Many of the most intimate friends of the Prophet and the most pious and distinguished of the 'companions' doubted which side they should take in the civil wars, and how they should act so as not to be responsible for any harm that might come, and so were led to adopt the most dangerous principle of all. They retired each into his private home and did not use their influence one way or the other, but passed the rest of their lives in prayer and pilgrimage. This example has ever since been unconsciously followed by some of the best and purest in every Muslim society. The most genuine and the most moral of Muslims often tell you, as they have a thousand times told me almost in identical terms at Constantinople or Cairo, at Bombay or Zanzibar, that as long as they spent their energies in prayer and pilgrimage they are certain that though they do not do the best, yet they do no harm, and thus they give up to prayer and pilgrimage the lives which should have been devoted to the well-being of their people. It is to this class in India that I appeal and desire most earnestly to impress upon them my conviction that, if they continue in their present attitude of aloofness, it means the certain extinction of Islam, at least, as a world-wide religion.

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