

# THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS.

VOL. VI.]

APRIL, 1907.  
Digitized by Khilafat Library

[No. 4

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ  
نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنُصَلِّیْ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِیْمِ

## Divine Judgment in Dowie's Death.

### Fulfilment of a Grand Prophecy.

We have often called the attention of all seekers after truth to the wonderful prophecies of the Promised Messiah whose fulfilment carries conviction to every heart that ponders over them on account of the clearness of their proof, but we are sorry to note that no one has hitherto started an earnest enquiry into them. Indeed when we witness the attention which is given to most trivialities, the indifference of the West to religious truth becomes the more striking. We do not mean to say that any one should blindly accept the truth of the prophecies, but we urge the necessity of a searching enquiry into them. We also make an allowance for the distance which separates India from the Western countries, for we know that distance of place like distance of time divests an event of much of its reality. But the example of the fulfilment of a prophecy to which we desire to call the attention of the English and the American public through these pages is one in which the element of remoteness is not present. It is a prophecy which was not only published by us in England and the United States of America by the wide circulation of thousands of printed notices, but which was far more widely published through the columns of English and American newspapers. The object of the prophecy was moreover a person who had earned a great notriety in both the continents and had thousands of followers in America and other Christian countries. Hence we place these facts before the seekers and lovers of truth in the West so that after a careful consideration of this testimony they may be able to form an opinion as to the truth of the prophecy. We are confident that there are

many in the West who for the sake of truth can overcome all barriers of racial and religious prejudice, and who can show the moral courage to declare the truth in the face of all opposition. In fact, love of truth is innate in human nature and though it may be suppressed for a while by prejudice, it ultimately breaks all barriers. Not long ago when a Hindu leader of great fame died in accordance with a prophecy of the Promised Messiah published several years before, many men belonging to the Hindu community had the moral courage to declare openly that the prophecy was fulfilled and that it no doubt proceeded from a Divine source. As the spirit of enquiry is freer in the West, it is no delusion to hope that lovers of truth in those countries will, after a careful consideration of these facts, testify to the truth of the prophecy and the efficacy of the Promised Messiah's prayer relating to Dowie.

Before referring to the facts of the fulfilment of the prophecy it is, however, necessary to inform the reader that we do it solely out of a desire to further the cause of truth and to enable our fellow-beings to see and realize the truth for themselves. The fulfilment of the prophecy affords such a clear and conclusive proof of the existence of an Omnipotent and Omniscient God that to withhold or suppress it is in our opinion a serious crime. It is not to exult over a fallen enemy that we refer to certain circumstances in Dowie's life. Such a thing is farthest off from our ideas. It is only in the cause and for the furtherance of truth that we publish these facts. The holy religion of Islam, no doubt, teaches us not to mention the faults of the dead, but this does not mean that facts should be concealed when their disclosure is in the interests of society and a service to humanity, truth and God. In bringing disaster upon Dowie's head and ultimately in his untimely death brought about with sorrow and torment, Almighty God has given His judgment exactly as He had informed His Messenger three or four years previous to these occurrences. It is a judgment which distinguishes the true Messenger of God from a false claimant, the true one from an impostor.

John Alexander Dowie was a Scotchman and he first landed at San Francisco in America in 1838. Before this he was for a short time a convict in Tasmania. It was in 1842 that he took to preaching and soon began to build up a separate following. He claimed

the power of healing, and it was this claim which brought to him many a credulous but wealthy people. With their wealth he became a rich man. The site of Zion city was bought in 1900 and lots were sold to the faithful who established themselves there. It was on the 2nd June 1901 that he first declared himself as Elijah the Prophet. The claim brought to him more wealth and a greater number of followers still. So great was his success that as a New Year's gift he was not satisfied with less than a million Dollars, and when travelling he occupied the most expensive and luxurious state-rooms. In 1902 he published a prophecy to the effect that all the Muhammadans living on the earth would be destroyed unless they bowed before the cross. It was on his publication of this prophecy that the Promised Messiah addressed to him a letter published in the *Review of Religions* for September 1902 inviting him to a *Mubdhila*. It was a reply to Dowie's prediction of the destruction of the Muhammadans and in this letter he was challenged to "pray to God that of us two whoever is the liar may perish first." Such was the gist of this challenge which was published in numerous English and American newspapers. We give here the names of some of these with the dates of the issues in which the remarks appeared in them to facilitate reference. They are the *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, 28th June 1903; the *Telegraph*, 5th July; the *Literary Digest*, 20th June; the *New York Mail and Express*, 25th June; the *Herald*, Rochester 25th June; the *Record*, Boston, 27th June; the *Advertiser*, Boston, 25th June; the *Pilot*, Boston, 27th June; the *Pathfinder*, Washington, 27th June; the *Argonaut*, San Francisco, 1st December 1902; the *Burlington Free Press*, 27th June 1903; the *Worcester Spy*, 28th June; the *Jacksonville Times*, 28th June; the *New York Mail*, 25th June; the *Buffalo Times*, 25th June. It is needless to name all the newspapers which published this notice.

Dowie, however, took no notice of the challenge, nor did he make any mention of it in his paper, the *Leaves of Healing*. But he continued his vituperations of Islam. On the 14th February 1903, he wrote: "I pray God for the day to come when the crescent shall disappear. May God grant it. May God destroy it." And on the 15th August he wrote in the same paper referring to Islam: "The Zion will have to wipe out that shocking blot upon humanity." Accordingly on the 23rd August 1903, the Promised Messiah publish-

ed another announcement headed "Predictions concerning Pigott and Dowie" which contained a plain prophecy as to the end of the impostor. The following extract from the *New York Commercial Advertiser* is sufficient to prove the vast circulation of the notice in America. Under the heading "Dowie challenged," the paper wrote:—

✓ "From far away India comes a printed circular from Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who writes from Qadian in the Punjab . . . . . He has issued a challenge to Elijah III to make good his pretensions, but so far Zion city's own and special Messiah has failed to reply.

"In support of his claims to divinity\* the Indian Messiah declares that when the Lord saw how badly things were being managed on earth, He raised him in the land of the Punjab 'for His works are wonderful.'

"I am the true Messiah who was to come in the last ages: thus has Almighty God spoken to me,' he announces: 'I do not claim to be the Promised Messiah simply by my own assertion, but Almighty God who made the earth and heaven has borne witness to the truth of my claim. The evidence of God has been manifested in hundreds of heavenly signs shown in my support. I say it truly that Almighty God has poured His grace upon me in far greater abundance than upon the Messiah who has gone before me. In the looking-glass of my person the face of God is revealed to a far greater extent than in that of Jesus' person. If these are simply my own assertions, and there is no other authority for them, I am a liar; but if Almighty God bears witness to my truth, no one can give the lie to me. Thousands of times—I should say times without number—has He borne witness to the truth of my claim.

"A sign of the evidence of God in my favor will appear on the death of Mr. Pigott, the arrogant pretender to Divinity, who shall be brought to destruction within my life-time. Another sign will appear on Dr. Dowie's acceptance of my challenge. If the pretender to Elijahship shows his willingness by any direct or indirect means to enter the lists against me, he shall leave the world

---

\* This is a misconception arising out of the meaning of the word Messiah, for, for the Christian mind God and Messiah are identical. But this is a mistake. The Jews never attributed Divinity to their expected Messiah. The error was introduced by the Christians.

before my eyes with great sorrow and torment. These two signs are particularly for Europe and America: ah! that they ponder over them and benefit by them.

“It should be borne in mind that Dr. Dowie has not given any reply to my challenge sent to him in September last, nor has he even so much as mentioned it in his paper. For an answer to that challenge, I will wait for a further period of seven months from this day the 23rd of August 1903. If he accepts the challenge within this period and fulfils all its conditions as published by me previously and makes an announcement to that effect in his paper, the world will soon see the end of this contest. I am about seventy years of age, while Dr. Dowie is about fifty-five, and, therefore, compared with me, he is a young man still. But since the matter is not to be settled by age, I do not care for this great disparity in years. The whole matter rests in the hand of Him who is the Lord of heaven and earth and Judge over all judges, and He will decide it in favor of the true claimant.

“‘But if Dr. Dowie cannot even now gather courage to appear in the contest against me, let both continents bear witness that I shall be entitled to claim the same victory as in the case of his death in my life-time if he accepts the challenge. The pretensions of Dr. Dowie will thus be falsified and proved to be an imposture. Though he may try as hard as he can to fly from the death which awaits him, yet his flight from such a contest will be nothing less than death to him, and calamity will certainly overtake his Zion, for he must take the consequences of either the acceptance of the challenge or its refusal.’”

“In view of the fact that Ahmad appears to have Dr. Dowie in a corner, it may be possible that the latter will prefer to stay there rather than come out in the open and leave the world with great sorrow and torment.’”

This quotation from the *Commercial Advertiser* of New York does not leave any necessity for the reproduction of the announcement itself. But it may be added that the notice is concluded with a long prayer in which Divine judgment is implored to decide between truth and falsehood. (The first sentence of this prayer runs thus:—

"I close these brief remarks with the following prayer. O powerful and perfect God, who hast ever been revealing and wilt ever continue to reveal Thyself to Thy prophets, do Thou give Thy judgment and show to Thy people the imposture and falsehood of Dowie and Pigott, for Thy weak creatures having taken to human-worship and trusted in weak mortals like themselves, have fallen away from Thy path and are wandering in errors far from Thee."

Thus did the Promised Messiah pray to God three and a half years ago to show to the world his truth and the imposture of a false claimant by His judgment, and it is to this Divine judgment that we now desire to call the attention of the public.

In connection with this announcement the following facts should be specially noticed :—

(1) It was not simply a challenge but, as the heading showed, it was a "prediction" as to Dowie's fate.

(2) The following words which occur in this announcement are of the essence of the prophecy: "*If the pretender to Elijahship shows his willingness by any direct or indirect means to enter the lists against me, he shall leave the world before my eyes with great sorrow and torment.*" Thus according to the prophecy whether the challenge was accepted openly or tacitly, in either case his fate was "leaving the world with great sorrow and torment."

(3) The effect of the Promised Messiah's prayer was to be certain death for Dowie before the prophet's eyes and calamity to his Zion, though he might try to evade the challenge. The words of the announcement are: "*Though he may try as hard as he can to fly from the death which awaits him, yet his flight from such a mighty contest will be nothing less than death to him, and calamity will certainly soon overtake his Zion.*" Thus the prophecy declared that *death awaited him* though he might try to fly from it by not accepting the challenge openly.

(4) The Promised Messiah did not wait for a reply but addressed a prayer to God and implored Divine judgment to show the imposture of Dowie.

Before this announcement was published, the previous challenge had already raised a question in the American press as to what reply Dowie had given. Referring to such questions and probably also to the later announcement Dowie wrote on the 26th September 1903 in his *Leaves of Healing*: "People sometimes say to me, why do you not reply to this, that or the other thing? Reply! Do you think that I shall reply to these gnats and flies. If I put my foot on them, I would crush out their lives. I give them a chance to fly away and live." About the same time he in his vituperative manner referred to the Promised Messiah as the "foolish Muhammadan Messiah." On December 12th, 1903, he wrote: If I am not God's Prophet, there is none on God's earth that is," and still persisting in his prophecy of the destruction of Muhammadans, he wrote in January next: "My part is to bring out the people from the East and from the West, from the North and from the South, and settle them in this and other Zion cities until the time shall come when the Mohammadans are swept away . . . may God grant us that time." He also published a vision on the 5th of December 1903 in which, he related, he saw an angel who told him that he would triumph over his enemies. This vision related soon after the publication of the announcement which predicted for him a death in sorrow and suffering was no doubt fabricated as a reply to the Promised Messiah's prophecy.

These and such other remarks made from time to time in the *Leaves of Healing* show clearly that though Dowie feared to accept the challenge openly, yet he brought himself in opposition to the Promised Messiah and indirectly accepted the challenge. The latter moreover had published his prayer to God imploring a Divine judgment, and since he claimed that his prayers were accepted, his publication of the prayer was equivalent to the publication of its acceptance.

The publication of the prophecy is, therefore, a settled fact, and now we have to see whether the prophecy was fulfilled. The prophecy indicated that Dowie who was more than eleven years younger than the Promised Messiah would die in the latter's life-time, that the man who lived like a king in palaces, at whose bidding thousands of men kneeled before him, whose wealth was counted by millions and who enjoyed the most perfect health claiming not only that no disease

would affect him, but also that he could heal all kinds of diseases, that man would end his days in great sorrow and suffering, and lastly that calamity would overtake his Zion. The fulfilment of these prophecies is so clear that it needs no explanation. The following facts relating to the circumstances of Dowie's life at the time of the publication of the prophecy and the change which the next few years produced will, we hope, cast further light upon the fulfilment of the prophecy. At the time of the publication of the prophecy in August 1903, Dowie was the leader, according to his own statement, of over a hundred thousand persons and counted his wealth over twenty million dollars which means in Indian money six crores and twenty-five lacs of rupees. He lived in a house whose preparation cost him nearly six and a half lacs of rupees and occupied the most expensive and luxurious state-rooms when travelling. Two valets, three secretaries, a personal bodyguard and several sub-deacons attended his personal wants in his journeys. He had a well-paid army of evangelists who worked in almost every country in the world. His factories in Zion were in a most flourishing condition. He was not only the owner of the whole city of Zion, but he was actually making plans for similar other cities. He was so strong and in such good health that he asserted that he would never become ill. For two years after the announcement of the prophecy, the star of his prosperity was still in the ascendant. But soon it began to decline. He was first stricken with a severe attack of paralysis. This was on the 1st October 1905. A second attack of paralysis on the 19th December incapacitated him for all work. As an invalid he removed himself to a tropic isle to regain health and left the charge of the Zion affairs in the hands of his overseers. But this only proved to be the beginning of fresh and unthought of troubles. In his absence, his disciples discovered that he had been guilty of the most serious offences. Some of the charges against him were that:—

“Dowie drank Scotch highballs, telling friends the drink was weak tea;’ kept wine and soda-water in his cellar.

“Dowie planned band of seven ‘vestal virgins’ who were to attend him.

“Shortage of 2,529,766 dollars in accounts of Zion, laid to Dowie by Voliva.



“Presents of 35,500 dollars given to pretty Zion women by Dowie.”

That these charges were valid is clear from the circumstance that the whole body of his disciples turned against him and his own son and wife divulged his secret doings. Thus within a few months he lost his honor, wealth and the whole body of his followers, and through disclosures made by his own disciples the world gazed upon the dark picture of his inner life. Dowie sought to regain his followers by again appearing among them, but to his utter disappointment he found that in the city where thousands stood and kneeled at his bidding once, there was not a single person to receive him. He went to courts for the possession of Zion and its money, but met with despair on all sides. He appealed to his followers, but no one listened to his voice. Physically he was in the most distressful condition during the whole of this time. He could not walk or stand but was removed from one place to another by his negro attendants. Thus the three things in which he prided himself, *viz.*, health, wealth and followers, were all gone, and from a highly prosperous condition he was reduced to a most distressful one within the short space of a few months. Sorrow and suffering encompassed him all around and he found his hell in this very life. His disasters reached their climax. Soon after this he became a raving maniac, and this was the last stage of his life upon this earth. And the fulfilment of this grand prophecy is now completed with his death.

Great was the fortune which Dowie attained but greater still was his adversity. Great was his rise but greater still his fall. He claimed that he was Elijah and forerunner of Christ and that he was divinely inspired but he was bitterly denounced by the whole body of his own followers who repudiated his alleged divine powers. He said that, as the messenger of Jesus Christ, he was free from sin and that his life was a pattern for others, but his most intimate friends and his own son and wife revealed the dark side of the picture of his life and showed that while he preached one thing he himself did the opposite. He asserted that disease was a sin and claimed to heal it by his prayer, but he himself was laid low by the worst diseases, paralysis and insanity, and neither his own prayers

nor those of his followers could heal him. He asserted that the Muslims would perish before his eyes, but he himself perished before the eyes of the Promised Messiah, in accordance with the latter's clear prophecy. Never was man dashed from such prosperity to such adversity.

The Divine judgment has been given in the case of Dowie and the prophecy regarding his end has been clearly fulfilled. (It foretold for him an end of great sorrow and suffering within the life-time and before the eyes of the Promised Messiah. "*He shall leave the world before my eyes with great sorrow and torment*": such were the plain and definite words of the prophecy and how clearly they have been fulfilled! The words were uttered and published at a time when Dowie was at the height of prosperity, and no one could think that he would fall so low. But Almighty God knew the end that was in store for him and He also knew that his end must come in the life-time of the Promised Messiah. No mortal could know these things. God only knew them and He revealed these deep secrets of the future to His Messenger.) Some time ago when we referred to this prophecy in connection with the disasters that befell Dowie before his end came, an American newspaper remarked that there was nothing extraordinary in the prophecy as any man could have safely prophesied that Dowie would ultimately come to ruin. It is easy to make such an assertion but it is impossible to prove it. How long did Dowie prosper in face of the bitterest opposition from the American Press and public? In spite of what the newspapers wrote about him and in spite of what the people generally thought and said of him, Dowie was daily becoming richer and making more and more followers. It was in spite of the opposition that he became the owner of a large city and twenty million dollars of money. In spite of the strong words in which his character was depicted in the American Press, his followers continued to increase, and so rapid was the progress that within a few years he counted more than a hundred thousand persons as his followers and his missions were established in every country in the world. All these adherents were secured in the civilized countries of Europe and America. And he continued to win greater esteem and went on earning more and more wealth until he came in opposition to the Promised Messiah. If there is any body else who predicted that such a fate would be-

fall Dowie, *viz.*, that his end would be in great sorrow and suffering, and who also prophesied that the sorrow and sufferings which he predicted for him would overtake Dowie before his eyes and that he would perish in his life-time, then indeed the prophecy of the Promised Messiah loses its extraordinariness. But if no such person can be pointed out, it is the duty of every seeker after truth to accept the truth of him who announced it long before. In fact, the very circumstances which brought about Dowie's ruin and death show traces of a Divine judgment in them for they were not in the ordinary course of events. The beginning of these was the attack of paralysis. This necessitated giving the control of Zion in other hands which was instrumental in turning away his followers from him by the disclosure of his secret doings. Had the control of Zion remained in his own hands, the whole calamity would have been averted, for none could know what he did secretly, and those who knew anything on account of their close relationship or intimacy could not have the moral courage to disclose it, for so great was the influence of Dowie upon his disciples that in his presence they knew nothing but implicit obedience and blind submission to him. He could turn out any body at his will and no one could question it, for he was taken to be doing all these things under Divine inspiration. In short, it was the attack of paralysis which led to the desertion of his followers and loss of Zion, and these in their turn contributed to his insanity and death, for his mind and body could not bear up under the heavy sufferings. The fulfilment of this wonderful prophecy is thus a sign from God of the truth of the Promised Messiah, let him who will accept it.

We have stated facts only and now we place them before the public to draw such conclusion from them as is consistent with reason and justice. It is the duty of the press in particular to represent these facts in their true light before their readers. It was the American and the English press which gave publication to the prophecy and the challenge, and hence a duty lies upon the press to give, in the cause of truth, a publication to the circumstances which constitute a fulfilment of the prophecy. The mere circumstance that the contest was between a representative of the cross and a representative of the crescent and that it has ended in the latter's favour should

not be a hinderance in the way of any lover of truth, whether he is a Christian or an Atheist, to give true testimony in the case. Divine judgment has brought about the death of Dowie. Nor is this judgment inconsistent with the mercy of God, for in the death of one man there is life for many if they would have it.

We would add here for further information two other prophecies relating to Europe and America recently published by the Promised Messiah. The first of these prophecies is regarding the occurrence of severe earthquakes and other terrible calamities and it is in the following words :—

“Bear in mind that Almighty God has informed me of earthquakes in general. Know it for certain, then, that as earthquakes have come in America, Europe and Asia in accordance with my former prophecies, more will yet occur in diverse places, some of which would be so severe that the destruction wrought by them will be unparalleled in the world’s history and will remind men of the destruction of the judgment day. Death will make such havoc that streams of blood will flow. In fact, so great will be the destruction on the earth’s surface as the world has not witnessed before. Many places shall be turned upside down and they would present such scenes of devastation that one would think they had never been inhabited. Other calamities of a terrible nature from earth as well as heaven will come upon men, so that the wise men will be convinced of their extraordinariness. Then will men in great bewilderment begin to ask themselves what was going to happen. Many shall be saved and many shall be destroyed. The days are near, nay they are at the door, when the world shall see an unparalleled scene of devastation. Not only will great earthquakes come, but other calamities from heaven and earth will also visit the earth. All this will be brought about because men have forsaken God and with all their heart and all their soul they are bent low upon the world. Had I not come, these calamities would also have been put off for a while, but with my appearance the secret designs of the wrath of God have been made manifest, for He says that “punishment is not sent upon a people until a Messenger is raised.” Those who repent shall be saved, and those who show fear before the calamity comes shall be shown mercy.

“Do you think that you can be saved by your own plans? That can not be. Do not think that severe earthquakes have come in distant places in America and your country will be safe, for I see that greater distress is in store for you. *Thou, O Europe! art not safe, nor thou, O Asia! And ye that dwell in islands! no self-made deity will assist you on that day. I see cities falling down and I find inhabited places in ruin.* The Omnipotent God has kept silence for a long time while detestable deeds were done in His sight, but now He will show His face with great awe. Let him who has ears hear that, that time is not distant. I strive hard to gather men under the protection of God, but it is necessary that the writing of Fate should be fulfilled. I say to you truly that the turn of this country is drawing near. The days of Noah will you again witness and the scene of Lot's land you will see with your own eyes. But God is slow in sending His wrath. Repent that mercy may be shown to you. He who forsakes God is a worm, not a man, and he who does not fear Him is dead, not living.”

The second prophecy is regarding the appearance of plague. The words of the prophecy literally translated run as follows: “In Europe and other Christian countries a kind of plague will make its appearance which will be very severe.” It may also be added here that the appearance of plague in India was foretold by the Promised Messiah more than ten years before it was known in this country. And later still when the Punjab was yet almost entirely free from the plague, he published a vision to the effect that the plague would spread in the whole of the Punjab and that in this province its destruction would be heaviest. And now we actually see that the Punjab with a population which is less than one-eleventh of the whole population of India shows a plague mortality which is between one-third and one-half of the entire plague-mortality of the country.

---

# The Purity of the Text of the Holy Quran.

## 4. Arrangement of the Verses and Chapters of the Quran.

It has already been shown that the Holy Quran was both written and committed to memory in the life-time of the Holy Prophet. But we also know that the Quran was revealed piecemeal during a long period extending over twenty-three years. Some of the chapters were revealed complete but the revelation of many others was fragmentary and extended over long periods. It also happened often that while one chapter was still unfinished, a new chapter was revealed, and sometimes verses belonging to more than two unfinished chapters were revealed at one and the same time. Now the arrangement of chapters and verses in the copies of the Holy Quran at present in the hands of the Muslims does not follow the order of revelation. The important question before us, therefore, now is whether the Holy Prophet himself arranged the verses and chapters in an order different from that of their revelation, and, if so, whether the present arrangement of the verses and chapters is the same as that which prevailed in the life-time of the Holy Prophet. In other words, was the Holy Quran left by the Holy Prophet in the same condition as regards the arrangement of its verses and chapters as that in which we now find it, or is its present condition different from that in which the Holy Prophet left it?

Both intrinsic and extrinsic evidence conclusively show that the present arrangement of the chapters and verses of the Holy Quran was effected by the the Holy Prophet under the guidance of Divine revelation. But as the intrinsic evidence on this point requires a separate treatment, I shall not attempt to give it here. The different verses in different chapters and the chapters themselves are so well arranged that no better arrangement is conceivable. It is only ignorance of the Holy Quran and Arabic idiom which has made some critics remark that there is no connection between certain verses or that there are some chasms. A deep reflection over the Holy Book reveals a close connection between verses which are considered by

hasty writers to be disconnected. But we leave this point for a separate discussion and would refer here only to the extrinsic evidence which proves that the present arrangement of the verses and chapters of the Holy Quran is not the work of Abu Bakr or Zaid, but that of the Holy Prophet himself who did it under the guidance of Divine revelation. Such evidence is not only met with abundantly in the traditions of the Holy Prophet, but it is also contained in the Holy Quran. Thus in lxxv : 19 we read: *ان علينا جمعه وقرانه فاذا قرانا* : "Verily it is for Us to collect it and to read it, and when We read it, then follow thou its reading." This verse clearly shows that the collection of the Quran, that is its gathering into one whole with an arrangement of its various parts, was brought about by the guidance of Divine revelation. Arrangement and collection were according to this verse as much the work of Divine revelation as the reading of a verse to the Holy Prophet, *i.e.*, its revelation. The Quran itself, therefore, asserts, not only that it is the Word of God, but that its collection and arrangement were also brought about by Divine revelation. It should be borne in mind that the word *Jama* in the above verse implies both collection and arrangement, since no collection could be brought about without an arrangement. Now the verse shows that this arrangement was different from the order of the revelation of the verses. It describes arrangement and collection as a process different from the revelation of a verse to the Holy Prophet, thus showing that from the first it was meant that the verses and the chapters of the Holy Quran should be arranged in an order different from that of their revelation. If the order in collection were to be the same as the order of the reading of the different verses to the Holy Prophet, *i.e.*, the order of their revelation, collection and reading would not have been described in the verse quoted above as two different things. The reader may also consult Lane's Lexicon which gives "arranging" as a significance of the word *Jama*.

It is in authentic traditions, however, that we meet with the clearest proof that the Holy Prophet left at his death the complete Quran with the same arrangement of the verses and the chapters that we have now in every Arabic Quran. We will consider the arrangement of verses and that of chapters separately and in each enquiry we shall have to discuss the following points :—

1. Was any arrangement followed by the Prophet himself and by his companions in his life-time ?

2. Was that arrangement different from the order in which the verses or the chapters were revealed ?

3. Is the present arrangement different from that followed by or in the life-time of the Holy Prophet ?

That such a large book treating of so many and such varied subjects should have been committed to memory and regularly recited in and outside prayers and taught by one man to another without there being any settled arrangement of its parts is a most preposterous proposition, but there is hardly a Christian critic of Islam who has not advanced it. The grounds for this assertion are the same in every case. Not the least regard is paid to historical evidence, and the supposition that no arrangement is discoverable in the verses and chapters at present is the only basis on which the proposition is based. Even Muir who sat down to write his "Life of Mahomet" on a strong historical basis has in this respect followed the earlier Christian critics and shut his eyes to the whole historical evidence. The following short paragraph from Muir's introduction is not only illustrative of the assertions of Christian critics in general, but it also shows how the author himself has evaded the historical evidence. He says :—

• "We are not, however, to assume that the entire Quran was at this period repeated in any fixed order. The present compilation, indeed, is held by the Moslims to follow the arrangement prescribed by Mahomet; *and early tradition might appear to imply some known sequence.*\* But this cannot be admitted; for had any fixed order been observed or sanctioned by the Prophet, it would unquestionably have been preserved in the subsequent collection. Now the Coran as handed down to our time, follows in the disposition of its several parts no intelligible arrangement whatever, either of subject or time; and it is inconceivable that Mahomet should have enjoined its recital invariably in this order. We must even doubt whether the number of *Suras*, or chapters, was determined by Mahomet as we now have them. The internal sequence at any rate of the contents of

\* Italics are Ours. Ed. R. R.



the several *Suras* cannot, in most cases, have been that intended by the Prophet."

Some of the foot-notes given under this paragraph show the struggle in the writer's mind between historical facts and religious prejudice. Thus while denying the existence of any fixed order in the Quran in the life-time of the Holy Prophet, Muir had to admit that "we read of certain companions, who could repeat the whole Coran in a given time, which might be held to imply some usual connection of the parts." In another foot-note it is admitted that there were four or five persons who could repeat "with scrupulous accuracy" the whole of the Quran, and "several others who could very nearly repeat the whole before Mahomet's death." Again while denying that even the number of *Suras* was determined by the Holy Prophet, for fear of being contradicted he cautiously adds the following foot-note:—

"But there is reason to believe that the chief *Suras*, including all passages in most common use, were fixed and known by name or other distinctive mark. Some are spoken of, in early and well authenticated traditions, as having been so referred to by Mahomet himself. Thus he recalled his fugitive followers at the discomfiture of Honein, by shouting to them as 'the men of the *Sura Bacr*' (i.e., *Sura ii*).

"Several persons are stated by tradition to have learnt by heart a certain number of *Suras* in Mahomet's life-time. Thus Abdulla bin Masud learned seventy *Suras* from the Prophet's own mouth and Mahomet on his death-bed repeated seventy *Suras*, 'among which were the seven long ones.' These traditions signify a recognised division of at least some part of the revelation into *Suras*, if not a usual order in repeating the *Suras* themselves.

"The liturgical use of the *Suras* by Mahomet must, no doubt, have in some measure fixed their form, and probably also their sequence."

In connection with the same subject, it is said in another foot-note that "the traditions just cited as to the number of *Suras* which some of the companions could repeat, and which Mahomet himself repeated on his death-bed, also imply the existence of such *Suras* in a complete and finished form."

In this manner, almost every remark made in the paragraph quoted above is contradicted in the foot-notes on the basis of historical facts met with in authentic traditions. And though the statements in the foot-notes are made reservedly, yet the contradictions are too clear to escape unnoticed by any careful reader, and the struggle in the writer's mind can be easily discovered. In the text it is asserted that there was no fixed order or arrangement in the verses and chapters of the Holy Quran, and historical evidence is produced in the foot-note showing that there was a connection. The text makes the allegation that even the *Suras* were not distinctly marked out by the Holy Prophet and their number was not determined by him, and the foot-note brings forward historical testimony to the effect that there was a recognised division and that form of the chapters was, no doubt, fixed. The reservations contained in such expressions as "some part" and "some measure" were only natural considering the allegations in the text. It can be easily seen that if "seventy *Suras* including the seven long ones" existed "in a complete and finished form" as the foot-note admits, and there is no evidence showing that the remaining forty-four short *Suras* which were, no doubt, generally recited in prayers did not exist in the same form, the presumption will be that all the *Suras* existed "in a complete and finished form." This conclusion becomes clearer still when it is borne in mind that the same writer has also admitted that there were several companions who could repeat, not only seventy *Suras*, but the whole Quran and that too "with scrupulous accuracy."

As regards the stale assertion that the Quran follows no arrangement in the disposition of its several parts, it arises only out of an ignorance of the Holy Book. There exist commentaries in the Arabic language which show the connection of the verses and the chapters to each other, but the subject is not suited for a short article in a monthly. I would, however, give one example of the real connection between verses which a superficial reader would think to be totally unconnected. From the 150th verse the second chapter runs thus: "With somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of wealth and of lives and of fruits, will We surely prove you: but bear good tidings to the patient, (151) who, when a calamity falls upon them, say, 'Verily we are God's and verily to Him do we return. (152) On such the Lord sends down His blessings and mercy, and these—they

are the rightly guided. (153) Verily, Safa and Marwa are among the Sanctuaries of God: whoever, therefore, makes a pilgrimage to the House or visits it may go round about them both. And whoever does good in obedience to God, then verily God is Grateful and Knowing." Apparently the 153<sup>d</sup> verse abruptly introduces a subject foreign to the purport of the context. A little reflection, however, makes it clear that this verse has a deep connection with the preceding verses. Safa and Marwa are the two hills which were the scene of Hajar's suffering when she ran hither and thither in search of water for her infant child. Now the previous verses lay it down that when Almighty God tries His servants by sending down any suffering upon them and they are patient and faithful and trust in God, they are rewarded with great blessings and mercy from the Lord, and the verse which speaks of Safa and Marwa is really only an illustration of the principle laid down in these verses. It mentions two hills which were the scene of the sufferings of a faithful servant of God who, because of the faithfulness and patience shown under the heaviest sufferings, was rewarded with the greatest of blessings from heaven, so much so that these very hills became the sanctuaries of God. Going round these hills was a commemoration of the events which befell Hajar and the patience and faithfulness which she showed in that trial which had been sent upon her by God. Her reward was great, for the descendants of Ishmael were made a great nation and it was from among them that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, was raised. These facts reveal the existence of a deep connection between verses which to a superficial reader of the Quran would appear as having not the least connection with each other.

The allegation that there is no connection between the verses as at present arranged is, therefore, the result only of the ignorance of the deep significance of the Quranic words and expressions. As it is only upon this one supposition that the whole historical evidence concerning the arrangement of the Holy Quran is rejected, we may after having shown the error of this supposition proceed to consider the evidence itself. The assertion that no arrangement was followed in the case of single verses revealed at different times is so absurd on its very face that it hardly requires a refutation. How was it possible for any body to commit the Holy Quran to memory if there

was no settled order in which the verses were read? What order did the different copies follow? Or was it that each copy of the Holy Quran current at the time followed a different order? And every man who knew any portion of the Holy Quran, and every one of the companions knew some portion, followed a different arrangement! Does any tradition support these absurd assertions? And what order did the reciters of the Holy Quran follow? Or did each reciter follow a different order? What again was the order of the verses followed by those who led the public prayers? It is inconceivable that a book which was so widely committed to memory and which was so frequently recited by thousands of men existed in such an orderless state.

If there were no other evidence to show that the verses in the different chapters of the Holy Quran followed some arrangement, the mere fact that the Holy Book was committed to memory by the companions would be sufficient to establish that conclusion. There are many chapters containing more than a hundred verses each, and unless these were arranged in a settled order, no one could be said to have committed to memory the whole of any chapter. Take the different permutations of only a hundred verses, and no two out of a hundred thousand men could have agreed upon one arrangement. In such a case there would have been not one Quran which the companions could learn from each other, but everybody would have his own Quran, and no one could be certain of the correctness of what his friend recited. Moreover, we learn from authentic traditions that when any person, while reciting a portion of the Holy Quran from memory, made a mistake or left out a verse, some one of those who listened to him corrected the mistake or pointed out the particulars verse. Now this could not be done unless the same arrangement of verses was followed by all. In fact, it was simply impossible to commit thousands of verses to memory unless there was some arrangement which they followed.

Considerations such as the above clearly show that some arrangement of verses was necessarily followed. Was it the order of revelation? There is clear historical evidence that the Holy Prophet arranged the verses not according to their chronological order but according to matter. There were no doubt many chapters that were

revealed complete, but there were others, particularly the longer ones, that were revealed by portions. Chronologically verses of one chapter were followed by those of another, and hence in the arrangement of verses in chapters the chronological order could not be observed. The practice of the Holy Prophet in such cases is clearly stated in authentic traditions. As Othman tells us in a tradition already quoted, "it was customary with the Messenger of God, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, when portions of different chapters were revealed to him, that when any verse was revealed he called one of the amanuenses and said to him 'Write these verses in the chapter where such and such verses occur.'" From this it appears that the place and chapter for every verse were pointed out by the Holy Prophet himself. With such clear and conclusive testimony before him, no sensible person would deny that the work of the arrangement of the verses in every chapter was done by the Holy Prophet himself and as the Holy Quran tells us it was done under the guidance of Divine revelation, and that that arrangement did not follow the chronological order of the revelation of verses.

If the arrangement of verses was different from the order of their revelation, the next question that arises is, was that arrangement different from the one upon which the whole Muslim world is now agreed? We must answer this question in the negative. The arrangement of the verses in the Quran we have in our hands is not in accordance with the order of revelation, and hence if there is no trace in the history of the Quran of any change having been brought about in the arrangement of its verses at any time, the conclusion that the present arrangement is exactly the same as that followed by the Holy Prophet will be absolutely certain and final. Now it is admitted on all hands, and the truth of the fact has not been questioned by the hostilest critic of Islam, that there has not been the slightest change in any word or letter of the Quran or in the arrangement of its verses or chapters since the time of Othman, the third of the Muslim Caliphs. Our copies of the Quran are admittedly exact copies, true and authentic in every way, of the collection made by Othman, and hence to prove that the arrangement of verses and chapters at present is the same as that followed by the Holy Prophet, we have only to show that the collection made by Othman followed the original

arrangement. It can be easily seen that at the time of his making the collection, Othman had no motive for changing the fixed arrangement which up to that time was followed by the companions of the Holy Prophet. That an arrangement different from the order of revelation was followed by the Holy Prophet and that the same arrangement was followed by the companions in the learning and teaching of the Holy Quran has already been shown. That that arrangement was changed by Othman is for him to show who makes the assertion. When Othman began to make his collection, or more correctly when he began to make copies of the Quran from Abu-Bakr's collection, thousands of the companions of the Holy Prophet were still living, and no change in the arrangement of verses could have remained unnoticed. Moreover, the task of making the required copies was not in the charge of Othman personally, but in that of several of the most well-known companions reputed for their knowledge of the Quran, and none of these can be shown to have had any motive for altering the arrangement of verses existing at the time. Nor is there the slightest trace in the historical record of the time that the arrangement was altered. No charge has ever been preferred against Othman by any sect of Islam or any individual that he had changed the arrangement of the verses in the chapters of the Holy Quran. In fact the only charge against him is that he disallowed certain readings, and the nature of this charge we will describe later on when we have occasion to write about the various readings. But of any alteration in the arrangement of verses there is absolutely no mention whatever in any tradition authentic or unauthentic.

Besides the negative proof cited above which conclusively shows that at no time in the history of the Quran was the arrangement of its verses altered in the slightest degree, there is positive evidence leading to the same conclusion. This evidence may be gathered from incidental remarks made in certain authentic traditions. Under the heading "The excellence of the chapter entitled Al-Baqra" Bukharee relates the following tradition: "The Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, said, 'Whoever reads the last two verses of the chapter entitled *Baqra* on any night they are sufficient for him.'" This tradition which reports the exact words of the Holy Prophet shows two things. Firstly, that the Holy Prophet himself followed an arrangement which he made known to his companions

and they all followed the same arrangement, for if such had not been the case, he could not have referred to two verses as the last two verses of a certain chapter. The tradition shows clearly that every verse had a known and fixed place in a chapter and no reciter of the Quran could change its place. In the second place, this tradition shows that the verses with which the chapter entitled the "Cow" now ends were also the concluding verses of that chapter in the time of the Holy Prophet, and hence that the arrangement in the copies of the Quran at present is the same that was followed by the Holy Prophet. In support of this we may cite another tradition which is accepted as authentic by the authorities on tradition. In this tradition these two verses, *i.e.*, the concluding verses of the chapter entitled the "Cow" are identified with the 285th and 286th verses of that chapter as enumerated in Rodwell's translation. (See for this tradition the *Fath-ul-Bari*.) According to another authentic tradition the Holy Prophet told his followers to recite the "first ten verses" of the chapter entitled the "Cave" at the appearance of the anti-Christ. Had there been no arrangement of verses, the "first ten verses" would have been a meaningless phrase because it would not have indicated any particular ten verses. This tradition occurs in the *Sahih Muslim*. The first ten verses as in our copies of the Quran are plainly the verses meant, as in these verses the doctrine of the sonship of Jesus, a doctrine indented with the teaching of the anti-Christ by the Holy Quran, is refuted in forcible words. This tradition also shows that the arrangement of verses in the time of the Holy Prophet was the same as it is now. Other traditions to the same effect may, if necessary, be quoted.

In no tradition any arrangement of verses other than the one which exists in the current copies of the Holy Quran is hinted at. Had the Holy Prophet left the Quran in an unarranged form, different arrangements of verses would no doubt have been followed by different companions and in the great mass of traditions there would have been references to some of these arrangements. But the absence of any such reference shows conclusively that there was only one arrangement of verses which was followed by all the companions and that arrangement was the same as we have now in our copies of the

Quran, because there is no reference at all to any change having been introduced at any time. There is only one tradition which speaks of Ali having made a collection of the Quran in the order of its revelation, but this if true only supports the conclusion we have already arrived at as to the present arrangement being the one in existence at the time of the Holy Prophet. The fact, if true, is mentioned only on account of the peculiarity of the arrangement, its distinction from the recognised and accepted arrangement. Had there been a third arrangement besides these two, we should also have had a reference to it. The order of revelation as we have seen was not followed by the Holy Prophet, for his arrangement was according to matter and not chronological. Ali might have thought of preserving the order of revelation for historical purposes. In the time of Othman when copies of the Quran were made for distribution, Ali was one of the companions who superintended the copying and there is no doubt that if he had not looked upon the present arrangement as the right arrangement, he would have either objected to it or refused to take any part in it. But along with the whole body of the companions, Ali followed an arrangement different from the order of the revelation though he might have preserved the chronological order also. Had he considered the latter arrangement to be the actual arrangement, he would no doubt have given currency to it during his caliphate. But neither in the time of the first three caliphs nor in his own reign did he ever, privately or publicly, make a statement that the arrangement of verses and chapters in the current copies of the Holy Quran was not followed by the Holy Prophet and that it ought to be superseded by as chronological arrangement. These considerations clearly show that the arrangement of verses in the copies made by Othman was recognised by all the companions without a single exception to be the arrangement followed by the Holy Prophet. Had it not been so there would have been many differences among them as to arrangement. But as a matter of fact even Ibn-i-Masud who otherwise expressed his dissatisfaction with the action of Othman in having disallowed certain readings favored by the former never took any objection to the arrangement of the verses in the copies made by the orders of the latter, nor did he himself ever propose a different arrangement.

The above considerations prove conclusively that the division



of the Holy Quran into chapters and the arrangement of verses in each chapter were both performed under the directions of the Holy Prophet. When a new verse was revealed, a place was assigned to it by the Holy Prophet, and no companion could assign it a place at his own choice. The greater part of the chapter entitled *Al-Baqra*, for instance, was revealed during the early days of the Holy Prophet at Medina, but some verses belonging to it were revealed only a few days before his death. Such were the verses relating to the prohibition of usury, as trustworthy traditions show. The place assigned to these verses is immediately after the verses which speak of alms. The reason for this arrangement is that both injunctions, *viz.*, the injunction relating to the giving of alms and the injunction relating to the prohibition of usury, were meant for the benefit of the poor and these were two steps in the same direction, that is, the amelioration of the poor. The state of the society whose reform the Holy Quran had in view was such that the two injunctions could not be given together. It was necessary that the people to whom the injunction relating to the prohibition of usury was to be given should be first prepared to accept that teaching. Hence the two injunctions were revealed at different periods, but the subjects of which they treated were so closely related to each other that in an arrangement of verses they had to be placed side by side. But the division into chapters was marked by the Holy Prophet himself and we find the names of most of the chapters expressly mentioned in authentic traditions. In fact the division of the Holy Quran into chapters and the arrangement of verses in these chapters by the Holy Prophet are such clear facts that no difference at all can be pointed out to have ever existed on these points among the companions or the later Muslims. No one can be shown to have ever asserted that a certain verse in a certain chapter in the collection in our hands belonged to a different chapter or that a verse occupying a certain position occupied a different position at any time. In many traditions references to verses are contained in numbers, and this shows clearly that the arrangement of verses was complete in the life-time of the Holy Prophet. To add another example to those already given, there is a tradition which narrates that Ibn-i-Masud recited forty verses of the chapter entitled *Al-Anfal* in a certain prayer. This is narrated in the *Sahih Bukharee*. Another traditionist Abdul Razzaq has mentioned the same tradi-

tion through a different chain of narrators with this difference that instead of mentioning the reciting of forty verses of the chapter, the narrator only says that he recited up to the verse which ends with such and such words. (Fath-ul-Bari, Vol. II, page 212). Now if we compute forty verses from the beginning as mentioned by the first narrator, we find them ending with the words mentioned by the second narrator. From this it is clear that the present arrangement of verses was well-known in the life-time of the Holy Prophet. According to another tradition narrated by Bukharee, the Holy Prophet used to recite, when he awoke for his *tahajjud* prayers, "the last ten verses of the chapter entitled *Al-i-Imrdn*," and in imitation of him the Muslims still recite the same ten verses. This fact also proves that the same arrangement of verses was followed during the life-time of the Holy Prophet that is followed now and that the division of the Holy Quran into chapters was distinctly marked at the time.

The next question that we have to consider is the arrangement of chapters. In the discussion of this question it may be stated at the very outset that any arrangement in the recital of chapters in or outside prayers was regarded as unnecessary except when the whole of Quran was to be recited. As we have seen in traditions already quoted, there were men among the companions who knew the whole of the Quran by heart and to keep it fresh in memory they used to recite the whole within a stated time. Indeed Bukharee has a chapter with the heading "In how much time should the recital of the Quran be finished." Under this heading traditions are narrated according to which the Holy Prophet forbade one of his companions to finish the recital of the Quran in less than three days, and forbade another to finish it in less than seven days. These traditions show the practice of the companions of the Holy Prophet. Those among them who knew the whole of the Quran by heart used to repeat it constantly and finished the recitation of the whole ordinarily in seven days. Indeed it would not have been possible to retain such a large book in memory except by its constant recital and repetition. The Holy Prophet himself had told them that they should constantly resort to a recital of the Holy Quran and that otherwise it could not be retained in memory. Hence they constantly resorted to its recital. Now to finish the Quran within a stated time and to recur to it again and again it was necessary that some arrangement of chapters should have

been observed. But it may be asked, does tradition support this conclusion? Ahmad and Abu Daud and others have narrated the following tradition which shows that the arrangement of chapters was also effected by the Holy Prophet: عن اوس بن ابى اوس اذ يفة اللقفى قال كنت فى الوفء الى ن اسلموا من ثقيف . . . . . فقال لءا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم طرأ على حزبى من القرآن فاردت ان لا اخرج حتى افضيه قال فسا لنا اصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قلنا كيف تحزبون القرآن قال نحزبه ثلاث سور وخمس سور وسبع سور وواحدى عشرة وثلاث عشرة وحزب Aus says: "I was in the *Saqeef* embassy at the time of their conversion to Islam . . . . . The Holy Prophet said to us, "My portion of the Holy Quran has come to me unexpectedly, so I intend not to go out until I finish it." Thereupon we questioned the companions of the Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, as to how they divided the Quran into portions. They said: 'We observe the following division into portions, three chapters and five chapters and seven chapters and nine chapters and eleven chapters and thirteen chapters and all the remaining chapters beginning with *Qdf* which are termed the *Mufassal*.' There is good reason to believe the authenticity of this tradition. It divides the Holy Quran into seven portions, each portion to be recited in one day, and the recital of the whole Quran is thus finished in seven days. From other trustworthy traditions we learn that the Holy Prophet had enjoined some of his companions not to finish the Holy Quran in less than seven days, and the two traditions reported through entirely different channels corroborating as they do the testimony of each other testify to each other's truth and authenticity. Moreover they are both accepted by eminent traditionists as authentic traditions. Hence we have no reason to doubt the truth of either. Now the tradition quoted above shows clearly an arrangement of chapters, for the division into portions mentioned in this tradition is observed to this day by the whole Muslim world. The seven portions are called the seven *manzils* or stages, and they include the same number of chapters as is mentioned in the tradition. The seventh portion begins with the chapter entitled *Qaf* as stated in the tradition, and the total number of chapters contained in the first six portions is forty-eight

as even in the copies of the Quran in our hands. It should be borne in mind that in our copies the *Qáf* is the fiftieth chapter, the difference arising from the fact that in the tradition quoted above the *Fátihá* or the Opening chapter is not included. This tradition affords the clearest and most conclusive testimony that the arrangement of the chapters of the Holy Quran was brought about by the Holy Prophet himself like the arrangement of its verses, and their present arrangement does not differ in the least from the original arrangement.

It may perhaps be objected that such an arrangement was not possible as the Quran was not complete till the death of the Holy Prophet and verses and chapters were constantly being revealed. It is quite true that the Quran could not be said to be complete so long as the recipient of the Divine revelation lived, but this could not interfere with the arrangement of verses and chapters. The word Quran signified the part of the Quran that had been revealed. Now the tradition quoted above speaks of the conversion to Islam of the *Beni Saqif*, which did not take place till the ninth year of Hejira, in which year the chapter entitled "Immunity," which is looked upon as the latest in chronological order, was revealed. Hence at the time of which the tradition speaks almost the whole of the Quran had been revealed, and the division into seven portions which speaks of the number of chapters in each portion has in its favour the authority of the Holy Prophet himself, and no objection to it is based on a reasonable ground. The verses that were revealed afterwards were put in their proper place in the chapters to which they belonged, and if any short *Sura* was also revealed afterwards, as the "Help," it also found its proper place in the arrangement of chapters, and did not interfere with the enumeration of the chapters contained in the first six portions.

There is no evidence that the arrangement of chapters existing in the time of the Holy Prophet was altered in any way by Abu Bakr or Othman. Against Abu Bakr no one has ever advanced such a charge, and Othman only followed the collection of Abu Bakr. The copies made in the time of Othman were made under the directions of the companions who possessed the best knowledge of the Quran, and many of them as *Obayy bin K'ab* knew the whole of it by heart.

The arguments which we have advanced above as to the arrangement of verses apply *mutatis mutandis* to the arrangement of chapters. But as some traditions speak of different arrangements, we shall consider them before leaving this subject.

Let us take first the chapter headed *Talif-ul-Quran* in the Bukharee. According to the first tradition mentioned in this chapter, a man from Iraq came to Ayesha and asked her to show him her copy of the Quran. On being questioned as to what he meant to do with it he said that no arrangement was followed in the recital of the Quran and that he wanted her copy for a right arrangement of the Holy Book. Upon this, the tradition tells us, Ayesha rebuked him and accosted him in the following words: "What harm is there which is read first. Verily what was revealed of it first was a chapter from among the *mufassal* speaking of paradise and hell. But when people began to accept Islam, injunctions were revealed about the things legal and the things prohibited. Had the first injunction revealed been the prohibition of drinking, they would have said that they could not give up drinking. . . . . Then she brought out her copy of the Quran and recited verses of some chapters." In this tradition we have the objection of a man from Iraq, not one of the companions but a new convert to Islam, and the reply of Ayesha. In the reply the objector is rebuked for saying that no arrangement was followed in the recital of the Quran and it is explained to him what necessitated an arrangement different from the chronological order. It appears from the reply that his question related to the order of revelation, for he was told that there was no harm in placing a verse revealed before another after it in the arrangement. The copy of the Quran which Ayesha showed the questioner had also its arrangement different from the order of revelation, for she is stated to have recited verses of different chapters in support of her argument. And the man was satisfied with Ayesha's argument and did not take her copy which he would have certainly done if the arrangement of Ayesha's copy had been different from the current copies of the Quran.

It should also be borne in mind that the arrangement of chapters to which we have referred above was observed only in the recital of the whole Quran, and no such arrangement was observed in its recital

in prayers or outside prayers when only certain portions were recited. In prayers for instance if any chapter or any portion of a chapter was recited in one *rak'at*, any other chapter or portion of a chapter whatever could be recited in the second *rak'at*. There is ample evidence as to this in traditions. Similarly two or more chapters could be read in a single *rak'at*, and in some cases there were combinations of such chapters for recital in prayers. In his *tahajjud* prayers, for instance, the Holy Prophet used sometimes to recite twenty chapters, eighteen of which were termed the *mufassal*, or the shorter chapters towards the close of the Quran beginning with *Qdf*, and two *Hd Mims*, or chapters commencing with *Hd Mm*. Thus in each *rak'at* two of these chapters were recited, the total number of *rak'ats* being ten. The Holy Prophet made a peculiar combination which has been preserved to us through Ibn-i-Masud, and accordingly it is known as the *tdlif-i-Ibn-i-Masud* or the combination of Ibn-i-Masud. Now this combination has nothing to do with the arrangement of chapters in the Quran, nor was it followed on all occasions. It was a combination, which according to Ibn-i-Masud, the Holy Prophet followed upon one occasion or more occasions than one in his later midnight prayers, and as authentic traditions show that the ordinary arrangement of chapters was not followed by the Holy Prophet or his companions in prayers, this peculiar combination does not detract aught from the value of the original arrangement. On the other hand, this peculiar combination was preserved and mentioned only on account of its peculiarity and departure from the original arrangement of chapters. Nor was this peculiar combination followed always even in *tahajjud* prayers, for there are other authentic traditions showing other combinations and the recital of other chapters. Even in the public prayers the arrangement of chapters was not followed. On one occasion the Holy Prophet recited the fourth chapter, *An-Nisa* in the first *rak'at* and the third chapter, *Al-i-Imran*, in the second, and the incident has been preserved to us in a tradition only because a departure was made in the case from the recognised arrangement. Many other instances of the same kind are on record, and as it was not obligatory to follow the arrangement of chapters in reciting them in prayers, such cases furnish only additional testimony to the truth of the fact that the arrangement of chapters followed at present is the same as was followed in the recital of the whole Quran in the life-time of the Holy Prophet according to his directions.

The circumstance narrated above as to the peculiar combination of the twenty chapters termed the *mufassal*, a combination resorted to by the Holy Prophet-sometimes in his *tahajjud* prayers, has led some men to think that Ibn-i-Masud's copy of the Quran followed a different arrangement of chapters. But the only trustworthy evidence to support this is the tradition quoted above, which speaks of a certain combination of twenty short chapters in the *tahajjud* prayers, and when it is shown that the observance of the arrangement of chapters was not necessary in prayers, the force of that evidence vanishes altogether. Even supposing for the sake of argument that Ibn-i-Masud followed a different arrangement of chapters, and that it was according to that arrangement that the chapters were written in his copy of the Holy Quran, it does not follow that his was the right arrangement or that the arrangement in Abu Bakr's or Othman's copy was the wrong one. None of the companions favored the arrangement of Ibn-i-Masud. On the other hand, all of them recognised the arrangement in Othman's copy as the arrangement followed by the Holy Prophet. Among the companions who superintended the copying of the Quran in the reign of Othman, there were such eminent men as Ali, Obayy bin Ka'b, Zaid bin Sábit and others. Othman had chosen, as I will show later on, twelve of the most eminent companions, who were distinguished for their sound knowledge of the Quran, and they decided all points on which any dispute arose. They could not be unaware of the particular combination of chapters which the Holy Prophet followed in his later midnight prayers, but they knew that no particular arrangement was adhered to by the Holy Prophet in the recital of chapters in prayers and no arrangement could in fact be observed. It is absurd to suppose that they were all ignorant of a certain combination and that Ibn-i-Masud alone knew it. Had the arrangement of chapters been left to private judgment, we could have supposed Ibn-i-Masud's arrangement to be the right one and attributed the error to the rest of the companions. But the matter was to be decided by what the Holy Prophet had ordered. Ibn-i-Masud thought that a certain arrangement which he had seen the Holy Prophet following in his *tahajjud* prayers was the right arrangement. But he made a mistake. The companions knew that the arrangement followed in prayers was not and could not be the right arrangement. Authentic traditions related by them show that the Holy Prophet used to recite a

portion of one chapter in one *rak'at* and a portion of another chapter whether before or after the first in actual arrangement in the second *rak'at*. They also knew the case in which a companion who led the prayers in a certain mosque commenced every *rak'at* with the short chapter entitled "Unity" and then followed it with any other chapter, and when the Holy Prophet was apprised of this circumstance he did not object to it. They knew further that in the morning prayers on Fridays, the Holy Prophet generally recited the chapter *As-Sijda*, the 32nd chapter, in the first *rak'at*, and the chapter *Ad-Dahr*, the seventy-sixth chapter, in the second *rak'at*, yet this did not mean that the latter chapter should follow the former in actual arrangement. They knew the actual arrangement and they followed it Ibn-i-Masud based his arrangement on a certain combination followed in certain prayers and thus made an error in judgment. Yet in the main even his arrangement was not different from the arrangement followed in Othman's copy. The same longer chapters, the *Tiwdl*, were first in his copy as in Othman's, with this difference only that *An-Nisa* preceded *Al-Imrân*, the order of the third and fourth chapters being thus reversed. The reversal of this order is also due to the Holy Prophet having once done it in reciting them in prayers. These are the only two differences as regards the arrangement of chapters that are mentioned to have existed in Ibn-i-Masud's copy. So the error is either to be attributed to Ibn-i-Masud or to those who have supposed that his arrangement of the chapters of the Quran differed in these two points from the recognised arrangement followed in the official copies issued by Othman. Even the existence of the difference confirms the conclusion that the arrangement of chapters followed by Othman was exactly the same as that followed by the Holy Prophet. There is agreement in the main between other companions and Ibn-i-Masud, and the difference arises only out of an error of judgment. The only differences in Ibn-i-Masud's arrangement, if these differences did actually exist in his copy, were those which arose out of the Holy Prophet reciting certain chapters in a different order in the prayers. Perhaps Ibn-i-Masud thought that the order of those few chapters had been changed by the Holy Prophet when he heard him reciting them in prayers, but the other companions knew that it was not obligatory to follow the arrangement in prayers. Now we ask, if the order of chapters was not fixed



by the Holy Prophet himself, what led Ibn-i-Masud to follow the same arrangement as was followed by Othman and the other companions? Such an agreement in the arrangement of 114 chapters was not possible unless both were following one and the same authority who had fixed that order. Such authority could be none but the Holy Prophet. As further testimony that Ibn-i-Masud's arrangement of chapters was materially the same as was followed in Othman's copies and as is followed by us to this day, we have a tradition in Bukharee in which Ibn-i-Masud names the five chapters in the middle of the Quran, *Beni Israel*, *Al-Kahf*, *Ta Ha*, *Maryam* and *Anbiya*, in the same order in which they are found in our copies of the Holy Quran. All this evidence leads us to the certain conclusion that Ibn-i-Masud's arrangement of chapters was the same as in the copies made by the order of Othman, that if there was any difference it was very slight and immaterial, and that this difference arose out of a misunderstanding on the part of Ibn-i-Masud.

Two other persons are named as having followed a different arrangement of chapters in the collection of the Quran. These are Ubayy bin Kab and Ali. The case of the former may be disposed of at once, as there is no testimony worth the name which should show that Ubayy followed a different arrangement of chapters. The only thing stated about him is that he placed the fourth chapter before the third. If that was the only difference of arrangement, it is quite immaterial and the error may have arisen from the same source as in the case of Ibn-i-Masud. But as I will show just now, if Ubayy ever entertained such opinion, he afterwards gave it up when he came to know the facts. Ali is said to have collected the chapters in the order of revelation, and there is a tradition stating that he did not rest after the Holy Prophet's death until he had collected the Quran, arranging its chapters in a chronological order. The authenticity of this tradition has been questioned, for that Quran was never handed down to posterity though Ali reigned as caliph immediately after Othman. Moreover there are traditions of a higher authority which do not give to Ali such credit. According to one tradition (see *Fath-ul-Bari*, p. 10) Ali himself said that "the greatest of men as regards the collection of the Quran is Abu Bakr: he is the first man who collected the Quran." Therefore the tradition which

makes Ali say that he did not rest after the death of the Prophet till he had collected the whole of the Quran is contradicted by the second tradition whose evidence is corroborated by other historical facts, one of which is that even during his caliphate Ali never referred to or accepted a different copy of the Quran or a different arrangement of its chapters. But besides this, there is another consideration which shows that neither Ali nor Ubayy followed any arrangement of chapters other than the one which was followed by Othman. Ubayy and Ali were among the men under whose directions the copies of the Quran were written, and therefore they had as much hand in giving us the present arrangement of chapters as Othman or any other companion.

There is one tradition more which may be mentioned in connection with the arrangement of chapters, as from it a contrary conclusion is sometimes drawn by mistake. Ibn-i-Abbas thus narrates this tradition: "I said to Othman what led you to put *Al-Anfal* (the eighth chapter) in juxtaposition with *Bardat* and you did not write between them the line *بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ* (the verse with which every chapter of the Quran commences), thus classing these two chapters with the seven long ones. Upon this question Othman gave me the following reply: 'It was customary with the Holy Prophet when many chapters were being revealed to him, that when any portion of any chapter was revealed, he sent for one of his amanuenses and told him to write down these verses in the chapter where such and such things were spoken of. Now *Al-Anfal* was one of the chapters revealed early at Medina, and *Bardat* was one of the latest revealed chapters, and the subject matter of these two chapters was identical. Therefore I believed that the latter chapter was a part of the former chapter, and the Holy Prophet died, and he did not distinctly say to us that it was a part.'" This tradition, far from ascribing the arrangement of chapters to the judgment of Othman, makes it clear that the arrangement of chapters was effected by none other than the Holy Prophet. It shows that except in the case mentioned in the tradition, the Holy Prophet had "distinctly" told his companions where a verse or chapter was to be placed. It also shows that the arrangement was effected according to subject-matter by the Holy Prophet himself, for it was the identity of the subject-matter which decided that

the eighth and the ninth chapters should be placed in juxtaposition. In fact, leaving the case of this one chapter, *viz.*, the ninth, out of question, the tradition relates in express and clear words, not only that the Holy Prophet pointed out the position of every verse, but also that he pointed out the position of every chapter and distinctly told his companions which chapter should follow which in the collection, and that it was he who arranged the chapters according to their subject matter. Now taking the case of the two chapters mentioned in the tradition, does it follow from what is said in it that the Holy Prophet gave no directions at all as to their arrangement. The chapter entitled *Bardat* (Immunity) was, we know, revealed to the Holy Prophet more than a year before his death and accordingly it is not right to say that he had no time to give distinct directions as to its place. The fact is that the Holy Prophet himself desired the two chapters to be thus placed side by side and the *Bardat* to be written without *bismilla*, the formula with which every chapter began. The two chapters, although known under two different names, were really parts of a single chapter. The first eighty verses of the *Bardat* were proclaimed to the assembled hosts in the days of pilgrimage, and this was the reason that the *Baraat* was regarded as a different chapter. Hence the Holy Prophet never told his companions distinctly that the *Baraat* was only a part of *Al-Anfal*, and it was for this reason that it was looked upon as a distinct chapter. But neither did the Holy Prophet commence it with the opening formula, because in a certain sense, that is, the identity of the subject matter, it was regarded as a part of the eighth chapter. This is what Othman explained to Ibn-i Abbas.

All these circumstances lead us to the certain and undeniable conclusion that the arrangement of the chapters of the Holy Quran and the arrangement of the verses in each chapter were both effected by the Holy Prophet. There is strong internal evidence to the same effect. The chapters like the verses have a connection with each other, but as this subject requires a separate treatment, we need not refer to it here. The next point to be considered is that if the whole of the Quran was safe in writing as well as in memory, and if even its verses and chapters were arranged before the death of the Holy Prophet, what was meant by the collection of the Quran in the time of *Abu Bakr* or in that of Othman.

*To be continued.*