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THE
**FUTURE OF ISLAM
IN INDIA**

A WARNING AND A CALL



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BY

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Abdul Majid Khan

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A WARNING AND A CALL

BY

F. K. KHAN DURRANI, B. A.

MUSLIM MISSIONARY ;

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THE FUTURE OF ISLAM IN INDIA.

I.

INDIA'S GOAL—INDEPENDENCE.

Recent political developments in India enable us to foresee with a clearness which was not possible a few years ago, what is the ultimate goal of India's political endeavour. Twenty years ago it was almost a crime to give expression to a desire for freedom and independence. To-day, complete independence is the professed creed of the Indian National Congress. We are proclaiming it from the house-tops and the cry : "India must be free," raised from a thousand platforms, has been caught by the masses and found an echo in the remotest corners of the country. And when a whole people makes up its mind to throw off the shackles of an alien race and take its destinies

into its own hands, there is no power on earth that can hinder it from the achievement of its goal. From what has been achieved during the short space of the last ten years, we can say with a good deal of confidence that that goal has come within a measurable distance of time.

Complete independence is the ultimate and natural goal of India. Dominion-status or self-government within the British Empire is only a question of practical politics. It only points out the lines along which the country has to travel. Complete independence at one gallop is an impossibility, and not even the most fiery fanatic seriously entertains the hope of achieving it in the immediate future. No doubt, it is a worthy ideal. It alone can warm the hearts and impell the people to mightier efforts and to ever greater sacrifices, while the ideal of dominion-status for purposes of political propaganda is a blunt weapon which cannot cut. People not versed in constitutional law can have small comprehension for it and for that reason cannot be expected to feel much enthusiasm for it. But while the slogan of complete independence is a good weapon for political propaganda, practical politics must take

count of the conditions as they are, and in view of these, dominion-status alone can be the next immediate object of India's political endeavour. But it is no more than a question of practical politics. The apparent difference of opinion among the leaders is only an empty war of words, and the Nehru school that has decided for dominion-status has done so only because it regards that status as a convenient stepping stone, a mere milestone on the way, and they have made a clear declaration to that effect. When dominion status has been achieved, it will be time to direct our effort to the attainment of the ultimate goal of complete independence. Dominion-status for India would be an artificial arrangement, which could not last for many days. The peoples of Canada and Australia can rest well satisfied with the status they enjoy in the British Commonwealth. The Canadians and the Australians speak the same tongue which the English speak. They are the same race, profess the same religion and have the same cultural ideals as the mother country. Common interest and sentiments of blood relationship bind them all into one nation. There is no such thing common between India and England. We are a different race. Our

religions and ways of living are different; we speak a different tongue and our economic interests and political leanings are frequently opposed to those of England. The only thing that can keep India within the orbit of the British Empire is England's superior military force and India's own feeling of helplessness against possible foreign aggressors. The moment India feels strong enough to defend her frontiers against foreign invaders, she will fly asunder from her British connection and declare herself independent. There is no natural tie of kinship that could induce her to consent to remain within the Empire.

Between dominion status and the attainment of complete independence there need not be only one short step. Before the World War, Canada was a self-governing dominion, and so is she at present. But in the meantime there has occurred a silent revolution of great consequence in her relations with the mother country, which makes her a partner of almost equal status with England in the British Commonwealth. Egypt is "independent," and has embassies and consulates in all foreign lands. Yet she has not the same status in the comity of nations as for

instance Turkey or Italy possess. Afghanistan before 1919 was "not independent," but except for the right of having direct diplomatic relations with foreign countries, she was more independent in the administration of her internal affairs than the "independent" Egypt of to-day. The truth is that sovereignty is a divisible thing and there can be a hundred and one stages between dominion status and complete independence. If India once achieves dominion status, she will find more room for rapid development to equip herself for a higher political life and by gradual indefinable stages achieve complete independence. A step to-day and a leap to-morrow bring us nearer to the goal until we achieve it.

It does seem hard for some to believe that such a consummation can ever take place, and those who would forecast India's future from her past have indeed good reason to shake their heads with doubt. Throughout their long history the peoples of India have never been a free nation. The despotic monarchies that prevailed in ancient India, the exaggerated notions about royalty embedded in Hindu tradition, the caste-system of the Hindus, and their pessimistic philosophies of

renunciation and transmigration with the eyes of the people fixed on former births and future births, which were in truth the outcome of prevalent political and social conditions, were all inimical to the growth of nationality. Patriotism, which is only another name for the feeling of nationality, can take its birth and thrive only in the soil of free democracy. Where the people are not associated in the administration of the state with their rulers and are not equally responsible with the latter for the maintenance and well-being of the whole, the idea of nationality cannot grow. Accordingly, when the Muslim conquerors came and swept the small Hindu principalities from off the board like so many pawns, they were able to hold undisputed sway over the country for many centuries without any opposition from their Hindu subjects. To the latter it only meant the exchange of one tyranny for another.

Nor was Muslim rule in India conducive to the birth of a nation. Muslim Emperors trusted wholly to the strength of their armies for the maintenance of their thrones. They forgot that they were foreign conquerors, whose real strength lay in a feeling of communal solidarity among

their Muslim subjects. Had the Muslim rulers of India regarded their Muslim subjects as the real supports of their power, and treated them with a special care, as the English have done with men of their own race, had they devoted some attention to the discipline, strength and expansion of the Muslim community by peaceful propagation of Islam in the country, no power on earth could have shaken the power of Islam in India. They put their Muslim and Hindu subjects on the same level, treated them alike and thereby ruined the foundations of their own power. It may be said that Islam teaches that a Muslim ruler should treat his Muslim and non-Muslim subjects alike, but it is also possible to stretch liberality to the point of suicide, and the Muslim rulers of India were certainly guilty of that folly. Islam certainly teaches that the Muslim state should treat its non-Muslim subjects with a liberal hand and should indeed make no difference so far as the rights of subjects are concerned, but at the same time it insists that the discipline of the community should not be relaxed. At any rate, Muslim rule in India was un-Muslim in character. It was a despotism in which the people had no share and

it ended like all despotisms. It seems difficult to get rid of ideas imbibed from school-books in childhood. Even well-meaning writers go on praising Akbar's polity and hold Aurangzeb responsible for the fall of the Mughal Empire. That is absurd. The Mughal Empire was a top-heavy edifice, which fell under its own weight. Despotisms prosper only so long as there is a strong man at the helm of the state. When the strong hand is removed, they go to smash. With the death of Aurangzeb, the central authority became weak, the provincial governors asserted their independence and the empire went to pieces.

When the English started the conquest of India, confusion and anarchy prevailed in the land. Central authority was almost extinct. There were rajas and there were nawabs, and each fought for himself. Hindus fought Hindus and Muslims fought Muslims and chaos reigned supreme. There were several powers contending for mastery and one of them rose supreme over the rest. With better political wisdom and a steady reserve of organised power away in England, it was as easy for the British to suppress the disturbing elements one

after the other and subdue the whole country to their authority, as it had been to the Muslim conquerors before them. Absence of national feeling in the country again decided the issue in the favour of the foreigner. That they should have been able to hold this immense country in subjection with a handful of British soldiery is an astonishing fact, but it finds its natural explanation in the circumstance that what we call India has been so far only a geographical expression or an administrative unit within the British Empire, and not a political unit. The peoples of India were a mass of individuals, who could be driven like cattle and so they have been.

With the advent of the British, however, a new era begins in the history of India. The immensity of its territorial extent was one of the many causes which hindered the formation of a compact nation. Railways and telegraphs have annihilated distance and brought far off provinces into closer association. English is fast becoming the common means of communication and has for the time being solved the problem of a common language. The example of British democracy, the dissemination of the doctrines of

English political philosophy, the network of schools and universities, the introduction of democratic institutions and the rapid growth of the newspaper press have brought about an awakening wholly new in the history of this country. India is discovering her soul. She is becoming ever more conscious that she has a self, an identity of her own. For the first time in their history, the peoples of this country have become aware that they are one people, and when the idea of being one nation once dawns upon the minds of a people, it is no longer possible to keep them in thralldom. The present movement for freedom is not the idea of an isolated philosopher, nor is it any longer true to say that it is the outcome of the declamations of a professional agitator. It is a mass movement and the desire for freedom has penetrated to the lowest strata of society. The heavy rock of public lethargy has been shaken from its bed of centuries and is bound to gather momentum at every step in its progress. Revolution in the mental attitude of a people, such as the one that has taken place in India, is a terrific force, which it is not possible for a handful of foreigners to check. It is unnatural that one

nation should hold sway over another, and when that other nation becomes once conscious of its identity, the issue is decided. It then becomes only a question of sooner or later.

No doubt, there are weak points in the armour, which it is our purpose to examine in the following pages. But there is no doubt that India is now awake and is finding the burden of the foreign yoke too heavy for her shoulders. She wants freedom ; when she shall get it, depends upon the time she takes to solve the communal question.



HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY.

It is commonplace to say that Hindu-Muslim unity is essential to the attainment of Swaraj. It is an absurd superstition and if it were held only by the ignorant, it would be enough to call it by its name and pass it by. But it is a superstition that like most superstitions has obtained almost universal acceptance. I have discussed the subject with Americans ; I have discussed it with Germans, and they all tell me that unless Hindus and Muslims sink their religious differences and unite, freedom is impossible. It has become an obsession with Muslim leaders in this country. Men of highest education and professors in colleges who ought to know better tell the same tale. It is therefore necessary to examine it at some length and lay bare its absurdity.

To begin with, Hindu-Muslim unity is impossible. One may well admit the possibility of a few gentlemen of sterling character and high

sense of public duty standing by their plighted word in fair weather and foul. But we are dealing with ignorant, illiterate and poverty-stricken masses of over three hundred million people and there is the third party, against whom unity is sought, with the full power of an organised government at its back and a full purse to reward service to itself and crown defection from the national cause with laurels. It is easy to the British, whenever they care to do so, to set one section against the other. It is common belief that the British policy of divide and rule is responsible for Hindu-Muslim disunity. No doubt, the charge is true, but to hold that policy to be the sole cause of disunity is a grave mistake. There are other and deeper causes which keep the two communities apart, and until we find out those other causes, we can never arrive at a true solution of the problem.

The so-called difference of religion between the two communities is not adequately appreciated. If religion denoted, as it does in Christianity, only an intellectual assent to a number of formulæ, which had no direct reference to the social and political life of man on earth, difference

in religious belief would not matter. The northern states of the American Union as well as of the Commonwealth of Germany are predominantly Protestant, while the southern states in both countries are predominantly Roman Catholic. Protestants and Roman Catholics fought one another much at a time when religion denoted divisions of political power. But since Christianity concerns itself mostly with supermundane affairs and has little to say about matters of this world, it can well be and has become segregated to the church and a special day of the week has been set aside for its practice. Whatever their differences of faith—and they are many and fundamental—the social usages and cultural ideals of both the Catholics and the Protestants are the same. Also, they speak the same languages and belong to the same races. Therefore, their union into one body-politic offered no difficulties, and they are politically united.

Islam is pre-eminently a religion of this world. It has much to say about politics and statecraft and social matters. But its institutions, the practice of which differentiates a Muslim from a non-Muslim, are strictly of a

personal, individual character, while its teachings pertaining to the social and political life of man are based on the broad foundations of humanity. We human beings may believe anything and profess any religion, we can live happily and peacefully together so long as we agree to meet our fellow-beings on the broad basis of humanity ; and conversely, if our religions impose upon us institutions and usages which prevent us from meeting our fellows on the basis of humanity, we can never be happy together. Due to the humanitarian character of the teachings of Islam, we Muslims have been able to live amicably with Christians, Jews and followers of other religions in many lands through many centuries and formed one body-politic with them.

Hinduism is difficult to define. It is not a religion in the sense in which Christianity and Islam are religions. Christianity and Islam both stand for certain religious beliefs and practices and moral ideals. Hinduism stands for none. It is like Judaism, in which one may hold any beliefs and reject any doctrines, but must conform to certain social usages which are based not upon the broad basis of humanity but upon racial or

national considerations. The Hindus are divided into a number of sects, which very often hold diametrically opposite beliefs. There is not one religious or philosophic doctrine, on which all Hindus may be said to agree. It is wrong, indeed, to call Hinduism a religion. It is the name of a social organisation, which distinguishes itself from others by its system of castes. If Islam and Christianity were abolished, churches and mosques will disappear, the world will be poorer for the loss of the moral ideals, for which these two religions stand, but for the rest, humanity will remain very much like what it is. If, on the contrary, Hinduism were abolished, there will be no loss of principles or moral and spiritual ideals, but Hindu society will be thrown into utter confusion. The caste-system is the bed-rock on which the entire structure of Hindu society stands, and when we demand of the Hindu that he should unite with others to form one body-public, we demand of him the moon, which it is not in his power to deliver. By his caste-system, the Hindu has erected a wall of iron around him which no one may climb over or break through. We may not eat with him ; we

may not drink with him and we may not intermarry. By our touch he becomes polluted and his food unfit for consumption. More than a thousand years we have lived with him, and he is as much a stranger to us to-day as ever. It is as though we came from different climes and did not understand each other's tongue.

The racial exclusiveness engendered by the rigid caste-system of the Hindus and their doctrine of untouchability are in themselves insuperable barriers, but there is also a fundamental difference of character between the two communities. The Hindu is a cool-headed man of business. Money is his chief concern and he values it for its own sake. We Muslims, like the rest of the world, work in order to procure the necessities and comforts of life, while the Hindu works in order to increase his hoard. For the joys and comforts of life he has small sense. He has no taste for good food and even less for clothes. (I am delineating the race by the average man, not by the Europeanised handful.) One *dhoti* carries the man through the year, whereas a Muslim or a European of the same financial status will have run through a number of suits in the same time.

That the Hindu can keep body and soul together upon almost nothing was the real cause which induced Canada and the United States of America to pass laws to bar the Indian labourer from their shores. For the man who earns to live cannot compete successfully with the man who earns to hoard. Jews have been living in Europe for almost two thousand years. They are the prototypes of the Hindus in Europe. They have often been persecuted and subjected to all manner of social disabilities. Even to-day they are hated. Not difference of faith but social exclusiveness and miserliness of their ways of living are responsible for it. The Christian who earns to enjoy life cannot compete with the Jew who earns to hoard and therefore hates him. We Muslims are a race of workers. The Hindus are a race of capitalists and money-lenders. Usury which the Muslim holds to be unclean is the chief source of the Hindu's wealth. The movements of Socialism, Communism and Bolshevism and strikes and labour upheavals prove abundantly enough that the workers can never agree with usurers and capitalists.

We see then that the difference between the

Hindus and Muslims is not that of mere faith. The cultural ideals and entire outlook on life are different. Until a re-adjustment is effected in these, unity is unthinkable. And, paradoxical as it may seem, the communal question is itself the offspring of the growth of nationalism and not something that was pre-existing and has become a hindrance to the growth of nationalism. In former times, the two communities were like two streams flowing side by side in their own separate channels. Being in equal subjection to an autocracy in which they had no share, there was nothing to divide and no cause for jealousy or rivalry. Only a few years ago, in small, out of the way towns and country places Hindus and Muslims lived amicably together. They did so because both of them were in a static condition. There was nothing to fight for. The dawn of political consciousness and the introduction of democratic institutions with their votes and representatives and rights, and the other accompaniments of democracy have, however, brought new hopes and new objects of endeavour. Had the Muslims and Hindus been one people, with the dawn of political consciousness they would have risen as one

body together. But the caste-system and the doctrine of untouchability had kept humanity into separate compartments. Communities existed in forms ; the new hopes of political rights put the flame of active life in them and hurled them one against the other. If political hopes could be killed to-day and political consciousness smothered in all Indian breasts, the communal question will too disappear. And it grows in intensity with the growth of political consciousness. Those who have been telling us that the present communal tension is bound to disappear with increasing political consciousness and have been preaching to us piously to trust in human nature have wholly failed to understand the situation. Human nature can be just as devilish as angelic. Self-interest, which is only another name for self-preservation, is a fundamental instinct of life and it is this instinct which is keeping the two communities at loggerheads. Communalism and nationalism are antagonistic forces ; but they are also necessary accompaniments of each other because of the peculiar constitution of the two communities concerned.

There is only one solution to the problem,

but that solution is not unity. Unity is impossible, and the following pages will make it still clearer why it is impossible. The very object, which we intend to achieve by it, is antagonistic to its realisation. The true solution in such a case, therefore, is not unity but elimination of one of the two warring elements. One of the two communities must be wiped out. One should either absorb the other or render it so harmless that it ceases to count. No state has ever come into being through pacts. The true foundations of states rest on force major and not on the mutual agreements and contracts of the constituent communities. Pacts are too fragile to have any reliance placed upon them. Unity is, therefore, not only impossible and unnecessary, it is even a source of danger to the national cause. The only sure thing is force commanded by one compact body, and that means that one of the two communities should go to the wall that the other may prosper.

It must sound brutal to many, and it is the brutality of it that makes it unacceptable to soft-hearted folk. I once mentioned it to an American scholar, and his face blanched with horror,

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but presently the light of intelligence shone in his eyes and he understood. Men who are wont to think in months and years, who do not possess a vision wide enough to sweep over large periods, must indeed find it hard to believe. They do not know that nature is a slow-footed old woman, who cannot be hurried. She must take her time and when she begins to grind, she grinds fine and without pity. Nature, "red in tooth and claw," has her own purposes to serve and has small regard for the petty tendernesses of those who stand in her way. And the weaker must go to the wall in order that the race of man may progress. "Go forth in the earth and see what has been the end of the deniers" is a standing challenge of the Quran, and the weaker ones, who confess weakness and would not grow stronger, are the real deniers of God's grace. God has created us straight of stature that we might command and not grovel in the dust. And the groveling weaklings must go to the wall, for they have denied the abundance of the grace of their Lord.

Whenever there are two wills, whose interests clash, who seek opposite ends, who differ

in their constitution and temper, they must sooner or later come to clash, and one of them must go under. So long as the Hindus and Muslims keep their separate identities, they cannot unite. The only solution of India's problem is then that one of them must go. Either Islam must reconquer Hindustan and with greater thoroughness than it did before, or Hinduism must wipe Islam off India's surface. There is no other solution possible. All this should be apparent to the student of history in theory. We shall now see in the next chapter that the process of elimination is already in progress.



III

HINDU AIMS.

A glance back over the events which have taken place in recent years in India makes it abundantly plain that the Hindus do not want unity. Whenever attempts are made to create better understanding between the two communities, Hindu leaders always manage to bring them to naught. Stopping sacrifices, playing music before mosques and interfering with *Tazia* celebrations are all modern innovations. Abusive books and articles in the newspapers are published and filthy attacks are made on the Holy Prophet Muhammad in order to hit the Muslims on their tenderest parts, and the whole community stands up to support and protect the culprits. These are certainly not very fine evidences of a desire for unity. Sir Richard Seeley, in his illuminating lectures on the *Expansion of England*, dealing with the problem of India mentions three things which are necessary to the formation of a united

nation : a common race, a common religion and a common language. The first two are not there, and the third, which was in the course of formation, the Hindus will not have. Urdu is the common product of the Hindus and Muslims. It is our *esparanto* and writers of both communities have used it for their vehicle of thought. That it was written in the Arabic character was no matter for objection. But with the dawn of political consciousness, it suddenly became anathema to the Hindus, who have spent no end of money and labour to oust it from the schools and offices and have at last succeeded in saddling it with several rivals, Punjabi, Gurmukhi, Hindi and what not. They would rather have a dead language than one which had any Islamic element in it. The anti-Urdu activities of the Hindus show to what lengths communal hatred can go.

Why do they kick against unity when it is offered to them? Firstly, because it is against the genius of their race. The Hindus believe, they are the chosen people of God. They are twice-born or regenerates while the non-Hindus are *mlechha*—unclean barbarians. The doctrine of untouchability has created an insuperable

barrier between the Hindu and the non-Hindu. It has kept the spirit of communalism alive in him through long centuries and strengthened it beyond the possibility of cure. Secondly, because they have come to realise that unity is not necessary for the realisation of their political goal. It speaks volumes for the political sagacity of the Hindu leaders to have realised this basic truth. They have awakened to the consciousness that they can win Swaraj without the help of the Musalmans and have made up their minds to win the empire of India for themselves. That the ultimate goal of the Hindu political endeavour is the exclusive possession of the empire of India is no longer a matter of conjecture. It is a matter of logical necessity and the ✓ Arya Samaj and the Hindu Maha Sabha, which between them divide the allegiance of entire Hindu India, have proclaimed it through the length and breadth of the country. The Arya Samaj started with the express object of making Hinduism the prevailing faith in India ; Swami Dayanand has laid it down as one of the chief functions of the Hindu state to drive out of the country all those who do not subscribe to the

Vedic religion. The Hindu Maha Sabha, which is without doubt the most powerful political organisation in the country, has no other aim before it than that of making India really and effectively Hindu-sthan. If it be possible to date the awakening of the political consciousness of India, when the whole country became aroused, that date must be the year 1919, when Mr. Gandhi entered upon his great passive-resistance campaign and General Dyer enacted the massacre of Jallianwalla Bagh and the Punjab was given a taste of martial law. And from what the Hindus have achieved and the Musalmans lost during the ten years that have since then passed, one can say with confidence that if things continue for a time as they have been so far, the Hindus will achieve their objective. In order that they should be able to do so, it is necessary that they should achieve the following among others :—

1. Improvement in physical prowess and the creation of a martial spirit ;
2. Organisation of the community ;
3. Possession of the finance, commerce and industry of the country ;

4. Possession of the government of the country ;

5. Expansion of the community by the absorption of those who can be absorbed ; and

6. Demoralisation and the gradual suppression of the rival Muslim community.

Mere enumeration of these points of strategy is enough to remind us how far the Hindu community has already advanced. The Young Hindu has been making steady improvement in his diet and general way of living. Not oppressed by any gloomy orthodoxy, he has begun to enliven his home life with music and otherwise, and it does not need much philosophy to realise that the happier spirit builds the stronger and more efficient man. The Hindu woman is not incarcerated within the four walls of her house like her unfortunate Muslim sister. They go about freely to breathe God's pure air and take evening walks either in groups or by the side of their husbands, and happier, healthier, stronger, self-respecting mothers are the surest guarantee for the improvement of the race. The Hindus are making steady progress in this direction. Hindu schools and colleges have better provision

for sports and athletics than Muslim institutions. They are a wealthy community and can afford the best, and when their activity on the playground is backed by the consciousness and hope of a higher national life, it is evident that their interest in games must be keener than of those who have no such hope. And to accelerate the rate of progress the Hindu Maha Sabha has undertaken to establish all over the country associations for physical culture and training in *lathi* play. Dr. Moonje, the President of the Sabha, has only recently brought forward the scheme of establishing Rifle Associations for the Hindu youth throughout India, where Hindu young men will be trained in rifle shooting. The Legislative Assembly has also passed a resolution at his motion to introduce miniature rifle practice in schools and colleges, of which without doubt Hindu institutions will take the fullest benefit. And no music is sweeter to the spirit of men than the crack of rifles and thunder of guns. The valiant Hindu leader has also another motion in hand to have provision made that Indians should be sent out at the expense of the State to learn the manufacture of arms and ammunition.

Hindus used to be a cowardly race, and had earned by their apologetic carriage the uncomplimentary epithet of "shivering natives" from the Europeans. But the Hindu is no longer a shivering native. By repeated doses of communal riots, organised with the purpose of discipline and inspiring courage, all fear of the Muslims has been washed out of their hearts. They are becoming a brave people and are no longer afraid of the Musalmans. That is the only reason why communal riots are so frequent. Fear of the Muslims is the surest guarantee of social peace, while fear of the Government holds only a secondary place. If the Muslims could become stronger and win back the prestige for fearlessness and valour which they have considerably lost, if the Hindu learnt to respect us as he did before, social peace would be better assured. In the meantime, he is winning the race and advancing triumphantly.

That the Hindu community is well-organised and that the organisation is being daily perfected are matters of common knowledge. The movement of Sanghatan embraces in its compass high and low, and every member is an effective unit, willing to dare and make any sacrifices. Here

again, the feeling of racial exclusiveness engendered by the doctrine of untouchability has been of immense help. The Hindu Maha Sabha has cast its net wide over the country and drawn the community into closer ranks. Inspired as they are by the same hope, perfect unanimity prevails among them all. One cannot adequately admire the single mindedness, sincerity, faithfulness and ceaseless effort of the Hindu leaders. Unlike Muslim leaders, who storm and screech on the stage and after the show is over, go home to forget it all, Hindu leaders are mindful of the interests of their community every hour of the day. They are not a company of stage dancers. Whereas speechification and pouring deafening floods of unmeaning eloquence—the Musalman adores the jingle of fine words—are the sole occupations of the Muslim leader, Hindu leaders work in quiet, behind the wall. Their leading is sincere and deserves all the credit for the progress the race is making.

Wealth, strong arms and organisation are the real bases of political power. All else is folly. The Hindu is a born shopkeeper. He values money for its own sake and knows by long

experience how to earn it. The commerce of the country is in the hands of the Hindus, Parsis and Europeans, of which the lion's share falls to the Hindu. A little while back, several industries used to be wholly or in major part controlled by the Muslims. They are steadily passing into the hands of the Hindus. Let us take one or two examples. Weaving industry was mostly in Muslim hands. The Muslim weavers were independent producers. Now they are generally hired labourers. Take the printing industry. Twenty years ago, with the exception of Messrs. Gulab Singh & Sons, the entire printing trade of Lahore was in the hands of the Muslims. To-day, the trade is controlled by the Hindus. The Muslim printers stand at the tail-end of it, and I know that they are not doing well, not at all so well as they ought to. A foolish superstition has obtained currency that shortage of funds has crippled the Muslim workers. Having a profound distrust of this kind of bazaar wisdom and having small respect for the fatalistic shaking of heads over want of money, I was led to enquire and have found the following to be the real causes. The Musalman has no use for books or journals, and does

not care to waste his money on them. He prefers to have them by "loan" or "in the name of Allah and His Prophet"—*i.e.*, in charity. So by his passive resistance he hits both the printer and the writer. The Hindu is anxious to increase his knowledge, reads much and being a born man of business is willing to pay for what he reads. And by increasing his stock of knowledge the Hindu adds to his own efficiency and by his patronage to the efficiency of Hindu writer. A Muslim gentleman writes books for students, and gives them to Hindu booksellers for sale, Muslim booksellers not being in existence. A Hindu gentleman also writes a similar book, and entrusts it to a Hindu bookseller, and it is up to the latter to see which should sell and which should not. The Hindu writer's book is placed before every customer, and the Muslim's only before those who ask for it. The Muslim writer finds no return for his labour and expense and the Muslim printer loses his job. Government departments are passing into Hindu hands, and with that the bulk of the printing work of the various departments goes to the Hindu printing presses. The passive resistance of the Muslim community against knowledge

in this way drives the printing trade, the paper trade and book trade into Hindu hands. So, for one cause or another industry is gradually passing from the Muslim hands into those of the Hindus.

Money-lending is a national concern of the Hindus and banking comes natural to them. More than half the agricultural population of the country is in the clutches of the Hindu money-lender, who enjoys a revenue of several crores of rupees annually from interest in the Punjab alone. The banking trade of India is almost entirely in the hands of the Hindus. They are also taking possession of the government of the country. The Muslims had started late in the race, but they were making steady progress, until the fateful days of non-co-operation came, when in a few short months they lost almost all that they had gained in the course of fifty years, and their loss was the gain of the Hindus. If the country enters upon another campaign of non-co-operation as the Congress has promised that it should do next year and the Musalmans take part in it, which their temper and character show that they are likely to do, Hindu India will be able to make another giant stride to outstrip the Musalmans for all time.

The Hindu's grip on the government of the country will thenceforward become unshakable.

The Hindus are supposed to number about two hundred and twenty millions. Of these, about seventy millions are untouchables, who can by no means be termed Hindus. These untouchables are also becoming conscious of their separate identity and their existence as a separate community is a source of great danger to Hindu aspirations. In order to absorb them and make them part of the Hindu body-politic, Hindu leaders have resolved to abolish untouchability and are straining every nerve to achieve their object. Valiant battles have already been fought over this issue. The untouchables are striving to put themselves on a basis of equality with the caste-Hindus ; they already bear Hindu names, and the Hindu leaders are reaching out their hands to receive them. Forces of orthodoxy cannot long stand in the way. New ideas are in the air and a new spirit is abroad, which are bound to vanquish and disperse the ranks of orthodoxy. Untouchability is an inhuman thing. The conscience of the world is rising in revolt against it, and the Hindu mind is steadily awakening to the injustice

and brutality of it. The idea has taken birth ; it is bound to grow and gather strength and success is only a question of time. Much has already been accomplished ; the Indian National Congress has undertaken to abolish untouchability and success is not far distant.'

The term 'religion' cannot be applied to Hinduism without violence. It is a social system based on birth and race. Hinduism has, therefore, been a static and not a missionary religion. When a person has once adopted a "revealed" religion, he passes out of Hinduism for all time, and neither he nor any of his descendants can ever re-enter its ranks. Driven by a political necessity, the Hindus have at last decided to stop the drain and make Hinduism a missionary faith. The Arya Samaj entered upon the field of religious propaganda about half a century ago, but as it was a purely religious propaganda based upon a religious doctrine, orthodox Hindus stood aloof and the Arya Samaj achieved next to nothing, beyond poisoning the public atmosphere by its unmeaning religious wranglings and disputes and its wholesale abuse, oftentimes of a very low character, of the non-Hindu religions and their

founders. But when a few years ago the Hindu leaders awakened to the political significance of religious propaganda, a sudden wave of enthusiasm passed over the country and Hindus of all sects and shades of opinion, orthodox and heterodox, stood up to widen the ranks of Hinduism and propagate their faith among the non-Hindus. The Muslims being the chief hindrance to the attainment of their political aims became the principal object of their hatred and their missionary activity. During the last seven years, the country has been resounding with the cries of Shudhi, and countless thousands of Muslims have been won over to Hinduism and absorbed in Hindu society. Unlike the Muslim missionary efforts, the Hindu activity is not spasmodic. They are working quietly and steadily. The Hindu community is expanding and it is doing so mostly at the expense of the Muslim community, although no opportunity is lost to absorb Christians as well. The pace of progress in this direction will become quicker as time goes by, and if nothing occurs to turn the tide and change the course of events, there is no room for doubt whatever, that in twenty or thirty years, the

Muslim community will become too crippled to count as a factor of importance in Indian politics.

Of the six lines of strategy mentioned above, we have seen that the Hindu is advancing steadily along every one. He has already achieved much, and judging by his past achievements he has a fair prospect of being able one day to wipe Islam out and win the empire of India for himself alone.



THE SUICIDES.

It is time that we put the Muslim community before the mirror and studied its features. Every week brings fresh experiences and reluctantly I am beginning to be of the opinion of those who drew ghastly pictures of the Muslim community when on my arrival here three months ago I went to ask for their views. The streets of Lahore are full of beggars, who thrust their distorted limbs and running sores under one's nose, but instead of exciting mercy make one turn the face away with disgust. Loathing takes possession of one's soul before pity could move and charity stretch its hand. And it is possible that some of my readers whose hearts have become hardened by the frequency of experience, who have become too used to feel, may not agree with me that the mirror reflects ugly features. But I protest that this book has been written for those who have courage to look facts in the face and would not turn their heads away. I would ask

them to take up their slates, put two and two together and see if they do not make four.

I call a people community when they possess a common aim, a community of interests, a common soul. If they lack these, they cannot be called a community; they are a rabble. Judged by this standard, the Muslims of India can hardly be called a community. Can they? Have they a common object before them? Had they ever one? When the Muslims came to this country, after the immediate task of conquest was finished, they settled down and became one with the natives without a common political or any other object before them. With the exception of a few saints who also came from outside, the Indian Muslims made no effort even to spread their faith, nor did they care to keep an Islamic social system among themselves. They did not even care to support their Muslim rulers, for they quite often fought under Hindu princes against Muslim rulers, and the reproach so often made by the Hindus that Indian Muslims are "Muslims first and Indians afterwards" is historically a lie. Had the Muslims ever thought so, they would be still the rulers of India. So long as the Muslim kings sat

on the throne of Delhi, the Muslims never developed a communal feeling. After the Mutiny, after the British power had become well-established, and the Hindus, who had already taken a lead in the race, began to clamour for more rights and to oust the Muslims from their share in the administration of the country, the Muslims also awoke to the fact that they were one community separate and distinct from the Hindu community. That great statesman, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, and his great lieutenant Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, had the clearness of vision to realise that the interests of the Muslims were distinct and opposite to those of the Hindus. To save them from exploitation and from being trodden under the heels of the Hindu community, it became necessary to draw them together into a community, and while the Educational Conference had been established to look after the educational interests of the Muslims, the Muslim League was established to protect their political rights. In the first decade of the present century the Muslims were already a compact body with a decided and unanimous voice which carried weight. Doubtless, the Muslim League had no positive programme of

constructive work before it. It met year after year, passed a few resolutions and dispersed. Its policy was defensive, asking for rights which were our due, but placing nothing before the community, by acting upon which it could grow in stature and strength. But it was better than nothing, and so long as it kept alive the sentiment of communal oneness among the Muslims, it did great good.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's policy was sanest and safest for the Muslims and had we kept to the path which he had laid down for us, we would have been saved from many a misfortune. But a rapid succession of events at home and abroad : the Turko-Italian War of 1911-12, when the unarmed Muslim population was massacred in the streets of Tripoli and England, professedly neutral but in private understanding with Italy, barred the passage of the Turkish troops through Egypt, although Egypt was still, though nominally, under the suzerainty of Turkey ; the repeal of the Partition of Bengal in December 1911 ; the Balkan War of 1912-13, during which the responsible British ministers openly jubilated over Turkish reverses and the attitude of England throughout

the struggle was most dishonourable ; the policy of repression towards Muslim newspapers in this country in connection with Balkan War for reasons which were clear to nobody ; the desecration of a mosque at Cawnpore and the subsequent massacre of the Muslims in the streets of that city, and more repression of newspapers with confiscation of securities and printing presses ; the entry of Turkey in the World-War and the defection of the Sherif of Mecca in favour of the English through British gold ; the unjust and humiliating treaty imposed upon Turkey which reduced that once mighty empire to the status of a Native Indian State ; the instigation to Greece by Britain to attack Turkey in Asia Minor while the Turks themselves were being hemmed and crippled by the Allies from defending their home ; the propaganda by British divines to take permanent possession of Constantinople and turn the historic mosque of St. Sophia into a church ;— these and other events of the same kind flung the Muslims of India at last into the arms of the Hindu community. Their blood was mixed in Jallianwala Bagh, and since then Muslims of India have lost their separate identity. By the unholy

alliance of 1919-1922 the Muslims became an appendage of the Hindu community, and the mania of Hindu-Muslim unity which still lurks in many heads is the deadly disease which threatens the very existence of Islam in India.

Up to the autumn of 1913, the Muslims of India followed a fairly safe course ; from 1913 to 1918 they vascillated, but in the closing days of 1918 they entered into an alliance which plunged them at one leap into a sea of troubles which seems to have neither bottom nor shore. I ascribe most of the present difficulties of the community to the Hindu-Muslim alliance of 1919—1922, and in order that the reader may be able to appreciate the *raison* of my judgments, I lay down here a political principle, which, so far as my knowledge goes, finds its sanction in the Holy Quran, in the practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and in the conduct of every politically successful nation. It is a principle which the Muslims should well understand and digest and keep steadily before their mind's eye, for we are passing through fateful days and neglect of this principle of plain commonsense is likely to undermine our existence in this country. My

political creed is this : In a country, the population of which is harmonious, as in Afghanistan or Persia, whose people have the same national character, have the same political and economic interests and are culturally united, it is well for the people if their different schools of thought deal with full frankness with one another, trust one another wholly and are prepared to make utmost sacrifices. For even if a party or section finds itself cheated afterwards, evil is done but not so great if the country does not come to grief thereby. But in a country like India, where there are two rival communities, whose traditions, national characteristics and cultural ideals are different and whose economic and political interests clash, if at any time for any particular cause they are called upon to unite against a third party, in the course of their united activity the leaders and the members of the two communities should at no time lose sight of the permanent interests of the community to which they belong. I mean, they should be prepared for all contingencies. Political rights or any rights whatsoever cannot be left to the goodwill and fair promises of those whose interests are naturally opposed to

our own. Behind every treaty between two contending nations stands always the force of armaments, and promises and contracts prove so many scraps of paper, if one of the parties lacks the physical strength of enforcing those contracts. For politics is a game of material strength, of wealth and tough sinews, and not of abstract ethics.

To the Muslims of India, taught to think as they are in Christian ideas of renunciation and absolute ethics, this is a new doctrine, and because it is new, it requires all the emphasis that one can lay upon it. Blind trust in the professions of those whose interests clash with ours is an act of suicide. Turkey was a mighty empire, but it laid itself in the dust by trusting the foreigner too often. To take one example. In 1911, on an assurance from England of safety from aggression, Turkey transferred her garrison from Tripoli to Yemen. The coast became clear, and Italy with the cognisance of England attacked Tripoli, and England barred the way of the Turkish armies through Egypt. This was treachery of the blackest kind. It is natural to feel enraged on such conduct, but one may spend the

whole vocabulary of abuse and pour vials of righteous wrath upon the head of England, the actual wrong done cannot be rectified, unless one can also command the material strength to punish England for her perfidy. In truth, it was criminal folly on the part of the Turks to trust, in the matter of the safety of their own home, the word of a foreign state, whose interests could not be the same as those of Turkey. And the blind and boundless trust of the Muslims and their leaders in the professions of friendship of the Hindu leaders was a criminal folly of the same texture, which has brought the Muslims to that perilous pass, in which they find themselves to-day.

Muslims are a hot-headed race and are easily carried away by their passions. When out of anger with Britain they joined hands with the Hindus, many follies were committed. The Hindus, being the stronger party, took the direction of affairs into their own hands, and the Muslims became mere appendages of the Hindu community. Men who had spent their lives in their opposition to Islam were invited to enter the mosques and preach from our pulpits. In

their mad folly, the Muslim leaders believed that the fever of political unity had also suddenly cleaned their hearts of enmity towards Islam! It is amazing that any one in his senses could be guilty of such folly. But it was not the season of sense but of madness. Mullahs and Maulvis, who had been fast falling into desuetude, were called upon to utter *fatwas*, and they, always glad of the chance, announced to the benighted folk that it was a sin to live under British rule. *Hijrat* was ordered. Many lives, some promising young men among them, were lost, and large properties passed into Hindu hands. An attack was made upon old established institutions, some of which were shaken to their foundations, while Hindu institutions were left untouched. These things are not likely to happen again; so it is useless to grieve over them, although some wounds have left deep scars behind.

The greatest injury to the Musalman community was done, however, by the policy of non-co-operation. It was supposed that the administration would be paralysed and had not Mahatma Gandhi promised Swaraj within an year? A large number of Muslim young men

relinquished their posts in the Government offices; but the administration was not paralysed even for a day. The posts vacated by Musalmans were immediately filled in by the Hindus, and the work of the Government went on as merrily as before. The share of the Muslims in the Government services was always meagre, but non-co-operation threw them so far behind that they never can hope to come up with the Hindus. The machinery of the government is now almost wholly in their hands. It does not speak much for the political sagacity of the Muslim leaders that although they saw the Hindu leaders turn their backs upon unity and non-co-operation, they still stood by their guns, "for the sake of consistency and character" as they put it, and went on preaching non-co-operation to the Muslim community. The Muslims lost through non-co-operation almost all that they had gained after strenuous efforts of half a century. The Indian National Congress has again announced that if the scheme laid down in the Nehru Report is not accepted by the British by December 31, 1929, the country is to enter upon a campaign of civil disobedience. There are Muslim leaders who

subscribe to the Congress creed and have the ear of the public. They are carrying on vigorous propaganda with a view to prepare the Musalmans for that campaign. God forbid! but if the Muslim public follows their lead and repeats the folly of 1919—1922, it shall have driven the last nails into its own coffin. The campaign is bound to end in disaster and the Muslims are the ones to suffer, as they did before.

Why is it that the Musalmans so often come to grief? Because they never consult their own interests. The Hindus are carrying on their anti-British policy because it is good for their commercial interests and national growth. The Muslims have no commercial interests and to their probable political future they do not seem to have given much thought. It is dangerous for one's good name to say things which the mind of the herd does not like. But truth I will speak. So far as my knowledge of political events in this country goes, the Muslims of India have had no cause of complaint and no direct personal grievance against the British Government. The British have not been particularly unjust to them, nor have they deprived them of any privileges. The attitude

of the Musalmans of India towards them is determined wholly and solely by their anger at what the British have done to Turkey and other Muslim lands. Anger and not calm consideration of their interests is their real political guide. I lag behind no one in my love of Islam and sympathy towards the Muslim world. I have given enough proof of it by devoting the best years of my life—nine years' exile from home—to the service of Islam, while others have sat at home and done life-service. I also admit that the anger of the Indian Muslims at the conduct of the British towards Muslim countries is perfectly justified, and whatever sympathy the Indian Muslims cherish towards the Muslims of other lands is quite natural and a valuable asset. But I do urge that anger is a very unsafe guide in politics and sympathy or love of Muslims abroad must not be allowed to determine our conduct in politics at home. I am far from suggesting that the Indian Musalman should hug and kiss the Englishman for love. Politics is neither a matter of love nor of anger, but of cold calculation of our material interests, and it is this which I would have in place of ~~anger~~ for our political guide.

We Muslims of India concern ourselves far too much with foreign politics and far too little with our interests at home, and it is this circumstance which has led some Hindus to accuse us of extra-territorial patriotism. Sultan Ibn Saud drove Sherif Husain out of Arabia and established a strong and independent state. But he was a Wahabi, so the Musalmans of India became two parties, perfectly willing to tear each other to pieces although neither the one nor the other could help or hurt the distant monarch. In fact, the Indian Muslims are willing and quite ready to arrange the affairs of all the world except their own. This is madness but it is very rampant.

And not only is it the anger of the community as a whole against the British doings in foreign Muslim lands, that controls their political activity at home, I have a shrewd notion that the majority of the leaders have their own private grudges against the Government as well. They cannot forget the injuries they have themselves suffered at its hands, and out of personal spite and to revenge their own wrongs they are hurling the community into paths that are dangerous to its existence. A community that decides its line

of conduct only out of anger, led by men who are very often actuated only by personal spite, has bad days before it. To make oneself a fool because another man has made a fool of himself and to cut one's own throat because another man has used us spitefully is not a paying game, and martyrdoms only invite ridicule and laughter. The Musalman is a man of wrath and stands in strange contrast to his Hindu compatriot, and it is this contrast in character that brings one gain and the other loss when both join hands in a common venture. The Hindu is a keen and cool-headed man of business. To him a rupee is a rupee, and no amount of eloquence, no thunders of rhetoric, no indignities and no cause for anger can change that rupee into anything more or less than a rupee. It is a very cheap witticism the Musalmans are wont to indulge in at what they call *bania* mentality, for matters of grave moment are decided not in storms of temper but after cold calculation of profits and losses. The Musalman suffers because in his fury he never stops to consider whether his chosen line of action is going to bring him gain or loss. His love for the jingle of fine words and eloquence is his deadly sin, which

overpowers his soul and deprives him of the capacity to think coherently.

The deeper I dig, the more firmly I am convinced that the Muslim politics in India is determined wholly and solely by their anger at the inimical actions of Britain towards foreign Muslim lands. Some of them are for dominion-status, and some are for complete independence, not because British rule is in any way irksome to them, not because they have any clear notion as to what these baubles are going to bring them, but because they feel grievously injured over the misfortunes at British hands of their Muslim brethren abroad. It is for this reason that they are most active and bring largest sacrifices when something untoward is happening to Turkey or Afghanistan, and go to profound sleep when sustained effort is needed for their own uplift at home. If the Musalmans of India valued freedom for its own sake, they would do something to improve themselves in arts which are necessary for the achievement of that ideal. The majority of them seem to think that a few more hot speeches, a little more agitation and a spell or too of civil disobedience will usher in the glorious day when they

shall be all independent. A greater folly cannot be imagined. Wealth, strength of our right arms and communal discipline are the real bases of political power, and if we do not seek these and go on spending our lungs in shouting the chorus of freedom and independence, we are very likely to end in disaster.

What the Muslims of India need most urgently is the creation and development of what they are wont to ridicule as *Mahajan* mentality. Politics is a question of material interests and those who would despise these as greed betray profound ignorance of politics. For want of a *Mahajan* mentality, for want of cold calculation of their probable gains and losses, the Musalmans have not lifted their little finger to obtain those things which are necessary for the attainment of the goal that they have apparently set before themselves. Poverty is playing havoc with their physical strength and fear is taking away their martial spirit. They have lost their prestige and dread which they used to inspire. We see the Hindus establishing associations for *lathi* play and the like and we complacently look on. We have no political organisation worth the name.

We have our League and our Khilafat Committees. A gentleman invites a few friends to his house, calls them a meeting of the Muslim League, and the public knows nothing about it. Another gentleman invites another set of friends, calls them a meeting of the Khilafat Committee and the public is none the wiser. If they held frequent open-air meetings and instead of deafening the ears of the public with unmeaning eloquence gave instructive lectures on current political events, we should have an enlightened Muslim public capable of forming opinions for themselves. The Hindu Mahasabha is doing that work for the Hindus and we cannot withhold our admiration from it.

One of the most powerful means of mass education in politics is undoubtedly the daily and periodical press. English newspapers we have none, the only one in existence being in a moribund condition. My correspondents tell me that an English newspaper of the Muslims, daily or weekly, cannot exist, and I am beginning to be of their opinion. Urdu newspapers we have, dailies as well as weeklies, and they are all in a sorry condition. They are put to strange shifts, which

it is not my place to tell, to keep themselves above water. Enough to say that they are not quite free to express their opinions. There is no fear or favour of the Government in the matter. That is a very foolish idea prevalent in the public. The oppression comes from the public itself, for which the newspapers in great part are themselves responsible. For years and years they have been serving incendiary stuff and the public palate is ruined. They want burning cinders and blazing shafts of wrath at the Government and if a newspaper begins to talk sense, it is bound to fail. The public does not want sense. Again, the editors of Urdu newspapers, with some honourable exceptions, are an ignorant lot, who lack even an elementary knowledge of politics, and it is due to the ignorance of these editors that although our mother-tongue is Urdu, we prefer English newspapers. When they feel nonplussed and have nothing to say, they burst into long prayers in place of leaders, and surprisingly enough the public likes that too. Their chief qualification is that they can write the language, whereas every writer who is worth his salt knows that language comes last, the first and foremost requirement

being the stuff, the ideas which we intend to convey. And the language that some of them write is unintelligible to nine-tenths of their readers. It is really very pathetic to see a shop-keeper poring over the editorial columns of the *Zamindar*, and one wishes that the paper—it is rich enough for that—should make a gift to each of its readers of a copy of an Arabic-Urdu dictionary, if such a commodity exists, which I very much doubt. If a public led by such moribund organisations and fed by such newspapers happens to be empty-headed and stupid, there is no cause for wonder.

The Hindus are now so far advanced that they teach politics even to their girls. It is not difficult to guess the nature of that teaching. Three-fourths of it must be hatred of the Musal-mans. At any rate, their women-folk are thus enabled to take an intelligent interest in politics. But from our schools and colleges politics is barred. I am not at all in favour of students taking active part in the politics of the day. We have sent them there for a number of years that they should devote themselves wholly to their studies and prepare themselves, so that when

their time comes and the reins are falling from our hands, they should come forward and take them up. If they waste their time in things which they are yet too young to understand, if they are poor students, they will prove poor citizens, and the community will come to grief. But it is certainly wrong to try to keep them ignorant. Politics cannot be kept out of schools and colleges so long as newspapers are admitted, and if the students are not helped to form their own judgments on current events, they will get them from irresponsible demagogues outside the college walls and harm will follow. It is the duty, therefore, of the professors to enlighten the students on current politics and invite public speakers to do the same, provided that the enlightenment is given in an academic, scientific spirit and not in party spirit. What is the academic or scientific spirit? The student of chemistry analyses dead matter. He has no particular affection for hydrogen nor any enmity towards oxygen. Both are equally objects of study, which leave his own personal feelings strictly alone. In the same impersonal, impartial objective spirit should politics be taught to the students,

not to make propaganda among them, not to win them over to this party or that party, but only to help them to form their own independent judgments. It is a matter of great importance, but it is wholly neglected.

All avenues of political education are thus closed to the Muslim public, and in absence of sound knowledge they have made the goddess of wrath their sole political guide. And the bitter irony of it is that those foreign brethren of ours on whose behalf we are angry, look down upon us with open disdain. I say this from personal knowledge. They despise us because we are nobody in our own home. We cannot help ourselves and we are of small use to them. For want of a common political aim, the Muslim community is in a state of utter disorganisation. There is no unity among us. We are being steadily driven out of commerce and industry, the doors of government service are being closed against us by the Hindus who hold the monopoly, as it were, of government offices; unemployment is increasing among the Musalmans at a frightful rate, and poverty is playing havoc with our public as well as private morals. The Muslims are known in the world

for their jealousy of the honour of their women. But poverty has brought them so low, that in some country districts husbands mortgage their wives with Hindu money-lenders. Could humiliation go further? As for our public morality, the Muslim public, always generous, always willing to make sacrifices in the name of Islam, has been so often disappointed in its leaders that it has lost its faith in all public men. We cannot blame it. The Muslim leaders have been treating the public too long to fiery speeches, and by appealing constantly to its lower passions, they have ruined its stamina. They have never laid before the Muslims any programme of quiet, constructive work and have reduced them to a state of despondency. When men see the prospect of better days before them, they go about cheerfully with their day's tasks and treat their fellows with generous humanity. But when the future presents a thick pall of blackness, when a people loses hope, and the grip of poverty and want becomes hard, they are seized with panic and fall to tear one another's flesh. It looks as if we are coming to that. Those mutual courtesies, that brotherly regard and sympathy which used to bind a Muslim to a

Muslim, are distinctly gone. Religion is becoming a matter of trade. I have known religious leaders and modern ones at that, who wear very long beards, say very long prayers and deliver burning sermons as if their hearts would burst for love of Islam, but who would tear one another to pieces for money, who for money would grind a brother Muslim to powder, and who for money would grovel in the dust before men of wealth. Swindle is on the increase ; they are behaving as if to-morrow's sun would not rise and a night of endless, hopeless length, the night of death were before them, and they are busy gathering while the daylight lasts. Life is dear and must be maintained somehow. When a swindle is brought to the light of day, public conscience is not shocked and the honest man is called a fool for his honesty. When the moral sense of a people becomes so depraved, they have bad days in store for them.

This is a ghastly picture, but it is drawn from life and no attempt has been made to heighten the colours. The late Mr. Upson made a passing reference to this state of affairs in one of his articles in a Lahore journal. He spoke from experience and from knowledge. Men in high positions and

men in the street tell me the same tale. Men of different walks of life and of different shades of opinion have drawn this picture before me. At first I disbelieved. I thought, they were exaggerating. But on closer enquiry I have found that the picture is true and that the Muslim community is sinking fast. Oft and oft have I put to myself the question : why ? Why are we going so low ? And every time comes the same answer : Poverty and loss of future hope. Despair, the mortal enemy of all effort, has taken hold of us. The leader with his gaze fixed on the stars has been blind to what lies before his feet. He would have nothing short of independence and has neglected the arts that should bring us near to the achievement of it. Poverty, disorganisation and loss of hope have at last robbed us of our morals.

The Musalmans are in a state of despondency. Not many years ago, they used to say that if India ever became free, they would be the rulers of the land. To-day they are staring in the face of doom. The feeling is common among the Muslims that Islam in India is in danger of extinction. There are those who believe that only war could save them. It would give them a chance.

There are others who are waiting for a miracle similar to the conversion of the Tartars to Islam after their destruction of the Muslim Empire. It is scarcely necessary to waste a word on these wild dreamers. There are still others, and these are the great majority, who believe in a political alliance with the Hindus in order to drive out the English, and after the English are gone, they would settle up with the Hindus by force if the latter do not agree to an amicable settlement. This shows what simpletons the Indian Muslims are, and how destitute of the very rudiments of political knowledge. They do not seem to know that in the case of dominion-status, they will not be allowed to settle their differences by force—the sovereign power will see to that—while complete independence in the immediate future is an impossibility, which no union of the Hindus and Muslim can attain. It can only come by slow degrees along the path of dominion-status, and will be so long in coming that in the meantime the Muslims will have been wiped out or rendered so weak that they will have ceased to count as a factor in Indian politics. Indeed, so long as Muslims remain a factor to be counted with, independence cannot come to India. If these different opinions prove anything, it is this that the situation is becoming very hopeless, indeed.

V.

HOW TO SAVE THE SITUATION.

The Muslim community is disunited. There is no common ideal and no common programme of work before them, which could produce unity among them. Some are for the Nehru scheme, some for complete independence, and some for the policy laid down in the comprehensive resolution passed by the All-Parties' Muslim Conference of Delhi. Before we decide which of them is the safest course for the Muslims to follow, let us sum up briefly what we have said in the previous chapters.

India's political consciousness has become awake. As she has no racial or cultural affinity with England and geographically she is situated almost on the other side of the globe, the natural and ultimate goal of her political endeavour can only be complete independence. But this consciousness is a wholly new thing in India's history.

It is yet too young and must take time to grow strong. Also, India is helpless before the overwhelming military strength of England. Therefore, India's way to independence must be a very slow process. The goal can be achieved only gradually, by indefinable stages, extending over a long period. The way must lie through dominion-status, with gradual extension of India's sovereignty and corresponding diminution of British authority, as time goes by. The pace of progress is very greatly affected by the existence of the communal question. But unity between the Hindus and Muslims is impossible. If there were only a difference of religious faith between them, a political alliance equally acceptable to both parties could be possible as has been the case between the Muslims and Christians or Protestants and Roman Catholics in some countries. But the gulf between them is much deeper than that of merely religious profession. Their cultural ideals, their outlook on life, and their entire mental constitution are different. Greater differences between the national characteristics of the Hindus and Muslims are not possible to think of. Traditions of the one are wholly military, of the other wholly

commercial. The one, chivalrous and brave, is actuated only by generous impulses; the other counts its losses and gains in rupees and annas. The one will have freedom and empire; the other posts and money and property. The one is willing to meet any nation and any people on earth on a common basis of humanity, the other is safely and securely entrenched behind the insuperable barriers of caste and untouchability and racial exclusiveness. Unity between two such peoples, standing poles apart from each other as they are, is unthinkable.

“When two strong men stand face to face, though they come from the ends of the earth,” they can become brothers. So is it with communities. If the Muslims and Hindus stood on the same level and had equal respect for each other, unity could perhaps still be possible. But the two communities stand on different levels. In numbers, education and wealth one is overwhelmingly stronger than the other. If the stronger community desired unity and friendship of the weaker, it would be very generous of it, and in order to allay the suspicion and distrust natural to the weaker one it

shall have to make many sacrifices and give up many privileges. But, in fact, the stronger community in the present case is also the most materialistic on earth, to whose nature generous impulses are foreign and which has learnt in all its long history only to count its gains and losses in rupees and annas, and in keeping with its character of grab it is striving its utmost to deprive the weaker sister even of whatever little rights and privileges it possesses. It understands by unity only the abolition of the other community as a separate entity. In these circumstances, if the weaker community makes an offer of friendship, it can only mean a confession of helplessness and an invitation to the other to exploit it. And so long as the weaker one resists being exploited, unity and friendship between them are impossible.

The communal question is the offspring of the growth of nationalism. Simultaneously with the rise of the nationalist idea the two communities have awakened to their separate political identities. Between unity and the desire to preserve their separate identities there is an inherent incompatibility. Unity is, therefore, impossible, so long as they persist in preserving their sepa-

rate identities, and caste, untouchability and racial exclusiveness of the Hindu make it necessary that they should so persist. Notwithstanding all that has been said, it is possible that the two communities may join hands for a short season for a political aim, but it is always possible to the third party to break down their alliance by urging one against the other. The inordinate love of money and material benefit of the Hindu community is a witness that it is easy to do so. To base the endeavour for independence on Hindu-Muslim unity is, therefore, dangerous for that goal.

No state has ever in the history of the world come into being through pacts. States are based upon power, not upon contracts. The creation of a state by Hindu-Muslim unity would be a wholly new experiment in the history of the world, which will call for its success the highest morals on both sides. These do not exist and failure of the experiment is a foregone conclusion.

Unity is, therefore, not necessary. The true solution of the communal question lies in the elimination of one of the two contending elements. Before independence can be achieved, one community must wipe out the other or reduce

it to such helplessness that it ceases for ever to count as a factor. The Hindus do not want unity. It is against the genius and traditions of their race. The Hindus have denied the most elementary rights of humanity to the untouchables. They have ground them so low that they have killed the very desire of self-betterment in them. No nation on earth was ever suppressed with such thoroughness as the original inhabitants of India have been by their Aryan conquerors. They have lived together four thousand years and have not been able to unite. It is an unjustifiable presumption and unforgivable folly on the part of the Muslims to expect better treatment from the Hindus in the face of these facts. How can they expect better treatment, when even in the heyday of their power the Hindus treated them as untouchables? What will they not do when they get power over us? In truth, the Hindus cannot and do not desire unity. From their overwhelming numerical strength and from their wealth and communal organisation they find that they can wipe out the Musalmans from India, and they have made up their minds to do so. They will have the empire of India for themselves. For the attainment of

of this goal, they are advancing along all lines of progress. They are ousting the Muslims from the administration of the country as well as from the economic field. They only want time to work out their aims. If the English suddenly left India to-day, we are still strong enough to settle up with the Hindus. Ten or twenty years hence it will be too late. The achievement of complete independence, which should leave us free to settle our accounts with the Hindus, in the immediate future, even with the most perfect unity between the two communities, is an idea that can find room only in the heads of lunatics. Progress must be slow and the way to independence, as pointed out above, lies only through dominion-status, and the Hindu has resolved to wipe us out in the interval.

These are, in brief, the natural tendencies of the age and this the situation at present. The question before us Muslims in these circumstances is how to save the situation. How can we maintain ourselves? What ought we to do to keep ourselves from extinction? What should be our political creed? The Indian Muslim does not love the Englishman. He is angry with him because of his inimical attitude towards the Mus-

lim states and therefore wants independence. He wants to be rid of the hated Britisher. But is it a good policy to cut one's own nose to spite the face? Are we justified in committing suicide out of anger at another people? I should think not. I am not asking any one to love the Englishman. It is not a question of love or hatred at all but of self-interest. And the signs of the times show that so far as the Muslim interests in India are concerned, it is not even a question of constitutional advancement. It is not in our power to go back. Constitutional advancement will go on, whether we will it or not. The stone has been set rolling and it cannot be stopped. Hindu leaders are throwing every principle to the winds and swallowing their most solemn declarations to achieve their aims. It is, therefore, nothing but waste of time and energy to strive after a thing that is coming to us with relentless necessity. By asking for independence or dominion-status we are only playing into the hands of the Hindus and helping their cause. By doing so, we dig our own graves. The constitutional question only distracts the community's attention from the real issue which is the safety of Islam in this country from

extirpation at the hands of the Hindus. They and not the English are the real enemies of Islam in India. They are threatening our very existence. Shall we live or shall we go? This is the chief and only urgent question before us to-day.

This question cannot be answered by getting angry with the Hindus, as the Musalmans are so likely to do. No amount of indignation at their want of charity and fellow-feeling and no jibes at their greed will mend matters. The only real and dependable source of strength are our own right arms. If we are strong in ourselves, no power on earth can do us any harm, and we can look the world in the face. This source of strength we must create. We must do something that we might be able to stand by ourselves and not depend upon the good-will of any other people. So far as politics is concerned, our duty is plain. We must insist upon having our separate rights. Whatever constitutional progress is made and whatever new powers and privileges come to the country, we must have our legitimate share in them. Let them go as far as they like, but none shall be allowed to trample upon our rights. The unanimous resolve of the All-Parties' Muslim

Conference at Delhi was, therefore, the wisest decision under the circumstances. In view of our economic backwardness and smallness of numbers separate communal representation is a very valuable possession. It is assured to us by law and none shall deprive us of it without our own consent.

It is only a negative solution. It only gains us time and time is necessary for our recovery. We must go on insisting upon our separate rights and separate communal representation as long as we can, and utilize the time thus gained for our betterment. For we must remember that the privilege in question is not in itself a sufficient guarantee for our communal existence. It is bad enough to depend upon borrowed props. They weaken our moral stamina and undermine our strength in the long run. Besides, we are not sure, we shall be able to keep our separate privileges for an indefinite period. The Muslims are already divided upon this question. There is a considerable number of those, who out of hatred towards the Englishman and for the good of the country as they call it are quite willing to give up this privilege in order to unite with the Hindus. They

seem to be blind to the fact that separate representation is the only guarantee of our communal existence, that it is the bare minimum which gives us an identity. If we lose it, we become a herd, without a soul, without a common purpose, and our ruin is then certain. The Hindus are trying every possible means in their power to deprive us of this privilege, because it stands like a wall of iron in their way. They have an inflexible resolve and will sooner or later achieve their end. The Musalmans are a pliable people. A little cajolery and a little more pressure on the part of the Hindus will make them yield up what they possess, and if they have not utilized the intervening time for the strengthening of the ranks of their community, they will be wholly at the mercy of the Hindus. And even this privilege of separate representation is secure to us only so long as we are strong enough to command it.

We must not, therefore, put any great reliance upon the privilege of separate representation. While insisting upon it as necessary for gaining time, we ought to exert ourselves to the utmost limits of our energies to utilize that time to strengthen our position. The Hindus are marching

forward at a rapid pace and we are sinking fast. It is not yet too late. But in ten years' time it will be certainly too late. And it is because I see that it is daily becoming too late that has prompted me to write this book.

What is to be done? Political education of the Muslim community is the most urgent necessity of the day. The Musalmans do not know which way their true interests lie. They are for unity with the Hindus in opposition to the English. That way lies danger and extinction of Islam in India. They ought to be made to feel that they are one community and that their interests and politics are not the same as those of the Hindus. This book has been written to provide this education, and it requires to be extensively circulated in the country. But it is really the work of an organisation formed on the pattern of the Hindu Mahasabha to do among the Muslims what that body is doing among the Hindus. By frequent lectures and extensive publication of suitable literature a prolonged effort should be made to awaken the Muslims to the peril of their position and to fire them up for organised activity. Organisation of the commu-

nity and its education in politics is then the first requirement.

Just as urgent is the work of social reform among the Muslims. Much ink has been spilt over the subject of late; the necessity and importance of it is realised on all hands, but no definite step has so far been taken in this direction. The fact is that beyond a vague and uncomfortable feeling that all is not as it ought to be, nothing is known as to exactly what is wrong and how it can be remedied and what really is needed. There are those who would blindly ape the West. The majority of them know very little about Europe except for a distant shine. Their lead, therefore, cannot be very safe. There are the orthodox who would not budge an inch beyond what the religion sanctions. I myself believe that conservatism in such matters is much safer than blind hurry. It is a very serious matter. The home is the basis of our society, and before we make any changes in our way of life, we must know definitely that the changes would be safe and useful. By a good fortune the Muslims in this country have a profound reverence for the injunctions of their religion. By another good

fortune, Islam gives the fullest scope for such progress as is needful for the growth of a healthy society. We can indeed go as far as it is necessary and useful for us to go. If therefore we could move the forces of religion in favour of social reform, we shall be able to create enthusiasm for the cause, which blind imitation of the West can never arouse. Work done under the sanction of religion will proceed faster, will be safer, sounder and of more lasting value than work done without it. Islam is the most powerful ally of social reform, whom we cannot ignore with impunity. This is a matter of vital importance to the well-being of the community and I have decided to deal with it at length in a separate book to be published within a fortnight after the present one.

No less urgent is the question of our economic betterment. A large part of the moral evils of the community comes from our poverty. The Muslims are proverbially a generous, large-hearted people. Their liberality, spirit of sacrifice and broad human sympathies are known to all the world. If the community is showing signs of depravity and corruption, it is wholly due to our daily increasing poverty. We are losing our share

in the commerce and industry of the country and unemployment, especially among the educated, is daily increasing. The condition is indeed very sorrowful and calls for immediate and drastic remedies on a large scale.

Our liberality is our great enemy, and the spirit of narrow-mindedness in some respects is urgently needed. Let me explain. A Muslim officer, when filling offices at his disposal, deals in a spirit of broad-mindedness and often from fear of criticism does less than justice, if not positive injustice, to his own co-religionists, whereas a Hindu officer bravely fills up the office with his kinsmen. Caste, untouchability and long discipline in racial prejudice have left no room for liberality in his heart. It is a matter of common knowledge that when once a Hindu has taken possession of an office, no Muslim can ever find room therein. Again, the Hindus rarely if ever buy from Muslim shopkeepers, whereas the Muslims never give a thought to whom they give their custom. The number of Muslim shops is in consequence daily decreasing. I would, therefore, teach narrow-mindedness. Good and bad are relative terms and not absolute, and the change of circum-

stances has rendered narrow-mindedness a virtue. It is a virtue to-day and if we desire to preserve our existence we must cultivate it and practice it as between communities. Here again I have to complain of the wrathfulness of the Muslim mind. When there is a riot, the Muslims in order to punish the Hindus declare a boycott of the Hindu shops and open their own. But we cannot be always having riots. The leaders meet; a peace is patched up, and the Muslim leaders, ever generous and always meaning what they say, as an evidence of their good-will call off the boycott, and the Muslim shopkeepers who had put perhaps all their savings in the newly-opened shops to meet the needs of the community often come to grief. The cause fails because it is backed by the spirit of revenge and wrath and not by a calm calculation of gains and losses. The spirit of revenge and wrath must, therefore, be banished from among the Muslims and the spirit of calculation created in its place.

We need commercial education extensively. If it were in my power, I would teach every boy in school or college how to keep accounts and

what commerce means to the individual and to the community, and I make the suggestion to those who have the education of the Muslim youth in their hands. It will create a business mentality, the habit of reckoning gains and losses and a spirit of co-operation within the community, which to-day is non-existent. Commercial education in early youth is a radical cure of three-fourths of the evils that prevail among us to-day. Its importance cannot be over-rated. It will give a wholly new character to the community.

Banking involving interest is a hard nut to crack. But it is absolutely necessary to commerce, and though interest is not held in such horror now as it used to be, there are still scruples in the minds, and it would much simplify matters, if some more light were thrown on the subject. The Holy Quran prohibits usury and distinguishes it from trade. The distinction is most important and if it could be proved that borrowing and lending of money on interest by banks is trade and not usury, the legality of commercial interest is established without a doubt. My contention is that the word *Riba* used in the Holy Quran does not cover commercial interest. Commercial in-

terest did not exist at the time the Quran was revealed, nor for many centuries after. It is a purely modern contrivance, although there is no manner of doubt that historically it has grown out of usury. Usury is generally distinguished from interest in that its rate is much higher than that of the latter. This is a serious mistake and when Maulvi Muhammad Ali puts usury and interest on the same level as he does in note 364 of his English translation of the Quran, he makes a bold assertion for which he has no authority whatever. The difference between usury and interest is not of degree but of kind. Usury comes from private treaty between a lender and a borrower and its rate depends upon the cleverness of the one and the urgency of the needs of the other. It is this direct human element that enters into the transactions, which gives them an evil character. There is a moral wrong involved in the practice of usury, and for that reason it has been held in abhorrence in antiquity and stands under the ban of the law even to-day in all civilized countries. But banks are public institutions and their rates of interest are governed not by the private considerations of lenders and borrowers

but by the condition of the market, by the law of supply and demand, by open competition, like the prices of any merchandise, which circumstance brings it within the category of trade. The usurer is purely and simply a money-lender. Usury creates miserliness, hard-heartedness and an inordinate love of money in those who practice it because their chief concern is to add to the hoard and because they stand in direct relation to the borrower. It is an enemy of commerce. Over against this, banks are meant solely to serve the needs of commerce. They are very much mistaken who think that banks are money-lending institutions. The first and chief function of the banks is to facilitate payments between buyers and sellers and adjust credits. The men who lend, namely the shareholders and depositors, have no direct relation with their debtors and the occasion for moral evil does not arise. The managers and clerks are just as disinterested parties and not necessarily miserly or hard-hearted, as money-lenders generally are. These considerations are enough to show that banking interest being in the category of trade in contradis-

tion to usury is not covered by the term *Riba* and is, therefore, not prohibited.

This has been a long digression, but it was necessary. Usurers are sucking the life-blood of the agriculturists, the majority of whom in the Punjab are Muslims. They pay several crores of rupees annually in usury to the Hindu money-lenders who are now agitating for the repeal of the Land Alienation Act in order to dispossess the Muslims altogether. It is urgent that these agriculturists should be freed from the clutches of the Hindu money-lenders, and the annual drain of several crores be stopped. The most efficient way to fight the evil of usury is to extend banking facilities. Muslims should, therefore, enter the field of banking in large numbers. By doing so they will do incalculable service to their commerce as well.

These are then the matters which require our immediate attention, while constitutional questions can be allowed to take care of themselves. We now pass on to another matter of vital importance to the maintenance of our community.

VI.

MUSLIM INDIA.

For years and years I have been cherishing a dream and the time has come that I should put it before my brethren. It is the dream of a **MUSLIM INDIA**. I have never been a believer in **Hindu-Muslim unity**. At a time when the whole of India was going mad over it, I rejected it as unthinkable, and the events that have happened in India during the last ten years have made it plain for all who have eyes to see that the dream of a **MUSLIM INDIA** is the only alternative that has been left for the Muslims of this country. The Hindus have declared a war of extirpation upon us. It is unreasonable to get angry over it. They could not do otherwise even if they wished to. It is the unavoidable result of the newly-born political consciousness. Two mutually inimical cultures cannot exist side by side without a clash and two communities equally conscious of their separate political identities must sooner or later come to

blows. The history of the church-states existing side by side with the secular states in Europe in the Middle Ages shows that an imperium within an imperium is an unnatural condition which must end in the destruction of one or the other. The idea of unity as a solution of India's problem is an unutterable folly, against which the history of the world stands as a witness. States have never been born of pacts and the peoples of India are not so extraordinarily wonderful that they should be able to achieve what the world has never been able to achieve. The idea of unity is based upon ignorance of the national characteristics of the two peoples. It is based upon ignorance of the very rudiments of political philosophy. The true solution of India's problem is elimination of one of the two elements. Either the Muslims should commit suicide and remove themselves from the stage (or grow tufts of hair on their heads and become Hindus, which means the same thing) or assert themselves like Muslims and make a bid for the empire of India. There is no other alternative.

Islam has a great mission in India, and it is the highest act of patriotism to try to make her

a Muslim country. Hinduism is a mass of superstitions and immoral usages, some of which are very inhuman, and with her inhuman usages and superstitions India can never find an honourable place in the comity of nations. Times are gone when she could live her own separate life of isolation. The world is now becoming an international society and India of the future shall have to live as part of a greater world, ready to receive what the world has to give and prepared to make a decent return by adding to the cultural goods of the world to justify her existence as an independent state. The earth belongs to God and no people has a birth-right to any part of it. The one great evil of alien rule is that, however mild and benevolent it may be, it does not allow the unhindered growth of all that lies in a people and the world remains the poorer by that. The mere presence of an alien race as rulers is an oppression to the creative spirit of a people. But if a people knows only how to live for itself, if it refuses to share its goods with the world at large and would not do its duty to the rest of the race of man, it loses all moral claim to what it possesses and the world is justified in depriving it of

its possessions. If India became a Hindu country,—which it must do if the Muslims do not stir themselves up—and if Hindu culture became established throughout the country, she would soon drift back to the barbarism of her “golden age,” and refuse to do her part towards the race. The world will be the poorer by that and history will have to repeat itself again. Hinduism is a deadly conservatism and Hindu India will be a retrograde step in the history of the world. In the interests of a larger humanity, therefore, it is necessary that Hinduism should be abolished and a progressive faith established in its place. Both patriotism and humanity demand of us that we make India a Muslim country. For in the long run Islam alone can be the true salvation of India. Under Islam alone will she be able to take her proper place in the society of nations.

It is not at all difficult to win India to Islam. As a system of faith no religion on earth can make a stand before Islam. Modern philosophy and modern science bear witness to its truth. It is the most modern religion and in utter conformity with the spirit of the modern age. It is absurd to think that that mass of superstitions and

immoral usages called Hinduism should be able to make a stand against Islam. That we are fewer in numbers, being only one in four, does not make the achievement impossible. Strength lies in determination and organisation and not in numbers. We are above seventy millions ; when we came, we were much fewer, and Muhammad, the man whose example the Muslim must ever keep before himself, was once alone. I say, the man of faith can change the destinies of nations, and if we have faith in ourselves, in the righteousness of our cause and in our ability to achieve it, nothing on earth is impossible to us, and no power on earth can hinder us from the attainment of our goal.

Islam is a missionary religion. It can live only by steady propagation of its teachings, and by propagation it can conquer a world. There is not a Muslim in India to-day, who does not recognise the necessity of Islamic propaganda. Some efforts have already been made. They have had some success, and their success would have been much greater if there were not some inherent defects in them. The Ahmadia propaganda is saddled with a doctrine which is not

acceptable to many men. It is a sectarian movement and sectarianism is repugnant to the modern mind. I am well aware that the Lahore section of the Ahmadia movement denies being a sect. Their denial is based upon ignorance of what constitutes a sect and upon their refusal to put themselves before the mirror and study their own features. As a matter of fact, the spirit of sectarianism is more virulent in them than in any other sect of Islam. There is, however, this much to be said for the Ahmadia movement that they started their propaganda as a religious necessity and not merely as a defensive measure, as has been the case with the rest of the Musalmans. When the Hindus started their propaganda of Shudhi, there was a great effervescence of feeling among the Muslims and much missionary activity was developed. But there is weakness in defence ; one cannot always be angry ; the passions soon subsided and our missionary activity is well nigh a thing of the past.

It is not possible to keep enthusiasm alive in men, unless a noble ideal is put before them, which should keep their hearts warm. The Ahmadia doctrine may not be acceptable to the majority

of people, but when a person has accepted the doctrine and entered the ranks of the community, he has a plank to stand upon and has something to strive for. That his efforts get lost in the sands is not his fault. The doctrine he fights for is in itself of no importance. The issue is dead and the people are no longer looking for a Mahdi or a Messiah. The great issue before the people to-day is not this doctrine or that doctrine of Islam but Islam itself. Is Islam a suitable religion for the modern progressive age or not? Why are the Muslims losing ground everywhere? If Islam is a true religion, why are the Muslims in such a backward state? Why has Islam failed to supply necessary guidance in the solution of those problems which are pressing themselves upon the public mind? Why are the teachers of religion tearing one another so ferociously? Is Islam so intolerant, so fanatical? Why cannot it unite people into one brotherhood? The unmeaning disputes and theological wranglings of the sectaries upon questions which have no concern with the actual problems of life are turning the minds of thinking men from religion altogether and indifference is growing apace. You cannot

kill the spirit of sectarianism by multiplying sects. Religion is a mighty force, but to-day it has actually become an obstacle in the path of progress. Sectarianism is eating into the vitals of the community and paralysing our activity. It is a crying need of the day that a way be discovered to kill the spirit of sectarianism and bring co-operation between the various sects of Islam. It has been preached as a matter of policy, but faith belongs to the deepest depths of the human heart, which are beyond the reach of policies. It requires to be taught as a theological necessity, as an article of faith, and if an organisation adopts it as its main plank, it is bound to create enthusiasm among the masses. The matter is important and I will come back to it shortly in a separate booklet, to be called "Orthodox Islam."

The Indian mind is philosophical and Islam is pre eminently practical. It has been presented so far as a bundle of institutions and positive commandments and the complaint is very common in this country that Islam does not afford room for higher thought. The complaint, in view of the literature so far published upon Islam, is very just. We have been far too busy with law and

Shariat and we have made religion a matter of exact rules and regulations. We have made a perfect Judaism of it. The wide expanse of heaven in which the spirit of man may soar and roam at will has been barred and shut out, and the chains fashioned by dry logicians are upon our necks. The spirit of man grows only in freedom, and a religion which has degenerated to a system of jurisprudence must sooner or later become a thing of repulsion to generous spirits. Such a religion cannot keep pace with the times. The time has come that we rescue Islam from the hands of the legalist Mullah, that we re-examine its first principles and find a philosophic basis for its teachings. Not what commandments it has, not what institutions it has established, but what Islam demands of us, what it conceives to be the purpose of life, and how its commandments and institutions are likely to bring that purpose to completion: these are the questions we must answer. Islam is losing its prestige among the thinking people. Only by a philosophic presentation of its teaching can we win prestige among the intelligentsia, and if we succeed in winning their respect, half the battle is already won. I have

decided to make a beginning in this behalf. But success depends upon the co-operation of others.

Our poverty is a great hindrance in our way. No one cares to join a company of beggars. Our way of life has no charms. The whole world points its finger of scorn at us. The Muslim home is not what it ought to be. Our crude ways must, indeed, be responsible for driving away many from us. What can we invite the people to? Many Muslims have gone over to Christianity in this country and they are now engaged in converting more Muslims to their newly adopted faith. Who knows what hardships, what ill-treatment at the hands of their fellow Muslims and what disgust at our sordid way of life and despair at its betterment drove them away from us? Our religious teachers are the worst enemies of Islam. The battle of Islam has to be fought on many fronts, but we can succeed only if we make an earnest search after righteousness and try to act ourselves first upon what we preach to others. I have not seen this done anywhere.

A challenge has been thrown down to us. We have come to the cross-roads, where we must decide which way to travel. We must either face

effacement and extinction or make a bid for the empire of India. There is no other alternative. India must be made a Muslim country and by God, we can make her if we take courage and have faith in ourselves. To the man of faith nothing is impossible. Smaller numbers have conquered India before, and humble beginnings can achieve mighty ends. Sincerity, sacrifice, perseverance and faith overcome all obstacles. Our goal is MUSLIM INDIA, and to the attainment of this ideal we must bend our energies. That is the only way left for Islam to live and prosper in India. And the Muslim must not despair.



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