

Archival Annexure

The Islamic Fraternity

Presenting here one of the rare issues of a journal: *The Islamic Fraternity* published from Tokyo, Japan promoting ‘fraternal feeling among the followers of Islam and those of other sister religions.’ It was jointly edited by Maulvi Mohammad Barakatullah (1864-1927) of India and Ahmad Fadli of Egypt. Of Indian origin, from Bhopal, Barkatullah reached Japan in 1909 and was a contemporary of Ahmad Fadli and Abdul Rashid Ibrahim. He worked with Ahmad Fadli in publishing *The Islamic Fraternity* in 1910¹.

The journal had an Islamic viewpoint and began to criticize British policies in India and Islamic World, in reaction to this the British government put pressure on the government of Japan, which shut down publishing *The Islamic Fraternity* in 1912. Barkatullah was very active in matters pertaining to religion and politics. He played an important role in Japanese-Islamic relations and the call to Islam in Japan. He was founder of the chair in Urdu studies at the Tokyo University of Foreign languages from 1910 to 1914².

Despite the suppression of *The Islamic Fraternity* into India, Barkatullah continued to be a concern from his base in Japan, where he became successful in winning over some high profile Japanese politicians and had become friends with influential Pan-Asianists like Okawa Shumei. Hasan Hatano, a Pan-Asianist Japanese convert to Islam and Barkatullah’s protégé based in Tokyo began to publish another newspaper called *El-Islam* in 1911 (written partly in English and Japanese) made their way into India in 1912 and 1913 and was considered to be a continuation of Barkatullah’s anti British campaign. Pamphlets like ‘*An Nazir-ul Uryan*’ published in Urdu alleged to have been written by Barkatullah made their way into India through Shanghai³. Looking his such activities, under the pressure of British government, Japanese government deported Barkatullah back to San Francisco from where he entered Japan. The following issue is taken from the personal collection of Moinuddin Aqeel. [JAK]

¹ Al-Samarrai, Dr Salih Mahdi, *The Message of Islam in Japan: Its History and Development*, translated from Arabic language by Dr Usama Hasan, Islamic Centre of Japan, 1999, 7p

² Ibid, 12p

³ Siddiqui, Samee Nasim, *The Career of Muhammad Barkatullah: From Intellectual to Anti-Colonial Revolutionary*, a theses submitted to the faculty of North Carolina University at Chapel hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in the Department of History in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, 2017, 50p

THE ISLAMIC FRATERNITY

An organ devoted to promoting fraternal feeling among the followers of
Islam and those of other sister religions.

"Verily, we have sent thee (O Mohammad) with truth as a bearer of glad tidings and warnings:
and there is no nation but there has been amongst them a warner (prophet)" (Quran, XXXV, 22.)
Make (religion) easy and do not make (it) difficult; convey glad tidings (to the people) and do not
drive (them) away; and become servants of God by becoming brothers, says the Prophet.

Subscriptions should be sent by money orders. *Edited jointly by Mohammad Barakatullah of India and Ahmad Fadhil of Egypt.*

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Notice.—Postage to Japan should be at the rate of foreign states.
All literary communications should be sent to M. Barakatullah, 40, Dai-machi,
Akasaka-ku, Tokyo, Japan;—and all business communications to A. Fadhil, 11,
Dai-machi, Akasaka-ku, Tokyo, Japan.

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Felicitations

It is with no small satisfaction, hope and courage that we enter, amidst blessings from the Holy Land, congratulations from far and near and good-will from many parts of the world upon the sixth month in the life of this journal. Our cordial thanks are, therefore, due to our friends, acquaintances and well-wishers, who gave this humble publication an enthusiastic welcome and showed their sympathy by enlarging the circle of subscribers to it. A few points in this connection did force themselves upon our attention, which, we think, would not be devoid of interest to our readers. In matters of being up-to-date and thorough in business-like methods, we observe, that America leads the van, Europe follows in its wake and Asia and Egypt come slowly on in the rear. For example the earliest response to our appeal, either in Japan or in the United States, came from Americans, whose encouraging word did invariably reach us with their subscription money. Though the subscription list from the Indian Empire is not by any means small, with a considerable volume of correspondence, yet not in a single case the western promptitude in paying the dues is visible there. But, "truly" as a friend from New York writes, "the light is breaking forth in all parts of this world and in places and persons the least expected." The Island of Cyprus has furnished us an illustration of the above quotation; for, from there we have received a large sum of money, quite out of proportion to its area and population. There is another element of interest in the list of our patrons. We have received subscription money for our paper from America from no less a person than the author of "Islam, a challenge to the faith," who has left no stone unturned to demonstrate that all that is good in Islam is borrowed from the Jewish and Christian scriptures and that the rest is nothing but congeries of superstitions. He has desired to have this paper to be sent to him at Bahrain in the Persian Gulf, where lies the field of his activity to spread Christian light in Muslim lands.

In view of a hopeful outlook, we felt a sort of inspirational impulse to start a Japanese edition, too, of the "Islamic Fraternity" from the next month. In this work, we are assisted

by the labour of love and hearty co-operation on the part of our two Japanese friends, Prof. Fujita and Mr. Hatano. The former one is a wonderful polyglot, who knows almost all European languages and has a fair acquaintance with Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Hindustanee. He has studied the Quran through German, French, and English translations. He has visited European capitals including Constantinople. Mr. Hatano is a bright young author. He possesses a facile pen and produces brilliant prose. He lives in the present and modernity is his creed. We hope and trust that through the help of these two scholars, it will be possible to bring principles of Islam home to Japanese people, who have so far got no conception of Islam whatsoever.

There are some men who serve God standing on the fence

(Continued from the July number.)

But in their efforts to please both the parties and remain in their good book by deceiving them, these hypocrites lose the confidence of both and sooner or later come to grief. "There are some men who serve God (remaining) on the fence; so if good come unto them they rest satisfied therewith, and if tribulation befall them, they turn themselves round, losing both this life and the life to come; this is manifest perdition" (Q. XXII, 11). Such men sell their birth-right for a mess of pottage and betray the Divine Manifestation for a trifling gain. Just look that even in a small community of twelve disciples of Christ there was one traitor—Judas. In the time of Mohammad, the prophet of God, there were many men of this wavering temperament, who had joined the ranks of the believers for worldly advantages only; as the followers of the Prophet were promised the inheritance of the Holy Land and other countries. The Quran contains many passages dealing with these hypocrites who not long after the ascension of the Divine Manifestation took into their hands, the reins of authority over the Islamic Commonwealth and gradually changed the democracy of spiritual brotherhood into an imperialism of privileges, corruption, selfishness, intrigue, discord and dismemberment of the Islamic unity. There is no wonder if the

Quran has been hard on such wolves in sheep-skins:—"Verily the hypocrites shall be in the lowest bottom of fire; and thou shalt not find any to help them (thence)." (Q. IV. 144.)

At the time when a new dispensation is about to begin, there is to be found also a different class of people, who are pure in spirit, clean in thought, word and action, and fond of righteousness and truth; and who are disgusted with the corruption and iniquity of the age, mourn over the loss of kindness, sympathy, charity, love and spirituality, and therefore long for the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of human form with power and great glory. So when they hear the sound of the spiritual trumpet—or the proclamation of the Divine Manifestation,—they respond to the call from the four corners of the earth as the sheep does to the voice of the shepherd. The spiritual sight, which they possess, enables them to see without hindrance the Mirror of the Divine Will in the frail form of human being, subject to all requirements of the flesh. Just as when Moses declared his mission and Pharaoh threatened him with putting him to death, there appeared on the scene: "a man (who was) a true believer, of the family of Pharaoh and (who had) concealed his faith, and said, Will ye put a man to death, because he saith, God is my Lord, seeing he is come unto you with evident signs from your Lord?" (Q. XL. 28) Or as when the Prophet of God was absorbed in devotion in front of the Kaaba, Oqbal-ibn-abi Moait, caught hold of the Prophet's shoulder, and putting a cloth round his neck drew it tightly to suffocate him to death; thereupon rushed in Abu Bakr and taking him by the shoulder pushed him aside from the Prophet of God and said: "Will ye put a man to death, because he saith, God is my Lord, seeing he is come unto you with evident signs from your Lord?" (Al Bokhari). Similarly when the Divine Master called Simon and his brother Andrew, saying: "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men, they straightway left their nets and followed him."

These are the men, who constitute the foundation of the edifice of the Kingdom of God on earth everytime when a new Jerusalem of spirituality is established by a Divine Architect in the human world. Being in close contact with the Divine Manifestation—who is the embodiment of altruism—they also become selfless in the service of humanity. Enjoying the superhuman ecstasies of spiritual visions, they take delight in giving to others what others would take delight in taking. Self-sacrifice is their badge; and the characteristics of the Merciful constitute the essentials of their characters. They are sometimes called by the epithet of "Angels" in the holy scriptures, on account of their devotion to the Divine Cause and disinterested services in spreading the religion of God. "The day when the Spirit (the Manifestation of the Divine Will) riseth (to proclaim a new dispensation) with the Angels in rows (the disciples and companions of the Divine Messenger) who speak not save one whom the Merciful permitteth (through the mouth-piece of the Divine Will) and that one speaketh right; that day is the day of infallibility. So whosoever desireth taketh refuge unto his Lord." (Q. I, XXIII. 39.)

The champions of the Divine Cause at the advent of a new dispensation are of two kinds: those, who are the first to join the cause and foremost to promote it, standing by the Manifestation through thick and thin and bearing the brunt of

opposition, persecution and martyrdom in the path of God. The others are those who fall in with the movement when the fury of the storm of opposition has somewhat spent itself, and render valuable services in enlarging the circle of the Faith, in the life-time of the Divine Manifestation. They are called the "Elect" by Jesus-Christ, whom the Angels (the disciples) gather together from the four winds and from one end of heaven to the other." (i.e. from far and near.) They are so called simply because they have elected themselves to enjoy the privilege of beholding the Blessed Beauty in the human temple, while the majority of the people see nothing in him but "a man who is distracted." The Quran in a most beautiful allegory describes the phenomenon of the advent of a new dispensation with its attendant commotions, revolutions in thoughts and actions, disappearance of the time-honoured institutions which have been thought to be as firm and lasting as mountains, the appearance of new ones in their place, and the attitude of the people toward the Divine Message.

"When the inevitable event (of the advent of a new Divine Manifestation) taketh place all of a sudden, nothing can falsify (or alter) its (predicted time of) occurrence. It abaseth (the mighty, who oppose the Divine Will) and exalteth (the lowly, who become the pillars of the new dispensation). When the earth shaketh with a violent shock (i.e. when the foundations of the preceding dispensation, in the bosom of which the people of that time are born and brought up and which has been supplying them with spiritual food like the mother earth, are shaken very seriously); and (when) the mountains are dashed to pieces and then become (like fine) dust scattered abroad (i.e. when the social customs, tyrannical institutions and mighty empires, which looked as firmly established to last for ever as the mountains themselves, are doomed to destruction by the Divine Will, and then in course of time they pass away as easily as the finest powder scattered by the wind leaving no trace behind; and (when) ye become three-different classes; then (there are to be found) the companions of the right hand,—what are the companions of the right hand! (i.e. the true believers); the companions of the left hand,—what are the companions of the left hand! (i.e. the infidels and hypocrites) and the foremost ones (in rank; who have been) the foremost (in identifying themselves with the cause of the Divine Manifestation); they are the nearest ones (to the Divine Messenger)." (Q. LVI. 1—11.)

These verses contain some important points. First it is mentioned therein that the coming of a Divine Messenger at a particular time predicted by his predecessor, is a settled fact by the decree of Heaven and cannot be averted. Secondly the appearance of the Divine Manifestation produces great changes; the high become low owing to their want of spirituality, while the lowly are raised to the apex of ever-lasting fame on account of their love of God and service to humanity through sacrifice and martyrdom. Thirdly the usual of the new dispensation does not arise until the existing religion becomes obsolete; though the people might claim to be under its shadow yet they are as strangers to its pristine purity as those who are outside its pale. Fourthly the forces of opposition to truth, justice, righteousness and spirituality, though in appearance formidable and all powerful, are destined to vanish and pass away when they come in collision with the Divine Will.

As Pharaoh who opposed Moses, the mighty Roman Empire that opposed Jesus and the Arabian Tribes, Khosro Purviz and Heraclius who opposed the Prophet of God, were decreed to be vanquished; and the spiritual victory was vouchsafed in the end to the Divine Cause: "Verily our word hath formerly been given unto our servants, the apostles; that they should certainly be aided (by the divine help) and that our hosts should surely be the conquerors" (Q. XXXVI. 133.)

Our trip to China

Our trip to the Celestial Empire was confined to Shanghai and Nanking only; the original plan having been frustrated owing to the excess of heat; yet our visit to that country was not devoid of interest. From Shanghai to Nanking one could see on both sides of the railway track a vast expanse covered with smiling green crops, dotted over at short intervals with conical straw huts supported on poles, underneath which men and beasts were going round and round and turning wooden pipes to draw the water for watering the fields. At other places there could be seen a group of peasants stark-naked standing side by side, leaning on a pole, exposed to the scorching sun, and turning the wooden machine with their feet with an astonishing rapidity to water their crops. They were drawing the water from the canal, which was constructed by the wise and benevolent Tsing Shi Hwang 2100 years ago. He also laid down at the same time the foundation of the Imperial city of Nanking which afterwards became the capital of the empire during the reigns of several dynasties. The ruins of the Imperial palaces, the statues of the emperors and empresses of Ming Dynasty and their tombs were in their mute serenity eloquent enough to tell the tale of transient nature of worldly grandeur. The Nanking exposition was also interesting, for it was Chinese in its design and execution.

We were delighted to see two Chinese Mosques in Shanghai; one of them being maintained by the Pabnai Firm of Bombay, India. The Moazzin of this Mosque—Jilaluddin,—is an enlightened young Chinese gentleman, who conversed with us in the Arabic language and discussed many problems confronting the Moslem world to day. The other mosque, had long quotations from the Quran and traditions inscribed on its walls. The thing we were agreeably surprised to find at this mosque was the fact that the bath-rooms attached to the mosque were fitted with up-to-date shower-bath implements, in the very heart of the China-town which was stinking with all sorts of foul odours. The following verse of the Quran escaped our lips and our Chinese Muslim brethren understood the full force of it: "The mosque founded on piety from the first day (of its construction) is better fitted for thee to stand therein in devotion; therein are men who love to be clean in the extreme; for God loveth those who are very particular about cleanliness." (Q. IX. 109). There is a lesson for the denizens of Al azhar University of Cairo to learn from these Chinese Muslims; for, these luminaries of the firmament of intellectual Egypt, once objected to the introduction of telephone into the university on the ground that it was an innovation in the religion!

We have to thank our Muslim brethren in Shanghai, who

spared no pains to make us comfortable, especially Mr. Arif El-Tabba of Beyrout, Syria, and managers of Essabhoj and Pabnai Firms.

Islam in China

We notice with pleasure the spirit of tolerance and the broadness of view in the writings of Dr. Timothy Richard—a great scholar of the Chinese language.—His long touch with eastern thought, sentiments and philosophy must have brought about this transformation from a missionary of monopoly-of-salvation creed into a believer in an unrestricted freedom of the Holy Spirit of God. In his book: "Conversion by the million" after giving an account of a conversation with a Chinese Muslim Tutor, he adds in the end: "On thinking over the topics on which the Tutor touched incidentally, two attracted my special attention. One is a stain, the other a credit to their (Muslims') religion. I mean revenge and charity. They (Muslims) practice fasting not merely on account of sin, but in order to know to some extent by experience what the sufferings of the poor are. Hence a Mohammedan beggar is seldom met with (I speak of Shantung).... On the other hand, in relating the battle at which the above mentioned Tsai-tai fell, it was evident, as it is throughout the whole of the Saracenic Wars, especially the Persian, that the Mohammedan conscience does not know that revenge is sin." We beg to remind the Rev. gentleman that it was the Prophet of God, who for all times abolished the time-honoured custom of revenge, and inculcated the Gospel of Love and harmony on a memorable occasion on the plain of Arafat in the tenth year of Hiberna. On that occasion the Manifestation charged those who were present to convey the message of peace and good-will to all generations to come, and concluded his sermon, while pointing toward heaven, by these words: "Lord, (be witness) that I have delivered (the Message)." (Al-Bokhari). The Quran is also full of sublime sentiments of mercy and forgiveness: "Good and evil shall not be held equal. Turn away (evil) with that which is better; and behold the man between whom and thyself (there was) enmity, (shall become), as it were, thy warmest friend; but none shall attain to this (perfection) except they who are patient; nor shall any attain thereto, except he who is destined to achieve a great share (of excellence)." (Q. XLII. 37.) Was Jesus Christ responsible for the concentration camps at Cuba or South Africa? The faults of Muslim monarchs were in spite of and not in accordance with the teachings of the Prophet of God. We give the following quotation from Rev. T. Richard's book:—

"Islam in China began by Mohammed himself sending his maternal uncle, Wahb-abi-kabsha, by sea as an envoy to the Emperor of China in A. D. 628, when authority was given to build mosques in Canton and liberty for the free exercise of their religion. In 708 there was another embassy overland to Singan-fu, then the capital of the empire, and several myriads of Muslims began to settle in Shensi. In 755, 400 Arab soldiers were sent by khaliph Abu-Giafar to succour the Chinese emperor against the Turkish rebel An Lu-Shan. As a recompense for their services, these soldiers were established in the principal cities of the empire and given Chinese wives. These may be considered the original stock of Arab Muslim Chinese. At that time the Arab traders

also came to Chinese ports in very large numbers, and had consuls of their own. In 850, during a rebellion at Canton, 120,000 Muslims, Jews, Christians and Parsees perished. After that they declined in China. In the Mongol dynasty the Arabs came in large numbers again and settled themselves in Fukkien, Chehkiang and Kiangsu, Foochow being now their chief centre of trade instead of Canton. During the Mongol dynasty the province of Yunnan was for the first time annexed to China. The inhabitants were wild and uncivilized. The Mongol emperor appointed Omar, a Muslim from Bokhara, to be the governor. He invited a large number of scholars and co-religionists to come and help him to civilize and convert the people, which they did till almost the whole province became Muslims. The Muslims in the north-west in Shensi and Kansuh also increased in numbers till they became a power in the land. When the Chinese dynasty was restored to power, a policy of repression of Muslims commenced, which has been followed by the Manchus down to the present time. In 1385 the Muslim merchants received orders to retire to their ships from Canton, and the Chinese were warned not to have too frequent communications with them. In 1525 the same thing happened again. From 1817 to 1855 the Chinese mandarins by a series of oppressions and wholesale massacres of men, women and children in Yunnan, roused the whole province to rebellion, which in 1873 they put-down by a crowning act of treachery, beheading 17 Muslim chiefs, whom they had invited to a friendly council and banquet! The same policy of hatred, privately encouraging the people to set fire and sword on the Muslims, was adopted in Shensi till the whole of the north-west was up in arms from Singan-fu to Hsi. And this rising took 12 years to put down. It was also done by the fearful slaughter and even the annihilation of the Muslims in many districts by General Tso and not by the moral force which the Chinese pride themselves on so much."

Awakening of the muslim world

Just as at the close of a severe winter, during which the realm of nature seems to be, as if, under the grip of death-like swoon, there appears suddenly something mysterious in the very air that we breathe, in the surrounding elements that we feel and in the entire economy of nature that we behold, which, in a mysterious way sets in a new era of life, youth and Joy, and to which mysterious force we give the name of: "Spring-tide"; so in the life of men and the history of nations there also passes unexpectedly a spirit of revival of life and energy over the face of the society, after a period of stagnation and decay, and begins to perform its wonders in the human world. Something of this sort has of late been taking place in the minds, sentiments and sensations of Muslim communities the world over. There is heard a note of hope and courage proceeding from every direction where the Muslim tribes inhabit. The establishment of the Constitutional regime in the Ottoman Empire, by the way, has been the first visible result of the working of that invisible mysterious power, that seems to be helping on the evolution of what is good in the eastern nations. With the removal of despotism in Turkey—the visible, spiritual and temporal centre of Islamic union of hearts—the signs of life, activity and progress are noticeable in all parts of the Muslim

world. For instance, we read that meetings are being held in Mecca—(once a fountain-head of human emancipation, but in the latter days of despotism a stronghold of reaction)—in which speeches are delivered and essays are read on "liberty, equality and fraternity," and in the conclusion of which the assembled people shout in chorus: "Long live the Constitution, long live the Fatherland, and long live the Committee of the Union and Progress."

Another remarkable feature of this rejuvenation has been the growth of sound and solid literature, especially in Egypt and the Ottoman Empire, in an unusually short time. In this respect the Indian empire is the only gloomy spot on the horizon. Persia, on the other hand, is rapidly recovering from the baneful effects of the last efforts of despotism and reaction. We have received from *Najaf*, near Bagdad, an Arabic periodical, which contains brilliant articles on the burning questions of the day. It is called: "Ilm", knowledge, and promises to spread the light of learning in that region. The Muslim community in Russia, too, has in Caucasus alone, thirty daily newspapers. It is a psychological principle that thoughts govern our minds and actions. We hope and trust that the writers, who cater to the intellectual requirements of the Muslim community, should indulge less in pessimistic presentation of Islamic outlook and take a leaf out of the book of the author of the Arabic Ode recited at Constantinople on the occasion of celebrating the anniversary of the Constitution: This poem is a choice piece of literature after the crude fashion of Arabian life and yet it is a sacred hymn to the indestructible nature of the Oriental people. We are indebted for it to our contemporary the Arabic Journal—"Al Adl"—the Justice, of Constantinople:—

"Leave alone the mention of mortal beings and attachment to sentimentalities. But sing the praises of the polished sword in the grip of a right hand. And leave alone flirtation with the moon-faced beauties. For, they, too, belong to that class of things that have to set down from the heaven of their glory. Praise the sword unsheathed from its scabbard, And thereby achieve the merit of eulogizing it. The sword has its edge moulded out of the steel of bravery. And it is enough that it has its matter and form both of manliness. The heart is troubled being in love with the sword. And it is a good fortune that I am occupied in love for it. Say to those, who can not bear its lightning-like brightness; Or those who can not behold an unsheathed sword; Have you forgotten that the Quran praises it; And have you forgotten what the Old and the New Testaments say in its praise? That sword is nothing more or nothing less than the Oriental people. Who have left the cowards slain lying on their sides. Through this sword the children of wisdom received Constitution. After an age, during which the wisdom lay captive in the dark. And by this sword the darkness, which had covered every thing, was dispelled. And surely the darkness of injustice availeth its children not even as much as a wick of advantage."

The second week of last August witnessed great heroism, self-sacrifice, national solidarity and touch of humanity on the part of the Japanese people, when the floods wrought havoc in certain parts of Tokyo and the country. It seemed, as if, a certain part of early history of Islam was enacted afresh on the stage of Japan in modern times.



Tehseel

No.2 Jan. - June 2018 vol.1

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Islamic Research Academy, Karachi

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