

Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets . . . " HOLY QUR-AN 33: 40.

"There will be no Prophet after me."—MUHAMMAD.

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Mr. HAMEEDULLAH BOWMAN

We are glad to have the opportunity of introducing our friend Mr. Bowman to our readers. Although he has been a Muslim for many years yet owing to various circumstances over which one sometimes has no control he could never get in touch with us. But about the end of August last year when the Imam of the Mosque at Woking had gone to Southport to attend a Convention of Religions at which he was billed to speak on "The Message of Islam", Mr. Bowman, who lives in Liverpool, found time to come down to Southport and make the personal acquaintance of the Imam. A brief life-history of our brother-in-faith, published in this issue, will be found interesting by our friends interested in the welfare of Islam in England. We print his declaration of Faith also.

—Ed. I. R.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مَجْلَدٌ فِي مَعْرِفَةِ سُنَّةِ رَسُولِ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

THE
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A DECLARATION

I, Frederick Hameedullah Bowman, of Liverpool, England, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Allah (God) alone; that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger and Servant; that I respect equally all Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and others, and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

La ilaha ill-Allah Muhammad-un-Rasul Allah.

[There is but One God (Allah) and Muhammad is God's Messenger.]

(Sd.) F. H. BOWMAN.

MY EXPERIENCE OF ISLAM

BY FREDERICK H. BOWMAN

In response to a request from the Imam Sahib, I have much pleasure in outlining the circumstances in which I first heard the truths of Islam. My mother, Alice Bertha Bowman, poetess and novelist, whose writings have been appreciatively accepted by Royalty, contributed, many years ago, articles and verses to "The Allahabad Review." This paper was published in India by the late Sarbuland Jung M. Hameedullah, afterwards Chief Justice of the Deccan. As a small boy, I read this publication and others in which her contributions appeared, and I conceived an early ambition to see my own name in print, especially as my mother's story, "A Romance of Llangollen," had won an authorship prize in "The Anglo-Indian Week's Times." I myself showed aptitude for literature at school and became editor of the Fifth Form Magazine. I was contributing to the public press before I left school, and Mr. Hameedullah, then a barrister, took a keen interest in my literary progress. I adopted his name. Now that he has, alas, passed away, my devoted gratitude is retained by his family, and I regularly correspond with his distinguished son, Mr. Mahmudullah, Home Secretary of the United Provinces of India, who so ably maintains the high traditions of his ancient Delhi ancestry. When I was at school, there was a Muslim mosque in Liverpool and I attended many services there with my mother. So interested did I become that I even tried to emulate the local Sheikh, and, in a home-made robe, I mounted a box at home to address my own meeting of neighbours and spread the truths of the Muslim Faith. The mosque eventually closed, and, for some time, I was out of touch with the Faith. I went on the stage,

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wrote many professionally toured plays, produced shows myself, had my stories and serials published by the leading London firms, wrote films and acted in some of them, and composed various songs. I have always sympathised with suffering animals, which was one of the characteristics of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. His humanity extended to the lowest of creatures. I am now President of the Animal Service Association, which I founded for the protection of the beasts of burden. My latest song is "Women and War," a plea for peace. I have for some years been the editor of my own paper, "The Talking Picture News," and had the honour of being presented to King George the Fifth at the June Levee in 1934 at St. James's Palace. I noticed this year that the Imam Sahib of the Woking Mosque was to deliver an address on Islam at the Southport Religious Conference, so I went over to hear him. It gave me great pleasure to meet him afterwards, when we had a most interesting chat. I hope we shall keep in touch with each other. I was born in Liverpool, and my people were Protestants. I have, however, always preferred to think for myself, and the Muslim view of God has always appealed to me.

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'ID-UL-FITR (1358 A.H.) SERMON

BY MAULVI ABDUL MAJID

To-day is a happy day for us Muslims and, I venture to say, for non-Muslims also. This day is happy for us Muslims, because we meet to-day in a prayer of thanksgiving to God the Beneficent, the Merciful, for having enabled us to perform our duty, which, to use the words of the Qur-án, was designed by God with the purpose "of fitting us to guard against evil." And, further to express our happiness at the completion of this moral duty of ours, each one of us is required to pay the sum of half-a-crown as *sadaqat-ul-fitr* or *fitrana*. This charity, be it noted, is obligatory on every Muslim whose paying capacity comes within the range of the specifications of the law of *Zakat*, or the Islamic poor-rate. It must be paid by every Muslim both for himself and for those dependent upon him.

This day, as already stated, closes the month of fasting—a course for self-purification, for seeking light and guidance from God, Who is the source of all that is good and the fountain-head of all that is noble and the Inspirer of every good desire bringing forth good conduct. I said that this day was a happy day for non-Muslims as well. For it is through the agency of this festival (there are two occasions of Muslim festival each year) that we Muslims by practical demonstration proclaim to the non-Islamic world the message of the spiritual equality of mankind. It is through the agency of this spiritual education of mankind in action that Islam and we Muslims have succeeded in breaking down the resistance offered to the peace of the world by the unconscionable barriers of racialism and the hatreds, which are the result of geographical limitations and linguistic and colour prejudices, from amongst

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one-sixth of the human race. This is indeed a great moral achievement in itself. A non-Muslim writer, Dr. Maude Royden, in her monograph, "The Problem of Palestine," published this year, has the following remarks to make on this singular characteristic accomplishment of Islam :

"The religion of Mahomet proclaimed the first real democracy ever conceived in the mind of man. His God was of such transcendent greatness that before Him all worldly differences were nought, and even the deep and cruel cleavage of colour ceased to count.

"There are social ranks among Moslems, as elsewhere, but fundamentally (that is to say, spiritually) all believers are equal, and this fundamental spiritual democracy is not a fiction, as it so commonly is among Christians ; it is accepted, and real. This accounts for its extraordinary spread among different peoples. It accounts for its strength to-day in Africa, where the Christian missionary preaches an equality which everywhere is mocked by the arrogance of the white races and the existence of a colour bar. The Moslem, black, brown or white, alone finds himself accepted as a brother, not according to his colour but according to his creed.

"During the War in France, I was told of some Indian Moslem soldiers who created a disturbance on finding black troops from Senegal served in the same estaminet as themselves. They were about to proceed from protest to violence, when one of the better informed pointed out that these blacks were Moslems. Instantly the protests were silenced and an apology offered. White Christians do not

always behave so, whether in London or in American hotels. It was on the strength of their religion that the Arabs conquered, and by its means they have made their great gift to civilisation."

We Muslims are never proud of ourselves as being Chinese, Iranian or Indian. What we are proud of is our religious culture. And it may be said, in passing, that this pride is not begotten of hatred or haughtiness. We talk of it because it is a gift from God, and we are humbly thankful to Him for this. The Islamic nations, at the height of their culture and material glory, never thought of themselves as Arabs or Turks, but simply as Muslims. For them, the difference between themselves and others was spiritual. They were Muslims and others were non-Muslims. We are Muslims and the sole justification for our existence, other things being equal, lies in the propagation of an outlook on life which brushes aside, effectively, once and for all, those obstacles which stand in the way of bringing about harmonious relations in the first place between one individual and another and, for that matter, between one nation and another, thus eventually paving the way for a world brotherhood of mankind.

It is with these noble aims in view that the Muslim festivals are held. I wish to emphasise that Muslim festivals are not mere festivities degenerating into mere frivolities. This is because Islam knows that all social functions, if dissociated from the remembrance of God, are liable to get out of hand and to degenerate into a reckless indulgence of the lower self. Islam has, therefore, enjoined, before everything else, the saying of prayers at these festivals. Those who have witnessed Muslim festivals will bear out the statement that the manner of them is in sharp contrast with the way in which the festivals of other religions are cele-

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brated. By way of illustration, I may refer you to the depths of degeneracy into which the European carnival has fallen. The carnival, as you know, was originally a feast which preceded the Christian period of fasting—Lent. But nowadays the Christian feast has lost its original significance and denotes nothing but riotous revelry and unfettered licence. On the occasion of carnivals in Europe, both men and women wear fancy dress and mob each other with confetti. They set at naught all social codes of morality. In a word, all that is sacred in normal life is suspended, and its place is taken by licence. And all this is at its height in Roman Catholic countries, more particularly in France and Italy!

The aim of Muslim festivals is to educate the world to realise the eventual destiny of mankind, which is the "fellowship of mankind." Thus those friends, who see fit to object to the celebrating of this festival of ours to-day on the ground that all festivities should have been suspended for the duration of the present war, would perhaps be able to discriminate between the nature of Muslim festivals and the usual kind of festivities to which one is accustomed in Europe. All Muslim festivals are controlled and guided by spiritual values, which are superimposed upon, and dominate, the biological values which play such a prominent part in non-Muslim festivals. The whole world is at present passing through a very crucial period.

Each one of us, at least, likes to believe that, at the end of this war, a new order will emerge from the present chaos; that a new humanity will be born out of the present turmoil. I think it is meet that I said a few words on the attitude of Islam towards wars and the position to be taken up by us Muslims in the present war in particular.

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As a rule, plain truths are not liked by us. There are things which we like, and their result is bad for us; and there are things which we hate, and their outcome is good for us. Thus our liking or disliking a thing does not make it either good or bad for us. We Muslims believe that all that comes from God is good, even though we may not understand it. We Muslims, for that reason, are neither panderers to nor danglers in, cheap sentimentalism. But that does not mean that Islam is devoid of idealistic teachings. The merit of the teaching of Islam lies in its capacity to be practical and yet idealistic. The religion of Islam is dynamic in its outlook on life and has no time for any talk or outlook which lacks courage to look things in the face. We Muslims never like to take refuge behind the stockade of such philosophies and religious outlooks on life as place a fantastic estimate on the worth of an individual, his powers and importance, but refuse to take due notice of the baser side of human nature of men and women who, for a number of reasons, may not be so elevated and advanced as ourselves, and may even be bent upon annihilating us outright. We Muslims like to call a spade a spade and seek remedies accordingly for those mental and moral aberrations, from which some people and nations may be suffering. Naturally, religions and philosophies which are oblivious of this phase of the life of mankind not only fail to see eye to eye with us, but they also decry us by styling us as gross, harsh and materialistic. But it passes my understanding when I see their prominent exponents exhorting their co-religionists to take up arms and be up and doing and fighting. The only conclusion to which I can come is that cheap sentimentalism and empty talk are employed by these exponents to keep people under their hold. Because of this dynamic and fearless outlook on life and our readiness and

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preparedness to look facts in the face, we have been branded, since our appearance on the world stage, as warlike people and as people whose history reeks of bloodshed and cruelties. It would indeed be a stroke of luck if anyone of us came across a book or a lecture by a non-Muslim in which, in one form or another, we Muslims were not described as loving war for the sake of war. I hope that my assurance will be accepted, when I tell you that we Muslims are the greatest pacifists the world has ever known. The very word Islam means pacifism, and the word "Muslim," its active participle form, means a pacifist; or, to use the words of the Prophet Muhammad, a Muslim is one from whose hands, tongue and limbs, everyone is safe. But as for men and women who are nothing but armchair philosophers, who indulge in nebulous talk and who would like to solve the problems of the world by mere thought force, or who, in other words, have not the courage to face the stern realities of life, it will be natural enough, if such people cannot understand us. Whenever such people read of the Prophet Muhammad and learn something of the war conducted by him in self-defence (Muhammad who counts amongst his followers to-day over 400 millions of people) it will be natural enough if they seek consolation in stigmatising us, his followers, as people who literally believe in the use of the sword for securing their ends. Calumnies have been heaped upon the fair name of Islam simply because its fault, if any, is that it refuses to play the ostrich policy. Nothing, of course, would convince such people of the necessity of unsheathing the sword. At all costs they would go on eulogising pacificism to the skies. Islam and the Holy Prophet will appeal to them to a certain extent, but, at a given point, they would part company with them. It is this particular point that I wish to discuss in the next few words of

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mine. Islam not only deals with the problem of war, but it has also laid down a detailed system of ethics, governing and controlling war. The only difference, according to me, between us Muslims and non-Muslims, especially the Christians, is, that we Muslims freely admit the presence and necessity of wars and humanise them by laying down ethical restrictions, whereas our Christian friends, though they act exactly in the same manner as we do, will not admit the presence and necessity of wars. Our Christian friends have no support for their conduct either in the words or example of the Holy Prophet Jesus (upon whom be the peace and blessings of God !) nor in any ethics having for their basis the words of the Master.

In order to understand this fundamental difference between the approach to the problems of life by the two great religions of the world, Christianity and Islam, I quote at some length the words of Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal from his book, "The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam" :

"The main purpose of the Qur-án is to awaken in man the higher consciousness of his manifold relations with God and the universe. It is in view of this essential aspect of the Qur-ánic teaching that Goethe, while making a general review of Islam as an educational force, said to Eckermann : ' You see, this teaching never fails ; with all our systems we cannot go, and generally speaking no man can go, farther than that.' The problem of Islam was suggested by the mutual conflict and at the same time mutual attraction, presented by the forces of religion and civilisation. The same problem confronted early Christianity. The great point in Christianity is the search for an independent

content for spiritual life which, according to the insight of its Founder, could be elevated not by the forces of a world external to the soul of man, but by the revelation of a new world within his soul. Islam fully agrees with this insight and supplements it by the further insight that the illumination of the new world thus revealed is not something foreign to the world of matter but permeates it through and through.

“ Thus the affirmation of the spirit sought by Christianity would come, not by the renunciation of external forces, which are already permeated by the illumination of spirit, but by a proper adjustment of man's relation to these forces in view of the light received from the world within. It is the mysterious touch of the ideal that animates and sustains the real, and through it alone we can discover and affirm the ideal. With Islam, the ideal and the real are not two opposing forces which cannot be reconciled. The life of the ideal consists, not in total breach with the real, which would tend to shatter the organic wholeness of life into painful oppositions, but in the perpetual endeavour of the ideal to appropriate the real with a view eventually to absorb it, to convert it into itself and to illuminate its whole being. It is the sharp opposition between the subject and the object, the mathematical without and the biological within, that impressed Christianity. Islam, however, faces the opposition with a view to overcome it. This essential difference in looking at a fundamental relation determines the respective attitudes of these great religions towards the problem of

human life in its present surroundings. Both demand the affirmation of the spiritual self in man, with this difference only, that Islam, recognising the contact of the ideal with the real, says 'yes' to the world of matter and points out the way to master it with a view to discover a 'basis for a realistic regulation of life.'

We Muslims believe in pacifism in the sense that we abhor war but, if circumstances are such that war becomes unavoidable, then the religion of Islam, unlike its sister religions, has got an ethic of war. It does not shut its eyes to the stern realities of life. It has courage enough to tell the world that war is one of the ways of God to cleanse it of a vitiated atmosphere; it says that war is a biological necessity. We read in the Qur-án, "And if God had not repelled some men by others the earth would have been corrupted. But God is a Lord of kindness to His creatures." (2 : 251.) In this verse, for the first time in the religious history of mankind, I believe, it is stated that wars sometimes become inevitable, and that their purpose is to purge mankind of the vicious elements that come to get the upper hand and trample under their feet justice, liberty, freedom of speech, freedom of conscience and religious conviction. It is under such circumstances that wars become a source of blessing to mankind, as a result of which justice and freedom of conscience are restored.

I wish to make it clear that Islam, like St. Paul, could have said in the words of Jesus, "Bless your persecutors." We Muslims feed our persecutors and enemies when they are hungry, and, if they are thirsty, we would give them to drink; for, to use the words of St. Paul, that is the way to make them burn with shame. This is idealistic without doubt, if idealistic and fantastic are synonymous. But is it always practical? Islam knew that it should take into due consideration

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the demands of human nature and that idealism has limitations, and that the showing of an absolute undiluted leniency to the enemy might do more harm than good. Thus, instead, the Qur-án laid down a guiding principle of life for us, which reads, "Repel evil by what is best." (23 : 96.) Thus it improved immeasurably upon such ideas as are couched in the phrase, "Bless your persecutors." The doing of good in return for evil is the common teaching of all religions, and is by no means a monopoly nor a peculiar distinctive element of Christian ethics. But nowhere is the principle put in such a beautiful and practical form as in the Qur-án in the verse read by me ; and, what is more, the whole change has been brought about by the mere use of a single word, *i.e.*, by what is *best*. To return good for evil is only possible under certain circumstances ; and, notwithstanding all the sentimentalism of the Gospel doctrine, no individual or community that has ever taken that teaching for a guide, has found it possible in practice to return good for evil in all cases. Some of the later disciples of Jesus have, perhaps, because of the impracticability of the original doctrine, taken rather the opposite course. The Qur-án, however, says, "*repel* evil by what is best." Evil is not a thing that must be encouraged. It must be repelled. But, in repelling, the rule according to the Qur-án is that it must be repelled by what is best. If you can *repel* evil by doing good for it, that is the course recommended ; but if punishment is necessary, and the meekest follower of Jesus must admit that in some circumstances this is so, then punishment is recommended. The aim is to repel evil, and the method of repelling evil is to be the best that is possible in the circumstances. The rule laid down here was the guiding rule of the Prophet Muhammad and is that of Muslim ethics. I am afraid

that the above explanation with regard to the repelling of evil may be misunderstood by some, especially by those who wish to live in a world of delusions. So I hasten to add that, as far as idealistic teachings go, Islam is abreast of all and is second to none in the loftiness of its ethics. Let me give just a short comparison between the teachings of Christianity and those of Islam to show that they run on parallel lines and that, in mere idealism, there is nothing to choose between them, while the characteristic which distinguishes Islam from other religions is its genius in conforming its idealism with practicability. In Christianity, as is clear from Thessalonians, 1, 5:15 and Galatians, 6:10 and Romans, 12:17, one is asked not only to refrain from offending or shocking one's pagan neighbours, but also to endeavour positively to do them good. Christianity does not admit any reprisals, even if the injury has been done to ourselves. (Romans, 12:17.) Now, if you ask how Christianity repels evil, we are told that the moral order will look after itself; for the principle of retribution is inherent in a moral universe and that we need make no effort "to get even with" people who have done us wrong. Evidently this fantastic idealism is sure to do more harm than good. But now I give to you the parallel teachings in the words of the Qur-án. We read:

"O you who believe, be upright for God, bearers of witness with justice, and let not hatred of a people incite you to act inequitably; act equitably, that is nearer to piety; and be careful of your duty to God; God is aware of what you do." (5:81.)

We read also:

"And the recompense of evil is punishment like it, but, whosoever forgives and amends, he shall have his reward from God; surely God does not love the unjust." (42:40.)

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To ensure peace we have often to disturb peace, and then it is that the martial spirit, that has been implanted in us by God for our safety, comes into play. The protection of life and property is a common instinct, but it has often served as a pretext for oppression and tyranny. We, it must be admitted, are not free from inordinacy; and, if we need something to put us on the right path, war is indispensable in order to restrain those who would otherwise be beyond our control. In other words, we need an ethic of war. We fail to find any healthy principle of war in the Bible.

No man can be bound by another's injunction, if that is at all likely to be detrimental to his own interests. But if he finds himself so bound, he tries to find some means to get rid of the obligation. Treaties in Europe are meant for the waste-paper basket. They are honoured more in the breach than in the observance. We need a word from God Himself on this subject to serve as our article of faith. This is not mere theory. The history of warring peoples has proved it. Those who were once the embodiment of oppression and a curse to humanity on account of their prowess, became as gentle as lambs under the salubrious influence of Divine Revelation, and won for themselves the title of "Gentlemen Soldiers" from the world. They were once reckless in the matter of life and wielded their swords ruthlessly, but these unscrupulous people became clean fighters under the teachings of God.

The question of war has always been a most difficult and intricate problem. War could neither be dispensed with in the interests of peace, nor could it be pursued on the lines laid down in bygone days. The world had urgent need of true reform in this respect, and Islam fulfilled that need. I will now give the essentials of Islamic teachings in this matter. Fighting to satisfy the hankering after land or property belonging to

others has been repeatedly condemned in the Qur-án. But, from the very beginning, these motives have always given rise to fighting in the world ; even to-day the same hankering makes civilised nations covetous of the possessions of others. They have engineered various schemes and have come with plausible pretexts, but cupidity and usurpation is at the bottom of all their movements. Islam, however, forbids all fighting for such objects. It allows war only under those conditions for which the Creator has purposely endowed us with a martial spirit. Islam permits fighting for three reasons :

- (i) To restrain disturbances and to keep every land free from the incursions of others.
- (ii) To defend life and property from the hands of others.
- (iii) To enable every person to follow his religious convictions, to whatever persuasion he may belong.

I need not emphasise the first two points ; they are self-evident. I will merely quote the following verses from the Holy Qur-án concerning them.

With regard to No. 1, the Qur-án says : “ If you, O Muslims, will not fight, there will be in the land persecution and great mischief.” (8 : 73.) With regard to No. 2, the Qur-án says :

“Permission (to fight) is given to those upon whom war is made, because they are oppressed ; and most surely God is well able to assist them ; and those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause.” (22 : 39, 40.)

The third object of war is, however, a vexed question. It has furnished the enemies of Islam with a pretext for carping against the faith, though the Holy Qur-án has given the most desirable and humane teachings on the subject.

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“No compulsion in religion” is the universal immunity given by the Qur-án to an adherent of any faith no matter what its form. Islam came to establish freedom of conscience and action in general but particularly in religion. A Muslim is bound to wage war against any person, whether of his own kith and kin and religion or not, who interferes with the beliefs of a non-Muslim. This state of things has been called “Faith for God” in the Qur-án; that is to say, everyone must be allowed to choose his own faith and to worship his God in the manner he thinks best. It is a disturbance of this state of things, that makes a Muslim draw the sword against any person, Muslim or otherwise, who violates the Islamic ideal of peace. Liberty of conscience was unknown before Islam. The feeling in Islam for religious freedom is so strong that a Muslim is enjoined to act as a policeman, as it were, in the protection of all religious houses. For example, a Muslim is ordered to protect a Christian church from a Muslim attack. The Qur-án is too clear on the point to allow any other conduct.

We read in the Qur-án, “And had there not been God’s repelling some people by others, certainly there would have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which God’s name is much remembered; and surely God will help him who helps His cause.” (22 : 40.)

In this verse the Qur-án identifies the maintenance of religious houses of every faith with the “cause of God.” It is to be noted that Muslims are ordered to sacrifice their lives not only to save their own mosques but the religious houses of other peoples as well. The civilised world, with Christian notions lurking in its breast, is still far from holding the noble principle thus enunciated in the Qur-án. Even in time of war a Muslim soldier is forbidden to touch an alien’s house

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of worship. He has to spare the life of religious teachers. One more consideration, and I shall have finished. What should be the attitude of us Muslims towards the present war? In view of the above remarks, our duty as Muslims is quite clear. I do not hold a brief for any political ideology. I am just trying to place before you our duty in the present circumstances. We Muslims have suffered much at the hands of the French and the British. Fate had thrown us into the arms of one another. Clashes and injustices were perhaps only natural. The Zionist policy in Palestine has done us great harm. Untold miseries has it brought upon our brethren in the faith in that country. But the very fact that synagogues have been pulled down in Germany upon the slightest pretext makes it obligatory upon us Muslims to throw our weight into the cause of the Allies. The Allies may be fighting for the defence of democracy and we Muslims possibly may not agree with the definition or the signification attached to that word by European diplomats. Nevertheless, in the present circumstances, our attitude is quite clear. Unless and until religious liberty is restored, no Muslim should think that he has done his duty.

MARTYRDOM OF IMAM HUSSAIN AND ITS SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

BY DR. M. HAFIZ SYED, M.A., PH.D., D. LITT.

"And do not speak of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead: nay (they are) alive, but you do not perceive."

—*Holy Qur-an*, 2: 154.

On Muawiyah's death, Yezid ascended the throne according to his father's testament. Yezid was both cruel and treacherous; his depraved nature knew no pity nor justice. His pleasures were as degrading as his companions were low and vicious. Drunken riotousness prevailed at court, and was naturally imitated in the streets of the capital. Hussain, the second son of Ali, had inherited his father's virtues and chivalrous disposition. In the terms of peace signed between Muawiyah and Hasan, his right to the Caliphate had been expressly reserved.

Hussain had never deigned to acknowledge the title of the tyrant of Damascus, whose vices he despised, and whose character he regarded with abhorrence; and when the Muslims of Kufa besought his help to release them from the curse of the Ommeyade rule, he felt it his duty to respond to the appeal for deliverance.

All Hussain's friends tried to persuade him not to trust the Kufa promises. They knew the Iraqi character. Eager, fierce and impetuous, the people of Kufa were utterly wanting in perseverance and steadiness.

Hussain traversed the desert of Arabia unmolested, accompanied by several of his kinsmen, his two grown-up sons, a few devoted followers, and a timorous retinue of women and children; but, as he approached the confines of Iraq, he saw no signs of the Kufan army, which had promised to meet him; he was alarmed by the solitary and hostile face of the country, and suspecting treachery, the Ommeyade's weapon, he encamped his small band at a place called Karbala near the western bank of the Euphrates.

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Hussain's apprehensions of betrayal proved only too well-founded. He was overtaken by an Ommeyade army. For days his tents were surrounded and as the murderous ruffians dared not come within the reach of Hussain's sword, they cut the victims off from the waters of the Euphrates, causing terrible suffering to the small band of martyrs. In a conference with the chief of the enemy, Hussain proposed the option of three honourable conditions: either that he should be allowed to return to Madina, or should be stationed in a frontier garrison against the Turks, or be safely conducted to the presence of Yezid. But the commands of the Ommeyade tyrant were stern and inexorable. No mercy should be shown to Hussain or his party, but they must be brought as criminals before the "Caliph" to be dealt with according to the Ommeyade sense of justice. As a last resource, Hussain besought these monsters not to war upon the helpless women and children, but to take his life and so end the unequal contest. But they knew no pity. Hussain then pressed his friends to ensure their own safety by timely flight; but they unanimously refused to desert or to survive their beloved master. One of the enemy's chiefs, struck with horror at the sacrilege of warring against the grandson of the Prophet, deserted with thirty followers "to claim the partnership of inevitable death." In every single combat and hand-to-hand fight the valour of the Fatimides was invincible. But the enemy's archers picked them off from a safe distance. One by one the defenders fell, until at last there remained but the grandson of the Prophet. Wounded and dying, he dragged himself to the riverside for a last drink; but the enemy's arrows drove him back. Re-entering his tent, he took his infant child in his arms; the child was transfixed with a dart. Then his sons and his nephews were killed in his arms. Able

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no more to stand up against his pitiless foes, alone and weary, Hussain seated himself at the entrance of his tent. One of the women handed him water to assuage his burning thirst; as he raised it to his lips, he was pierced in the mouth with a dart. He lifted his hands to heaven, and uttered a funeral prayer for the living and the dead. Then raising himself for one desperate charge, he threw himself among the Ommeyades, who fell back on every side. But faint with loss of blood, he soon sank to the ground, and then the murderous crew rushed upon the dying hero. They cut off his head, trampled on his body and, with savage ferocity, subjected it to every ignominy.

It will now be easy to understand, perhaps, to sympathise with the frenzy of sorrow and indignation to which the adherents of Ali and of his children give vent on the recurrence of the anniversary of Hussain's martyrdom.

This, in brief, is the authenticated story of the tragedy of Karbala, so well known in all Asiatic countries, where Muslim civilisation has its sway. It is not enough to admire the supremely selfless character of the martyr of Islam. We have to probe deeper in order to get at the true significance and inner meaning of the struggle, which the illustrious grandson of the Prophet of Islam had to make, and by which he set an immortal example of selfless devotion to duty, complete resignation to the will of God and unswerving devotion to the ideal which he believed to be true.

What was it that sustained Hussain through this crucial ordeal? Why was he so ready to sacrifice at the altar of Divine Love all that was dear and near to him? Why did he remain unmoved in the midst of excruciating pain and insufferably cruel bereavement?

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In spite of every possible humiliation and ignominy of every description that he and his family faced, why did he not budge an inch from his firm position ?

If he had some control over nature's forces and was endowed with supernatural power, why did he not avert the tragedy or save his little ones from thirst, starvation and death ?

Because, like his holy grandfather, his faith in the unity and the existence of a Power mightier and higher than the mightiest of natural phenomena, was unshakable.

He was a most worthy successor to the spiritual heritage which the holy Prophet of Islam had handed down to him. When conviction, however, had once taken possession of his mind, it was unshakable. No earthly power or friendly persuasion could move him away from his iron resolve.

To him, spiritual life was a reality. He did not pay a mere lip homage to all that was sacred and Divine. He was the truest of believers in God and His messenger and the Life Eternal. He had fully realised that God alone was real, and that earthly life with all its glitter and glamour was hollow and unreal. He knew, beyond the shadow of doubt, that the outer, solid-seeming world was constantly changing, and was therefore transitory. Earthly joys were deceptive. To work in conscious co-operation with the Divine Plan was the manifest duty of every Muslim whose one concern in life must be to do His bidding.

Once he told his elder brother Imam Hasan that he clearly foresaw what was going to happen to him and that he was preparing to lay down his life in order to vindicate the cause of true Islam undaunted by fear or frown. He recognised no power higher than Allah, Whose will must be carried out.

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From the outer and physical point of view, he seemed to suffer the pangs of hunger and thirst, pain and anguish; the cries and lamentations of his dearest and nearest kith and kin bruised his heart; but from the higher point of view, he remained inwardly calm and resigned, as he was in full possession of spiritual life and knew clearly and confidently that outer forms and human bodies were, after all, perishable.

To quote an ancient teacher, "This dweller in the body of everyone is ever invulnerable." As a spiritual being of a high order, Imam Hussain was fully convinced that the human spirit was perpetual and ancient. "Weapons cleave him not, nor fire burneth him, nor waters wet him, nor wind drieth him away." (*Gita*, II: 23.) It has ever been "perpetual, all-pervasive, stable, immovable, ancient." One who is conscious of his spiritual reality cannot be shaken off his feet by the shattering of outer forms, and frail human bodies.

Not until man identifies himself with the life instead of with the form can the element of pain in sacrifice be got rid of. The law of sacrifice is the law of life-evolution in the universe. Those who look only at the perishing forms see nature as a vast charnel-house; while those who see the deathless soul escaping from the trials and turmoils of earthly life, hear ever the joyous song of Life that knows no end.

Hazrat Imam Hussain's whole heart rushed upwards to the ever merciful God in one strong surge of love and worship, and he gave himself in joyfullest self-surrender to be a *channel* of His life and love to the world. To him, to be a carrier of His light, a worker in His realm, appeared to be the only life worth living.

God does not endow any one with Divine vision, nor does He reveal His true glory to any one, unless that person surrenders everything to Him.

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THE MESSAGE OF ISLAM

BY MAULVI ABDUL MAJID

(Continued from page 76 of Vol. XXVIII)

No religion has escaped the blight of priestcraft which has in the long run arrogated to itself the functions of intermediaries between the people and the Almighty, and has thus relegated in to the background the importance of the dignity of the human soul. The importance of this cannot be over emphasised. For it is on this concept that all the legal concepts should be based and are based in Islam. If we begin to make distinctions at the very foundations, then the whole of the fabric of our legal and social system becomes perverted and suffused with ideas which create disharmony and amorphous social institutions and customs which harden and tighten, instead of mitigating, the existing distinctions.

In considering what Islam has done in mitigating the racial, linguistic, and geographical discrimination for which nature, rather than man himself, is responsible, I would commend to you the testimonies of non-Muslim observers, who, while admitting the unparalleled success of Islam towards realising the brotherhood of man by the Islamic socio-religious institutions just do not have the courage to do so without adding some qualifying and modifying statements.

Count Keyserling, the well-known modern German Philosopher, in his book, *The Travel Diary of a Philosopher*, has the following observations to make on the Islamic structure of society: "... the national character always seems somewhat blurred wherever the crescent moon illuminates the landscape, which is particularly noticeable here in India, where the types are otherwise outlined so clearly. But its place is

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taken by a more universal and no less definite character : that of Mussalman. Every single Mohammadan whom I asked what he is, replied, 'I am a Mussulman.' Why has this religion alone understood how to substitute national feeling by something wider ? And by something wider which is not less strong and significant ? How is it that Islam, without a corresponding dogma, achieves the ideal of brotherhood, whereas Christianity fails in spite of its ideals ? It must be due to intimate relations between the underlying tendencies of this peculiar faith and fundamental traits in the nature of its followers, concerning which I am still in the dark."

The above remarks can well be supplemented by the following, equally interesting, taken from another source :

"One of the most striking features of the Muhammadan world, which has been emphasised by many observers, historians, travellers and missionaries, is the feeling of unity in Islam which overleaps all the barriers set up by nationality or by geographical position. Islam has succeeded in obliterating race prejudice to an extent to which no other religious system in the world offers any parallel, and though, like other forms of the ideal of human brotherhood, Islam has failed to realise its ideal of the brotherhood of all the believers, still the measure of its success is the more noteworthy feature."

—"Europe and Islam" by Sir Thomas Arnold in *Western Races of the World*, Volume V, published by the Oxford University Press.

Dr. Maude Royden, C.H., D.D., in her monograph *The Problem of Palestine*, London, 1939, page 37, has the following remarks to make : "The religion of Mahomet proclaimed the first real democracy ever conceived in the mind of man. His God was of such

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transcendent greatness that before him all worldly differences were nought and even the deep and the cruel cleavage of colour ceased to count. There are social ranks among Moslems as elsewhere, but fundamentally (that is to say, spiritually) all the believers are equal: and this fundamental spiritual equality is not a fiction, as commonly among Christians; it is accepted and is real. This accounts very largely for its rapid spread among different peoples. It accounts for its strength to-day in Africa, where the Christian missionary preaches an equality which is everywhere mocked by the arrogance of the white races and the existence of the colour bar. The Moslem—black, brown or white—alone finds himself accepted as a brother not according to his colour but his creed.

“During the war in France I was told of some Indian Moslem soldiers who created a disturbance on finding black troops from Senegal served in the same estaminet as themselves. They were about to proceed from protest to violence, when one of the better-informed pointed out that these blacks were Moslems. Instantly the protests were silenced and an apology offered. White Christians do not always behave so, whether in London or American hotels. It was by the strength of their religion that the Arabs conquered and by its means they have made their great gift to civilisation.”

A Muslim is never proud of himself as being “Chinese,” “Persian” or “Indian.” He is proud of his religious culture. The Islamic nations at the height of their culture and glory never thought of themselves as Arabs or Turks, but simply as Muslims. For them the difference between themselves and others was spiritual. They were Muslims and others non-Muslims. Muslims never despised, nor do they ever despise any people for the colour of their skin.

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The Arabs never despised a Spaniard or Negro Muslim. An Indian Muslim in spite of the racial differences between himself and the Negro Muslim of West Africa never speaks contemptuously of his Negro brother-in-faith because he is a Negro or a Chinese. But, as stated already, it should not be understood that it was merely the theoretical verses of the Qur-án that enabled the Muslim to "blur the national character;" for beautiful homilies and platitudes are no less a common feature of the religious books of the world other than the Qur-án. All religions, including Islam, claim to have as their ideal the establishment of a world brotherhood of man. Every seer, every sage, every prophet, seems to have wished for it; for it is along the lines of world brotherhood of man that the world will have to travel for its ultimate salvation.

The secret of the miraculous success of Islam, as witnessed by non-Muslim writers, lies in the institution of prayer as conceived by the genius of Muhammad, culminating in the institution of the yearly pilgrimage to Makka. Let us, therefore, now proceed to view the part played by prayer and pilgrimage in the social life of a Muslim.

In the daily prayers all racial and tribal differences between Muslims are effaced, because they learn to stand in the mosque shoulder to shoulder in brotherhood. Although it is not essential to offer the daily prayers with the congregation in the mosque, yet the Prophet regarded such an act as highly commendable, inasmuch as it brings into contact different members of the community living in the same quarter of the town in an atmosphere, and on a level, of equality.

But, realising that it is not possible even for the most zealous members of the community living in one particular quarter of the town to attend the mosque of that quarter, the Holy Prophet Muhammad took a

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further step and made the attendance at the congregation once a week obligatory on every Muslim ; for he wanted to make the social contact, already made feasible by the daily prayers, closer and more effective and to enable men to learn something of the reality of the Islamic ideal that all men are brothers and equal in the sight of God. The weekly Friday congregation requires all the Muslims of any one quarter of the town in which they reside to assemble in the mosque. This was enough to bring together the Muslims of one quarter, to give them the polish which we get only when we come into touch with others. Yet even this was not sufficiently comprehensive. He, therefore, instituted the two yearly congregations, where it was enjoined that Muslims of many quarters of the town should come together. But neither did Muhammad stop at this. For, although the daily prayers as well as the weekly Friday prayers and the two yearly gatherings—'Idul-Fitr and 'Idul-Azha—were effective and comprehensive enough, they were not cosmopolitan, catholic and international in character. Consequently, in order to pave the way for a world-brotherhood which was destined to arise from the ever-growing shrinkage of the world, he developed the two yearly congregations into an international gathering to take place every year at Makka. This marks the highest stage of social evolution in Islam—or in any other system of the world.

Now in this connection I should like to say a few words with regard to the ceremonial side of the institution of the pilgrimage, so that you may get an idea as to how it succeeds in helping its votaries to visualise to themselves their complete spiritual equality before God. Performance of the pilgrimage to Makka is incumbent on every Muslim once in his lifetime, subject to the condition that he has the means to undertake the

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journey as well as to make due provision for those dependent on him. Security of life is also a necessary condition. The pilgrimage is performed in the month of Zul-Hijja the twelfth month of the Muslim year, and the pilgrim must reach the town of Makka before the seventh day of that month. The principal points in connection with the pilgrimage are :

Entering upon a state of *Ihrām*, in which one's ordinary clothes are removed and all pilgrims wear one kind of apparel, consisting of two seamless sheets, leaving the head uncovered. It will thus be seen that the state of *Ihrām* makes all men and women stand upon one plane of equality, all wearing the same simple dress and living in the same simple conditions. All distinctions of rank and colour, of wealth and nationality disappear. The king is indistinguishable from the peasant.

The whole of the gathering, which averages some 1,00,000 men and women from all parts of the world, assumes one aspect, one attitude before its Maker, and thus the grandest and the noblest sight of human equality is witnessed in that wonderful desert plain called the "Arafát" which indeed makes a man have a true knowledge of his Creator. The whole world is unable to present another such noble picture of real brotherhood and practical equality between man and man.

Sir Thomas Arnold, in his book, *The Preaching of Islam*, London, 1913, thus expresses himself on the institution of pilgrimage as conceived by the Prophet Muḥammad :

"But, above all, and herein lies its supreme importance in the missionary history of Islam—it ordains a yearly gathering of all believers of all nations and languages brought together

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from all parts of the world to pray in that sacred place called the Ka'ba, towards which their faces are set in every hour of private worship in their distant homes. No fetch of religious genius could have conceived a better expedient for impressing on the minds of the faithful a sense of their common life and of their brotherhood in the bond of faith. Here, in a supreme act of worship, the Negro of West Africa meets the Chinaman from the distant East, the courtly and polished Ottoman recognises his brother Muslim in the wild islander from the farthest end of the Malayan seas."

Thus Islam has really succeeded in removing colour prejudice and hatred from at least 350 millions of people and, if it had done nothing else than this, it would have had good claim to hold the world its debtor for all time to come. *We Muslims believe that the justification for our existence lies in our carrying through the world a practical brotherhood of man.*

Let me now further develop the idea of understanding shown by Islam towards the members of other faiths. We read in the Qur-án: "Say: O followers of the Scripture! Come to an agreement between us and you: that we shall worship none but God and that we shall ascribe no partner to Him and that none of us shall take others for lords beside God" (3:63).

In this verse broad bases are laid for a common understanding. But this was not regarded as enough. The Qur-án took another step and required every Muslim to believe in all the prophets of God. A Muslim becomes outside the pale of Islam if he does not believe in the prophethood of any of the prophets of God—Moses, Jesus, etc. Thus the Qur-án did not leave it to the

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predilection of the individual to reject or to accept His Prophets, nor to his liberal education, which also might or might not make him accept the Prophets of God. It is nowadays in fashion to be broadminded and to respect the sentiments of the members of faiths other than one's own. For instance, it would to-day be difficult to find people who would not acknowledge the greatness and even the prophethood of Muhammad. But, if you were to ask them if there is any sanction for such an attitude in their religious scriptures, I think they would find it difficult to make an answer in the affirmative.

Thus a non-Muslim can say anything he likes, even of a derogatory nature, about the Prophets of God, and no compunction for having done something wrong and ignoble would torment him; but a Muslim dare not do so. A belief in all the Prophets of God born anywhere in the world was made an article of faith because Islam does not believe that true and lasting amity between one man and another, one community and another, can be brought about, unless we begin to respect and reverence all those upon whom is centred the affection of people who do not see eye to eye with us. Thus a Muslim must respect all the Prophets of God and must regard them as the chosen ones of God. The Jew could, with impunity, condemn Jesus, and the Christian Muhammad, but the Muslim could not do so. He must accept them both as Prophets of God. In the history of the spiritual education of man, Islam stands out like a beacon-light, because it taught its followers to respect the Prophets of God. As time passes, the real importance of this seemingly simple but far-reaching doctrine, potent enough to control the hearts of men (that supremely difficult task) will be increasingly realised and appreciated by the world.

Islam also is the first religion to take into account those factors which have stood in the way of the emancipation of mankind. Bondage can be of two kinds: either spiritual and mental or material.

The spiritual and mental exploitation of man Islam has dealt with by announcing to its followers *i.e.*, those who accept the Islamic outlook on life, that there is no intermediary between them and their Creator—God. Islam, like Christianity, has emphasised the dignity of the human soul, its personality and its equality in the eyes of God, but, knowing that priestcraft in its worst forms had crept into its sister religions, Islam took preventive steps against this insidious evil, so that up till now Islam is free from priestcraft in the sense in which it is understood in the West. Thus we have no altars, no baptism, no holy communion, no choirs in the mosque, because these practices and formalities either give rise to the institution of priesthood, or become an easy tool in the hands of those who can adroitly make use of them in exploiting man spiritually.

(to be continued.)

ISLAM AND THE COVENANT OF ABRAHAM

BY MRS. NADIRE FLORENCE IVES OSMAN (NEW YORK)

(Continued from page 15, Vol. XXVIII)

In the Qur-*anic* account, with the proper sequence of events restored, and their necessity revealed, the jigsaw puzzle of speculation is forever solved.

The Muslims believe that God urged Abraham to lead to that altar Ishmael, and not Isaac (incorrectly called "Abraham's only son" in the account of Gen. 22: 1—18). Abraham was asked to do this incredible thing by that voice which had so faithfully guided him through the years. The veil of incomprehension

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quickly dropped from his eyes when he realised, through the moving symbolism, what would be required of him. Ishmael, who had grown up beside him as his only child, was to be taken from him, together with the mother—ostensibly to yield to the exactions of his wife, Sarah. Yet, in reality, Ishmael, left in a remote place, would there found a nation that would thrive, although removed from the developments of contemporaneous life. Ishmael and his descendants were ordained to dwell in simplicity, continuing even the patriarchal conditions of Abraham's own life, close to the book of nature, until God should have need of them.

It is related in the Genesis account that God willed Abraham to substitute a ram for that son. Now this outward manifestation of Abraham's sacrifice, like the sign of circumcision, was to play a most important and identifying part in the spiritual system underlying world events, for every year rams are sacrificed by Muslims in commemoration of this event, and have been so sacrificed by Ishmael's descendants from time immemorial. The occasion is regarded as a great feast day for all who hold Ishmael in reverence. It emphasises the preparation that God had made for the appearance of the Prophet Muhammad, of the line of Ishmael. Here we may discover a passionate attachment to a religious heritage that survives even to our own day. It attests a devotion to the monotheism of Abraham. Before Moses, there was no Mosaic law, no ritual such as developed after the experience of Egypt. We are sure only of a pure faith and of a covenant.

When Sarah said: "Cast out this bond-woman and her son; for the son of this bond-woman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac" (Gen 21:10), it cost Abraham much. Their casting forth was declared to be "grievous in Abraham's sight." (Gen. 21:11.)

Yet with but meagre provisions, Abraham left them in the desert-like vicinity of Mount Paran, of Arabia. Genesis, nevertheless, tells us that God heard the voice of the lad in their extremity.

“The angel of God called to Hagar and said unto her: ‘. . . . fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad and hold him in thine hands, for I will make of him a great nation.’” (21 : 17, 18.)

“*And God was with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness.*” (Gen. 21 : 20.)

Is it not plainly to be seen that Ishmael was destined to be a righteous man? Should it be so incongruous then that this Ishmael is regarded by the Muslims as a prophet to his descendants? He was certainly not an unworthy outcast. Great harm has been done through the interpretation given to Genesis 16 : 12: “And he (Ishmael) will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him.” This has given rise to the belief that Ishmael was a social outcast, but such an idea is the result of a misunderstanding of the conditions of desert life. A great organising power is necessary to patrol and regulate a vast barren waste, so that peace and security may there prevail. Safety is merely local, and every stranger represents a threat. While this state of affairs does not lead to a stable civilisation, it does not reflect upon the individual character, which may develop a grandeur of its own, living, as it were, always on the edge of danger.

Genesis itself flatly contradicts this erroneous idea that the name of Ishmael is synonymous with a social outcast. We find evidence of a contact that was maintained between these two great branches of Abraham’s offspring. When Abraham died, it is stated

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that his two sons, Isaac and Ishmael, together buried him. (Gen. 25 : 9.)

When we turn to Arabic tradition, we find there stories of the bond of love and piety that united the father and his distant son, which we have every reason to believe. We may well imagine the visits that Abraham paid to Ishmael in his lifetime. Later, we shall study what they accomplished together.

One more instance may be noted in Genesis which would prove that a bond of sympathy continued to unite even Isaac and Ishmael when their father was gone from them.

When Esau was 40 years old, he took two native women to be his wives. Gen. 26 : 35 tells us : " which were a grief of mind to Isaac and to Rebekah." But then, we are informed : " seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father, then went Esau unto Ishmael and took unto the wives he had Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, to be his wife."

If the tie of relationship between Ishmael and his father had been severed, we should be tempted to conclude that Abraham had committed an act of sheer cruelty in so abandoning Ishmael and his mother after their long years in common. Instead of that, we are advised that Abraham acted with discretion and restraint in a painful and difficult situation, to which he was enjoined to submit. His son, Ishmael, on his side, responded with forbearance. Through the mists of time has mercifully been preserved to us that brief glimpse of the two brothers, united in their pious rites at their father's grave.

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CORRESPONDENCE

LIVERPOOL, W. I.

The 1st December, 1939.

THE SECRETARY,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

I warmly reciprocate the blessings you send me in the name of Allah and Mohammed (Peace be upon him!).

I explained to the Imam Sahib at Southport that for many years, through the collapse of the Islamic mosque at Liverpool in such regrettable circumstances, I have been out of touch with organised religion. As a boy I certainly joined the fraternity of Islam and was a regular worshipper and in maturity I see no reason to abandon the teachings of my childhood. I am much indebted for your kindness in sending me the complimentary copy of the *Islamic Review* for a year. I shall read it with reverence.

Always yours sincerely,
F. HAMEEDULLAH BOWMAN.

KINGSWAY AVENUE,
WOKING.

The 27th October, 1939.

DEAR SIR,

Following your very interesting lecture at the Shah Jehan Mosque to the girls of Fulham Central School and your promise of a copy of the "Koran" to the most deserving student, we asked the girls to write about the subject-matter of your talk and we consider the enclosed to be the best one sent in. We think, perhaps, you, also, will be interested to read it. It was composed and written by Edith O'Dell, 16 years of age.

Thanking you once again for your lecture which girls and staff enjoyed immensely and for your very generous offer.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
(Miss) ETHEL A. HEAVENS.
(Staff.)

CORRESPONDENCE

KINGSWAY AVENUE, WOKING.
The 4th November, 1939.

THE SECRETARY,
THE SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE,
WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

On behalf of the Head Mistress and Staff of the Fulham Central School for Girls, I wish to thank His Eminence the Imam for the copy of the book "Wisdom of the Qur-án" which he has kindly sent me for our School Library and also for the invitation to your annual festival. The Head Mistress, Dr. E. Toms, and about four members of the Staff, will be very pleased to attend on Monday, the 13th November.

I have not yet had a suitable opportunity of passing on the copy of the Holy Qur-án to Edith O'Dell, so please excuse her delay in thanking you. She will, no doubt, do so early next week.

With best wishes and thanks.

Yours very truly,
ETHEL A. HEAVENS.

KINGSWAY, WOKING, SURREY.
The 11th November, 1939.

DEAR SIR,

I wish to thank you for presenting me with the Holy Qur-án. I shall always treasure it, and it will remind me of a very interesting morning spent in the Shah Jehan Mosque.

Also, thank you for correcting my essay; the Mistresses have pointed out my mistakes.

The Qur-án will be very educational to me I am sure, and will provide many hours of pleasant reading.

Once again thanking you for your kindness to me.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
EDITH O'DELL.

WOLVERHAMPTON.
The 23rd October, 1939.

DEAR SIR,

I have read some of the doctrines of the Faith of Islam, and have been greatly interested and would like some further enlightenment.

I trust that you will find it possible to send me some interesting literature concerning worship, etc.

I understand that Woking is the nearest place of worship. If, however, there is a mosque in Birmingham, I would be glad to attend.

Yours faithfully,
R. DU FEN. EDWARDS.

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WOLVERHAMPTON.

Friday, the 3rd November, 1939.

THE IMAM,

THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

I wish to thank you for the very interesting literature you sent me and also for your kind invitation to the Celebration of the Festival (but I am afraid that I will not be able to attend—but if, however, I do find it possible I will make every effort to be present).

I have read through the literature and the Faith of Islam appeals to me as it is broadminded and unprejudiced. What really made me write to you was that as I was brought up in Christian surroundings I have come to realise the hypocrisy of present-day Christianity. Christ himself (rightly or wrongly) was, according to the Bible, an absolute pacifist—and yet soldiers bearing the emblem of the Crucifix (under the cloak of Christianity) have brought misery and suffering to non-Christians—instead of respecting the Faith of other peoples.

This present conflict! We are told that the Allies are fighting for freedom against tyranny and oppression and have received victory "blessings" from all denominations of the Christian religion. On the other hand, Christian priests in Germany are "blessing" Hitler's victory.

That is what I admire about Islam; it does not confine itself to any particular nationality!

I would like to ask this question: I am a member of the British Union (Leader, Sir Oswald Mosley); is this party compatible with Islam?

I believe that both the Jewish and Catholic religions are rackets and wherever they are present we find poverty, immorality, etc. I would include also many other Christian religions (with perhaps a few exceptions). I have always supported spiritually the Arab Nationalists' cause in Palestine. Also I have great admiration for the so-called "rebels" on the North West Frontier of India. Are all these ideas consistent with Islam?

If it would not be asking too much I would be grateful if you could let me have a symbol of Islam in the form of a badge; it might be noticed by a Muslim here, whom I might not otherwise meet. I have never had the pleasure of a personal discussion with a Muslim, but if, perchance, he saw a badge of the Faith in my lapel, it would bring us together.

In case I am not present at the Festival Celebration, please do not think that I am disinterested. As a matter of fact, I am commencing a new occupation next week and I doubt whether I could absent myself on Monday, the 13th.

Trusting you will appreciate this fact and again thanking you for your kind attention to my enquiries.

Yours faithfully,
R. F. EDWARDS.

CORRESPONDENCE

To *November 7, 1939.*

MR. R. F. EDWARDS,
WOLVERHAMPTON.

DEAR FRIEND,

I am thankful to you for your letter of the 3rd instant which you have written to us on having read our literature on Islam. I am glad of your appreciative remarks.

You wish to know if your membership of the British Union, whose Leader is Sir Oswald Mosley, is compatible with the teachings of Islam. Now, in reply to this, I write to say that I can only give some guiding principles as enunciated by Islam, leaving it for you to decide the issue. Islamic polity is controlled by certain guiding principles. The first and the most important is that God has no associates neither in His essence nor in His attributes and the stress laid upon this by Islam can be best understood when we remember that though we are expressly asked in the Qur-án to obey our parents implicitly it is enjoined upon us to disobey them at the risk of their displeasure, if they ever invited us to polytheism (the Qur-án, 17 : 23).

The second, as a corollary to the foregoing, teaches us to remember that all human beings are equal both spiritually and morally and are equal before the eyes of law. Even a king forms no exception. We Muslims do not believe in the myth which is embodied in the sentence "the king can do no wrong." The Qur-án, consequently, teaches us that everything in the world is created by God for the service of man.

The third principle is that there should be no compulsion in matters religious (the Qur-án, 2 : 256); there should be absolute freedom of conscience and no one is to be persecuted because of his religious persuasions.

God alone is the source of our moral conduct; it is His attributes that are our watchword. Our Prophet Muhammad once said: "Imbue yourselves with the Divine Attributes;" that is to say, take Him for your prototype. According to Islam it is God who is the ruler and the chief of the world. His Will is the source of all legislation in Islam. Have we ever seen God making any distinction in the dispensation of His favours between a white and a black? We, therefore, have no right to be intolerant towards others or assume haughty airs towards those who do not belong to the same faith as we do or have not the same colour of skin as we have.

Now Nazism, as I understand it, is absolutely opposed to these fundamentals—the source of all conduct and legislation in Islam. The present-day legislation in Germany is inspired by racial discrimination and religious distinctions. It, to begin with, believes in racial superiority, it believes in exiling people for their religious opinions. It has actually pulled down synagogues. I have no idea if these are the aims of the British Union. In case they are, then there can be no two opinions on the matter. Islam has come to establish in reality the Brotherhood of Man which is the imperative need of the present-day world. Enough of dissensions. Let

ISLAMIC REVIEW

us talk of ways enabling us to treat each other as brothers and members of one family.

To illustrate further the foregoing I cite to you the case of the Jews. I know the Jew is inassimilable and that there are many who believe that the present-day troubles are due to the financial machinations and control of the affairs of the world by the Jews. I need hardly point out to you that such statements are sweeping. It is not all the Jews who are guilty. There are good and honest Jews too. Why should they suffer for the misdeeds of their co-religionists ?

As a Muslim, I would not persecute the whole community for the crime of the few ; I would not exile the Jews bag and baggage in punishment of the few guilty ones. I would try instead to bring about changes in our economic system without persecuting the Jews as Jews. When you and I wish to introduce desired reforms in our own midst, we try to restrict the activities of such as obstruct our reforms and jeopardise their existence. A discrimination is made on the basis of the crime but not on the basis of the race or religion. Only those are made to suffer penalty who harm the interests of society ; only those are brought to book who create trouble. It is not only inhuman and unjust, it is also irreligious to condemn a person because of his race or religion. In Islam there is no colour distinction ; in Islam religious differences are not regarded as synonymous with lack of the existence of truth or goodness in those who are not Muslims. The Qur-án says : " Every one who does good shall have reward from his Lord (2 : 62 ; 5 : 48). The duty of a Muslim ends with his having pointed out to a non-Muslim the error in his belief.

As to the badge, I have much pleasure in advising you that there has been a design before the Muslim(?) Society in Great Britain for their consideration for some time and it is hoped that soon it will be available for the use of its members. Your reminder is much appreciated.

I hope we shall have the pleasure of seeing you in our midst on the occasion of the next festival of 'Id-ul-Azha which falls on or about the 18th January, 1940.

Please do not hesitate to write to me if there is anything you would like to know about Islam.

With kind regards,

I am,
Yours sincerely,
ABDUL MAJID,
Imam.

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"There will be no Prophet after me."—MURHAMMAD.

The
Islamic Review

FOUNDED BY THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

Vol. XXVIII]

[No. 5

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MAY, 1940 A.C.

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Ed. I. R.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

فِي مَجْلَدٍ مِنْ مَجَلَدَاتِ رِيسَالَةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
مِنْ خِطَابَاتِهِ إِلَى النَّبِيِّينَ

THE
ISLAMIC REVIEW

Vol. XXVIII]

RABI'UL-AWWAL, 1359 A.H.
MAY, 1940 A.C.

[No. 5

THE CHARTER OF THE PROPHET*

[Below we print an English translation of an Arabic document, which has been made public by Madame Jeanne Aubert in the form of a book "*Le Sermon du Prophete*" (Paris, 1938). Our English version is a translation of the French translation. In the book itself there is a facsimile reproduction of the Arabic original, but, unfortunately, it is too small to be decipherable. But a superficial comparison shows that the French rendering is rather free. We are trying to get in touch with Madame Aubert and to obtain a photograph of the original for reproduction in a future issue of the *Islamic Review*.

A preface has been written to the book by Professor Edmond Poupe, Professor of History and President of the Society for Scientific and Archaeological Research of Ver, France. We give below

*Translated from the French by Madame Shakir Mahomedoff of London.

a few excerpts from it, which will serve to throw light on the historicity and value of the document. The Professor says :

“ Amongst a collection of old papers originating, according to all evidence, from a French Officer who had served under Bonaparte in the Egyptian Expedition, Madame Jeanne Aubert, who came to know of their existence, had her attention aroused by three documents in Arabic.

“ Herself hailing from Egypt and being of an inquisitive mind and well informed, she found it easy to translate them. One of them was a *firman* awarding the title of “ Bey ” to a chief of a battalion of the expeditionary army ; the second, adorned with geometric and quasi-architectural figures illuminated with designs and letterings in red and black, dealt with Muslim law chiefly in respect of heritage and bondage ; the third document was a copy of the “ Charter of the Prophet.”

Of the three documents, noticed by Madame Jeanne Aubert, the last entitled the “Charter of the Prophet,” was the most interesting. Two questions arose :

• Was the document authentic ?

If so, what was its importance ?

Madame Aubert was still seeking the solution of these problems, when in an issue of *Al-Ahram* of Cairo for the 12th December, 1937, there appeared the following article :

“ As a result of the abolition of the Foreign Capitulations in Egypt, the Government has withdrawn all the customs exemptions and other privileges accorded to religious societies and to monastic organisations, both Egyptian and foreign.”

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Upon this, the monks of Mount Sinai protested in a letter addressed to His Excellency Makram Ebeid Pasha, the then Minister of Finance. We quote the textual translation as follows:

"Your Excellency,

The undersigned Poryphyrios III, Archbishop and Superior of Mount Sinai, has the honour of submitting to your Excellency the following:

This monastery conserves with meticulous care the most precious of all documents concerning itself. That document is the Deed by which the Prophet Muhammad, on the 3rd Muharram of the 2nd year of the Hejira, accorded to our monastery all its privileges, *e.g.*, the exemption from the payment of taxes on our lands and property and other belongings ~~that we possessed~~ then or should possess in the future till the end of the world.

This Deed is written by his son-in-law 'Alī ibn Abī-Tālib and is signed by the Prophet himself and by his disciples present at the time it was drawn up.

Amongst other things the Prophet advised all Muslims to protect our Order against aggression, internal or external. The present Egyptian Government and those Muslim Governments which preceded it have accorded us all those privileges. We, therefore, request your Excellency not to make void this privilege acquired by us so many centuries ago."

The Monastery of Sinai referred to in the letter is the same as the "Monastery of Tour."

The first question which occurred to Madame Aubert was thus solved in the affirmative. The document preserved in the papers of the French Offices was of indisputable authenticity.

What was the nature of the importance attaching to the document?

Historically, the text discovered proves that the Arab Muslims, far from entertaining any hate for the Christians, on the contrary promised to protect them. A Holy war had no "raison d'être."—*Ed. I. R.*]

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- "A declaration to the Christians of the entire world.
- "To them security! Protection to their persons and to their property!
- "In giving this pledge I write in accordance with the Commandments of God.
- "In whatever place the Christians are, they are placed there by the will of God. Such is the Supreme Will that nothing can happen against God. If the Christians are what they are, it is because God has so willed it. It is He Who has commended them to our hearts.
- "Herein is stated how He ordains the rulers of His religion to act in obedience to Him.
- "Those who, from the south to the north of the earth both in near and distant lands whether Arabicised or else remaining Occidentals, both known and unknown, all such as have embraced the Christian religion and its principles, must be protected by the highest officers and respected by all those who shall be in positions of power.
- "The persons charged with public affairs shall facilitate the execution of this Charter with obedience.
- "To transgress it would be contrary to the Divine Commandments, to neglect it would be an error. It should be observed with absolute fidelity, because it is an undertaking before

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God and to destroy a way traced by God Himself would be to expose oneself to the final malediction. It is immaterial whether the person concerned be the Sultan or a simple plain believer amongst the Muslims.

- “In adhering to the law of the Prophet, in the discharge of pious duties, all believers and all Muslims will observe this undertaking which has been given by me on behalf of those who follow my religion and are under my responsibility. To guard this pledge is the “ Promise of God ” to all creatures.
- “With my men and my horses I shall preserve their lands, with my arms, with my strength, with the Muslims attached to me, in every place far and near, I shall protect their churches, their holy books, and the habitations of their priests.
- “Whether they be in mountains or beside a river, whether they have built their houses by hollowing the rocks of mountains or whether they live in a public place or even in a monastery, whether they be on a voyage or in town, I shall protect them even as I shall protect myself, even as I shall protect the Muslims and preserve my own people. With justice I shall give to all peace and help.
- “Whatever the time and in whatever place in the world I shall repulse all harm which may threaten them.
- “My duty is to defend them even without their knowledge. In doing this I teach the Faith of the Pledge, and of Honour, because I pledge here my life and the lives of Muslims to come, and this trust must not be sacrificed; the evil

will have to pass first over myself and my co-religionists before it reaches them.

“ No one must humiliate the bishop in his bishopric, nor the priest in his church, nor the Christian in his Christianity, nor the ascetic in his cloister, nor the apostle in his seclusion. No one should remove stones nor any objects of the Christian church to use them for a mosque or the dwelling place of a Muslim.

“ He who disobeys in this will betray the “ Pledge of God ” and would be acting contrary to what we have written and would estrange himself from us.

“ One should not impose woollen garments on the arch-priests nor on the hermits in their cloisters.

“ One should not demand tax from the inhabitants living in the country, the hills or the wilderness.

“ Those who cannot afford to have servant-slaves and have no commerce, should pay a tax of a quarter of dram (drachma) of silver per year; if this tax is too heavy, let them give a modest garment in place of the tax. If amongst them are any destitute people, let them receive immediate help from the treasury of the Muslims.

“ One should never arrest them or force them to make payment; and also one should accept from them only what they can give, what their situation permits them to give, without privation.

“ The merchants, who sail the seas, who transport and exchange precious stones or silver, the rich and the notables shall be required to pay only twelve drachms of tax a year when they have a fixed abode or if they are sojourning temporarily.

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- " This tax is not to be levied upon a tourist coming from outside whose domicile is not known. If he comes to collect an inheritance, he will be under the obligation of paying the " tax of the Sultan " and he should pay the tax of succession just as everyone else does.
- " No Muslim should harm him nor take from him anything except that which his estate permits him to give at the time of the settlement of his estate and the valuation of his landed property.
- " One must not inflict unjust impositions upon him nor make additional charges.
- " The Christians will not be compelled to abandon their homes and go out with the Muslims to fight the enemy. They are not obliged to go to war while the Muslims fight to defend them.
- " No one should compel the Christians to equip Muslims for the war. This is a voluntary matter left to the initiative of the Christians themselves.
- " In any case we should not accept help from them but in accordance with tradition, after having ascertained that their means permit these expenses and that the Muslim treasury will guarantee the restitution of the equipment. If eventually it is too much dilapidated for return or too old or lost, then the loss should be refunded in full by the Muslim Exchequer (*Baytu 'l-Mali*).
- " The Christian community is not to be treated brutally nor are Christians to be compelled to accept Islam nor should one try to convince them by force. One should not discuss this subject but with the best kindness, using

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tenderness and avoiding all things which may hurt and this upon all occasions.

“ If a Muslim is requested to aid a Christian, he must respond to his appeal, help him with tenderness in charity, abjure danger by efficient counsel between him and his enemy, either by making him achieve success or by simply extricating him out of his trouble.

“ A Muslim must never cheat, never quarrel with, never despise and never abandon, a Christian.

“ I stand guarantee that all harm is hereby removed from the Christians and that the most kindly attention shall be paid to them.

“ A Muslim will share with them a joint life in everything.

“ No one should compel a Christian to marry another against his will.

“ A Christian should not be compelled to marry the daughter of a Muslim nor should he be forced to give his daughter to a Muslim.

“ He will not be obliged to give the hand of his daughter to a suitor, unless it is his own desire.

“ A Christian staying with a Muslim should have the confidence of his Muslim host. The Christian may follow all his customs freely with regard to his own religion.

“ Anyone who acts contrary to the aforesaid “ commits a sin ” ; by us he would be considered “ a liar among liars.”

“ If the Christians stand in need of rebuilding their churches and their belfries, you Muslims, in pursuance of this undertaking which I have offered to them, should not resist their opinions, nor their religion.

“ The Christians are not obliged to do anything either for war or for military purposes or as

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agents of communications. Any one who does anything contrary to the above is guilty before God. We shall be displeased and he will be neglecting his religion, unless he fulfils all conditions indicated herein concerning the Christians. Nobody has the right to withdraw himself from this law nor to reduce its force; the conditions which we have established for them must be respected by the Christians also, in order to maintain the principle of the Pledge.

“No Christian shall come to the aid of those who plan a war against the Muslims, either openly or secretly. Christians shall not hide an enemy of the Muslims in their homes, neither shall they supply war material, horses, money or men, etc., against them.

“In their turn, when a Muslim traveller, who is passing through their territory, or when war refugees ask for hospitality, they shall be granted this for three days and three nights; they must come to their help and feed them and their animals and avert from them all harm.

“If one of the Muslim refugees is pursued, the Christians must conceal him and not give him up and they should accept provisionally the burdens which are constantly upon Muslims.

“If they act according to these conditions without deviating from them, the Christians may live in security and may practise their religion. They will be treated with all kindness and good-will.

“He who does not follow these rules but violates these conditions and does what we have forbidden will violate and break the “Pledge of God.”

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- “ I have put this Pledge in the hands of the priests to assure them of my peace, and I hold myself responsible everywhere for the sincerity of the execution of this promise according to the rules indicated.
- “ The Muslim must protect the Christian with gentleness, kindness and perseverance, and must execute this Pledge till the Day of Judgment and the disappearance of the world.
- “ And he who should do wrong to a Christian would be a breaker of the Pledge ; he would see in me his own adversary on the day of judgment.
- “ I write this Charter with the testimony of thirty pious and pure witnesses.”

Abū-Bakr.

‘Umar-ibn-al-Khattāb.

‘Uthmān.

‘Alī-ibn-Abī Tālib.

Abū Zarr.

Abu Dardā.

Abū Hurayra.

‘Abdullāh-ibn-Mas‘ūd.

‘Abdullāh-ibn-‘Abbās.

‘Abbās-al-Zuhairi.

Sa‘d-ibn-Mu‘āz.

Talha-ibn-‘Abdullāh.

Fadl-ibn-‘Umar.

Bashīr-ibn-Qays.

Zaid-ibn-Qālib.

Said-ibn-‘Ubādāh.

‘Abdullāh-ibn-Maryam.

Mar‘ūs-ibn-Hasan.

Maryam-bint-Ibrāhīm.

‘Amāma-ibn-Marīr.

Sahl-ibn-‘Umar.

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'Abdu 'l-Azīm-ibn-Hasan.
'Abdullāh-ibn-'Abdu'l-Ahad.
'Uthmān-ibn-Numayl.
'Ayd-ibn-Mansūr.
Mu'azzam-ibn-Mūsā.
Hasan-ibn-Sābit.
Abū Hayfa.
Hāshim-ibn-'Abdullāh.
Abu 'l-Qadir.

Annotation from the Copyist

"This Charter is written by 'Alī-ibn-Abī Tālib in the first days of Muharram, two years after the Hejira. There exist only three copies: one in the house of the Sultan in his coffer till now, the two others in the hands of the monks: one in the monastery of "Tour," the other in the mountains of "Enachroun." They bear the seal (that is to say, the signature or the impression of the seal) of the Prophet, who had ordered its execution. This copy has been made from the original with the help of God.

Praise be to God!"

NOTE.—This copy has been transcribed at the time of the campaign in Egypt, where the Sultanate had existed as long ago as the 10th century. Since the drawing up of the original document in the 7th century, the three copies passed to their several destinations. The skin of the gazelle, which was later the property of the Sultan, was in reality in the hands of a high official whom they then called "Lieutenant-General" but who bore also the title of "Sultan."

There have been Khalifas only after the death of the Prophet, and Sultans only after the Khalifas. As a result of the wars and the handing over by Egypt of the Standard of the Prophet to the Seljouks (Seldjoucides), the Coffer passed into the care of the Sultan. This is the explanation of how the document came to be preserved by this monarch.

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IN DEFENCE OF ISLAM

BY A. O. R. RAHMAN

In the West, Islam is still misunderstood. Here is an example: In the course of a letter to the present writer, a Canadian friend says with reference to some religious discussion proceeding:

"I was greatly interested in your discussion of religion and, while I agree with you in many instances, I find myself in disagreement in others. You claim Muhammad was the last of the prophets. How so? After all, Christians claim Jesus was. I agree with neither, in that. I doubt whether either was a Prophet divinely inspired. True both men were inspired with a great passion for bringing about a better world—call that divine, if you please. There I go contradicting myself—I'll modify my previous statement. It is my belief that Jesus and Muhammad were just ordinary human beings—but they were certainly great men. But there have been other great men—how about Socrates? You claim Muslimism is the remedy for the world's troubles. Perhaps so—but I do say this—nothing is perfect—we are always striving for the perfect—that is the purpose of life. If we were to reach the perfect, life would be futile.

"Speaking of Fascism and Communism—perhaps they are inclined to be materialistic—but they needs must be to a certain extent—we must keep at least our feet on the ground, even if our hearts are groping into the unknown. The fact remains that both Fascism and Communism are making a bid for world power, while nothing else seems to be. Hence it is logical to believe that one will succeed sooner or later. You

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claim that these two systems are not in consonance with the natural inclinations of man—I wonder! It seems to me that man's first thought is for the materialistic; he resorts elsewhere only as a last hope. That's why I believe these modern systems will win temporarily at least. At this stage in the evolution of the human mind, man must have something concrete to grasp at—something tangible—which both Fascism and Communism offer. In other words, man to-day *has to be* more interested in food for stomach than in food for the brain. Remedy the cause of this outlook—or give him food for the stomach—then he will cease to be a materialist.

I suppose all this doesn't make sense to you—or does it?"

The present writer would not have taken the pains to quote at length from this Canadian youth, had it not been that the views expressed in the letter are typical and truly reflective of the great majority of Western minds, brought up and nourished as they, are in a conservative, Christian and ultra-national, atmosphere completely at variance with the outside world. The fact that bread and butter, wealth and fortune, personal pleasure and self-aggrandisement have formed the *raison d'être* of our Western brethren, that the be-all and end-all of their life is materialistic (a view expressed in a somewhat diluted form by the Canadian friend) is traceable to the fundamental incompatibility of Christian teachings (as opposed to the teachings of Jesus) with the conditions prevailing in the world from time immemorial and with the hard realities of life and with the essential facts of human nature. It is a historical truth borne out by impartial critics that Christianity has always been the greatest

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stumbling-block to civilisation, progress and enlightenment. While the priests, the monks and the clergy spared no pains to arrogate to themselves the full and unquestioned right to administer justice to the people in all religious matters, they left no stone unturned to interpolate the lines of the Holy Bible in order to establish and maintain their own spiritual hegemony over the masses. Naturally, they took to discouraging education and literacy in every possible way. In fact, as the late Al-Farooq Lord Headley has rightly pointed out, "the more ignorant a person was, the more spiritual he was deemed to be." Obviously, with the mighty machinery of the state at the command of these autocratic spiritualists and "benefactors of mankind," thinkers, philosophers, literators, scientists and other men of learning, who happened to express new ideas or old ideas in a new form, were burnt to death as "heretics." Naturally, as long as the conception of Christendom prevailed in Europe, or as long as the Papal hegemony flourished over the continent, Europe produced nothing remarkable or worth while in science or the arts. Fallacious beliefs prevailed. False conceptions of the Universe were held and are still thrust on educated and enlightened people through the medium of the Bible. For a considerable time during the Middle Ages, it was seriously believed that the earth was the centre of the Universe and anybody who opposed this belief was doomed to perdition and considered fit to be burnt to death. Similarly, there is a passage in the Bible purporting to show that the Almighty created the day and the night on the first day and the sun on the fourth. How palpably absurd! Fantastic and ridiculous, is it not? And yet such was Europe and such were the teachings of Christianity!

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At the same time the sciences were marching ahead with remarkable rapidity and bearing fruit in the barren sands of the Arabian Desert and in the soothing atmosphere of Muslim Spain. Such antagonism between religion and science as prevailed in Christendom has not, fortunately, been an article of the Islamic faith. Only the adventurous Greeks came in contact with the enlightened Muslims of the East and imbibed much of their culture and learning. Their trading connections with the Muslim nations enriched them with the new learning which they spread over the face of the whole of Europe when driven from Constantinople by the Turks in 1453. This influx of learning and knowledge was like a spark to the accumulated tinder of discontent against Papal dictation and clerical domination responsible for all the intellectual agony with which Europe was writhing. The reaction was stupendous, and Europe must be thankful to the conquering Turks for all it gained from the Renaissance. Even then the Church was responsible for furnishing ethical justification and religious sanction to the oppressions and tyrannies of the monarchies and privileged classes in France and Russia, with consequences too well-known to enumerate. It is no wonder, therefore, that young and imaginative Christian youths rebel against traditional religious notions and conceptions of ethics, morality, and religion, and seek for "something tangible" to satisfy their curiosity and clarify their bewilderment. But the insidious and virulent propaganda of several centuries is so great as to prevent them from viewing Islam on the same footing as Christianity. The writer's correspondent, as also the great majority of intelligent people in the West, are obsessed with the notion that Islam is as much "other-worldly," as much "authoritarian," as much dreamy and visionary and

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divorced from the realities of life on this planet as is the faith preached by the Christian monastics. Such a view is essentially in contradiction with the fundamental tenets and the spirit of the faith of Islam, which is a message of progress and enlightenment rather than one of superstition and ignorance or even of purely theoretical spiritual development removed from practical reality.

Apart from the general, wider and more subtle question of the complete synthesis which Islam offers to us, let us analyse and examine the interesting and thought-provoking points raised in the letter quoted above, and answer them categorically for the edification of all seekers of Knowledge and Truth.

Broadly speaking, the following points have been stressed :

- (1) Why should Muhammad be considered to be the last Prophet and not Jesus ?
- (2) What justification is there for treating them as Divine Messengers ? They were only great men as was also Socrates.
- (3) Nothing is perfect. How can Islam be ?
- (4) Religion is ethereal and unreal. It offers no solution for the crying needs of the human stomach. Fascism and Communism, on the other hand, offer solutions for the hunger and poverty of the masses. Naturally, it is one of them and not Islam that will emerge triumphant.

Let us now examine these points one by one :

- (1) Jesus, humble and unassuming as he was, made no parade of his own greatness as a spiritual messenger. He came as leader, guide and philosopher to the down-trodden Jews to lift them from the abyss of depravity into which they had fallen since the death

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of Moses. He came with the mission to infuse a new life into his people and to teach them the supreme lesson of sacrifice and love—important elements of religious belief no doubt. His chief object in life, however, was to ameliorate the position of the Israelites and to make them believe in the Oneness of God. Jesus Christ himself declared, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for, if I go not away, the Comforter will come not unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you. . . . I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he shall guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak. . . . He shall glorify me." (John, XVI: 7 and 12—14). It is evident, therefore, that Jesus never put forward any claim to be the last of the Prophets. On the other hand, he held out the promise of a future Comforter who would complete the message of God, which he himself was unable to accomplish. From Christ's own admission, as acknowledged by the Christians themselves, he was not the last Prophet. There was to follow him somebody mightier in personality and more successful as a preacher, who should yet speak not his own words, but those of the Almighty. The fact that it was Muhammad alone who could fulfil the prophecy is borne out by the remarkable revolution he brought about in the spheres of politics, society, knowledge and learning.

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as a result of his simple teachings in idolatrous Arabia, which was, at the time of his advent, torn by internal strife, narrow dogmatism, brutal inhumanity, horrid superstitions and general moral, social and political bankruptcy. In further support of this view, there is the repetition in the Holy Qur-án of the declaration that, "he does not speak from his own desire except what is revealed unto him." It is, therefore, obvious that the assumed rival claim to the last prophethood by Muhammad and Jesus is but a figment of the imagination of scheming Christian priests. It has no semblance of appeal to the average man of intellect and there is not an iota of truth in it.

- (2) The second question presupposes the existence of the Divine Being—the Almighty; otherwise there could be no question of divine inspiration. If it is admitted that the unity of the world is an immutable physical law (as believed by all advanced scientists to-day), it follows as a necessary corollary that in this limitless universe, with the law of uniformity ever in force, there is some great purposive mind that makes for the order, the cosmos that rules the Universe. That unity of the physical and spiritual world having been admitted, it does not require much intelligence to realise that this mighty force, this *wājib-ul-icajid*, will make itself felt, and offer some guidance and instruction to the people of this planet to follow a well-ordered life, not as creatures of the wild that act according to their impulse, but as rational beings capable of understanding

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what is good and what is bad for them, both as individuals and as members of society. That is why, according to Muslim beliefs, hundreds and thousands of prophets and divine messengers have, from time to time, appeared in different countries and among different nations to guide them along the right path. They have been distinguished from mere impostors by virtue of the truth of their sayings verified by subsequent history, as also by the force of their own character. Jesus Christ was, no doubt, possessed of supernatural powers, bestowed upon him to satisfy the idle fancies of the ignorant and superstitious Jews, who were capable of being easily overawed by startling feats. But his greatest achievement was his teaching of the Oneness of God and Love, as well as the prophecy concerning the advent of a greater Prophet, a prophecy fulfilled by Muhammad, whose achievement has, in its social, ethical and political aspect, been greater than that of any other human being. Now it is evident that none but a divinely inspired person could foretell the coming event in the way Jesus did. Nor could anything but spiritual experience of the highest order make him conscious of the existence of the Almighty, while he was surrounded by an atmosphere of sacerdotalism, ceremonialism and idolatry. His gentleness and humility in the face of the gravest provocation, moreover, raises him above the ordinary mortal. Had he been merely great, as so many warriors and chieftains, kings and princes, statesmen and

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men of letters have been, he could not heal the sick and wounded simply by a touch of the hand. No amount of delving into the mysteries of science, no amount of jugglery could enable him to show this remarkable phenomenon in order to convince his intellectually backward people of the strength and purposiveness of the Creator.

With Muhammad, however, things were entirely different. His greatest and, practically speaking, only miracle was the Holy Qur-án. Unsurpassed as a piece of literature, even the greatest of the Arab bards found it impossible to produce a single verse that might stand comparison with any of its lines. The majesty, grandeur and beauty of style of the Holy Qur-án can better be appreciated when we realise that Muhammad was absolutely unschooled and unlettered. He knew absolutely nothing of history except what he heard during his travels. And yet the Holy Qur-án comprises some historical accounts, accurate with regard to chronology and geographical references, and in strict conformity with available accounts of the past, which have not been, hitherto, contradicted or challenged by a single scholar of history or geology.

To examine briefly even a few of the salient features of the Qur-án would, however, require volumes. Let us, therefore, content ourselves with only two more. Some thirteen centuries ago when the sciences were absolutely dormant, the Holy Qur-án declared the truth, which scientists have only recently discovered, that even plants are possessed of a certain amount of sensation and differentiation of sex. The Holy Qur-án would not lose a single grain of its worth if it did not contain this reference to a physical truth. But our present object is only to demonstrate, to those dubious of its Divine origin, that there is no justification for their doubts.

IN DEFENCE OF ISLAM

To turn to another well-known point, Muhammad was not a student of biology, nor was that science at all developed in his time. Yet he could declare the actual process of development of the child that took place in the womb of the mother. Curiously enough, his account actually coincides with the one given by modern physicians. Are not all these signs of divine inspiration and revelation ?

Could a mere passion for a better world, without Divine aid and guidance, make an unschooled, unlettered Arab of the burning deserts, one who knew not a word of literature, history, philosophy, geography or any of the physical and social sciences—realise the serious peril which threatened the world and enable him not only to work out a tremendous change in the national economy, politics, ethics and general manners of the Arabs, but also to give to the world a message of life and endeavour, whose wide importance has begun to be understood and appraised by non-believers only now ?

In order to escape the odium of being deified and idolised, Muhammad himself always declared, "I am only a man like yourselves." But he did also say, "I speak not of my own accord but what is revealed unto me." Could Muhammad, without the Qur'an and Divine guidance, have been a tenth part as great as he was with them ? Could he have been the same Muhammad ?

Once his prophethood has been acknowledged, we cannot but accept his word, "I and the Day of Judgment are like this," which he said with two of his fingers joined together. Surely the Divine Messenger cannot lie.

But the same belief is strengthened by subsequent historical developments since the time of Muhammad. Can any one of the great historical figures compare

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with him in achievement or influence? Has any human being after him played so many and varied rôles with perfect success?

Combining and even surpassing in his religion all that was best in the older codes, the piety of Moses, the love of Jesus, the sacrifice of Abraham, the compassion of Buddha and the justice and magnanimity of Solomon, Muhammad gave to the world the final Dispensation of God, the observance of which will mean the salvation of humanity.

As to Socrates being regarded as one of the messengers, there is enough scope in the statement, "I have not left any people without a warner," to allow him that exalted status.

(3) The writer's interpretation of his Canadian friend's comments is that the abhorrence felt towards the Qur-ân to-day by believers in modern political doctrines has a twofold basis. Firstly, that a religious code need not and cannot guide human beings except in the domain of spiritual development and philosophical pursuits, which matters obviously cannot be the concern of the average man, if the affairs of everyday life are to proceed unhampered and in a rational way. Secondly, that a code laid down thirteen centuries ago for the help and guidance of the people of Arabia cannot have a universal applicability and must, in the modern age, be treated as a dead letter.

The first objection is readily overcome, when we consider that it arises from the dualistic mentality of the Christians, as also of some neo-modernists, who consider the world to be a hotbed of sins and thus set up an antagonism between matter and spirit. Islam does not seek to demarcate the regions of the spirit

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and the flesh. On the contrary, it considers them to be mutually contributive in every respect. Being a faith of action and not of mere belief and dogma like those religions which are based on a dualistic conception of the universe, Islam discountenances the development of an other-worldly mentality. It recognises the fundamental rationality of human beings, who can attain to the highest perfection, not by isolating themselves from one another, but by living a harmonious life of universal brotherhood. It is, therefore, quite natural that the differentiation between good and evil has been indicated in the Qur-án for the guidance both of individuals and of society. Maulvi Aftabuddin Ahmad has very ably explained the whole point thus :

“ It is a false religious outlook that makes people feel that religion need not bother about social legislation. As a matter of fact, this is the most difficult part of the function of a religion. Islam rightly thinks that the major part of our moral feelings are those that concern society. The intellect, not being superior to the emotions, cannot comprehend their laws, far less control them. These laws have to come from outside, and from outside they do come. This had to be so because man cannot view life as a whole and cannot rise above his emotion and interests.”

The belief that the Quránic decree cannot be of practical help to humanity in its present-day troubles, rests on the misconception that it does not claim in itself the seeds of progress and development but lays down only rigid and inflexible laws, which, though of practical help to the inhabitants of the burning deserts of Arabia in the 7th century, A.D., cannot be applied with beneficial results in the twentieth century. In order, however, to understand and appreciate the

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teachings of Islam, one must remember that the Islamic laws relate themselves primarily to the moulding of human nature, which, as even a sceptic of the standing of Mr. George Bernard Shaw has been forced to admit, is "pliable." Once the social mind has been trained to differentiate between good and evil, it can easily guide itself along the path of progress and well-being. It can face economic issues, issues on which depend the development of healthy social life, from a wider and broader angle of vision than the sordid mundane fashion in which the problem has been tackled even by our ardent socialists and rabid communists. Just an ordinary reference will make the point clear. When Mr. Winston Churchill, in his characteristically pungent and suggestive way, describes Mr. Shaw as, "at once an acquisitive Capitalist and zealous Communist," he only lays bare the heart and mind of the average believer in the Marxian doctrine, who, though aiming at a moral reconstruction of the world and society, approaches the question in a curiously individualistic spirit and is impelled more by a sense of discontent against his present lot, than by the desire of bettering of those worse than himself. Considering this, we find that the Islamic method is much more radical and aims at the complete liquidation of the problem by the prevention of every kind of exploitation specified in the Qur-án and Hadith as sources of evil. The institution of *Zakát* (or compulsory poor tax), the equitable distribution of wealth and property, the prohibition of transactions on interest, and the abolition of slavery, monopolies, inequitable profiteering in business and artificial inflation, etc., contain in themselves enough seeds of development, and can form the basis of legislative enactments of the greatest magnitude. These will, no doubt, serve as a check upon any possible rapacity by members of society and

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will often prove the means of curing its acute ills. But an equally important part can be played by the social conscience of the people, which can be developed by an understanding of the spirit of the faith. That is why it is essential to study the Qur-án between the lines. We may take, for example, a passage in the chapter Al-Fajr, which says that prosperity is denied to people that are unjust to widows and orphans and usurp their livelihood. Evidently there is much more in the passage than meets the superficial glance. It gives the plain suggestion that if experience shows that the social and economic position of widows and orphans is in jeopardy, it is incumbent on the state to take measures to see them protected. If, however, there is no serious detriment to their interests, the injunction stands that the *status quo*, if just and equitable, should be maintained. Does this not afford enough scope for progress and development ?

Then again, here is the well-known saying of the Prophet, "Give the labourer his wages before his perspiration be dry." Is it, then, any wonder that in the presence of such definite and broad-based injunctions, Arab life was transformed with the most remarkable success into a perfect and workable socialistic state ?

Thus it is by furnishing a definite social and political code and by affording scope for the development of the communal conscience, that the Qur-án furnishes a way of living that would give the world the peace and happiness it so much needs. The position at present can be further improved and increasing prosperity obtained through gradual efforts. But to suggest that Islam limits the field of human advance is palpably absurd. As the late Khwaja Kamaluddin

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has said :

“Al-Qur-án declared that man was not only *God's image*, but His vicegerent on earth who, through acquiring the necessary knowledge, can receive homage from angels, those sentient beings who, as the Book says, move forces of Nature and actuate her potentialities.”

Besides, the fact that a particular generation of men and women have succeeded in conducting their affairs with the most perfect success, does not mean that the next generation would be equally virtuous. They have to face their own problems and strive by their own efforts for the perfect. Islam indicates the line, but does not delimit the achievement.

If, therefore, Marxian and Hegelian dialectics of old are credited with applicability to-day, there is no reason why the tenets of Islam should not be considered to be capable of contributing to the general evolution of the human mind, which, to be candid, is seldom uniform and progressive.

- (4) The fact has already been explained, in the preceding paragraphs, that Islam is not an other-worldly faith. According to Islam, the degree of one's virtue in this world will determine his happiness in the next. Its denunciation of asceticism and mendicancy is the greatest evidence of its sense of realism. Certainly, it is unjust to say that Islam offers only food for the brain and not for the stomach, it being assumed that Fascism and Communism do ensure the latter. Had this been true, we should not have witnessed the obvious fall in the standard of living in Soviet Russia and the depredations of the Fascist powers upon the weaker nations of

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the world. Fascism is based on the conception of race superiority and racial hatred; Communism on indiscriminate interference in the economic activity of the citizens, tending to the development of red-tape and the oppressive bureaucracy of the commissars. Both are totalitarian in the extreme and do not concede to the citizens the right of independent thinking and judgment on vital issues, which is the monopoly of the coterie of the Duce, Fuehrer and commissars. Both believe in violence as an instrument of policy, and pogroms and *coups d'etat* are the order of the day. Even in the Soviet, where a classless society is said to exist, conflicts are bound to arise between agricultural labourers and the town proletariat, between superintendents and managers on the one hand and workers on the other. The inequality of wealth must become visible, simply because of the absence of any wide moral basis for society and owing to the prominence of discontent and jealousy.

Under Islamic society, on the other hand, as it existed in the days of the Prophet and the four Caliphs and as envisaged in the Qur-án, things stand differently. Under Islam there could not exist any privileged classes; even high state officials and bureaucrats were accorded the treatment of ordinary citizens. But, as opposed to Fascism and Communism, difference of opinion was encouraged. Private property was guaranteed security and private enterprise encouraged, though every effective measure was taken to prevent exploitation of any kind, as already mentioned above. Even the monstrous accumulation of capital at the expense of the mass of the people has been effectively avoided

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through the Islamic system of inheritance. In this connection I cannot help quoting from a speech delivered by that adroit statesman Mr. M. A. Jinnah in the Central Indian Assembly. He said :

“ I find and I have no hesitation in declaring that the Islamic code of Law with regard to succession is most equitable, most just, most advanced and most progressive.”

The other economic laws have also been dealt with by the present writer in an article appearing in the *Islamic Review* of December, 1938. But it would not be out of place to refer to the great institution of *Zakât* (or compulsory poor-rate), which formed the golden mean between blood-sucking capitalism and red communism. Every citizen who had an annual saving of at least Rs. 40 or £3 had to pay at the rate of rupee one or 1s. 6d. to the *Baitul-Mal* ; and the amount which was collected, apart from the state taxes, was to be spent exclusively for the removal of the hunger and poverty of the masses. This made it possible for individuals to preserve their initiative and originality and also to make ends meet in times of distress. It also helped industrial development and enterprise. But the most remarkable feature of *Zakât* lies in its mitigation of the inequality of wealth and the manner in which even a man of comparatively meagre income was made to feel his duty towards his less fortunate brethren. This principle of making charity a social obligation was realised in England as late as 1601 and even then not in its entirety. In fact, the institution of *Zakât* (poor tax) made it impossible for a single citizen to go hungry : and all this without abolishing private property or killing individual initiative and enterprise. Thus it is that the Islamic laws have provided food for the stomach without involving the people in a fratricidal warfare based on lust and

IN DEFENCE OF ISLAM

aggrandisement upon the earnings of others. In other words, Islam provided for the establishment of the communal spirit without destroying the possibilities of those high and noble achievements which a sense of individualism gives us, private initiative being, in the opinion of J. S. Mill, the root of all change and progress. For while Islam provides for the utmost freedom of contract, it prevents the evils of unfair competition and the exploitation of labour.

In contrast with the well-fed Islamic Commonwealth, we have the following picture of Russia given by Mr. Littlepage in his *In Search of Soviet Gold* :

"In 1929 hundreds of thousands of ambitious and energetic farmers were dispossessed of their property. Members of the dispossessed groups were permitted to buy enough food to keep themselves alive, if they had the money; otherwise it was their own look-out."

Evidently there is a wide gulf between the two creeds—Islam and Communism.

The details entered into in this brief dissertation are far from exhaustive. But it is hoped that, if Islam is studied in the proper light, it will be of immense help to the chaotic modern world, and especially to the statesmen and politicians of the West, in its present hour of trial!

Surely, it can serve no good to rely on the bliss of ignorance and indifference!!

THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

BY THE LATE KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

[Continued from Vol. XXIII, page 261.]

Tazkiyya, or purification, is of three kinds, and the idea of all these three is contained in the meaning of the word. First, it means the growth of a thing; secondly, it means its being cleansed from all impurities; thirdly, it means the manifestation of that essential quality in a thing which forms its *raison d'être*. It is this last mentioned purification which is called *Faláh* in Arabic. Indeed, the very purpose of revelation is *Faláh*, as is mentioned in the fifth verse of the chapter entitled "The Cow." *Faláh* is attainable to such as have experienced *Tazkiyya* or purification, as has been stated in the chapter called "Al-Shams"—"He indeed has attained *Faláh*, who has purified himself." Take any fruit-bearing tree; it will furnish you with a very good example of *Tazkiyya*. When its seed is sown in the ground, it experiences the first stage of *Tazkiyya*; it starts growing from day to day. The appearance of the sprout, and of branches therefrom, the formation of wood in them, the growing of the leaves, giving further birth to flowers and fruits—all these are included in the first stage of *Tazkiyya*. Apart from this, the tree rejects, in its every stage of growth, all that is no longer needed. For example, the seed sown in the ground, assimilates many earthly ingredients necessary for its existence, but these ingredients invariably consist of elements superfluous at the sprouting stage of its growth, when they have to be rejected. Similarly in the wood stage some more unneeded elements are further rejected in the interest of the healthy growth of the tree. In the same way in the leaf stage, when much that goes to make up the constitution of the wood has again to be left behind.

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And through all these processes of transformation the real essence of the thing manifests itself in a systematic course of gradual development. After this, the leaves draw aside and the real essence manifests itself in the shape of a flower. But there are some crude elements even in flowers, which are discarded in the fruit stage. This is the second meaning of the word *Tazkiyya*. In ordinary language it may be called "freedom from dross." It is, as we know, the crude and refuse materials that are called "dross." To conclude, when the essence of a thing manifests itself in its last stage of evolution, it fulfils the third meaning of *Tazkiyya*. In the same way, the real and final object of "Prophethood" is the purification of consciousness. According to the prayer of Abraham there are four functions of "Prophethood." First, there should be revelation from God; Secondly, this revelation should finally take the form of a Book. Thirdly, the distinguishing feature of man being reasoning, whatever this Book or revelation should teach must be based on wisdom.

Passing on to the fourth function of "Prophethood," it states that it should be instrumental in bringing about the purification of consciousness. In other words, coming in the form of a voice from outside the human consciousness it should teach us what we should do and what we should not, in order that the real essence may finally emerge out of our consciousness. This is what is known in religious circles as Dispensation or Law. In Arabic it is called "Shari'ah."

The human species is a branch of the animal world. When plant life experiences the more evolved stage of flesh and emotion, it attains to what is called animal life. Further, when these animal emotions feel the urge of more refined possibilities, animal consciousness assumes the form of human consciousness and, in the

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language of the Qur-án, is called *Nafs*. For the sake of facility of discussion, I have used the expression "animal consciousness" with regard to the emotions as they are, and I shall use the expression "human consciousness" with regard to the emotions when they are found to exhibit certain special features and higher possibilities. It may be mentioned at the outset that all the possible emotions are not to be found in animal consciousness, whereas all those emotions, which are possessed by animals severally, can be seen existing together in human consciousness. For example, the sense of cleanliness, which is noticed in a cat, is not present in a pig. In the same way, the humility that characterises a cow, cannot be seen in a wolf. In man, however, both the spirits of humility and aggression are seen existing side by side. One cannot find in a dog the fellow-feeling of a cow; a dog as we know, is hostile to every other dog. In man, however, we find the quality of sympathy as well as antipathy. In the same way, every animal manifests one or other of various emotions; but, in man, all these are found existing together. To speak metaphorically, the consciousness of man is like a zoo, in which there are a dog, a cat, a pig, a wolf, a cow, a tiger, a monkey and all the other animals. The perfection of human consciousness can be a reality only when man can use these various animals, or animal impulses, ~~in their~~ proper places—which faculty is another characteristic of human consciousness. In the human stage, the emotions feel the urge of certain new impulses. First, the expansion of emotions. For instance, our knowledge expands from day to day, whereas purely animal knowledge does not expand. Human emotions assume some such forms as have no parallels in the purely animal. The emotion of anger is found both in the man and in the animal, but in man it expands

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into justice, fair dealing and courage. This phenomenon, however, is not seen in animals. Similarly, our knowledge of yesterday becomes the basis of, or the datum for, our experiences to-day. Both these things, however, are absent in an animal. The monkey often sees travellers passing their nights in forests, and kindling fire for their necessity with fire-sticks. By nature the monkey is a lover of fire. When the travellers stop anywhere in a forest, the monkey comes and sits by their fire. Then again the monkey has a strong tendency for imitation. With all this, however, it lacks the logic necessary for lighting fire itself with fire-sticks. Apart from the extension of knowledge, man has also the capacity of refining his emotion. He knows the occasion for the proper display of a particular emotion and avails himself of it accordingly. An animal does not know the right occasion for the use of anger; but a fully developed man does. He knows, moreover, in what measure it should be used for a certain purpose. It is on the development of this capacity that the real essence of man appears on the surface and he experiences what we call the "purification of consciousness." Under the guidance of prophethood, the animal emotions of man, cleansed of their impurities, finally reach this stage, where they are used in the proper way and measure. This is exactly the function of the revelation or the law as vouchsafed to a prophet. If, however, the revelation of a person does not furnish these requisites, that person cannot be called a *Nabi*.

There can be no doubt about the recipient of such a revelation being a God-realised person. It is inconceivable that one should receive messages from God, while he has not attained His nearness. Below the position of a prophet, there is a lower stage, which, however, is itself above the mere reception of Divine

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Communication. This lower stage is the stage of *Muhaddathiyya*. Every recipient of Divine communication cannot be called a *Muhaddath*. He alone can be called a *Muhaddath* who receives these communications copiously and frequently. One may call such a person "one having the semblance of a prophet." A *Muhaddath*, nevertheless, can be a *Nabi* only when his revelations contain instructions for the refinement of animal emotions. In order that faith in the phenomenon of prophethood does not suffer deterioration, the door of revelation as such has been left open for the followers of the Prophet Muhammad. The law, however, having reached completion, no *Muhaddath*, coming after Muhammad, can attain to the position of prophethood. We believe in the finality of prophethood with the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, because our Holy Prophet says so and because it is so written in the Holy Qur-án. Unfortunately, there are people, not equipped with proper knowledge of the subject, who would make unwarranted interpretations of these sayings of the Prophet and the verses of the Qur-án that bear on the subject. We hold to this idea of the finality of prophethood because we do not find materials for the purification of our consciousness or the refinement of all the animal emotions reposed in us, in the revelation granted to any recipient of prophethood appearing after the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Applying this standard, we are not prepared to accept even the prophethood of previous prophets, relying merely on the remnants of their teaching, as extant to-day. Our acceptance of these prophets is based on two considerations; firstly, that the Holy Qur-án itself calls them prophets; and, secondly, the Book also persistently refers to the loss or interpolation of the books associated with these holy names—an allegation which has become a verified fact in these

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days. Consequently, we acknowledge that any one, whom the Holy Qur-án calls by the name of "Prophet," must have come with the teachings essential to the function of the prophethood, but that these teachings are now lost to the world. This loss, however, does not affect the prophethood of these prophets and so the Holy Qur-án insists on calling them "Prophets."

Moreover, there are certain instincts in man of which no traces can be found in other animals. And, strictly speaking, the special function of prophethood is the education of these instincts. Here I propose to name two such instincts. One is the instinct of worship and the other that of corporate social life. No other animal excepting man has ever worshipped any power greater than itself. It is only man who has bowed his head in worship before stones, trees, stars, etc., considering some or all of them to be possessing higher power than himself. It is this very instinct, we should not forget, which manifests itself in a refined form in the worship of God, the Invisible Creator. Similarly, in the world of animals, it is man alone who lives a corporate social life. Both these instincts are of such a nature that their proper use alone can assure a safe civilisation and culture for us. If we fail to make proper use of the instincts of worship and social life, we cannot achieve any success in our life. It is to refine these two instincts that God speaks to man. If, therefore, materials for their refinement are missing in the revelations of a person, no benefit can accrue from them to others. Hence, it is that the term "revelation of prophethood" can apply only to such revelations as have instructions for worship and social life.

Although prophethood is co-existent with humanity yet the Prophet Moses is the only person in the whole history of prophethood who is found to purify

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in a perfect manner the idea of God, from all kinds of embodiment and representation, and who taught man to bow before the One Invisible Creator of the Universe. The details of this subject have already been given. Other prophets besides the Prophet Moses had also been giving the same lessons respecting the unity of the Godhead. But, unfortunately, their followers all, in course of time, became polytheists. Even among the Hindus, unitarianism was the original religious principle, but this gradually gave way to incarnation worship. All the elements of nature and their combinations in thousands and millions of different forms became objects of worship. Evidently, it was the manifestation of this very instinct of worship which was finally corrected and refined by the Holy Qur-án. This Book uprooted the tendency of polytheism in such a manner that, since its revelation, its followers never betrayed the weakness of idol-worship. This is not the proper place to discuss how far polytheism has played havoc with human culture. It is a fact, nevertheless, that this curse of polytheism has deprived humanity of every kind of real progress and prosperity. It is evident from this that the proper training of this instinct of worship is of surpassing importance.

Next to the instinct of worship comes the instinct of social existence. It is undeniable that provisions of this instinct were not wanting in civilisations before the Prophet Moses. Civilisations like those of the Egyptians and Phœnicians existed before the revelation of the Torah. The instructions for social existence, however, that can be seen in a systematic form in the pages of the Torah, have no parallel anywhere else. The Ten Commandments of the Prophet Moses and the Law of Retaliation are only different forms of the principles of social existence.

THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

To make a mighty ruling nation out of a people that had spent generations in the servitude of the Egyptians, certainly needed a very effective system of instruction in social life. Since the instinct of resistance, without which there could be no defence, had altogether died in this race, they were given the Law of Retaliation. The same people, who had not spirit enough to raise their heads against the most destructive onslaughts, became, under the training of the Mosaic Dispensation, objects of fear to other nations, as is seen from the last chapters of Deuteronomy.

The Israelite Prophets, that followed Moses, so perfected the civilisation with the help of revelation, that a magnificent King like Solomon came to be born in this line. As compared with this, if one looks at the teachings of the Holy Qur-án, this last revelation will be found to have kindled the light of civilisation in a form surpassingly resplendent.

There seems to be no aspect of civilised existence on which the Holy Qur-án has not thrown sufficient light. Leaving aside other parts of the Book, if one examines the short opening chapter, called *Fátiha*, one will find it covering each and every aspect of civilisation—the physical, the moral, the economic, the political and the spiritual. Above all, this last prophetic mission has instituted such a comprehensive series of Divine attributes, that it covers not only the instincts of worship and civilised life, but the instinct that belongs to man.

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CORRESPONDENCE

KETTERING :
3rd November, 1939.

THE SECRETARY,
WOKING MUSLIM MISSION,
WOKING, SURREY.

DEAR SIR,

In the course of my reading I have seen an interesting reference to your work, and as a student of Comparative Religion I should be glad to receive any literature you might care to send.

Yours faithfully,
FREDK. A. HALL

LONDON, W. 10.
7th November, 1939.

THE MOSQUE, WOKING

DEAR SIR,

I am enclosing herewith my subscription for six months for the *Islamic Review*.

I must say I greatly enjoyed reading this magazine during the last twelve months, and it certainly is a very enlightening work; but I feel it is definitely not enough to contemplate embracing a religion with book knowledge only, and though I have made great effort to find Muslim friends I have only been successful in finding more non-Muslim friends than I know what to do with.

I wonder if you could suggest a way in which I can make friends with Muslims (pen or personal and either sex) about my own age (25). I should like to have the opportunity of getting in touch with someone, preferably Indian or Egyptian, who really is enthusiastic to answer questions and discuss matters from time to time. I am, and have always been, keen on the Muhammadan religion but it appears rather pure to accept the faith and live isolated from one's believers. I must exhaust all my arguments and be absolutely sure before I can feel justified in committing myself to take a vow, especially of such a serious nature.

I must apologise to you for taking up your valuable time but if you can help me I really shall be grateful indeed and you may pass my name and address on to anyone if the opportunity arises.

Yours faithfully,
R. E.

CORRESPONDENCE

PALMERS GREEN,
LONDON, N. 13.
10th November, 1939.

THE SECRETARY,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

I would be very interested indeed if you would forward me some literature on the subject of Islam.

For some time past I have been seeking a satisfactory form of spiritual solace, and have the idea that ultimate peace might be through Islam.

Having been born of fairly orthodox Jewish parents, I have become somewhat of a freethinker (although definitely not in any way atheistically inclined) and should welcome your guidance.

Yours,
S. R. LEWIS.

GUILDFORD,
19th November, 1939.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING.

REVD. SIR,

I, together with two friends, would much like to visit the Mosque for the Service—I believe it is Friday. If we may be allowed to do so, would you tell me the hour of the Service and also if any particular form of dress is required? I know we must remove our shoes.

I have studied Arabic by myself for some time, but, having no opportunity to hear it, cannot speak it at all. It is such a beautiful language; but so very difficult!

Apologising for troubling you,

Truly yours,
O. M. A.

THE WORLD SERVICE GROUP,
13, CHESHAM PLACE,
BELGRAVE SQUARE,
LONDON, S.W. 1.
21st November, 1939.

HIS EMINENCE THE IMAM OF MOSQUE,
WOKING, SURREY.

DEAR SIR,

Please allow me to express my very deep appreciation of the service you have rendered by giving us all this delightful service this afternoon. I feel that you have boldly propounded excellent problems which will be considered by our audience, and, furthermore, I believe that we very much need the contribution which Islam can provide to the solution of our present difficulties.

With grateful thanks,

I am,
Sir,
Yours sincerely,
EDMUND BENTLEY,
Honorary Secretary.

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SALISBURY, WILTS,
27th November, 1939.

DEAR SIR,

I am writing to ask you if you could be so kind as to forward to me a list of books suitable to get a knowledge of Islam; what it stands for, and its principles, as I am very interested, especially after attending the festival of Idul-Fitr.

This, needless to say, would be very much appreciated, as I have been giving a great deal of thought to your religion.

I should also like to take this opportunity to thank you for the hospitality shown to us on the occasion of our visit to the Mosque.

Yours sincerely,
T. R. FRANCIS.

WAS IT SLEEP ?

BY EDITH M. CHASE.

Islam, did you sleep
When time, unfurling banners in the wind,
Whipping the earth with steady, marching feet,
Seemed to forget you in its flight ?
Did sleep weight down the curtain of your mind,
When gold was hoarded in the city vaults,
Usury spread wide the seams
Of Western might ?

~~Q~~ to have slept

When fighting planes first glistened in the Sun,
And men, with steel in hand, went out to find
Their warred brothers lying in the dust !
The moon is shrouded by the night,
A vision might be lost in broken dreams,
If sleep and rest could never follow day,
And who has seen the Morning Star at Noon ?

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of
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"Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Seal (the last) of the Prophets . . ."—
HOLY QUR-AN 33: 40. "There will be no Prophet after me."—MUMHAMMAD.

The
Islamic Review

FOUNDED BY THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

Vol. XXVIII]

[No. 6

RABI'UL-THANI, 1359 A.H.

JUNE, 1940 A.C.

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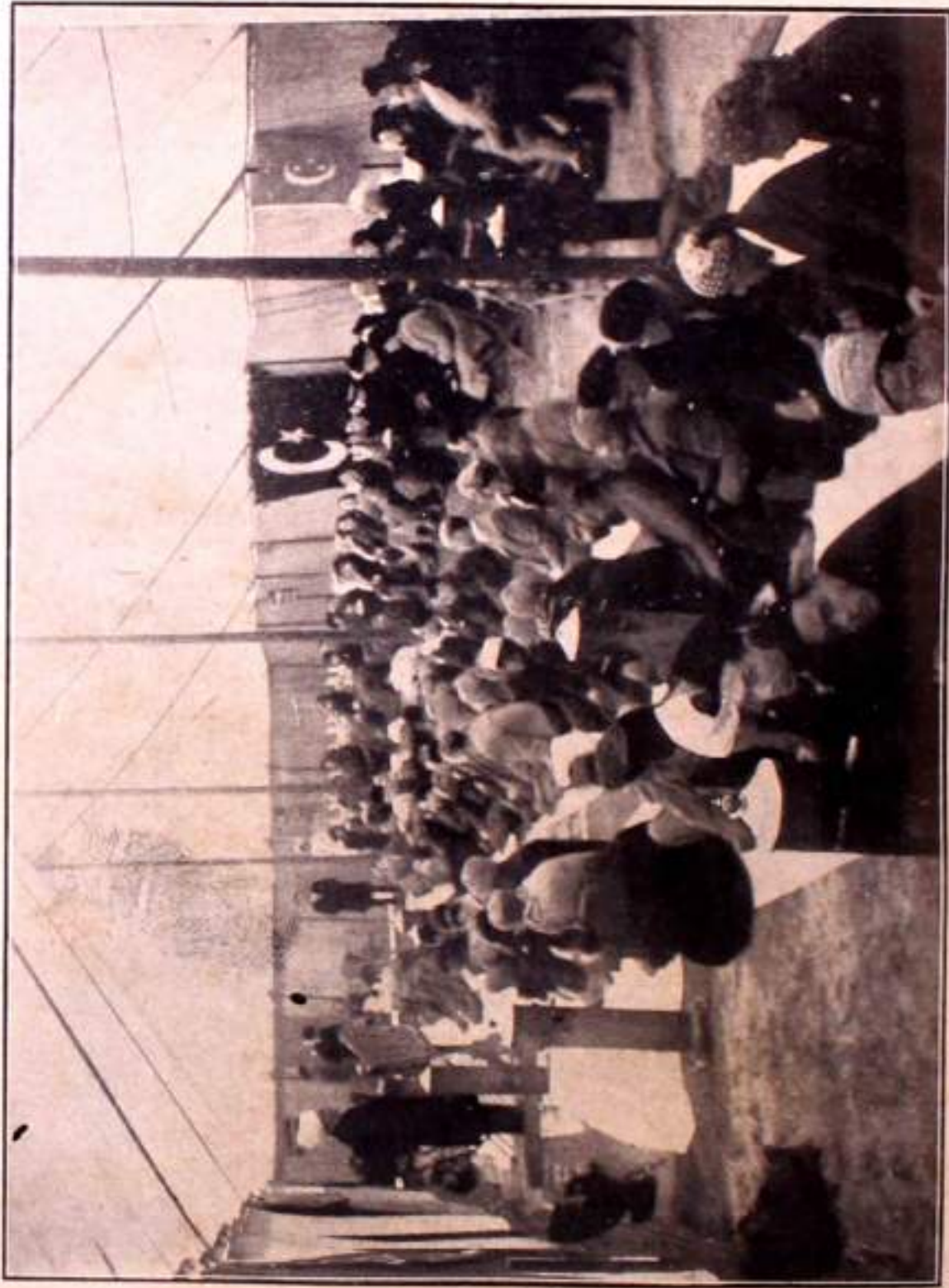
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A partial view of the 'Idu'l-Adha (1358 A.H.) Congregation at the Mosque,
Woking, listening to the sermon.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُكَ يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدًا
وَيُحْيِيهِ لَنَا فِي هَذِهِ السَّنَةِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا
لِإِسْلَامِهِ وَإِنَّا لَكَنَّا
لَشَاكِرُونَ

THE
ISLAMIC REVIEW

Vol. XXVIII]

RABI'UL-THANI, 1359 A.H.
JUNE, 1940 A.C.

[No. 6

A DECLARATION

I, Mrs. A. Othman, of Rosamond Street, Hull (England), do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Allah (God) alone; that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger and Servant; that I respect equally all Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus and others—and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

La ilaha ill-Allah Muhammad-un-Rasul-Allah.

[There is but One God (Allah) and Muhammad is God's Messenger.]

(Sd.) AMEENA OTHMAN.

26th January 1940.

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IN MEMORIAM

It is with great regret that we have to record the passing of Mr. Ahmad Shahab Suhrawardy, who died on Friday, the 16th February, 1940, after a short illness. A Requiem (Fátiha) meeting was called by Khwaja S. Mahmud, Secretary of the Mosque, Woking, at the Hall of the Muslim Society in Great Britain, London, on the same day. Many Muslims attended the meeting and recited passages from the Holy Qur-án in memory of the deceased.

The deceased young man's reputation as a keen student and his outstanding family connections brought in a record number of sympathisers. Members of Muslim Legations and representatives from Indian as well as English Societies and Associations were present to pay their tribute to his soul. Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India, deputed Sir John Woodhead, sometime Governor of Bengal, to represent him at the Requiem (Fátiha) and to convey his condolence to Sir Hassan Suhrawardy and the members of the Muslim Community in their sad loss. Sirdar Bahadur Mohan Singh was one of the many prominent non-Muslim Indians present.

The late Mr. Ahmad Shahab was just past his teens at the time of his death and was a student of Christ Church College, Oxford. He traced his descent from the well-known ancient and learned family of India. He was the only son of the Hon'ble Mr. Shahid Suhrawardy, Minister, Government of Bengal, grandson of the Hon'ble Justice Sir Zahid Suhrawardy, Judge of the Calcutta High Court, and grand-nephew of Al-Hajj Lieut.-Colonel Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, O.B.E., Adviser to the Secretary of State for India, London, and the only maternal grandson of the Hon'ble Sir Abdur Rahim, K.C.S.I., President, Central Legislative Assembly of India, and ex-Judge of Madras High Court. It is

IN MEMORIAM

a matter of added regret that by his passing the Indian Muslims should have been deprived of the last male link of that illustrious Suhrawardy family. In spite of his youthful years, Ahmad Shahab showed great promise of keeping up the family tradition of intellectuals. The Muslim community is not so full of young men of proved ability to be able to afford losing from its midst a young man of his calibre. But fate had willed it otherwise—

“Every one that there is will pass away. There remaineth but the countenance of thy Lord of Might and Glory.”—*The Holy Qur-án, LV : 26 and 27.*

The family of the deceased has always taken an active interest in the spread of Islam in the West. We have a photograph in our sitting-room in which the late Allāma Sir Abdullah Al-Mamun-Al-Suhrawardy—the doyen of the family, and brother of Al-Hajj Lieut.-Colonel Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, O.B.E.—is seen leading the prayers at the Mosque, Woking, in as early as 1906—that is to say, about seven years before the inauguration of the Woking Muslim Mission. We offer our deep sympathy to the Suhrawardy family in their sad bereavement.

Mr. Muhsin Mirza read an Urdu elegy which we are printing in the Urdu edition of the *Islamic Review*.

Among those present were: Dr. Rao, Lady Headley, Maulvi Abdul Majid, Mr. Yusuf Ali, Mr. Rashid, Mr. Ismail de-Yorke, Mr. Syed Moonis Hassan Akhadi, Sirdar Iqbal Ali Shah and Mr. Amer Zia Khan.

The same evening the following resolution was passed by the Executive Committee of the Muslim Society in Great Britain :

“Resolved that this special meeting of the Executive Committee of the Muslim Society in Great Britain records its profound grief at the sad

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and untimely demise of Ahmad Shahab Suhrawardy, the only son of the Hon'ble Mr. Shahid Suhrawardy, and offers its sincerest condolences to the bereaved family in their irretrievable loss. May his soul rest in peace!

“Resolved that copies of this Resolution be sent to the Hon'ble Mr. Shahid Suhrawardy, Al-Hajj Lieut.-Colonel Sir Hassan Suhrawardy and the Hon'ble Sir Abdur Rahim.”

'IDU 'L-ADHA (1358 A.H.) 1940 A.C. AT THE SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE, WOKING

The second of the two annual Islamic festivals, the 'Idu 'l-Adha, or the festival of sacrifices, was celebrated at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, on Saturday, the 20th January, 1940, under the most untoward conditions. The weather was the most inclement that England had witnessed for many past years. It was bitterly cold and frosty. On the previous day, it had been snowing hard. Travel facilities were curtailed owing to war conditions. In a word, there was nothing to encourage a Muslim or a non-Muslim to undertake a journey of 25 miles from London to Woking. But, despite these discomforts and disabilities, it was heartening to find at the time of prayers, which were said at 11-30 A.M., that the numbers of those who took part in the Service had exceeded three hundred. If one of the charabancs bringing a large number of Indian Muslims from the East End of London had not broken down on its way to Woking as a result of the freeze, the number of devotees would have gone into the neighbourhood of 400. Non-Muslim visitors were surprised to find that it was at all possible, under conditions that were enough to damp even the most zealous, to have such a large assemblage consisting of various nationalities—Indians, Afghans, Arabs,

'IDU 'L-ADHA (1358 A.H.) 1940 A.C.

Egyptians, Malays and English. Some had travelled long distances and had stayed overnight in London to be able to join the prayers the following day.

In this unusual gathering there was a deep lesson to those who are accustomed to living upon truth acquired and received through pure reason, which, as is well-known, is never able to sway communities as communities; there was a source of deep inspiration for those who wonder why philosophy alone has never changed the destinies of mankind. The 'Id prayers are primarily meant to enable the followers of Islam to give their thanks to God for the performance of their duty associated with these festivals. This is the chief reason that Islamic festivals are always, before everything else, preceded by a Divine service, a prayer in congregation to God. But the social value, permeated by the religious leaven imparted to it by the Divine service, is no less important. Critics and writers on Islam are agreed that the two festivals of Islam, which owe their conception and their present structure to the religious genius of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, are such that no better expedient could have been devised for impressing on the minds of those who have accepted the outlook on life of Islam, a sense of their common life and of their brotherhood in the bond of faith.

The Imam of the Mosque, who read his address after the prayers, laid stress on this peculiarity of the religion of Islam and Islamic life. He quoted instances from the history of Islam to show how deep-rooted is the principle of the absolute equality of all men in the Islamic system of life, and how real is the sense of justice inspired by the teachings of the Holy Qur-ân and how admirable are the practical institutions which enable Muslims to put their ideal of the unity of all believers and the brotherhood of man into actual

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practice. He reminded Muslims of the urgency of their duty to their fellow beings, who, because they were as yet ignorant of the pleasures and blessings bestowed upon Muslims by the practical brotherhood of Islam, were groaning under the crushing burden of race-consciousness and passionate exclusiveness. "About fifty years ago," said the Imam, "the need was perhaps not so serious. Race theories and academical discussions about the unequal distribution of wealth were confined to ethnologists and economists. But now one has begun to preach and glorify the virtues of the doctrine of servitude, of exclusiveness, of partiality, of intolerance towards people not belonging to the Aryan race. The message of the moral fraternity, of the equality of the soul, of social justice, of charity towards all, of protecting the weak and the oppressed, is being preached and derided openly. We Muslims, in common with our Christian friends, possess the certitude and the conviction of the fact that the individual does not develop thoroughly except through devotion to others—through service to his fellow beings. But there is something we possess that our fellow brethren in Christendom do not possess. That something leaves us as the only people who can shoulder the responsibility. Let us appreciate our position . . . as yet five-sixths of the human race are groaning under the crushing burden of race-consciousness and passionate exclusiveness and other ridiculous superiority complexes and, what is more, those five-sixths of mankind have not as yet realised that each and every one of us is to be of service to the others. This is a huge task, and none can shoulder it better than we Muslims, who not only possess the incomparably broad and cosmopolitan outlook on life, but also are the custodians of the secret and the methods to put that universal outlook on life into practice."

THE 'IDU 'L-ADHA (1358 A.H.) SERMON

After the sermon, the Imam wished every friend present a Happy 'Id, upon which the gathering broke up and friends wished happiness to each other by embracing and hearty handshakes. A few minutes later, the time of luncheon having arrived, all sat down to partake of the Indian dishes which had been prepared under the supervision of the proprietor of the Shafi India Restaurant of London. As the weather was frosty and cold (although the huge marquee was sufficiently well heated by the stoves placed at regular intervals all over the carpeted enclosure), friends and visitors took leave of each other to resume their normal duties and occupations.

THE 'IDU 'L-ADHA (1358 A.H.) SERMON

BY MAULVI ABDUL MAJID

To-day's festival is called the festival of Adhā, (that is to say, of sacrifices) primarily because every Muslim, after having performed his pilgrimage to Makka, sacrifices an animal on the plains of Minā near Makka, secondly because it is in memory of the willing, unstinted and spontaneous sacrifices made by the great Patriarch Abraham and his son Ishmael. But although the patience, perseverance and courage with which the son offered himself to be killed by the loving hands of his father, and the readiness which the father showed in sacrificing his son in pursuance of a dream he had had, are enough in themselves for their memory to have been made immortal for all time to come by the institution of sacrifice, as Islam has done, yet it is not merely in this lofty consideration that the occasion of to-day has its far-reaching importance. We Muslims are proud of this occasion and of the blessings that flow from it, which we in our turn are able to pass on to our fellow beings all over the world.

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Now it is a fact that the principle of the equality of man and man has been enunciated and affirmed by all religions. There is nothing, for instance, to choose between Islam and Christianity in this matter. If we read in the words of St. Paul the following: "God hath made of one (blood) all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (The Acts, 17 : 26), then we, when turning to the pages of the Qur-án read the following, the same sentiment in a slightly different form: "O you men! We have created you of a male and a female and made you nations and tribes that you may know each other. Verily the noblest of you, in the sight of God, is the best in conduct. Surely God is Knowing and Aware" (LIX : 13). Indeed one could multiply the number of such edifying and inspiring excerpts and verses from the religious books and writings of the prophets and saints of other religions. Such words and phrases do indeed create a desire for a better world order. They do create a fundamental change in men's minds, but they definitely do not suggest how to express that change in practice and conduct. For is it not a fact that the belief in the fatherhood of God and that we all are the children of God has been preached in one form or another from the pulpits of the Christian world for the last two thousand years? And yet the net result of continual doses of these admirable ideals is that the behaviour of the present Christian crowds is indistinguishable from that of the crowds that believed in the virtues of clanism and tribalism before the advent of Jesus. The answer that is made, when this is pointed out, is that Christianity has not been tried, that it has not been given a fair chance. Such an answer may satisfy some, but I wonder if it will satisfy those who realise that 2,000 years is a long period for any experiment. To illustrate my point further, I would take you to the

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year 640 A.D. in the land of Egypt. When the Muslim conquerors sent a deputation of their ablest men to discuss the terms of the surrender of the capital of Egypt, headed by Ubāda, a negro and the ablest of them all, the Archbishop Cyrus exclaimed, "Take away that black man! I can have no discussion with him." The scared Archbishop, to his astonishment, was told that this black man had been commissioned by 'Amr bin al-Ās, the Commander of the Muslim army, that the Muslims held negroes and white men in equal respect, and that they judged a man by his character and not by his colour.

"Well, if the negro must lead, then he must speak gently," ordered the prelate, so as not to frighten his white auditors. The reply of the Muslim negro Ubāda shows the spirit of the early Muslims and of the Muslims of to-day with all their backsliding. Ubāda said, "There are a thousand blacks as black as myself, amongst the companions of our Commander. I and they would be ready each to meet and fight a hundred enemies together; we live only to fight for God and to follow His Will; we care naught for wealth, so long as we have wherewithal to stay our hunger and to clothe our bodies. The world is naught to us, the next world is all."

The point which I wish to emphasise is that the spirit of the Christian prelate Cyrus of Egypt prevails even to this day in the West. Race hatred still rules and controls men's judgments. In some countries people are persecuted and even exiled because they belong to a different race. Every one knows the gulf that snobbery and class distinction make to separate English people from each other and how they spoil the otherwise admirable character of English life. Here one talks of democracy, but is not aware of its real import. Here one at best understands by democracy

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the universal suffrage, but the classes are careful that its essence does not infiltrate the masses. Considerations of prestige and discipline create class distinction and snobbery. It is simply next to impossible for an Englishman of the masses to understand the ease and freedom with which the poor move in Muslim countries amongst all sorts and conditions of men. The Muslim rich also show no trace of any consciousness of class. The snobbery and class distinction of English life are simply incomprehensible to us Muslims. We, bred and born in the Islamic system of life, cannot understand the class distinctions of English life. We Muslims have our poor, but poverty is one thing and inferiority another. With us there is an equality real enough to override the greatest inequality. With us priority in faith and spiritual eminence are the only real claims to distinction.

By way of contrast I give you two historical incidents, which will illustrate the social and political ideal of Islam.

In the days of the Caliph 'Umar the Great, in the beginning of the 7th century, the King of the Ghassanids, named Jabala, accepted Islam as his faith. Jabala went in great pomp and ceremony to perform the pilgrimage to Makka. While circumambulating the holy shrine of the Ka'aba, the robe of a poor pilgrim was accidentally flicked across the King's neck. The King turned and in a fury struck his fellow pilgrim violently, knocking out his teeth. This is how the Caliph 'Umar the Great records what followed: "The poor man came to me and prayed for redress. I sent for Jabala, and when he came before me, I asked him why he had so ill-treated a brother Muslim. He answered that the man had insulted him and that, were it not for the sanctity of the place, he would have killed him on the spot. I answered that his words

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added greatly to the gravity of his offence, and that, unless he obtained pardon of the injured man, he would have to submit to the usual penalty of the law. Jabala replied, 'I am a King and the other man only a common man.' I said, 'King or no king, both of you are equal in the eye of the law.' The King escaped in the night and became a Christian rather than apologise."

Islam abolishes both priesthood and hereditary kingship, and for this reason its conception of equality is on a different plane to that to which our friends in the West are accustomed when they use such phrases as "the King can do no wrong." By abolishing sacerdotalism and kingship, Islam emancipates man completely. It makes him the complete master of his destinies both in the physical and the spiritual world. Nowhere has the recognition of the value of the soul and the dignity of the individual been so much emphasised as in Islam. In Islam, if there has to be a king, then he submits to the same law as applies to an ordinary individual of the kingdom. The well-known incident of Sultan Salāhuddīn Ayyubī (known to Europe under the name of Saladin) who flourished from 1137 to 1193 A.D. will be remembered by many in illustration of my remarks. The Sultan (who was Sultan of Syria and Egypt and one of the mightiest men of his day) appeared before the tribunal in an action brought against him by one of his humble subjects. In a few words the story is that a man by name 'Umar al-Khalātī came to the holy city of Jerusalem and appeared before a court of justice. He placed in the hands of the judge a certified memorandum and begged him to read it. The judge asked him who his adversary was. The man replied that his affair was with the Sultan and added, "this is the seat of justice, where I have heard you make no distinction of persons." "Why," the

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judge replied, "do you bring this action against the Sultan?" The man replied, "I had a slave who remained in my possession until his death. The name of the slave is Sonkor. At the moment of his death he had several large sums of money, which now are mine by right. He died leaving these sums, and the Sultan has taken possession of them. I lay claim to them as my property." The judge remarked, "Why have you delayed your action so long?" The plaintiff said, "One does not forfeit one's right by delaying to claim it. Here is the certificate, proving that the slave remained my property until his death." The judge read the document and found that the slave had been bought by the plaintiff from a merchant of Arjish in Armenia and that the witnesses in the document had never understood that the slave had ever ceased to be the property of his master in any manner whatever. The instrument was in legal form. The judge said to the plaintiff, "It is not meet to adjudge a claim in the absence of the party sued; I will inform the Sultan and will let you know what he says in the matter." The Sultan, when told of the legal suit, thought it utterly absurd and asked if the document had been carefully examined. He was told that the document had been taken to Damascus for examination and that the judge had appended a certificate to that effect. "Very well," the Sultan replied, "let the man appear, and I will defend myself against him and conform to all the regulations prescribed by law." The Sultan, placing himself before the plaintiff, called upon him to state his case. The plaintiff stated his case, and the Sultan replied in the following words: "This Sonkor was my slave; he never ceased to be my property till the time I gave him his freedom. He is dead, and his heirs have entered upon his inheritance he left." The plaintiff answered, "I hold in my hand

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an instrument that will prove the truth of my case. Please open it so that its contents may be known." The judge opened it and found that it bore out the statement of the complainant. The Sultan having informed himself of the date of the paper replied, "I have witnesses to prove that Sonkor was in my possession and at Cairo at the said date. A year before, I had bought him with eight others, and he remained in my possession till he received his freedom." The Sultan then summoned several of his chief military officers, who bore witness that the facts were in accordance with the statement of the Sultan and declared that the date given was exact. The plaintiff was confounded.

These two instances should suffice to show how deep-rooted is the principle of the absolute equality of all men in Islam, and will bear witness to the sense of justice inspired by the teachings of the Holy Qur-án, and will give some idea of the practical institutions which enable us Muslims to put our ideal of the unity of all believers and the brotherhood of man into actual practice.

The miraculous change that comes over an individual when he joins the brotherhood of man in Islam, and the reality of human fellowship under the aegis of Islam have been remarked by all those writers and travellers who have had the good fortune of mixing with Muslims. A recent writer, Dr. M. N. Dhalla, a distinguished Zoroastrian high-priest in India, has recently published a book entitled, "Our Perfecting World," and in it has paid the following tribute to Islam for rising above colour and racial prejudice :

" Muhammadanism alone among the religions of the world has remained free from colour bias . . . it welcomes all converts with open arms, whether they be negroes or pariahs.

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Without reserve it accords them their rights and privileges, and receives them into its social circle as much as into its religious fold. It is the only religion that excludes all barriers of birth and colour, and admits its converts into the community on the basis of complete social equality." The same writer, referring to this matter elsewhere, makes the following observations: "Until the race problem is solved, peace and goodwill cannot come on earth. The race problem is the most menacing that confronts civilisation."

In view of these observations it will be quite correct to say that moral exhortations, even backed by religious authority, are not efficacious. For otherwise the history of Christendom, for example, would have offered a different spectacle and would have been free from race hatred. But the Christian world is the same to-day as it was at the time of the conquest of Egypt by the Muslims, as I have illustrated already by referring to the words of the Christian prelate Cyrus. Therefore it would be no exaggeration to say that there is something else that is wanted and there is still something that is missing from Christianity. In other words, why is it that Islam alone succeeds where others fail?

The diagnosis of Islam is that it is the lack of right and suitable formalism and institutions, through which alone man can get an opportunity to express his noble ideals of human fellowship, and human brotherhood, that is ultimately responsible for the discrepancy and anomaly existing between his behaviour and the high ideals he entertains and is so anxious to materialise. How, then, does Islam try to solve the difficulty that has been the bane of its predecessors, which, in spite of their sublime idealism, as sublime as that of Islam,

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were unable to make that idealism part and parcel of the lives of their followers? What does Islam do to remove the wide gulf existing between the ideals of man and his behaviour?

The first thing Islam does is this. While it creates the suitable frame of mind by echoing in common with all other religions the essentials of the brotherhood of man, it also realises that mere pious wishes and words have not been enough to induce man to give up his age-old tribal outlook on life. It is here that Islam is an improvement on its sister religions. Islam does succeed in implementing the ideal of human fellowship simply by devising institutions that enable every Muslim to practise effectively and learn visually that we are in reality the children of God. One of those institutions, which, linked together, gradually awaken in a Muslim a consciousness of his real place in relation to his fellow beings and ultimately make him cosmic conscious, is the festival of to-day which we are now celebrating.

To-day is the last day of the pilgrimage; to-day is the 10th day of the 12th month of the Muslim year. In Makka to-day there are gathered together tens of thousands of men and women from all over the world. They have gone there because Islam wants every believer to perform the pilgrimage to Makka at least once in his lifetime. In the words of the late Sir Thomas Arnold let me describe to you the part this festival of to-day plays in the social life of us Muslims. "No touch of religious genius could have conceived a better expedient for impressing on the minds of the faithful a sense of their common life and of their brotherhood in the bonds of faith. Here in the supreme act of worship, the negro of the West Coast of Africa meets the Chinaman from the distant East, the courtly and polished Ottoman recognising his brother Muslim in

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the wild islander from the farthest end of the Malayan Sea. At the same time, throughout the whole of the Muhammadan world, the hearts of believers are lifted up in sympathy with their more fortunate brethren gathered together in the sacred city of Makka, as in their own homes they celebrate the festival of Eid ul Adha. . . . whatever be the race, colour, or antecedents of the worshipper, he is received into the brotherhood of the believers and takes his place as an equal amongst equals." (*The Preaching of Islam*, London 1913 pp. 416-17).

The marvellous fraternal spirit transcending all barriers of race, country or colour animates to-day the great brotherhood of Islam in exactly the same manner as it did 1,400 years ago, when it was preached and instituted by the Prophet Muhammad, and this in a degree not discernible in any other community of mankind. Here, I am proud to say, at any rate we have a great example and a great promise for the redemption of humanity. If Islam had done nothing else than eliminate (as it has incontestably done) the unconscionable barriers of racial antipathy and national exclusiveness from among one-sixth of the human race, scattered over the surface of the globe and covering every land and clime, then it must hold civilisation its debtor for ever.

Christianity, after two thousand years of evolution, has signally failed in this vital aspect. The conception of a human brotherhood, a social communion that would transcend geographical, racial or national boundaries, seems to be equally unrealised in the other great religions of the world. It is Islam alone that rules out in practice, no less than in theory, the claims of race or nation, caste or colour, which claims break the unity and mar the harmony of the human family; and there can be no question but that it is along that

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path the world will have to travel to find its ultimate salvation.

The gathering at Makka which comes to an end to-day, consisting of tens of thousands of Muslims, consisting of poor and rich, prince and peasant from all countries, meeting together from far and near, all wearing the same simple unsewn garment, is an annual demonstration of the brotherhood of man in Islam and sets a grand practical example of fraternity and equality. Each of these pilgrims on his return home enlivens his fellow beings with his experiences in the plains of Makka. You can imagine the enthusiasm and how fast it would spread. There is no parallel to this institution in any other religious system of the world. Islam is unique in this and unsurpassed.

The gradual evolution of the daily prayers of us Muslims into the international Islamic gathering, which is being celebrated this day at Makka and in which we are joining by our prayers and our sympathy, makes a fascinating sociological study. It must be remembered that a Muslim is initiated into the idea of the equality of man and man on the floor of the Mosque, where prayers give every day a demonstration of the simplicity and the equality which run through the whole of the Islamic system.

We Muslims must never forget that, as yet, it is only one-sixth of mankind, (the Muslims making 1/6th of mankind) that has tasted the delicious fruit of equality. With the happenings of the last few years in Europe the duty of us Muslims towards our fellow beings becomes all the more important. They perhaps have a faint appreciation of but as yet they do not know the fullness of the taste of this fruit; and the reason is partly because we have failed in our duty to carry the light of Islam to them. The Qur-án says to the Prophet Muhammad, "Give to the people what has

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been revealed to you from your Lord" (V. 67). This commandment holds as good to-day as it did 1,400 years ago. The world is in sore need of ways by which it can obliterate its racial differences and forget its antipathies. No one but Muslims can do this task. About fifty years ago the need was perhaps not so serious. Race theories were confined to sociologists and ethnologists. But now one has begun to preach and glorify openly the virtues of the doctrine of enslavement, of exclusiveness, of partiality, of intolerance towards people not belonging to the Aryan race. The message of the moral fraternity, of the equality of souls, of social justice, of charity towards all, of protecting the weak and the oppressed is being pooh-poohed and derided openly. We Muslims, in common with our Christian friends, are inspired by the conviction of the fact that the individual does not develop but through devotion to others, through service to his fellow beings. But there is something more that we possess and that our fellow brethren in Christendom do not possess. That something leaves us as the only people who can shoulder the responsibility. Let us appreciate our position. We are the only spiritually democratic people in the world; for what other community or people can boast of being free from the blight of priestcraft? We alone can give spiritualised democracy to the world. I know that Europe has built up idealistic systems that preach race equality, that inculcate service to mankind, but experience shows that truth received through pure reason and through religions without the right and suitable accompaniments of formalism is incapable of bringing the fire of living conviction to societies and is incapable of a regeneration *en masse*. No religion in the world excepting Islam, not even Christianity, possesses the means of changing and transforming societies into

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veritable fraternities. No doubt Christianity has succeeded in changing the lives of individuals, and is doing so every day, but wholesale transformation has never come its way. The same applies to other religions.

The world has made progress, unparalleled in its history in the matter of its conquests of the forces of nature only to find that it is destroying itself and digging its grave with its own hands. As yet five-sixths of the world are groaning under the crushing burden of race consciousness, passioned exclusiveness and other ridiculous superiority complexes, and these five-sixths of mankind have not as yet realised that each and every person of them is to be of service to and to co-operate with all the others rather than be an enemy to all the others. This is a huge task! No one can shoulder it better than we Muslims, who not only possess the incomparably broad and cosmopolitan outlook on life but who also are the custodians of the secret and the methods to put that universal outlook on life into practice.

May Allah shower on us all the blessings of the Holy Qur-án. Amen!

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BY THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

[Continued from Vol. XXVIII, page 197.]

Now, as I have already said, if we do not find in the revelation of a great man provisions for the proper training of these two impulses (towards worship and towards civilisation) not to speak of other things, we cannot, by reason of this very deficiency, call that person a "prophet." As, after all, prophethood is the outcome of God's attribute of *Rabubiyyah* or "nourishing;" the kind of nourishment which prophethood affords is that of the emotions or impulses. It may be of interest to mention here that Abdul Baha, the great Bahai propagandist, has tried to prove the prophethood of Bahaullah, and this again on the authority of certain verses of the Holy Qur-an. He refers, among other verses, to the following:

"So whenever there will come to you from Me any guidance, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve" (2 : 38).

Abdul Baha has tried to substantiate with this verse his theory of the continuation of prophethood. He, however, does not seem to make allowance for the fact that the pronoun in "from Me" has as its noun in the previous verse the word *Rabb*. So we are constrained to see whether this subsequent claimant to prophethood has got any teachings reflecting God's attribute of *Rabubiyyah*; in other words, whether he has any guidance to offer in the refinement of the emotions or the purification of the consciousness. No doubt, Hazrat Bahaullah has framed a so-called "Law." He has changed the order of prayers, introduced modifications in fasting and effected other similar minor changes. But there is no provision in his

teachings for any purification of the consciousness, which the Qur-án has omitted. I, therefore, fail to acknowledge Hazrat Bahau'llah as a prophet on the mere grounds of his having introduced certain modifications in institutions like those of prayer and fasting. *Verses 130 and 131.*

The prayer just discussed gives, indeed, a very clear picture of Abraham's religion, but the substance of the whole position has been given in two brief words in the Verse 130. When God commanded Abraham to bow before His will, his reply was, as the verse says, that he would bow before any command that could come from the "Lord of the Creation." It is this religious attitude, indeed, which is of the purest form—freed, as it is, from every kind of narrowness—national, racial or ritualistic. The phrase "Lord of the Creation" refers to the desirability of a religious man acknowledging and acting upon such principles alone as fulfil the aims of the nourishment of the whole creation.

It is not religion that a man should act exclusively for himself. He should rather keep the good of God's creatures in view. This was the religion of Abraham; hence his precedence before God among the members of the human family.

132.—It was this religion which Abraham taught his children—that is to say, that they should obey the commandments of the Lord or the Nourisher of the Universe.

133.—The Prophet Jacob also, while taking leave of this world, said the same thing to his children. They similarly replied, saying that they did submit themselves to God. They also said that they would obey his God as well as the God of Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac. This particularisation is on one ground only. The same God is the Creator of all. And yet there are wide

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differences between the various conceptions of God with reference to the attributes ascribed to Him. From this point of view, one may say that the God of the Christians is not the same as the God of the Muslims. It was on this account that the sons of Jacob said that they would worship the God of Abraham.

134.—These people have passed away and have carried the effects of their actions with them. The whole affair, in reality, revolves round the worship of God. Hence to say that unless one becomes, for example, a Jew or a Christian, one will not be given guidance, is not correct.

135.—The proper attitude for any one to adopt in matters of religion is to say that he follows the religion of Abraham, who remained, throughout his whole life, a *Hanif*, i.e., one dedicated to God. The word 'Hanif' literally means "to be inclined in one particular direction." With reference to Abraham, it only means that he was solely inclined towards God. In other words, he did not turn in any other direction. And the right religion is that one should obey the commandments of God, through whomsoever they may be communicated.

136.—Now in this verse a Muslim is commanded to announce to people that he does not make any distinction between any two messengers of God, in whatsoever part of the world they may happen to appear; that he is not concerned with personalities, but with the commandments of God, which have to be obeyed, it being immaterial through whom they are delivered.

137.—Now, if others also follow this line of conduct, they must also be in the right course. But if any one is opposed to it, he is evidently actuated by a feeling of obstinacy. And if such a person adopts an aggressive

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attitude in his hostility, God will support the believers, —and He hears and sees everything.

138.—Thus true religion is that we should be saturated with Divine grace, and this is the highest possible form of religious life. In fact, the object of our human birth, as the Qur-án rightly points out, is nothing but that we should base our conduct on His behests. And the truth about our life is that we carry the effect of our actions with us into the other life. Now, when we are all subject to the law of righteousness of action, and the God which we worship is also the God of others, there is no room left for any quarrel on religious matters. At this point, for the Jews and the Christians to say that the prophets Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob were Jews or Christians is a mere assertion opposed to facts. These people, unfortunately, do not stop to think that the personalities in question had departed from this world long before the appearance of the founders of those two religions. How, on earth, can they be conceived of as belonging to any or both of these two religions? Such assertions are, in fact, attempts to hide the very evidences which are to be found in their scriptures.

139.—These sacred personalities have departed with the record of their own conduct clinging to them, and no one else will ever be called upon to account for how they behaved.

In this last section of its first part, the Holy Qur-án has preached a perfect religion of peace, the like of which is not to be met with in any other religion of the world. Of course, I have to admit with regret that, reacting to the narrow-mindedness of others some Muslims, contrary to the teachings of the Book, have become rather narrow-minded of late. If, however, the world adopts the religious attitude outlined by the Qur-án, there will be no possibility left of any

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disturbance in the field of religion. True religion is that one should do deeds of virtue, the instructions for which are to be found in the commandments of God, Who is the common Lord of all peoples. Through whomsoever His voice may come, one should bow before it. It is a well-known fact that, commanded by the Qur-án, Muslims pay unqualified homage to the leaders of all the religions of the world. If the followers of other religions, acting upon the example of the Muslims, begin respecting the leaders of faiths other than their own, in the same way as they revere their own leaders, the days of religious dissension will soon be over.

It should be remembered that, so far as the question of good deeds is concerned, one finds a uniform teaching given by all teachers of religion. Ritualism, as introduced into religion, has not only deformed religion, but has also become the fruitful source of inter-religious bickerings. If all followers of religion can set aside the ritualistic parts of religion, and concentrate on the worship of God and righteous acts, there will be no occasion left for any quarrel. This is, in essence, the connotation of Islam, as I have explained above. When the literal as well as the implied meaning of the term 'Islam' is the carrying out of God's commandments, it is inconceivable that one should not like to be called a Muslim. However much one may call himself Hindu or Christian or Jew, it is, after all, a case of associating oneself with a person or a race; but, so far as the question of righteous actions is concerned, one must, more or less, be a Muslim. To say this is merely to state a fact. After all, if, on the one hand, previous revelations have not retained their original shape and form, being distorted almost beyond recognition by the influence of human mind and hand, while, on the other hand, the Qur-án is proved to be the only Book that has maintained its purity

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from the beginning until now, and again, if the injunctions contained in this Book are such as are acceptable to the unsophisticated intelligence of man, and further, if there are no two opinions on the question of its being beneficial to man, why should not obedience be given to this Book alongside with God? And this is Islam in its recognised sense.

PART II

In the last section of its first part, the Holy Qur-án laid the world of humanity under a great weight of benefaction by separating real religion from the rituals of any system of religion. It taught, in very clear language, that religion, first and foremost, consists of faith in God and the Day of Judgment and of good deeds—things which have nothing exclusively to do with a particular people or country or person.

In every religion prayer is an institution, which inclines to be the embodiment of religion. Then there is the further possibility of the direction towards which the votaries turn in their prayers, becoming a substitute for the religion itself. The literal meaning of the term 'Qibla,' the symbolical pivot of Muslim prayer life, is the direction towards which a person turns. In the religious sense, however, it signifies the direction towards which a religious community turns in times of prayers. After all, the *Qibla*, or the sacred direction of every man, is the symbol of his religion. For instance, in olden days, the Zoroastrians used to face the sun in their prayers. But to-day a person facing the sun in prayers can pass for a Christian. In the same way, those who turn towards Jerusalem in prayers are called Jews.

At the time of the advent of the Prophet Muhammad different religious communities had different *Qiblas*. Although Arab traditions spoke of the religion of Abraham, his sojourn in Makka and his

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erecting the walls of the Ka'ba in Makka, and although the Arabs remembered the prayers of Abraham, yet there was no mention, in Makkan revelations, of the prayer of Abraham or its occasion.

There was, no doubt, a reference in it to the religion of Abraham, but there was nothing to indicate that our Holy Prophet was the prophet promised in it. Further, because of all the existing points of devotional turning, the temple of Jerusalem was the only one whose adherents were believers in the Unity of God to some extent, and also because, unless there was any clear commandment from God on any particular religious matter, the Prophet used to follow the sensible part of the traditions of the followers of the Scriptures, until the time of the revelation upon the matter, he kept the Temple of Jerusalem as the *Qibla* or point of turning. But on his immigration to Madina, the revelation of the chapter entitled 'The Cow,' made it clear first that he himself was the subject-matter of the prayer of Abraham; secondly that the Jews and Christians had deviated greatly from the Unity of God, which forms the corner-stone of the teachings of the religion of Islam, and thirdly that if that perfect Unity of the Divinity could be found anywhere it was in his teachings alone. Hence, if there was any suitable *Qibla* for him to adopt it would be the Ka'ba, the *Qibla* of Abraham, towards which he was naturally inclined now.

142.—Accordingly, when, on receiving the relevant revelation, he changed his *Qibla* of the Temple of Jerusalem for the Temple of Abraham in Makka, the ignorant began to be busy with gossip about the change. These people failed to realise that to face any particular direction in prayer was, after all, a matter of custom and did not constitute in itself any virtue. God is everywhere—in the East as well as in the West and at all places; there should be no particular importance

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attached either to the East or to the West. The guidance of God operates irrespectively of these directions.

143.—Of course, it was in the knowledge of God that the Muslim community was destined to spread Islam all over the world, and that they were not to be confined to any particular country as the Jews were in Palestine, rather they were to be the inhabitants of the whole world. For these reasons it was necessary that they should have a *Qibla* in a distinguished place, particularly in view of the fact that the *Qibla* of a people is, in a way, the symbol of its beliefs. The beliefs of the Muslims were not the same as those of the Jews, as the latter were not observers of the Unity of God in its purest form as the former were. Hence it was necessary that there should be something to distinguish the Muslims from the Jews. So much so that, even while saying prayers, people should know that they were Muslims and that the birth-place of their religion was the Holy City of Makka. At this time, moreover, there were some hypocrites, passing for believers, who were closely connected with the Jews. Besides, some Muslims, because of their hatred for the Quraish of Makka, were not inclined to turn towards that city. Circumstances, such as these, naturally made this change of *Qibla* a rather difficult matter. People of firm convictions, however, do not mind these trials, provided, of course, the favours of God guard them. As for the Holy Prophet himself, such a commandment was rather welcome to him.

144.—He receives the injunction to make the *Qibla* of Abraham his own *Qibla*, towards which the believers, wherever they happen to be, should turn their faces while in prayers.

145.—Now, however much the Jews might be dominated by the passion of greed, they would never

agree with the Muslims on their change of *Qibla*. Besides, when this question was raised, there were already several *Qiblas*. To begin with, the Christians had their own *Qibla*, not the same as the Jewish Temple of Jerusalem, and this in spite of the fact that the Christians belonged to the same tradition as the Jews, and that the prophet Jesus, as a true Jew, had kept to the *Qibla* of Jerusalem throughout his life. Nay, even the followers of Jesus had been observing the same *Qibla* for their prayers for two hundred years after him. In the fourth century, however, idolatrous tendencies vitiated the pure traditions of Christianity—and the Christians gradually adopted all the features of the sun-worshipping cult as their own. One of the changes thus wrought in their religious practices was that the East, *i.e.*, the rising point of the sun, came to be the Christian *Qibla* instead of the Temple of Jerusalem, the original *Qibla* of their religion. But even the Jews themselves were not free from corruption on this score. There was a sect among them called 'Samaritans' who differed from the bulk of the Jews on this question of *Qibla*. Thus there were various *Qiblas* belonging to different nations, and not one of them would yield to the other in the matter.

146.—Hence the rather serious tone of the command that the prophet should not follow the insensate desires of the Jews.

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BY MRS. NADIRE F. IVES OSMAN (NEW YORK)

In the opening chapter of the Gospel of St. John, the principal titles bestowed upon Jesus are acknowledged by his relative, John the Baptist, and by four of the men about to become his disciples. We are thus at once informed that Jesus was considered to be "the only-begotten Son," "the Lamb of God," "the Messiah" and "the King of Israel" in an account of the ministry of Jesus which follows upon a brief introduction designed especially for those having an acquaintance with Greek Philosophy. Of these witnesses it is Philip who declares: "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." (John I: 18, 36, 41, 45, 49.)

The name of Joseph figures prominently in the two genealogies of Jesus which have come down to us in the Gospels. The one contained in the Gospel of St. Matthew has been given the name of "The Legal Genealogy." Here the male line has been traced from Jesus through Joseph, the husband of Mary. The first book of the New Testament commences: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begat Isaac,"—and so on until it concludes with the 16th verse,—"and Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." (Matth. I:1—16.)

We may well wonder why this genealogy of Joseph has been given to us for, were Jesus a mere step-son, there could have been no reason to graft him on the family-tree of Mary's husband. The line of descent is also incomplete, for the name of one of the progenitors is missing somewhere from the list. We know this because in the following verse (Matth. I:17) we are told, "from the carrying away unto Babylon unto

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Christ are fourteen generations." Only thirteen have been given. Such an omission completely invalidates the reckoning, from a legal standpoint.

A second genealogy is included in the Gospel of St. Luke which, likewise, traces the ancestry of Jesus through Joseph. This has been named "the Natural Genealogy." It is, however, even more naive than the first. We discover that Joseph is now declared to have been the son of Heli, instead of the son of Jacob. If we are fortunate enough to possess a Bible with commentaries, we learn in a footnote that Heli was Mary's father. As it was the custom to trace a line through the male side only, someone has ingeniously inserted the name of Joseph in Mary's pedigree, substituting it there instead of her own. (It is not out of place to remark that if Mary had had a brother, which we cannot verify, his line would have been superior to hers.) In brief, Luke III: 23—38 reads: "Jesus, as was supposed the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli, which was the son of Matthat,"—and so on until we come to the name of Adam, who, we are informed, "was the son of God." It is very obvious that a desperate attempt has been made, in these two genealogies, to make something plausible.

From the two above-mentioned sources, we do gather the valuable information that Joseph was the lineal descendant of King Solomon, the son of David, whereas Mary traced her descent from David through his *younger son*, Nathan, *Solomon's brother*. Zechariah gives us additional light on the matter. He undoubtedly prophesied of Jesus in verses to which we shall later refer; but he has also drawn a very clear distinction between the two lines represented by Joseph and by Mary, which never became confused. "And the land shall mourn, every family apart: the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family

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of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart ; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart," etc. (Zech. XII : 12.) It is very evident, therefore, that a descent from Joseph was necessary to establish Jesus's title to the inheritance of the throne of David,—a descent from Nathan would have represented only the claim of a younger brother which could not have been in force while the royal line of David was still in existence. The right of the first-born male was mandatory in Hebrew law. (Deut. XXI : 15—17.) Unless Jesus were the offspring of Joseph, one of his half-brothers, born later to Joseph and Mary, could have superseded him and made his pretensions invalid.

Despite the fact that Mary was of the tribe of Judah, we know from Luke I : 36 that she was also a cousin of Elizabeth, the mother of John. In Verse 5 of the same chapter, we are told that Elizabeth was born of the line of Aaron, and was also the wife of a priest : both having been descended from Levi, they were separate from the tribe of Judah. They had long been childless. The holy Qur-án tells us that Mary's mother, like Elizabeth, also came of the line of Aaron, and that she had placed her daughter under the care of Zacharias, Elizabeth's husband, in obedience to a vow made even before the birth of Mary (Holy Qur-án III : 34, 36). The only tradition that we have of Jesus's mother states that she had been devoted to the temple service as a child. It is quite likely, therefore, as Mary was related to Elizabeth, of the line of Aaron, while her father came of the house of Jacob, that actually her mother had been born in the priestly caste, but had later married out of it.

Seven hundred years before Jesus was born, the Prophet Isaiah had spoken : " Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign ; Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name

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Immanuel" (Isaiah VII: 14). There is no doubt that Mary and her son were given to the world as a sign from God, for the resulting controversies which have ravaged and torn mankind have indicated that. We find an acknowledgment of this in the Holy Qur-án: "And We made the son of Mary and his mother a sign" (Holy Qur-án XXIII: 50).

It is not recorded that this name "Immanuel" was ever given to Jesus directly by his mother. As interpreted, "God with us," it might have been used as an appellation for any prophet. It may be observed, however, that the name given to Mary's son by his parents was not really that of "Jesus." This latter is only the Latin form of the original Hebrew name 'Yēshūa', which signifies "Jehovah helps." There is not a very great difference in meaning between the two names, "Immanuel" and "Yēshūa", except that the name from which "Jesus" has been derived was constructed with the aid of that name of God so disparaged by Christians,—"Jehovah."

One of the words used in this prophecy, "virgin," will bear a cautious scrutiny. It appears frequently in Hebrew Scripture where it was uncoloured by later strained intellectual aspirations. In Psalms XIV: 13, 14, to quote an example, we read of "The King's daughter . . . the virgins, her companions that follow her." There was, however, a peculiar association with this word in the Israelite mind, very remote from Western thought. This was the result of certain restrictions placed upon the priests in their choice of wives. They could not marry a widow, a divorced woman, a profane, or a harlot. All but virgins were forbidden to them (Lev. XXI: 13, 14). The clue to the reason for this prohibition may be found when we review other requirements for the hereditary priesthood. Any physical blemish excluded a son from officiating

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at the altar or from going into the veil. Only the most perfect specimens of man, beast, bird, fruit or grain (and, of the last, only the first-fruits) were considered worthy of presentation. Such a state of physical excellence was a witness to the glory of God in His rôle as Creator, and impressive to a wondering people but recently escaped from a state of bondage and depression.

This scrupulous selection of an exterior perfection rounded out the insistence upon a purity of content. The direction given to Abraham, "Walk before me and be thou perfect . . ." (Gen. XVII : 1) had again been voiced in Deuteronomy XVIII : 13—"Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God"—which made the Ten Commandments obligatory. It was recognised that a disregard of chastity would spread havoc throughout the nation and destroy its finest qualities, as well as the direct line. Purity of Life was re-emphasised for the priesthood. The virgin, about to be admitted into a domesticity closely allied with the life of the temple, became an example of virtuous womanhood.

It is to be noted that Ezekiel, companion of the Babylonian Exiles, gave substantially the same directions as those contained in Leviticus, for the priesthood of his day, but with a difference. The authority for this modification of the law of Moses was his inspired vision: "Neither shall they, the priests, take for their wives a widow, nor her that is put away; but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow that had a priest before." (Ezek. XLIV : 22.) With the substitution of the more common noun, "maiden," for our austere term, "virgin," the direction seems to assume a softer outline.

When, however, we consult the Hebrew texts of Leviticus and Ezekiel which refer to the choice of wives for the priesthood, we make the discovery that, although the English translation of the Bible offers us "maiden"

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as the substitute for "virgin," the same Hebrew word has been used in each instance; "bsuloh," signifying "virgin,"—a woman who has had no special experience with man. In the verse of Psalms which referred to the companions of the King's daughter, we again find "bsuloh." This word is not used in Isaiah VII: 14. In that case was employed a noun not a synonym for virgin—"almo," which means "a young woman." We have no exact equivalent for this word in English. It was used, however, to describe a young woman who is either married or unmarried in the same interchangeable way as when our English word "girl" is applied to a female child while, at the same time, it may find a rightful place in the sentence, "She is a fine girl," which now refers to a young married woman.

The foregoing should explain what has often seemed so incomprehensible,—why an educated Jew, instructed in the language of his forefathers, should fail to respond to the suggestion that a unique miracle was prophesied in Isaiah, which found its fulfilment in the life of the virgin Mary. It also accounts for the strangeness of the fact that, for nearly eight hundred years previous to the birth of Jesus, this prophecy was current among the Jews while yet they entertained no suspicion that they were to expect other than what was common to the race of man. The Jews were not looking for an incarnation of God that should be arrived at by supernatural means: they were wishing and praying for that leader who might save them from their dependent position, and who might also become their King.

We think it interesting to point out that Matthew I: 23 attempts to quote Isaiah VII: 14, but with the following result: "Behold, a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son and they shall call

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his name Emmanuel." This is not identical with the original form of the prophecy.

The Gospel of Luke is the only book in the New Testament which contains an account of what has been called "The Annunciation." We are there told that Mary, a virgin, was espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. An angel (we should add in vision) came to acquaint her with the news that she should conceive a son: "And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father, David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob." In other words, Mary has been informed that she will bear a son, in God's time, of her fiancé, Joseph, of the house of David, who had just been mentioned. Mary's astonishment brings the reply that with God nothing is impossible (Luke I: 27—36). Did not her cousin, Elizabeth, conceive a child in her old age, she, who like Sarah, had been called barren? We are then informed that, three months later, Zacharias publicly acknowledged the male parent of the child soon to be born to his relative, Mary. Amid an outburst of prophecy and thanksgiving occasioned by the birth of his own son, he exclaimed: "And (God) hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David" (Luke I: 69). The entire first chapter of Luke provides us with a perfect example of what may be won by interpretation.

It must be conceded that many New Testament verses declare unequivocally that Jesus was the Son of God, a statement which, as it draws certain minds through the emotions, creates in others a strong repugnance by its irrationality and suggestion of Polytheism. We should, nevertheless, feel a sense of compassion for those who react with joy to the idea that God, or His Son, would come down and submit himself to birth in our impure midst; it seems more

difficult, however, to find any degree of sympathy for sentiments such as were once so graciously written to us, "*Que peut-il y avoir de plus beau, de plus saint que L'Eucharistie qu' un Dieu se donnant en nourriture á nos á mes ?*" What could be more beautiful, more holy, than the Eucharist, where God gives himself as food for our souls? We should beware, at the same time, of condemning lightly those who cherish a conception of God so high that it seems to them inconceivable that His Presence could be circumscribed by the finite, or His Majesty suffer the detraction of that incongruous personage, another member of His "Divine Family."

We have read, however, that the New Testament does not claim this sacred relationship for Jesus alone. In the genealogy of Luke just given, Adam, likewise, was called "the son of God" although in his case the term of consanguinity was not capitalised. Romans VIII:14 informs us, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." This explanation would not justify the inclusion, in a legal genealogy, of that which has to do only with a spiritual state. A second explanation may then be advanced that a terse reference has been made to God as the Creator of physical man. This interpretation may at first seem more appropriate, yet further consideration must pronounce it as inadequate. The word "son" itself opens up the way for a double construction,—it demands immediately the existence of a mother. As a result, our minds cannot but revert to the first allegory of creation as given in the first chapter of Genesis. This is truly a noble representation of what a mere statement of human relationship, with its consequent disregard of all facts, can achieve.

The appearance in Hebrew Scripture of a Divine solicitude, expressed in terms of human ties, is first

ISLAM AND JESUS

to be found in Exodus. Moses was instructed by God that he should say unto Pharaoh, "Thus, saith the Lord, 'Israel is my son, even my first-born . . . let my son go that he may serve me.'" (Ex. IV : 22, 23). We may well believe that such an address must have come as a rude shock to the mighty Pharaoh who had been accustomed to thinking of himself as the divine son of God,—realised by a most ingenious procedure. The Holy Qur-án, written nearly thirteen hundred years ago, provides us with a truer picture of what must have been Pharaoh's response than does even Exodus itself, and which we now can appreciate—thanks to the progress made in Egyptology: "If thou wilt take a god beside me, I will put thee in prison" (Holy Qur-án XXVI : 29).

In an effort to add to the prophetic background of Jesus, this event, recalled in Hosea, has been requisitioned for the New Testament. We are told in Matthew that the child Jesus was in Egypt "until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying 'Out of Egypt have I called my son'" (Matth. II : 15). Two references have been given in the Bible footnotes, the first being Numbers XXIV : 8: "God brought him forth out of Egypt." There is no special reason to believe that this verse prophesied the "Flight into Egypt" which, we are told, in Matthew alone, was taken by Joseph and his family. The second reference is the one from which the verse in Matthew directly quotes, but it certainly was never meant to be used in this connection: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him and called my son out of Egypt" (Hosea XI : 1). All of the context denies such an application. The verse refers specifically to that charge given to Moses which we have just quoted: "Israel is my son, even my first-

born . . . let my son go that he may serve me" (Ex. IV : 22).

From a perusal of Old Testament verses, the conclusion should immediately be reached that, if Jesus did assert his sonship to God in the presence of his compatriots, there should have been no cause for any astonishment, on their part. This is borne out by John VIII : 41, where we are told that, while speaking with Jesus, the Jews acknowledged the fatherhood of God in his presence; "We have one Father, even God," they exclaimed. When Jesus was about to be stoned for blasphemy, that most serious of all offences in the Hebrew religion,—the prophesying falsely in the name of God,—he hastened to recall to them that verse of Psalms LXXXII : 6 : "I have said ye are gods : and all of you are children of the Most High." We find other declarations, however, which carry Jesus far beyond the bounds of this analogy : "The Father is in me and I in Him." (John X : 38) ; "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John XIV : 9) : although he also can still say to them, "The first of all the Commandments is, 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One Lord'" (Mark XII : 29). If even these statements might be explained away as an example of spiritual exaggeration, the climax may be said to have been reached, from the Jewish viewpoint, when it is said that Jesus announced, "Before Abraham was, I am." We are told that Jesus saved himself by hiding, after the use of these sacred words, and "went out of the temple going through the midst of them, and so passed by" (John VIII : 58, 59).

WHAT IS ISLAM?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its teachings. For further details, please write to the IMAM of the Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.]

ISLAM: THE RELIGION OF PEACE.—The word Islam literally means: (1) Peace; (2) the way to achieve peace; (3) submission, as submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code, whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

THE PROPHET OF ISLAM.—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, *i.e.*, the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's Prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

THE QUR-AN.—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-án, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.—These are seven in number: Belief in (1) Allah; (2) Angels; (3) Books from God; (4) Messengers from God; (5) the Hereafter; (6) the Premeasurement of good and evil; (7) Resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life, but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the Hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in Heaven. State after death is an image of the spiritual state in this life.

The sixth article of Faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination; he believes in Pre-measurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

PILLARS OF ISLAM.—These are five in number: (1) Declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; (2) Prayer; (3) Fasting; (4) Almsgiving; (5) Pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine at Mecca.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.—The Muslims worship One God—the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of

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All the Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

FAITH AND ACTION.—Faith without action is a dead-letter. Faith by itself is insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and in the hereafter. Each must bear his own burden and none can expiate for another's sin.

ETHICS OF ISLAM.—"Imbue yourself with Divine Attributes," says the noble Prophet. God is the prototype of man, and His Attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. Righteousness in Islam consists in leading a life in complete harmony with the Divine Attributes. To act otherwise is sin.

CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM.—The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature, which, made of the goodliest fibre, is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the angels, and leading him to the border of Divinity.

THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM.—Man and woman come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainments. Islam places man and woman under the like obligations, the one to the other.

EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM.—Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things; virtue and the service of humanity are the matters of real merit. Distinctions of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family, and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and the white into one fraternal whole.

PERSONAL JUDGMENT.—Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion, which, according to the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, is a blessing of God.

KNOWLEDGE.—The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior to angels.

SANCTITY OF LABOUR.—Every labour which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

CHARITY.—All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from God, for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to God. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.

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"Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Last of the Prophets . . ."—
HOLY QUR-AN 33: 40. "There will be no Prophet after me."—MUHAMMAD.

The
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FOUNDED BY THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

Vol. XXVIII]

RAMADZAN, 1359 A.H.
OCTOBER, 1940 A.C.

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(Founded By The Late Al-Hajj Khwaja Kemal-ud-Din)

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Date 12-5-40.

H. R. EASTGATE.



THE INDIAN MUSLIM SOLDIERS AT
The photo was taken in front of the Sir Salar Jung Memo



SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE, WOKING.
House, after the Jum'a prayers on Friday 7th June, 1940.

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INDIAN MUSLIM SOLDIERS AT THE SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE, WOKING

The news that the Muslim Indian soldiers who had been fighting side by side with the British Expeditionary Force in France were coming to the Shah Jehan Mosque at Woking for their Friday prayers had made the tiny Mosque at Woking the cynosure of the British public on Friday, the 7th June, 1940. Led by their officer-in-charge, the men and the officers, some three hundred strong, marched from their camp some ten miles away from Woking to the Mosque. The Secretary of the Mosque had gone out to meet them at a good distance from the Mosque and piloted them to the Mosque now that the road signs have been removed from the countryside. It was exceptionally warm—rather uncomfortable—to walk in the sun. The heat of the sun reminded one of the tropical sun. But the enthusiasm of the men was so great that only one idea seemed to dominate their actions and their movements—they wanted to see their Mosque and bow their heads before their Creator under proper Muslim atmosphere which they had not seen or experienced during the period of their absence from India ever since the beginning of the war. For this spiritual bliss they were willing to undergo any privation. One had but to see their faces to realise the joy they, each one of them, experienced at the sight of their Mosque in the land of the Trinity ; their Mosque which had become world-famous, despite its tiny dimensions, by virtue of its tireless efforts mostly under discouraging conditions, in the service of Islam ; their Mosque which had succeeded in infusing courage into the sinking heart of many a young man who had become dazzled by the glamour of the Western civilisation and in steadying him in his belief in the future of Islam and what is more their Mosque that

INDIAN MUSLIM SOLDIERS

has been the source of the light of Islam to many a Westerner. They were more than glad to see that there was an English Muslim community composed of their Muslim brethren and sisters in Islam that had assembled at the Mosque to accord them happy welcome in their midst. The visitors were received by the English Muslim ladies, Mrs. Burrows, Mrs. Groves and Mrs. Farmer, who also went round offering to each one of them cold drinks which were most appreciated after the long walk in the hot sun. Our sister-in-Islam Miss Al-Hajja 'A'isha Wentworth-Fitzwilliam, could not come and sent instead a telegram of welcome to the Indian Muslim soldiers. Al-Hajja 'A'isha Fitzwilliam has been exceptionally busy in taking interest in the welfare of the Indian Muslim soldiers so that the English Muslim community is proud of her.

After a short rest under the shade of the trees in the grounds of the Mosque the visitors set about performing ablutions for the Friday Prayers. The First Call to the Prayers was sounded by their religious leader, Maulvi Abdul Ghani. It was impressive to see the men responding to the words of the Call: "Come to prayers, Come to prayers, Come to success, Come to success." No sooner did these words reach his ears than every one just left the work or the talk wherever it was. Every one had one idea: to go to the Mosque because the call had been made. Within the next few minutes every one had come to the Mosque and taken his seat inside the Mosque or outside it, its lawn inside the semi-circular enclosure having been covered with carpets to accommodate the overflowing number of the devotees. After each one had said his individual preliminary prayers consisting of four *rak'ats*, Maulvi Abdul Ghani again sounded the Second Call. Thereupon the Imam Abdul Majid, M.A., stood up and recited the well-known verse of the Holy Qur-án which

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reads: "This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour on you and chosen for you Islam as religion." (5 : 3.)

The Imam laid emphasis on the fact that we Muslims should be worthy of the favours of God ; for favours involve obligations. There is no privilege without corresponding duties, no honours without responsibilities. The Khutba' (the sermon) was delivered in the Urdu language and was followed by *As-Salât 'ala'n-Nabi* in which the whole of the Congregation took part. The *As-Salât 'ala'n-Nabi* was followed by a short sermon by Maulvi Abdul Ghani in which he exhorted the audience to spend that which it loved most.

After the prayers, tea was served to the Congregation by the Woking Mosque and a photo taken which we reproduce as a frontispiece to this issue.

THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

BY THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

(Continued from p. 228, June 1940 issue.)

To further emphasise this, it is also stated that it is a step in the right direction and dictated by considerations of truth, so much so that there is no room in it for any doubt or misgiving.

In this section there are a few words that need a special explanation. In Verse 142, the objectors to the change of *Qibla* have been called unwise not without strong reasons. The fact is, this change was such a patent necessity that to criticise it was a clear indication of lack of intelligence. For, to the Quraish of Makka it should be a matter of joy, as their traditions centred round the Ka'ba of Abraham. This centre was to become the gathering place of all nations. The prophethood which related to it would also belong to these people. Thus it left them no ground for criticising

THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

this change; particularly when the prostration was directed towards the house which was already held in esteem by them. As for the Jews, they also acted foolishly in criticising this step, as this change of *Qibla* supported the truth of their own Scriptures. They could not very well expunge the prophecies concerning the prophethood of Arabia, which were lying scattered all over their Scriptures. But surpassing all these peoples in foolishness are the clergyman-critics of our own time who, holding the position of University Professors, insult their very gowns by offering such ridiculous criticism as that the Prophet first bowed towards the Holy Temple of Jerusalem to please the Jews and then towards the Ka'ba to please the unbelievers of Makka. I wish these people had sense enough to realise that, during the 12 years of his stay in Makka, when he had not the slightest contact with the Jews, the Prophet was prostrating towards the Temple in Jerusalem. It is, indeed, a very curious way of placating the Jews that now that he came to their city, *i.e.*, Madina, he should give up Jerusalem as the city of his devotional turning. On the other hand, the opportunity to placate the Makkan unbelievers was when he was living in Makka. It was a strange way of conciliating them that during that time he would be turning towards the Temple of Jerusalem, in preference to the Ka'ba, the House they venerated so much, and that he should turn towards the Ka'ba when Makkan hostility reached its extreme point. In both situations he acted in a way which would enrage rather than conciliate the one party or the other. Thus, it will not be at all untrue to say that this last mentioned group, *i.e.*, the Christian clergy, are the most foolish of all the critics of this change of *Qibla*.

In Verse 143, the Muslims have been called an equitable nation. The Arabic expression for which

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the word "equitable" has been used in translation is "Wasat" which affords another example of the unique excellence of the Arabic language. "Wasat" means middle part. It also means "best." It is a well-known fact that the best thing is that which is free from both oversufficiency and inadequacy and holds to the golden mean. No doubt, the teachings of the Qur-án are there to show that those who would believe in and act upon them will make an ideal nation. Apart from this, however, the primary sense of the word, *i.e.*, observing the middle course, is a truth which applies most forcibly to the teachings of this faith. For instance, whereas the Jewish law has prescribed tooth-for-tooth retaliation,* the Christian principle encourages the oppressor to further oppression by the injunction of turning the other cheek when smitten on the one! Neither of these teachings can be applicable to all conditions and at all times. As distinguished from these two extreme principles, the Holy Qur-án has in view the correction of the evil-doer. Retaliation is permissible on proper occasions, whereas there is also recommendation for forgiveness. But the object in each case is the reformation of the evil-doer. If, on the one hand, the whole religious structure, both in Hinduism and Judaism, is based on rituals, on the other, the Christian faith has gone to the opposite extreme of dispensing with the necessity of all laws. As distinct from both these extremes, the Holy Qur-án lays down the principle in its Verse 177, that although some kind of form is necessary for worship, yet in itself it is no virtue.

In Verse 143, the Book speaks of God as *Ra'ūfur-Rahim*. Usually these two words "Ra'ūf" and "Rahim" occur together in the pages of this Book. "Raf'at" in Arabic signifies that active type of affec-

*Habakkuk, Isaiah.

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tion and kindness which manifests itself in alleviating the suffering of others. For example, if a person relieves someone in a position of danger, he will be entitled to the epithet "Ra'ûf." The mercy of *Rahim* is called forth by some good deed, however small. The two attributes have been used together, on the ground that the *raf'at* of God comes into play only when some good deed has been done. Leaving aside other events, this change of *Qibla* became a trial for some Muslims, but their previous virtuous conduct, expressing itself in their embracing the new faith, was a guarantee that they would come out of this trial unhurt, since God had in Him these attributes of "*Rahimiyat*" and "*Raf'at*." Possessing these attributes, He could not allow the faith of these people to be wasted. In fact, this was a very serious matter, as is indicated by the word "*Kabîr*" occurring in the verse under discussion. But as *Ra'ûf* and *Rahim*, God helped them out of this trial by His own mercy because of their previous faith.

Section 18, Verse 148.—In short, this change of *Qibla* had many underlying purposes. The pith of religion, however, was rectitude of conduct. Hence it is commanded that the faithful should lead others in the matter of virtuous deeds. Wherever they may be, God will collect them as He has power over everything. Of course, the manifestation of His power is conditioned by intelligence and wisdom.

149.—The believers should face the Ka'ba wherever they may happen to be. This is the truth. The situation is a creation of the Lord, and is befitting the time. It is not possible that God should be indifferent to the consequences of this step.

150.—So wherever the believers may happen to be, they should face this Sacred House, so that people may not be in doubt as regards their identity. Of course, such of the people as are unjust by nature will

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never appreciate this step, because they are incapable, by nature, to understand a fact in its proper bearing. The faithful, however, have no need to be afraid of such people. They should be afraid of God alone. He will complete His blessings on them and they will be walking along the right path—a thing which, in fact, is a great blessing by itself.

The word *khashiyat* has been used in this verse and it means a feeling of fear with respect to some person, from whom something of consequence is expected to happen to the possessor of the feeling. This fear is further associated with a kind of respect for the person so feared. Thus we are told in this verse that the people of unjust nature are not such from whom one should apprehend any harm or as are worthy of any respect. One should have *khashiyat* or fear of God and be attentive to Him alone, lest He lets something befall him. It is such a fear which will result in the completion of blessing from God and in His guiding the person concerned in the right way.

151.—It is to regulate and utilise this tendency of fear for God, innate in human nature, that the Prophet has been sent to you. He is one among you. He communicates to you messages of God, purifies your minds, teaches you knowledge and wisdom and instructs you in such things that you were totally ignorant of. * You should bear in mind all that he says.

152.—Remember! It will not carry you anywhere if you have a rosary in your hand and you repeat with its help the names of God. To remember anyone you should remember his position and his will so that the person remembering may conduct himself according to the will of the person remembered. If you remember God in this correct way, He will also, as a result, remember you, and will establish you in glory and honour. It is noteworthy that, in Arabic, one of

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the meanings of *zīkr*, translated as "remembrance," is "honouring." Continuing, the commandment says that we should offer our *shukr* or thanks to Him, and should not return ingratitude for His gifts. The word *shukr* also does not mean just a verbal acknowledgment of a favour, as there will be no sense in it. The real gratitude is to realise the value of the gift and to use it in the proper way. In other words, to apply a gift in the work it is intended for is the true expression of gratitude for it.

Section XIX, Verse 153.—It was but natural that the change of *Qibla* should arouse opposition, as it presented Islam in a new form. The believers are asked to exhibit patience in view of troubles consequent upon it. They should seek the help of God Who would remove all difficulties arising out of this question. Here the only solution of difficulties suggested is that the afflicted should turn to God, and apply to Him alone for succour incessantly. But in such spiritual struggle patience is indispensable. In fact patience is the key to all successes. Sufferings are unavoidable and it is these that call forth patience, but it is through patience again that the life eternal is obtained.

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“ And (We sent) apostles We have mentioned to you before and apostles We have not mentioned to you ; and to Moses Allah addressed His word, speaking (to him).

“ (We sent) apostles as the givers of good news and as warners, so that people should not have a plea against Allah after the (coming of) apostles ; and Allah is Mighty, Wise.”—*The Holy Qur-án*, Chapter 4, Verses 164 and 165.

Islam entered India more than a thousand years ago. It did not come here as a casual visitor, although individual Muslims there were many who came as such. It came to settle down and form an integral part of its national life.

Islam appeared in the scene of world affairs with the sole object of service. It went everywhere to serve and to help. The approach of Muslims may not have been always a pleasant one but the approach of Islam as a religion has always been affectionate and peaceful. People know too much of Islam's army manœuvres, but very little of its loving penetration in different parts of the world. They know too much of Mahmud of Ghazni but too little of Khwaja Mu'inuddin Chishti. That is Islam's misfortune, but let not that fact detain us to sorrow.

Behind the political conquests and administrative machineries of the Pathans and the Mughals was the imperceptible yet salutary effect of Islamic spirituality slowly but surely revitalising the drooping national character of Hindu India.

It is a mistake to think that a revealed religion influences the spiritual lives only of those who come to confess it formally. Like a shower of rain on the hill-top, its services are meant as much for distant regions as for the area immediately affected by it. It is a phenomenon not sufficiently taken note of by the

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students of religion that a fresh revelation invariably works a considerable change in the spiritual outlook of the followers of older religions. If, for example, Islam revolutionised the Arab life and the life of those who came to embrace it later, it did not fail to arouse a new zest for real religious life in the minds of the people of other and older religions. Thus, we find a progressive change for the better taking place in all older religions since the advent of Islam. If Christianity and Judaism have benefited enormously from the invigorating emotions and ideas proceeding from Islam, Hinduism did not remain unaffected by them either. As a matter of fact, Hinduism, as it existed before the advent of Islam, can be said to be an altogether different thing from the Hinduism that has developed since. It is true that elements of reconstruction have always been found in the body of these religions themselves but it should not be forgotten that the will to avail them and the light to discover them always come from the religion of the moment. And this is no discredit to the reformed religion. The older is as much a religion from God as the newer. Both have the same source. If they do not help one another, who will ?

Of course, it is high time that different religious communities had eschewed the idea of the monopoly of Divine favour. The exclusive sanctity attached to any particular religion or land has to be renounced not only to arrive at a true conception of religion but in the very interest of international and inter-religious peace. The services of Islam will prove invaluable in this matter. It stands nonchalantly for an equal sanctity of all religions and for an equal favour for all the religious communities humanity has known. Muslims are those "who believe in what has been revealed to you (Muhammad) and that which was revealed before you (Muhammad)," and who "do not make any distinction between any of them (*i.e.*, Divinely commissioned reformers and leaders of religion)." By the very essentials of his religion a Muslim is bound to

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respect the founders of other religions. He is, of course, not prepared to accept any great figure in the past as an incarnation or a son of God. He takes them as God-inspired men. But in doing so he, in fact, pays them more real homage than those who try to ascribe any higher dignity to them.

It is time, indeed, that the world had appreciated the fact that Islam never proposed to supplant any religious tradition but only to supplement and enlarge it.

Hinduism has proved itself a great and persevering religion. Perhaps next only to Judaism, it has the longest continuous tradition. In fact, the great Hindu nation has shown a cultural stamina parallel only to that of the Jews.

It is noteworthy that after ages of lapse, the Hindu mind is once more anxious to revive the past traditions of the race. Let us hasten to assure our Hindu brothers that it will bring nothing but gladness to the Muslim heart, if revival of Hinduism means the revival of the days of the great teachers of Hinduism—Shri Rama and Shri Krishna. And let us warn them that anything short of it will be a betrayal of their sacred memories. We further assure our Hindu compatriots that Islam can help them enormously in salvaging the sacred traditions of India as they really were. The light of the Qur-án will act as a searchlight to discover the deep universal truths, that lie hidden underneath the huge mass of allegory and metaphysical symbolism which the ingenuity of human mind has contrived to weave round the simple rational religion of old-time *Rishis*.

The Eastern mind is famous for its ready acknowledgment of any help and benefit received. The West has, unfortunately, a very different history to present on this score. The debts of intellectual and cultural help which the West owes to Islam, has been persistently denied. We do hope the Eastern spirit of Hindu India will not follow that shameful path and will readily

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admit the enormous spiritual and intellectual inspiration which Islam brought as a gift to this great and ancient land. An acknowledgment on these lines will pave the way for a friendly discussion as to what Islam can do in the fulfilment of the new ambitions which are animating the minds of patriotic Indians.

Freedom from foreign domination is no doubt, a praiseworthy ideal, but to our mind, this is not an ideal great enough for a country so great in spiritual traditions as India is. So often do we find our higher destiny being fulfilled in spite of ourselves. Who knows the higher destiny of India will be fulfilled in spite of our passionately holding to comparatively lower ideals inspired by the materialistic West ?

Let our Hindu compatriots take note of the fact that Islam has entered a new phase in its present appeal to them. It is new, not in the sense of its being alien to the constitution of the religion. It is new in the sense of being emphasised afresh and in an unprecedented manner. It is the moral and the spiritual phase. It was there all the time, but the political glory of Islam had kept it overshadowed all this time. Now that that political glory has more or less receded into the background, it has the opportunity of shining in its fullest brilliance.

With all the colouring it has taken from the materialistic West, the Hindu mind, we are sure, is still religious and devotional at bottom. It is expected to respond more readily to a spiritual appeal than to a material one. Islam's is the only appeal of spirituality to-day in the world. The appeal has proved powerful enough to elicit a response even from the West. Will it fall flat on the Hindu ear ? We can say with confidence, please God, " No."

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THE CAUSE OF WORLD'S ILLS: A RETROSPECT

BY C. PARAMESHWAR PILLAI

[We have great pleasure in publishing the following article from the pen of a devout Hindu scholar. If all Hindus were, like the writer, followers of the original tradition of Hinduism, and animated by its original and inner spirit, Hindu-Muslim problem in India would have already been half solved. We recommend to the careful study of our readers his appeal for a faithful following of the spirit of religion to the total exclusion of all simulation and show and exhibition of selfishness and aggrandisement. We need hardly emphasise that it is these latter things which make for the pugnacious side of a religious movement, and which gradually lead to the corruption of the system.

Islam recognises the source of all religions in God, but it has also regretfully to affirm that there is scarcely a religion to-day which has not suffered in purity, owing to the "guilt of man," both of form and meaning. With regard to Islam, this much can be said at least that, however much malpractised, its structure and general outline remain uncorrupted till to-day. The excrescences of it, fortunately, have not yet formed part of its body. The true Islam is yet, luckily, readily distinguishable from false Islam. That is the only credit we claim for this religion. We are afraid the same cannot be said of other religions. In them the real and the faked are lumped together in an indistinguishable mass.

What is more, in Islam misinterpretation and malpractice have never been universal as in other religions. If one section of its followers have believed and acted wrongly in a certain matter, another section has always been found to protest against it and present

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a correct example in the matter. And this is a clear proof of its being a living religion. In this world of imperfections, we should not expect to find any proof clearer than this.—ED. I.R.]

About fourteen centuries ago, to a deputation of Banu Amir who waited upon the Holy Prophet Muhammiad and who spoke of him as their "Lord" and as "the best of us," the Prophet said :

"Your Lord is God. When you speak, you must think and weigh whether or not it be Satan who is driving you."

There are many great sayings which seek to impress upon persons the desirability of exercising restraint on their thought and speech, but there is none so penetrating and telling. The teachings of the God-inspired, though directly addressed to groups of individuals, are always of universal values; they are for universal application, and the above teaching is by no means an exception. It goes to the very root of the problem of right conduct and right life. It does not merely reiterate the advisability or desirability of "Discretion in speech being more than eloquence," as Bacon puts it. It, on the other hand, insists on the imperative necessity of bringing to bear upon our thought, word and deed, prudence and judgment every time we think and express whether or not we are faithful and truthful to our God and to ourselves. In fine, it enjoins on man the duty of self-analysis and self-examination in every moment of his life—an anxious and honest search and scrutiny within himself of himself, in an atmosphere of the felt Presence of the Omniscient Lord, whether or not he pays unstinted and undivided homage to his Lord and Him alone in every detail of his personal, social, national and religious activities. It emphasises that Religion is a serious affair. It discourages all idle thoughts that mere

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lip-homage to the leadership of the holy Prophets and Rishis or a surface profession of faith in God and Religion, whether Hinduism, Islam, Christianity or any other, as being of any moment or value. “. . . . Whoever *believes and acts aright*, they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve,” is the Divine Promise given in the Holy Qur-án (VI : 48). Professions of faith in God, in the truth of Revealed Religion, in the leadership of the holy leaders and teachers, are helpful only in so far as they influence and dominate the follower's inner life so as to find its own consistent expression in the outer life in the form of thought, word and deed.

Religion, according to the Quranic and the Hindu teaching, is the way of life. Hypocrisy, simulation of godliness or piety, or half-hearted allegiance to selflessness and virtue, has no place in religion. *To be or not to be?* that is the only question in Religion. The Principle of Islam, preached by the Holy Prophet of Arabia, is the Principle of the Religion taught by the holy Sages and Rishis of India. The two, Hinduism and Islam, are not complementary to each other, but they are one and the same essentially. They both teach in unmistakable terms the unity of God and the unity of all created beings. They both declare that God is the sole and Supreme, Omniscient, Omnipresent and Omnipotent Creator, Protector and Sustainer of the Universe. They both enjoin on their followers to be deeply, sincerely and consistently devoted to God, and to be true and faithful, inwardly as well as outwardly, to their professed beliefs and faiths. They both emphasise on the supreme necessity of realising God, of imbibing the Divine attributes of God, in this very life. In Chapter II, Verse 138, the Qur-án says : “Dye yourself with the colouring of God, and nothing is better than the colouring of God.” Again, it says : “They are losers indeed who reject the meeting of

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God (in this life)." (VI : 31.) The life which has not for its serious purpose this dyeing oneself with the colouring of God, this meeting of God, this identification with the All-loving, Almighty Creator, is "an evil; and is a play and an idle sport." (VI : 31, 32.) They both preach of the necessity of worshipping God, and both insist that those who worship must "guard" their prayers, must be sincere in their worship. The Qur-án enjoins : " Keep up prayer ; for prayer keeps (one) away from indecency and evil, and the remembrance of God is certainly the greatest." (XXIX : 45.) But it also reminds the worshippers of the truth " Woe to the praying ones who are unmindful of their prayers, who do good to be seen, and withhold alms." (CVII : 4—7.) They who are believers, they who are heirs to Paradise, are those who *guard* their prayers and are the *keepers* of their trusts and their covenants (XXIII : 8—11). Both Islam and Hinduism declare that the Source of all religions is God. They both impose on their followers the obligations to live for the triumph of Virtue, of Good. " And thou dost conform (thyself) to sublime morality " (LXVIII : 4). They both command man to believe in the existence of incorruptible, inviolable, self-acting Laws of God, such as of Cause and Effect, of Compensation, of Reciprocity, of Harmony, of Perfection, etc., subject only to the Almighty Creator. They both teach man to live in God's way, to depend on God alone, to be God-reliant, and to seek protection and guidance from the Lord of the Worlds alone, ever and always. Just as the Principle of the Quranic Religion is Islam, which is an Arabic word for God-surrender, the sum total of the teachings of the holy *Rishis* and Seers of India is epitomised in the symbolic representation contained in the ancient parable of the *Lord and His Flute*, which is Hinduism.

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There are a hundred-and-one other reasons why the apparently two great religions, nay all the religions, are emanations from the same Source. The points of similarity noted above, as between Hinduism and Islam, are the most vital ones, and we trust that no Muslim or Hindu will have any hesitation in acknowledging that in essential fundamentals the two are one and the same. They represent a concrete instance of the basic identity of all religions. In the course of a contribution sent to *The Young Messenger of India*, and published in its Swadeshi Annual, 1937-38, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer says :

“If we (Hindus) are to be true to our faith, we should give an example of tolerance, realising that it does not in essence matter whether a man follows one *Avatar* or another. Our faith is great enough, strong enough, tolerant enough, comprehensive enough, to regard and respect and treat as brothers bent on the same quest the followers of the Buddha and our holy men and seers, of Zoroaster, of Moses, of Jesus Christ and of Muhammad and others to whom the *truth has been revealed in various forms* If we believe in our philosophy, if we know what is best for us, we shall know also that our faith speaks of the Supreme Who reveals Himself differently to men of different epochs and countries and stages of growth and culture”

“*If we are true to our faith ;*” “*if we believe in our philosophy*” and “*if we know what is best for us,*” to quote the words of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer—these in a way sum up the nature and magnitude of the problem that confronts the whole world. “Everybody,” said the great Ruskin, “likes to do good, but not one in a hundred finds this out No man really

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enjoyed doing evil since God made this world." And yet what is the element which we find predominating and controlling the world? Is it good or evil, virtue or vice? Is it the Divine or the Satanic? If a Musalman studies the holy scriptures of the other religions, he does so for the definite purpose of picking holes in them, distorting them and taking captious exceptions to them.* In his comparative study of religions the Hindu's attitude is by no means different. That unfortunately is the prevailing tendency which finds warm support and meets with almost fanatic approbation from the large majority of the followers of the respective "faiths." That is the common experience, rare, noble exceptions apart. They read in their own holy revealed scriptures of the unity of man and the unity of religions, but they, without a qualm, seize every conceivable occasion to divide humanity and create sects of their own, in total and wanton disregard of their sacred obligation to trace out and emphasise on elements that harmonise and unite man with man and religion with religion. There is an instance told of an educated, highly placed Christian missionary, respected in Christian social circles, who, in the course of one of his usual nocturnal highway preachings in a place in South India, once wanted to draw a comparison between the "Hindu God" and the "Christian God" for the purpose of establishing that the "God of the Christians" was "a better God." To give his comparison a concrete shape, for the edification of the unsophisticated masses, the missionary had a picture specially drawn and exhibited for public gaze, wherein was painted Lord Krishna as a boy with butter in one hand and making

*A Muslim is required by the very fundamentals of his religion to believe in the Divine origin of all Books, held sacred by other religious communities.—Ed. J. R.

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a pose expressive of his alleged sensuality, staring at the form standing beside him. Nearby, in the same picture, stood the form of Lord Jesus Christ in a prayerful pose with his both hands uplifted and face turned. The biting sarcasms of the missionary against his "Hindu God" knew no bounds. No epithet, according to him, was too vulgar, too unholy or too indecent to call the "Hindu God" by. He reviled Hinduism and the God of the Hindus in unmeasured terms, on the strength of the representation given in his picture. When he finished, a Hindu from among the audience stepped forward and answered the missionary in a few chosen words. It was a tit for tat, and the missionary stood dumbfounded. The two pictures seemed to corroborate by a reversal of logic the reasoning adopted by the Hindu. It is too obscene to be recorded here, but it was thoroughly justified by the *logic* of the circumstances. But just consider whither the world is drifting to, in its pursuit of that "logic." Verse 62 of Chapter II of the Qur-ân is a warning to those who resort to such blasphemous methods in the name of propagating God's Religion, and the same must be in essence the principle of all other religions. The Satan-driven man, however, makes of the revealed religions the scapegoat of his unholy passions and prepossessions. He knows that what his religion demands is the total and absolute surrendering of his personal ego, his entire being, to the Lord of the worlds, to the God of all religions, and to His ways; but wherever possible in actual practice, he vilely surrenders the Divine Command to the dictates of his personal ego. Such is the insincerity of man! His intellectual acquisition of right knowledge cannot, at any rate does not, grant him the requisite capacity to resist the base temptations that drag to the opposite pole and to live strictly in the light of that knowledge. He does things,

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willingly too, perhaps, in spite of himself. He has the freedom to choose and to prefer. He is repeatedly warned as to which way is Godly, and which Satanic. He is again and again told that the God-way runs through truth, harmony, strength, happiness, perfection and immortality. He is also told that the Satanic way runs through falsehood, discord, misery, disintegration and destruction. Thus the fact was never concealed from him that he is subjected to two diametrically antagonistic influences—the Sublime and the Satanic—the one positive and creative and the other negative and destructive; the one is Life, while the other is death. But, despite his professions of being a follower of what is sublime, he far more readily takes to vice than virtue, the evanescent rather than the eternal.

Man is given his freedom; he is given the knowledge that freedom has its responsibilities. He is told also how to use that God-given freedom for his own good and happiness. Man is free, but he is bound down by the very fact of his freedom. He must taste the fruits, sweet or bitter, of his thought, speech and deed. Once in his life-time (to relate here an incident recorded in *The Ideal Prophet*, by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din), while engaged in a religious conversation with an influential citizen of Makka, the Holy Prophet Muhammad had turned away from a humble, blind seeker after truth. For this conduct, the Prophet received God's disapprobation. After this, whenever the Prophet saw the poor, blind man, he used to go out of his way to do him honour, saying: "The man is thrice welcome on whose account my Lord reprimanded me." The Prophet had him twice as the Governor of Madina. Against such an unintended flaw, he made amends, and he did so with love and affection, as is clear from his words.

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If that is how the Law works in the case of a chosen servant of God, when it is duly recognised that that is how the sanctity of the Divine ways is preserved even as against a seemingly trifling deflection on the part of a holy one, whose whole life was one continuous prayer and dedication to God and who was in conscious communion with God, the present plight of the world—of humanity, becomes readily explicable. The whole cause of it is clearly traceable to the fact that, as pointed out by the great Prophet, man allowed himself to be driven by Satan, even though he knew that his Lord is God and even though he had the freedom to refuse to be so driven and to tread only in God's way. That warning had been given to the world about one thousand four hundred years ago. Could not have the leaders of peoples, if they had but paid scrupulous heed to that golden rule of virtuous conduct, if they were but true to their philosophy and faith, enabled humanity to approximate itself more and more in the pursuit of what is virtuous and sublime towards reaching perfection within the long years passed? The great exponent of Islam in Arabia converted a whole people of a vast country from crudity and savagery to refinement and civilised ways of life within a period of twenty years. Instead, the world at the present time is in chaos. It is in the firm grip of agents of savagery, misery, grief, destitution and devastation. Whence this rebuke, this reprisal? These are effects. What are the causes? If the world or any part thereof has been treading the path of God, the path of Life and Happiness, will it have gathered, as it has done, the fruits gatherable only in the abysmal path of misery and death? There is no question more important and more vital than this for the world to consider at the present time: Man seldom, if ever, subjected himself to a thorough, systematic and sincere examina-

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tion whether or not he constantly and incessantly lives in the Light of God, whether or not by some mishap he is driven away from it by the Satanic influences of his low, earthly, selfish nature—whether or not he, in every moment of his life, conforms himself strictly to his professed faith, to the revealed teachings of the Lord to whom he professes outward allegiance. He refused to scrutinise, study and judge his own thoughts, speeches and actions to satisfy himself whether or not he was living every instant in faithful fulfilment of his fundamental duty to the Lord, to his fellow-creatures and to himself, of which he had been acquainted and warned—Whether or not his own low desires were deluding him and getting the better of his Faith and his Duty. To his professions of faith, to the teachings and warning which he believed to have come from the Almighty Lord, he has been clearly indifferent—insincere. He has been insincere to his freedom, his faith, his professions, his claims, his duty, to himself and to his progeny. That is the natural consequence of being insincere to God, to His Revealed Word. Insincerity, if the blackest vice, is also the blackest guilt. True, man-made laws nowhere place any stigma on it, but God-made laws do. And man reaps what he sows. God is Supreme. Let us, therefore, remember, *sincerely* from this moment the holy, divine words in all humility uttered through one of His chosen servants :

“When we speak (or act), we must think and weigh whether or not it be Satan who is driving us. For our Lord is God.”

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THE QUR-AN—IN VINDICATION OF JESUS CHRIST AND HIS MOTHER

BY MAULVI AHSANULLAH

SURA ALU-‘IMRĀN

Verse 35.—“ Iz-qālat-im-ra’atu ‘Imrāna : Rabbi innī
Nazartu-laka māfi batnī muhar-raran
Fa-taqabbal minnī
Innaka antas-samī‘ul ‘alīm.”

“ Behold ! A woman of Imrān
Said, My Lord ! I do
Dedicate unto Thee
What is in my womb
For Thy special service :
So accept this of me :
For Thou hearest
And knowest all things.”

Verse 36.—“ Falammā wada‘at-hā qālat : Rabbi innī
wada‘tuhā unthā
Wal-lāho a‘lamu bimā wa-da‘at
Wa-laisaz-zakaru kal-unthā
Wa innī sammaituhā Maryama
Wa innī u‘izuhā bika
Wa zur-riyyatahā minash-shaitānir rajīm.”

When she was delivered,
She said : “ My Lord !
Behold ! I am delivered
Of a female child ! ”——
• And God knew best
What she brought forth——
“ And nowise is the male
Like the female.
I have named her Mary,
And I commend her
And her offspring
To Thy protection
From the Evil one,
The Rejected.”

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Verse 37.—“Fa-taqabbalahā Rabbuhā bi-qabūlin hasanin

Wa-ambatahā nabātan hasanan wa-kaf-
falahā Zakariyyā

Kul-lamā dakhala ‘alaihā Zakariyya-l
Mihrāba

Wajada ‘indahā rizqan

Qāla Yā Maryamu annā laki hāzā ;

Qālat huwa min ‘indillāh

Innal-lāha yarzuqu mai-yashā’u

Bighairi hisāb.”

Right graciously

Did her Lord accept her :

He made her grown

In purity and beauty :

To the care of Zakariyya

Was she assigned.

Every time that he entered

(Her) chamber to see her,

He found her supplied

With sustenance. He said :

“ O Mary ! Whence (comes) this

To you ?” She said :

“ From God : For God

Provides sustenance

To whom He pleases,

Without measure.”

Verse 38.—“Hunālika da‘ā Zakariyyā Rabbahu ; qāla

Rabbi hab

Li min-ladunka zur-riyyatan tayyibatan

In-naka sami‘ud-du‘ā.”

There did Zakariyya

Pray to his Lord, saying :

“ O my Lord ! grant unto me

From Thee a progeny

That is pure : for Thou

Art He that heareth prayer.”

ISLAMIC REVIEW

Verse 39.—“ Fanādat-hul malā'ikatu
 Wa-huwa qāimuy yusalli fil mihrābi
 Annal-lāha yubashshiruka bi-Yahya
 Musaddiqam bi kalimatim minal-lāhi
 Wa-sayyidaw wa hasūraw
 Wa nabīyyam minas sālihīn.”

While he was standing
 In prayer in the chamber,
 The angels called unto him :

“ God doth give thee
 Glad tidings of Yahya (John),
 Who would testify to the truth
 Of a word from God, and (be
 Besides) noble, chaste,
 And a prophet,—
 Of the (goodly) company
 Of the righteous.”

Verse 40.—“ Qāla Rabbi annā yakūnu lī ghulāmuw
 Wa-qad balaghaniyal kibaru
 Wamra 'ati 'āqirun
 Qala kazālika-l-lāho yaf'alu mā yashā'u.”

He said : “ O my Lord !
 How shall I have a son,
 Seeing I am very old,
 And my wife is barren ? ”

“ Thus,” was the answer,
 “ Doth God accomplish
 • What He willeth.”

Verse 41.—“ Qāla rabbi-j'al-li āyatan
 Qāla āyatuka al-lá tukalliman-nāsa
 Thalāthata ayyamin
 Illā Ramzan
 Wazkur Rab-baka kasīran
 Wa sabbih bil-'ashiyyi wal ibkār.”

He says : “ O my Lord !
 Give me a sign ! ”
 “ Thy sign,” was the answer,

JESUS CHRIST AND HIS MOTHER

“ Shall be that thou
Shall speak to no man
For three days
But with signs,
Then celebrate
The praises of thy Lord
Again and again,
And glorify Him
In the evening
And in the morning.”

Verse 42.—“ Wa-iz qālatil malā'ikatu ya Maryamu in-
nal-lāhastafāki
wat-tahharaki was-tafāki 'alā nisāi-l-
'ālamīn.”

Behold ! The angel said :

O Mary ! God hath chosen thee, and puri-
fied thee and chosen thee
Above the women
Of all nations.

Verse 43.—“ Yā Maryamuquntī li-rab-biki was-judī
War-ka'ī ma'ar-rakī'in.”

“ O Mary, worship
Thy Lord devoutly ;
Prostrate thyself,
And bow down (in prayer)
With those who bow down.”

Verse 44.—“ Zālika min-anbā'il ghaibi
Nuhihi ilaika wa mā kunta ladaihim
Iz-yulqūna aqlāmahūm
Ayyuhum yakfulu Maryama
Wamā kunta ladaihim
Iz yakhtasimūn.”

This is part of the tidings
of the things unseen,
Which We reveal unto thee
(O Apostle !) by inspiration :

ISLAMIC REVIEW

Thou wast not with them
When they cast lot
With arrows as to which
Of them should be charged
With the care of Mary :
Nor wast thou with them
When they disputed (the point).

Verse 45.—“ Iz-qālatil malā'ikatu yā Maryamu in-
nallāha
Yubash-shiruki bikalimatim minhu
Ismuhul Masīhu 'Īsabnu Maryama
Wajīhan fid-dunyā wal ākhirati
Wa minal muqarrabīn.”

Behold, The angel said :
“ O Mary ! God giveth thee
Glad tidings of a word
From Him : His name
Will be Christ Jesus,
The Son of Mary, held in honour
In this world and hereafter
And of (the company of) those
Nearest to God.”

Verse 46 —“ Wa yukal-liman-nāsa fil mahdī wa-kahlaw
Wa minas-swālihīn.”
“ He shall speak to the people
In the childhood and in maturity,
And he shall be (of the company)
Of the righteous.”

Verse 47.—“ Qālat Rabbi annā yakūnu-li waladuw
Walam yamsasnī bashar
Qāla kazalikal-lāhu yakhluqu maiyashā'u
Izā qazā amran
Fa-in-namā yaqūlu lahū kun fā-yakūn.”

ISLAM AND JESUS

She said : " O my Lord !
How shall I have a son
When no man hath touched me ?
He said : " Even so :
God createth
What He willeth :
When He hath decreed
A Plan, He but saith
To it ' BE ', and it is."

ISLAM AND JESUS

BY MRS. NADIRE FLORENCE IVES-OSMAN (NEW YORK)

[Continued from Vol. XXVIII, page 271.]

Whence came this impulse so unlike Hebrew thought to deify a man ? From sources, we protest, similar to that which described Jesus as the unique *Logos* or " Word of God " emanating from God, in order that educated Greeks, familiar with the theories of Plato, might become impressed. This title, without any parallel in the Old Testament, is to be found only in the writings ascribed to John, in his Gospels, Letters and Revelation. No other reference in New Testament sources has come down to us. Vaguely reminiscent of the allegory of Genesis, wherein God is declared to have spoken, " and it was so," this notion is never so warmly defended as by those who have not the remotest idea of what Platonic Philosophy is like.

The Qur-án, however, offers the following argument to those who might wish to view the expression more reasonably: " And were every tree that is in the earth made into pens, and the sea to supply it with ink, with seven more seas to increase it, the words of God would not come to an end; surely God is Mighty, Wise."

ISLAMIC REVIEW

(Qur-án 3 : 27.) Jesus may thus be regarded as one of the " Words of God " in the sense that we all are His creatures. This example is but one of the many instances of the infusion of Greek ideas into early Christian writings.

But before we can speak directly on the matter of Greek influence upon the religion presumed to have sprung from the utterances of Jesus, we must first of all realise how the scene had been laid which made such a participation possible. We must trace back to the 3rd century B. C. when artists, artisans and scholars accompanied the army of the Macedonian Conqueror, Alexander, in its irruption into the East. The glory that was Athens' had gone. Many of the Greek followers, including merchants and soldiers, continued to remain away from their homeland, introducing their language and methods elsewhere.

Even when Roman arms succeeded in mastery, in the Near East, the superiority of Greek masterpieces was recognised at home so that they were taken as models by Roman copyists, in the field of literature as well as in art. Greek instructors were in great demand. The Roman administrative genius guaranteed henceforth that security for the spread of Greek ideology which had hitherto been able to serve only a state preoccupied in the main with itself. By that time, however, current Hellenic philosophy and literature were no longer robust.

The following torch of Greek intellectual activity was caught, as it were, by the Greek-speaking inhabitants of Alexandria, a city in Egypt named after its founder, Alexander the Great. In the ferment of thought which there ensued, the Jews freely shared, many of them becoming quite Hellenised. They or their ancestors had fled to Egypt for safety during past

ISLAM AND JESUS

persecutions. Although separated from their co-religionists in Judea, they found no new barriers risen between them because of language difficulties. So many of the Jews in Palestine had neglected to speak Hebrew for so long a time that it was found necessary to have the sacred scriptures translated into Greek for public use in the synagogues. For generations they too had been subjected to Greek influence. Those of Antioch and Alexandria enjoyed a greater freedom of activity.

After the disappearance of Jesus from the life of Jerusalem, a chaotic condition seems to have been the order. At least extravagant tales of miracles are recorded in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles: there were mass healings by the disciples, including Paul, for which it seems so unreasonable to think that these public benefactors should be thrown into prison—especially by persecutors from that race of whom Paul spoke, "For the Jews require a sign" (1 Cor. 1:22); the application of handkerchiefs and aprons upon the body of Paul brought relief to many (Acts 19:12); prison doors were unlocked by angels (Acts 5:19); and an example is given to us where Philip was made to vanish (Acts 8:38). A most interesting sidelight on their social programme is revealed in connection with a miracle which is declared to have struck fear into the hearts of all to whom it was told. We learn that the converts, intent upon reconstructing a better social order, and "being of one heart and one soul. . . neither said aught of the things which he possessed was his own . . . but they had all things in common,"—"the possessors of lands and houses sold them and brought the price of the things that were sold." This practice was considered so sacred that when Ananias and Sapphira, his wife, sold a possession yet retained a portion, secretly, of the money for themselves, upon Peter's uncovering of this foul deed they

ISLAMIC REVIEW

immediately dropped dead. (Acts 3 : 41—45 ; 4 : 32—5 : 11.) That the New Testament favoured such an economic arrangement doubtless accounts for the support given by occasional Christian bishops and clergymen to Communism.

The marginal note on this instance of the awful retribution which comes to individualists directs us to another episode related in Joshua 7 : 1 ; but here the recital is not concerned with communal or personal property : we are told rather of a man who took that which was never his and which had been specifically forbidden by God.

Detailed accounts of only two groups have come down to us in the New Testament, that of the sect designated by the Jews as Nazarenes,—also known as the Judaical Party,—and the Paulist Christians or the Anti-Judaical. We are advised, however, of Paul's movements almost to the exclusion of the other apostles, Peter alone having shared some of the prominence. What we find principally outlined is the struggle to enlist the sympathies of the Gentiles, together with the Jewish reaction to this attempt.

At this point we wish to advise the reader that whereas the four books of the Gospel are respectfully recognised by Islam (although the records, as a whole, are not considered completely trustworthy), as receptacles of the life-story and the teachings of Jesus, the remainder of the New Testament is considered to lack even that doubtful authority. In other words, the activity which is later described is not regarded as having any more claim to be part of Jesus's original mission, than are procedures of modern churchmen. The outstanding fact is that Paul is not recognised to have been a genuine apostle.

Both in the Acts and in his Letters has been depicted the mentality of Paul of Tarsus, he who was so

ISLAM AND JESUS

instrumental in the altering of the entire course of Christian history. Paul may be recognised as a revengeful, unbalanced man who maliciously spied upon the early followers of Jesus, out of his own initiative, to deliver them up to persecution. We quote but one verse of his discourses to prove our point. Said Paul: "She that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy in body and in spirit." If ever there was a gross libel on married womanhood, that is it.

This ex-Pharisee held a superior political position, in contrast to his fellow Jews, which fact made him all the more fearless in his dealings with them—if "fearless" be the exact word—for he constantly claimed protection from the foreign rulers of his people. As a lien of sympathy, he seemed only to have had the Hebrew tongue. Paul was like many a young student who goes to study in a foreign land, only to return and despise the domestic culture. In his early youth, his half-baked temper had displayed itself in an abhorrence of innovation. A level-headed Roman later said to him, wonderingly, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." (Acts 26:24.) What happened to Paul is what continues to operate, even to-day, with religious zealots of every age—when uninspired men attempt to interpret the scriptures according to their own "brilliant intuitions." Convinced of the soundness of his own theories by which he would reconcile the Jews and the Greeks, by carrying the Jews to the Greeks, he really identified himself with the Gentiles. Paul claimed to have had visions. That they were genuine is not to be adduced by the light of true understanding and erudition.

(To be continued.)

ISLAMIC REVIEW

THE HOLY PROPHET ON PROMISE AND TRUST

Jābir reported that when the Messenger of Allah died, and some wealth was brought to Abu Bakr from the side of 'Alā ibn-i-Hazramy. Abu Bakr proclaimed: Who has got a debt due from the Messenger of Allah, or a promise from him? Let him come to us. Jābir said: The Messenger of Allah gave me a promise to give (me) such and such things. Then he spread out his hands three times. Jābir said: Then he gave me a load (of money) which I counted, when lo! it was (a load) 500 (dinars). He said: Take double of it.—*Agreed.*

Abu Huzaifah reported: I saw the Messenger of Allah getting white. He had become old and Hasan-ibn-i-Ali was resembling him. He ordered for us 13 young she-camels. We then started to get them when his death intervened: he did not give us anything. When Abu Bakr stood up (saying): "Who has got any promise from the Prophet? Let him come!" I went to him and informed him. Then he ordered for us these.—*Tirmizi.*

Abdullah-ibn-Abil-Hasma'a reported: I made a business contract with the Holy Prophet before he was raised up (as a Prophet), and there was price due to him (from me). So I promised to come to him there-with in its (appointed) place. Then I forgot but I remembered after three days, when lo! he was in its (appointed) place. He said: You have put trouble to myself. I am here since three days waiting for you.—*Abu Dawūd.*

HOLY PROPHET ON PROMISE AND TRUST

Zaid-b-Arqam reported from the Holy Prophet who said : When a man gives promise to his brother and his intention is to fulfil it for him, but he does not fulfil it, nor does he come at the appointed time, there is no sin against him.—*Abu Dawūd, Tirmizi.*

Abu Hurairah raised (it to the Prophet) who said : Verily the Almighty and Glorious Allah says : I am the Third of the two co-sharers so long as one of the two does not commit treachery with his friend. Then when he commits treachery with him, I go out from the midst of the two.—*Abu Dawūd.*

Same reported from the Holy Prophet who said : Pay trust to one who has entrusted you, and be not treacherous to one who was treacherous to you.—*Tirmizi, Abu Dawūd.*

Abu Sa'īd reported that the Messenger of Allah said : Verily the greatest of trusts in the sight of Allah on the Resurrection Day (and in a narration : Verily the worst of men in rank to Allah on the Resurrection Day) will be (that of) the man who goes unto his wife (and she goes unto him) and then who gives out her secrets.—*Muslim.*

Jābir-ibn-Abdullah reported from the Holy Prophet who said : When a man gives an information and then draws attention (for keeping it secret) it is a trust.—*Tirmizi, Abu Dawūd.*

'Umar reported that the Messenger of Allah said : When you find a man committing breach of trust in the way of Allah, burn his commodities and beat him.—*Abu Dawūd, Tirmizi.*

Jābir reported that the Messenger of Allah said : All meetings are on trust except three—the meetings

ISLAMIC REVIEW

for shedding unlawful blood, or for unlawful sexual intercourse, or for taking away property without just cause.—*Abu Dawūd.*

Sufyan-ibn-Asad-al-Hazrami reported: I heard the Messenger of Allah say: It is the height of breach of trust that you communicate a news to your brother which he believes you to be truthful while you are lying to him.—*Abu Dawūd.*

Abdullah-ibn-Amr reported that the Messenger of Allah said: When four things are in you, there is nothing against you in the world which may cause you loss: guarding of trust, truthfulness in speech and beauty in conduct, and moderation in food.—*Ahmad, Baihaqī.*

Anas reported: Hardly did the Messenger of Allah address us without sayings: There is no faith with him who does not deserve any trust, and no religion with him who is unworthy of any promise.—*Baihaqī.*

CORRESPONDENCE

CORRESPONDENCE

To
THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

EASTCOTE, RUISLIP,
MIDDLESEX.
19th April, 1940.

DEAR SIR,

I wish to thank you very much for your letter of the 12th and to apologise for not having replied to it until now. Actually I was not here when the letter arrived, and so there was some slight delay before I actually received it.

I thank you also for the book which you enclosed entitled "The Religion of Jesus and Traditional Christianity." I am studying it very closely, having already perused it once. I find it most enlightening and helpful, as also the other book entitled "What is Islam?" It is difficult to convey by correspondence exactly what one feels in the heart, more especially on such an important matter as religion. I would like to repeat, however, how attracted I am to the noble yet simple Faith of Islam, and I would indeed welcome the opportunity of having a personal discussion on the subject with you.

It is extremely kind of you to invite me to spend a day or two as your guest, and I intend to avail myself of your kind invitation at the earliest possible occasion. I anticipate that it will be some time towards the end of next week, but will inform you as to precise arrangements in due course.

May I also take this opportunity to say how much I enjoyed your hospitality last Thursday afternoon when I visited you.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,
B. IVAN JAMSET.

To
THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

BLAKEHALL ROAD,
WANSTEAD, E. 11.
24th April, 1940.

DEAR IMAM,

Peace be upon you! I have to thank you very much for the Koran that was sent me. It is the very size that I wanted. Being on Active Service means that I have to carry all my clothes in my pack and, of course, that would make it impossible if I had a large book.

Thanking you again.

Your brother-in-Islam,
A. R. HONE.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.
REVEREND SIR,

c/o THE B. E. F.
The 26th April, 1940.

For some years now I have been deeply interested in Islam. Once I became so interested that I made up my mind definitely to change my religion. I had the great fortune to meet an English Muslim, Mr. G. E. Warren, who has been more than patient in instructing me where I have been at all uncertain. Through him I have been lucky enough to have several copies of the *Islamic Review* and, above all, a chance of reading the Qur-án.

I would be grateful to you if you could please send me the Declaration Form and any literature that you may think would assist me; also kindly instruct me as to the way of obtaining a copy of the Qur-án (English Translation) as I am on Active Service.

I am,
Yours respectfully,
R. G. K.

TO
THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

TALBOT ROAD, W. 2.
29th April, 1940.

DEAR SIR,

I am anxious to have full particulars of the Islamic Religion, conditions of joining and any other particulars you can furnish me.

Yours truly,
A. KISSEADOO.

TO
THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

WHEATHAMPSTEAD,
ST. ALBANS,
29th April, 1940.

DEAR SIR,

I should be grateful if you would send me some authentic free literature on Islam.

Some of my friends are interested in promoting the study of the various Religions and Islam will receive our careful consideration.

Yours truly,
M. GODFREY.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

NEWPORT, ESSEX.
30th April, 1940.

SIR,

Could you please send me some literature answering the question "What is Islam?"

(DR.) T. TYSON CAIN.

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The
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FOUNDED BY THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

Vol. XXVIII]

SHAWWAL 1359 A.H.
NOVEMBER 1910 A.C.

[No. 11

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(Founded By The Late Al-Hajj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din)

Edited by

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THE
ISLAMIC REVIEW

Vol. XXVIII]

SHAWWAL 1359 A.H.
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[No. 11

A DECLARATION

I. . . . (Mrs.) CLARA WILLIAMS of Muswell Hill, London, do hereby and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Allah (God) alone; that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger and Servant; that I respect equally all Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus and others and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

Lá iláha ill-Alláh Muhammad-un-Rasul-Alláh.

[There is but One God (Allah) and Muhammad is God's Messenger.]

Dated 21st June, 1940

(SD.) CLARA WILLIAMS.

THE QUR-AN—IN VINDICATION OF JESUS
CHRIST AND HIS MOTHER

BY MAULVI AHSANULLAH

Verse 48.—“ Wa yu‘al-limuhul kitāba wal hikmata
wat-Taurāta wal Injil.”

“And God will teach him
The Book and Wisdom, The Law and the
Gospel.”

Verse 49.—“ Wa Rasūlan ilā Banī-Isra‘ila
Annī qad-ji‘tukum bi-ayatin mir-Rabbikum
Annī akhluqu lakum minat-tīni ka-hai‘atit-
tairi

Fan-fukhu fihī fayakūnutairam
Bi-iznillāh

Wa-ubri‘ul akmaha wal-abrasa

Wa uhyil mautā bi-iznillāh

Wa-unab-bi‘ukum bimā ta‘kulūna wamā
tad-dakhirūna

Fi-buyūtikum ; innā fī zālika la-āyatan
lakum

In kuntum mu‘minīn.”

And (appointing)

An Apostle to the children
Of Israel (with this message) :

“ I have come unto you,

With a sign from your Lord,

In that I make for you

Out of clay, as it were,

The figure of a bird,

And breathe into it,

And it becomes a bird

By God’s leave ;

And I heal those

Born blind and lepers,

And I quicken the dead,

JESUS CHRIST AND HIS MOTHER

By God's leave ;
And I declare to you—
What ye eat and what ye store
In your houses. Surely
There is a sign for you
If ye did believe."

Verse 50.—"Wa musaddiqal liqā
Baina yadayya minat-Taurāti
Wa-li uhillā lakum ba'dal-lazi
Hur-rima 'alaikum waji'tukum bi āyatim
mir-Rabbikum
Fat-taqul-lāha wa-ati'ūn."

"(I have come unto you),
To attest the law
Which was before me,
And to make lawful
To you part of what was
(Before) forbidden to you ;
I have come to you
With a Sign from your Lord.
So fear God,
And obey me."

Verse 51.—"In-nal-lāha Rab-bī wa
Rab-bukum fa'budūhu
Hāzā sirātum-mustaqīm."

"It is God
Who is my Lord
And your Lord ;
Then worship Him.
This is a way
That is straight."

Verse 52.—"Falam-mā ahas-sā 'Īsā min-humu-l kufra
Qāla man ansārī ilal-lāhi
Qāla-l-hawāriyyūna nahnu ansārul-lāhi
Āman-nā billāhi
Wash-hadū bi-annā Muslimūn."

ISLAMIC REVIEW

When Jesus found
Unbelief on their part,
He said : “ Who will be
My helpers (to the work of God) ? ” Said
the disciples :
“ We are the helpers : We believe in God
And do thou bear witness
That we are Muslims.”

Verse 53.—“ Rabbanā āman-nā bimā an-zalta
Wat-ta-ba‘nar Rasūla
Fak-tubnā ma‘ash-shāhidīn.”
“ Our Lord ! We believe in what Thou hast
revealed,
And we follow the apostle,
Then write us down
Among those who bear witness.”

Verse 54.—“ Wa makarū wa maka-ral-lāhu
Wal-lāhu khairul mākirīn.”
And (the unbelievers)
Plotted and planned,
And God too planned,
And the best of planners
Is God.

Verse 55.—“ Iz qālal-lāhu yā ‘Īsā innī Mutawaffīka
Wa rāfi‘uka ilayya wa mutah-hiruka
Minal-lazīna kafarū
Wa jā‘ilul-lazīnat-taba‘ūka fawqal
Lazīna kafaru ilā yawmil qiyāmati
Thumma ilayya marji‘ukum
Fa-ahkumu bainakum
Fī mā kuntum fihī takhtalifūn.”

Behold ! God said :
“ O Jesus ! I will take thy soul
And raise thee to Myself
And clear thee (of the falsehoods)

JESUS CHRIST AND HIS MOTHER

Of those who blaspheme;
I will make those
Who follow thee superior
To those who reject faith,
To the day of Resurrection :
Then shall ye all
Return unto Me,
And I will judge
Between you of the matters
Wherein ye dispute."

Verse 56.—"Fa-ammal-lazīna kafarū fa-u'az-zibuhum
'azāban

Shadīdan fid-dunya wal ākhirati.
Wa mā lahum min-nāsirīn."

"As to those who reject faith,
I will punish them
With severe agony
In this world and in the Hereafter,
Nor will they have
Any one to help."

Verse 57.—"Wa am-mal lazīna āmanū wa 'amilus-
swālihāti

Fa-yu-waf-fihim ujūrahum
Wal-lāhu lā yuhibbuz-zwālimīn."

"As to those who believe
And work righteousness,
God will pay them in full
Their reward ;
But God loveth not
Those who do wrong."

Verse 58.—"Zālika natlūhu 'alaika minal āyāti
Waz-zikrīl Hakīm."

"This is what we rehearse
Unto thee of the signs
And the message
Of wisdom."

ISLAMIC REVIEW

Verse 59.—“ Inna mathala ‘Isā ‘indal-lāhi ka mathali
Adama

Khalaqahū min turābin
Thum-ma qāla lahū kun-fayakūn.”

“ The similitude of Jesus
Before God is as that of Adam :
He created him from dust,
Then said to him : ‘ Be ! ’
And he was.”

Verse 60.—“ Al haq-qu mir Rab-bika
Falā takūnū minal mumtarīn.”

“ (This is) the Truth
From thy Lord ;
So be not of those
Who doubt.”

Verse 61.—“ Faman hāj-jaka fihī
Mimba‘di mā jā‘aka minal ‘ilmi faqul
ta‘ālaw
Nad‘u ab-nā‘ana wa abnā‘akum
Wa nisā‘anā wa nisā‘akum wa anfusana
Wa anfusakum

Thumma nabtahil fanaj‘al
La‘natal-lāhi ‘alal kazibīn.”

“ If any one disputes
In this matter with thee,
Now after (full) knowledge
Hath come to thee,
Say : ‘ Come ! let us
Gather together
Our sons and your sons,
Our women and your women,
Ourselves and yourselves :
Then let us earnestly pray,
And invoke the curse
Of God on those who lie ! ’”

THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

Verse 62.—"In-na hāza lahuwal qasasul haqqu
Wamā min ilāhin illal-lāhu wa in-nal-lāha
lahuwal 'Azizul Ḥakīm."

"This is the true account : There is no god
but God ;
And God—He is
The Mighty
The Wise."

Verse 63.—"Fa-in tawal-law
Fa in-nallāha 'alimum bil mufsidin."

"But if they turn back,
God hath full knowledge
Of those who do mischief."

THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

BY THE LATE KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

(Continued from page 369 Vol. XXVIII)

154.—The acutest of all sufferings is that which comes to us in the way of God. Sometimes this suffering goes to the extent of laying down our very lives. Those who experience that extreme form of suffering, no doubt die from the physical point of view, but they achieve the glory of an eternal life and their memory lives for ever. It is a well-known fact that persons who make some sort of sacrifice in life are ever remembered by people. How can then God forget such as give their very lives for His sake? People of the world may or may not quite appreciate such a phenomenon but the fact is that God keeps such servants of His alive. Such an achievement, however, can come only through patience. It is patience, again, that gives birth to perseverance and there is nothing in the world which cannot be achieved by man through perseverance.

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155.—It is to create this quality in us that different kinds of trouble befall us, such as fear, hunger, loss of wealth, loss of relatives through death and other kinds of losses. Evidently they tend to create patience and perseverance in us. If these qualities hold a very high place in human character and are indispensable to every kind of success in life, it is inconceivable how they can grow in a man, unless he is tested by these blows on the smooth running of his life. When a person, however, comes out successful through such a test and acquires thereby the quality of patience, he renders himself capable of every kind of achievement in life. It is to draw our attention to this fact that the verse concludes with the announcement that good news should be given to the patient.

156.—The sign of the patient is further given as that when any calamity befalls them they feel more than ever that they belong to God and have to return to Him eventually. In fact, unless and until such a realisation comes to man, he can neither have real patience nor experience real happiness. A man should have a state of mind which neither the ordinary happiness of this world nor its grief is able to perturb. He should be completely given to God and should be thankful to Him in whatever condition of life He may be pleased to place him. He should feel that the condition of life which is ordained for him by his Master is the best for him. He should gird up his loins for perpetual service to the Lord and he should cheerfully follow the road indicated by the Master. Let any one think over it; he is sure to realise that the position outlined here is the only correct position of man with relation to God. In fact, certain calamities befall us in such a way that they cannot be avoided or dodged in any way. Those alone can enjoy the tranquillity of mind in face of these mishaps who can

THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

bring about the above-mentioned change in themselves. Such alone will have real safety.

157.—It is to bring out this idea clearly to view that the next verse states that people who have got this evolved state of mind will receive favours from God and will be directly under His mercy. It is not the kind of consolation with which we often pacify angry children. It is an unquestionable fact, because if the highest object of life is to come out successful through difficult affairs of life, the achievement can fall to the lot of only such people as possess the laudable quality of perseverance. It is only such people whose memory lives in human history, so much so that people by themselves adopt certain ways of their life in honour of their memory. Even God confers similar honours on them by appointing certain affairs of their life as religious institutions for future generations.

158.—Thus the separation of Hagar from her husband and her rushing hither and thither in search of water to quench the dire thirst of the baby was, indeed, a great test of her patience. And all this took place to fulfil some wise purpose of God. The progeny of Ishmael was destined to establish the kingdom of God on earth, and the light of Divine guidance sent for this purpose was to attain perfection in the city of Makka. But, for the materialisation of this Divine purpose, the patience of Hagar in the midst of this acute suffering was an indispensable condition. She was running about everywhere in search of water, and she did not give up the quest in despair. In this incident is given to us the right interpretation of the word *Sabr*. It is, of course, improper to take to bewailing and lamentation in times of trouble. But to sit idly aside and not to do anything to seek relief is not included in the connotation of *Sabr*. *Sabr* lies in our not getting upset when face to face with trouble and, at the same time,

ISLAMIC REVIEW

in our being engaged in the task of finding some way out of it. However much baffled any one may be in the struggle, he should not relax his enthusiastic efforts. Near the sacred House of Makka, where the Lady Hagar had left her thirsty baby, where also lies the famous well of Zamzam, there stand two famous hills called "Safa" and "Marwa." The Lady Hagar was running about the space between these two hills in her search for water. In the course of her anxious wanderings she came across this well of Zamzam—an event which ended her troubles. This incident in the life of the Lady Hagar is very important inasmuch as it was, at bottom, a crisis affecting the very existence of her son Ishmael. Hence this act of Hagar has come to be part of the sacred ritual of our pilgrimage. So much so that our running in the course of our pilgrimage in commemoration of this incident in Hagar's life has been called *Sa'y*. The Lady Hagar made an effort in fulfilment of a Divine purpose, and God had this effort incorporated in the rites of the institution of Hajj.

159.—Among its other aspects, this happening is a sign of God, a very clear indication of His existence in that it points to the miraculous incident of a child being saved from death from thirst in a place absolutely devoid of water, and of that same child leaving behind a mighty heritage in turn. To conceal such a sign as this is to invite the chastisement of God. The advent of the Prophet Muhammad has a direct connection with this remarkable incident in the life of Hagar. Unambiguous references to this advent were to be found in the Israelitish books, and it was the duty of this people not to have concealed these evidences. Unfortunately they did conceal them. Naturally, they had to suffer the punishment of this sin, in that they not only found themselves under the curse of God,

ISLAM AND JESUS

but were also despised by man wherever they went. In other words, they were accursed both by God and man. This is not merely a religious belief of the Muslims. The facts of the history of the Jewish race testify to the truth of this statement.

In Deuteronomy, Chapter 28, verses 18 and 19, mention is made of the curses that were to overtake the Jews. It is written how their wives and children, their wealth and their cattle would all come to harm; how they would be involved in all kinds of diseases and epidemics. Further, in verses 40—68 of the same chapter, there is a description of the various ill-treatments which the Jews were to receive at the hands of the people of the earth. One's hair actually stands on end at reading the horrible descriptions of how the Jews came to be regarded as accursed in the eyes of both God and His creatures. And yet they obstinately persisted in their wrong course of actions.

ISLAM AND JESUS

BY MRS. NADIRE FLORENCE IVES-OSMAN (NEW YORK)
(Continued from p. 369 Vol. XXVIII)

Warning had been clearly given: "And many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many . . . and shall shew great signs and wonders." (Math. 24:11, 24.) By changing the very course of religion, Paul ventured ignorantly into a field where only prophets had walked. But as Christ was declared to be the last prophet, and soon to return, he must deny himself such an honour and, at the most, make himself equal with the eleven chosen disciples. "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ, our Lord?" he demands, almost petulantly, in a letter to his poor followers. Who could tell? He cut off all hope of enlightenment for them by his directions: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions . . . contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." (Romans 16:17.)

ISLAMIC REVIEW

Both Peter and Paul claimed that they had been directed to invite the Gentiles. Peter received permission from the Council to do this. Paul speaks of himself, however, as "the Apostle of the Gentiles." (Romans 11 : 13.) He goes even further when he declares that the Gospel of the Circumcision was given to Peter while the Gospel of the Uncircumcision was delivered to himself. (Gal. 2 : 7, 8.) The climax of his audacity is reached when he adds :

"Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing" (1 Cor. 7 : 19) and again : "therefore, if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision ?" (Romans 2 : 26.)

It may easily be seen from this that Paul had very little real understanding of what the rite of circumcision actually meant. He jumbled all Hebrew observances together into that vaguely defined but much despised object, "the law." To him the Land of Canaan meant next to nothing, not even a strategic position. He was willing to amputate all Jewishness, with which he held no sympathy, in order to make his doctrine acceptable to the Greeks. As for their besetting sin, idolatry, he passed that over easily in speaking of that which "in the times of this ignorance God winked at." (Acts 18 : 30.) "They be no gods which are made with hands," he said to them. (Acts 19 : 26.) Nevertheless he did not push them too far ; he would still give them a personality, as they could visualise it, expressed in terms of the human form, to be worshipped.

Paul had his own theories : "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not 'and to seeds' as of many ; but as of one, 'and to thy seed,' which is Christ." (Gal. 3 : 16.) By so referring to Genesis 13 : 15, 16, Paul went athwart, with impunity, the entire tradition of the race of Israel : it may be

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noted that he is obliged to select from those very passages distinctly referring to the Covenant of Abraham, of which the rite of circumcision was to be a sign. Before Agrippa, he makes the presumptuous speech; "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews."

The new adoration of Jesus escaped Judaical persecutions by losing itself among the Gentiles. When the Jews would not listen any further, Paul cried, "From henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." (Acts 18:6.) Even the fame of Peter does not come down to us linked with the movement among his own people. That small body of Jewish Christians who would still adhere to the Covenant of Abraham were soon out-distanced. The Gentiles wished to break completely with the Hebrew religion. They had no sympathy with its ritual. That small body of Jews who stoutly maintained that Jesus was a Prophet and a man, speaking in the allegorical manner peculiar to his people, were easily dismissed by the superior Greeks. We are told in Acts 18:13—17 that the Greeks took the Chief Ruler of the Synagogue and beat him before the judgment-seat, when his case was dismissed before the civil authorities, because he had dared to complain: "This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to law." From A.D. 70 to 150, almost all Christians were Greek-speaking subjects of the Roman Empire.

The Græco-Roman masses were fervently polytheistic. A chasm yawned, as it were, between them and the scholars of their race. They had triumphed in their case against Socrates for which the philosopher had been condemned to death because he had ceased

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to believe in their gods. Purely intellectual movements always progress slowly. The masses had not yet emerged from that age when gods and goddesses were declared to have walked the earth, participating in public processions. Even when bands of determined Christians threw down their temples, there were still to be expected recrudescences of "paganism," unless a new manifestation of Christian saint-worship took its place, by way of metamorphosis. The old religions were never dragged up by their roots: to change the metaphor, new clothing and morals were given to familiar friends, new purposes to old ceremonies. Christ, Mary and the Saints reigned in the heavens where formerly male and female divinities feasted and quarrelled together. Julian the apostate was able to stage a classical revival as late as the 4th century. St. Augustine, in the 5th, could thunder his denunciations against those who needed busts of Homer, Pythagoras, Christ and Paul in their chapels in order to woo a worshipful state of contemplation. The Gentiles were not embarrassed by any old traditions when they took a man, come down from Heaven and then returned to it, to be their God. Rather, they had been thoroughly prepared to do this by their allegories, poems and plays.

The new movement was embraced at first by slaves and by the lowly. Paul of Tarsus woefully but still proudly admitted: "For ye see your calling, Brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise." (1 Cor. 1:26, 27.) The purity of life which distinguished some of the early converts, and the sense of security to which they seemed to have attained, even amid troublous times, gradually interested some of the more sensitive of the higher orders, in

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proportion as these same qualities irritated the worldly. Nevertheless, we find such references to vice itself, in the New Testament, associated with the early church, so that we are made to ponder on the workings of mass psychology which had originally propelled the converts. Even St. Paul was obliged to give further specifications for that delicate distinction of Jesus: "Be not children in understanding . . . but in understanding be men." (1 Cor. 14:20.)

The first great test of the new religion came at Rome. Persecution flared up over a political controversy which involved the formal worship paid to the head of the state. Not every emperor chose so to try the Christians, or continuously. Rome was very tolerant. It understood polytheism. New gods were always welcomed. Under that most odious of Roman emperors, the cruellest tortures were devised. Yet even here some of their sufferings came about as the result of an irrelevant cause, the Christians being cunningly used as a scapegoat. Persecution, however, never tends to weaken; it cements and hardens. Conditions were propitious for the believers to survive underground. Only by a long series of vague hypotheses can the scene of the martyrdom of Peter and Paul be placed at Rome.

How simple it is, in this credulous world, for marvellous stories to spread. Without doubt any number of martyrs could be garnered, as we write, from among the humble followers of our negro contemporary, "Father Divine," of Harlem, New York City. They are quite convinced that in him they are serving God Himself. If the circumstances so surrounding this group were to be made conducive, even our own time of public instruction and science would be at a loss to account for their actions. Such happened in Iran, among members of a religious sect known to

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us as Bahaiism, an offshoot of the Shi'ite sect of Islam. It does not appear to be so very difficult to convince others that a man is God. In the case of Jesus, there was this difference: those who believed in him as God the most ardently had never seen him. When we reflect upon that initial delusion, we cannot determine whether mankind has been made the victim of a fraud or of a mistake: most probably, the mixture of both. At any rate, at the bottom of that early obscurity rests the secret responsible for the moulding of world events.

The new religion of Christ, existing in many forms, did not appear to have been destined for world prominence until the fourth century, when the Roman Emperor, Constantine, in search of support, attracted to himself the Christian faction by declaring himself a convert. Thus the situation was abruptly changed. As civil advancement could be secured only within the ranks of the Christian party, the waverers hesitated no longer, while the ambitious came. Constantine moved the seat of his empire, for greater safety, to Byzantium, renaming it Constantinople, leaving behind a bishop in Rome. The bishops of the Eastern Empire became nought but creatures of their royal masters. But now we go ahead with our story. The real interest lies in the East, where books are to be written and traditions arranged, where amid shifting scenes a certain version is to gain the ascendancy.

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The Greeks of the intellectual classes shared the alarm of the Jews when they saw Christianity spreading among their masses. They thoroughly despised the new movement, characterising it as ignorant. Here, as in the case of Rome, it was not because of any fear of a new god that they found objections: it was the

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emphasis laid upon sin which proved the disturbing factor.

Intolerance had been practically unknown under the *laissez-faire* order of the past where there had flourished more of a state religion than of a personal. Although there was an appreciation of character, ideally supposed to supplement the physical beauty, these spiritual and moral principles were never brought to perfection, as was the outer form. Vice had come upon them, by degrees, in proportion as their art expanded. It is true that certain religious movements inspired from the Orient had made their appearances in Greece and in Rome, but these had never obtruded actively upon the lives of the disinterested. Only those were approached who showed interest in this purity, to be achieved by physical means, or who desired to be taken, as an initiate, to receive the secret doctrine.

The Greeks had always been susceptible to Oriental influence. Through the centuries, certain Greek thinkers had voyaged to the East, to announce later, at home, philosophical systems which were to gain renown under their own names but which were no other than beliefs current in Asia or in Africa. An example of this is to be found in Pythagoras's contribution of abstract ideas. Thus there had always been a slender current of Eastern metaphysics existing side by side with the popular religion and with speculative Greek philosophy. But, by that time, the broader stream of philosophy itself had widened considerably and gained in importance due to the scepticism which cut into the old faith. At that stage, Greek philosophy was carried, as it were, and deposited at the very doors of the Orient.

The prayer of Jesus recorded in Matthew 11 : 25 had sufficed for the simple: "I thank thee, Oh Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid

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these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes." This did not, however, obviate the need for "someone defender of the gospel who, versed in the learned arts, might be able to combat the Jewish doctors and Pagan philosophers with their own arms." (Mosheim Eccles. Hist., Vol. I, p. 63.) In other words, if the educated Greeks were to be converted, Christianity would have to be recast in a Greek form. We have attempted already to show how Paul of Tarsus performed this service for the simple. We may add, however, that he also took the Hebraic teachings of Jesus and made them illustrate the nebulous theories of neo-Pythagoreanism, with its doctrine of intelligence (Acts 17 : 28) : he gave to the Greeks a new application of the triad, which had already served other religions, by associating in a new combination the names of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Centuries were required, however, for this to become dogma. The divinity of Christ was not affirmed until the Council of Nice (A.D. 325), held under the auspices of Constantine. "Thus the simple, human, compassionate, democratic Teacher of Southern Syria was brought back to his homeland after a sojourn of some 300 years in the Græco-Roman World, as the 2nd person of a triune deity." (Abraham M. Rihbany.) The Council of Constantinople, 56 years later, affirmed the divinity of the Holy Ghost, at the same time that it insisted upon the Unity of God, declaring that the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity was to be the doctrine of the Church.

(To be continued.)

IMAGE-WORSHIP—BHAKTI RUN RIOT

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

“ And they serve besides God that which does not control for them any sustenance at all from the heavens and the earth, nor have they any power.

“ Therefore do not give likeness to God ; surely God knows and ye do not know.”—The Qur-án, 16 : 73-74.

“ Say : If there were with Him gods as they say, then certainly they would have been able to seek a way to the Lord of Power.”—*Ibid.*, 17 : 42.

It is happy to reflect that the light of reason prevailing, the gross form of idol-worship is scarcely defended by any cultured man to-day. It is true that idol-worship starts with the idea of representation ; but this subtle metaphysical distinction between symbol and reality, particularly in worship, is incapable of being maintained by an average man. Having, therefore, the fullest regard for the explanation offered by intellectual Hindus in regard to what they insist on calling “ image-worship ” it is difficult for us to see what difference it at all makes to the unlearned votary. To such a one the image itself possesses all that is ascribed to God, of whom it is intended to stand as a symbol. If it is argued that such representations are a help to the imagination of the devotee, it is pertinent to ask whether the system has ever helped a considerable number of persons to rise to the height of free, abstract worship. What is actually found is that even the most advanced minds keep joining the unimaginative in paying worship to these lifeless objects of man's creation to the very last.

Some are found to advance the rather plausible argument that in any case the mind of man is incapable of soaring above a material conception of God. These

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hold that a formless God is inconceivable. But such an argument can come only from a person who has no refined experience of spiritual matters. The most elementary fact about human mind is that it proceeds from material experiences to abstract ideas. All ideas called "concepts" in logic are products of this process, called "induction" in technical language. Although associated with concrete things these ideas by themselves are of an abstract nature, not reducible to material form, in the strictest sense of the term. Of course, the intelligent votary, who worships an image as the symbol of the Eternal God, if he at all sticks to his avowed perspective, simply reverses this process. He has to call forth much of his knowledge acquired through this process of abstraction in aid of the image, through which he tries to worship his God. He has to imagine qualities in the image which are not there. For example, it is to be credited with a mind which it does not possess. It is to be believed as possessing the power of hearing, which is also contrary to fact. It certainly needs a violent exercise of mental faculties to have to cope with the fact that a lifeless thing is to be regarded as having control over the life and destiny of man. If there is any strain on the mind of man in worship, it must be the greatest in this process of regarding the idol as the symbol of Eternity. A great figure in modern Hinduism, who was by no means unorthodox in other ways of life, asked why he was not found to practise the Hindu mode of worship, replied that he had a living goddess to worship. Further asked where it was, he said that it was his mother. A very significant statement indeed! A straight worship offered to man is more understandable than the "image-worship." If, for instance, a person worships his mother, he is worshipping one who has not only a mind but also the quality of love, which is undoubtedly a

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reflection of a corresponding Divine attribute. As a matter of fact, among those whom the Qur-án will call "polytheists," the most sensible are they who worship their king, like the Egyptians of the time of Moses or the Romans during the latter part of their history. The mind in such a worship follows a course which is more or less natural. The king does have, however superficially, some power over the life, death and destiny of his people. He has some control over the provisions of life, moral and material. It is for this reason, that in all nations the king has been regarded as the representative of God on earth. Thus in the presence of living human beings, particularly of a king, it is absolutely devoid of any sense to create figures of wood and earth and metal for purposes of worship, after the pattern mostly of none but man himself. As for the figures of animals, real or imaginary, or symbols representing no animal life at all, we do not think this part of idol-worship will ever find any intellectual supporter at all. Incidentally, the fact that in all idol-worshipping cults, the worship degenerates into the adoration of these and even more reprehensible representations, goes to show that whatever the original idea in "image-worship," it very soon paralyses the spiritual faculties of its adherents.

If it be argued that everything in nature is a sign pointing to God and as such may serve as a reminder in worship, my reply will be "Why fix any object at all; anything that confronts your sight is good enough as a reminder in that way. Is not man's own self, with its wonderful constitution and enormous possibilities, the best reminder in this respect? If any external thing is needed at all, the very ground under his feet, the very sky over his head are quite potent reminders to the worshipper in any place. But with all the arguments to the contrary, the fact is that all

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polytheistic modes of worship are a concession to that weakness in human mind which wants to adore everything that is impressive and thrills his senses rightly or wrongly. The faculty of worship in man, on the other hand, is a far deeper hankering. Physical phenomena may arouse this hankering superficially on certain occasions but it needs a spiritual concentration, undisturbed by any physical sensations, to give it a real satisfaction. It is for this reason that in all polytheistic cults, the number of adorable things may be legion—so much so that every interesting pebble lying on wayside has been found to serve as the symbol in worship—and yet the spiritual hankering of the nation remains unsatisfied and is in constant turmoil in search of the unknown God. An example of this is met with in the Athenian altar for the "Unknown God," which provided St. Paul with the theme for his first sermon in that city. I wish St. Paul could realise that that spiritual vacuum in the Greek mind could neither be filled by such an impressive human personality as that of Jesus. It could be filled only by a full-hearted spiritual thought of God Himself, existing in His Unity and shorn of all representations.

But apart from the fact that representations, inasmuch as they attempt to stir our spiritual faculties through the mediumship of our physical senses, do their job in an indirect way and very imperfectly on account of the very nature of things, with all the efficiency of the art of representation, man can give only one expression to an image. Each one of the multitude of gods and goddesses in any one pantheon can represent, therefore, only one aspect of Divine glory—either His power, or His knowledge, or His grace or any other. This analytical view of the Divine Being is the very opposite of what the human soul needs. The self of man realises itself by the exercise of its

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power of synthesis. Gathering, collection and centralisation are the methods by which man fulfils himself. The idea of Unity is the natural culmination of this eternal hankering of the human soul. The conception of one power covering the whole of cosmos is only a logical sequel to man's ever-expanding urge for synthesis. It is the acme of the process of summing up, of which human life consists. The invocation of ONE Supreme God, explaining the whole of life and existence, brings, therefore, that satisfaction which the soul needs in its synthetic grasp of its being. Any proper name standing for that synthetic ideal in its entirety will serve the purpose—whether it be Jehovah, God, Allah, Khuda or Parameshwar. But any attempt at decentralisation will be a violence to this natural flow of the human soul. Far from being helpful in the attainment of its objective, such a conception of the Deity will shatter the central object of worship to pieces.

The force of the argument of Unity is implied by the replies of the polytheistic worshippers themselves, when they say that these image-gods or goddesses are subordinate ones, acting as intermediaries between the Supreme Invisible God and mankind. It is significant that in the Hindu pantheon there is no representation of Parameshwar or the Supreme God.

If we analyse the pantheons of the polytheistic nations of the world, the representations for purposes of worship can be divided into four classes :

- (1) Representations of forces of external nature, *i.e.*, manifestations of Divine attributes in nature such as Lakshmi in Hinduism and the Sun and the Moon, the Sea, etc., in all polytheistic cults.
- (2) Representations of past heroes.
- (3) Representations of passions and emotions of the human mind such as Cupid, the Roman god.
- (4) Anything curious or imposing, real or imaginary.

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An examination of the order in which I have placed them, will reveal a gradual fall in the scale. Left to its own resources human mind first stumbles on the objects of nature in its search for the controller of his destiny.

Slipping further down in the scale, he bows before his fellow human beings with impressive personalities and great powers over men.

Getting more confused, he begins to adore the passions of man which are generally found to ride over man's mind.

Lastly, in a reckless condition of his spiritual struggles he seems to surrender himself to each and every thing that creates sensation in his mind.

It should be remarked here that the correct method of approaching God should be and has always been, revealed to man. The revelational origin associated with all the great religions of the world points towards this fact, as also the other fact that original worship in any of these had invariably been the same, *i.e.*, monotheistic. For example, it is admitted on all hands that original mode of worship in Hinduism, as observed in early Vedic days, was of the monotheistic type. The Christian prayers, in the time of Jesus Christ, were strictly monotheistic. We do not find there the worshippers associating Jesus with God in their prayers. Nor does one find any Buddhist of Buddha's time facing any statue of Buddha or even Buddha himself in his prayers. So far as Hinduism is concerned, the first beginnings of polytheism are to be seen in the hymns addressed to certain objects of nature in certain Vedic *mantras* of a later date. The contentions of Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj to the effect that original Hinduism was monotheistic in nature are accordingly based on good grounds although it is not correct to hold that the Vedas as they exist to-day breathe an

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unadulterated spirit of monotheism. Be that as it may, the fact that all attempts at reformation in Hinduism invariably aim at a monotheistic conception of God shows that Hinduism must have been monotheistic at its foundation.

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BY MAULANA ABDUL MAJID, M.A.

In a short article entitled "The Religion of Humanity," which appeared in the *Sunday Times* for 7th January, 1940, there are some interesting, though provocative reflections on Islam and Buddhism. As they come from such an important Church dignitary as Bishop Hensley Henson, they are worth a dispassionate and objective examination. The reverend gentleman expresses himself thus :

" . . . If Judaism be omitted as incorrigibly nationalistic, there are but two religions which can be reasonably brought into comparison with Christianity—Buddhism and Mahomedanism. Both these great religions have displayed wonderful expansive power. In that respect it would be impossible to demonstrate the uniqueness of Christianity. When, however, the enquiry is extended to the ethnical quality of the following which the three religions have secured, and the likelihood of their success in maintaining their ground under the novel conditions which modern civilisation has created, it may be fairly maintained that Christianity has an apparent superiority, and that this does provide a foundation for the belief, that it may finally make good its claim to be the Religion of Humanity. Finally, if the enquiry be carried from the credenda of

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the religions to their practical effects in politics, in society, and in personal morality, the conclusion can hardly be avoided that Christianity carries the promise of universal acceptance. The expansion of Buddhism has been almost wholly limited to Asia, that of Mahomedanism to Asia and Africa. Both religions appeal to the coloured races. Now Christianity includes within its profession "all sorts and conditions of men," and though the course of its history has made it predominantly a white man's religion, yet its expansion outside Europe has been so considerable as to demonstrate its ability to win also the acceptance of the coloured races."

From the above four conclusions follow :

1. That ethnically the followers of Christianity are superior to those of Buddhism and Islam.
2. That Christianity has influenced politics, society and the personal morality of its followers.
3. That Islam and Buddhism are suited best to the coloured races, which, according to the reverend gentleman, explains the eastward rather than the westward spread of Islam.
4. That Christianity is a universal religion.

Not only are these conclusions obviously debatable, they are contested by other religions also. Let us, therefore, examine them a little more closely.

As to the claim that the white races are ethnically superior to the coloured races, it is evident that Bishop Hensley Henson, if not echoing the threadbare views of those who believe in the now antiquated Nordic or Aryan race theory, is at least assuming that the present materialistic progress and achievements of the Western

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world are the direct outcome of their supposed ethnical superiority. He assumes a thing the validity of which is yet to be established. If the Western races are essentially and intrinsically superior to the Eastern peoples, then one wonders at the entire obscurity of western superiority in days when other civilisations prior to the Renaissance were in their full glory. The truth is that no nation is ethnically superior to any other. Nations, like individuals, rise and fall. Every people has its heyday, its day of the unfolding of its latent capacities. Each plays its destined part and then suffers eclipse. We can talk of the superiority of certain outlooks on life, certain principles, but not of the essential superiority of peoples. In passing, a reference may be made to the deep influence which the Islamic peoples exerted on the culture of Europe. Islam has affected the speculative and applied sciences of Europe; Islam has influenced all the European languages; Islam has contributed to the development of the technical industries of Europe; it has left its unmistakable mark upon the arts and letters of Europe, and upon political, social and pedagogical institutions of Europe. All scholars recognise the considerable extent of the influence that Averrhoes had on St. Thomas Aquinas, that Abumassarra had on the Franciscan school, that Ibn Arabi had on Lolo, and that the Muslim eschatology had on the writings of Dante. Books as *Der Einfluss der Araber auf die Kultur Europas* by Gustav Diercks, Leipzig, 1882, *Die Renaissance des Islams* by A. Mez, Heidelberg, 1922¹ and Draper's *Intellectual Development of Europe*, London, 1921, will enable the reader to form an idea of the influence of Islam on the culture and thought of Europe. Therefore, we would not talk of Indians, Chinese,

¹Translated into English by S. Khuda Bakhsh and D. S. Margoliouth, Patna, 1937.

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Turks and Arabs who have indubitably left their impress on the material and mental progress of mankind. We would proceed to examine if there is any truth in the claim to ethnical superiority. Not to mention the races that have accepted Islam (and they are by reason of the various causes confined to the regions lying between 17 and 41 of the northern latitude), the claim of the white races to ethnical superiority cannot even be established when one compares the white races with the blacks, who, as some believe, cannot boast of a glorious past to their credit.

In the United States of America experiments have been made which prove conclusively that the Negro is not inferior to his white compatriot in anything whatsoever. It has been established that it is more a question of environment and opportunity than of capacity. In 1860 there were 4,441,830 Negroes in the States, of which 4,215,614 were in the Southern States, where the law had prohibited, under pain of severe punishment, the teaching of Negroes to read and write. Ever since their emancipation, the percentage of illiterates has fallen rapidly. In 1880 there were still 80 per cent., in 1890 57·8 per cent., in 1910 30·4 per cent., in 1920 22·9 per cent., in 1930 14·7 per cent., which is three times less than in Spain. The university education at Tusgere, Howard, Fisk, Atlanta, Xavier (New Orleans), Lincoln, Morgan, Hampton, more than 22 official higher schools, 17 higher schools run by the Blacks themselves, represented in 1926 a revenue of three hundred million Belgian francs and a landed property of more than one milliard. All this is directed and controlled by the Blacks themselves. Out of 1,046, there are 903 Black teachers and the number of students is 17,506. It must be added that till 1916 the great majority of the Blacks lived in the Southern States, and, till 1890, 19·4 per

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cent. of the Blacks lived in villages and that it was prohibited by law for the Blacks to frequent the schools of the Whites. Also that on the fields of Alabama or Carolina, where the villages are dispersed and where the Blacks live on the plantations of cotton, the schools were rare. Besides, the one dozen great States of the South allocated in 1916, according to the report of Thomas Jesse Jones, 6,429,000 dollars to the higher education of the Whites and 350,000 dollars to that of the Blacks. The same report stated that there still were required more than six thousand rooms for the accommodation of the schoolgoing population of the Blacks. In the Mosley School of Chicago, experiments by comparative tests on the mental capacity of the Blacks and the Whites have been made. One has made use of the test method of Gray for oral and loud reading. The Blacks of the North who lived in towns and in the same milieu as the Whites, succeeded as well as the Whites. The Blacks of the South having had their parents who were still illiterates and not having known anything better than the life of the cabin on the plantations were evidently at a disadvantage. It is, therefore, rather a question of the milieu than of racial aptitudes (*cf. Revue de l'aucam, Louvain, for February, 1940*).

Why Islam did not spread westward is a very interesting and intriguing speculation despite the fact that it was knocking at the gates of Vienna in 1683 A.D. and reigned supreme in Spain for about seven centuries. And also despite the fact that the relations between the Muslims and the Christians of the early centuries were harmonious and sweet. Professor C. H. Becker, in his monograph, *Christianity and Islam*, London, 1909, tells us that, in the teachings of Islam, in the actions of Muhammad and his immediate contemporaries and his immediate followers, there was no anti-

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Christian fanaticism. Muslims never refused to worship in the same building as the Christians. Religious animosity, if any, was a very subordinate phenomenon. "It was a gradual development, and seems to me to have had a spasmodic beginning in the first century under the influence of Christianity. It may seem paradoxical to assert that it was Christian influence which first stirred Islam to religious animosity and armed it with the sword against Christianity, but the hypothesis becomes highly probable when we have realised the indifferentism of the Muhammadan conquerors. . . . Their attitude towards other beliefs was never so intolerant as that of Christendom at that period. Christianity may well have been the teaching influence in this department of life as in others. Moreover, at all times and especially in the first century the position of Christians has been very tolerable, even though the Muslims regarded them as an inferior class. Christians were able to rise to the highest offices of state, even to the post of vizier, without any compulsion to renounce their faith. Even during the period of the Crusades, when religious opposition was greatly intensified, again through Christian policy, Christian officials cannot have been uncommon: otherwise Muslim theorists would never have uttered their constant invectives against the employment of Christians in administrative duties. Naturally zealots appeared at all times on the Muhammadan as well as on the Christian side and occasionally acts of oppression took place. These were, however, exceptional. So late as the eleventh century, church funeral processions were able to pass through the streets of Bagdad with all the emblems of Christianity and disturbances were recorded by the chroniclers as exceptional. In Egypt, Christian festivals were also regarded to some extent as holidays by the Muhammadan

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population. We have but to imagine these conditions in a Christian kingdom of the early Middle Ages and the probability of my theory will become obvious." (Pp. 29—32.)

Naturally the assumption that Islam is best suited to the needs of the coloured races and that Christianity is better than Islam will not carry us very far. It will not convince many. A Muslim will maintain stoutly in his place exactly in the same manner as will a Christian. Thus if we wish to understand the reasons that led to the spread of the religion of Islam eastward we shall have to approach the question from the historical and later psychological causes. Islam appeared about 1,400 years ago and before even the world could realise the extent of its dynamic capacity, it had spread, within fifty years of the death of its promulgator, from the bank of the Indus, on the one hand, to the coast of the Atlantic Ocean on the other. All this happened without the aid of a secular emperor and with the "indifferentism of its conquerors." Its sister religions owed their spread to the material help given to them by one emperor or another. Buddhism owes its spread to the might of Asoka, Christianity, after having remained hidden in the nooks and corners of the world for three hundred years, to the manipulations of Constantine, Zoroastrianism to the fabulously wealthy and powerful Cyrus. Not so Islam. Yet, strangely enough, it could not fasten its roots in Europe. The fall of Jerusalem into the hands of the Muslims in 637 A.D., coupled with the rising tide of the power and success that attended the arms of Muslims that led to the critical period of the Crusades, has resulted in a wide gulf between Islam and the people of the West. The two worlds have stood constantly in opposition to each other ever since then. The West, more accurately the clergy, of those days gave currency

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to such grotesque and absurd propaganda against Islam and Muhammad that we, when to-day we read it ourselves, are simply left aghast and amazed. An etymological study of the word "Muhammad" in the *Great Oxford Dictionary* is an instructive commentary on the methods of misrepresentation of those days. A translation of the Qur-án was forbidden under papal bulls. The earliest translation of the Qur-án in the English language is not more than 200 years old. The misunderstanding has ever since been so deep that the West has spurned Islam "as a religion bitterly rejecting its monotheism and its iconoclasm, and practising, even with its own Christian monasticism, far less human brotherhood and abstemiousness than were the characteristics of Islam."

Economic causes fed the religious fanaticism fanned against Islam. In the name of religion the West launched against Islam a series of wars whose motives mainly were relief for European over-population and success in the commercial enterprise of the Genoese and Venetians. To add to this, came the sudden and irremediable decadence of Muslim civilisation. And when the time came to realise the debt which Europe owed to Islam, Europe found before its eyes the world of Islam prostrate, evincing no signs of life and vitality. This ended in the subjugation of practically the whole of the world of Islam by the West. It is these circumstances that led to the spread of Islam eastward and to the drawing of the muddled conclusion that the Bishop has done. But a scholar should think and know better. The question of colour has nothing to do with the eastward spread of Islam.

In their higher forms, it is interesting to note that there is nothing to choose between Islam and Christianity; if there is any claim that Islam makes in the pages of the Qur-án, it is that it supplements in places

WHY ISLAM DID NOT SPREAD WESTWARD

and rehabilitates in others the teachings of Jesus Christ. Europe knows more of Islam now than it did, say fifty years ago, yet it does not know enough.

Even so in Europe to-day there are eight million Muslims, including those in Russia and Turkey, out of which 1,750,000 are Jugoslavs in a total population of 15,000,000. Almost four-fifths of the total number of Muslims are Jugoslavs, while the remainder are of Turkish and Albanian origin.

How far the teaching of Jesus has affected the life of Europe is a point and claim which need not be belaboured. One has to cast a cursory look around and to form one's own judgment on the matter. Capitalism, armaments, disregard, even scorn, of a different race or colour, the accumulation of riches are some of the characteristics of Europe which are antithetical to the fundamentals of Christianity.

As to the claim on the universality of Christianity, let us see if there is any germ for this claim in the words of Jesus. It is on the eleven concluding verses of Chapter 16 of St. Mark that the claim to the universality of the teachings of Christianity is based. And it is these eleven concluding verses that have been proved to be spurious; they are forgeries and admitted additions to the ancient MSS. It is these eleven verses of St. Mark that supply the justification of the Christian Foreign Missions. Also the verse of St. Matthew (28 : 19) is no authority on the point either. In it the word "nations" is a mistranslation and a wrong substitute for the "tribes" by which is meant the rest of the Jewish tribes scattered all over the world. (Cf. *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, p. 1880, Section G, Wescott and Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek*, Appendix.)

"Christianity did not make its appearance as a truly universal religion, not even as a new religion nor

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as a mystery of salvation : it, in the first place, gave itself out as the accomplishment of the Jewish hope which defined itself in the notion of the ' Kingdom of God. '

" It is this accomplishment that Jesus the Nazarene, after John the Baptist, announced, having himself received the baptism from John.

" It is equally certain that Jesus was not proclaimed as Christ, nor as ' the Prince of the Kingdom to come ' until after his death.

" But the new faith did not move as the mystery of salvation nor did it detach itself radically from Judaism until after the capture of Jerusalem by Titus and the destruction of the Temple when the Christian propaganda had directly touched the pagans." (Alfred Loisy, *La Crise Morale du temps présent et l'éducation humaine*, Paris 1937, pp. II et seq).

RESPECT FOR INTERNATIONAL PROMISES IN ISLAM

BY SIRDAR IKBAL ALI SHAH

An inviolable respect for all treaty engagements is time and again enjoined upon the Faithful, not only in relation to contracts between themselves, but more explicitly to all international covenants ; for the Qur-anic command has it : " O you who believe ! Fulfil the obligations." (Chapter V : 1.)

The word used is " 'Uqúd " which not only means covenants with God, but also includes all agreements, treaties, international promises mutually contracted by men, and the Faithful are to consider the scrupulous adherence to such as an important factor in international social relationship.

The command is emphasised further by the saying : " And fulfil the covenant of Allah when you have made

RESPECT FOR INTERNATIONAL PROMISES

a covenant, and do not break the oaths after making them fast . . . ” (Chapter XVI : 91.)

A breaker of engagements is likened in a Quranic parable to a woman who, after spinning her yarn and giving it the strength of unity, tears it into shreds and thus destroys “the strands of mutual accord.”

It is clear from the above that both through direct commands and by inferential meaning, the keeping of a promise when once made either between two men or two states is to be strictly observed. Whosoever does not fulfil the terms of his solemn pledge is unfaithful not only to the Muslims, but to God.

Incidents can be cited to prove how strictly these injunctions were observed in Islamic history. One example will suffice : It is a story of the most scrupulous integrity and respect for treaties, and as it appertains to the Prophet himself, we can take it as the true symbol of all Islamic practice.

With fourteen hundred pilgrims, the Prophet was journeying towards Makka. None was armed except with swords, for the taking of swords was as perfunctory during those days as the carrying of walking sticks is to-day.

The Quraish, the enemies of Islam at Makka, began to prepare for war. But the Prophet sent word to them that he was coming with his followers in peace to Makka, only to perform the pilgrimage, and that he had no warlike intentions. But the Quraish forbade the Muslims to enter Makka. After a few skirmishes a ten-year treaty was signed.

Its six clauses are significant. It was agreed that that year no pilgrims were to visit Makka, that next year they could do so, provided that they did not stay more than three days ; that their swords were to remain sheathed during the pilgrimage ; that no pilgrim would be permitted to remain in Makka after the pilgrimage;

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that should any Muslim resident of Makka leave the city, he should be made to return by the Muslims; and, finally, that the tribes of the desert should be free to choose with whom they should ally themselves in battle.

When the treaty was being written out, and while Suhail, the Quraish delegate, waited, some men in the camp ran to remove the chains from the legs of a refugee. The unfortunate man was staggering with privation and fatigue of the journey. The Muslims washed his wounds where the chains had eaten into the flesh.

Then, before he could relate his story, he fainted. Every effort was made to resuscitate him, and when he revived he was taken before the Prophet.

One horrified look he gave Suhail, the Quraish, who sat beside the Prophet of God. The treaty had just been signed.

It was the turn of Suhail to speak: "To prove that you are faithful to your contract," he addressed the Prophet, "a fitting opportunity presents itself. This refugee is my own son, Abu Jandal; because he has embraced Islam a befitting punishment has been given him. That he has been put in chains is proof of what I say."

He looked at his son and then, with that cruel voice by which the men of the desert knew Suhail from afar, he insisted that the refugee should be sent back to Makka wearing the very same chains with which he had escaped from that city at the approach of his co-religionists. Suhail pointed to the terms of the treaty.

Fourteen hundred warriors stood around the Prophet—warriors who had won battles. Even now they could throw themselves upon the unbeliever, the father who would tolerate, even demand, the torturing of his own son!

RESPECT FOR INTERNATIONAL PROMISES

These men of the desert were not a whit inferior in military skill to Suhail, the vile Quraishite, and he was alone in their midst. What if his blood flowed! He richly deserved it; and, above all, a Muslim's life was in danger,—a Muslim who was so utterly helpless that even his father desired his persecution.

What seas of passion must not have been heaving in their hearts! What fire must not have been burning in their eyes! And what would the Prophet now command? Why did he wait?

“But the treaty was not signed,” said the Prophet to the delegate of the Quraish, “when your son entered the camp.” Suhail only looked at the man in chains like a viper that devours its own serpent-brother: “Aye, aye,” he replied, “but the terms of the treaty were agreed upon.”

One must have a heart of stone not to be moved by this human drama, but the faithful engagement was placed above all other considerations—a word of a Muslim was something sacred, something which admitted no ambiguity, a contract which could not be broken.

In silent resignation Abu Jandal was borne away in chains: “. . . and Allah shall open a way for thee,” said the Prophet to that true son of Islam.

That Abu Jandal did receive his freedom, and later joined the Muslims, is beside the point. What is of importance to note is the extraordinary degree of faithfulness which was exhibited by the Prophet towards respecting all international promises once entered into, no matter what circumstances might arise after a contract had been sealed and the solemn pledge had been taken.

Strong as this example is regarding the fulfilling of engagements, some critics of Islam have presumed that the restoration of Abu Jandal to the Quraish was

ISLAMIC REVIEW

owing to the weaker military strength of the Muslims as compared with the Quraish at the time; and, inadmissible though the argument is, I am yet prepared to give another example of positive respect of international treaty by the Muslims even at a period when the might of the Islamic legions could not be effectively challenged; that is, during the Caliphate of 'Umar.

On an occasion when the Muslim armies under Abu Obeyda had besieged Damascus, and when the Muslim general Khalid had actually forced one of the gateways of the town, and victory was within his grasp, the people, opening other gates unknown to the attacking Muslim general, made a treaty with the high command of Islam.

Order was at once given to Khalid to stop the war and give peace to the people. The actual conquest of Damascus was thus stayed when no one could have prevented the Muslims from making the city their own within a few hours.

Finally, in the Qur-án to refrain from fighting against those with whom one has a treaty is signified as a duty; and observance of the clauses of treaties "to the end of their terms," is strictly enjoined upon Muslims. Only two of the tribes, namely, Banu Damra and Banu Kinana, had adhered to their engagements and against them the Muslims did not fight; but permission to do battle against others who had broken covenants with the Muslims was granted, for they had sent their challenge to the Muslims through Ali in the following terms:

"O Ali! deliver this message to your cousin Muhammad, that we have thrown the agreements behind our backs, and that there is no agreement between him and us except smiting with spears and striking with swords."

From these and many other examples of Islamic history, it can, therefore, be proved how important

CORRESPONDENCE

the Muslims hold any contract that they sign with others. Indeed, so much is this so, that the Qur-án enjoins upon the Muslims the duty of fighting when treaties are broken.

CORRESPONDENCE "Another on the Threshold"

SYDNEY,
AUSTRALIA.
24th April, 1940.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

I am writing to tell you that I wish to become a Muslim. My people have no objection as they consider it very good.

Ever since I was quite young it was my intention to study all religions and I find in Islam such beautiful truths which cannot be traced in other religions. Its universality, broadmindedness and simplicity appeal to me especially.

I would be very grateful if you would send me information and more literature regarding prayers and fasting.

Yours sincerely,
M. HAMPTON.

SHANTI SADAN,
LONDON.
June 21st, 1940.

DEAR IMAM SAHIB,

On behalf of Shanti Sadan I am asked to thank you most sincerely for your kind invitation of last Sunday.

For many of us it was a unique opportunity and we are more than grateful for the hospitality shown to us.

May your work be blessed and prosper so that the Truth may reach all human beings.

Yours truly,
H. HALLIDAY,
Secretary.

SOUTHER HOSPITAL,
DARTFORD, KENT.
24th June, 1940.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

Thank you very much for the parcel of literature sent to this hospital. It will be much appreciated by the wounded soldiers.

Yours faithfully,
M. MILLER,
Librarian.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

LONDON, N. 10.
27th June, 1940.

DEAR IMAM,

You expressed a wish that I should write and tell you my reasons for becoming a Muslim. Here they are.

I was given a copy of *Islam and the Muslim Prayer* by the late Khwaja Kamal-ud-din. Before I had read to page 18 I knew I had found a religion that would help and satisfy me. Two things especially impressed me :

1. The Muslim belief in the inherent sinlessness of men.
2. That Muslim prayers are not selfish.

As Christians we are taught to believe that we are born in sin and can only be saved by the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ. It is for this reason that we are "baptised" and later on "confirmed." I tried hard to believe all this but my commonsense refused. It was all childish and seemed an excuse to do as one liked and wriggle out of the consequences. The coward's way in fact !

I could not believe that the babies I saw were sinful and again I found that most of the so-called sins were just a breaking of community laws and not God's Laws at all. It was a great relief to find that under the teachings of the Qur-án nothing is in itself right or wrong but only the use or abuse of it.

Secondly, although the Muslim prayers puzzled me at first (for I could not understand them ; something was missing it seemed) yet when I began to study them I realised they were all praise or very nearly so ; they sing nothing but God's mercy and greatness, and I am sure that their constant recitation must foster a desire to be more godlike in our daily lives. This contrast with the Christian prayer, which is a constant whine to be saved from the results of one's misdeeds or for things we think we need.

We, as Christians, are taught God is a kind Father, Who is always listening to our prayers, ready to grant all we wish, if only we ask long and loud enough.

I, for one, always asked for all I wanted and I have had my prayers answered only to find I would have been happier had I left myself in God's hands. For my vision was short and the things I prayed for so constantly one day became a burden and a chain around my neck a little later.

So these things alone decided me and I am glad. I feel I have left the child's state of religion and now through adult eyes see the Truth.

Every day I am learning to love the simplicity and justice of Islam and the wisdom of the Holy Qur-án.

The Bible seemed so full of useless matter and much that I thought horrible.

I hope this has not bored you. I shall try to attend prayers at 18 Eccleston Square on Friday next (28th).

I am,
Yours sincerely,
(MRS.) CLARA WILLIAMS.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER IN ISLAM,
ASSALAM-O-ALAIKUM!

I am sure as a Muslim you are anxious to see Islam properly understood. May I help you to realise this aim by making a suggestion or two?—Induce your friends to read books on Islam and let them see what Islam is. You must have a few non-Muslim friends. They can, as a rule, be divided into two sets of people—those who are favourably inclined towards Islam and intellectually dissatisfied with Christianity and those who know nothing of Islam.

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Islam, Her Moral and Spiritual Value, by Major Leonard	3	0
The Renaissance of Islam, by Mez	15	0

Buy these books and educate your friends. This is a duty incumbent on you. "Deliver what has been revealed unto you from your Lord."—(The Holy Qur-ān, Chapter 5:67.)

D.—You can also do an immense amount of spadework by paying a year's subscription (10/-) Ten Shillings for the *Islamic Review*, Woking, on behalf of a non-Muslim friend of yours.

I remain,
Yours sincerely and fraternally,
ABDUL MAJID,
Imam of the Mosque, Woking.

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