CHRISTIANITY

IN ITS

RELATIONS TO ISLÂM.

A PAPER

READ AT THE MISSIONARY CONFERENCE,
OXFORD, 3d MAY 1877,

BY

GEORGE PERCY BADGER, D.C.L.

LATE CHAPLAIN, BOMBAY PRESIDENCY,
AUTHOR OF "THE NESTORIANS AND THEIR RITUALS," ETC. ETC. ETC.

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within the last year, have raised such a storm of righteous indignation against them, that unless care is taken not to confound Islâm with that system there is great danger of a prejudice being set up which may seriously warp our better judgment. As an instance in point, I may mention that my own personal experience, published thirty years ago, of the tyranny and cruelties of Ottoman officials has been construed into a sweeping denunciation of Islâm. In my opinion, indeed, it would be as fair, or as unfair, to regard the "Bulgarian atrocities" as the legitimate outcome of Islâm, as it would be to regard the torrents of blood shed from the beginning of the fourth century by rival Christian fanaticism, when as St. Gregory Nazianzen pathetically laments "the kingdom of heaven was converted, by discord, into the image of chaos, of a nocturnal tempest, and of hell itself," * or, in later ages, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, the persecution of the Waldenses, the foul murders of the inquisition, the judicial executions for alleged heresy by Protestant bigotry, or, to bring the painful record down to our day, the atrocities of the Russians towards the Uniat Poles, as the outcome of Christianity. Both creeds, as far as they sanctioned such outrages, have much to answer for; and, were it possible to estimate with any degree of accuracy the blood shed by Christians and Muslims respectively, on the ostensible plea of religion, it is doubtful on which side the greater burden would rest. On the other hand, an impartial umpire, if called upon to decide between the two nations whose hostilities at the present time threaten to involve Europe in a desolating war, would find it difficult to resist the conclusion that, as regards intolerance and inhumanity, the political Islâm of the Turks and the political Christianity of the Russians are very much on a par.

Christianity:—The early propagation and final establishment of Christianity, its triumphs over obstacles the most formidable by means apparently the most inadequate, and the beneficial effects which it has produced, form together one of the most marvellous phenomena of the world's history.

All know what was the degraded state of the human race, socially, morally, and politically, when the God-Man was manifested in the Person of Jesus Christ. The dark places of the earth were full of the habitations of cruelty, and that not only during the so-called iron ages, but when the empires of

* Gregory Nazianzen, *Orat.*, i. p. 33. See Tillemont, vi. p. 501; quarto edition.

Greece and Rome existed in their greatest glory. Knowledge, and civilization, and education, such as were cultivated by those renowned kingdoms, failed to reform mankind. Just as the river Jordan which flows into the Dead Sea produces no appreciable amelioration of its bitter waters, even so all the science and refinement of the Greeks and Romans brought to bear upon mankind neither checked the impurities of the general idolatry, nor contributed to raise the moral character of individuals.

I may not stop to dilate on the unparalleled change for the better which has taken place in the world since that period, a change not affecting one nation alone but whole continents. But if it is asked, what has produced this moral revolution? there is but one answer to the question—*the glorious truths of the Gospel.* Wherever the Apostles of our Blessed Lord went, armed, be it remembered, with no other weapons than the afflatus of the Divine Spirit of God, there a stream of the water of life followed them, fertilizing the hearts of men to bring forth the fruits of virtue and holiness; and their successors in the same ministry have carried forward the transcendant message. Even in this our day it has been borne to the untutored inhabitants of Greenland, and the cannibals of Oceania—the scene of the late martyrdom of a devoted bishop of the Church, and to the savages in the wilds of Africa, where not long ago another saintly bishop breathed his last. This river of the grace and mercy of God still flows on from city to hamlet, and from the centres of civilization to the haunts of barbarism. Thousands upon thousands of the fallen race of Adam have slaked their thirst at its saving waters, and myriads yet unborn shall draw from the same source their present and future happiness.

What the state of the world would have been now had not the seeds of dissension sprung up in the midst of the Church to arrest the progress of evangelization, and to give place to the establishment of a powerful non-Christian religion and polity, I do not venture to say. But of this there can be no doubt, that the heresies respecting the Incarnation of our Blessed Lord and the Holy Trinity which arose between the third and seventh centuries, together with the universal decay of learning and true piety, the introduction of a load of idle and superstitious ceremonies, the worship of the Virgin Mary, of saints, pictures, and relics, and the rancorous hatred which replaced the primitive love which had existed between Chris-

tian and Christian, paved the way for Islâm, and were among the main causes which contributed to its propagation and success.

That there is an overruling Providence awarding to national communities prosperity or adversity according as they fulfil or fail to fulfil the duty which they primarily owe to the Most High, is fully borne out by a careful study of the rise and fall of empires,—in none more signally than the history of God's ancient people Israel. And as God chose,—so I read the workings of His hand,—in His inscrutable purpose, and for their unbelief and unworthiness, to cut off for a while the original branches of the Jewish Church, so in like manner was He pleased, by way of manifesting His displeasure at the grievous degeneracy of the Christians in the seventh century, to decree or to permit the establishment of Islâm.

What, then, is Islâm? It is professedly the religion of the Kurân in the same sense that Judaism is the religion of the Old Testament. But whereas the latter, in its outward form, is the work of many writers, the Kurân is the work of an individual, Muhammad, of the noble but decayed family of the tribe of the al-Kuraish, the hereditary guardians of the pagan temple called the *al-Kaabah*, at Makkah. This extraordinary man was born A.D. 571, but it was not until he had attained his fortieth year that he made preparations to avow his alleged mission. The interval he spent chiefly in mercantile pursuits. As a lad he accompanied his father to al-Busra, the Bozrah of the Old Testament, where the caravan was entertained by a Christian monk. Subsequently, he made several trips to Southern Arabia, and eventually he became the travelling agent of the rich widow Khadîjah, in whose service he made frequent visits to Syria, and whom he afterwards married. There existed at the time in Southern Arabia, in addition to some vestiges of an earlier Christianity, remnants of the occupation of the country by the Abyssinians, A.D. 523, from which they were not expelled till A.D. 573. These were, undoubtedly, either Eutychians or Monophysites, and if Muhammad learnt anything of their peculiar doctrine, namely, that of the confusion or of the perfect union of the Divinity and humanity of Christ in one nature, it accounts in some degree for his mistaken view of the Incarnation. His monk entertainer at al-Busra was probably a Nestorian, whose views were diametrically opposed to Monophysitism, and his intercourse with the Christians on his journeys to Syria furnished

him with fresh evidence of the dissensions which were then rife among them on the doctrine of the Incarnation and of the Holy Trinity, which appears in some cases to have been converted into a positive Tritheism, and of numerous other corruptions in doctrine and practice which had crept into the Church. The Jews, also, were at the time both numerous and powerful in Arabia, and from them it was easy for him to acquire some knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures and of the Talmûd.

There is abundant internal evidence in the Kurân that the writer had availed himself of all these sources of information, and that he was more or less acquainted with the apocryphal Gospels. These materials he manipulated with more or less ingenuity under the guidance of the excusable but perverse notions of Christianity which he had personally imbibed from its then degenerate professors. Apart, indeed, from the often rapturous sublimity of the style in which Muhammad collated, epitomized, expanded, distorted, and then re-issued these second-hand elements, there is nothing original in the successive *Sûrahs*, or Chapters, of the Kurân, except when they appear in the shape of political bulletins or of rescripts in relation to current events, and absolutely nothing to claim for them the sanction of Divine inspiration. At the same time we do well to bear in mind, as a most essential precaution in dealing with Muslims, that the Divine inspiration of their Apostle, and the perfection of the Kurân as a transcript of a copy made in heaven, are among the cardinal doctrines of Islâm.

The religion of the Arabs at this period was an admixture of Sabeanism, or the worship of the heavenly bodies, and a multiform idolatry of which the *al-Kaabah* at Makkah was the principal shrine. No less than 360 idols were installed in this pantheon, which was then as it is now—under another guise—the Holy Place of Pilgrimage for the entire peninsula of Arabia. Several prior abortive attempts appear to have been made by individuals of the al-Kuraish tribe to preach down the native idolatry. It was reserved for Muhammad to effect that stupendous task. His first efforts at conversion, however, signally failed, and he had, at the outset, to suffer severe obloquy and persecution at the hands of his own countrymen, who regarded him as a lunatic or an impostor; and he was eventually obliged to flee to al-Madînah, from which event the era of the *al-Hijrah*, or the flight, took its rise. There he continued his mission with varying success, having in the

meantime issued one of his alleged revelations inculcating the duty of carrying on war for the propagation of Islâm, until at length his advance against Makkah with a force of 10,000 Muslims resulted in the submission of the inhabitants, and their recognition of him as their sovereign and the Apostle of God. Thereupon he ordered the destruction of the idols of the *al-Kaabah*, after he had devoutly perambulated that sanctuary seven times, as had been the usage under the prior pagan worship, kissing the sacred Black Stone therein imbedded at each perambulation.

Following upon this crowning success came numerous embassies from Arab tribes proffering their submission and allegiance, which emboldened him to proclaim a *Jihâd*, or Holy War, against the Byzantine Empire. But dying at al-Madînah, A.D. 632, he left that project to the care of his immediate successors.

Very conflicting opinions are entertained by Christian writers of the character of this extraordinary man, some regarding him as an arch-deceiver, others as a special instrument of the Almighty, like Joshua or others of the warlike Hebrew worthies, to root out idolatry, and otherwise to reform the degraded habits of his countrymen. Others, again, believe that he began his public career with honest intentions, but ended in becoming a self-deluded, wicked impostor. I shall not attempt to decide between those opposite views; for having already stated my conviction that he was not inspired, his character and actions are open to criticism like those of any other man. On the one hand, we have before us the great reform which he wrought in the religious, moral, and social condition of the Arabs, accomplished at the frequent risk of his life, and apparently with no selfish motive,—for Muhammad was eminently frugal and bountiful; while, on the other hand, we find his hands stained with innocent blood, and himself guilty of outrages upon sexual morality so gross that they called for an alleged special revelation to sanction them. On this subject I quote with satisfaction the following statement by the Rev. Mr. Hughes, who has laboured for many years among the Muslims at Peshâwar as an agent of the Church Missionary Society, and who is well versed in the dogmas and institutions of Islâm. He says: "I am quite conscious of the weak points in Muhammad's character, and of the great errors in his religious system; but I do not hesitate to say that Muhammad was one of the greatest men the world has produced; and

the missionary who cannot take this view of his character must be lamentably ignorant of the whole question." Be it further borne in mind that Muslims do not claim for their Apostle, as a man, the attribute of sinlessness. He is only infallible when the mouthpiece of the decrees of the Almighty.

The propagation of Islâm was prosecuted with the utmost vigour by the immediate *Khalîfahs*, or Successors, of Muhammad, and succeeded in an incredibly short space of time in reducing the limits of Christendom by one-third. In the course of less than a century, in addition to their conquests in the far East, extending to the frontiers of India and China, the Muslims wrested Syria, including Palestine and Jerusalem, Egypt, Northern Africa, and Spain from the Christian emperors. Then came the Seljûks and Moghuls, wild Muslims from Tartary, who seized some of the finest portions of Asia Minor. After them came the Ottomans, subsequent to the destruction of the old Abbaside Khalîfate at Baghdâd, who captured the greater part of the territory now known as European Turkey, and finally put an end to the Byzantine Empire by taking possession of Constantinople, A.D. 1453.

As Paley truly observes, "The only event in the history of the human species, which admits of comparison with the propagation of Christianity, is the success of Mohametanism;" and what we are specially bound to notice in this cursory review is the deplorable fact that throughout the Arab or Saracen and the Turkish invasions alike, large Christian populations embraced the faith of the conquerors, whereas there is no record whatever of any such defection from Islâm to the ranks of Christianity. The Nestorian congregations in Central Asia either conformed or soon dwindled entirely away, while the surviving representatives of the once flourishing African Church appear to have deliberately apostatized from the religion of Christ to that of their invaders. Another equally notable characteristic of Muslim success is the fact that, with the single exception of Spain, Islâm has never been suppressed in any country where it has once taken root. Moreover, in the midst of the general decay of its political power and ascendancy, it is making quiet but rapid progress still, in China, in India, in the Indian Archipelago, and more especially in West and Central Africa, insomuch that its followers at the present day—and let us remember that it is six centuries younger than Christianity—are presumably not far behind the aggregate number of Christians. I am well

aware, of course, that otherwise than numerically the balance is immeasurably in favour of Christianity.

That the earlier conquests were mainly effected by the sword is unquestionable. On the other hand, we must not ignore the fact that Christians, as also Jews and Sabæns, who are recognized by the Kurân as the possessors of a Divine revelation, were generally offered the alternative of the *Jizyah*, or Tribute, which secured to them the toleration, under certain restrictions, of their respective religions, together with the protection of their life and property. It is more than probable that, in many cases, this security was little better than a delusion; nevertheless, when we call to mind the utterly defenceless condition of the Christians who braved the fierce persecutions to which they were subjected during the first three centuries of our era, we must needs come to the sorrowful conclusion that their successors during the Muslim invasions had, with their faith and love, lost the other manly characteristics of Christian courage and patriotism.

To that cause, indeed, more than to any other, I attribute the successes of Islâm. Of course, several auxiliary and concomitant causes cöoperated, such as the conciseness but momentous import of its symbol of initiation,—"There is no god but *the* God, and Muhammad is His Apostle," recalling to mind similar brief formulæ in the New Testament; its simple insistence on the observance, however onerous, of a round of external ceremonies apart from any purity of the heart; and the absolute certainty of eternal happiness in a paradise of sensual delights held out to its faithful professors. But on these I may not enlarge. A more important point for us to consider is the influence which Islâm has exercised wherever it has been established.

That it wrought a wonderful religious and social reformation among the pagan Arabs is beyond doubt. Equally certain it is that its numerous modern converts from among the heathen negroes are thereby raised immensely in the scale of civilization. In like manner there is no denying that the Muslim Arabs "for five hundred years held up the torch of learning to humanity," and that they greatly developed several of the pre-existent sciences and originated others. But after a while all this scientific vigour came to a standstill; for, as Palgrave has truly observed, "Islâm is stationary, and was framed thus to remain. Sterile like its God, lifeless like its first principle and supreme original in all that constitutes true life,—for life is

love, participation, and progress, and of these the Koranic Deity has none,—it justly repudiates all change, all advance, all development. To borrow the forcible words of Lord Houghton, the 'written book is there the dead man's hand,' stiff and motionless; whatever savours of vitality is by that alone convicted of heresy and defection." Hence, I say, the pristine energy of the system has long since died out, and the actual condition of Islâm, morally and socially, politically and intellectually, in countries under Muslim rule, is as abject as it well can be, proving incontestably, in my humble opinion, that its potentiality for good is limited by its defective religious principles, and that it is as powerless to regenerate and to lead mankind onward to perfection, as it is to resist that disintegration and decay which are rapidly sapping the foundation of its political sovereignty.

There is a striking historical parallelism between Judaism and Islâm which I cannot forbear noticing here. We have no certain record of the moral condition of the Israelites during their long captivity in Egypt; but it is more than probable that they had conformed to the religion of their pagan masters, until at length God raised up Moses to effect their deliverance and reformation. The grand and simple message which he was commissioned by the Almighty to bear to his enslaved brethren from the land of Midian was the essential Unity of God, as distinct from all other beings who were called gods. This restored truth was to be the foundation of the new polity and ritual; and, accordingly, in wisely adopting, as Moses undoubtedly did, some of the familiar Egyptian rites to the reformed worship, the whole was nevertheless permeated, as it were, with this sublime truth. Now, is it not a singular coincidence in the history of the world that upwards of 2000 years later, or six centuries subsequent to the advent of our Blessed Lord, when paganism was still rife in Arabia, and Christians in their hair-splitting controversies about the Godhead, the Incarnation, and the Holy Trinity had well-nigh degenerated into Tritheists, that the Divine Providence should have raised up Muhammad, from the adjacent wild territory of the Hijâz, to reiterate the doctrine of the absolute Unity of God, and that he, like Moses, should have incorporated into his system some of the previously existing pagan rites? The older dispensation was imperfect, as being suited only to the childhood of the Israelites. Hence we read of it that "it could never make the comers thereunto perfect;" and, further, that in

the inscrutable purposes of God He had given to the Jews "statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live." No wonder, therefore, that Islâm, which at best is but a diluted ectype of Judaism, with an admixture of distorted Christianity, should like its Jewish prototype be powerless to effect the regeneration of mankind.

On the contrast between Christianity and Islâm I quote with infinite pleasure two passages from my valued friend Mr. Bosworth Smith's "Mohammed and Mohammedanism," the more so because that in some quarters his occasional too favourable estimate, in my opinion, of Islâm has been unfairly construed into a corresponding depreciation of Christianity. He writes: "The religion of Christ contains whole fields of morality and whole realms of thought which are all but outside the religion of Mohammed. It opens humility, purity of heart, forgiveness of injuries, sacrifice of self to man's moral nature; it gives scope to development, boundless progress to his mind; its motive power is stronger, even as a friend is better than a king, and love higher than obedience. . . . Nor are the methods of drawing near to God the same in the two religions. The Mussulman gains a knowledge of God—he can hardly be said to approach Him—by listening to the lofty message of God's prophet. The Christian believes that he approaches God by a process which, however difficult it may be to define, yet has had a real meaning to Christ's servants, and has embodied itself in countless types of Christian character,—that mysterious something which St. Paul calls 'a union with Christ.' 'Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.'"

Such being, allowedly, the vast superiority of Christianity over Islâm, what is our duty as philanthropists, and especially as Christians, towards the Muslims? The commands of our Blessed Lord and our obligations as His professed followers alike demand that we should endeavour to make them partakers in the same exalted privileges which we ourselves enjoy. Christ's final charge to His apostles was that they should go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. There is no limitation in the objects of this commission, and if we heartily receive our Master's words we may not doubt, despite the specious arguments that have been adduced to the contrary, that the Gospel is as suited to the mingled races of Africa and the East as it is to what are called the "higher races" of the human family—that it is "the power of God unto

salvation to every one that believeth," whether he be Jew or Gentile, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free. Two very powerful motives, moreover, apart from this consideration, should constrain the Church to the devout and zealous discharge of its responsibilities in this respect. The first is the antagonism of Islâm to Christianity, and the great barrier which it raises against the progress of the latter, and, consequently, against the increased happiness of the human race. I am fully aware how strongly it has been maintained that Islâm predisposes its professors to Christianity. My own extensive experience of Muslims, among whom I have many valued friends, convinces me that the contrary is true, and that the defective system of Islâm, largely mingled as it is with Divine truth, is in more direct and determined opposition to Christianity than paganism itself. The uniform testimony of Christian missionaries of all denominations, that the difficulties which they encounter among Muslims far transcend those which they meet with among the idolatrous heathen, is an additional proof to the same effect.

But what then? Whenever a forlorn hope has been wanted from the ranks of our gallant army or navy, more volunteers than were needed have always been forthcoming for the perilous enterprise. And shall it be said of our Church—shall it be said of this University, the cradle of so many giants in learning, and piety, and Christian self-devotion,—that love, and zeal, and contempt of danger are at so low an ebb within her that she cannot muster a band of dauntless missionaries to preach the Gospel to the Muslims? Call we to mind how the primitive evangelists went forth, with their lives in their hand, to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to the most barbarous as well as to the most civilized nations. True it is that many of them died for the holy cause which they had espoused, but the blood of the martyrs proved to be the seed of the Church. Call we to mind the heroism of that saintly presbyter, Henry Martyn, and later still the indomitable courage and perseverance of Livingstone in Central Africa, and let us devoutly pray that a goodly number of successors to them may soon go forth from this land to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the followers of Islâm. Success is assured. The Gospel must eventually prevail over every obstacle; and as to the Muslims, what a glorious triumph it would be. Of them, indeed, we may confidently adapt the language of St. Paul respecting Israel of old, and say, "If the casting away of them

be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead;" for considering the pre-eminent importance which Muslims attach to religion, their strict observance of its precepts and ceremonial, and their ardent zeal in the dissemination of their creed, it is not too much to expect that, under the power of the Gospel, every converted follower of Islâm would become an ardent propagator of the faith of Christ. "The Mohammedan quarry, so to speak"—I quote from an address of General Lake before the Church Missionary Society—"contains materials which only require the touch of the Master-Builder to form out of it pillars for that temple which is being raised to His glory in this earth."

Coming now to the question proposed, "How best to deal with Muhammadanism," I maintain in the first place that, in addition to a heart inspired with Christian zeal and charity, indomitable courage and unswerving faith, missionaries to the Muslims should be armed *cap-a-pie* with the best weapons for defending the inspiration, authenticity, and genuineness of the Sacred Scriptures. Secondly, that a thorough knowledge of Arabic, of the Kurân, of the *Sunnah*, or Religious Institutes, of the *Hadîth*, or Traditions, and of other standard works of Muslim theology, is indispensable. Such knowledge, as I can testify from experience, will prove the missionary's best introduction to the Muslims of any country. It will enable him the better to point out the many contradictions, discrepancies, misquotations, and anachronisms contained in the Kurân, and it will give him a clearer insight into the real doctrines of Islâm than can possibly be acquired from any translations. Allow me to illustrate the latter remark in one particular instance. You are doubtless aware that the great stumblingblocks in the way of Muslims are the Christian dogmas of the Incarnation and the Holy Trinity. One or other of them, or both combined, will certainly be objected to at the outset of any discussion, and the *Sûratu'l-Ikhlâs*, the shortest but by Muslims regarded as the most pregnant and essential chapter of the Kurân, will be objected against them. "Say, God is One; God the Eternal; He begetteth not, neither is He begotten; neither is there any one like Him." After having been led to examine the original carefully you will perhaps be surprised to hear that thereafter, on having this chapter quoted, I have said, to the astonishment of the Muslims, "Hand me the Kurân and I will kiss that *Sûrah*." Let me explain why. I found the verb

therein used to express "begetteth" and "begotten" was the same which is ordinarily used, even at the present day, to signify human procreation, an idea abhorrent to the Deity. I have then contended that neither the Arabic versions of the New Testament nor any Arab-speaking Christians ever use the passive of that verb of God or of the "Son of God,"* always rendering our "only-begotten of the Father" by the "only One of the Father," or that they ever call Christ the *Wáladu-'llah*, that is Son of God by procreation, but *Ibnu-'llah* (from the Arabic root *bána*, to erect, build, fashion), that is, the Son of God's building. Now, this same distinction in the two words exists in the Hebrew also, but unfortunately there was no equivalent for both in Greek, consequently in the New Testament our Lord is called υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, the Son of God absolutely, without any distinction in the mode of the Sonship. We also say the "Son of God," in which title the designation of "Son" does not differ from that of a male child by human procreation. I have then argued that the "Son of God," as indicating our Blessed Lord, was God manifest in the flesh. Not a ray or an emanation of the Godhead barely, nor anything less than God Himself in a human form, with the perfect attributes of humanity joined with the perfections of the Deity.

The Muslims to whom I have expounded the Incarnation this way, pointing out to them at the same time that the inhabitation of the Deity in some favoured and elect individuals —albeit that notion differs widely from the true Christian doctrine—was not foreign to their own theology, were generally much struck with the, to them, new idea; but then they asked: "Why, in that case, Christ being according to your theory God, do you pray to God through Him, ask His mediation, and ascribe your salvation to Him." To this I have replied: "What is God? You tell me that He is a spirit, that He is everlasting, all-knowing, all-judging, all-merciful, and so forth. Granted; nevertheless, by such language you give personality to a spirit, or, in other words, you ascribe a person to God. What is your proof of that? You, Muslims, can adduce no satisfactory proof of it, so that what you really believe in is almightiness, omniscience, infinite goodness, and the like. But there are attributes or abstractions, and you cannot rationally worship or confide in either. You may plausibly reply, that in that respect your creed agrees with the Old Testament; nevertheless you must bear in mind that

* The verb *wálada* is used of Christ, but never of the Son of God.

under that dispensation, even from the earliest times, we read of certain manifestations of God, as of God talking with Abraham, of the "Angel of the Lord" as representing God, of the "glory of God" as seen by Moses, &c., all which manifestations served to give the Jews a clearer idea than is conveyed by your theology of the personality of God. All these revelations, however, were "imperfect" as being preparatory to something better; and in the fulness of time that consummation was manifested by the appearance of God in the flesh, that is, in a form within human comprehension, open to human imitation, and endowed with human sympathies. In the God-Man, therefore, were exhibited, manifestly, the attributes of the Divinity, and more especially, if we may draw a distinction, of His love and mercy for fallen man. He was not an abstraction of deity, but in very deed One who was infinite in power, wisdom, goodness, and love, insomuch that we cannot be really said to apprehend or know God except as He was revealed in the Man Jesus Christ. Hence, when we Christians pray "through Jesus Christ our Lord," seeking His mediation and intercession, we mean this: "O Thou Most High God, by that manifestation of Thy love, exhibited by Thyself as the Son of God, we pray Thee to have mercy upon us." I can assure you that this idea of the Incarnation and of the Divine Mediatorship was more readily comprehended by intelligent Muslims than I find it to be by the generality of Christians. And the reason, I fear, is this: that apart from the orthodox formulæ respecting the Unity of God, the Holy Trinity, and the Incarnation, an impression prevails among the masses, often fostered by a loose style of pulpit teaching, of the existence of three distinct individuals in the Godhead, each having attributes peculiar to himself, and differing from, if not opposed to, the attributes of his associates.

I have ventured to enlarge on this topic because of its paramount importance in dealing with Muslims. Aside, however, from this cardinal dogma, there are many points of contact between Islâm and Christianity which the missionary should bear in mind when he approaches its followers.

In the first place, there is their admission of the inspiration of the Christian Scriptures, the perfections of the Godhead, and the pre-eminence of Jesus, as set forth in the Kurân, the purity and exalted rank of His Virgin Mother, the reverence paid to the Prophets and Apostles, the resurrection of the quick and dead, and the judgment of the last day, together

with a striking accord between the two creeds respecting the obligation and practice of the moral virtues. And even as regards some of their peculiar rites, "Is there nothing," asks Mr. Hughes, "in the religious ceremony of the *Zikr*, in which the devotees of Central Asia will exercise themselves for hours? Surely it speaks of the alienation of the human soul, and its need of reconciliation to God. The various ablutions which are practised by the Muslims are Jewish in their origin, and typify the need of spiritual sanctification. The great central feast of Muhammadanism"—the *'Idu'dh-Dháha*, called by the Turks the *Kurbân Bairâm*, and in India the *Bakri'Id*—"is a feast of sacrifice; but surely it speaketh of better things than the blood of Ishmael [which it was designed to commemorate]. The recital of the liturgical form of prayer five times a day expresses a sense of need and a yearning after God." But in addition to these considerations the Muslims should above all be approached with Christian sympathy, in imitation of the great apostle St. Paul, who dropped not a word of scorn even against the polytheism of the Athenians, quoted their authors with respect, and professed only to declare to them more fully that God whom, unknowingly, they already worshipped. By thus holding up Christianity to the Muslims, and "by showing"—I again quote the words of Mr. Bosworth Smith—"how perfectly that Christ, whom Mohammed with his half knowledge so reverenced, came up to the ideal which prophets and priests desired to see and had not seen, and which Mohammed himself, Prophet and King in one, could only half realise,—in this way, and this alone, is it likely that Christianity will ever act upon Mohammedanism; not by sweeping it into oblivion,—for what of truth there is in it, and there is very much truth, can never die,—but by gradually, and perhaps unconsciously breathing into its vast and still vigorous frame a newer, purer, a diviner life."

Further, inasmuch as preaching was the divinely-appointed ordinance by which the apostles were to gather in the fold of the Redeemer those who had gone astray, and by the unwearied use of which they planted the Church in the far-off regions of the world, it is essential to success that this means should be adopted by missionaries to the Muslims. I mention this specially because missionaries are often found wholly engrossed in the occupation of schoolmasters to non-Christian or pagan children. But the early Evangelists preached to grown-up men and women, and their first converts were

gathered from among such. These afterwards brought their children to be baptized and instructed by the ministers of the Church. And when schools are formed of children of believing parents, it is doubtless the duty of the Church to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and, *secondarily*, to afford them all the help in their power to secure their well-being in the world by imparting to them secular knowledge.

The early Apostles and Evangelists journeyed from place to place, very much as the Muslim Darwîshes, Fakîrs, and Marâbits do nowadays, proclaiming or preaching the Word, and if they were not received in one town they went to another. If the Lord had any "people" there, they were added to the Church by holy baptism, and pastors were ordained to reside among them, and a form of order and discipline established for their government and edification. The outward exhibition of this order, combined with the love and unity which existed among these infant churches, was doubtless one great means of bringing others into communion with the Church.

This remark leads me to another of correlative importance. Islâm has been represented as "essentially a spiritual religion," which it is not; but it is undeniably more decidedly non-objective than almost every other. Nevertheless, as is attested by the grandeur and architectural elaborateness of their mosques, no people seem more impressed with the propriety of beautifying God's house. In striking contrast with this characteristic, however, is the utter absence of all objects of adoration or of symbols within its walls, and the great simplicity of their worship. The assembled congregation, drawn up in parallel lines and looking towards the *Mihrâb*, or *Niche*, indicative of the direction of Makkah, repeating or rather chaunting the *al-Fâtihah* and other passages from the Kurân, bending, kneeling, and prostrating themselves in accordance with the prescribed ritual, exhibits a picture at once solemn and deeply impressive.

The Church of Christ, even from the beginning, has recognized the necessity of similar adjuncts calculated to convey the hidden import enshrined under its outward symbolism. And such an order of externals we possess in our ritual, all of which are designed to inculcate some important truth upon the mind, and to guide and support it in the practice of the same. I mean the normal ritual of the Church of England, and not that travestie of it in the direction of sensuous pomp

and gaud which has unhappily come into vogue of late, for such I need scarcely assure you would be regarded by the Muslims as tantamount to an idolatrous desecration of God's worship. On this subject I may mention that several Muslim grandees who were present at and highly admired the Thanksgiving service at St. Paul's, for the recovery of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, were so struck with it—the solemn prayer on bended knee and the address by the Archbishop of Canterbury recalling to mind their own prayers and the sermon from the pulpit by the *Khatîb*—that they asked me why it was that the ritual in all our churches was not equally simple.

I insist, therefore, on the full and public exposition of our reformed ritual by every missionary who takes up his abode amidst a Muslim population; remarking, however, by the way, that, in accordance with our Lord's pattern, they should be sent out in pairs. Let every one so settled begin his labours by erecting a place of worship, no matter how humble it may be at the outset. Let him go thither morning and evening to say his prayers with his own household until he learns the language of the people, the acquirement of which should be his diligent study. Let him, in the meantime, go among the people, familiarize himself with their customs, take an interest in their concerns generally, assist them in their lawful pursuits as far as he is able, visit their sick, sympathize with and help their poor as far as in him lies, and seek by these and every other available means to secure their goodwill. The very existence of a Christian oratory in their midst, the due celebration there of Christian worship, the observance of the Church's solemnities with suitable accessories, will not fail to excite attention and interest. Such an *exhibition* of the truth would, I am persuaded, be eventually blessed to the ingathering of souls into the fold of Christ. As an abstract of these remarks I adduce the testimony of a valued friend of mine who laboured for many years on the East Coast of Africa, and who assured me that nothing, in his opinion, had tended so much to the spread of Islâm there as its external exhibition before the heathen. Wherever the Muslim traders settled they built a *Másjid*, or Oratory, for the celebration of their worship, and, without any other direct efforts to make proselytes, that alone had led thousands to embrace Islâm. This testimony is the more valuable as coming from a Lutheran.

When we contemplate the wide field for missionary labour which the Muslim world presents, it is deplorable to reflect

how slender have been the efforts of the Christian Church to cultivate it. Considering, moreover, that our own native fellow-subjects in India who profess Islâm number upwards of forty millions, it is a reproach to us that we have done so little towards their evangelization. Among the numerous societies throughout Christendom for the spread of the Gospel, —many for special objects,—not one exists exclusively for Muslims, if we except the English "Moslem Mission Society," a very limited and ill-supported association. It is true that one or more of our church societies, especially the Church Missionary Society, as well in Africa and in India—notably in the North-West Provinces and at Peshâwar—has, in conjunction with its other operations, given some attention to the Muslims; but as nothing has been attempted on a scale commensurate with the great work, so the success has been meagre in the extreme; for whereas, God be praised, large accessions are yearly made to the Church from among the heathen, the annual converts from Islâm may, I fear, be reckoned upon the fingers.

It is high time that this reproach should be removed, and that the Church should substitute godly zeal for past lukewarmness, glowing faith for past despondency, and a bountiful liberality for past niggardliness in this province of Christian enterprise and duty. It is among the principal objects of this Conference to maintain and stimulate Christian zeal and energy in the missionary department of the Church's work, and if its efforts are seconded and prospered by exciting an interest in the subject, and by contributing to raise up a band of devoted men to proclaim the glad tidings of the Gospel, with all its attendant blessings both for time and for eternity, to the followers of Islâm, it will have effected a glorious triumph, the beneficial effects of which will be felt in the future of the world's history,—its crowning consummation, not until that great day when the redeemed from among every nation, and kindred, and tongue shall be gathered together to worship before the throne of God and the Lamb, the Beatific Vision of the God-Man, the Alpha and Omega of creation and redemption, the Saviour of mankind, to Whom alone belongeth adoration now and for ever.

