

selves with sackcloth, wonder and silence spread through heaven itself.

Distrustful, disheartened and fearful are any? Courage, Christian Philanthropist! Almost can be seen now the incipient openings of that broad light, that shall beam in upon every family of the earth. The bright heralding star is already up; night is waning; the morning, the morning breaketh! Illustrious day! Let all the slumberers of the world awake to welcome thee!

ARTICLE IV.

ISLAMISM¹

By Rev. James M. Hoppin, Salem, Mass.

SEVEN centuries ago there existed between Christianity and Islamism an antagonism of temporal power, in which perhaps the preponderance of authority, and certainly the higher tone of outer refinement and elevation, belonged to the latter cause; now, the visible opposition has nearly passed away, and the moral antagonism remains. But this, though it may be as strong as ever, presents a far more favorable position of things in a religious view; for while absolute interdiction still closes the mind of the Mohammedan, he has nevertheless the opportunity of reflection, and therefore for a long time past he has manifested evident signs of intellectual curiosity, of looks directed toward a higher civilization, and even of moral and religious antipathies being softened by closer and quicker contact with Christian faith and intelligence. There are indications, also, of Christian attention being directed toward the Moslem world. The rapidly and ruthlessly encroaching vastness of adjacent European powers, the dangerous condition of the Mohammedan empire, held together chiefly

¹ Islamism is an older name than Mohammedanism. "Islam" signifies primarily entire devotion to another's will, especially that of God, and thereby the attainment of peace. Its relation to the Hebrew word "saalem" is evident. It stands in a secondary sense for all the tenets, doctrinal and practical, of the Mohammedan religion. From it are derived the terms "Moslem" and "Mussulman."

by the pressure of outside forces, its compelled and unwilling admixture with European questions, its awkward attempts to meet the progress of the age in civil and social reform, the frequency of travel in Mohammedan lands, and the unavoidable encounter of Christian missionaries with Moslem mind, have in these latter days brought the Mohammedan prominently before us. His claims, we think, upon our religious sympathies, are great.¹

In casting a glance back to the origin of Islamism, we see, in its very birth-place, the best explanation of its character and history. From the bosom of the still desert it sprung, which is the native place of religious enthusiasm, whether false or true. The Pentateuch shows very strongly the desert in it, not only in the solemn monotony of its imagery, and the profoundness of its conceptions of God, but in the intensity of its religious enthusiasm. It exhibits a faith not in *essence* but in feature, rather of an oriental or more strictly Arabian, than universal type; which, nourished in awe, quietude and contemplation, is usually passive, but when it acts, acts with terrible energy. More than once it has been observed that oriental religious thought nursed in the still, burning desert, and unguided by Divine inspiration, has issued forth in the most fierce and destructive fanaticism. The young camel-driver of the desert, Mohammed, of a priestly stock and claiming descent from Abraham himself, was without doubt of a highly religiously emotive, or at least imaginative temperament.² We do not suppose, at the present day, that original, strong disgust at the idolatry of his nation and desire to introduce a better faith, is denied to Mohammed. His countrymen were partly of the elder Arabian or Sabæan, and partly of the Magian idolatries, with, however, dim recollections still haunting them of an ancient Abrahamic patriarchal faith, pervading, indeed, all the false religions of the East, even those of India and China, thereby proving a streaming forth of primitive mind East and West, from about the region of Mesopotamia.³ To restore this ancient Arabian Abrahamic faith in one God, was always Mohammed's profession. He seems early to have been drawn to such contemplations, as in his camel-drivings

¹ Even an occasional discourse, such as our missionary, Rev. Mr. Hamlin, recently preached in Constantinople, on the Oriental Churches and Mohammedanism, shows that the encountering relation of the latter with Christianity, and their pressure on the missionary responsibility, are beginning to be felt.

² The Koreish tribe from which Mohammed sprung, had a mixture of Jewish blood direct, it is said, from Ishmael.

³ Abraham stood with divining arrows in his hand as a stone idol in the ante-Mohammedan Caaba of Mecca. Bib. Sac. Vol. IX. No. 34. p. 257.

over the desert, and visits as a factor to Syrian and Egyptian towns, he eagerly sought out the traditions of older times, and sacred localities, and informed himself at least of the outside views and practices of Judaism and Christianity, receiving, there is good reason to believe, much attention and many hints from Christians, and especially from a monk named Sergius, whom he met in Syria, and who afterwards resided in Mecca.¹ Indeed, Arabia at that time contained as resident citizens, large numbers of Christians, chiefly schismatics, as well as multitudes of Jews. The Nestorian instructors of Mohammed, particularly opposed to Greek and Latin superstitions and virtual idolatry, strengthened his bias to a simple Abrahamic belief in one spiritual God.

The mind of Mohammed revolved this thought until he was forty years old, when he proclaimed it as an inspiration from heaven. We should not be entirely unwilling to suppose that Mohammed, up to this time, was laboring under a mental enthusiasm, arising from the conception of so great an idea, which amounted perhaps to a belief in a species of inspiration. But the bold impiety which thus early, as a ground-creed, ever linked with the sublime and pure truth of "one God," the corollary that "Mohammed was the prophet of God," militates against this view. And when opportunity came to Mohammed, developing, according to an oriental proverb, the love of power which is latent like a closed flower-bud in every man's breast, the zeal of a spiritual reformer gave way. He hesitated not to grasp the sword when fortuitously extended to him. And this is somewhat a key to his character, which was an impulsive one, following rather than compelling circumstances; now strongly guided to higher objects, and now, when the temptation came, seizing it for selfish ends. When tempted to sensuality, his luxuriousness was a hard struggle with his sanctity, and it required all his prophetic casuistry to cover the breaches made in his sacred character. So his Bedouin predatory disposition, impossible to be resisted, called for hot-spiced sanctions from heaven, bringing in the timely god to help him out of his dilemmas.

We regard Mohammed, about whom there have been so many opinions, as a man of extraordinary genius, decidedly the most so of his rather mediocre age; a genius, humanly speaking, equal to the vast

¹ Carlyle says: "I know not what to make of that 'Sergius, the Nestorian monk;' probably enough of it is greatly exaggerated, this of the Nestorian monk." There is no need of making much of "Sergius;" this was already the seventh century of the Christian religion.

effects which have sprung from its energetic character. He who leads out his nation from gross idolatry to the knowledge of one spiritual God, deserves the praise of it; and here he was great, showing lofty intelligence, and a sublime religious appreciation. Had he not proved false to that God whom he taught to idolaters; nor made a great truth which his penetration has fastened upon the instrument of unhallowed ends; had he not deliberately assumed the awful crown of a prophet with its involved consequences; had he not shown that he possessed no true conception of the moral and spiritual character of God, all his conduct, life and name would have been perfumed with the odor of goodness and greatness. Much that was good and great clung to him to the end of life. His nature from the hand of God was probably generous and large, and his mind acute, imaginative and suggestive; his gentleness, love to children, eloquence, and personal dignity, are dwelt upon with ecstasy by his Arabian biographers; light, they say, beamed from his forehead, fragrance wafted from his body, his form cast no shadow, and a grateful cloud overhung his desert steps.¹ Politically, he manifested sagacity and force, laboring for national union, and stamping, with the powerful tread of his sandal, the thousand discordant tribes of Arabia into one. But the dark sides of his nature are equally strong, and his own book, the Koran, is a standing witness against him, and would be in itself fatal to his sacred pretensions. One of the chapters is expressly to reveal the indulgence of heaven to its favorite prophet, for an act of incest, according to Arabian law. That there were great and elemental strifes in his soul between good and bad, we doubt not; for with extreme cunning he was still a fanatic, or perhaps better, an enthusiast; a lustful, blood-stained man, a genuine Arab, he was nevertheless one of lofty native power, and of the precise type of oriental greatness; an unscrupulous zealot, he was yet no imbecile, and must have possessed some splendid traits of character to have excited the love and veneration with which he has been regarded by millions for twelve centuries.² To one visiting the East, the vast influence of Mohammed, throwing its colossal shadow upon eternity, cannot but be felt; and a desire will be inevitably excited in any philosophic or religious mind, to inquire into the sources of this power; and while doing this, there is no fear of disturbing truth, unless, indeed, truth be wantonly disregarded.³

¹ Merrick's shee'ah traditions of the Hy'at-Ul-Kuloob.

² Ryan.

³ The modern French writers, in speaking of Mohammedanism, seem to lay aside Christian discrimination and conscience. Indeed, to read a sentence like

Doubtless the chief reason of the rapid primitive success of Mohammed's faith, was the sword, sanctioned by all the authority of heaven. But no moral cause of the success of Islamism purely as a religion, was perhaps more operative, than the opportunity of a corrupt Christianity. About the end of the sixth and beginning of the seventh century, A. D., the gate of Zion was fairly flung open for the wild boar of the forest, or the lion of the desert, to enter. The great split of the Eastern and Western churches had occurred (the house was already divided against itself), and at the West the form of the Man of Sin had begun to take fearful distinctness in the temple of God. In the East, especially in Syria, Arabia and Persia, the old Manichaean flame still glowed, the tremendous Arian controversy was not yet stilled, the Nestorians offered a determined front to the main church, the Monosophytes, or since called Jacobites, were in bitter schismatic opposition, and still continue so, in Syria and Mesopotamia, even Tritheism flourished, and, according to Origen, in Egypt and Arabia, the joining of the Virgin to the Godhead had adherents. Ever since the Council at Nice, there had been continual religious contention, reaching its acme at this period; imperial and political disputes were fused with ecclesiastical; "Christianity was taken from the spirit and made sense; there was no progressive inward union to the kingdom of God by faith, but outward mediation by signs and forms."¹ At the same time learning breathed but feebly in the cell and cloister, the Latin tongue had ceased from Italy, and philosophy was banished from the world, Aristotle being alone retained as a kind of dialectic master in controversy. Mohammed, at this crisis, ostensibly proclaimed a faith incapable of heresies,²

the following, we lose every boundary of truth, and embark on a sea of all irreverence and unbelief: "la mission de Mahomet, revelation féconde qui illumine la mecque au contact de Jerusalem et du Sinai." — M. Barrault.

Carlyle's conception of Mohammed, as far as we may judge, appears to have done in the main, some rough justice to his personal character, and to have thrown a truer glance into the genuine Arab, than writers generally have done. But Carlyle has, in his down-handed strokes, wounded truth severely in continuing to call a mingling of human sagacity religious emotiveness, truth, falsehood, cunning and passion, by the sacred name of prophet, a prophet being alone one who is inspired by the Holy Ghost. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"

It would seem sufficient to Mr. Carlyle, for one to have a brave insight into the "great Deep of Nature," or, in a word, to be a man of preëminent, swaying genius, to be a prophet.

¹ Neander. History of the Christian Religion, Vol. III.

² Spinoza.

indivisible into sects, the simple faith of Noah and Abraham and primitive man, though in fact a pure Deism, which, even if philosophically true, is not, as a modern author has pregnantly remarked, and never was, true religion. Christian schismatics, especially the Nestorians, actively oppressed by the Greek and Catholic churches, were willing to advance far in union, even with an enemy, against a common foe;¹ and the simplicity of Mohammed's faith without doubt contrasted favorably with the miserable and incredible superstitions of the Christian church, and this also had its influence. But we have met with no reason to believe, as many have supposed, that Mohammed himself, whatever his followers did *afterwards*, knew aught truly of the doctrine of the Trinity, or had a further view than the assailing of Pagan polytheisms, and the sagacious turning to his own account of the debased, superstitious, tumultuary aspect with which Christianity presented itself at that time, especially in the eyes of the Eastern world; yet we have no difficulty in believing, with a species of Islamic predestination itself, that Mohammed was raised up at this time especially, and for the reasons of the peculiar and wounding controversies of the age, to be a rod to the corrupt and abandoned church of God.

No cause, however, of the permanence of Islamism, and its wide and thorough conquest of the oriental world, even to the present moment, do we regard so important as the fact of its singular affiliation to the oriental character. This will require a rapid glance at one of the prominent characteristics of the East, which will in itself explain much more. Though it is universally known and believed that philosophy, religion, in fine all things intellectual and spiritual, have had their birth in the East, yet they have not had their fullest and final developments there; though the germs of all things were, and are still, in the East, yet they have not there come to their maturity. The philosopher Cousin has hinted at this, in the idea, that in the very oriental mind, there seems to be a singular infancy of human nature; and in childhood there is unity, or little feeling of the need of spiritual progress, development and culture; the elements of things are satisfying, there being a predominance of nature over culture, of imagination over reason, and of sense over science. The orientals have been, and are still, as children, undisciplined, fanciful, seeking sensual contentment rather than hard and heavenly virtue, loving the marvellous even more than the true, delighting in story more than

¹ The opening chapters of Evagrius's Ecclesiastical History give a most vivid impression of the deadly bitterness of religious strife in this age.

argument; if not too far effeminated by luxury, rejoicing also in war as do children, with minds suggestive of all things divine and true, without the will to follow the suggestion, with extreme religious susceptibilities, but in spiritual things rising to the highest possible elevation, in mere visual speculation, or contemplative tranquillity, rather than in profound, vigorous, philosophical, or more than that, practical and life-regenerative faith. To such a nature Islamism was offered, and it was received like native food and kindred air. Its one simple religious element was enough to satisfy the spiritual susceptibility and feed the religious feeling, thought and meditation, while it seemed to touch every other point of oriental character, and also of its peculiar depravity. It flattered the untamed pride and temper of exclusiveness, confirmed the love of war and conquest, strengthened the immemorial negative morality of the East, and gave latitude to its luxurious spirit. A union of devotion and indulgence, religious profession and easy life, profound form and inner tranquillity, precisely suited the oriental mind; the cup was mixed so rarely with heaven and earth, that they could not refuse it. We see sometimes this style of mind and character in Christian lands, where the sublimities of spiritual speculation are joined with earthly tempers and lusts, where devotion and life seem to be strangely divorced, and a religious profession or philosophy exists, without having in it a spark of soul-life, or spiritual salvation. Nothing but the power of God, we must believe, exerted through his Word, by his Spirit, will ever remove the oriental mind from the embrace of such a faith.

We could not be just in giving the chief causes of the success and permanence of Islamism, without dwelling upon one other, simply the mixture of true with false. And this leads us to speak of Islamism more particularly as a religion, under which its true as well as false features, will briefly be noticed. Strictly as a faith, it may be regarded historically, doctrinally and practically. Its source and moulding shape, whatever influences may have flowed in upon it afterwards, was unquestionably Mohammed himself. His own spirit, life, acts and sayings, and especially the book which he left, the Koran, form the head-spring of this mighty fanaticism. In these the prime dogma, the essential faith, was given: "There is one God, and Mohammed is his prophet." Mohammed's own personal existence furnishes the tangible, visible nucleus of religious affection, and the perpetual living religious model. Of the Koran, it can be said in a word, that it might have been written in the design of God, to show the abysmal chasm between a genuine and a spurious inspiration. It has been

called "a counterfeit of the Pentateuch and a plagiary of the Gospels," though much of its author is still discernible in its subtlety of thought, sagacious obscurity, and sometimes poetry. Written in the ancient Cufic, it settled the Arabic language as entirely, as did Luther's Bible the German language. Beyond the Christian idea of Scriptural inspiration or reverence, a superstitious regard or worship is attached to the letter of the Koran, as the embodiment of Divinity, or God really existing in the word. From the Koran, a theology and polity have been gradually drawn by commentary and practical application, which form Islamism as it now stands, and in many respects such as its founder never dreamed of. The polemic opposition which Islamism met from Christian writers of the Greek and Latin churches, would in itself compose a curious ecclesiastical history. The Greeks were especially severe, and as their swords failed, their pens grew sharp. A body of Greek apologies, hurled against Islam before 1200 A. D., bore the title of "*Βασιλεια*," or the name of the emperor Joannis Cantacuzeni. In a later age, among other writers, the reformers Savanarola and Luther were conspicuous; the last in his rough German-Latin dealing most sturdy blows, although one shrewdly suspects he is ever chastising the Pope over Mohammed's back.¹ Augustine, and generally speaking, the Roman church, in these assaults, treated Islamism as a Christian heresy, classing it particularly with the Noctian and Sabellian heresies. At the Council of Vienna, the Koran was forbidden to be read or opened by Latin Christians. It may be sufficient to remark here historically, that Islamism of the present day has lost its fanaticism, and therefore its chief religious energy; rather existing as a social and political principle, and ground-

¹ Hard names abound in these Greek and Latin treatises. Thus a running commentary upon the Koran proceeds for many pages, almost simply thus:

"Idiota! —
Homo diabolicus! —
Primogenitus Satanae! —
Stulta, vana, et impia!" — etc.

One of Luther's characteristic sentences speaks of the especial doctrines of the Gospel as "*robustissima arma. Haec sunt tonitrua, quae destrunt non modo Mahometum, etiam portas inferi. Mahometus enim negat Christum esse filium Dei. Negat ipsum mortuum pro nostris peccatis. Negat ipsum resurrexisse ad vitam nostram. Negat fide in illum remitti peccatos et nos justificari. Negat ipsum judicem venturum super vivos et mortuos, licet resurrectionem mortuorum et diem judicii credat. Negat spiritum sanctum. Negat ejus dona.*" It has been said that the contentions of Christian and Mohammedan writers on the doctrines of freewill and predestination led the way to Pelagianism and to the Pelagian controversy.

ing itself really more in oriental nature than belief. Doctrinally considered, it has but one essential dogma, the unity of God; to this, however, the false is immediately joined, of the prophetic nature of Mohammed. Thus this conjunction of the false with the true runs through the whole system, engrafting upon a few of the truths of Christianity the death and corruption of superstition, like a living body tied to a corpse. If Mohammedans believe in a judgment, it is Mohammed who is to be judge of quick and dead; and the terms of judgment are changed from the solemn standard of God's Word and Spirit, to children's play-terms. If heaven and hell are truths of belief, they are so wholly unsphered that "the powers of the world to come" have little more of spiritual energy than the apprehension of an earthly gaol, or the prospect of a kiosk amid the rushing streams and apricot-gardens of Damascus. As to the sensual character of the Mahommedan paradise, which some are disposed to deny, the truth as far as we may judge, is, that Mohammed himself intended the material view, that his immediate followers sincerely received it thus, and that while spiritualizing commentators have here and there sprung up and still form a class, the great body of Moslems, or the orthodox, have ever held and still most firmly hold the literal interpretation of the Koran, confirming this by their lives, for as the heaven of a faith is, so will the earthly lives of its believers be. If, likewise, there is even a deep belief in the decrees of God, it is so generally deficient even in the Hebrew element of Divine complacency with good and separation from evil, that God is made the author and tempter of evil, and thus, of course, the moral sense receives a stunning blow as if from the hand of God himself. Not only is Islamic predestination a dark necessity, discovering nought of the intelligence of God and of adaptation to a Divine and infinite design, but it effectually prostrates the pillar of man's freedom, which even the inexorable Greek "*σιμαρμόνη*" was saved from by the instinctive pride of human dignity, and it discerns no gleam of a Christian faith in the harmonious determinations of God with the moral nature of man; so that while God reigns supreme, his moral creatures are as free as if he did not reign at all, thus throwing them on the unspeakable gift and glory of self-activity.¹ Even in the Moslem's belief in God, it is, without the Gospel manifestation of God, almost entirely a distant and awful abstraction, having its only human power in this

¹ Moslem fatalism opposed to human consciousness, will yet become indirectly a moral lever to help upheave this system. Even quarantine was a great progress.

principle of predestination, or Asiatic resignation. There is no coming down of God to man in love, and no rising upward of man to God in faith. The infinite need of an incarnate, redeeming God, touching, meeting, regenerating sinful humanity by his descended Word and Spirit shed abroad, leaves the system a cold Deism, a philosophical creed, but not a religion. There is, therefore, no spiritual and Divine life in the Mohammedan, although he believes in a God, and in future accountability.¹ This is strikingly shown in the practical workings of the system.

¹ The Pythagorean, Gnostic and speculative elements of oriental mind and history, have entered also into Mohammedan theology, and we have in its bulky interpretations, glosses, systems and catechisms, the results of meditation upon many of the deeps of metaphysical and religious thought, as the being of God, freewill, election, virtue, faith, etc., and it becomes interesting to follow the human mind even in such contrasted circumstances on these incessant problems of nature. The following are two or three extracts, taken here and there, from the "Catechism of Omer Nesséfy":

"ART. 2. The attributes of God do not constitute his essence; the word is in God's eternal essence.

"ART. 19. Faith consists in the admission and profession of all which has been announced from God.

"ART. 20. The acts of believers are susceptible of more or less; belief ought to be absolute.

"ART. 21. Belief does not differ from resignation.

"ART. 22. Believers and unbelievers are able to lose and recover faith; but the faith of the elect is not shaken by this, because the future is unchangeable in the Divine essence."—*L'empire Ottoman*, Chauvin Baillard.

Faith in God; from the Mohammedan Catechism:

"Faith in God consists in knowing truly with the heart and confessing openly with the mouth, that the most high God exists; that He is true, permanent and very essence; that He is eternal in relation to the past, having never begun, and eternal also in relation to the future, since He is without the necessity of an end; that there appertaineth to Him neither place, time, figure, nor any outward form whatever—no motion, change, transposition, separation, division, fraction or fatigue; that He is without equal and without parallel; that He is perfectly pure, one, everlasting and living; that He is omniscient, omnipotent and sovereign; that He hears, sees, speaks, acts, creates, sustains; that He produces intelligently; that He causes to live, and causes to die; that He gives beginning to all, and makes all to return to their original state, whenever he pleases; that He judges, decrees, directs, commands, prohibits; that He conducts in the right way and leads into error; and that to Him belong retribution, reward, punishment, favor and victory. It is necessary further to believe, that all these eternal attributes are embraced in his essential Being, and subsist in Him from everlasting to everlasting, without division or variation, yet so that it can neither be said that these attributes are Himself, nor that they are essentially different from Himself, since each of them is conjoined with another, as, for example, life with knowledge, and knowledge with power. Such are the great and inestimable perfections of the most high God, under which He is known

As a system of good works and purely formal, even the Catholic faith in its strictest days has hardly surpassed it in scrupulosity; but then it lodges in the stiff branches of prescriptive formula and objective duty, without influence to produce that inwrought holiness, or even pure morality, which faith in Christ necessitates from its very nature. The four great prescriptive duties of Islamism are prayer, fasting, alms, and pilgrimage to Mecca; and by these rounds of works the Mohammedan climbs to his paradise. The Mohammedan prayer is something more than picturesque; it is impressive to behold the Mohammedan at his devotions, his simple, manly, unabashed prostration before God, in the field or the town, whenever the Muezzin calls from his minaret, or whenever the sun comes forth, touches the meridian, and sinks beneath the horizon, without regard to place, occupation or company. But what are his prayers? Are they a spiritual communion with God? are they confessions of sin? are they the breathings of penitence? are they the pleadings for pardon? are they purifyings of the heart, or even expressions of holy, devotional desire? This can hardly be claimed. The brief Mohammedan creed, repeated and repeated, with a few variations in general ascriptions of praise, constitute the prayer itself, while physical prostrations and attitudes make up the rest. It is, in fact, chiefly a bodily exercise, and allies itself, with certainly a high degree of outward dignity and propriety, to all physical methods of worship, of which we see an instance among ourselves, in the Shaker communities. The Mohammedan rises from his prayer to the life of sense which he led before;¹ and the same remark will apply to the religious fast of the Ramadan. The Mohammedan generally observes this fast with rigor, even the

and adored by the faithful. Whoever dares to deny them or to call them in question, whether in whole or in part, truly he is an infidel. O God! preserve Thou us from infidelity!" — Southgate's Travels in Persia, etc.

¹ In riding from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea, the writer was accompanied by a noble looking, middle-aged Arab sheikh, who was a renowned "santon" or saint. Five times in the course of the ride, whenever we came to sweet running water, the chief dismounted, washed his face, hands and feet, spread the carpet, which formed his saddle-cloth, upon the ground, stuck his long lance upright at one of its corners, and turning his face towards Mecca, went through his devotions, touching his forehead in the dust in token of humiliation; yet at the close of the day, the same man attempted to practise upon me a fraud. But this need not give a whole impression of Moslem piety, for in that species of devotion which springs from the emotions and sentiments merely, as we have said, the orientals are eminent, and we believe that under the teachings of a true religion they would not only have the feeling, the sentiment, the poetry, the ecstasy of devotion, but the calm faith, intelligent principle and reasonable hope.

solitary Bedouin on the desert, according to the exact Burckhardt, confining himself to half a pound of black bread in the twenty-four hours; but the manner in which all, from the sultan on the throne to the poorest "fellah" at the water-wheel, rush back again to their old vices, at the moment the cannon booms to announce the close of the fast, shows how little of a spiritual or chastening character it has, and how purely it is a matter of Stoic endurance. So the matter of alms, is chiefly a form, regulated by a species of poll-tax; and the pilgrimage to Mecca, if it ever had a religious character, has long since become a sad business of mingled money-making, vagabondism and immorality; a "hadji," or pilgrim, being almost synonymous with a worthless fellow. No longer does the magnificence of mighty caravans issuing from the arched gateways of Bagdad and Damascus, lend solemnity and pomp to these pilgrimages, and cover up their inutility, puerile superstition and vices.

The civil morality of Islamism, drawn from the religious, has no higher character. The law of revenge, or the talio, is directly enforced from the Koran. Slavery has also in the Koran express sanction, and by Mohammedan theocratic statute, absolute power is given to the master, and all civil or judicial protection removed from the slave. Polygamy, connected with pliant divorce and slave concubinage, opens the door to sensuality, only limited by the wealth and power of the individual. It is true, that earth and heaven, according to Islamism, are made for man, and woman has at best an uncertain, and always a degraded place, in either. The names of the crimes themselves, under the Mohammedan civil law, exhibit the mournful condition of the public morals, and in the administration of justice the grossest bribery universally prevails. At the present day even some of the old prescriptive Mohammedan virtues are vanishing, and intemperance itself is rushing upon the oriental world, the traveller's boat up the river Nile being lighted by night with the fires of distilleries. The attempted reforms of the father of the present sultan, have only precipitated the grave Ottoman into the more shameless profligacy of the French school of vice, and by the testimony of intelligent travellers, throughout Persia and the more interior Mohammedan countries, the most profound and awful sensuality reigns. Yet strange to say, the Mohammedan makes his boast of the morality of his religion, and shameful as the truth is, in many respects, in general integrity, solidity and dignity of character, he rises superior to the nominal Christian with whom he daily comes in contact. He has recently shown a noble example of the ancient Moslem virtue

of hospitality in his treatment of the Hungarian exiles, against whose ancestors his own once so fiercely contended, the candelabras which now light the mosque of St. Sophia having been plundered from Hungarian temples. And the Mohammedan is exceedingly affected by the example of a high morality wherever it appears, giving a hope of the speedier triumph of pure Christianity among the Mohammedans whenever it shall begin to move upon them. Let us, in conclusion, say a few words as to the present condition of Islamism, especially in its relations to Christianity.

We have not pretended in the foregoing rapid sketch of Islamism and the causes of its success and permanence, to impart any new truth, but would only desire to draw more thought to this great field which is sooner or later to be possessed by Christ, comprising an eighth portion of the souls of the world. We have not concealed a certain respect for this religion, which, so mingled with false as to be wholly falsified, is yet so superior to the thousand fetich superstitions that shine not with one ray of spiritual or even philosophic light. It is, in truth, rather a Christian, or at least Judaic heresy, than a simple heathenism, being at the time of its rise, a rude and fierce reaffirmation of the truth respecting God, when idolatry was fast destroying the purity of true religion. Of course the great obstacle to the progress of Christianity among the Mohammedans is the law respecting apostasy. This is the mighty crime of the Mohammedan, and if not retracted after the third time, is punishable with death; and the homicide of the apostate is counted no crime. But this law will evidently not long resist the progress of Providence, for already Islamism, in a hundred instances, has receded from its own standards, and permitted unheard of innovations. It has become a tolerant system, every religion throughout the sultan's dominion being now protected by law, whereas the successor of the prophet is bound to wage exterminating war against all unbelief, and to offer the sword's edge or the creed "Namaz" to every man, and all the world. The sword itself of the Moslem is broken, and the faith, therefore, has lost its great propagandist, and it consequently no longer grows. The religious zeal of Islam has also become cooled, its own piety has grown dull, rationalistic disputes have arisen, and absolute scepticism has crept extensively over the Mohammedan mind.¹ When thought is aroused, the inconsistencies and falsities of

¹ Even the first child of Islamism, the Beduoin of the desert, is heard to say jestingly, according to Niebuhr: "the religion of Mohammed could not be made for us. We have no water for ablution on the desert; we have no money for

their faith appear glaring, and it is alone the profound principle of predestination, or stirless obedience to the system of things or laws under which they find themselves, which prevents oriental minds from outbreaking into open denial or higher truth. Islamism being itself essentially a politico-religious system, the polity being drawn from the faith, the civil and religious power are of course indissolubly united; they stand or fall together; for without the Mohammedan State there is no Mohammedan church, the visible "Imani" or representative of the Prophet being the sultan himself, who, like the Pope, constitutes not only the head, but the very principle of the religion. The present hollow vastness, therefore, of the Islamic empire, portends, we believe, the hollow weakness of Islamism, the religion having no distinctive, separate principle of life. All it has of good belongs to Christianity, and all its evil is inwoven with its secular decaying policy. God seems always to have wrought with a peculiarity of providence in the East; He has wrought at long intervals, and then suddenly. Continual progress, as at the West, does not seem to be the law of oriental existence. The inhabitants of the East are a wonderfully fixed quantity; the customs and opinions which sway the enlightened world do not seem to reach them; the revolutions which like magnetic storms sweep over Europe, reverberate faintly, and die away on their unsympathetic shores; there the people stand, like their own mysterious temples of the past, hardly touched by cycles, themselves the most impressive antiquities; the Samaritans were Samaritans until they were extinct; the Jews are still Jews; the Ishmaelites are still Ishmaelites; a Mohammedan once, an Eastern proverb is, a Mohammedan forever. Whenever a change occurs in the East, it seems to be by the fiat of Omnipotence. The Exodus of the Hebrews, the rise of Christianity, the springing up of Islamism, all were sudden and miraculous movements, in which the hand of God was awfully visible. It seems as if a more direct Divine interposition, more regardless of means, wrought in the East; and now that Mohammedanism has answered its predestined end, may not God, by one of those sudden and omnipotent decrees, cause the Mohammedan religion to go down and disappear, as quickly and startlingly as it rose? This may sound visionary, but looking at the peculiar nature of the system, its linked destiny with the secular power, its abstract, indistinctive, unvital character as a faith, and its past relation in the providence of God, we cannot believe that, unas-

alms; we already fast the year round; and God is everywhere, therefore why go to Mecca."

sailable as it now appears, it is to be vanquished by Christianity by slow steps, rood after rood, region after region, but that it is destined to fall rapidly under the unseen hand of God. Yet any theory like this, should not blind the eyes, or deter the effort, in present missionary responsibility toward the Mohammedan. The missionary world should not neglect in its action, and certainly in its prayers, him, who has already so much of common ground with the Christian. If direct action cannot yet be made for his spiritual welfare, much can be done indirectly, as a preparation for the time when the civil obstacles shall cease before the pressing force of political necessity; for religious freedom to the Moslem, is the next step which naturally follows the religious freedom to Christians and other religionists, already secured by the firm intervention of England in Turkey, and lately in Persia.

All religious writers on the East agree, that the power of a pure Christian example will be a great means of turning the eyes of the Mohammedan to Christ, and this example will be furnished, it is hoped, in the fast-increasing body of missionaries and their converts in the East. Already the Turks have begun to discriminate between the oriental Christian and the Protestant; and their admiration for the higher purity, elevation, truth and spirituality of the latter, has often exhibited itself unmistakably. But we look to a still mightier agent in the silent leavening and preparation of the Mohammedan mind and heart for a thorough moral transformation — *the power of the word of God*. Mohammedans acknowledge the Divine inspiration of the Christian and Jewish Scriptures, and of late, especially in the city of Constantinople, they have begun to read the Gospel, with more than a feeling of curiosity. There is a call for a Turkish translation, especially of the New Testament, and the discovery is beginning to dawn upon many a darkened Moslem mind, that all the good which their own faith boasts, is here found in its pure head-springs; and when the word of Christ finds entrance, his faith follows. Often the heart is reached through the door of the mind, and the oriental possesses a mind of original powers, as history has now and then shown, which, even under the pressure of centuries of fatalistic inaction, has yet preserved a manly living instinct for the good and true. A vein of conviction sometimes struggles upward to the light through the mountains of Islamic ignorance and sensualism, from the central gold of Divine thought in the human mind — an aspiration which seeks for something more of God, than the bare knowledge of his existence and power. God manifest in the flesh, the *love of God in Christ to man*, has, it is said, started even the apathetic Turk into

strange emotion and reflection. This alone, the Gospel salvation, can arouse the Mohammedan from the profound sleep, the terrible entombment of spiritual life, in which he is buried. This alone can infuse animation through those lethargic kingdoms, those hundred millions of souls stretched in

"the sleepy drench
Of that forgetful lake"

of strong delusion. The Gospel of Christ can alone even bring the infancy of the East to the full manhood of conscience, reason and action. The temporal as well as the eternal salvation of the fast sinking East, can only come through true Christianity awakening the sense of moral responsibility and freewill, and thereby invigorating the oriental mind. That mind, through whose medium the Bible came to men, feeling again the impulse of Divine inspiration pouring through it the tide of life and hope, may throw off its bands, and in the first home of the human race, the garden of the world, the birth-place of our heavenly religion, the freest and largest developments of that religion may yet be seen. The latent devotion of the Eastern nature awoke to its present and grandest energy by the Spirit of God, may produce, as far as they may be reproduced in uninspired men, Peters and Johns and Pauls, not as types, but as classes. Woman in the East, giving the contradiction to the cruel faith of Islam, wherever she has heard the name of Christ and His spiritual life, faith and kingdom, shall hail with joy the coming of a pure religion, appealing to a quick conscience, and a noble self-activity. The free Christian home and altar shall then be erected on the ruins of polygamy and slavery. All classes, united by the common faith and love of Christ, and regulated by Christian equal laws, shall take the place of the personal despotism of individuals and the sunken degradation of the masses which is the immemorial type of Eastern and Mohammedan society. Above all, the cold, gloomy, vast void between God and man, inducing a still and frozen religion, shall be filled by the Divine humanity of Christ's religion, awakening to love, human fellowship, mental and spiritual activity, freedom, development, progress and life. The East shall feel the touch of Christ and shall arise, and not before. Should we not give to it the Word of Life, even where we may not yet send the preacher?