

*not for publication
a general one*

RELIGION AND WORLD PEACE.

"God sends his teachers unto every age,
To every clime, and every race of men,
With revelations fitted to their growth
And shape of mind, nor gives the realm of Truth
Into the selfish rule of one sole race;
Therefore each form of worship that hath swayed
The life of man, and given it to grasp
The master-key of knowledge, reverence,
Infolds some germs of goodness and of right;
Else never had the eager soul, which loathes
The slothful down of pampered ignorance,
Found in it even a moment's fitful rest."

--James Russell Lowell (Introduction to 'Rhoecus.')

"And to every nation We appointed acts of devotion that they may mention the name of Allah on what He has given them of the cattle quadruped; so your God is one God, therefore to Him should you subject, and give good news to the humble."

- Sura XXII, 34.

What can religion contribute toward the establishment of World Peace and the Outlawry of War? Sufism differs, perhaps, from each particular faith only that it approaches religion from a universal viewpoint. Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan, who introduced the Message of Sufism into the Western World, writes:

"If one keenly observes the present condition of humanity, no one with sense will deny the fact that the world to-day needs the religion. Why I say the religion, and not a religion, is because there are many religions existing to-day called a religion, but what is needed to-day is the religion. And now coming to the question of what the religion must be--must it be a new religion? If it were a new religion, it could not be called the religion; then it would be like many religions. I called the religion that religion, which one can see by rising above sects and differences which divide men; and by understanding the religion we shall understand all religions which may be called a religion.

--"The Unity of Religious Ideals," p. 9

Chapter III, "The Present Need of the World."

Therefore it is not part of the Sufi report to point out any mistakes of any creed or cult. Perhaps all may have failed in some respects, but this constant reference to the failures of others, to the sins of others, to the short-comings of others, has been and will continue to be a cause for future wars. As each person differs in some respects from every other person, so it is not possible to force all to believe the same or worship the same. What is first necessary is to win humanity over to the value of faith, to the value of worship, without prescribing or insisting on the absolute efficacy of particular forms.

This was sent by Samuel Lewis to the Conference in Geneva on World Peace through Religion. Mrs. Gibbin says it had a fine reception -

Thus Abul Fazl, the great Prime Minister of the Noble Emperor Akbar of India (both of whom were Sufis) has written:

"Oh God, in every temple I see people that seek Thee,
And in every language I hear spoken, people praise Three.
Polytheism and Islam feel after Thee,
Each religion says, 'Thou art One without equal.'
If it be a mosque, people murmur the holy prayers,
And if it be a Christian Church people ring the bell,
From love to Thee.
Sometimes I frequent the Christian Church,
Sometimes the Mosque,
But it is Thee Whom I search from temple to temple.
The elect have no dealings with either heresy nor orthodoxy,
For neither of them stands behind the screen of Truth.
Heresy to the heretic and religion to the orthodox,
But the dust of the rose petals belongs to the heart of the perfume seller."
--From an inscription on a Temple in Thibet.

That these noble sentiments were not only preached but practiced can be seen in the history of India, particularly in the reign of Akbar. He succeeded in bringing together all the races, faiths and divisions of the Indian people into one great union and saw in the Universality and Infinite Attributes of God, not only the nexus of union between all divisions of a theological nature, but by this means all the races, castes and divisions of people in his dominion were joined in a brotherhood of feeling. However much they differ in other respects, Aryan subject and Anglo-Saxon official agree that the reign of Akbar was ideal so far as the government of India has been concerned.

The overthrow of Sufism brought the degeneration not only of the Mogul Empire, but all of India. When Dara, the son of Shah Jehan, was martyred by his orthodox brother Aurungzeb, it doomed the nation. The strife begun by Mahmud of Ghazni centuries before, and continuing until the advent of Babar--that Mohammedan and Hindu were not brothers, and that each should consider the other as unbeliever--was resumed, and until the British occupation was completed, there was no peace in the land.

If one visits the Metropolitan Museum in New York and goes to the Mogul Room, one will see therein pictures of the Sufi saints, and seated near them, very often, was a Hindu Sadhu in posture, showing that whatever be their difference in form, there was unity in spirit. This has been their attitude ever since the advent of the great saint, Meinnedin Chisti, in the 14th century.

The same condition held in Turkey for a much longer period. Despite the horror over the Armenian massacres prior to and during the world war, few ever gave any thought to the fact that the Armenians had been tolerated for centuries by their Ottoman overlords. In fact they had suffered more, in some instances, from Orthodox Russia than from non-Christian Turkey.

Travelers in Turkey report that Christian and Mussulman hold the same localities sacred and the Sufi dervishes have been guardians alike of Christian and Islamic shrines. Jelal-ud-din Rumi, perhaps the greatest saint in that region, has been honored by Armenian and Greek Catholics, who have joined with Sufis and Orthodox Mohammedans in pilgrimages to his tomb. The late F. W. Hasluck, Librarian of the British School at Athens wrote:

"The golden age of the Sultanate of Rum is undoubtedly the reign of Ala-ed-din (1219-1234), whose capital, Konia, still in its decay bears witness by monument and inscription to the culture and artistic achievement of his time. He was familiar with Christianity, having spent eleven years in exile at Constantinople. One of his predecessors, Kaikhosru I (1192-9, 1204-10), who likewise spent an exile in Christendom, nearly became a Christian and married a Christian wife. He was more than suspected of infidelity to Islam by his stricter Moslem neighbour of Aleppo. Ala-ed-din's grandson, Az-ed-edin, the son of a Christian mother, was said by the bishop of Pisida to have been a Christian, and his sons, when at Constantinople, were admitted to the Sacrament. Both Ala-ed-din and his house were therefore familiar with Christianity and, if not actively sympathetic to it, at least without prejudice against it.

"Beside Ala-ed-din stands another striking figure, that of Jelal-ed-din, the mystic poet of Bokhara, who came to Konia in 1233 and is represented as a close and influential friend of the temporal ruler. Jelal-ed-din, with his friend and master in philosophy, Shems-ed-din of Tabriz (d. 1246), originated the order of dervishes known by the name of Mevlevi, who have throughout their history shown themselves humane and tolerant toward Christians and regard all religions as reconcilable on a philosophic basis."

--pp. 370-71 "Christianity and Islam under the Sultans."

Speaking of the Armenian massacres, the same author quotes Sir Charles Eliot (Hasluck footnote, pp. 619-20):

"As to their relations with local Christians, Sir Charles Eliot heard on good authority that during the Armenian massacres of 1895-6 the Christians of Konia owed their immunity largely to the influence of the Mevlevi; this is confirmed by a Greek author." (Antonopoulous, Mikra Asia, p. 214; Eliot, Turkey in Europe, pp. 185 f.)

No wonder Max Muller was led to write: "If Christianity and Mohammedanism are ever to join hands in carrying out the high objects at which they are both aiming, Sufism would be the common ground on which they could best meet each other, understand each other, and help each other."--"Theosophy or Psychological Religion," p. 359.

Nor was it the Christians alone to whom the Sufi-trained sultans and ministers of the Sublime Porte were tolerant. When the Hebrews were exiled from Spain, Turkey threw open its doors to them, as no other country did, and they enjoyed protection there, such as no other land permitted at that time. The effect of the influence of Sufism can be seen in the difference between the conditions of the Jews in Turkey and those in north Africa, where the orthodox held sway.

In Persia, too, there was a freedom of opinion granted to the masses, not to be found in many countries even at this day. E. G. Browne mentions this in his "A Year Among the Persians." When he sought permission to visit the tomb of a Sufi Sheikh, it was granted on condition he held to their tenet: "In the world of Gnostics, there is no difference of sects." --ibid. p. 357.

Now the question arises, what is this spirit in Sufism which has favored this toleration and how will it help to perpetuate world peace. Sufism, strictly speaking, is not religion, but can be called mysticism. All founders of faiths have stressed inner peace. Therefore the Sufi says: "If you would make peace with the world, first make peace with yourself." He sees no difference in Christ preaching the kingdom of God within and the eight-fold path of the Buddha. The Nirvana of the Orient and the effacement of the Sufi are identical; the teachings of Moses and Abraham also are his teachings.

The objects of the Sufi Movement have been stated by the Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan as:

1. To realize and spread the knowledge of unity, the religion of love and wisdom, so that the bias of faiths and beliefs may of itself fall away, the human heart may overflow with love, and all hatred caused by distinctions and differences may be rooted out.
2. To discover the light and power latent in man, the secret of all religion, the power of mysticism, and the essence of Philosophy, without interfering with customs or belief.
3. To help to bring the world's two opposite poles, East and West, close together by the interchange of thought and ideals, that the Universal Brotherhood may form of itself, and man may meet with man beyond the narrow national and racial boundaries.

--p. 294, The Unity of Religious Ideals.

Therefore our first suggestion is that the WORLD CONFERENCE FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE THROUGH RELIGION be in some way perpetuated, if this is at all possible, that the religious and spiritual leaders of the world, by meeting and communing, may help to overcome the differences which have led to war or bloodshed. Not that there be any attempt to find a universal religion, but that the idea of sacredness be propagated.

The next step would be that all sacred places: churches, shrines, scenes of pilgrimages, sanctuaries of all kinds, be considered inviolable. This, not only for the time of war, but that every attempt be made to end forever such disgraceful scenes as have taken place between Christian and Christian in the temple of the Holy Sepulchre.

The Sufi does not necessarily advocate or oppose the preservation of any institution, social, political and economic. Until God becomes a reality in our daily lives, and until like the Hindu, we see every act an act of Dharma, a sacred event, we have established peace neither with ourselves nor with the world.

We see in the noble teachings of Zoroaster the need for moral purification and holiness, and the relationship between our devotional attitude and our material prosperity. Despite our so-called advances, there is not one nation on earth to-day which has attempted to save its surplus from the years of plenty to stave off famine in years of adversity, a teaching of all ancient peoples.

We see the need for the high moral teachings of Jesus, for inner development, and spiritual brotherhood. We believe, as Buddha taught, that through the practice of meditation and concentration, coming to a knowledge of our own being, we shall in time be able to solve all the problems of the world. We advocate, as did the Prophet Mohammed, the spiritual unity of all peoples, regardless of race or social condition.

With Emerson and the Transcendentalists, with Lessing, Max Muller, Lord Gifford and many others, we hold that the great Founders of the religions do not differ in the principles they have taught, that the differences were due to the condition of the state and populace where they appeared and not to any imperfection of their inner development. Holding a single holy prophet to calumny is mental war, which cannot work for physical peace.

But we need not ever stop with the founders of the religion. The Sufis have always believed that Music engendered harmony; in the spiritual training of the Sufis one was taught to enter into harmony with God and his inner being through music. In a different manner Martin Luther advocated the use of music, for he who sang with another could not hate another. Therefore, we join with the delegates of that faith in supporting the principle that through music and song, peoples can be brought closer together. We have already seen this in the world of culture, art and mechanical invention, and it is a test of religion if it shall continue to lag behind other branches of human endeavor.

Exchange of international ideas in all directions will work for better understanding, and so for world peace. The West will do well to follow Schopenhauer and Emerson and Muller in the study of the deeper philosophies of India. It will do well to learn something of meditation, whereby one can come to peace with one's own inner being. The doctrine of the Divinity of Christ or of the Unity of God will not fall because one learns from a Buddhist Bhikku how to sit at ease and calm the vibrations of the physical, emotional and mental planes, any more than the unity of feeling between the people of India need be destroyed by their appreciation of the sciences or culture or even of the religions of the West.

Inayat Khan, in introducing the Sufi Movement in the West, established the Universal Worship which pays respect to all teachers and all scriptures. We do not advocate it as a cure all or as a substitute. But we do believe it is possible for one to reverence all religion and that even members of various faiths can pray together, can worship together, can meet in silent communion. So I quote Salat, a prayer of the Universal Worship:

"Most gracious Lord, Master, Messiah and Saviour of Humanity,
We greet Thee with all humility.
Thou art the First Cause and the Last Effect, the Divine Light
and the Spirit of Guidance, Alpha and Omega.
Thy Light is in all forms, Thy Love in all beings; in a loving
mother, in a kind father, in an innocent child, in a
helpful friend, in an inspiring teacher.
Allow us to recognize Thee in all Thy holy names and forms;
as Rama, as Krishna, as Shiva, as Buddha.
Let us know Thee as Abraham, as Solomon, as Zarathustra, as
Moses, as Jesus, as Mohammed, and in many other names and
forms, known and unknown to the world.
We adore Thy Past; Thy Presence deeply enlightens our being,
and we look for Thy blessing in the future.
O Messenger, Christ, Nabi, the Rasoul of God! Thou whose heart
constantly reaches upward. Thou comest on earth with a
message as a dove from above when Dharma decayeth, and
speakest the Word that is put into Thy mouth, as the light
filleth the crescent moon.
May the Star of the Divine Light shining in Thy heart be
reflected in the hearts of Thy devotees.
May the Message of God reach far and wide, illuminating and
making the whole Humanity as one single Brotherhood in the
Fatherhood of God.
Amen."

The question arises, how can such a spirit operate in our social order to prevent war and mitigate the causes of war. The answer is, that in all ages more attention has been paid to the personality of the prophet than to his teaching; the correction is not necessarily to pay less attention to the personality but to take the teaching more seriously. On the very economic problems which lead to warfare, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha and all the Aryan sages have spoken in no uncertain terms, yet to-day we do not turn to the Bible nor to the Vedas nor to the Avesta for a solution of these problems; we do not consider whether the Sabbatical law is either true or practicable; we do not entertain even for an instant the supposition that we can live in a world without the institution of usury, unless we accept the form in which it has been presented in a quasiatheistic country. But the teaching of Christ still holds, that the father who has two sons and bades them obey, has more hope in the son who refuses yet does his will than the one who consents but performs not his will.

We have first to convert ourselves, each of us to our own religion. The phenomenon of a world conference meeting to establish a peace settlement without prayer or veneration has led to the repudiation of the foundations of religion. We might say, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors;" we must advance beyond the word stage into the deed stage. Otherwise there is only one message, the warning of a Jeremiah that not only our social order but our whole civilization will go into the dust heap.

We need look to no such event. If in the name of religion certain changes have been made in our institutions--as for instance the adoption of the prohibition amendment in the United States--certainly in the name of religion we can follow in a practical manner what has been proclaimed out of the very mouths of the holy ones. We cannot deny that the children of Israel were happy under the statutes and laws of the polity of Moses, nor that the people of India reached a high grade of prosperity under the rule of Harsha. We need not return to the simple life nor medieval ways, but we can make God a reality, both in our individual lives and in our communities.

This is the offering of Sufism: To make God a reality. Not to argue over His existence or His nature, nor on the theoretical merits of one creed or another sect, but to fulfill in our daily lives and in our social order the creed of the Great Teachers of Humanity, the representatives of God upon earth.

SECOND PRELIMINARY REPORT.

1. What is the teaching of your religion as to international peace?
 - A. (The three objects of the Sufi Movement are quoted)
2. Has your religion any prayer or service dealing with international peace?

There is the Healing Service and also the Service of Universal Worship, with the prayers of that worship which are called Saum, Salat and Khatum. All of these prayers further the universal attitude. They are of a synthetic nature. We recognize that this may not be what is wanted by the World Conference, but neither are our members required to accept this synthesis. A Sufi may remain an orthodox member of any church, or may attend no services, but the Universal Worship was instituted for those who accepted this point of view. The prayers of the Healing Service are universal in a different sense, as they mention no names.

3. Has your religious organization passed resolutions dealing with international peace? If so, please quote.

A. Sufis have always worked for peace, individual, collective or international. In Sufism, one begins with the individual and ends with the race. Sufis also practice repetition of one of these phrases: "IN UNION WITH THE WILL OF GOD WE WILL TO HAVE PEACE" or "TOWARD THE ONE, THE PERFECTION OF LOVE, HARMONY AND BEAUTY, THE ONLY BEING, UNITED WITH ALL THE ILLUMINATED SOULS, WHO FORM THE EMBODIMENT OF THE MASTER, THE SPIRIT OF GUIDANCE." The former has been especially used by those interested in world peace. It is repeated as a suggestion for the Conference: IN UNISON WITH THE WILL OF GOD WE WILL TO HAVE PEACE!

4. Within your religion are there organizations working for international peace? If so, what?

A. All Sufis at all times have always worked for peace on the largest practical scale. This matter has also been dealt with in the work of Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan. (Refer Mr. R. A. M. Armstrong)

5. In what way has your religion indirectly contributed to the cause of international peace?

1) religious attitude. A. This matter has been reported at length in my first paper sent to Geneva. The Sufi believes it is right to pray with all just as it may be considered correct to eat with all or to sing with all, that real religion should draw people together, not separate them. Historically this was best exhibited in Spain under the early Muslim rule, in the Turkish empire and especially in the Mogul Empire.

2) social justice. A. The Sufi regards all people as the children of God, regardless of their belief, spiritual evolution or social status. Justice is a Divine Ideal and Mercy is of God's Grace, but both are free for all and as the above objects of the Sufi Movement indicate, it is hoped that all distinctions and differences will some day disappear. (See prayers, also.)

3) inter-racial relations. A. Sufis have not only promoted better relations between racial and religious groups in the past, but have done much in modern times. In the former report mention is made to their efforts to mediate in behalf of the Armenians. They have also served as a nexus in Albania around which a national government could be formed. It was the co-operation of the Nakib at Bagdad, the outer director of the Sufis of Irak, which made the establishment of a government possible in that country and the Sufis still mediate between the Muslims and Hindus in India.

(Details can be supplied on all these matters.)

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