescue them from the destruction that threatened them, in addition to the eternal life that they would secure by

believing in, and living up to, his divine Mission. The pact entered into, therefore, was a triumph for all.

Furthering the cause of Muhammad and protecting him was an act of sheer defiance to the rest of the Arabs, and they knew it before taking their oath, as may be evidenced by the speech of Saad Ibn Obadah at the second conference before the oath of allegiance was sworn at Al Aqabah : ((You people of Khazrag)) - Saad was a Khazragite -"Do you know what you are doing when you swear allegiance to this man ? you are swearing to defend him against all people, red and black".³

But they knew well what they were doing, and all Aus and Khazrag representatives including Saad himself took their oath with confidence, to defend the Prophet, come what might. Henceforth they were called Al Ansar, the Helpers and defenders of Muhammad, the Apostle of God.

The Helpers were throughout loyal to the Islamic Call, were the faithful soldiers of the Prophet, ran the risk of long wars, and bore large sacrifices in body and property. They fought in fact against both Arabs and Jews, but never gave way. They took their oath and stuck to it with the undaunted spirit and the readiness expressed by Saad Son of Maaz in a speech made on a famous occasion before the battle of Badr "We believed in you, and consequently in your word. We gave you our pledges, so proceed, O Apostle of God ! to the fulfilment of your heavenly orders. For, by Him who has sent you with Truth, should it be your will to wade the sea, we shall be ready to wade it with you. Nor do we shun the idea of your sending us against the enemy tomorrow. We are patient in war, true in battle; so proceed with God's blessing".

This splendid morale was one chief factor in securing the victory for the Muslims in the battle of Badr decisive for the success and dissemination of the Cause.

But it is no wonder that those Helpers should be so, their natural valour having been stirred up, and their martial spirit, ever watchful wary and ready, having been marshalled by the Prophet into a formidable force with which he struck right and left when occasion arose. With it he struck at Quraish, and with

³ Hussein Heikal, "Life of Muhammad", P. 201 (in Arabic).

it he met the clans of the Moat, and with it he reduced the Jewish tribes one by one until God sent final victory, and caused the Call to conquer all. The Helpers, then, having been through God's mercy brought together into one whole after their pre-Islamic wars, became God's instrument for securing the victory for the cause of Islam, shielding it from the many dangers that threatened it.

The Prophet, upon whom be peace, returned the strong attachment the Helpers felt towards him, and, at the moment of his final victory, fulfilled his part of the Aqabah pact. On that famous occasion, Abu Al Haitham asked **"O Apostle of Allah! we shall sever connections existing between us and men (the Jews). When this is done and Allah gives you triumph, would you go back to your folk and leave us?"**.

"No!" answered the Prophet **"Your blood is my blood, and your abode is my abode. You are of me and I am of you. I fight whom you fight, and make peace with whom you make peace"**.

And so it was. The Prophet, true to his word, did not move to Mecca after the conquest. He stayed on with his faithful Helpers who supported him at the critical time, and aided in propagating his Call. He made their city his abode until he was recalled by his Lord.

Chapter V

THE QUR'AN Its language - Arabic

Every religious Call has its book or written text defining its objectives, interpreting its tenets, indicating its progress, and recording its achievements. The Islamic Call had its revealed Book "The Qur'an", expressed in the tongue of the people first addressed. If the Jews had their Torah, and the Christians their Gospel, it is no wonder that the Arabs had their Qur'an, since they were a people moved by rhetoric and enchanted by eloquence. Such a nation could not live on the cultural heritage of others through translations from Syriac and Hebrew. However able the translator, translations can never convey the spirit or the particular stamp of the original which defies imitation. This may be evidenced by the failure of many who attempted a translation of the Qur'an which should preserve the characteristics of the Arabic original, projecting its striking beauty and elegance which constitute the main secret of its inimitability. Precise translation when possible conveys only the idea but fails as regards style and form. From this point of view, the Arabs of old were scarcely influenced by the Torah and the Gospel, foreign as these were to the Arab spirit and expression, but listened on to the Islamic Call, being charmed by its Book, the Qur'an.

The Qur'an, then, was an important factor in propagating the Call of Islam and bringing the bulk of the Arabs under its standard. This is borne out by ample historical evidence relating both to the life-time of the master-Prophet himself and to the era following his death.

The incident between the Prophet and Otabah, son of Rabiah, constitutes a first example of such evidence. When the latter made clear to the Prophet what Quraish offered in return for the Prophet's desisting from his calling, the Prophet's reply came when Otabah ceased talking: "Have you finished O Father of Al-Waleed ?" "Yes I have", answered Otabah. "Hear me then"; and the Prophet began reciting the Surah entitled "Fussilat" until he came to thirteenth verse:

فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا فَقُلْ أَنْذَرْتُكُمْ صَاعِقَةً مِثْلَ صَاعِقَةِ عَادٍ وَثَمُودَ ﴿١١٣﴾

"But if they turn away, then say: I warn you of a thunderbolt like the thunderbolt (which fell of old upon the tribes of 'Aad and Thamud) Otbah then, putting his hand to the Prophet's mouth, besought him to forbear. Returning to his people he was asked how he fared. He answered: "By God, I never heard such speech before. It is neither poetry, nor oracular rhyme, nor magic. O ! people of Quraish! Obey me and make me responsible. Let the man be, he and his mission. By

God, what I have heard from him shall have an issue. Should the Arabs get him, then somebody else would have done the work for you. Should, however, the upper hand be his, then his glory will be your glory". "Oh ! you have been bewitched by Muhammad", they said. "Please yourselves. I have spoken", answered Otbah.

Some Quraishite accused the Prophet, Peace be upon him of getting his Islamic teachings from a certain Greek slave, like Shoal who himself was a convert, implying that these teachings were derived from Judaism and Christianity. The Prophet hit the mark by an answer very convincing especially to the Arab, knowing the Qur'an inimitable as they did. He recited God's words:

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ

أَعْجَمِيٌّ وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُبِينٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾

"And we know well that they say :Only a man teacheth him. The tongue of him at whom they falsely hint is foreign, and this is illuminating Arabic speech" . (Surah: Al Nahl, verse 103).

The primary reason why the Arabs did not take to either Judaism or Christianity was the fact that neither had a book which recommended itself to their taste, or touched their inner religious feelings. That this is so will appear from a comparison of two texts dealing with the same idea, namely that of

amassing wealth without giving to the poor. This point is dealt with in the Gospel of St. Mathews in the following manner:

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal".

Now, let us consider a Qur'anic verse dealing with the same point:-

وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يَنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٤﴾ يَوْمَ يُحْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ
فَتُكْوَىٰ بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ هَذَا مَا كُنْتُمْ
لِأَنفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

"They who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah, unto them give tidings(O Muhammad) of a painful doom. On the day when it will (all) be heated in the fire of hell, and their foreheads and their flanks and their backs will be branded therewith (and it will be said unto them): Here is that which ye hoarded for yourselves Now taste of what ye used to hoard". (Surah: Al Tobata, verses 34 and 35).

I am not comparing the two texts from the stand-point of sense or idea, but of style and diction when the Arabic translation of the Gospel text is compared with the Qur'anic original, my court of appeal being the classical Arabic literary standard of taste, style and form.

Judged by this standard, the gulf between the two texts, in construction, If not in sense and effect, is wide. How wide, how to the ancient Arab appallingly wide, may be judged from the fact that the Arab legacy of pre Islamic times consists solely in their poetry and prose.

For a further example, compare the text : "and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Genesis 3, 16) with the Qur'anic verse which runs:

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ

"Men are in charge of Women, because God hath made the one of them to excel the other"(Surah Al Nisa, 34, after Pickthall's Explanatory Translation).

The Arab could not but sense the queerness, the great queerness, of the Torah of Gospel in translation and so could not assimilate either. This would be the more so when on style and diction depended the medium of expression in worship.

But the question does not stop at form and style, but goes on to character and spirit. The Torah and the Gospel contain what runs more or less against Arab spirit and ethical code. To give only one example, the Torah mentions the story of Lot and what his two daughters did to him when he dwelt in a cave after the destruction of his people. There it is said that the elder, then the younger, daughter mixed with her father, one night each, after making him so drunk as to be unaware of what he did. Consequently each gave birth to an illegitimate child who in time became the father of a tribe. (Genesis 19, 30 - 38)

Now such a narrative is utterly repugnant to an Arab, especially when related of a prophet. A similar criticism applies to Abraham (Ibrahim) and Sarah when he presented her to the King of Gerar as his sister and not his wife. This, it is alleged, preserved her against usurpation, and kept her entirely for Abraham, who practiced this deceit because his wife Sarah was exceedingly infatuating, justifying himself still more by confessing to the King later that he was his sister from his father only. The Arabs condemn behaviour of this sort, and consider it a sacrilege for one, not to mention a great prophet, to marry his half sister. An Arab guards his matrimonial honor with his life, and does not resort to duplicity or evasive methods, being very frank and conscious of his personal power which, to him at least, was akin to that of the heroes of Romance.

These psychological traits of the Ancient Arabs are

sufficiently recognized by the Qur'an, revealed to them in their own language. Some Bible narratives figure in the Qur'an, it is true, but these are intended for their moral implication, and are quite consonant with the spirit, tradition, and psychology of the Arabs. Some of that the Qur'an narrates throws some light on the pre historic life of the Arabs, e.g. the story of Aad and of Thamoud of which no mention is made in the Torah or the Gospel. The stories point to certain Arab ancestry of old, and how they fared when they rejected their prophets.

The Old Testament enlarge on the heroism of the Hebrew prophets, stressing the claim that the Jews are God's only chosen people. In this matter it borders on fanaticism. This is not a blemish so far as it was intended to stir the enthusiasm of the Jews of old against their idolatrous foes. But such a narrow attitude, how agreeable to the Jews, is necessarily repugnant to other races, especially when by (other) is meant some such race as the Arabs who pride themselves on their heroic past and their holy possessions. The Old Testament, moreover, abounds with much detail and names of places and of persons, which for the Arab, scarcely agrees with the nature of a holy book, but rather with ordinary tribal history.

As a last example may be mentioned the chapter (The Song of Solomon) or song of songs in the Old Testament. Remarkable as it is for beauty and rhythm it runs contrary to Arab spirit, because this sort of love song contains much which must have struck the Arabs of old as almost obscene. How can such material be contained in a religious book designed for worship?

To every people attaches a certain distinctive spirit and tradition. Such Arab spirit and tradition the Qur'an never violates unless they violate God's laws and then it weans them gradually. That is why the Qur'an, the Book of the Islamic Call, exercised so enormous an influence over Arabs.

Who amongst the Arabs could have listened with antagonism or reserve to Qur'anic verse:

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ
يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٦٤﴾

"Allah verily hath shown grace to the believers by sending unto them a messenger of their own who reciteth unto them the Scriptures and wisdom, although before (he came to them) they were in flagrant error". (Surah Al `Imran, verse 164)

Their past error and ignorance is accounted for by the absence of the Call which touches their hearts, and the Book which would inspire wisdom and effect their re-orientation. Now that it has been revealed to them by God in an Arabic expressive tongue through the truest and noblest man amongst them, how can they help responding in the end ?

How can they refuse such Guidance ?

2. - Its Eloquence

Another characteristic of the Book, in addition to its being in Arabic, is its grand eloquence which enormously contributed to the propagation of Islam and the conversion of many previous believers. Omar Ibn El Khattab, when suffering from commotion and conflict within, was soon appeased when his sister Fatimah gave him the chapter entitled (Taha) to read. He was subdued by the grandeur, and his heart opened by the quickening eloquence, of the revealed text. He at once became a convert to Islam, despite his previous implacable hostility to Muslims. His conversion added so much to their strength that they now dared to practise Islam openly after having conducted it three years in secret.

Omar heard the Meccan Surah and listened to what it relates of Moses. He saw the vividly depicted picture of Moses and his miracles when God first called him and charged him with the divine message :-

وَهَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ مُوسَى ﴿٩﴾ إِذْ رَأَى نَارًا فَقَالَ لِأَهْلِهِ امْكُثُوا إِنِّي

ءَانَسْتُ نَارًا لَّعَلِّي ءَاتِيكُمْ مِنْهَا بِقَبَسٍ أَوْ أَجْدُ عَلَى النَّارِ هُدًى ﴿١٠﴾

فَلَمَّا أَتَاهَا نُودِيَ يَمْوَسَى ﴿١١﴾ إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ فَاخْلَعْ نَعْلَيْكَ إِنَّكَ بِالْوَادِ

الْمُقَدَّسِ طَوًى ﴿١٢﴾ وَأَنَا اخْتَرْتُكَ فَاسْتَمِعْ لِمَا يُوحَى ﴿١٣﴾

"Hath there come unto thee the story of Moses ? When he saw a fire and said unto his folk : Wait! Lo ! I sense a fire afar off. Peradventure I may bring you a brand therefrom or may find guidance at the fire. And when he reached it, he was called (by name) O Moses! Lo ! I, even I, am thy Lord. So take off thy shoes, for Lo ! thou art in the holy valley of Tuwa. And I have chosen thee, so harken unto that which inspired". (Surah: Taha, verse 10).

The style in the original is inimitable. It contains subtle expressions and suggestive terms : (I sense fire) instead of (I see a fire), which falls short of the shades of meaning

intended, to be made plain later. The original expression reflects a refined intuitive faculty in Moses on the eve of receiving his great mission.

Another subtlety of the style is the metonymy in: (Take off thy shoes, for, lo ! thou art in the holy valley of Tuwa), pointing to submissiveness in the presence of the Divine, and to the sanctity and awe to be felt by Moses when listening to God's words. As to the harmony and melody of diction and construction, it can only be felt and appreciated in the original.

Now we come to Moses' prayer at the critical moment when he received the divine order:

أَذْهَبْ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَىٰ ﴿٢٤﴾

Go thou to Pharaoh! He bath burst all bounds!

قَالَ رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي ﴿٢٥﴾

He said : My Lord! Relieve my mind,

وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي ﴿٢٦﴾

And ease my task for me;

وَأَحْلِلْ عُقْدَةً مِّنْ لِّسَانِي ﴿٢٧﴾

And loosen a knot from my tongue,

يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي ﴿٢٨﴾

That they may understand my say

وَأَجْعَلْ لِّي وَزِيرًا مِّنْ أَهْلِي ﴿٢٩﴾

Appoint for me a counsellor from my skin

هَارُونَ أَخِي ﴿٣٠﴾

Aaron, my brother

أَشْدُدْ بِهِ أَزْرِي ﴿٣١﴾

Confirm my strength with him

وَأَشْرِكْهُ فِي أَمْرِي ﴿٣٢﴾

And let him share my task,

كَيْ نُسَبِّحَكَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾

That we may glorify Thee much

وَنَذْكُرَكَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٣٤﴾

And much remember Thee,..

إِنَّكَ كُنْتَ بِنَا بَصِيرًا ﴿٣٥﴾

**Thou Knowest us best
(Surat Taha, verses 25-35)**

How pregnant these verses are will further appear on examination. As to the music and pathos, even the translation may give a foretaste. At any rate it may now be imagined how Omar was so charmed by such I eloquence that he was transformed from the raging' brother who struck and wounded his sister, to the repentant convert asking to be conducted to the Prophet's presence that he might profess : "There is no God but Allah, and of certainty Muhammad is Allah's Messenger".

In the light of Omar's experience, we may now further consider the case of Otbah, son of Rabiah, already referred to, when he listened to the first part of the Surah entitled (Fussilalt) (or " Plain") from the lips of the Prophet himself.

The Surah opens with the deeply mysterious term **Īā Haa Meem**). In the Qur'an many Surahs (about one fourth of the total number) start with such letters, single or combined, mysterious in meaning and melodious in sound when the letters are read by their names consecutively, as they should be :e.g. (**Ō :Saad**) ; ((**Ṣ Qaaf**) : Alif, Laam, Meem) . They strike the listener or reader with awe and reverence. Different interpretations have been given to these terms by commentators. It may be, however that they refer to a metaphysical existence, beyond this material universe, of which man is yet ignorant.

"A revelation from the Beneficent, the Merciful", so runs the verse in as near a translation as possible. One orientalist⁴ suggests that the two Arabic words Al-Rahman (the Beneficent) Al-Raheem (the Merciful) are words of mystery occurring in the Old Testament. This is a fantastic suggestion, since in Arabic they are perfect derivatives from the verb **رَحِمَ** (rahima) (to take mercy on), the one to indicate the active, and the other to indicate the abstract, attribute of Mercy, in a superlative degree. There is no mystery about the two words then as far as the Arabic language is concerned, but as attributes, as exalted names, of God, the Almighty, the One, they necessarily, like all God's names, become to man imbued with mystery. The finite man cannot hope to comprehend the infinite. But however mysterious in this sense the words may be, they will always be to man a beacon of tranquillity, hope, and peace.

Then come the happy tidings which should stir satisfaction in every Arabian, the tidings relating to the honour conferred upon him by God in revealing in the Arabic tongue a divine Book to be a Divine guidance for all who know.

كِتَابٌ فَصَّلْتُ آيَاتُهُ وَقُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣﴾

"A book whose verses are made plain, an Arabic Qur'an for men of knowledge"

Next comes the picture depicting the polytheists who

⁴ George Foot Moore, (*The History of Religions*) , p. 391.

turned their back to the heavenly message of true monotheism, admitting equals to God, the One. Here their state is lamented, their attitude ridiculed and their doom predicted, in a style breathing warning, and threat in work's that shooed strike the obdurate with awe and fear, such as "thunderbolt ", "a frosty destructive wind" , " torment of disgrace" "humiliating torture", and "hell fire their abode".

The Surah contains a vivid plan for the Prophet to follow in dealing with the mischievous, the obstinate, and the misguided:

وَلَا تَسْتَوِ الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ
فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

"A benevolent act and a mischievous one can never be equal. For a mischief done to you, return an act of benevolence. This would transform your enemy into a faithful friend". (a free translation of verse 34)

It is no wonder, then, that Otbah should have been struck dumb after having listened to this Surah, nor that, having returned to his people, he should have told of the wonderful impression he had of the Qur'anic verses he had heard from Muhammad the Prophet.

Again, what connoisseur can read the Surah of (Josep) and fail to feel the striking beauty of portraiture in general, and nobility of behaviour on the part of Joseph in particular ? Here both the narrative and depiction are perfect, expressively alive, and teeming with spirit and action. Take for example the divine verses running to the effect.

وَرَأَوْنَهُ الَّتِي هُوَ فِي بَيْتِهَا عَنْ نَفْسِهِ ۖ وَغَلَّقَتِ الْأَبْوَابَ وَقَالَتْ هَيْتَ لَكَ
 قَالَ مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ رَبِّي أَحْسَنَ مَثْوَايَ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَلَقَدْ
 هَمَّتْ بِهِ ۖ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَنْ رَأَى بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ ۚ كَذَلِكَ
 لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءَ وَالْفَحْشَاءَ إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾
 وَأَسْتَبَقَا الْبَابَ وَقَدَّتْ قَمِيصَهُ مِنْ دُبُرٍ وَأَلْفَيَا سَيِّدَهَا لَدَا الْبَابِ قَالَتْ مَا
 جَزَاءُ مَنْ أَرَادَ بِأَهْلِكَ سُوءًا إِلَّا أَنْ يُسْجَنَ أَوْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

Verse 23. - "And she, in whose house he was, asked of him an evil act. She bolted the doors and said: Come! He said I seek refuge in God ! Lo ! he is my Lord who hath treated me honorably. Wrong-doers never prosper".

24.- "She verily desired him, and he would have desired her if it had not been that he saw the argument of his Lord. Thus it was, that We might ward off from him evil and lewdness. Lo ! he was of Our chosen slaves".

25.- "And they raced with one another to the door, and she tore his shirt from behind, and they met her lord and master at the door. She said : What shall be his reward, who wished evil to thy folk, save prison or a painful doom?. And the verses continue with the psychological study, delineating a picture beyond the reach of art, whether that of drawing, portraiture, or poetry. It is meanwhile the picture of an ideal character challenging and resisting temptation in its most seductive form; of the noble soul fighting the good fight and overcoming base desire; of the believing self invoking Faith, and through it the powers abiding deep in the spirit, thus shaming the devil, trampling him down, and coming out of the struggle not only unscathed but nobler than ever. That is ideal art in the service of Ideal morality".

Now compare the above vivid animated scene, teeming

with life and movement as depicted by the Qur'an, with the corresponding scene in the Old Testament.

"And it came to pass about this time that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me and he left his garment in her hand, and fled and got him out ". (Genesis 39).

Not much of life or of the sublime in this; not even after you go through the next five verses intervening before "his lord came home"

To this must be added the contrast in diction, in the superb diction, which renders both the recital and the hearing of the Qur'an a perpetual source of joy and comfort which repetition cannot wear off. All natural aids to rhyme and melody are there - rhyme and resonance, antithesis and balance, even such aids to euphony as alliteration, all so subtly and naturally interwoven that never a redundant word. Of these happy features the most obvious perhaps are rhyme and assonance, especially in the endings of most verses.

It cannot be hoped to give adequate illustrations through a translation, such features being exactly those which a translation cannot convey. Balance and euphony may be faintly reflected, majesty and nobility cannot be missed! even in a translation:

وَلَيْنُ أَذْقَنَّا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنَّا رَحْمَةً ثُمَّ نَزَعْنَاهَا مِنْهُ إِنَّهُ لَكَفُورٌ ﴿٩﴾
وَلَيْنُ أَذْقَنَهُ نِعْمَاءَ بَعْدَ ضَرَاءٍ مَسَتْهُ لَيَقُولَنَّ ذَهَبَ السَّيِّئَاتُ عَنِّي إِنَّهُ
لَفَرِحٌ فَخُورٌ ﴿١٠﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ
مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾

"And if we cause man to taste some mercy from Us thankless. And if we cause him to taste grace after some misfortune that had befallen him, he saith: The ills have gone

from me! Lo! he is exultant, boastful. Save those who persevere and do good work. Theirs will be forgiveness and great reward".
(Surah : Hud, verse 9-11)

Translation of shorter verses may happen to illustrate other features - assonance and rhyme in verse endings for example:-
EX-1

وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰ ﴿٥﴾

5) And verily thy Lord will give unto thee so that thou wilt be content.

أَلَمْ يَجِدْكَ يَتِيمًا فَآوَىٰ ﴿٦﴾

6) Did he not find thee an orphan and protect (thee) ?

وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَىٰ ﴿٧﴾

7) Did he not find thee wandering and direct (thee) ?

وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَىٰ ﴿٨﴾

8) Did he not find thee destitute and enrich (thee) ?

فَأَمَّا الْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ ﴿٩﴾

9) Therefor the orphan oppress not.

وَأَمَّا السَّائِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ ﴿١٠﴾

10) Therefor the beggar drive pot away.

وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ ﴿١١﴾

11) Therefor of the bounty of thy Lord be thy discourse.

EX-2

يَتَأْتِيهَا الْمُدَّتُّرُ ﴿١﴾

1) O thou enveloped (in thy cloak),

قُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ ﴿٢﴾

2) Arise and warn !

وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ ﴿٣﴾

3) Thy Lord magnify,

وَتِيَابَكَ فَطَهِّرْ ﴿٤﴾

4) Thy raiment purify,

وَالرُّجْزَ فَاهْجُرْ ﴿٥﴾

5) Pollution shun

وَلَا تَمُنْ تَسْتَكْثِرُ ﴿٦﴾

6) And show not favour, seeking worldly gain

وَلِرَبِّكَ فَاصْبِرْ ﴿٧﴾

7) For the sake of thy Lord, be patient

فَإِذَا نُقِرَ فِي النَّاقُورِ ﴿٨﴾

8) For when the trumpet shall sound,

فَذَلِكَ يَوْمٌ عَسِيرٌ ﴿٩﴾

9) Surely that day will be a day of anguish,

عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ غَيْرُ يَسِيرٍ ﴿١٠﴾

10) Not of ease, for disbelievers.

(After M. Pickles Explanatory Translation).

Then comes the eloquence of the Qur'an as regards treatment and exposition. Noticeable in this connection is the fact that abstruse recondite thought is presented lucid and plain, free from even a trace of dry philosophy. Such is the treatment accorded to (the inmates of the cave) (the companionship of Moses and Khadr), and to (Yagog and Magog). Such subject matter, ramifying back into the remote past and made obscure by time, is presented to us by the Qur'an bright and glowing, consonant with reason and right emotion.

Neither is there any dry logic in the argumentation adopted by the Qur'an with the foes of the Islamic Call. Delicate but sure is the manner of attack, of clarification, and bringing the argument home. The miracle of the creation of Jesus Christ without a father, for example, is compared with the creation of Adam, in refutation of the claim that Jesus is God's Son:

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٥٩﴾

(Lo! the likeness of Jesus with Allah is as the likeness of Adam He created him of dust, then He said unto him: Be and he is. From Surah : Al-Imran; verse 59).

Again God, exalted be He ! tells in the Qur'an of what Jesus will answer on Judgement Day, concerning the godship attributed to him and his mother:

وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَٰعِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ءَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمِّي
 إِلَهَيْنِ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ قَالِ سُبْحَانَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَن أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي
 بِحَقٍّ إِن كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ تَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي
 نَفْسِكَ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿١١٦﴾ مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَّا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ
 أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَّا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ فَلَمَّا
 تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنْتَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿١١٧﴾

"And when Allah saith : O Jesus, son of Mary! Midst thou say to people: Take me and my mother for two gods beside Allah ? He saith : Be glorified ! It was not mine to utter that to which I had no right. If I used to say it, then Thou Knewset it. Thou Knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy Mind. Lo Thou, only Thou, art the Knower of Things Hidden.

I spake unto them only that which Thou commandest me (saying) Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. I was a witness of them while I dwelt among them, and when Thou tookest me Thou wast the Watcher over them. Thou art Witness over all things". (Surah : Al Maid; verse. 116 and 117). (After M. Pickthall's explanatory translation).

Here the historical message of Jesus to his people, is given in the sensational answer which he shall certainly make on Resurrection Day in the face of his and his mother's worshippers, that they may take warning in time and return to the truth that he was only a human Prophet, worshipping God, the One, only.

Other fields for the eloquence of the Qur'an are the great varieties of knowledge with which it abounds, the high morality

it recommends to humanity, and the beautiful wholesome narratives which abound in it. That is the reason why it constitutes the Prophet's great miracle, living and eternal, which challenged the eloquent Arabs, and still challenges all who doubt it, to imitate even a simple Surah of it. It is the voice of God; God's perfect words revealed to the Prophet, peace be upon him, for the guidance of humanity. It contributed greatly to the propagation of the Faith, of the Islamic Call, among peoples who, though ignorant of Arabic, were impressed and attracted both by its melody on recital, and the simple truth of its creed.

That is the Divine Book of the Divine Call destined to remain intact as long as Time.

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾

"Lo ! We, even we, reveal the Qur'an, and Lo ! We verily are its Guardian" Surah: Al Hagar, verse. 9).

Amongst the various ways by which God guarded the Qur'an, and which materially helped the propagation of its Call, is the continuous recital of one or other of its Surahs throughout the Muslim world by night and day. It is recited by the devout at night, especially in the small hours before dawn. Verses of it, in addition to the opening Surah, are recited by every Muslim in every one of the five prayers incumbent on all Muslims day and night, from dawn to dawn. It is recited in ceremonies and obsequies, in schools and mosques. It is read or heard by one Muslim or another almost every where anytime of the day. This keeps it always in the Muslim's ear, though it required more than hearing to make a Muslim act up on it, and still more to make on him live up to it. At any rate, its continuous recital is a continuous reminder to all.

It is in the nature of every serious call to maintain itself by all means. It seeks all ways to the hearts of men that it may take root there. That is why it over takes them at home, at school, at clubs and at entertain meanest, that it may become to them a fixed creed.

The role of art in attaining this difficult aim is now universally admitted. It plays an important part in almost every

movement. Judaism, It will be remembered established itself through art, for example through the psalms, from which may be quoted.

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the Lord with the harp: with the harp and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King. " (Psalm 98).

So did the Call of Islam, by making of the literary art a most capable medium and very effective means to establish and fortify itself, making its tenets reach the utmost recesses of the human heart.

This it did through the Holy Qur'an, the highest linguistic achievement in this and in future ages.

CHAPTER VI THE MANNER OF THE CALL

1. - Utilization of National Feeling

The Muhammadan Call made use of every possible right inducement to its acceptance. It is not every or any inducement that it used. It must be the right inducement that has in it nothing wrong, nothing false. It is God's own Call to humanity through His Messenger Muhammad, and it must therefore have followed God's own natural laws which govern human nature. We shall therefore make a study of its manner, in the hope of discovering something of those laws.

This Call, though religious, ridiculing particularly idol-worship sacred to the Arabs, yet it did not lose sight of the fact that those Arabs were chosen by God for first accepting the new Faith then carrying it to other nations. Further, the Apostle himself through whom the call was raised was one of them, and like themselves, a citizen of Arabia.

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ
بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

"There hath come unto thee a messenger, (one) of yourselves, unto whom aught that ye are overburdened is grievous, full of concern for you, for the believers full of pity, merciful" (Surah IX, 128).

Had this Call neglected to hint at the fact that the Arabs were a distinguished and chosen people worthy of carrying this mission, and that its propagation needed their hearty collaboration, one spring of action would have been neglected, and the desired success would have been much delayed.

The Arabs were not a people rendered corrupt and helpless

through the evils of generations, as some suppose, but were a people full of energy, possessing cardinal virtues particularly courage, generosity, and the active tendency towards Liberty and equality.

When still a young man, the Prophet joined an alliance constituted by certain chiefs of Quraish, called the pact of "Al Fudool", in which they pledged themselves to support "the oppressed" until he got his due. Of this alliance the Prophet says:

"I would not take the choicest of riches in place of an alliance that I had witnessed at the house of Ibn Gadaan, and should I be appealed to in its name, I would respond at once".

Had the Arabs been loose and decrepit in character, it would naturally have been almost impossible to turn them, in so short a period, into a nation which, in a still shorter period, were able to strike North, East and West carrying the torches of liberty, justice and equality wherever they went.

The strong elements in the Arab community lacked only guidance and leadership to get the upper hand. They were like coals smoldering under ashes; they did not glow though they gave heat and warmth. The Apostle blew into them and they glowed turning other elements into fire. He in time unified and integrated the elements of force in the Arabs into power to be directed where it should.

Through Islam he restored to them Faith, faith in God and faith in themselves, as a Muslim became the best among nations. So the divine Book tells them:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

"Ye are the best community that hath been raised up for mankind. To enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency; and ye believe in Allah".

They are told further that as long as they maintain on their part as a community, such a standard of moral excellence, their distinction over other nations will continue in this world and in the Hereafter:

"Thus we have appointed you a middle nation that ye may be witnesses against mankind, and that the Messenger may be a witness against you". (Surah II, 143 in part).

The appeal to Arab national feeling was mostly incidental. but not the less powerful for that. Here is another prominent example: Muslims in prayer turn their faces five times daily to the House of God, to the Kaabah:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ

"Allah hath appointed the Kaabah, the sacred House a standard for mankind". (Surah 5, verse 97).

The Kaabah was built by Abraham and Ismail by God's order. It happened to be the first place sanctified by the Arabs through long-established tradition, from the time of Ismail, their forefather. They firmly believed that its sacredness, its holy nature, was the reason for the failure of the foreign Abraham to gain possession of the holy spot with the sacrilegious intention of converting it into a church. They honoured it so much and derived honour therefrom, that on the occasion of rebuilding it, the Quraish tribes nearly fought together for the honour of laying ((the black stone)) back in its proper place. The matter was nicely settled⁵ by the Prophet himself when in his thirty fifth year, that is five years before his Mission.

It is remarkable that Muslims at first were directed to face

⁵ A cloak was spread, the black stone put on it, a representative of each tribe was selected, the representatives were asked each to take hold of a suitable part of the cloak and to lift it all together near to the niche where the stone was to be put. Then Muhammad himself put it in place, not one of the idolaters.

towards Jerusalem, and not the Kaabah, in prayer. This continued throughout the Meccan period and for a short period at Madinah. The reason at Mecca was obviously lest the Meccans would take facing the Kaabah idols as an act of worship, but it might have served also as a silent protest against the hostile attitude of the idolaters towards the Prophet and his companions, forcing the emigration of the latter to Abyssinia and ultimately the emigration generally called the flight of the Muhagireen to Madinah.

The practice at Madinah was a natural continuation to that at Mecca, but it might have also served the purpose of reconciling for a time the people of the Scripture, as the Christians and Jews are called, to distinguish them from the idolaters, Facing towards Jerusalem at Madinah was a hard trial to both the Arab believers and the Jews of Madinah. The former though wishing in their hearts to face towards Mecca continued to face towards Jerusalem in obedience to the Divine order, but the latter failed in the trial, mistaking it for a sign of superiority of Judaism. When the Divine order came to face in prayer towards Mecca, for good, the believers at Madinah, including the Prophet, rejoiced and probably disbelievers at Mecca also.

God has ordained His House, the Kaabah for all Muslims the Arabs included as a symbol of unity and security

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنَا وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّٰٓئَٔ
وَعَهْدُنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ
وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ ﴿١٢٥﴾

"And I remember when we made the House (at Mecca) a resort for mankind and a sanctuary (saying) Take as your place of worship the place where Abraham stood (to pray). And We imposed a duty upon Abraham and Ismail (saying) : Purify My House for those who go around and those who meditate therein

and those who bend down and prostrate themselves (in worship) !. (Surah II, 125).

So was the pilgrimage to this Holy place ordained one of the cardinals of Islam - an imposed obligation on those who can afford to do it. Once in a life time, Pilgrims have to go seven times round the Kaabah. This "tawaf "is one of the necessary performance of any pilgrimage, without the observance of which the whole pilgrimage is invalidated, This going round the House of God, this " tawaf " , is not a mere ceremonial devoid of purpose; its signifiacance is well brought out by a distinguished Western-Muslim writer Muhammad Asad (Leopold Weiss) when he says in his " *Islam at the Cross roads* " :⁶ (If we move in a circle around some object, we thereby establish that object as the central point of our action, The Kaabah, towards which every Muslim turns his face in prayer, symbolizes the Oneness of God. The bodily movement of the pilgrims in the " tawaf " symbolizes the activity of human life ! . Consequently the tawaf implies that not only our devotional thoughts, but also our practical life, our actions and endeavors, must have the idea of God and His Oneness for their centre - in accordance with the words of the Holy Qur'an.

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾

"I have not created Jinn and Man but that they should worship Me". (Surah 51, verse 56),

Some of the rites observed in pilgrimage before the Islamic Call, in pre-Islamic days, were retained by Islam since, being remnants of the correct rites ordained from the time of Abraham and Ishmael (Ismail), they were in no sense contradictory with the cardinals of the Faith or the essentials of Monotheism. As pointed out above, pilgrimage rites are of essential significance to all Muslims, but their partial natural agreement with pre-Islamic practice incidentally served the purpose of satisfying Arab national feeling, and thus there was no impassable gulf between the new and the old.

⁶ P. 16, Islam at the crossroads.

It is impossible for any nation to break suddenly loose from all established traditions and beliefs once for all. Such an all round radical change, would have made the Islamic Call impossible of realization. It was Providential, therefore, that there was some common basis of right and truth between the new and the old to serve as a meeting ground to settle the points of difference according to Truth and Right and Reason. It helps the cause of the new to make the people of the old feel that the new Call fights only against what is wrong and false, confirming what is right and true in the standing order of things.

The foresighted reformer versed in peoples' psychology and social evolution should make his new bricks from the soil on which he is trying to raise his super structure, and from its rocks should cut and chisel his foundation stones. It seems to be a general social law that the present derives its very existence wholly or partially from the past, and the future is built wholly or partially on the present. To go contrary to this is to contradict historical fact and ignore the divine laws operating in the sphere of human activity.

It is natural to suppose that the Islamic Call observed those divine laws to perfection. It was as perfect an application of them as is possible to humanity. It was God's Call guided by Him through His Apostle according to His natural laws. It used the right natural springs of individual and collective human activity in the right way. The right appeal to national feeling as far as it could rightly go was one such example. Another was the right appeal to Hope, justifiable hope raised to a maximum because based on maximum conformity to natural laws, the laws of the Author of Nature, human or otherwise, God's obedience being the most general form of these laws. Brilliant future here and complete eternal happiness in the Hereafter were comprised by that Hope. What greater hope can there be ? What greater guarantee for its realisation than God's own Promise in His revealed word:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي
 الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي
 ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي
 شَيْئًا وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

"Allah hath promised such of you as believe and do good works that He will surely make them to succeed (the present rulers) in the earth even as He caused those who were before them to succeed (others); and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He hath approved for them, and will give them in exchange safety after their fear. They serve Me. They ascribe nothing as partner unto Me. Those who disbelieve after that they are the miscreants". (Surah XXIV, ver. 55).

This divine promise still stands for all who fulfill its conditions. In it lies the real hope for Muslims today Arabs and all. But at the time of its revelation it had a special application to the Arabs, and in fact was to them fulfilled to the letter.

This and similar Divine promises released the latent potentialities of the believing Arab tribes who were in time driven forth by the heat of faith and power of conviction, disestablishing old sovereignties and monarchies, raising the tremendous cry ("God is Greater (than All else). God is Greater (than All else), I testify that there is no true God but Allah, and that Muhammad is surely Allah's Prophet".

2- Faith In Revealed Books

The Islamic Call in the core recognises and acknowledges the fact that it is an extension of the Call of Abraham the father of the Arabs through his son Ismael; so says the Holy Qur'an:

مِلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ هُوَ سَمَّكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ

"The faith of your father Abraham, He hath named you Muslims of old time and in this (Scripture)" (Surah XXII, 78).

This means that the followers of Abraham and the Muslims are one in that their respective creeds constitute orthodox Islam; further, that the prophet Muhammad was divinely commissioned to restore to its former status the first creed of Monotheism in its full strength and cogency:

إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَذَا النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَاللَّهُ

وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

"Lo! those of mankind who have the best claim to Abraham are those who followed him, and this Prophet and those who believe (with him) and Allah is the protecting Friend of the believers" (Surah III, 68)

As regards the core of Abraham's religion our knowledge of it is restricted to what is mentioned in the holy Qur'an. Still we can emphasize the fact borne out by the above, that the two religions, if not identical in rites and legislation, are at least near enough when account is taken of time and circumstances.

The Islamic religion acknowledges the revealed books primarily the Torah and the Gospel. These are stated to have been divinely revealed to Moses and Jesus respectively for the guidance of humanity in part. As Jesus was preceded by Moses, so God sent Muhammad after Jesus to terminate the line of

Prophets and Apostles. This point the holy Qur'an elucidates in the following text:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّورَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا
لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ
وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ

وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا
بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّورَةِ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنْجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى
وَنُورٌ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّورَةِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةً
لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا
عَلَيْهِ

"Lo ! We did reveal the Torah, where in is guidance and light, by which the Prophets who surrendered (unto Allah)

judged the Jews, and the rabbis and the doctors (judged) by such of Allah's Scripture as they were bidden to observe, and thereunto were they witnesses So fear not mankind, but fear Me. And barter not My revelations for a little gain. Whoso judgeth not by that which Allah hath revealed : such are disbelievers.. And We caused Jesus, Son of Mary, to follow in their footsteps; confirming that which was (revealed) before him in the Torah and We bestowed on him the Gospel wherein is guidance and light, confirming that which was (revealed) before it in the Torah - a guidance and an admonition unto those who ward off (evil) And unto thee have We revealed the Scripture with the truth, confirming whatever Scripture was before it, and a watcher over it" (Surah V, verses 44, 46, 48 - in part).

Islam then did not come to pull down past religions but to corroborate and acknowledge them and correct any interpolations. It admitted the past function and role of Christianity and Judaism, and their respective contribution to human welfare. Any criticism passed by Islam on them as they stand at present is ascribed to interpolations and wrong interpretations introduced by certain of the clergy.

"O ye who believe! Lo!! many of the (Jewish) rabbis and the (Christian) monks devour the wealth of mankind wantonly and debar (men) from the way of Allah ". (Surah IX, 34 - in part). This point is admitted by H. G. Wells who remarks that

"the text of the Gospels, though probably tampered with during this period, was not destroyed"⁷.

This right attitude of the Call of Islam was a strong factor in converting to Islam from Christianity and Judaism many of the Arab tribes in the Ghassanite and Muntherite States and in Yemen. They could not refuse the Islamic Call with its Arab Prophet, and its revealed Arabic Book, believing as it does in all divine prophets and messengers, and in the Torah and the Gospel as originally revealed. How could they have refused it and continued in another religion containing as it were much that was contrary to their nature and which certain circumstances made them adopt? They found in the New Faith, in addition to the right monotheism, a wonderful system combining all that was essential and general in past religious legislations with much that was new and consonant with human nature. As an example of the confirmatory part, may be mentioned what God Himself states in the Holy Qur'an relating to retribution in the Torah, which still stands in Islam as Divine law:

وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنْ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالْأَنْفَ
بِالْأَنْفِ وَالْأُذُنَ بِالْأُذُنِ وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ وَالْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ

"And We prescribed for them therein : The life for the life and the eye for the eye, and the nose for the nose, and the ear for the ear, and the tooth for the tooth and for wounds retaliation, But whoso forgoeth it (in the way of charity) it shall be expiation for him". (Surah V, 45 - in part)

The Torah is a heavenly book, and it is impossible that the

⁷ Outline of history ; p. 542

permanent part of its legislation would not be reinstated by the final divine book the Qur'an. This fact was overlooked by many scholars in their study of the Islamic Call, Certain polytheists in the early phase of the Call accused it of having been taken from Judaism and Christianity. In this unwarrantable assumption they were followed by Orientalists and foreign non-Muslim historians of religion, especially George Foot Moore, of Harvard University, America, who claims that all the dogmas of Muhammad are derived from Christianity and Judaism, that the symbolic ablution is based on Judaic rites, that many terms used in prayer are derived from the Hebrew, and that Muslim belief in paradise is derived from corresponding Mosaic belief.⁸

Had the bias of such researchers been less, their honesty in pursuit of knowledge been more, they would not have maintained this erroneous claim, since they know. that Christ of their belief is only a replica of Buddha in the belief of the Hindous who also call Buddha the Messiah, believe him to have been begotten by the Spirit, a god who has taken on a human body, the Saviour of mankind who gave himself up as a sacrifice for the redemption of man and delivering humanity from sin. Nor was there any necessity for such a writer to take trouble to misrepresent a fact emphasised by the Holy Qur'an itself, namely that Islam, that is surrender to God, the One, was the true religion of all past Prophets, that all truly revealed books come from God and therefore should never disagree in principle or in fact, any such disagreement being necessarily due to human interpolation or misinterpretation.

A newly revealed religion should naturally put matters right concerning previous religions, especially the one immediately preceding it, confirming the true side, pointing out and condemning accretions and omissions with suitable legislation modifications to suit change in conditions. So did Christianity, concerning Judaism, and so did Islam concerning both. To correct external additions, and omissions is what is meant by the Holy Qur'an being a watcher over previous Scripture. Such could not have been the case had Islam been

⁸ George Foot Moore; The History of Religions; pp. 398, 477, 478, 488.

taken from Judaism and Christianity as Jewish and Christian writers claim. Islam differs essentially in important respects from past religions as they now stand. It puts for example an end to all belief in human divinities, completely denouncing the doctrine of the Divine in the form of man which is basic in Christianity, as in Buddhism before it. This in fact is one main Qur'anic theme. A few quotations will serve to illustrate the point.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۖ وَقَالَ الْمَسِيحُ
يَدْبَنِىْٓ إِسْرَءِيلَ أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّىْ وَرَبَّكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ مَن يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ
حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ ۚ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ﴿٧٢﴾

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَاثَةٍ ۚ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ ۚ وَإِنْ
لَّمْ يَنْتَهُوا عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ
مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُ صِدِّيقَةٌ ۖ كَانَا يَأْكُلَانِ الطَّعَامَ ۗ أَنْظِرْ كَيْفَ تُبَيِّنُ
لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ ثُمَّ أَنْظِرْ ۖ أَتَىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

72) "They surely disbelieve who say : Lo ! Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary. The Messiah (himself) said : O children of Israel ! worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. Lo! whoso ascribeth partners unto Allah, for him Allah hath forbidden Paradise. His abode is Fire; For evil-doers there will be no helpers.

73) "They surely disbelieve who say : Lo ! Allah is the third of three ; when there is no God save the One God. If they desist not from so saying a painful doom will fall on those of them who disbelieve".

75) "The Messiah, son of Mary, was none other than a messenger, Messengers (the like of whom) had passed away

before him And his mother was a saintly woman. And they both used to eat (earthly) food. See how we make the revelations clear for them, and see how they are turned away ". (Surah V. after Pickthall's Explanatory Translation)

The Prophet stressed the fact that he was only human for fear of Muslims claiming for him what Christians claim for Christ. This was recognised and appreciated by H. G. Welles when he wrote : " Warned by the experiences of Christianity Mohammad was very emphatic in insisting that he himself was merely a man and so saved his teaching from much corruption and misrepresentation"⁹

Another illustration in point is the denial by Islam of the view maintained by Christianity that man is by nature evil, and that the body inherits Adam's sin when he responded to the call of the devil, leading it is claimed, to the statement of Jesus " My Kingdom is not of this world ", which led to monastic retirement.

Careful inquiry can find further essential differences between Islam and other religions - differences which arise from its being based on human nature and so will appeal to every one of sound taste especially to the Arabs. It is not in human nature, and less still for an Arab, to respond to such a command by Jesus: (Ye have heard that it hath been said an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also). (St. Matt., 5:38, 39) Again, undoubtedly the judgment in the Gospel relating to open almsgiving is somewhat harsh where it says (Dont give your alms before men, to be seen by them, otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven), (St. Matt 6), if this is taken, as it usually is, to mean that all alms should be given in secret The Holy Qur'an adopts a milder tone.

⁹ Outline of History, p. 533

إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ
لَّكُمْ وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٢٧١﴾

"If you publish your alms-giving, it is well, but you hide it and give it to the poor, it will better for you and will atone for some of your ill-deeds. Allah Informed of what ye do". (Surah Al Baqara, ver. 271).

Such consideration of human nature by the Islamic Call was far- reaching. It disconcerted religions already in the field, and moved many of their believers to become converts to Islam, especially when the Divine Words struck their ears

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ
الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

"And he whoso sekeeth as religion other than Islam (the Surrender to Allah) it will not be accepted from him and he will be a loser in the Hereafter" . (Surah Al -Imran, ver. 85).

And also the divine announcement, decided and clear:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ
عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

"He it is who hath sent His Messenger with the Guidance and the Religion of Truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religions, however much the idolaters may averse" (Surah Al-Tawbah, ver 33).

3. Gradation in Reformation

On a previous occasion was discussed the question of how a call for reform or revolution can gain ground and ultimately establish itself through judicious application of psychological principles, pointing out that such a call can in no way eradicate, once for all, long stanching beliefs and customs, but must disestablish and supplant them very gradually according to a well considered plan as occasion and circumstances permit. This was the course taken by the Islamic Call in the reforms it introduced. Gradation, where possible, was the rule especially in legislation, otherwise it would have been almost impossible for the masses to obey.

Fasting for example was not divinely ordained for a month all at once. It was first recommended for one day (Ashora) in the year, a day used to be kept by the Arabs in pre-Islamic days and also by the Jews of Madinah. Then came fasting for the duration of one month "Ramadan", with the licence for those who could keep it only with great difficulty to break it, provided that they should feed one poor man each broken day. Then came fasting without this licence except for the old. Under certain conditions, such as being ill or on travel, a Muslim can break the fast provided he should observe an equal number of days when he returns to normal conditions. Thus a reasonable institution of fasting was gradually established.

Similarly, drinking wine and other intoxicants became gradually forbidden. Wine being a common drink in pre-Islamic days, sudden prohibition of it would have had undue consequences. It is almost impossible to abstain all at once, and sudden prohibition may lead to indulging the pernicious habit in secret, which is sinful, may physically harm those who honestly observe it, or may even hinder conversion to Islam, which is the main aim in view.

Hence the reasonableness of gradual prohibition, and this was the course adopted by Islam. It first declared it more harmful than useful, and the wiser Muslims foresook it of their own when they heard God's answer to a question addressed to the Prophet concerning it and gambling.

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ
وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَفْعِهِمَا﴾

"They question thee about wines and games of chance. Say : In both is great Sin and some utility for men ; but the sin of them is greater than their usefulness". (Surah Al Baqara, verse 299 in part).

This pronouncement admits of considerable latitude of interpretation. Some of the Prophet's companions took it to mean prohibition, and some did not see in it anything so definite, while the Prophet himself contradicted neither interpretation. Then came virtual prohibition by Muslims to pray when drunk, the five prayers being distributed throughout day and night.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَرَىٰ

"O ye who believe ! Draw not near unto prayer when ye are drunken, till ye know that which ye utter". (Surah Al Nisaa, verse 43 in part).

Then came absolute and complete prohibition in the Divine words revealed in the second year of the Higraph.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ

عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

"O ye who believe! Wines and games of chance and idols and divining arrows are only an infamy of Satan's handwork. Leave it aside in order that ye may succeed". (Surah Al Ma'ida, verse 90).

Many of the duties in Islam, such as pilgrimage came to be

obligatory only later on in the development of the Islamic Call. At the beginning, the Call Was centred in establishing monotheism and eradicating polytheism. The main evil then prevalent in the Arab community was idol worship, a wrong which not only indicated degenerate thought but made all spiritual progress impossible. Against it the Islamic Call directed all its effort. And it needed it all. Idolatry, it will be remembered, was for generations the established worship, instilled in the young, practised by the masses, and sustained by a heirachy of temple keepers and by all who drew from it either prestige or material gain. That its exposure and suppression was the main theme of the Meccan surahs, is illustrated by one of the earliest, the Surah of "Al-Mozzammil" or the "Enshrouded One" from which may be quoted.

وَادْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا ﴿٨﴾
 رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا ﴿٩﴾

"And remember the name of thy Lord and devote thyself to Him with a complete devotion Lord of the East and the West ; there is no God save Him ; so choose Him, alone for thy defender". (Surah 73, ver 8, 9).

Most of this chapter and the subsequent chapters advance arguments to establish monotheism and condemn idol-worship as an approach to God, whereas in respect of Divine cardinal obligations in the Meccan surahs, prayers only is emphasized, alms-giving or Zakat belonging to revelations at Madinah.

The fact that the Revealed Book of the Islamic Call was not revealed as a whole but in gradual stages over twenty three years is due, amongst other reasons, to the developmental character of the Islamic Reform, lest both those who believed and those called on to believe be bewildered and overwhelmed by the complexity of the far reaching Reform. Questions used to be asked, and situations used to arise, and the Prophet dealt with each inspired by revelation or on his own initiative by reason under divine correction. Such verdict by word or by action became an authoritative pronouncement binding on all Muslims.

It is now generally admitted that any idea or call, party or body, crowding itself or its constitution with detailed articles, can scarcely secure the response necessary for its success; and those responsible for it may meet with violent criticism when matters grow difficult, and circumstances unfavourable, the hostile critic finding the crowded material subtle means for breathing his venom and defaming the cause.

It will be remembered that the Socialist movement started by Marx and Friedrich Engels centred around a ((Manifesto)) issued by both comprising ten articles which presented the socialistic attitude in a moderate practical manner coupled with a demand that the German government should put it into effect. Such practical moderate simple presentation laid the basis for the later success of the call of socialism.

CHAPTER VII. SLOGANS OF THE CALL

1. - Faith

The Islamic Call was an ideal call because it knew how to conquer the human heart, how to reach its utmost recesses, and how to direct it. It made faith its first feature, its first slogan, firm faith in the basic principles of the Call and its objectives; deep faith in the Oneness of God and in the Prophet's Mission; established faith unshakeable by tempest or cyclone; strong faith unaffected by persecution or torture; faith of the highest order in its most striking form. That is why the Muslims of old were given in truth the appellation of the Faithful.

That is again why the two terms Faith and Islam are usually synonymous as may be seen from the Divine text

يَتَّيِّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا ءَابَاءَكُمْ وَإِخْوَانَكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ إِنِ اسْتَحَبُّوا
الْكُفْرَ عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ

"O ye who believe ! Choose not your fathers nor your brethren for friends if they take pleasure in disbelief rather than faith". (Surah Al-Tawbah, verse 23 in part).

Again that is why Paradise is made the final abode of the faithful acting up to their faith. The Qur'an constantly addresses true Muslims as those who believe, that is believe in the Faith, the Arabic verb in fact being derived from the the very word "Faith" to emphasise that sublime trait that distinguishes them:

يَتَّيِّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَرْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَاعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَافْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

"O ye who believe ! Bow down and prostrate your selves, and worship your Lord and do good, that ye may prosper" (Surah Al Hag, verse 77) .

God will not accept anything done by a Muslim unless it proceeds from true belief. Of two mosques, one built in true faith, and the other in hypocrisy for untoward purposes, the Prophet was divinely ordered to use the former but not to stand in the latter, which was subsequently demolished in fact.

لَا تَقُمْ فِيهِ أَبَدًا لَمَْسْجِدٍ أُسِّسَ عَلَى التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْ أَوَّلِ يَوْمٍ أَحَقُّ أَنْ
تَقُمْ فِيهِ فِيهِ رِجَالٌ يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَتَطَهَّرُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُطَهَّرِينَ
﴿١٠٨﴾ أَفَمَنْ أُسِّسَ بُنْيَانُهُ عَلَى تَقْوَىٰ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٍ خَيْرٌ أَمْ مَنْ
أُسِّسَ بُنْيَانُهُ عَلَىٰ شَفَا جُرُفٍ هَارٍ فَانْهَارَ بِهِ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ وَاللَّهُ
لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾ لَا يَزَالُ بُنْيَانُهُمُ الَّذِي بَنَوْا رِيبَةً فِي
قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلَّا أَنْ تَقَطَّعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

"Never stand in it. A place of worship which was founded upon duty to (Allah) from the first day is more worthy that thou shouldst stand (to pray) therein wherein are men who love to purify themselves Allah loveth the purifiers. Is he who founded his building upon duty to Allah and His good pleasure better; or he who founded his building on the brink of a crumbling overhanging precipice so that it toppled with him into the fire of hell ? Allah guideth not wrongdoing folk. The building which they built will never cease to be a misgiving in their hearts, unless their hearts are to be torn to pieces. Allah is Knower, Wise (Surah Al-Tawbah, verses 108-110).

The true believer is he who rejoices and feels his faith growing and increasing when a surah of the Holy Qur'an revealed:

وَإِذَا مَا أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَقُولُ أَيُّكُمْ زَادَتْهُ هَذِهِ
 إِيمَانًا فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فَزَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَهُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾
 وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَتْهُمْ رِجْسًا إِلَىٰ رِجْسِهِمْ وَمَاتُوا
 وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

"And when ever a surah is revealed there are some of them who say : which one of you hath this increased him in faith? As for those who believe, it hath increased them in faith and they rejoice (therefor) as for those in whose hearts is disease, it only addeth wickedness to their wickedness, and they die while they are disbelievers".
 (Surah Al Tawbab, verse 124, I 25).

And the true believers are those whose hearts submissively and resignedly respond to God's revealed word at the invocation of His name:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ
 ءَايَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٢﴾ الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ
 الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ﴿٣﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ
 حَقًّا لَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾

"They only are the (true) Believers whose hearts fear when Allah is mentioned, and when the revelations of Allah are recited unto them they increase their faith, and who trust in their Lord. Who establish worship and spend of what We have bestowed on them. Those are they who are in truth believers. For them are grades (of honour) with their Lord, and pardon, and a beautiful provision. (Surah Al Anfal, verses 2-4).

True Muslims because of their faith, are strong and valiant, however limited in number. Their hearts, full of faith drive them to martyrdom, to persistence in the pursuit of Truth, to devotion to principle, and to sacrifice for the Call. By such faith the victory was achieved by the Muslim few over the polytheistic many of Quraish in the big battle of "Badr" To this truth concerning the unimportance of number compared with faith, God recalled the attention of the Prophet, upon whom be peace and gladdened his heart, by the address divine:

يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّبِيُّ حَسْبُكَ اللَّهُ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾
يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِصٌ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ إِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ عَشْرُونَ
صَابِرُونَ يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتَيْنِ وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفًا مِنَ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

"Oh! Prophet ! Allah is sufficient for thee and those who follow thee of the believers. O Prophet Exhort the believers to fight. If there be of you twenty steadfast they shall overcome two hundred, and if there be of you a hundred steadfast they shall overcome a thousand of those who disbelieve, the latter being ignorant and unwise". (Surah Al Anfal, ver. 64, 65).

No Islamic duty can really be discharged unless proceeding from faith and good will. This is expressed by the Prophet, upon whom be Peace in the words.

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ وَلِكُلِّ أَمْرٍ مَا نَوَى

"Actions are judged by intentions; and for every one what he intended". Well sound intention is one of the essentials of Prayer indeed of all religious duties. Otherwise what effect will the performance of these duties have on the human heart if it be purely mechanical ? One must be conscious of his religious duty throughout to do himself good and justice.

Inseparable from belief in God is belief in Fate and Destiny from Him, whether sweet or bitter, blissful or baneful. This attitude on the part of the Muslims of old made them fearless in the face of deadly peril, and made them even seek martyrdom. Such full faith is indicated by the Holy text:

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا
وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ﴿١٧٣﴾ فَانْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَىٰ دِفْطَرِ رَبِّهِمْ
لَمْ يَمَسَّهُمُ سُوٌّ وَلَا غَمٌّ وَقَالَ رَبُّهُمْ اتَّبِعُوا رِضْوَانَنَا وَآلَهُ دُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٧٤﴾

"Those unto whom men said: Lo the people have gathered against you, therefore fear them, (the threat of danger) but increased them in faith, and they said: Allah is sufficient for us! Most excellent is He in whom we trust ! So they returned with favour from Allah, and no harm touched them. They followed the good pleasure of Allah, and Allah is of Infinite bounty". (Surah Al `Imran, verses 173,174).

And now, with this faith firmly established in the hearts of the early Muslims and filling their souls, can you give ear to the empty unwarrantable assumptions made by Western historians that the reason why the Arabs joined Islam was only "their hope for the many spoils to be gained in the battles for the new faith, and their further hope to substitute for their waste rocky deserts the more fertile and luxurious lands of Persia, Syria, and Egypt"?¹⁰ Or that the "expansion of the Arab army was at best an emigration movement of energetic hardy people, impelled by hunger and destitution to leave their unproductive deserts and overrun more fertile countries occupied by more fortunate neighbours?"¹¹

No ! It was by Faith, and Faith alone, that the Muhammadan Call achieved its unique success - a success without parallel in the history of calls for reform. It knew how to exercise full spiritual dominion over man, evoke in him full emotional response, spur him on to miraculous achievements, and, in a short time, to expand North and South, extending his

¹⁰ The preaching of Islam by T. Arnold, pp. 46, 47.

¹¹ The preaching of Islam by T. Arnold, pp. 46, 47.

**dominion East and West. It made new generations and
breathed life into man's conscience epoch after epoch.**

2. - Good Deeds

This is, after faith, the second characteristic, the second slogan, of the Muhammadan Call.

It is work free from remissness, false imaginativeness, or day-dreaming; effective work for the welfare of the whole community and in the interest of the Call; work that drives reform forward with a sure, powerful hand.

For, nothing is more detrimental to nations than having life all leisure, to individuals than procrastination and laziness, to a call or cause than being based on empty theories and uncontrolled fancy.

The Islamic Call, knowing this fact, made good work a prominent feature of the true Muslim, thus coupling faith with its outward expression. Otherwise what avails faith without fruition into good work? One putting forth no effort towards its realisation, his belief will be useless, of no avail.

I know of no other call which equals Islam in exhortation for work and in insisting on it as a characteristic of the true believer. Islam denies monasticism; in the words of the Prophet, peace be upon him, there is "No monasticism in Islam". To devote oneself entirely to worship, to the exclusion of all other human activities, is foreign to Islam, as is known from the teaching and life of the Prophet and his companions especially his second Caliph and commander of the Faithful Omar. No religion as far as I know has ever honoured labour and associated it with belief as Islam did. To quote only one of many verses to the point in the Holy Qur'an.

وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُم مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ غُرَفًا تَجْرِي مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا نِعَمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

"And those who believe and do good work., them verily We shall house in lofty dwellings of the Garden underneath which rivers flow. These they will secure".

The Holy verse goes on to emphasise the noble meaning by an adage that shall stand for ever ; **"How sweet the garden of the toilers"** .(Surah XXIX, 58)

So much importance is attached by the Islamic call to good work because it is the only true expression of the reality and value of the creed. Belief may be passive, may not express itself in outward act. Such a passive believer is not worthy of the true Faith because true faith demands from one firm belief in the Call, through active participation in it on the one hand, and on the other, through enlightening those responsible for the call and its propagation as to the way he thinks best for securing it, and the difficulties he has met in doing his part! So will the call be served and disseminated far and wide.

This positivity God ordered His apostle to make plain to the believers in the Divine words:

وَقُلْ أَعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَى اللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَسَتُرَدُّونَ إِلَى
عَلِيمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

"And Say (unto them) Act ! Allah will behold your actions, and (so will) His messenger and the believers, and ye will be brought back to the Knobbier of the invisible and visible, and He will tell you what ye used to do". (Surah IX, 105).

In the light of this positivity, the Islamic community has been divided into three categories : the patients, the workers, and the fighters, and nothing else is indicated by the holy text:

فَأَقْرَأُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ عَلِمَ أَنْ سَيَكُونُ
مِنْكُمْ مَرْضَىٰ وَءَاخَرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ مِنْ
فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَءَاخَرُونَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

"Recite, then, of the Qur'an that which is easy for you; He knoweth that there are sick folk among you, and some who

seek of Allah's bounty, while others (still) fight for the cause of Allah ! (Surah 73, verse in part).

It is also this positivity which calls upon believers to actively seek their living thereafter having attended the Friday congregational prayers letting for the moment work aside:

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا
اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

"And when the prayer is ended, then disperse in the land and seek of Allah's bounty, and remember Allah much, that ye may be successful". (Surah 62,10).

Contemporary Calls preaching socialism, fascism and democracy put at the head of programs working for the good of the state that the produce of the individual may increase, and hence the income of both individual and nation. A successful state mobilizes individual efforts for the exploitation of national resources, putting to use every tract of land, big or small.

A strong state has little labour disturbances or union strikes, all being busy developing resources and increasing production. Only recently have states come to know and fully appreciate these facts with the advance of science and the widening horizon of human thought, yet they were known to the Muslim nation when other parts of the world floundered in ignorance and enjoyed it.

The Islamic call could and did recruit and enlist the services of almost every individual and Muslim believer, integrating all into one powerful whole working with faith for the welfare of the newly risen nation. There was no room for bloody disturbances similar to those previously stirred up by the tribes, and which in fact used up the vitality of the Arab race, threatening it with ultimate destruction. There was no room for that killing poverty which was the real cause for tribal strife. All took to work earnestly and sincerely, and the Arab mind found its way out of the narrow circuit within which it used to revolve, to a sphere world-wide, in order to deliver the

Islamic Call a permanent message of enlightenment and guidance to mankind. Only later during periods of weakness and disunion was heard the factious discordant tune, but there had been no echo of it at the time of the strength and glow of the Call.

In its slogans, in its distinctive features, the Islamic Call is a living ideal for every group, individual or nation. The groups believe and carry into effect what they believe in; the individual subscribes to a principle and works for it; the nation holds a view with unanimity and keeps on calling for it, fighting for it until it is translated into fact, however great the sacrifice entailed.

The Apostle of the Islamic Call was an outstanding example, the practical ideal to the true Believer, persistent in Faith, unshaken by calamity, unweakened by obstruction and unyielding under adversity. His history is true testimony of his entire devotion to his Mission voicing it loud and clear, and translating it perfectly into action for the good of the Muslim community.

Muhammad was the perfect practical expression of All the characteristics of the call divinely raised through him for the guidance of individuals and of humanity at large, the two most prominent being Faith and Good Work.

Let us, then, follow him and take him as our Master and Leader in every reform we wish to attain.

CHAPTER VIII SAFEGUARDING THE CALL

1- Against Meccan Danger

The light of the Mohammadan Call, it will be remembered emanated in Mecca where stands the praying place of Abraham and the sanctuary of all the Arabs then. and where dwelt whose privilege and honour amongst the Arabs was the keeping of the Holy House. That privilege gave them great prestige which largely contributed to their prosperity and amenities. To the Holy House, then, they owed their riches, their livelihood and even their existence. They were therefore alive to any danger real or imaginary, which threatened its sanctity and would unite to overcome the source of the danger at all costs. We have already seen the fate that the call of Zeid son of Nofile, prior to the Muhammadan Call, met at their hands, and the sort of resistance meted to the Prophet and his followers in the earlier stages of the conflict.

This accounts for the subsequent long cruel persecution of the Prophet and his adherents who had to seek refuge elsewhere. That was the reason for the two emigrations to Abyssinia and the great emigration to Madinah. The Meccans-planned the murder of the prophet himself knowing well that by so doing the whole movement would collapse as did Zeid's attempt against their idolatry before. They resorted to this desperate measure, having in vain denounced him to their tribes first as poet and magician, and then as a mad man, and having in vain gone even to the length of ostracizing him, and his near relations who sympathized with him, in a rocky defile for three years.

Against this prolonged Meccan danger to him and his Mission as pointed out in a previous occasion, sought the protection of other tribes as occasion permitted, especially during the pilgrimage season recommending himself to them as God's Messenger asking them to accept and defend him. Had they done, the centre of the Call would have moved to where the protection was available, with a much better chance of success than at Mecca.

The Aus and Khazrag who swore him allegiance gave him a way out of the difficulty. Here, then at Yathrib (Madinah), he would find a wholesome atmosphere permitting popular open preaching of Islam, capable of developing into a really Islamic city, and affording a stronghold for himself and his Mission.

But the people of Quraish were aware of the allegiance sworn at Aqabah and of its disastrous implications to themselves and their privileged position aiming as it did at protecting Muhammad and safeguarding his Call. They instantly embarked on a plot for his murder to avoid his emigration. Fortunately, through Divine help they were outmanoeuvred, and he escaped on the very night assigned for the execution of their monstrous plot.

At Madinah he found a more extensive scope and a more productive soil, free from the vehement resistance he formerly experienced. In a very short time he reconciled the Aus and the Khazrag tribes on the one hand and instituted a brotherhood between the helpers and the Immigrants on the other. He integrated them all into one whole, harmonious within, and showing one front without against all danger especially from Quraish. He sent out at intervals a series of expeditions, the first of which commanded by his uncle Hamzah, to intimidate Quraish, and to detect, if possible, any offensive measure they might have planned.

Thus matters continued for a time, each side waiting for the opportunity to settle the dispute forcibly in his favour. This led to the big pitched battle of Badr. It was admittedly a decisive battle in the history of Islam, because it strengthened the Muslims' morale and increased them to collective self-consciousness or group-consciousness, to use a psychological term, having given them the upper hand over an enemy of greater prestige, better equipment, and almost treble their number.

Still the battle, decisive in this sense, was not decisive in the sense of having annihilated the martial power of Quraish. On the contrary it impelled them to rally and put forth their collected strength that they might take their revenge and restore their lost prestige. They pledged the rich caravan which was the cause of Badr, cargo and all, to the meditated struggle against the Muslims. This resulted in the big pitched battle of

Ohod in which the- Muslims, victorious at the beginning were defeated in the end although it was not a crushing defeat, since it did not affect the prestige of the Prophet himself, as had primarily been the purpose of the enemy. Quraish did not stop there. They did their best to incite other tribes against Islam and the Muslims. This led to a series of campaigns the greatest of which was the campaign of Al Ahzab "the Clans" or of Al-Khandak (the Moat), as it is variously called. More than 10,000 strong attacked Madinah which was saved only through the prophet causing a moat to be dug in time at the vulnerable part, himself taking part in the digging.

On this occasion the Prophet's efficient tactics, the counsel of his near companions and the valour and faith his soldiers, stood them in good stead and held the enemy off. It was in one of the skirmishes, when Amre Ibn Wud with some enemy cavalry leapt the moat, that the youthful hero Ali killed the veteran knight in a famous duel. The situation became very critical when confidential news came to the Prophet that the Jewish tribe of Bani Korizah at the other side of Madinah forsook their pact with the Prophet for another with the enemy who was arranging with them a concerted attack. A clever ruse by a Muslim in secret cowed doubt between the enemy and the Jews at the same time God sent a tempest which caused the enemy to decamp.

This was for the people of Quraish a crushing defeat. The state of war continued between the Prophet and his group. On the one hand, and the tribes of Quraish on the other till the truce of Hodibeyah was signed when the Prophet with about fifteen hundred of his men arrived near Mecca (the 6th. year after Higraph) to pay a visit to the Kaabah. Though he did not fulfil his visit, which by the terms of the truce had to be postponed for a year, he was successful in extending the truce for ten years during which he would be free to disseminate the Call himself and deal effectively with any enemy that might arise.

The truce of Hodibeyah, though including some rigorous terms binding on the Muslims, showed great foresight on the part of the Prophet as may be seen by the fact that during the two years following it great numbers joined the Faith - larger than the total converts in all years. The truce remained in force

until its breach by Quraish when, with their connivance, an allied tribe attacked another in alliance with the Prophet.

He retaliated by leading an expedition of nearly 10,000 braves against Mecca. The enemy could not but peace fully surrender the sacred city and welcome Muhammad as God's Messenger.

Thus was Mecca conquered ; the long struggle terminated the principal danger which had long jeopardized the believers. More than twenty years had passed since the Islamic Call was first begun at the hands of a single man in the sacred city of idolatrous Arabia. The city had rejected its Prophet and drove him forth after thirteen years of patient preaching. In about eight years more the rejected Prophet entered the sacred city victorious but humble, forgave the past enmity of its inhabitants, purged its idols, and confirmed it as the sacred city of Islam. A great triumph worthy of the great Mission.

2. - Against Jewish Danger

The Jews lived at Yathrib with almost undisputed power and prestige through their control of economic and financial affairs and their exploitation of the struggle then raging between the Aus and Khazrag tribes. Their maxim then, seems to have been the maxim of the colonial system today "Divide and conquer". It is no wonder, then, that the Prophet's and his companions emigration to Madinah terrified them, especially after the reconciliation he effected between the two principal waning tribes.

They waited for the opportunity to declare their hostility to the Prophet, ready to ally themselves even with the devil that they might crush his power and regain their prestige. He was probably aware of their secret machination, but he let matters until they would show their hand, giving much of his attention to Quraish. Preliminary hostility began on the Jews' part by trying to weaken the Helpers and Immigrants by sowing dissention and doubt, and asking questions that would lead to disputes. Undoubtedly those Jews were a most serious danger to the Faith and its Call, seeking to disarm and undermine both, as may be seen from the divine text:

﴿لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا﴾

"Thou wilt find the most vehement of mankind in hostility to those who believe (to be) the Jews and the idolaters". (Surah V, 82 - in part).

If they could not openly show their hostility or make Muslims disobey the Prophet, they would try and weaken the faith of believers, using whatever opportunity might offer. One such opportunity was the change of the Qiblah, from facing towards Jerusalem to facing towards Mecca in prayer. They took that as a proof of hesitancy in belief. Their calumny was both stated and answered in the holy revelation.

سَيَقُولُ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَا وَلَّاهُمْ عَنْ قِبْلَتِهِمُ الَّتِي كَانُوا
عَلَيْهَا قُلْ لِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ

مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١٤٢﴾

"The foolish of the people will say : what hath turned them from the Qiblah which they formerly observed ? Say Unto Allah belong the East and the west. He guideth whom he will unto a straight path" . (Surah II, 142).

They also did their best to insinuate that Islam plagiarized much from Judaism. In spite of all, the Prophet bore patiently with them until they themselves would give the opportunity for their iniquities to be visited on them. As long as they outwardly kept the pact that the Prophet made with them when he first came to Madinah, they could not be touched. It was a particularized pact; referring to the Jews not generally but group by group. Therefore the breach, if any, by one group, would be visited only on that group not on all the Jews. Bani Kinana were the first to break the pact. An Arab woman selling her necklace to a Jew in their market was outraged by him. This provoked a Muslim who killed the Jew. The Jews avenged themselves by killing the Muslim instead of submitting the matter to the Prophet for judgment as the pact specified. The Prophet besieged Beni Kinana, for fifteen nights until they were forced to surrender unconditionally and to evacuate the city and move to Wadi El Kira, then to Syria. But for the pact, it would have been good policy to do this to all the Jews of Madinah in order to ensure security against attack from within when the Prophet should go out on a campaign. Such a general Jewish evacuation would have made of the city a single cohesive mass working at one hand, moved by one heart, that would stand firm in tempestuous weather and present one united front to all enemies from without. But it could not be done as long as Jewish tribes singly kept their part of the pact.

The example of Beni Kinana however, did not deter Jews from their purpose. Ka'ab Son of Al Ashraf commenting on the

victory achieved by the Muslims at Badr, made his recorded remarks " Is this true ? Muhammad really kill these nobles and leaders of Mecca. If he had really killed these, then the bowl of earth would be a better abode than its surface". Having assured the Victory he went directly to Mecca incite the Meccans to a fresh campaign against the prophet weeping their dead and stirring their enthusiasm !. He wanted to revenge the Jew's of Bani-Kinaka stirring the Meccans to revenge according to the old maxim " divide and conquer". He did it not in prose in poetry, in bitter hateful poetry which moved them to double effort in their preparation for the coming battle of Ohod.

It was natural that the Prophet could not leave Kaab and his mischief unopposed. He consequently sent someone who killed the dangerous for that he might an outstanding example for others of his kind. His death was- deeply resented by Bani Nadeer, his mother's tribe, and certainly terrified the whole Jewish community.

When the Muslim army returned from Ohod, already strained and wounded, some further action was necessary in the interest of security against possible danger from those determined still to exact vengeance any cost, or to wreck the whole Islamic movement. When on his way to the battle, the Prophet noticed their organized hatred which collected a contingent directed against him, though it was not actually sent to the battle field probably through a last moment fear of consequences. Sound strategy at any rate dictates caution and the elimination of potential danger threatening the rear.

The immediate cause however of the campaign against the Jews of Bani Nadeer in their strongholds near Madinah was their attempt against the life of the Prophet when, with some of his companions, he went to them as his allies to seek some help. They were besieged in their forts, resisted the siege for some time while, as the holy Qur'an describes it.

وَوَظَّنُوا أَنَّهُمْ مَانِعَتُهُمْ حُصُونُهُمْ مِّنَ اللَّهِ فَأَتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ
يَحْتَسِبُوا وَقَذَفَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الرُّعْبَ يُخْرِبُونَ بُيُوتَهُمْ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ
وَأَيْدَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

"They deemed that their strongholds would protect them from Allah. But Allah reached them from a place they reckoned not, and cast terror in their hearts so that they ruined their houses with their own hands and the hands of the believers" , (Surah 59, 2 in part).

The campaign resulted in their ejection from their settlement near Koba; being permitted to take with them what they could carry excepting armament. They went partly to Khaiber and partly to Athriat in Syria where Bani Kinana were exiled before.

Some of their leaders, among whom Haiy son of Akhtab and Sallam son of Abil Hakik, who at first went to Khaiber, sent soon afterwards to Mecca to enlist the aid of its people against the Prophet, working on their fears and bidding them beware of the growing strength of the Muslims. Versed as of old in the technique of sedition and conspiracy, and driven by their implacable hatred of the Prophet they, to gain favour in the eyes of the Meccans-, went even to the length of telling them that their idol-worship was better than Islam, the religion of Muhammad and that the Jews for that reason were ready to ally themselves with them, idol-worshippers as they were in the hope of defeating Muhammad.

One cannot but agree to the criticism passed on this very strange dictum of theirs by one of them, Dr. Wilfinson by name, in his book "*The History of Jews in Arabia*" , and wonder with him how the Jews could on that occasion abandon their religion which emphatically upholds monotheism and abhors and fights idol worship to the length of preferring the latter to monotheistic Islam,

Why did they commit that heinous sacrilege ? Simply to make a dual alliance against a common enemy. Neither the impulse of survival nor the thirst for revenge could justify the unforgivable act of preferring idolatry to Islam, a monotheistic religion like their own And it availed them nothing. It is true that they caused Quraish to attack Al-Madinah with their allies of Ghatfan in the campaign of the Clans, and that Haiy Ibn Akhtab succeeded in making the Jewish tribe of Bani Korizah join the Clans and break their pact with the Prophet. But their campaign miserably failed and Bani Korizah were utterly destroyed. As soon as the Clans decamped in despair the

Prophet and his Muslim soldiers by divine order upset a siege to the strongholds of Bani Korizah. The siege lasted twenty five days and ended with their unconditional surrender. They were judged by the head of their special allies the Aus, by Saad Ibn Moaz, who sentenced their men to death, the rest passing as spoils to the hands of the Muslim army which would have been utterly destroyed had the perfidy of Bani Korizah succeeded. Haiy, the instigator of the perfidy was among the killed.

CHAPTER IX CERTAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

1 - Liberation From Bondage.

A. From the Bondage of Slavery : (Manumission)

The Islamic Call first dawned in a world of darkness and of crying class differentiation. It was an era marked by the dominion of man over man, the utter subordination of the weak to the strong, of the masses to the nobility, and the flourishing of slave trade. Then came the Call bearing the torch of liberty, of human liberty at large, putting an end almost to slavery in all its forms. Yes, Islam put an end to enslaving and dehumanizing man, male or female. It prohibited enslaving him except in holy war, while, before, it was legal in peace and war alike.

When a legitimate war ceases there is, with respect to captives, a possible choice between two alternatives either their liberation for mercy's sake, or their redemption by ransom or against Muslim captives:

فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَضَرْبَ الرِّقَابِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَثْخَنْتُمُوهُمْ
فَشُدُّوا أَلْوِثَاقَ فَإِمَّا مَنًّا بَعْدُ وَإِمَّا فِدَاءً حَتَّىٰ تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ
أَوْزَارَهَا

"When you meet in battle those who disbelieve smite the necks until ye rout them with carnage, then make fast of bonds: then afterward either grant grace or take ransom till the war lay down its burdens" (Surah 47, verse 4).

Such a legislation is admittedly just and humane, with no feeling of malice or vengeance. Islam did not adopt a passive

attitude towards those already in slavery at its advent. It made liberation of slaves a way to earning God's favour :

❖ لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ
وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ
وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ
وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ

"It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces to the East and the West; but righteous is he who believeth in Allah and the Last Day and the angels and the Scripture and the Prophets; and giveth his wealth, for love of Him, to kinsfolk and to orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask and to slaves free" (Surah II, 177).

Further, the total funds assigned for charity are to be dispensed to eight classes, of which slaves and captives form one, the object being their liberation:

❖ إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ
قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ

"The Alms are only for the poor and the needy, and those who collect them, and those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and to free the necks (of slaves and captives), and to those heavily in debt, and for the cause of Allah, and for the wayfarer". (Surah IX, 60, in part).

The liberation of a slave is in Islam a basic part of the atonement for several sins. It is a basic part of the atonement for killing a believer by mistake, the supplement being blood

money to be paid to his folk unless they are enemies of the Muslims:

وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَاً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ

"He who hath killed a believer by mistake must set free a believing slave" (Surah IV, 92, in part).

It is an alternative atonement for not keeping an earnest oath:

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ
بِمَا عَقَّدْتُمُ الْأَيْمَانَ فَكَفَّرتُكُمْ^ط إِطْعَامَ عَشْرَةِ مَسْكِينٍ مِنْ أَوْسَطِ
مَا تُطْعَمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ^ط فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ
فَصِيَامَ ثَلَاثَةِ

"Allah will not take you to task for that which is unintentional in your oaths, but He will take you to task for the oaths which ye swear in earnest. The expiation thereof is the feeding of ten of the needy with the average of that wherewith ye feed your own folk, or the clothing of them, or the liberation of a slave, and for him who findeth not (the wherewithal to do so) then a three days' fast". (Surah V. 89, in part).

It is the primary alternative in the atonement for the sin involved in likening one's wife to one's mother in the matter of conjugal rights:

وَالَّذِينَ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ لِمَا قَالُوا فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مِّنْ
قَبْلِ أَنْ يَتَمَآسَا^ج

"And those who put away their wives (by saying they are as their mothers) and afterward would go back on that which they have said, have first to free a slave before they touch one another" . (Surah 58, 3 in part).

So is the case in the atonement for failure to keep the fast even in one day of Ramadan. Moreover, slave liberation is recognised as expiatory for sin in general, and is much recommended by the Prophet especially if the slave be a Muslim:

أَيُّمَا رَجُلٍ أَعْتَقَ أَمْرَاءَ مُسْلِمِينَ اسْتَقْدَّ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ عُضْوٍ مِنْهُ عُضْوًا مِنَ النَّارِ

"He who frees a Muslim slave will have for every organ of the emancipated slave, an organ of himself redeemed by God from hell fire" a great inducement indeed to manumission.

Islam is unique in teaching that a slave has the same chance of obtaining God's favour as a free man. In fact he is promised a double favour if he does his duty towards God and towards his- master, so much so that such a companion of the Prophet as Abu Horaira was induced to say "By him who dispenses death and life, had it not been for the struggle in the Cause of God, the pilgrimage, and my obligation to my mother, I would have preferred to die in bondage". Another unique feature is the emphasis Islam lays on the humane treatment of slaves in bondage. He who ill treats his slave by even one stroke can find atonement for it only in setting him free, as is evidenced by the Prophets' saying:

مَنْ لَطَمَ مَمْلُوكَهُ أَوْ ضَرَبَهُ فَكَفَّارَتُهُ أَنْ يَعْتِقَهُ

"He who smacks or beats his slave can atone for it only by setting him free".

In talking to or of a slave, the Prophet, upon whom be Peace and the Blessings of God, forbids masters to use such words as (my bondman, my bondwoman but to substitute some such words- as "my man, my woman, my boy" .

He laid for their further treatment the unique everstanding regulation.

إِخْوَانُكُمْ جَعَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَحْتَ أَيْدِيكُمْ ، فَمَنْ أَحْوَهُ تَحْتَ يَدِهِ فَلْيُطْعِمَهُ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ ،
وَلْيَلْبِسْهُ مِمَّا يَلْبَسُ ، وَلَا تُكَلِّفُوهُمْ مَا يُغْلِبُهُمْ فَإِنْ كَلَّفْتُمُوهُمْ فَأَعِينُوهُمْ

"Your slaves are your brothers whom God has put under your hands. He who has his brother under his hand has to feed him from what he himself eats, and to clothe him from what he himself wears. Do not demand from them what will tax their power, and in case you do, help them ! ".

This attitude was not a mere verbal expression to the men of Islam of old. They were true to every word of it, both as regards emancipation and treatment of slaves, as may be seen in books on Islamic biographies. In such an ideal practical manner, especially in those dark ages, did the Islamic Call legislate for slaves such a humanitarian code as they could not dream of or imagine, so much so that they followed the Call in such a number that the Prophet, upon whom be Peace, was not averse to call Islamic law "the law of the weak ! They did not only flock to the Prophet in great numbers, but great was their share in the early support of the Call and its later rise to power. They joined the faith voluntarily without any coercion from the Prophet. He had then no power to coerce, even if coercion were permissible.

He had only his conviction, his faith, and its strikingly attractive principles. Those Mawali suffered much at the hands of the idolaters, yet because of their indomitable spirit and firm belief, their very weakness was a source of power to the Call, proving to spiritual grip, attracting many to it, and in the long in helping to raise its super-structure. On the other hand the Islamic Call first laid the foundation of, and finally led to, their delivery from torment and bondage. The Prophet admitted them to his favour, his company, and his council, occasionally taking their counsel in war and peace.

A characteristic misunderstanding of the spirit and implication of the Islamic Call's attitude towards slavery has subjected it to the unfair deprecatory criticism of its enemies,

especially of certain western writers. They forget that slavery was rife under Western civilisation even towards the end of the nineteenth century, that the slave trade was so thriving and so profitable that armed raids, by the connivance of Western governments, were made on the helpless African tribes, to carry the Africans by force and sell them as slaves at the Spanish and American plantations. They forget too that if it is true that the Northern States fought the Southern American States to free these slaves, it is as true that the Southern States fought the Northern to keep them, and the North might have been defeated instead of defeating the South. The colour question in America remains as a testimony to the abysmal depths to which slaves fell, and the treatment they used to receive at the hands of the civilised West. One may further urge the subjugation of whole nations for the material benefit of Western countries, the doings of France in Tunis, Algiers and Morocco, and the treatment of captives and defeated nations of the first and second world wars, but this is needless in the face of the above more specific facts which should suffice as an adequate answer to those hostile critics.

When we come to the liberty and peculiar rights of woman, we find them sanctioned by Islamic law. Before Islam, woman had practically no liberty, and hardly any rights. It is recorded that she was inherited along with heritable property, but could not herself inherit. She could not participate in the activities of man. Islam gave her this important right, as evidenced by the holy verse :

لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ

"Unto the men (of a family).. belongeth a share of that which parents and near kindred leave, and unto the women a share of that which parents and near kindred leave". - (Surah IV, verse 7, in part).

Islam recognises woman in her own right, being addressed by God, exalted be He exactly as man is, in the holy verse :

فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أَضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَمَلٍ مِّنْكُمْ مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ
أُنْثَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ مِّن بَعْضٍ

"And their Lord hath heard their prayers (and He saith) : Lo ! I suffer not the work of any worker, male or female, to be lost. Ye proceed one from another ". (Surah III, 195, in part)

She is granted full liberty to accept or refuse whom she will in. marriage, her acceptance being a condition of the legality of marriage. In courtship she is afforded an opportunity to see her would-be fiance, and mutual attraction or repulsion decides the match. The husband has no authority over his wife's property, nor on her manner of managing it. That is full liberty.

And lastly, Islam gave the weak and the poor, slaves included, several opportunities everyday to stand on perfect equality with nobles and men of distinction, side by side, in prayers and otherwise. An annual opportunity for the abolition of all class distinction is afforded in the performance of pilgrimage where the Muslim is divested from all sewed clothes which might denote poverty or riches that none may appear overbearing through wealth, or downhearted through poverty and tattered dress. A sense of equality prevails among all pilgrims, not only in appearance, but in fact before God and man. Such a complete equality is meant to be a timely reminder of the absolute equality that shall be before God, the Lord of the Universe, in the future world, where shall rule the great principle that piety is the only criterion of merit which shall be apportioned according to faith and good works a principle that shall turn the scales heavily in favour of the poor and the down-trodden in this life.

Islamic cardinal duties are thus an emphatic display of the spirit of equality between men, emphasising freedom from bondage, and imbuing the Muslim with a sense of individuality and personal dignity.

Liberation from Poverty

Poverty is another sort of bondage challenged by the Islamic Call, a bondage which humiliates and strains man's spirit generating submissiveness and subservience. This tragic fact, in the form of its opposite, is recognized by the first surah revealed, in the divine words

كَأَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَيْطُفً ۖ (٦) أَنْ رَّءَاهُ اسْتَغْنَى (٧) إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الرُّجْعَىٰ (٨)

"Nay, but verily man is insolent (7) Because he seeth himself wealthy. (8) Verily, unto thy Lord is the return". (Surah 96, verses 6-8).

This foreshadows the inevitable doom of one given to ostentation and insolence as the result of wealth. Such a man will believe that through his wealth he can dominate men, buying them off and making them do his will. But why this thanklessness, this transgression? Is he to live on for ever ? And if not, why not curb his passion, and keep his pride in bounds ? Whenever man is tempted to be over-bearing and imperious he should remember the Great Day.

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ (٨٨) إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ (٨٩)

"The day when wealth and sons avail not (any man) save him who bringeth unto Allah a whole heart" (Surah 26. verses 88, 89).

It should be ever present to man that the span of life in this world is very limited, and that we shall meet God in the Hereafter. If we are not righteous here, how can we ever face Him with soul destitute of sympathy with the poor, with stony hearts indifferent to the distress of our fellowmen ? What will become of us when we are called by the Almighty to answer for every deed of our life?. The divine verse

إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الرُّجْعَىٰ ﴿٨﴾

"Lo! Unto thy Lord is the return " carries within it impressive warning and dreadful threat to those whose accumulated wealth makes them so ungrateful and arrogant as to neglect their duty to the poor and extend not a hand to the helpless.

What is implicit in the above verse is made explicit in other verses where God, exalted be He, promises abiding torture to the miserly rich and the grasping trustees who, far from being generous to the orphan, curtail his rights and deprive him of his due. So corrupted they become by riches that they refuse to glorify the Lord, Who gave it them, through active sympathy with His poor creatures.

Dreadful shall be the doom of such people, and disgraceful shall be their torment:

كَلَّا بَلْ لَا تُكْرِمُونَ الْيَتِيمَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَا تَحْتِضُونَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ الْمَسْكِينِ ﴿١٨﴾
وَتَأْكُلُونَ التُّرَاثَ أَكْلًا لَّمًّا ﴿١٩﴾ وَتُحِبُّونَ الْمَالَ حُبًّا جَمًّا ﴿٢٠﴾ كَلَّا إِذَا
دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا ﴿٢١﴾ وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا ﴿٢٢﴾ وَجِئْنَا
يَوْمَئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ وَأَنَّىٰ لَهُ الذِّكْرَىٰ ﴿٢٣﴾ يَقُولُ
يَلَيْتَنِي قَدَّمْتُ لِحَيَاتِي ﴿٢٤﴾ فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يُعَذِّبُ عَذَابَهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿٢٥﴾
وَلَا يُوثِقُ وَثَاقَهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

"Nay, but ye honour not the orphan and urge not on the feeding of the people, and ye devour heritages with devouring greed and love wealth with abounding love, Nay, but when the earth is ground to atoms, grinding, grinding; and thy Lord shall come with angels rank on rank; and hell is brought near that day; on that day man will remember, but how will the remembrance then avail him ? He will say : Ah, would that I

had sent before me (some provision) for my life? None punished as He will punish on that day ! None bindeth as He then will bind" (Surah 89) verses 17-26).

Such tragic picture as presented by these verses represents the general state of the wretched rich who close in their riches, leaving their fellow brothers to shift for themselves in distress. Nor did Islam neglect to set in relief the sort of pain awaiting such people in the Hereafter, that perchance their hearts might melt, and their souls might open. Their very treasures shall be their torment, as set out in God's words

وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يَنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٤﴾ يَوْمَ يُحْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ
فَتَكْوَىٰ بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ هَذَا مَا كُنْتُمْ
لَأَنفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

"They who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah unto them give tidings (O Muhammad) of a painful doom. On the day when it will (all) be heated in the fire of hell, and their foreheads and their flanks and their backs will be branded there with (and it will be said unto them) : Here is that which ye hoarded for yourselves. Now taste of what ye used to hoard". (Surah 1, 34 in part, 35).

Nor did Islam in handling the problem of alms- giving leave it entirely to the discretion of individual conscience or caprice. It made it an obligation, a compulsory duty on the able, to give to the poor annually in determinate proportions. It is a feature of the true believer to give it, as pointed out by the verse

وَالَّذِينَ فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَّعْلُومٌ ﴿٢٤﴾ لِلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ ﴿٢٥﴾

"And those in whose wealth there is a known right for the beggar and the destitute. (Surah 70, verses 24! 25).

These are only two verses of many dealing with the poor's due, the " zakat " , which comes next to the daily prayers in importance among the five essential duties imposed by Islam. It is to be forcibly collected if not voluntarily given, so much so that the first right Caliph, Abu Bakr, held it his duty to fight those apostate tribes whose apostasy consisted only in denying the Zakat due to the public treasury to be dispensed among the eight classes enumerated on a previous occasion, five of whom are people in want. He went so far as to say " By God, should they deny me of it even a halter, I shall be ready to fight them for it ".

Nor are the interests of the poor disregarded on the occasion of religious festivities. To them is due at least one third of the sacrifice offered in Bairam, the festival celebrating the end of pilgrimage days. To the is due all the Zakat to be distributed on the occasion of the festival celebrating the end of the fast, so much for every member of every family not in need, children included, if the fast of the elders is to be accepted.

Then comes voluntary alms for charity's sake. This is held to be a sure way to God's favour. And voluntary or compulsory, for all alms is promised not only God's favour in the Hereafter, but also His blessings in this life., safeguarding the giver's interests and multiplying his funds and earthly goods. In God's words

وَمَا آتَيْتُمْ مِّن زَكَاةٍ تُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُضَعِفُونَ



"Whatever ye give in charity, seeking Allah's countenance, this will increase manifold", (Surah xxx, verse 39 in part).

There is yet a higher object, a greater benefit of almsgiving, namely spiritual regeneration. Again in God's words:

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا

"Take, of their wealth, alms wherewith thou purifyest them and makest them grow", (Surah IX, 103 in part). This legislation of Zakat struck the balance between the poor and the rich, and helped to make of them brothers for God's sake, rendering violence between the two unthinkable. Nor did the Muslim rich of old go to excess in enjoying their riches, then added to by their share of the spoils of war. They took the recommended course of moderation, a sense of mysticism making them rather frugal in food and dress, "with a view" , as Ibnul Taktaki says, "to comforting the poor, and keeping their own appetites in check to habituate themselves to the best moral conditions through self discipline".

By this liberation from poverty, the Islamic Call restored self-confidence and self-dignity to Muslims, Arabs and all. There is nothing more detrimental to human behaviour than poverty and want. With this liberation there was no longer any room for the natural fear for the future of family and children should a believer fall in the struggle for the establishment of the Faith. It helped him, therefore, to go to battle single hearted when war came.

Again, this liberation helped the whole-hearted co-operation of groups and classes in the Muslim community.

It made it very difficult for class dissension to creep in. Hence the failure of Abu Tharr il Ghafari's movement to secure any mass response. It would have led the poor to hate the rich, being in certain points akin to present day communism. But it was doomed to failure, having no chance of even being listened to, the predominance of the faith and the consequent observance of its laws leaving no room for any complaint on the part of the poor.

The Islamic Call condemned any exploitation of the poor, as may be seen, for example, in the complete prohibition of

usury. The usurer, taking a mean advantage of man's need, is compared to one stricken by the devil, and the devil, or one in compact with him, cannot be sympathetic or humanitarian. The whole problem of pre-Islamic usury is fully dealt with in the following divine verses:

الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ
 مِنَ الْمَسِّ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبَا وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ
 وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا فَمَنْ جَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ فَانْتَهَى فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢٧٥﴾ يَمْحَقُ
 اللَّهُ الرِّبَا وَيُرْبِي الصَّدَقَاتِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿٢٧٦﴾
 إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوْا الزَّكَاةَ لَهُمْ
 أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٢٧٧﴾ يَتَأْتِيهَا
 الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَذَرُوا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبَا إِن
 كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٧٨﴾ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
 وَإِنْ تُبْتُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ لَا تَظْلِمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧٩﴾

275: "Those who swallow usury cannot rise up save as he ariseth whom the devil hath prostrated by (his) touch. That is because they say Trade is just like usury whereas Allah permitteth trading and forbiddeth usury. He unto whom an admonition from his Lord cometh, and (he) refraineth (in obedience thereto) he shall keep (the profits of) that which is past, and his affair (henceforth) is with Allah. As for him who returneth (to usury) - Such are rightful owners of the Fire. They will abide therein.

276: "Allah hath blighted usury and made almsgiving fruitful. Allah loveth not the impious and guilty".

277. "Lo! those who believe and do good works and establish worship and pay the poor-due, their reward is with their Lord and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve".

278. "O ye who believe ! Observe your duty to Allah, and give up what remaineth (due to you) from usury if ye are (in truth) believer!.

279. " And if ye do not, then be warned of war (against you) from Allah and His messenger. And if you repent, then ye have your principal (without interest). neither wronging nor being wronged". Surah II, 275-279

To help to put an end to usury, a debtor is to be given then opportunity and time to repay his debt when he is better off. No coercion or compulsion is here legitimate, since it would mean his further running into debt to his creditors, and consequently the better opportunity and market for usury so runs the holy text:

وَإِنْ كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ مَيْسَرَةٍ

(And if the debtor is in straitened circumstances, then (let there be) postponement to (the time of) ease"; (Surah II, 280 in part).

This, in brief, is the trend of the Islamic Call in so far as it attempted to liberate the faithful from poverty and its dire implications. A more detailed treatment would carry us beyond the scope of the present work.

The Bondage of Rigidity.

By this is meant rigidity of thought and slavish conformity to forefathers ways. Such mental stagnation is undoubtedly a sort of bondage, or one of its worst forms. Many thinkers when they use the word liberation in general mean the liberation of thought and the overthrow of what is false in old systems in this sense the Muhammadan Call was itself a splendid revolution of thought, and a far-reaching social evolution.

It was in essence a revolution against the erroneous beliefs and innovations bequeathed by ancestors against idol worship, against slavery, against poverty, against ignorance, and against class distinctions. This sweeping revolution was reinforced by a mental revolution designed to shake individual minds out of the tendency of automatically taking the stray tracks of thought beaten out by their forefathers.

إِنَّهُمْ أَفْوَوْا أَبَاءَهُمْ ضَالِّينَ ﴿٦٩﴾ فَهُمْ عَلَىٰ عَثَرِهِمْ يَاهِرُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

"They indeed found their fathers astray. But they make haste (to follow) in their foot steps. (Surah :37, verses 69, 70).

Islam preached that God is One a true creed reasonable in itself, and conclusively proved through contemplating the physical universe, its perfect design, and the beauty which pervades it. Such beautiful and imposing super-structure presupposes an omnipotent Designer exercising over it absolute unchallenged dominion.

The interaction between body and spirit, between matter and mind, between the different universes, and between Heaven and earth, these and the interrelations between these undoubtedly derive their existence from One Supreme being operating the entire universe. Such continuity in the chain of creation, such consummate precision and uniformity of natural laws which made possible the unfolding of their secrets to the human intellect day after day, and epoch after epoch, demonstrate conclusively the oneness of God, The Creator.

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا

"If there were therein God beside Allah, then verily both (the heavens and the earth) had been disordered (Surah XXI, 22, in part).

Such exhortation of mind to contemplate the universe in order to have an insight into its inner workings is meant not only to furnish the Muslim with additional proof of the truth of the Faith, but also that he might grow in strength and keep up with the natural development of the Call to its logical results. It is a perfectly logical call. There is nothing in it against Reason. Islamic prayers and worship put one in communion with God five times daily. If in between two prayers he gets forgetful of his duty towards Him, he is soon reminded of it by the next. That is why so great a stress is laid on prayers in Islam:

وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُّلْكُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

"Seek help in patience and prayer ; and truly it is hard save for the humble minded ; Who know that they will have to meet their Lord, and that unto Him they are returning". (Surah II, verses 45, 46).

Similarly Zakat, or the poor-due, stands for an adjustment between classes so that no class can enrich itself at the expense of another, and no group can enslave another because of poverty or ill-health. It removes the main cause of social strife if adequately maintained thus ensuring social cohesion and equanimity through mutual sympathy. Next to prayers, to worship, it receives the greatest emphasis.

وَعَاثُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ
تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا وَأَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

"And establish worship and pay the poor-due, and (so) lend unto Allah a goodly loan. Whatsoever good ye send. before you for your souls, ye will surely find it with Allah, better and greater in the recompense. And seek forgiveness of Allah. Lo ! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful". (Surah 73, verse 20 in part).

Fasting is a reminder of the bitterness of hunger and want. It is a training in self-discipline teaching patience and endurance. It also brings man to communion with God keeping him off frivolity as a safeguard against his ever becoming licentious. It is at once abstinence from food and drink, and from licence in speech.

Pilgrimage develops communal relations between Muslims all over the world, affording them with an adequate opportunity for taking yearly counsel amongst themselves for the welfare of the Muslim Common wealth, every Muslim community being well represented in pilgrimage. It regenerates the pilgrim spiritually to visit God's House and circle round it in "tawaf " as a planet round the sun, to stand on the Mount along with the vast pilgrim multitude in direct communion with God, repenting, lamenting, pleading and asking for divine forgiveness and future guidance. It renews and strengthens the bonds between the pilgrim and his Master, his Prophet, to visit the scenes of the Prophet's early struggles, where the Qur'an was first revealed, and the divine Call was first declared. This gives an idea why pilgrimage is incumbent on every able Muslim once in a life time. And believers do it even on foot if need be.

وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ
مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ ﴿٢٧﴾

"And proclaim unto mankind the Pilgrimage. They will come unto thee on foot and on every lean (animal of burden); they will come from every deep ravine,

لِيَشْهَدُوا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ وَيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَاتٍ
عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُم مِّن بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطِيعُوا أَوَّلَ الْبَاسِ
الْفَقِيرَ ﴿٢٨﴾

That they may witness things that are of benefit to them, and mention the name of Allah on appointed days over the beast of cattle that He hath best owed upon them. Then eat thereof and feed therewith the poor unfortunate.

ثُمَّ لِيَقْضُوا تَفَثَهُمْ وَلِيُوفُوا نَذْرَهُمْ وَلِيَطُوفُوا بِالْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ ﴿٢٩﴾

Then let them make an end of their unkemptness and pay their vows and go around the ancient House. (Surah XXII, verses 27-29).

So much for the reasonableness and the logic of the Islamic Call. Now for a unique feature of Islam which shows how far it has gone to safeguard the liberation of Islamic thought from bondage. What do you think of a religion which admits learned exercise of reason as one of the main sources of its legislation? This undoubtedly shows it to be alive to the needs of future developments necessitated by the progressive evolution of human society with time. See what Omar, the second right Caliph, says to Shorihe on appointing him judge at Koofa : ((Seek your verdict in God's Book (the Qur'an). If there, take it and consult no body. If not there, seek it in the Prophet's traditions, and judge the case accordingly. If not in the Prophet's Sunnah, then exercise your own discretion in judgement).

This exercise of discretion in judging problematic cases not specifically dealt with in the Qur'an or the Sunnah, and which of course should follow their lead, is an unfailing source of vitality in Islamic jurisprudence. It accounts for its vigorous survival inspite of dire vicissitudes. It rendered it perfectly elastic, capable of meeting the needs of place and time within

the bounds of right and reason, these being broadly indicated by principles and universals revealed in the Qur'an and applied by the Prophet under divine guidance. A first principle amongst these is the recognition of natural laws, governing the outer world, as divine laws to be sought and followed by man. This is repeatedly emphasised in the divine Wit, in the Qur'an, and legislation concerning them was disclaimed by the Prophet when he said

أَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِأُمُورِ دُنْيَاكُمْ

"You are better informed concerning your worldly affairs".

A second principle is the free exercise of sound reasoning. It was to encourage his disciples to discuss matters with him that the Prophet said to them:

إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ إِذَا أَمَرْتُكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَخُذُوا بِهِ وَ إِذَا أَمَرْتُكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ رَأْيٍ فَإِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ

"I am only human like you. If I command you concerning something of your religion, follow and obey but if I express an opinion of mine, I am only human"

Thus did the Prophet train his companions to the judicious application of their reasoning faculties to the problem in hand especially when not specifically dealt with by revelation. Omar was only following the Prophet's example when he gave Judge Shorihe the order mentioned above. It was in fact a repetition of the instructions given by the Prophet to Moaz Ibn Gabal when sent to Yemen. Like Omar, all the Prophet's companions did their best to follow the Prophet's example. That is why their verdict is very often held to be binding on Muslims. The principle of free but judicious application of reason in the domain of Islamic jurisdiction was applied, following the lead of the Prophet and his companions after him, by all leading jurists of Islam, especially by the earlier two Imams. Abu Hanifah and Malik and in particular by the later Imam Al-Shafiei, Malik's disciple, who first turned Islamic jurisprudence into a science which stands to this day.

This use of initiative and judging by analogy in the light of the Qur'an and tradition came gradually to a standstill in the era of collapse, and gave way to narrow mindedness. We hope that free judicious constructive thinking will again be restored to its former state in handling matters relating to the Faith. In this will be restored one of its basic essentials.

The above will show how far-reaching was the revolution in the sphere of thought initiated by the Islamic Call which made of the Prophet's companions true thinkers, and laid the foundation of the great schools of jurisprudence that appeared later. Right and truth became the aim of the early Muslims as a result both of their faith and of their untrammelled thinking. They obeyed Right and Truth and enforced them on all.

2. - Spirit and Matter Reconciled

The Islamic Call is an adequate answer to the materialists who deny resurrection and say "And naught destroys us save time". It maintains that there is a second life for which every individual and every community should work, where every one shall be judged according to what he had done in this life, be it good or be it evil.

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ﴿٧﴾ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ ﴿٨﴾

"And whoso doeth good an atom's weight shall see it then, And whoso doeth ill an atom's weight shall see it then" . (Surah 99, verses 7, 8.)

This line of true belief would naturally deter wrong-doers and mischief makers as far as they would be deterred at all from their evil way. At any rate, it should deter others from following in their footsteps. In case one is tempted to do some private or public evil and he remembers the Last Day in time, the probability is that he will resist the temptation for fear of dire punishment or for hope of future bliss. It may be contended that civil criminal laws are deterrent enough, but experience shows that people generally try to evade such laws, either through lack of evidence or through latitude of interpretation, while hardened criminals who would not fear any man-made laws, however stringent, will submit without difficulty to divine laws for fear of hell fire and divine vengeance. Then there are those who toil for their living in mines and quarries or in difficult plantations under trying conditions of heat and cold. Such hard toilers, unless provided with true consolation and genuine hope, are apt to develop ungovernable hatred and rage against the privileged rich, which will lead to social strife if not to open revolt.

For such, Islam is true healer and consoler, emphasizing to them the great truth that the future in the Hereafter will be determined by the eternal principle.

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

"Truly, the most worthy of honour in the sight of God is he who feareth Him most". (Surah 49, 13 in part).

Paradise is not restricted to this or that class of society, but embraces all who believe and do good, irrespective of wealth or poverty, colour or race. The Islamic Call has thus laid the foundation of peace and friendship between classes in place of probable strife and anarchy. It gave the spiritual side of life the predominance over the material side, and effected social cohesion in the Islamic community, making of its members brothers in Faith co-operating for the love of God in good work and piety, not in sin and aggression.

Islam is unique amongst religions and calls in general in its full appreciation of man's nature the needs of the body being recognized as well as the needs of the spirit, a fact which has much to do with its continuous quiet ascendancy with time. The nature of life in this world disagrees with asceticism and torment of body. The Prophet Muhammad himself was required by God not to go to the extent of self-torment in his active zeal and devotion to the mission as may be seen from the divine words

مَا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لِتَشْقَى ۖ إِلَّا تَذِكْرَةً لِّمَن يَخْشَى ﴿٢﴾

"We have not revealed unto thee the Qur'an that thou shouldst be distressed. But as a reminder unto him who feareth (God)." (Surah XX, verses 2 and 3).

Islam in fact makes it legitimate to enjoy the good things of this world with moderation, including reasonable adornment. In God's words:

يَبْنَیْ عَادَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

"O Children of Adam ! Look to your adornment at every place of worship, and eat and drink but be not prodigal. Lo ! He loveth not the prodigal". (Surah VII, verse 31) And again

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا ءَاتٰكَ اللّٰهُ الدّٰرَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا

"And seek the abode of the Hereafter in that which Allah hath given thee and neglect not thy portion of the world ", (Surah xxviii, ver. 77, in part). And yet again

قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللّٰهِ الَّتِي اَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ

"Say : Who bath forbidden the adornment of Allah which he hath brought forth for his bondmen, and the good things of His providing? Say: Such, on the Day of Resurrection, will be only for those who believed during the life of the world". (Surah VII, vers 32 in part).

The Prophet, upon whom be Peace, expresses the same truth clearly when he says : "The best of you is he who does not forego this world for the next, Or forego the next world for this. The best of you is he who takes from this and from that".

This sound standpoint which takes both sides of man into due consideration is unlike the Christian standpoint, for instance, which misconceives the nature of the physical body, taking it to be purely evil as the result of Adam's fall, and consequently has to be purged through torment and cruel suppression. Christianity thus considers man to be evil by

nature. But not so Islam. Islam pronounces human nature to be free from evil at birth. being capable of both evil and good according to environment and education. In the words of God, exalted be He:

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّيْنَاهَا ۖ فَآلِهَمَهَا فَجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا ۗ
قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ۚ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا ۝

"And (by) a soul and Him who perfected it and inspired it (with conscience of) what is wrong for it and (what is) right for it. He is indeed successful who causes it to grow. And he is indeed a failure who stenteth it ». (Surah 91, verses 7-10).

Also the Prophet, upon whom be Peace, says ;"Every child is born with sound nature but his parents make of him a Jew, a Christian or a magian". The soul or "self" is thus born free from evil, the evil coming to it from outside, by accretion from environment or by bad education. If both environment and education are right, the child will retain his natural soundness and be a righteous man or woman, and will continue so unless he chooses to change his course. God, exalted be He, says:

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ عَيْنَيْنِ ۚ وَلِسَانًا وَشَفَتَيْنِ ۚ وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ ۝

"Did We not assign unto him (man) two eyes and a tongue and two lips, and guide him concerning the two highways? " (Surah 90, verses 8-10).¹²

Recent psychological researches accord well with this Islamic view. The future life of the child is largely determined by his upbringing and environment influences, and not by hereditary factors. Certain modern schools of psychology,

¹² The two highways are the ways of good and evil.

notably that of Adler, the leading individual psychologist, confirm this view. Valentine, the author of the Difficult Child, states that a child is admittedly deeply affected by his environment in respect of traits of character. As to the view of Christianity with respect to torment of body, certain Christian savants condemn it, maintaining that pain in the end will conquer, mastering us instead of our mastering it. As pointed out by Aldous Huxley in his book " Means and Ends ". some see in sickness insurmountable obstruction in the way of devotion to God and hence to be counted a sin.

When Islam allowed private property and permitted free activity of work or trade, it did not overlook the right of the poor to a share of the world's good things, as previously pointed out. The early Muslims attained great wealth, but were not given to luxury or excess in disregard of God or the life hereafter. They could not overlook such utterances of the Prophet as:

"Develop a certain amount of austerity, for plenty is not permanent".

"We never eat unless we are hungry and when eating we avoid excess"

It was this deep spiritual attitude that made Omar Ibn Abdel Aziz reject the complaint of his Commissioner in Egypt that the tribute is getting smaller because the number of converts to Islam is getting bigger. His written answer to the Commissioner is quite remarkable in its trenchant rebuke and because it strikes the key note of the Islamic attitude "Exempt from tribute those who join the faith shamed be your opinion God sent Muhammad, Peace and the blessings of God be upon him, as a Guide and not as a tax collector. Would to God that no tribute be due, but Omar (meaning him self) is too unfortunate to have all people converted to Islam in his days ".

3. Struggle for the Faith

A new call and a new cause necessitate struggle by tongue and pen , and by sword and arm. Such is the nature of things and the logic of events. Once the Islamic Call was raised by Muhammad the Apostle, upon whom be Peace, it met with organized resistance from polytheist Quraish who embarked on a protracted struggle in defence of their worship. Their long cold war against the Apostle and his followers ended in a plan for his murder which decided, with God's permission, his emigration to a safer place where he could freely preach his mission and find staunch adherents capable of defending him.

At Mecca, Muslims were not in a position to wage war against the polytheists, since they were only a very limited number, living without means for defence or offence, amongst a stubborn enemy keeping a watchful eye on their movements.

Moreover, the Islamic Call had first to pass, as every call should, through the phase of peaceful preaching, depending on logic and persuasion according the divine orders:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَدِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ
أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ۖ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ



"Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and exhortation, and reason with them in the better way. Lo! thy Lord is best aware of him who strayed from His way, and He is best aware of those who go aright ". (Surah VI, verse 125).

Then came the phase of armed resistance when the Prophet was in a better position in Yathrib, and when fighting against polytheists was divinely permitted

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلَمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ
الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ

"Sanction is given unto those who are fought, having been wronged; and Allah is indeed Able to give them victory. Those who have been driven from their homes unjustly only because they say : Our Lord is Allah ! (Surah XXII, verses 39, 40 in part).

This is the very word truth for the utterance of which the Muslims were subjected to merciless war which drove them out of property and home, and which they were permitted to resist by active fighting. At first the battle was between the Muslims and their active enemies, Quraish and their allies. It was fortunate that their passive enemies, the Jews, had not then showed their hand and for a time kept their pact with the Prophet, otherwise he would have had to fight on two fronts.

As the war developed, the laws of war were gradually laid down by revelation as occasion arose, as appears from many verses of the holy Qur'an, of which the following may be quoted:

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾ وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِّنْ حَيْثُ
أَخْرَجُوكُمْ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا تَقَاتِلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ
الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ حَتَّى يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ فَإِنْ قَاتَلُوكُمْ
فَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ كَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٩١﴾ فَإِنْ أَنْتَهُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٩٢﴾ وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الَّذِينَ
لِلَّهِ فَإِنْ أَنْتَهُوا فَلَا عُدْوَانَ إِلَّا عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٩٣﴾

"Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you ; but begin not hostilities. Lo ! Allah loveth not aggressors. And slay them wherever you find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out, for persecution is worse than slaughter. And fight not with them at the Inviolable Place of Worship until they first attack you there, but if they attack you then slay them. Such is the reward of disbelievers. But if

they desist, then Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. And fight them until persecution is no more and religion is for Allah. But if they desist, then let there be no hostility except against the wrong doers". (Surah II, verses 190-193).

With the progress of war in this field, the Jews, of great power then in their several strongholds, began to break their pacts and be actively hostile, and were dealt with accordingly. The Prophet fought those other than the idolaters in obedience to the divine order.

قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ
وَرَسُولُهُ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حَتَّى يُعْطُوا

الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

"Fight against such of those who have been given the Scripture as believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, and forbid not that which Allah hath forbidden by His messenger, and follow not the religion of truth until they pay the tribute readily, being brought low". (Surah IX, verse 29).

Certain remanents of the defeated Jews sided with Quraish and other antagonistic tribes. Against them and all such, the Prophet and all the believers had to wage war in obedience to the divine order

وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ

مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

"And wage war on all of the idolaters as they are waging war on all of you. And know that Allah is with those who keep their duty (unto Him) ". (Surah IX, 36, in part). In explanation of this order the Prophet says:

"I have been divinely ordered to fight the idolaters until they declare that there is no God except Allah. Once they declare it their property and blood are guaranteed except by law, the question of sincerity to be judged by Allah".

The Islamic Call was addressed to the entire bulk of mankind in accordance with the divine texts:

قُلْ يَتَّيِّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا

"Say (O Muhammad) O mankind! Lo! I am the messenger of Allah to you all", (Surah VII, 158 in part).

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا



"Glorified is He who hath revealed unto His slave the criterion (of right and wrong), that he may be a warner to all peoples". (Surah 25 verse 1).

In addition to the above may be mentioned two decisive quotations from God's Book; the first

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظَاهِرَهُ

عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

"He it is who hath sent His messenger with the guidance and the Religion of Truth, that He may cause it to prevail over

all religions, however. much the idolaters be averse" (Surah IX, verse 32) ; and the second

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

"And We have not sent thee (O Muhammad) save as a bringer of good tidings and a warner unto all man kind; but most of mankind know not". (Surah 34, verse 28).

This being the position, fighting in the way of Allah had to be, and still is, a duty on every Muslim, male or female, if not for guaranteeing the freedom of preaching God's religion, it would be to defend it against all aggression. This explains the far-reaching divine exhortation to Muslim states and peoples:

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِن قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ
تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَءَاخِرِينَ مِّنْ دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ اللَّهُ
يَعْلَمُهُمْ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِن شَيْءٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ
لَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

"And make ready for them all thou canst of (armed) force and of horses tethered, that thereby ye dismay the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others beside them whom ye know not. Allah knoweth them, Whatsoever ye spend in the way of Allah it will be repaid to you in full, and ye will not be wronged". (Surah VII, verse 60).

Had we Muslims considered the far-reaching implication of this and similar verses which emphasize the importance of readiness, union and alertness lest we should be surprised by the enemy when no lamentation will avail, then we would have been able to repel the attack when it came, meeting the challenge wholeheartedly without the successive defeats we suffered, The enemy's sinister policy of ((divide and conquer)) would then have failed, leaving us unsuppressed and our power unsapped, the opposite of what we are now.

But Islam as it calls for strength and preparedness calls for peace and friendly relations with those who do not oppress Muslim's, though they be disbelievers, as is evident from God's words:

لَا يَنْهَكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ
يُخْرِجُواكُم مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ
الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٨﴾

"Allah forbiddeth you not those who warred not against you on account of religion and drove you not out from your homes, that you should show them kindness and deal justly with them. Lo ! Allah loveth the just dealers ! (Surah 60, verse 8).

The classes forbidden the friendship of Muslims, obvious from this verse by implication, are for emphasis explicitly mentioned in verse (9) of the same surah. This is obviously fair and just. Wonderfully fair and benevolent, however, is the order to give disbelievers at war peace if they ask for it:

وَإِن جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلَامِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ
هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿١١﴾ وَإِن يُرِيدُوا أَن يَخْدَعُوكَ فَإِنَّ
حَسْبَكَ اللَّهُ هُوَ الَّذِي أَيَّدَكَ بِنَصْرِهِ وَبِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٢﴾

"And if they incline to peace, incline thou also to it , and trust in Allah. Lo! He is the Hearer, the Knower and if they would deceive thee, then lo Allah is sufficient for thee". (Surah VIII, 61, 62 in part).

The implication of the last verse emphasizes the peaceful trend of Islam still more, because it means that mere fear of the enemy's deceit should not prevent Muslims giving him the

peace asked for, because Allah is sufficient to disappoint and repel him If he really means deceit, and also because the pact of peace can always be thrown back to the enemy if Muslims should have sufficient reason to fear his perfidy, as is clear from the verse

وَأَمَّا تَخَافَنَّ مِنْ قَوْمٍ خِيَانَةً فَانْزِلْ إِلَيْهِمْ عَلَىٰ سَوَاءٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْخَائِنِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

"And if thou fearest treachery from any folk, then throw back to them (their treaty) fairly. Lo ! Allah loveth not the treacherous" . (Surah VIII, verse 58).

All this is Islamic war legislation, and it leaves no ground for the allegation that Islam is aggressive.

It is not aggressive, but does not hesitate to repel aggression when attacked, as is clear from the injunction previously pointed out in this discussion, namely:

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقْتُلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾

"Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but begin not hostilities, Lo ! Allah loveth not aggressors". (Surah II verse 190). Islam then, being a universal religion which regulates life in all its human phases, of necessity recognizes and regulates the war phase of life, severely limiting its legitimacy, and conducting it on humane lines. Judaism also recognizes war but makes it almost purely aggressive for the benefit of one sectary nation on lines far from humane, as is evident from Old Testament wars which, to Jews undoubtedly served as a religious sanction of the Jewish atrocities which characterised the Jewish Palestinian aggression. Christianity apparently does not recognise war, since it recommends turning the left cheek to him who strikes the right. But present day Christian world is far from acting on this recommendation, being steeped in war and atrocities to the eye, conniving even at the unparalleled atrocities of the Jews in Palestine, perhaps also through Old Testament influence, the Old Testament being recognised holy by Christianity and Judaism alike.

In the matter of war, then, Islam strikes a natural middle course between the intensely aggressive and atrocious Jewish course, and the intensely meek and purely pacifist course of true Christianity. For war to be legitimate in Islam, it must not be aggressive, must be in the way of God not for self aggrandisement, and must be conducted on the Islamic lines ordained by God in the Qur'an and through the Prophet, and put into application by the right Caliphs, especially in the wars of Abu Bakr and Omar. On these limitations, war becomes a necessary beneficial divine institution, realising maximum good with minimum harm to humanity at large.

As the right Caliph Abu Bakr says in his inaugural speech: "No people can ever renounce the struggle for the cause of God without suffering ignominy and humiliation dispensed to them by God in return".

To the frequently raised question : "How did the predominance and dissemination of Islam come about?", we leave the answer to such a distinguished writer as H. G. Wells who says:

(Islam prevailed because everywhere it found politically apathetic peoples, robbed, oppressed, bullied, uneducated, and unorganised, and it found selfish and unsound governments out of touch with any people at all. It was the broadest, freshest, and cleanest political idea that had yet come into actual activity in the world, and it offered better terms than any other to the mass of mankind. The capitalistic and slaveholding system of the Roman Empire, and the literature and culture and social tradition of Europe, had altogether decayed and broken down before Islam arose.¹³ This may afford a further convincing answer to those who still argue that Islam was established by the sword.

¹³ Outline of History by H.G.Welles, page 13.

4. - Establishing a Unified Muslim Nation

It is fair to maintain that this was a major objective of the Muhammadan Mission. Its constitution and activity aim at creating a strong integrated nation of comprehensive unity. Islam was aware of the factious spirit dividing and subdividing the Arabs into prejudiced tribes and branches of tribe!. This narrow prejudice took a new ominous direction at the beginning of the Mission of the Prophet, peace be upon him, when the disbelieving tribes of Quraish, in order to suppress the Prophet's Call, allied themselves against Bani Hashim and Banil Mottalib, the nearer relatives of the Prophet who defended him, though mostly disbelievers, for kin ship's sake. In that unholy alliance the other Quraish tribes severed all connection with the latter, refusing mutual dealings of any sort, in marriage or in trade. This social boycott remained in force for three years, during which the Prophet and his folk were confined in a defile of Mecca where they suffered severe privation which they were only able to bear through faith in God and the justice of their cause. God's relief came in time, and the boycott was abandoned through the awakening of certain Quraish leaders of the nobler sort to the enormity of their action, and their finding that the moth had eaten up every unholy word of the unholy scroll as the Prophet had foretold.

This strong tribal primitive attachment was sublimated by the Islamic Call on the conversion of the tribes. being diverted to the cause of God, the cause of Islam itself, the tribal bond serving within the brotherhood of Islam much the same function as the family bond served within the tribe. It had to be so, giving another prominent illustration of Islam's recognition and right application of natural instincts, otherwise it would have meant the suppression now condemned by psychology.

Even a limited knowledge of the Muhammadan Call will suffice to show that it was addressed to all mankind as may be seen from the several Quranic texts quoted in this work, and from the messages dispatched by the Prophet to contemporary rulers and kings, notably those of the East Roman Empire, Persia and Abyssinia. This universal character of Islam, is again borne out by abstract reason, as the Mission is religious, and God is for all. The Prophet whom God sends after Christ must be sent to all humanity, especially if he be the last and concluding Prophet, since his Mission has to be the final word

on religion. The Prophet declared the generality of his Mission explicitly when he said

بُعِثْتُ إِلَى الْأَحْمَرِ وَالْأَسْوَدِ

"I have been sent to the Red and the Black". Judaism was restricted to Israel. As pointed out on a previous occasion, it admitted racial distinction, Moses himself, upon whom be peace, was not the last of prophets as the Torah admits. As regards Christianity, it was a kind of individualistic religion regulating the relation between man and God, and man and man, as far as individual conduct is concerned. Christianity did not concern itself with social systems, whether local and special as in Judaism, or universally general as in Islam. This generality is the main difference between Islam and other creeds. Islam is for this world and for the next world, for the individual and for the state, for governor and governed. It is the religion of human nature, recognizing natural laws in general, and those concerned with the nature of man in particular. It is the only religion that claims the unique distinction of identifying itself completely with the Nature of Man, as is evident from the divine verse:

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ
لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

"So set thy purpose (O Muhammad) for religion as a man by nature upright - the nature (framed) of Allah, in which he has created man. There is no altering the laws of Allah's creation. That is the right religion, but most men know not ". (Surah xxx, verse 30).

That is why Islam is the final religion, the healer of social ills. It healed the Arabs first from their faction spirit which disintegrated them into quarrelling integrating these very tribes and sub-tribes into a great united nation of this amazing social miracle God the Almighty reminds the Arabs in the divine words .

وَأَذْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ
 كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى
 شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ
 تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

"And remember Allah's favour unto you : how ye were enemies and He made friendship between your hearts that ye became as brothers by His grace; and (how) ye were upon the brink of an abyss of fire, and He did save you from it. Thus Allah maketh clear His revelations unto you, that haply ye may be guided". (Surah III, verse 103, in part).

It healed them from the greater social ill of racial, not merely tribal, prejudice, which made the Arab of pre-Islamic days look with contempt on non-Arabs, especially the blacks. Not even in anger would the Prophet allow an Arab to reproach a black with his origin, as Abu Tharr el Ghafari did to Bilal, mentioning his black mother. Bilal complained to the Prophet, and the Prophet sharply rebuked Abu Tharr :

"Did you reproach him with his mother? You savour of the Days of Ignorance". Islam admitted no criterion of merit save that of Piety, to the entire exclusion of colour or race. The Prophet declared in more than one public speech:

"An Arab has no merit over a non-Arab, unless he be of greater piety". Not only is racial distinction utterly discarded, but mankind are divinely reminded that peoples and races are meant to supplement one another in a general brotherhood in God:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ
 لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

" O mankind! Lo! We have created you of male and female, and have made you peoples and tribes that ye may know one another. Truly, the most worthy of honour in the sight of Allah he who feareth Him most". (Surah 49, verse 13 in part).

The Islamic Call made of Muslims one united nation in the life-time of the Prophet, upon whom be Peace, who, as God's Prophet and Apostle, was the head of the Islamic State established at Madinah to guide humanity in state matters, just as he guided humanity with his personal life in individual matters. He was Judge, Statesman, and General, in a state in which all males were ready at a short notice to act as soldiers, and which had the Holy Quran for constitution, with the Prophet himself as interpreter, surrounded by a galaxy of able faithful disciples and companions from amongst whom he chose his civil counsellors, delegates, rulers, and army commanders a model Islamic Republic in fact.

On the Prophet's death, his elected Caliph and successor as head of the state followed in his footsteps, preserved the unity of the Islamic community by sending his victorious armies against apostate tribes till they were reclaimed to the Faith. Further operations extending North and East were necessary to ! the faith against hostile border empires, and to guarantee the free dissemination and preaching of Islam. The Islamic wars, then, were declared in defence of the creed. Nor were the Muslim armies fighting to coerce non-Arab peoples into Islam, coercion curiously enough being legitimate only in the case of Arab idolaters. On the contrary, they were fighting coercion and tyranny in the neighbouring states to establish private and public liberty of conscience. As a final proof of this may be mentioned first the solemn Divine declaration.

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ
وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَى لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ

عَلِيمٌ ٢٥٦

"No compulsion in religion. Right is now manifestly distinct from Wrong". (Surah II, verse 256! in part); and secondly, the tolerance characteristic of Islam in the treatment of Christians and Jews and even of magians in subjugated area.

Complete equality lies at the bases of union in the Muslim community. Worship and other Islamic duties are equally imposed on Muslims: males or females, without exception or distinction. The females have here certain privileges due to their constitution, that is all. This applies to fasting, prayers, alms-giving and pilgrimage, the cardinal duties of Islam. Each of the first three has its characteristic manifestation of unity and equality within each Muslim community, and, being common to all, within the commonwealth of Islam, as was discussed in some detail on a previous occasion. But it is the fourth cardinal duty, the wonderful institution of pilgrimage, which displays in one great annual demonstration the unity and equality.

Muslims throughout the Muslim world, irrespective of colour, place, status or race. This again was dealt with before in enough detail. It is sufficient to recall here the wonderful effect pilgrimage has in regenerating and fortifying the faithful pilgrim in faith and spirit, performing it as he does in pure obedience to God, regardless of expense, fatigue or danger, which enables him to be himself a regenerating nucleus, if only for a time, amongst those who come in contact with him on his return home.

But it is the meeting of many thousands, hundreds of thousands perhaps, of pilgrims from all directions of the compass under the same conditions in the holy places every year that is particularly significant in denoting and emphasizing the brotherhood in the world of Islam beyond the possibility of disruption or dissension.

If such mass performance does not testify and contribute to unity, what else can do? At any rate the institution is there, living and practised, affording Muslim leaders an annual opportunity to meet and discuss how to make present day Muslims worthy of Islam, and how to knit them into one union as of old.

And now what are the essential features of a united nation? First comes language. The Qur'an did establish the predominance of Arabic in former days, and make it the medium of expression in almost every country converted to Islam. The Qur'an is still there and shall continue to be there through God's own promise, but unfortunately Arabic has ceased to be common language in the world of Islam. Why not

make of the Qur'an the means of reviving Arabic as the tongue of every Muslim, to allow mutual intercourse of Muslims wherever they meet ? It is wonderful that in countries like Indonesia, Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan, where Arabic is no more the popular language, there is still great zeal for the faith, more so even than in most Arabic-speaking countries. With Arabic as the common language once more, both Arabic and non-Arabic parts of the Muslim world will surely benefit one another and confirm each other still more in the faith by mutual exchange of zeal and learning, thus putting an end to the insidious foreign influences affecting Muslims in their home.

Again, is not religion still the major integrating force, especially when race and place are not there as common bonds between all ? In building a vast united whole, Islam has disregarded race altogether, putting in its place a far better and nobler bond, that of the Islamic creed, God's own bond on Earth. The Islamic Call preaches world wide brotherhood. The unity of mankind in ideology and mode of living according to God's laws is the aim of Islam. And it is the only system that can do it naturally and well. It recognises all heavenly religions as a first principle, Books, Prophets and all, known or unknown. It abolishes such barriers to unity as colour, place or race. It recognizes beforehand all proven truth, all natural laws, but condemns their abuse as has been done by Western civilization. It lays down the great principle that man is born free, announcing him subject only to God, his Creator. That is the first meaning of Islam - surrender to God the One, only. If the ideal of making one Nation of mankind is to be stably realized, it can be done only along these Islamic principles. It can be realized only within Islam.

A word now for Muslims, in conclusion. The unprecedented progress in Science, leading to the release of undreamt of natural forces and limitless atomic energy which have been barbarously abused by this twentieth century, a giant in science and a pigmy in morals, as evidenced by wiping out whole towns, population and all by air bombardment, atomic and otherwise - this and the fear of the hydrogen atomic bomb lest it would in the end annihilate man, civilization and all, have led to the proposal of a cosmopolitan government, and the abolishment of all national and racial barriers which stand in the way of world-wide unity. But is it possible to put into effect such proposal while the spiritual degeneration which led to the

failure of the less formidable League of Nations and the United Nations Organization still prevails?

At any rate that is the trend of humanity under the pressure of events. The entire world seeks general unity. In one form or other as the only means of self-preservation. But the necessary spiritual guidance which Western civilization lacks, the Muslim world has. Why not then take it and be united ourselves when the world seeks peace and safety in union but cannot get it? Why does not the Islamic World awaken to itself and the tremendous opportunity it has of uniting on Islamic lines, and thus teach the world once more how to unite?

Muslims are bound to do so in self-preservation, if not as a religious duty imposed by Islam. If they should realize Islamic brotherhood by uniting and working for the distant-future, they would regain the international prestige they have lost, recover their usurped rights, and liberate whatever Muslim land or people now in subjection.

But when will this Islamic Call be responded to by Muslims again? When shall we again witness the Islamic unity which dawned on the world early in the seventh Century and is still the wonder of history?

Let us hope that it will be witnessed by contemporary generations, through the Muslims awakening to their Islamic duty. By doing it Muslims will turn into reality again one of the major objectives of the great divine religion to which they have the honour and fortune to belong. We hope that Islam through a general genuine Muslim revival shall again come into its own.