

away. But the Meccans, from the way in which he had at first given out a verse as God's word and afterwards withdrawn it as a suggestion of Satan, did not hesitate to draw the inference that the whole of his boasted revelation was nothing but a manifest imposture. To their cold and unfeeling logic the Prophet had nothing to oppose save passionate assurances.

Fortunately for the Moslems, precisely at this juncture, when matters were assuming so gloomy an aspect for their little company, two conversions took place, which were well fitted to revive their courage. Mohammed's uncle, Hamza b. 'Abdalmotallib, felt his family pride wounded by the injurious treatment which the former had received from Abū Jahl, head of the great and wealthy family of the Banū Makhzūm, and in order to become publicly his champion, he adopted Islam. Of much more importance still was the conversion in the same year (the sixth of the Call) of 'Omar b. al-Khattāb. 'Omar was then only twenty-six years of age, and neither rich nor noble; but his imposing figure and his unbending strength of will gave him a personal influence, which immediately made itself felt in a very marked manner in favour of Islam. Until now its religious gatherings had taken place privately, especially in the house of Arkam; but 'Omar offered his prayers at the Ka'ba as publicly as possible, and his example was followed by the other Moslems. Their religious exercises were no longer gone about in secret, but ostentatiously and before the eyes of all.

So far as can be gathered, it was at this time that the opposition between Mohammed and his townsmen reached its highest pitch. The feeling that he had somewhat committed himself embittered him; he was determined to atone for his previous concessions to polytheism by uncompromising polemic against it. A personal element, which had lurked from the first in the war of principles, became by degrees increasingly dominant. The idols were less displeasing to Allāh than the idolaters; his own worship was a matter of less concern to him than the recognition of his messenger. With ever-increasing distinctness the prophetic utterances came to be mere words of threatening and rebuke against the Meccans; it was impossible not to recognize in Noah and Moses or Abraham the prophet himself. The coming judgment upon Mecca, and the hour of it, were either in plain words or veiled allusion the continual theme of the "admonisher;" but the oftener and the more urgently it was repeated, the less was the impression it produced. The Meccans did not, on the whole, suffer themselves to be much disturbed by the prospect of the terrible overthrow which was portrayed before them in vivid colours. They were even profane enough to express a desire to see the long-threatened catastrophe arrive at last, and their audacity went so far as to complain of the revelations with which Mohammed sought to stir their feelings as being tedious.¹ They did not in the least believe that the Biblical narratives, which he related with special pride, were known to him by revelation; on the contrary, they pretended to know perfectly well the human source from which he had derived them (sur. xvi. 105; xxv. 5; xlv. 13). It is very interesting to find Mohammed in presence of their unbelief referring to the recognition and approval with which he met among the children of Israel (sur. vi. 114; x. 94; xiii. 36 sqq.; xvii. 108; xxviii. 52 sq.; xxxiv. 6), and particularly to find him appealing to the testimony of a certain Jew, whom he does not name (sur. xvi. 9 sqq.). Manifestly he had relations with Jews at this period, and was under their influence; and from them, of course, it was that the material of his Old Testament and Haggadic narratives was derived. At the

¹ Ibn Hishām, pp. 191, 235 sq.

same time it is clear that he himself must have believed these to have come directly to him in a second revelation from above, otherwise he would hardly have taken his stand in the presence of his opponents upon the testimony of the Jews. Such a self-deception seems indeed hardly credible to us, but it is impossible to impute to the Arab prophet too complete an absence of the critical faculty.

The Korāish at last lost all patience. Their heads entered into a solemn compact to break off all intercourse with the Hashimids, as they declined to separate themselves from Mohammed. The Hashimids submitted to the interdict for the sake of their relative, although for the most part they were not believers on him. Along with the Banū 'l-Motallib they withdrew into the separate quarter of their chief, into the so-called Shi'b Abi Tālib; one only of their number, Abū Lahab, separated himself from them, and made common cause with the Meccans. All buying and selling with the excommunicated persons being forbidden, these found themselves reduced occasionally to outward distress, as well as excluded from all fellowship. This treatment, although apparently never carried out with absolute strictness, did not fail of its effect. The Prophet's more remotely attached adherents fell away from him, and his efforts for the spread of Islam were crippled. All he could do was to encourage those who remained faithful, and to set himself to seek the conversion of his relations.

This state of matters, after continuing for from two to three years, at last became intolerable to the Meccans themselves, who had a variety of relations with the excommunicated family. In the tenth year of the Call (sur. 619-620) five of the leading citizens paid a visit to the Shi'b Abi Tālib and induced the Banū Hāshim and al-Motallib to come out of their retirement and again appear among their fellow-citizens. The rest of the Korāish were taken by surprise, and did not venture, by setting themselves against the *fait accompli*, to run the risk of what might have become a dangerous breach. The story goes that a lucky accident released them from the solemn oath under which they had laid themselves with reference to the Banū Hāshim—the mice had destroyed the document, hung up in the Ka'ba, on which it was recorded.

Mohammed was now free once more; but he no longer thought of carrying on his polemic against the Meccans or of seeking to influence them at all. In his relations to them three stadia can be distinguished, although it is easier to determine their character than their chronology. In the first instance, his endeavour was to propitiate them and win them over to his side; when other methods failed, he even went so far as to make complimentary mention of their goddesses in one of his revelations, and thus to set up a compromise with heathenism. When this compromise failed, he forthwith commenced an embittered assault upon the idolaters, which ended in the outlawry of himself and of his family. And now, the ban having been removed, he gave the Meccans up, abandoning them to their hardness of heart. It had become clear to him that in his native town Islam was to make no progress, and that his position was untenable. His feeling of separation was increased all the more with the death of his faithful Khadija about this time, followed soon afterwards by that of Abū Tālib, his noble protector. He accordingly came to the determination to take his chance in the neighbouring Tāif, and set out thither alone. On his arrival he asked the heads of the town whether they would be willing to receive him and protect the free proclamation of his doctrines. He was answered in the negative; the mob drove him out of the town, and pursued him until he found refuge in a vineyard, the property of two noble Meccans. In the deepest despondency he again took the homeward road,

Tradition has it that he found comfort in the fact that at least the Jinns listened to him as by the way he chanted the Koran in the sacred grove of Nakhla.¹ In the present circumstances it was now impossible for him to return into the town, after having openly announced his intention of breaking with it and joining another community. He did not venture to do so until, after lengthened negotiations, he had assured himself of the protection of a leading citizen, Mot'im b. 'Adī. Notwithstanding all that had happened, he resolved, two months after the death of Khadija, to enter upon a second marriage with Sauda bint Zam'a, the widow of an Abyssinian emigrant.

Chance soon afterwards brought to pass what forethought (on his journey to Tāif) had failed to accomplish. After having given up the Meccans, Mohammed was wont to seek interviews with the Arabs who came to Mecca, Majanna, Dhū 'l-Majāz, and 'Okāz, for the purpose of taking part in the feasts and fairs, and to preach to them.² On one such occasion, in the third year before the Flight (A.D. 619-620), he fell in with a small company of citizens of Medina, who to his delight did not ridicule him, as was usually the case, but showed both aptness to understand and willingness to receive his doctrines. For this they had been previously prepared, alike by their daily intercourse with the numerous Jews who lived in confederation with them in their town and neighbourhood, and by the connections which they had with the Nabateans and Christian Arabs of the north. Hanifitism was remarkably widely diffused among them, and at the same time there were movements of expectation of a new religion, perhaps even of an Arabian Messiah, who should found it. Medina was the proper soil for Mohammed's activity. It is singular that he owed such a discovery to accident. He entered into closer relations with the pilgrims who had come from thence, and asked them to try to find out whether there was any likelihood of his being received in their town. They promised to do so, and to let him hear from them in the following year.

At the pilgrim feast of next year, accordingly, twelve citizens of Medina had a meeting with Mohammed,³ and gave him their pledge to have no god but Allāh, to withhold their hands from what was not their own, to flee fornication, not to kill new-born infants, to shun slander, and to obey God's messenger as far as was fairly to be asked.⁴ This is the so-called First Homage on the 'Akāba.⁵ The twelve men now returned, as propagandists of Islam, to their homes with the injunction to let their master hear of the success of their efforts at the same place on the following year. One of the Meccan Moslems, Mo'ab b. 'Omair, was sent along with or after them, in order to teach the people of Medina to read the Koran, and instruct them in the doctrines and practices of Islam.

Islam spread very quickly on the new soil. It is easy to understand how his joy strengthened the Prophet's spirit to try a higher flight. As a symptom of his exalted frame we might well regard his famous night-journey to Jerusalem (sur. xvii. 1; vi. 2), if we could be sure that it

¹ Sur. xlv. 28; lxxii. 1. On the impossibility of historically fixing the date of this occurrence see Noldeke, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

² Muir (ii. 181 sq.) assumes, with good reason, that he had already done so during the time when he was living in the Shi'b Abi Tālib, and assigns to this period the story that Abū Lahab followed him in this in order to counteract his preaching, and sow tares among the wheat.

³ Sprenger (ii. 526) identifies this meeting with the first, which tradition distinguishes from it and places a year earlier. He is probably right.

⁴ Afterwards this was called the women's oath. It is a noteworthy summary of the features by which Islam is distinguished from heathenism.

⁵ On the 'Akāba compare *Vakidi*, pp. 417, 427, 429. It was a station between 'Arafa and Minā.

belonged to this period.⁶ The prophecy also of the final triumph of the Romans over the Persians (contained in sur. xxx. 1 sqq.) might very well pass for an expression of his own assurance of victory, as at that time he still had a feeling of solidarity with the Christians. But the prophecy (the only one contained in the Koran) belongs, it would appear, to a much earlier date.⁷

At the Meccan festival of the last year before the Flight (in March 622) there presented themselves among the pilgrims from Medina seventy-three men and two women who had been converted to Islam. In the night after the day of the sacrifice they again had an interview with the Prophet on the 'Akāba; Al-'Abbās, his uncle, who after Abū Tālib's death had become head of the Banū Hāshim, was also present. This is the so-called Second Homage on the 'Akāba, at which Mohammed's emigration to Medina was definitely settled. Al-'Abbās solemnly transferred his nephew from under his own protection to that of the men from Medina, after these had promised a faithful discharge of the duties this involved. They swore to the Prophet to guard him against all that they guarded their wives and children from. He, on the other hand, promised thenceforward to consider himself wholly as one of themselves, and to adhere to their society. According to the tradition this remarkable scene was brought to a close by a sudden noise.

The Meccans soon got wind of the affair, notwithstanding the secrecy with which it had been gone about, but Ibn Obay, the leader of the Medina pilgrim caravan, whom they questioned next morning, was able with good conscience to declare that he knew nothing at all about it, as, being still a heathen, he had not been taken into the confidence of his Moslem comrades, and he had not observed their absence over night. The Meccans did not gain certainty as to what had occurred, until the men of Medina had left. They set out after them, but by this they gained nothing. They next tried, it is said, violently to prevent their own Moslems from migrating. After a considerable pause, they renewed the persecution of the adherents of the Prophet, compelling some to apostasy, and shutting up others in prison. But the measures they adopted were in no case effective, and at best served only to precipitate the crisis. A few days after the homage on the 'Akāba, Mohammed issued to his followers the formal command to emigrate. In the first month of the first year of the Flight (April 622) the emigration began; within two months some 150 persons had reached Medina. Apart from slaves, only a few were kept behind in Mecca.⁸

Mohammed himself remained to the last in Mecca, in the company of Abūbekr and 'Alī. His reason for doing so is as obscure as the cause of his sudden flight. The explanation offered of the latter is a plan laid by the Meccans for his assassination, in consequence of which he secretly withdrew along with Abūbekr. For two or three days the two friends hid themselves in a cave of Mount Thaur, south from Mecca, till the pursuit should have passed over (sur. ix. 40). They then took the northward road and arrived safely in Medina on the 12th of Rabi' of the first year of the Flight.⁹ Meanwhile, 'Alī remained three

⁶ See Muir, ii. 219 sqq.; Sprenger, ii. 527 sqq.; and on the other side, Noldeke, *Koran*, p. 102. The *ma'arā* was afterwards called *mir'āṣ* (ascension), and, originally represented as a vision, came to be regarded as an objective though instantaneous occurrence.

⁷ See on the one hand Muir (ii. 223 sqq.) and Sprenger (ii. 527 sqq.), and on the other Noldeke (*Koran*, p. 102; *Tabari*, p. 298). The manner in which Sprenger seeks to make the prophecy a *retrodictum ex eventu* is unfair.

⁸ Ibn Hishām, pp. 315 sq., 319 sq.

⁹ The 12th of Rabi' is, according to tradition, the Prophet's birthday, the day of his arrival in Medina, and the day of his death. It is certain that he died at mid-day on Monday the 12th of Rabi', but

days longer in Mecca, for the purpose, it is alleged, of restoring to its owners all the property which had been entrusted for safe keeping to the Prophet. The Koraish left him entirely unmolested, and threw no obstacle in the way when at last he also took his departure.

With the Flight to Medina a new period in the life of the Prophet begins; seldom does so great a revolution occur in the circumstances of any man. Had he remained in Mecca he would in the best event have died for his doctrine, and its triumph would not have come until after his death. The Flight brought it about that he, the founder of a new religion, lived also to see its complete victory,—that in his case was united all that in Christendom is separated by the enormous interval between Christ and Constantine. He knew how to utilize Islam as the means of founding the Arabian commonwealth; hence the rapidity of its success. That this was of no advantage for the religion is easily understood. It soon lost the ideality of its beginnings, for almost from the first it became mixed up with the dross of practical considerations. In reaching its goal so soon its capability of development was checked for all time to come; in every essential feature it received from Mohammed the shape which it has ever since retained. It ought not, however, to be overlooked that the want of ideality and spiritual fruitfulness was partly due to its Arabian origin.

Mohammed in the first instance took up his quarters in the outlying village of Kobá, where several of his most zealous adherents had their homes, and had already built a mosque. It was not until after some days had passed, and he had made himself sure of the best reception, that he removed to the city itself, which at that time bore the name of Yathrib. All were anxious to have him; in order that none might feel themselves slighted, he left the decision to the camel (al-Kaşwa) on which he rode. It knelt down in an open space in the quarter of the Banú Najjár, which he accordingly selected as the site of the mosque and of his own house. At first he took quarters for seven months in the house of Abú Ayyúb; within this interval the mosque was finished, which was to serve at once as the place of religious gatherings and as the common hall. Close to it was the Prophet's private dwelling, consisting of the huts of his wives, in one or other of which he lived. At that time he had only one wife, the Sauda already mentioned; but soon he married, in addition, the youthful 'Aisha, the daughter of his friend Abúbekr, who acquired great influence over him. Some of the leading emigrants built houses in the same neighbourhood, while the rest continued to be quartered with the people of Medina.

Medina is situated on a westward spur of the Arabian tableland, on the Wadi Kanát. It is an oasis amongst barren rocks, mostly of volcanic origin. The inhabitants supported themselves by their date palms and by the field and garden fruits that grew under their shadow; they had their homes partly in the town itself and partly in the suburbs and outlying villages. At one time the oasis had belonged to the Jews, as the similar oases to the north still did—Wadi 'l-Korá, Khaibar, Fadak, Taimá. But some centuries before Mohammed's time, Arabs of Yemen, the Banú Kaila, had immigrated and partially driven the Jews away. Many Jews, however, still continued to live there, partly scattered among the Arab tribes and under their protection, partly also in independent communities such as the Kaincká, the Nadír, and the Koraiza. For them it was a great advantage that the Arabs were not agreed among themselves. The Banú Kaila were divided

the other statements are all the more suspicious because they also speak of Monday and mid-day. Comp. Noldeke, *Qoran*, p. 59.

into two branches, the Aus and the Khazraj, who were constantly at daggers drawn. The mutual hate which burned within them, from time to time manifested itself in murder and assassination, if by any chance one of the Aus had wandered into a Khazrajite quarter, or *vice versa*. Shortly before the arrival of Mohammed, the battle of Bo'áth had taken place within the liberties of Medina, in which the Aus, with the help of their Jewish allies, had vanquished the Khazraj and broken their preponderance. The Khazraj were the more numerous and powerful, and seem to have been on the point of making their leading man, Ibn Obay, the king of Medina; by the battle of Bo'áth the balance of parties—and anarchy—was preserved in the interests of a third, who came in at the right moment to settle these feeble and exhausting feuds and restore order.

The circumstances were singularly fitted to change the religious influence which Mohammed brought along with him into another of a political character, and from being a prophet to make him the founder of a commonwealth. The Arabs had hitherto been accustomed to lay before their Káhins, or priestly seers, at the sanctuaries, for decision in God's name, all sorts of disputes and hard questions which ordinary means were inadequate to decide. The religious prestige which Mohammed enjoyed led directly to his being frequently called in as adviser and judge. In Medina quarrels and complications were abundant, and an authority to stand over both parties was much needed. Mohammed met this need in the manner which was most acceptable to the Arabs; the authority he exercised did not rest upon force, but upon such a voluntary recognition of the judgment of God as no one had any need to be ashamed of.¹ In principle, it was the same kind of judicial and public influence as had been possessed by the old Káhins, but its strength was much greater. This arose not only from the peculiarly favourable circumstances, but above all from Mohammed's own personality. It is impossible to understand the history until one has mastered the fact of his immense spiritual ascendancy over the Arabs. The expedient of giving oneself out for the messenger of God, and one's speech as the speech of God, is of no avail to one who finds no credence; and credence such as Mohammed received is not given for any length of time either to an impostor or a dupe. Even the respect in which he was held as a prophet would have helped him little if his decisions had been foolish and perverse. But they were in accordance with truth and sound understanding; he saw into things and was able to solve their riddle; he was no mere enthusiast, but a thoroughly practical nature as well.

It was not long before he was able to demand as of right that which, in the first instance, had been a voluntary tribute. "Every dispute which ye have one with another ye shall bring before God and Mohammed;" so runs the text in the original constitution for Medina, set up in the first years after the Flight²; and in the Koran a rebuke is given to those who continue to seek the administration of justice at the hands of the false gods, *i. e.* of their priests and seers.³ With incredible rapidity the Prophet as a veritable "hákim biámr Alláh" had come to be the most powerful man in all Medina.

¹ Very significant is it that the Moslems were ready to submit even to punishment with stripes, if awarded by God.

² Ibn Hishám, 342, 17.

³ Ibn Hishám, 360, 8 *sqq.* Jolís b. Scvaid and other hypocrites were summoned before Mohammed by their believing relatives on account of some dispute; but they in their turn summoned the plaintiffs before the Káhins, who in the days of heathenism had been their judges. It was with reference to this that sur. iv. 63 was revealed—"Hast thou not taken note of those who profess to be believers, yet wish to carry on their suit before the false gods?"

Mohammed thus laid the foundations of his position in a manner precisely similar to that which Moses (Exod. xviii.) is said to have followed; and just as the Torah grew out of the decisions of Moses, so did the Sunna out of those of Mohammed. It was perhaps in judicial and regulative activity, which he continued quietly to carry on to the very end of his life, that his vocation chiefly lay. At all events his work in this direction was extremely beneficial, if only because he was the creator of law and justice where previously there had been nothing but violence, self-help, or at best voluntary arrangement. But the contents of his legislation also (if it can be called by such a name) marked a distinct advance upon what had been the previous use and wont in Arabia. In particular, he made it his special care to set a fence round the rights of property, and to protect and raise the place of woman in marriage. Blood revenge he retained indeed, but completely altered its character by reserving to himself the right of permitting it; in other words, the right of capital sentence. It need not be said that in many ways he availed himself of that which already existed, whether in the form of Arab usage or of Jewish law; he followed the latter, in particular, in his laws relating to marriage.

The new situation of affairs inevitably brought it about that religion was made a mere servant in the work of forming a commonwealth. Never has this service been better performed; never has it been utilized with greater adroitness as a means towards this end. In Mecca, Islam had originally been nothing more than the individual conviction of Mohammed; it was only after severe struggles that he went so far as to preach it, and even his preaching had no other aim than to create individual conviction in others. What he said was of the simplest description—that people ought to believe in God and in judgment to come, that men ought to live their lives seriously and not waste them in follies, that one ought not to be high-minded or covetous, and so on. A community arose, it is true, even in Mecca, and was confirmed by the persecutions. There also religious meetings were held and social prayers. But everything was still in a very fluid and rudimentary stage; religion retained its inward character. It was not until the first two years after the Flight that it gradually lost this, and became, if not exclusively, yet to a very large extent, a mere drill system for the community.¹ No god but the one God (lá iláh illa 'lláh) was the entire sum of their dogmatic, and less importance was attached to belief in it than to profession of it. It was the watchword and battle-cry. The prayers² took the form of military exercises; they were imitated with the greatest precision by the congregation, after the example of the Imám. The mosque was, in fact, the great exercising ground of Islam; it was there that the Moslems acquired the *esprit de corps* and rigid discipline which distinguished their armies.

Next to the monotheistic confession (tauhíd) and to prayer (salát) came almsgiving (zakát, sadaqa) as a third important means by which Mohammed awakened and brought into action among his followers the feeling of fellowship. The alms by and by grew to be a sort of tithe, which

¹ This is to be understood as applying to the system as a whole. Of course, there are always individuals who break through system; but the historical power of Islam rests upon the system. To the system also belongs the spiritual jargon which Mohammed introduced. It was no longer permissible to say "Good morning!" (im sabáhan), the phrase now ran, "Peace be with thee!" and on every occasion pious forms of speech were demanded. Characteristic of the puritanism of the system is the prohibition of wine and of gaming, first issued in the years immediately following the Flight, and the contempt for poetry.

² They were five in number—at sunrise, noon, afternoon, sunset, and late evening. Each prayer consisted originally of two, afterwards of four, prostrations. The chief weekly public service (jom'a), with sermon, was held on Friday at mid-day.

afterwards became the basis of the Moslem fiscal system, and so at the same time the material foundation of the Moslem state. Religion received so practical a development that of alms nothing but the name remained, and the convenient fiction that the taxes had to be paid to God.

Just in proportion to the closeness of the union into which Islam brought its followers did its exclusiveness towards them that were without increase. If in Mecca Mohammed in his relations to the other monotheistic religions had observed the principle, "he that is not against me is for me," in Medina his rule was "he that is not for me is against me." As circumstances were, he had to adjust matters chiefly with the Jews. Without any intention on their part, they had helped to prepare the ground for him in Medina; he had great hopes from them, and at first treated them on no different footing from that of the Arab families which recognized him. But as his relations with the Aus and Khazraj consolidated, those which he had with the Jews became less close. The conjunction of religious with political authority, the development of civil polity out of religion, of the kingship from the prophetic function, was precisely what they objected to.³ On the other hand, while the old polity of Medina, broken up and disorganized as it was, had no difficulty in tolerating foreign elements within its limits, the new political system created by Islam changed the situation, and rendered it necessary that these should be either assimilated or expelled.

Mohammed's hostility to the Jews found expression, in the first instance, theoretically more than practically,⁴ and especially in the care with which he now differentiated certain important religious usages which he had taken over from Judaism, so that they became distinguishing marks between Islam and Mosaism. Thus, for example, he altered the direction of prayer (Kibla), which formerly used to be towards Jerusalem, so that it now was towards Mecca; and for the fast on the 10th of Tisri ('Ashúrâ) he substituted that of the month of Ramadan.⁵ In appointing Friday as the principal day of public worship, he may also possibly have had some polemical reference to the Jewish Sabbath. Of these alterations the greatest in positive importance is the transference of the Kibla to Mecca. It symbolizes the completion of the Arabizing process which went on step by step with the change Islam underwent from being an individual to being a political religion. In substituting the Meccan Ka'ba for the sanctuary at Jerusalem, Mohammed did not merely bid farewell to Judaism and assert his independence of it; what he chiefly did was to make a concession to heathenism, and bring about a nationalization of Islam, for the purpose of welding together the Arab tribes (Kabáil) into one community. Of similar significance was the institution of the feast of sacrifice (id al-dohá) on the day of the Meccan festival. The Moslems were to observe the latter as much as possible, even if they could not be actually present on the spot.

Thus we have the five chief precepts of Islam—(1) Confession of the unity of God; (2) stated prayer; (3) almsgiving; (4) the fast of Ramadan; (5) observance of the festival of Mecca. Capable of having deeper meanings

³ While Islam had the effect of uniting the Arabs politically, uniformity of religion in the case of the Jews had no such effect; on the contrary, the mutual feuds and hatreds in which they indulged conduced greatly to the advantage of the Moslems. The Jews, of course, recognised Mohammed's supremacy as a fact, but they denied any legal title thereto as arising from his prophetic office.

⁴ Compare the well-known second sûra, in which a long attack is made on Judaism.

⁵ A connection with the Christian fasts is usually alleged. It is possible that Christian influence may have to do with the long duration of the fasts, but it cannot have anything to do with the selection of Ramadan; for in the first years after the Flight, Ramadan fell not in Spring but in December.

attached to them, but meritorious also, even in a merely external observance, they were an excellent instrumentality for producing that *esprit de corps*, that obedience to Allāh and his messenger, which constituted the strength of the Moslem system. Up till that time blood-relationship had been the foundation of all political and social relations in Arabia; upon such a foundation it was impossible to raise any enduring edifice, for blood dissociates as much as it unites. But now, religion entered upon the scene as a much more energetic agent in building the social structure; it ruthlessly broke up the old associations, in order to cement the thus disintegrated elements into a new and much more stable system. The very hearts of men were changed; the sanctity of the old relationships faded away in the presence of Allāh; brother would have slain brother, had Mohammed willed it. The best Moslem was he who was the most remorseless in separating from the old and attaching himself to the new; Mohammed gave preference to active natures, even if they occasionally kicked over the traces; contemplative piety received from him only the praise of words. Over the anarchical rule of a multitude of families the sole sovereignty of God came forth triumphant; its subjects were united by the firmest of all bonds. Every Moslem was every Moslem's brother, and, as matter of course, took his part as against every non-Moslem. Outside of Islam there was neither law nor safety; Allāh alone was powerful, and he protected those only who acknowledged his sole sovereignty.

Emigrants and Defenders.

The Emigrants (Mohājira), who along with the Prophet had fled from Mecca, were the kernel and the cement of the community. It was made all the easier for them to give effect to the fundamental principle, that citizenship in Medina depended not on family but on faith, because the natives themselves (Anṣār, "the Defenders"), consisting of Aus and Khazraj, neutralized one another by their mutual enmity. Mohammed seems at first to have cherished the design not only of entirely disowning relationship with non-Moslems, but also of obliterating as much as possible, within Islam, the distinctions of blood, by means of the common faith. He established between emigrants and individual citizens of Medina relationships of brotherhood, which also involved heirship. But he soon abandoned this line, and expressly recognized the validity and sacredness, within Islam, of the old rights of family and inheritance (sur. viii. 76). Thus he refrained from carrying out to its full logical consequence the theoretical principle of equalization, but on practical grounds permitted the old order of society to continue. At a subsequent period, he even conceded to relationship and the ties of blood far larger rights than were compatible with Islam, and thus himself laid the foundations of the violent quarrel which rent the community, more particularly in the time of the Omayyads. Similarly it might be said that communism was originally involved in the principles of Islam; but it is characteristic that from the first the alms were less employed for the equalization of society, than for strengthening the hands of the ruling power. It frequently happens that a religious revolution finds expression also in the region of social polity; but it is remarkable to observe how Islam utilized the religious leaven from the first for a positive reorganization of society, and neutralized the destructive tendency which that leaven is wont to show in political affairs. It did not indeed succeed in totally destroying the radical tendency, as the history of the caliphate shows. But, on the whole, the equality before God which Islam teaches interfered hardly at all with the subordination of men to their human leaders; both were demanded by religion, both were taken sincerely, and each was found, in practice, reconcilable with the other.

That this new and drastic principle, thrown into the

chaos of existing relations, must have exercised a mighty power both of attraction and repulsion is obvious. More than one naïve expression bears witness to the astonishment with which the Arabs regarded the strange spirit which animated the community of the Moslems—the firmness with which they held together, the absolute and willing obedience which they gave to their leaders, the recklessness with which they disregarded everything that before Islam, or outside of it, was looked upon as holy. Some natures felt themselves attracted by these peculiarities, especially if on other grounds they felt little difficulty in severing themselves from their old connexions; but, on the whole, feelings of antipathy prevailed. Even in Medina itself this antipathy was widespread. The so-called hypocrites (monāfikūn) were either only half-attached to the Prophet or in their inmost hearts unfavourably disposed; they were kept from overt action partly by the absence of a decided opinion, partly by the terrorism which the convinced Moslems exercised. The reproach of hypocrisy brought against them means chiefly that they did not manifest a full acceptance of the new political relations. They could not reconcile themselves to the position of having never a word to say in their own town, and of being compelled to obey the Prophet from Mecca and those who had come with him. For a time the danger was imminent that all Medina (the Emigrants of course excepted) might be infected with hypocrisy, if one may call it hypocrisy when for a moment nature and blood asserted themselves against religious discipline and burst its bonds. The younger portion of the community, however, was on the whole enthusiastic for Mohammed; the hypocrites were for the most part older men, especially heads of families, who found it difficult to put up with the loss of political influence which they were suffering. As chief of their number Ibn Obay is always named, the foremost man of Medina, whom the Khazraj had thought of crowning as king, before matters were so fundamentally changed by Islam. Mohammed's attitude towards him and the hypocrites in general was that of connivance,—thoroughly appropriate here, where political rather than religious affairs were involved, and the question was one less of principle than of power.

The founding of the state upon the feeling of fellowship generated by religion, was without question the Prophet's greatest achievement; the community of Medina was the tool, its heroic faith the force, by means of which Islam attained the results which figure so largely in the history of the world.¹ Moslem tradition, however, does not stop to inquire what it was that constituted the inward strength of Islam, but goes on at once to relate what were its outward manifestations. Its information on the subject of the period of Mohammed's sojourn in Medina is given under the title of "the campaigns (maghāzi) of the apostle of God." With a few of the smaller tribes in the neighbourhood of Medina (Johaina, Mozaina, Ghifār, Aslam), and with the Khozā'a, Mohammed maintained relations of peace and amity; benevolent neutrality gradually grew into alliance, and finally union with the commonwealth of Medina. But towards all the rest of Arabia his very principles placed him in an attitude of war. Ever since Islam from being a religion had become a kingdom, he was compelled to vindicate, by means of war against unbelievers, its claims to supremacy; the conflict of principles had to be settled by the sword, the sole sovereignty of Allāh demonstrated

¹ The credit of being the founder of the Moslem state cannot be transferred to Omar, but must be left with Mohammed. It was not Omar who created that feeling of oneness which enabled him, for example, suddenly to recall a general like Khālid from his career of victory without eliciting a murmur. The miracle is the "primitive cell" of Medina, not the fact that in course of time success gave it the force of an avalanche.

by force to the rebels who showed unwillingness to accept it. More literally than Christ could Mohammed say of himself that he was come not to bring peace but a sword. Islam was a standing declaration of war against idolaters.

The nearest object against which to direct the holy war (jihād) was presented by the Meccans. Against them first did Mohammed bring into operation the new principle, that it is faith and not blood that separates and unites. According to Arab notions it was a kind of high treason on his part to leave his native town in order to join a foreign society; on the part of the people of Medina it was an act of hostility to Mecca to receive him among them. The Meccans would have been fully justified on their side in taking arms against the Moslems, but they refrained, being too much at their ease, and shrinking besides from fratricidal war. It was the Moslems who took the initiative; aggressiveness was in their blood. Mohammed began with utilizing the favourable position of Medina, on a mountain spur near the great highway from Yemen to Syria, to intercept the Meccan caravans. Originally he sent forth only the Emigrants to take part in the expeditions, as the people of Medina had pledged themselves to defend him only in the event of his being attacked; soon, however, they also joined him. What first induced them to do so was the prospect of booty; afterwards it was impossible to separate themselves, so great was the fusion of elements which had been quietly going on within the crucible of Islam.

The first plunder was taken in the month Rajab, A.H. 2 (Autumn 623), in which circumstance was at once seen the advantage arising from the change of conscience brought about by the new religion; for in Rajab feuds and plundering raids were held to be unlawful. Relying upon the sacredness of this month a caravan of Koraish was returning from Tāif laden with leather, wine, and raisins. But this did not prevent Mohammed from sending out a band of Emigrants to surprise the caravan at Nakhla, between Tāif and Mecca; his orders to this effect were given in a document which was not to be unsealed until two days after the departure of the expedition. The plan was carried out, and the surprise was all the more successful, because the robbers gave themselves the outward semblance of pilgrims; one Meccan was killed in the struggle. But the perfidy with which in this instance Mohammed's advanced religious views enabled him to utilize for his own advantage the pious custom of the heathen roused in Medina itself such a storm of disapproval, that he found himself compelled to disavow his own tools. In Mohammedan tradition, the contents of the unambiguous document in which he ordered the surprise are usually falsified.

The Koraish still remained quiet; another outrage had yet to come. In Ramaḍan A.H. 2 (December 623), the return of their great Syrian caravan was expected, and Mohammed resolved to lie in wait for it at Bedr, a favourite watering-place and camping-ground, northward from Medina. For this purpose he set out thither in person along with 308 men; but the leader of the caravan, the Omayyad Abū Sofyān, got word of the plan and sent a messenger to Mecca with a request for speedy help. Concern about their money and goods at last drove the Koraish to arms; a very short interval found them, 900 strong, on the road to Bedr. By the way they received intelligence that the caravan had made a circuit to the west of Bedr, and was already in safety. Nevertheless they resolved, at the instance of the Makhzumit Abū Jahl, for the sake of their honour, to continue their march. When the Moslems first got touch of them at Bedr, they took them for the caravan; their surprise on discovering the truth may be imagined. But, kept firm by the courage of their leader, they resolved to face the superior numbers of the enemy.

On the morning of Friday, the 17th of Ramaḍan, the encounter took place. A number of duels were fought in the front, which were mostly decided in favour of the Moslems. The Meccans at last gave up the fight, strictly speaking for no other cause than that they did not see any reason for carrying it on. They were reluctant to shed the blood of their kinsmen; they were awestruck in presence of the gloomy determination of their adversaries, who did know what they were fighting for, and were absolutely reckless of consequences. After a number of the noblest and oldest of the Koraish, including at last Abū Jahl, had fallen, those who remained took to flight. The number of the dead is said to have been as great as that of the prisoners. Two of the latter, whom he personally hated, Mohammed caused to be put to death—'Okba b. Abī Mo'ait and al-Nadr b. al-Hārith. When the last named had perceived, from the Prophet's malignant glance, the danger in which he stood, he implored an old friend of his among the Moslems for his intercession. This request being refused, al-Nadr said: "Had the Koraish taken thee prisoner, thou hadst not been put to death as long as I had lived;" to which the apologetic reply was: "I do not doubt it, but I am differently placed from thee, for Islam has made an end of the old relations." To the remaining prisoners life was spared on payment by their kinsmen of a heavy ransom; but Mohammed is said to have afterwards reproached himself for having allowed considerations of earthly gain to keep him back from sending them all to hell as they deserved.

The battle of Bedr is not only the most celebrated of battles in the memory of Moslems; it was really also of great historical importance. It helped immensely to strengthen Mohammed's position. Thenceforward open opposition to him in Medina was impossible; families which had hitherto withdrawn themselves from his influence were so thoroughly cowed by some atrocious murders carried out in obedience to his orders, that they went over to Islam. He was now in a position to proceed to break up the autonomy of the Jews. In the first instance, he addressed himself to the weak Banū Kainokā, demanding their acceptance of Islam; on their refusal, he took the earliest opportunity that offered itself to declare war against them. After a short siege they were compelled to surrender; and they might congratulate themselves that their old ally, Ibn Obay, was able to concuss the Prophet into sparing their lives, and contenting himself with their banishment from Medina. Soon afterwards other blows were struck, in the shape of assassinations, by means of which Mohammed put out of the way several of the Jews whom he hated most, such as Ka'b b. al-Ashraf and Ibn Sonaina.¹ The state of fear to which the rest were reduced may readily be imagined; they came to the Prophet and begged him to be propitious. If in other days their dislike had found somewhat public expression in all sorts of witticisms and scornful sayings, they were now at least modest and quiet, and kept their hatred to themselves.

The Meccans also were very deeply impressed by the defeat inflicted on them by the Moslems. They saw clearly that the blow must be avenged, and they took comprehensive measures for their campaign. After a year's delay, their preparations being now complete, and their allies

¹ The murderer of Ibn Sonaina was Mohayyisa b. Mas'ūd, of whose elder brother, Howaisa, he had been a sworn ally. Howaisa struck the murderer in consequence, and reproached him with his treacherous ingratitude, saying that much of the fat in his body had come from the estate of the Jew. Mohayyisa's reply was: "If he who bade me kill him were also to bid me kill thee, I should obey." The brother, amazed, asked him if he was serious, and when the other assured him that he was, Howaisa exclaimed: "By God, a religion which brings it to this is a stupendous one," and forthwith became a convert. The story (*Vakāidi*, p. 98) is too characteristic to be passed over.