

with a tendency to mysticism—a man of visions and dreams—with a sensitive and imaginative temperament and a disordered physical system, and a nature swayed by passions and lacking in moral stamina, who became deeply impressed with the Jewish conception of one spiritual God, and conceived himself a prophet of monotheistic reform amidst the abounding follies of idolatry. Under the influence, no doubt, of sincere conviction, he began to teach and proclaim the religious ideas which had lodged in his mind from all sources—Jewish and Christian and heathen—and shaped them into the rude consistency of the Moslem code. He can hardly be considered the originator of the religious reform he advocated. He was rather the exponent of a spirit of reformation which seems to have been in the air at that time. The movement at first did not seem to imply more than a purely religious purpose. It was not until the exigencies of his success led him to adopt methods of expediency and worldly policy that Mohammed became the political schemer and the ambitious leader of a military movement.

II. Mohammedanism was established and propagated by the agency of two of the most energetic and commanding forces of human history—the *power of moral conviction and the power of the sword*. In addition it at once threw its mantle of protection and loyalty over every adherent, and acknowledged him as a member of a Moslem brotherhood in which all are equal, and all can expect and claim the help and protection of all others. Islam is a religious caste—so much so that in India, the land of castes, it exists and wins its converts from the people of India without any disturbance or shock to the claims and exactions of the spirit of caste. It is an immense religious monopoly—a gigantic spiritual corporation whose celestial capital is of unknown proportions—a stupendous combination for the exclusive handling of the commodities of Paradise. It is an actual “Brotherhood” of Moslems, a social, political and religious “Union” of knights of the turban. With the exception that the Sunnites repudiate the Shiites as heretics, and the latter return the compliment, every Moslem befriends and respects every other Moslem because of the religious affinity which exists between them. This striking feature of the Moslem religion is to-day one of the most powerful forces to hold Mohammedanism together throughout the world.

III. Islam has never known or seen Christianity except in its *corrupt and semi-idolatrous forms*. This is a damage to Christianity—a gain to Islam. Mohammedanism is thus enabled to appear in the role of a spiritual religion inviting to direct communion with the Deity, scorning the fiction of a human priesthood as in any sense a necessary instrument of mediation between God and the soul, and rebuking idolatry in all its forms. On the other hand, the corrupt Christianity of the East seems to be deeply imbued with the spirit of idolatry, overloaded with superstitious practices, and weighted with the enormous