

# Islamic Review

Edited by KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN, B.A., LL.B.

---

Vol. XI.]

SAFAR 1342 A.H.

[No. .

Annual Subscription, 10s.

OCTOBER 1923.

Single Copies

---

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Notes .. .. .	341
Islam in Albania .. .. .	345
Mysticism in Islam .. .. .	348
Humanity and Divinity of Jesus. .. .. .	356
By Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din	
"Shoes Off." By Francis A. H. Williams .. .. .	361
The Character of Muhammad. By Masud Ali Varesi	367
Review .. .. .	377
What is Islam? .. .. .	379

---

## THE HOLY QUR-ÂN

With English Translation and Commentary, printed on high-class India paper, and bound in green flexible leather, price £2 10s. ; Pluviosin, £2; cloth £1 10s. Postage and packing for all qualities: United Kingdom, 2s. ; abroad, 4s. Prospectus and sample pages sent free on application. Apply to "Islamic Review," The Mosque, Woking, England, or to Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i-Islam, Ahmadiyya Buildings, Lahore, or to "Islamic Review" Office, Azeez Manzil, Lahore, India.

---

PUBLISHED AT  
THE MOSQUE, WOKING, ENGLAND

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
مُحَمَّدٌ وَصَلَّى عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

# THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

VOL. XI.

SAFAR, 1342 A.H.

NO. 10.

OCTOBER 1923.

## NOTES

### Maulvi Mohammed Yakub Khan.

With the departure of Maulvi Mohammed Yakub Khan, who left London on September 20th, *en route* for India, the Muslim Mission in England loses, for a time only, we hope, a tireless worker, a skilful leader, and a unique personality. The two years of his ministry in this country—brief as the period may seem—have been of outstanding value to the work of the Mission, and have left behind them a mark and, it may almost be said, established a tradition which will not easily be effaced or forgotten.

Maulvi Yakub Khan left the Government service at the call of spiritual duty in 1919, resigning a responsible and lucrative position to devote himself heart and soul to the cause of Islam. In 1921 he came to England, where his ripe scholarship and wide experience in affairs were especially welcome. He took over the conduct and management of the *Islamic Review*, together with the Publications Department of the Mission; and had charge, for a year, of the London Prayer House (111, Campden Hill Road, Notting Hill Gate, W.). During his stay he has translated *Sérat-i-Khair-ul-Bashar* (*The Life of the Holy Prophet*), by His Holiness Maulvi Muhammad Ali, and *The Secret of Existence*, by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, which is now in the press.

When Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din left England in June for Mecca and his Eastern tour, Maulvi Yakub Khan assumed

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

control of the Mission, and his peculiar fitness for that somewhat delicate post became at once apparent. It is not a position that can easily be filled, neither is the personality of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din one that can easily be replaced; and personality is, in this connection, a consideration of well-nigh paramount importance. The Head of the Muslim Mission—be he acting or permanent—needs a combination of qualities rarely to be found united in one person; and therefore it may be regarded as providential that there was at hand so fitting a successor upon whom the mantle of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din might fall.

To the single-mindedness and devotion without which no high cause may hope to prosper, must be added the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove; a mastery of the myriad weapons of theological warfare, and an infinite tact in using them; a wide knowledge of men and affairs; alertness to discern occasion and grasp opportunity, and the ability not only to perceive clearly both sides of a question but also to demonstrate as clearly and convincingly where the other side is wrong; infinite patience, infinite sympathy, infinite understanding. These are the things needful—or some of them—and, looking back on his life and work amongst us during the past two years, to say that Maulvi Yakub Khan possesses all these qualities in a signal degree is to say not a word too much.

A profound thinker, a cogent preacher and an illuminating conversationalist, he based his instruction, not on Reason only, but on reasonableness, which is, to many, a quality at once more appealing and more human; his inflexible principle showed never a taint of bigotry, and his devotion to the Faith was compounded of that wide tolerance and God-begotten charity which are of the very essence of Islam. Argument, from him, bore with double force, because it was untouched by rancour; and his calm and eminently logical personality had a subduing influence on the adversary, which eliminated all bitterness and compelled reflection. He made men think. There is, perhaps, no higher tribute that his fellow-men may render to a servant of the Most High.

Maulvi Yakub Khan possesses, moreover, that rare quality disguised and obscured nowadays by the over-worked phrase “a sense of humour”—the precious gift which is claimed by all men, yet vouchsafed scarcely to one in a thousand;

## NOTES

and it is this gift of self-detachment—by virtue of which, had it been so ordained, he might, one feels, have aspired to emulate the achievements of a Dickens or a Gilbert—which enabled him always to take the level view in practical matters and to discharge the delicate duties of his responsible position with unvarying and conspicuous success.

To the little throng of friends and well-wishers that met together at Victoria (S.E. & C.R.) Station on the morning of September 19th, to bid him God-speed, the occasion was a sad one. There were tears in many eyes. As the train steamed out into the sunlight, there was not one of us but felt keenly the sense of loss—the loss of a friend, of one who was carrying with him to his well-earned rest the respect, the confidence, the love, not of us only, his fellow-workers, but of all who know him. May he soon return to us.

### Lord Headley's Experiences.

With reference to Lord Headley's pilgrimage to Mecca, *The Times* of August 30th prints the following :—

Writing on August 22nd, our Cairo Correspondent gave the following account of the experiences of Lord Headley, who is a Moslem :—

Lord Headley, who has just returned to Cairo after completing the pilgrimage to Mecca, has brought back with him two pieces of the Kiswa, or Holy Carpet, presented to him by King Hussein. One of the pieces, the larger, is destined for the Mosque at Woking, the other for his drawing-room at Twickenham.

Lord Headley is not only the first British peer to perform the pilgrimage, but, so far as is known, the first Englishman who has made the journey to Mecca under his own name and as an Englishman. Burton, Wavell, and others went in Oriental disguise.

Of King Hussein and his hospitality, Lord Headley is loud in his praise. The King sent his motor-car to Jeddah to convey him to Mecca, and to take him back to the seaport when the pilgrimage had been completed. The King's private doctor was deputed to drive the car, doubtless as a double precaution—first, against accidents ; and, secondly, if misfortune should be encountered, to ensure that medical aid should be immediately at hand.

Lord Headley and his companion, the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, Imam of the Woking Mosque, were during their stay in the Hejaz the guests of King Hussein, who displayed the utmost solicitude for their comfort. On one occasion, when the pilgrims were encamped in the desert, the King learned that Lord Headley had no bed. He immediately sent his own camp-bed, himself sleeping on the ground.

From the time that the pilgrims reach the outskirts of Mecca until they have completed the object of their journey, it is obligatory to wear the *chram*, the pilgrims' dress, consisting simply of two linen sheets, one worn around the loins and the other cast over the shoulders, and during the performance of certain rites the head must be bare. The wearing of the ceremonial garments was somewhat irksome, but

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

standing bareheaded in the scorching sun was a terrible ordeal. Lord Headley told the King that a grave had better be prepared at once, for no English head would survive the trial. Eventually a compromise was effected in the shape of a large turban.

Mecca impressed Lord Headley as a fairly well-cared-for city of about sixty thousand inhabitants, but very hot and dusty, and most undesirable as a place of permanent residence. All that was observed of the local administration went to show that King Hussein's Government is a progressive one.

Lord Headley highly praised the Egyptian Government's arrangements for the pilgrims, especially the quarantine station at Tor, where everything possible was done to mitigate the tedium of the three days' enforced confinement.

### Cause and Effect.

Dr. S. M. Zwemer, the indefatigable missionary to the Muslims, has recently stated, according to *The Christian World*, that "there seems to be one blind spot in the British outlook upon missions, and that is with regard to the opportunities for Mohammedan evangelization." Most of the societies whom he approached on the subject "confessed that they had no work, or had issued no literature for ten years."

This must have been sufficiently discouraging; but while in England Dr. Zwemer visited, says *The Christian World*, the Muslim Mosque at Woking, in connection with which, he says, a very large mail order business is carried on with all parts of the world in Muslim literature. The fact that the *edition de luxe* of the Holy Qur-án, sold at £2 10s., is going into a second edition seems to have caused him particular uneasiness. "Perhaps," he is reported to have said, "their high prices make them more greatly appreciated by purchasers. Sometimes I think our books are too cheap."

We are inclined to think that Dr. Zwemer must look nearer home altogether if he is to get at the real cause of the utter failure of all Christian missions to Islam.

The frankly non-Christian (in the orthodox sense) attitude of a large and influential section of the Church of England has long been sufficiently notorious; and now we find that, the Presbyterian General Assembly of America having decided in favour of orthodoxy, a number of eminent ministers of that community have seen fit frankly to repudiate that decision.

One of their number, Dr. Coffin, speaking, apparently, for many, writes in *Unity* to the effect that the inspiration of the Scriptures, the Virgin Birth of Christ and the actual resurrection of his physical body are alike untenable and

## ISLAM IN ALBANIA

unessential; and further that "the accounts of his miracles must be judged in the light of the scientific ideas of his day," all of which concessions to human reason cannot fail to prove a severe handicap to the zealous missionary in his self-imposed conflict with Islam.

A house divided against itself not only cannot stand, but is not likely to attract any great number of new adherents to share in the impending ruin.

It is here, rather than in the price of "literature," that Dr. Zwemer will find the real solution of the problem.

---

## ISLAM IN ALBANIA

UNDER the above heading, the *Near East* of August 30th prints news which cannot be regarded by devout Muslims as other than disquieting. It would appear that in that restless land there has been convoked a "Congress of Muslims, of both the Sunni and Bektashi persuasions," at which, first, "the complete independence of the Mohammedan religion in Albania was proclaimed"; secondly, "the authority of the Khalif was altogether repudiated," and all reference to him, where the prayers are said in Albanian, expunged; and thirdly, that the question of "a form of prayer to be used in the Mosques" is under consideration. It would further appear that the Government (such as it is) approves of all these things; that it has formally recognized the Mussulman High Council, appointed by the Congress, as the supreme Mohammedan authority in Albania; and that one of the first acts of the Council aforesaid has been to "give definite permission for women to go about unveiled in public."

Mr. Wilson's egregious doctrine of "self-determination" is possibly at the root of this movement—that, and the example, it may be, of the numerous "Churches" of the West, "Free" and otherwise; or it may be that the peculiarly Anglo-Saxon notion of what may be termed territorial religion, as exem-

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

plified in the Church of England, has been the inspiring idea.

However this may be, one thing seems painfully clear, and that is that Western ideas and Western influence have contrived to intrude into a sphere in which they can have no place. The result would be grotesque were it not for the sacrilege—the potential tragedy of it all. We have heard similar reports of other Muslim communities in other parts of the world from time to time; but these have hitherto lacked confirmation; and it is devoutly to be wished that the news, in the present instance also, may be erroneous. For what, after all, is the position?

The countless schisms and sects of Christendom, as well as its territorial religions—with frontiers as jealously guarded as those of enemy countries—must be taken as symbolical of the failure of a Faith. The cracks appear in the edifice because the foundations are unsound. Their presence is unfeignedly deplored by those officially in charge; it is, indeed, to them, a source of the most profound anxiety. Every effort is made to patch up and clamp the tottering walls; to erect brand-new façades of elegant and arresting design, in order to conceal the process of disintegration which is going on behind the carved marble and glowing mosaics. Nay, publicists and devout men of unimpeachable learning and piety write volume after volume to prove, according to all the rules, known and unknown, of logic and common sense, that the walls are not, in reality, tottering at all, nor are they cracked, nor, indeed, anything but the soundest of sound masonry, and that any appearance to the contrary is a mere hallucination of the vulgar.

The fabric of Islam, on the other hand, has stood foursquare for thirteen centuries—one Lord, one Faith—independent of time and controversy, as of the petty terrestrial boundaries that part nation from nation. What shall be said of the hand that seeks

## ISLAM IN ALBANIA

wantonly to deface so fair and flawless an edifice? What of the eye that sees a glamour and attractiveness in decay, and the phenomena of approaching dissolution; that finds in the convulsive struggles of a dying creed, an example instead of a warning?

Wherefore we beg of our brethren in Albania, most earnestly and without rancour or reproach, that they pause ere proceeding farther on a course the end whereof none may clearly forecast, save that it must involve a grave and irretrievable injury to the fabric of our Faith. It is easier to destroy than to build up, and who may gauge the force of evil example—however trifling in itself that example may be?

It is not for us to decry the West. East and West have each their excellences, which the other might do well to emulate. But in religion—in Islam—there is neither East nor West; neither are the eternal truths of religion amenable to the changing fashion of a time or of a country.

What is to be understood by the phrase “complete independence of the Mohammedan religion in Albania”? If it signifies, in any sense, separation from other Muslims, then the religion so rendered independent can no longer claim to be called Mohammedan; for unity is of the essence of Islam.

What can be the purpose served by considering a new “form of prayer to be used in the Mosques,” except to mark some definite and significant severance between the Muslims of Albania and their brethren throughout the world? Independence is a word of glamour. The child in the nursery longs for independence; the schoolboy on the threshold of life covets it. More legitimately, the oppressed nation—be it small or great—will claim and fight for its independence from the tyrant and oppressor. All these are simulacra of an independence which is natural to mankind—which is at its highest noble, at its



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

lowest, can at least be understood ; but the independence which is not of nature, and the craving for which passes the comprehension of men even averagely devout, is independence of God and the Religion of God.

At a time when thoughtful men and women throughout the countries of the West are turning more and more to Islam, and the consolation that it offers to the perplexed and weary seeker after God—the consolation of Faith no longer divorced from Reason, of Reason no longer the malignant enemy, but the submissive handmaid of Faith ; of a creed neither founded on fable nor fettered by dogma, which has for thirteen hundred years maintained unshaken its claim to be the very voice of God Himself, speaking by the mouth of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), the last, and, because the last, the greatest of His Messengers ; a creed which still, through the centuries, makes its chief appeal to the world without, by the essential oneness of its millions of followers—such action as that reported of the Muslims of Albania is little short of a catastrophe.

---

### MYSTICISM IN ISLAM

[Text of a lecture by M. Yakub Khan on August 15th, in connection with the Summer School of Theology, in the hall of Trinity College, Oxford ; Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter, M.A., D.Litt., D.D., being in the chair.]

WHATEVER connotation is attached to the term mysticism, it is more or less, if not exactly, what is known as *tasawwuf* in the literature of Islam. A brief reference to the origin of this word in Islamic nomenclature may not be without interest. *Tasawwuf* and its derivative *Sufi* (one possessed of mystic powers) were words unknown in the day of the Prophet of Islam ; nor do we find them in vogue amongst his immediate successors. They are of a much later origin, having sprung up about the close

## MYSTICISM IN ISLAM

of the second century of the Muslim era. Various are the explanations offered as to their growth. Some trace their origin to the well-known *Ashab-i-Suffa*, the Prophet's companions who used to sit and sleep on the *suffa* or raised terrace, in the mosque, devoting their entire time and energy to the acquisition of religious knowledge. In later times people piously inclined came to be called *Sufis*, after these companions of the Prophet. Others suppose the term *sufi* to be derived from *suf* or wool. Like the Christian sackcloth, woollen garments suggest the idea of penance; but such garments did not form any part of the necessary insignia of the *Sufi* Order. And there is yet another surmise. *Safā* means purification, and so *Sufi* signifies the person with a pure heart. But according to a modern scholar, the word *Sufi* is in all likelihood an adaptation of the Greek word *suf* (σόφια), which signifies deep wisdom.

Whatever the derivation of the word *tasawwuf*, there is no mistake about what it stands for. Knowledge of the reality of things, according to the *Sufi*, is beyond the reach of the bare intellectual vision of man. Questions such as the why and wherefore, the whence and whither of this fact of existence, have ever baffled all attempts at solution. No scientific research, no philosophic discourse, no metaphysical speculation, can offer a convincing answer to this riddle of life. Their vision is limited to the four walls of physical sense. On these wings we may soar to great heights, but when we do land, wherever it may be, we are still on the misty soil of doubt and obscurity. The highest flight of speculative thought may at best take us to the stage that there *ought to be* a Universal Mind pervading the entire realm of phenomena, but even this, after all, is only *probable* and not *positive* knowledge. The gulf between *ought to be* and *is*, is still there, yawning as wide as ever. It is the *Sufi* that comes forward

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

to bridge this gulf, to raise that *ought to be* to the plane of *is*. This, he tells us, is done in moments of "illumination," "intuition," "inspiration" or "revelation," call it what you will. There is no longer that tossing on the waves of doubt, uncertainty and obscurity. It is broad daylight, and things appear as they are.

This, in a nutshell, is the true purport of *tasawwuf* or mysticism. As a truth, it is grounded on the teachings of Islam—is every bit Islamic. It constitutes, in fact, the highest meaning of the religion of Islam—the uplifting of man to those celestial heights where one is in full view of the Reality.

Before proceeding, however, with the elucidation of this great Islamic Truth, a survey of the growth, development and subsequent decay of the *Sufi* Movement as a specific system or cult may not be out of place.

To begin with, this *sufistic* system seems to owe its origin more to a counter-current set in reaction to the rigid formalism and hollow ceremonialism of the Commandment. The champions of the Commandment laid all their emphasis on observance, regardless of the corresponding spiritual purification which ought to be the sole purpose of all commandment. The *Sufi*, with a keen eye for the reality behind the appearance, for the kernel within the shell, was naturally disgusted with the mimic letter-worship of the *Multa* or the priest. To him, the latter's ritualistic practices seemed sheer nonsense, and he was not slow to denounce them as such. This has ever kept the *Sufi* and the *Multa* at loggerheads. The *Multa*, often in the good books of the powers that be, has, on his part, invoked all the rigour of law and custom against the unfortunate *Sufi* and often made him the victim of ostracism, imprisonment and, at times, even of the gallows. Theirs is a story much akin to that of Jesus and the Pharisees.

Imam Ghazali may be regarded as the chief

## MYSTICISM IN ISLAM

exponent of *sufistic* thought. He was the first to formulate the notions of this school. His exposition of the system in a few words is just this : Like the school of Commandment, the school of *tasawwuf* comprises two parts, viz. knowledge and conduct. The difference between the two lies in that in the first knowledge precedes conduct, whereas in the latter knowledge is the outcome of conduct. In other words—a matter of course—knowledge of things is first acquired through education, ratiocination and similar processes of the brain ; and then comes one's conduct, which is regulated according to the knowledge thus obtained. But in the case of *tasawwuf* knowledge comes, Imam Ghazali tells us, as a flash of light, without any physiological brain processes. Such knowledge is the outcome of a pure heart, which in its turn is the product of certain pious devotional practices. On hearts so cleansed of all worldly alloy Divine Light falls like a flash of lightning, which in the twinkling of the eye opens up before man's mental eyes a vast vista of knowledge. The Imam elucidates the point in a beautiful parable. Says he :—

Once upon a time a competition was held between Roman and Chinese painters. Each claimed superiority in the art. The King called them to a trial of their skill, setting them to show their handiwork on opposite walls. And lest they should copy each other, a screen was suspended in the middle, between the walls, to shut them off from each other's view. In a few days the Romans informed the King that their work was finished, and so did the Chinese. The curtain being lifted, it was found that the two did not vary even by an hair's breadth. The one was an exact copy of the other. Then it was discovered that the Romans, instead of doing any painting themselves, had only polished the surface of their wall, so that when the curtain was removed it reflected the painting on the opposite wall.

Another great figure of the same school, Maulana Jalaluddin of Rûm (Turkey), whose *Masnawi* enjoys a great reputation, quotes the same illustration and says that the heart of man, when thus purified, becomes the tabernacle of the Divine.

The voluminous works of Imam Ghazali are

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

considered the standard works on Islamic mysticism. They give a wonderfully minute dissection of the human mind, its shades and colours, passions, emotions, volitions and so forth, and contain a remedy for every conceivable moral or spiritual ailment. Maulana Rûm's *Masnavi* is known by the name of "Qur-án in the Pahlawi language."

The pages of Islamic history have been bright with these spiritual luminaries, all down the ages. The names of Altar, Hafiz, Omar Khayyám, Sa'di, amongst the Persians are too well known to need any great introduction. Every Muslim land is rich in these beacon lights. Muinuddin, Nizamuddin, Ganj Bakhsh, Bahauddin and many others, shone on the spiritual horizon of India and their graves to this day adorn that ancient home of sages and seers, attracting crowds of pilgrims, both Muslims and Hindus. Their works are sweet to a degree. Of the Divine Beatitude, which is the goal of all their efforts, and which forms the burden of their tunes, they speak as of a beloved. And so are the various spiritual pleasures of their ecstatic moments likened to wine or the gentle breeze, and quite a vocabulary of terminology has been developed to express the hundred and one phases in relation to the Universal Mind. Here is a specimen of their bewitching notes :—

A philosopher you have become, but you know not  
From where you are and where you are and what you are.  
Throw your hundreds of books and leaves in the fire ;  
Turn your heart and soul towards the Beloved.  
In your heart will you see the knowledge of the Prophets ;  
Without the aid of book, or tutor or teacher. (Maulana Rûm.)

How long will you waste your toil in the philosophy of the  
Greeks ?

Come and learn the philosophy of the believers too.  
A lifetime have you wasted in discourses of grammar ;  
Come and read a word of love as well.  
There is no knowledge but the knowledge of love ;  
All else is deceit of the Evil One. (Bahauddin.)

## MYSTICISM IN ISLAM

The knowledge of the people of the physical is a burden unto them ;

The knowledge of the people of the heart, is a lift unto them ;

Knowledge of the heart—it is a bosom friend ;

Knowledge of the body—it is a snake. (Masnawi.)

You have not come out of the closet of your low passions ;

How can you hope to get to the street of Truth ?

The beauty of the Beloved has no veil to cover it ;

You have only to keep down the dust of your way to behold it. (Hafiz.)

These great souls, whose one care was Truth and nothing short of Truth, were quite right in the denunciation of hollow ceremonialism. The Qur-án itself is unsparing in its disapproval of any such thing. Prayer five times a day is obligatory on every Muslim, and yet the Qur-án says :—

Have you seen him who belies his religion ? That is the one who treats the orphan with harshness, and does not urge others to feed the poor. So woe to the praying ones who are unmindful of their prayers (cvii. 1-5).

Prayer as a mere ritual is no prayer. It must lead to spiritual elevation, or else it is worthless trash. "Prayer is the *Mi'raj* of a believer," says the Prophet. *Mi'raj* means a ladder, and so by prayer a believer has to ascend to higher planes of spiritual life. Again, the Prophet is reported once to have asked his companions : "What do you think of a man in whose house there flows a stream of crystal water and five times a day he takes a dip into it ?" . . . "So is the case of the man," continued the Prophet, "who says his prayers five times a day." This is the value of these religious observances when performed in their proper spirit. On physico-psychological grounds, too, their value is obvious enough. The recent theory of psycho-physical parallelism bears testimony to the efficacy of bodily observances, postures, repetition of words by mouth, and so forth. They have an unfailing corresponding effect on our mentality. So, as a means to an end, these devotional practices are indispensable, just as food is indispensable

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

if the body is to keep in proper order and strength. Therefore these great spiritual luminaries, though they placed all their emphasis on the soul of things, never gave up the observance of the law. It was the law as observed by the letter-worshipper that was a cause of spiritual decay; but for proper growth and development the law was none the less necessary. All that was needed was to keep an eye on the spirit of the law and aim at that. Nevertheless, their denunciation afforded a handle to many to evade the rigour of the law. Many an indolent person and idler, to whom a well-regulated, well-balanced life of law and commandment was rather irksome, would flock to the *Sufi* Order.

It was thus that the movement degenerated. In the common herd, to whom it meant no more than a refuge from the rigorous life of the law, its original spark was extinguished. It had arisen as a protest against formalism, but gradually it became itself a dead-weight of perhaps worse formalism. The letter again took the place of the spirit, rite and ritual of essence. A stupendous structure of terms and trappings was raised in the course of time, such as *wird* and *wazifa* (repetition of certain holy words), *Pīr* and *Murīd* (the spiritual guide and the disciple), *silsila* (line of spiritual descent) and *sajjada Nashīn* (those that sit in the seat of the teacher), *bai'at* (swearing allegiance to the Head), of *sajjādah* and *tasbīh* (prayer-carpet and strung beads), *sarod* and *wajd* (hymn-singing and ecstasy), *zīkr-bil-jahr* and *zīkr khafī* (loud repetitions and low repetitions), *Darwaish* and *Fakir* (the ascetic hermit), *hāl* (working up an ecstatic mood), *mast* and *malang* (oblivious of everything and reckless), *Ghanth*, *Qutab*, *Abdāl*, *Wali* (the various spiritual ranks), *Sālik* (the seeker after Truth), *sirr* (the secret), and a hundred and one others. And under this superstructure was crushed the vision of Ghazali, Rumi, Hafiz and the rest of the great *Sufis*. Theirs was a cry of "Back to

## MYSTICISM IN ISLAM

Islamic simplicity." But those that came after them, men of narrower views and commoner clay, outdid the *Mullah* himself in weaving a web of rites and rituals, forms and names, around the simple Truth of Islam. The general decadence of the world of Islam has in no small degree been influenced by the mushroom of the *sufistic* schools, now deformed and degenerated, that sprang up here, there and everywhere. A wave of lethargy swept over all those that fell under their influence. What was this life worth? A *Sufi* must look forward to things of the hereafter. While here, he must be content with whatever befalls him. His sole care must be to do the will of the *Pîr*, whose mysterious influence with God would secure him a position of special privilege with Him. Thus was undermined the moral backbone of a once manly, strenuous race. The Islamic life of strife and struggle gave place to a life of morbid humility and contentment. The Islamic straightforward common-sense code of life was subordinated to the caprice of an ignorant *Pîr*.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that *tasawwuf*, as truly conceived and worked out by the great masters, has its roots in the teachings of the Holy Qur-ân and is, in fact, the highest culmination of the Islamic conception of a spiritual life. The Word of God is still, according to the Holy Qur-ân, the highest reward with which a truly good and noble soul can be blessed. Says the Book :—

The beloved of the Lord—those that have faith in Him and lead a virtuous life—for them is a good news in this life as well as in the next ; . . . and this is the Highest Good.

Again :—

Those who say, Allah is our Lord, and then firmly hold to it—God's angels come to them (with the message): Fear not, nor grieve, and be of good cheer. . . .

Divine revelation still comes, and will ever come, to enlighten a clean and pure heart. And inasmuch



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

as true *tasawwuf* stands for that grand truth, it is one with Islam. It may, however, be pointed out that for self-purification, necessary to make one a recipient of the Divine Word, Islam recognizes no such forms and practices as laid down by the so-called *tasawwuf*. Islam has only one pathway that leads Godwards—the pathway of a good *practical* life, of duty, honesty, goodwill and charity. The image of God as He is. Let man but work out these potential virtues in him—and worked out they cannot be but through daily practical life—and Divine Light will reflect on His heart, even as the light of the sun does on a clean mirror. “The life of this world is like a field for the life to come,” the Prophet says; and so it is in this soil of practical life that we must work out our spiritual elevation. Anything tending to detach from this life in which the All-wise Providence has placed us, is deceit, illusion, moonshine. No farm, no crop; no practical life, no spirituality. A true *Sufi* is thus one whose life is the richest, fullest, throbbing with vitality, and at the same time pure, noble and honourable—and he is the true Muslim.

---

## HUMANITY AND DIVINITY OF JESUS

By KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

WHAT were the conception of the divinity of Christ in its primitive stage, and the gradual changes it underwent subsequently, is beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice it to say that the modern Christian mind has rejected all old theories, and has become too advanced to believe in a plurality of gods. In fact, to speak now of Christians as believers in three gods, as they used to be in days past, is simply to betray one's ignorance of their belief, in the light of modernized Western theology. They, it is said, believe in One, and only One God; with the Lord Jesus as a Manifestation of that One and the same God.

# HUMANITY AND DIVINITY OF JESUS

## THE INFINITE BEING.

An Infinite Being to be comprehended by finite man is an impossibility; and all that the unaided research of man can establish is: that there is some Power and an "Infinite and Eternal Energy" from which all things proceed—a fact which even science and the agnostic cannot deny. "In our search for a cause we discover no resting-place until we arrive at the hypothesis of a first cause, and we have no alternative but to regard the first cause as infinite and absolute."<sup>1</sup> But is this First Cause unknowable? Is not Intelligence and Design observable in all His working? Is it unlikely for Him to reveal some of His characters to His creatures, which they could not of themselves find out, or is it impossible for Him to do so? To think otherwise would be "not only unphilosophical but absurd," says a Christian writer, whose pronouncement seems to me more plausible than that of the Dean of Carlisle in his efforts to make the Divinity of Jesus agreeable to a modern mind. "I ask you to examine, with calm, unprejudiced inquiry," he continues, "those historical facts and that inner character of Christianity which make Christians believe that the great First Cause has spoken to mankind and revealed His character in Jesus Christ." To emphasize the idea I may as well add, in the same apologetic spirit, that if man is not a material product of purely material substance, and possesses, not only intellectual but moral forces; and if his morals are the morals of a Personal God, whose image he is, is it not desirable that God should come in the form of man, as a prototype and perfect specimen for other's imitation, so that all our moral forces may find their complete development? The unique figure of Jesus, his spotless character, his life after death, the miracles he worked, are some tangible points of God's character which, it is said, He has been

<sup>1</sup> Herbert Spencer.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

pleased to reveal to mankind in the person of the blessed Son of the Holy Virgin.

I need not question the correctness of the premises given above, nor do I see the necessity for impeaching the genuineness of the Evangelical records upon which they have been based. I accept them as they are; but do they lead to the conclusions arrived at? I am afraid I am constrained to remark that I do not see my way to answer in the affirmative.

### MIRACLES AND TEACHING OF JESUS.

With the miracles and teaching of the Nazarene Prophet, as well as with his spotless character, and certain self-glorifying utterances, as the basis of his claims to Divinity, I will deal later on. Besides, Jesus is not a unique character in this respect. History has not failed to record others as well, in the person of some of the great men of the world, who can equally claim Divinity on these basic lines. For the present I wish to meet the first ground, which appeals to me more than the other grounds, and, I must acknowledge, is not destitute of plausibility.

### GOD AND JESUS.

Has God revealed His character in Jesus Christ? If to give full manifestation to His glory, God was pleased to take human birth, and stooped to eat and drink like others, and suffered the consequences of His so doing, one cannot fail to find an apology if He betrays ordinary human weaknesses; and therefore I should not be so unreasonable as to expect "God coming out of a woman's womb" to possess those transcendent superhuman attributes like Omniscience, Omnipresence and Omnipotence, which everywhere and in all times have been rightly considered as true essentials of Godhood. One must always bear in mind, it is argued, that the Son of Man was God, but in Man; and the glory of God and His attributes, therefore, had to receive their full epiphany within

## HUMANITY AND DIVINITY OF JESUS

the four walls of humanity, and subject to the implacable tyrannies of time and space to which a helpless creature like man has been victimized. No wonder, therefore, if the God incarnate lacked knowledge of many things, such as his confessed ignorance of the exact time of the last day, of which only God the Father knew, and God the Son could and did not. His experience with a fig-tree (Mark xi. 12), perhaps, is the best illustration of his two natures. "He was hungry and seeing a figtree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves." The event, no doubt, shows not only his want of omniscience, but seemingly his lack of average human observation, "for the time of figs was not yet." But he was a man, and he did what his fellow-men would have done when oppressed with hunger. Are we not prone to fall short of average human judgment when certain passions in us are aroused? And therefore his showing anger against an inanimate thing like a tree which did not supply him with figs to satisfy his hunger, was nothing short of what we usually do when baffled in our expectation. But were they not necessary preliminaries, a Christian apologist would say, for the working of Divine glory which found its manifestation when the Lord was heard to say, "Let no man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever," and the tree withered for all time. We know that there are other events recorded of Jesus in the New Testament, which to many appear to be absolutely inconsistent with the universal conception of God, but the Divinity of Jesus perhaps stands on a different base. It consists, it is urged, in the development and manifestation of certain Divine morals, which, finding their revelation in him, place him on the throne of his Father, rather than in the possession of those magnificent superhuman powers which befit the Almighty God.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

### GOD AND HIS IMAGE.

God is Impersonal, and man made after His image ! The moral attributes of the Divine image can come to their realization, it may be said, only in one who is man as well as God. But was Jesus a complete epiphany of such morals ? If God is man's prototype, the morals observable in the latter are those of the former. If moral forces are realities and can rule the whole universe, when properly balanced, did they meet their fullest development in the person of Jesus ? Modesty, Meekness, and Patience undoubtedly are noble qualities in man which partake of the Divine nature, but do these passive tender qualities exhaust the long list of human morals ? Are there not other stern, active morals, noble as well, which are essential to constitute humanity ? Bravery, Justice, Generosity and Trustworthiness amongst them ; and did Jesus get the occasions necessary for the manifestation of these morals ? Because, unless one gets a fitting opportunity for the exercise of a moral quality, a possible potentiality is no proof of actuality. God forbid that I stigmatize Jesus for being otherwise, but I say that negative virtues are no virtues, especially in teachers of morality ; they cost nothing, and are no help to one who needs a specimen in practice.

### WORDS AND ACTIONS.

In judging the ethical side of a man's character people make a serious mistake, which sometimes imperceptibly creeps even into the judgment of level-headed writers, known otherwise for their impartial criticism. Words are accepted for actions, virtues preached to others in sermons and homilies are often believed to be actually owned by their teachers. But it is a mistake, and a serious one. No literature in any community is devoid of books on ethics. They contain golden rules of morality worthy of a prophet or a god in man ; but, if what-

## “SHOES OFF”

ever is contained in them is to be accepted as an index to the moral character of their writers, our judgment on the moral side of Lord Bacon's character should be otherwise than it is. A teacher, however highly divine his claims may be, should not be accredited with possessing all those moral attributes which he inculcates to others through his precepts, unless he, by his own example, has converted them into action. This truth was never so practically and lucidly hinted at as by the author of *Anwar Suheli*, a famous book on morality in Persian literature, where all the moral lessons which he intended to teach to his readers have been put into the mouths of birds and other dumb creatures. In fact, an ethical aphorism written on a wall, is as good as in the mouth of a man, if the latter has never been able, or had occasion to, put it into practice. Besides, morals can be best brought home to others only through actions, and an example is, therefore, always deemed better than a precept.

(*To be continued.*)

---

## “SHOES OFF”

“And [the Lord] said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”—EXODUS iii. 5.

“Surely I am thy Lord, therefore put off thy shoes; for thou art in the sacred valley.”—THE HOLY QUR-ÁN, xx. 12.

To most non-Muslims the simple and reverent services of Islam are a complete revelation and opposed to their preconceived ideas of Muslim worship. What most arouses their interest, however, is the custom of taking off the footwear before beginning prayers. Many people suppose that the custom was commanded by the Holy Prophet, but you may search in vain within the pages of the Holy Qur-án for any such direction, neither is any found in the Traditions: it is just a simple, natural, and spontaneous act of

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

reverence, a custom which dates back to remote antiquity. Therefore I have chosen a text out of the Holy Bible and the Holy Qur-án respectively, referring to a very ancient period, 1,491 years before the birth of the Holy Prophet Jesus, when the Prophet Moses, shepherding the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, found his way to Mount Horeb. While there, the angel or messenger of Allah appeared to him in the midst of a burning bush, and yet while the fire burned, the bush itself was not consumed. When Moses, curious to trace the source of the unnatural phenomenon, approached closer to the spot, Allah Himself spoke to Moses and peremptorily forbade him to come any nearer without due preparation: "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." "And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God." You know the rest of the story: how Allah gave Moses a commission to lead His people out of Egypt, concluding with the revelation of one of His great attributes, "I AM THAT I AM"—Allah, the Great I AM, the God of all the Prophets, this is His Name for ever, and holy and blessed may it be!

Reverence and lowliness in divine worship is one of the first and most natural instincts of primitive man: it is found in the rough savage as well as in the more civilized nations, but it was developed to a much greater degree by our Holy Prophet, and it is only in the Holy Qur-án that the fullest attributes of God are made known, to an extent not found elsewhere; it is natural therefore to find that reverence is the key-note of Muslim worship everywhere and in all lands. No matter what country you go to, or whatever nation inhabits it, whether Indian, Chinese, Egyptian, Turks, or Africans, or here in England amongst English Muslims, you find everywhere the same attitude of profound reverence in the worship of Allah.

## “ SHOES OFF ”

Yet it is perhaps to the dweller in the lonely desert, sleeping at night amidst a vast expanse of arid sand, and underneath the clear studded star-dome of the Eastern sky, that the awful sublimity of Allah in nature, and His power and greatness, is borne home in a very special degree. So it was with the Prophet Moses in the desolate regions of Mount Horeb, so it was with the Holy Prophet of Arabia. The more lonely one's surroundings, the more one realizes the omnipresence of Allah, and turns to Him with feelings of awe and reverence. Even thus to the Holy Prophet, dwelling amongst a nation who were absorbed in the puerilities of their polytheistic religion, Allah gave a special sense of reverence and affinity towards Himself, which led the great apostle to turn away with feelings of abhorrence from the idolatry which surrounded him; and in his consequent loneliness and isolation of spirit he dwelt at times apart from his fellow men and in such intimate communion with Allah his Creator, that at last there came to him the divine revelation which is comprised in the Holy Qur-án as we have it now, untarnished and untampered with in spite of the years between, till down through all the succeeding ages comes the grand and imperishable doctrine, “Allah is one . . . and none is like Him,” and through our ears rings from day to day the haunting refrain of the Muslim call to prayer five times a day: “Allah-u-Abkar, Allah-u-Akbar,” “God is the greatest, God is the greatest.” Small wonder, therefore, that Christian missionaries in all countries are constrained to bear unwilling witness to the reverential behaviour of our Muslim brethren everywhere; for short as our prayers are, they are deeply spiritual and imbued with the right sentiments towards Allah, the Author of all life, and as the Muslim kneels on his prayer-carpet, he realizes that he is indeed on “holy ground.”

Moreover, true worship does not consist in the



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

length of our prayers. I recollect a very saintly Christian man telling me years ago that "Prayer is hard work," that is, the effort to attain true spiritual union with the Unseen, and though words may fail us beyond the prescribed formulas, yet our hearts may approach very closely to the divine Presence if we conceive the proper attitude of reverence and worship which is borne in so forcibly upon us by witnessing our Muslim brethren at prayer as they stand and kneel on "holy ground."

Come with me, and I will show you a few scenes to illustrate the expression as I conceive it, so that you may better understand its value. Imagine to yourselves a battle-ground. It is the climax of the fight, and its successful outcome depends on a swift charge by the cavalry. At the head of his squadron, galloping for all they are worth, rides the commanding officer, spurring on his troops and urging them forward. Yet, hark! to the consternation of everyone, the order comes in a peremptory tone to halt, and each rider has to rein back his steed with such impetuosity as almost to overthrow the animal, so furious has been the onslaught. What can be the cause of such a dramatic check? There, out of the mist and the dust of battle looms the figure of a little, chubby, sweet-faced child, who has strayed somehow right into the line of the advancing horsemen, and is entirely oblivious of the danger facing him. The spectacle of infantile helplessness, and utter unconsciousness of harm, is sufficient to hold up the whole squadron, and, for the time being, the spot on which stands the little child is "holy ground," until he can be lifted up and tenderly removed into a place of safety. "Holy ground," you see, created by the purity of a little child!

A little child—and now we pass to the opposite extreme. Another scene, and you see an aged man, with snow-white hair and venerable beard, gazing out of the window at the setting sun. On his rapt face

## “ SHOES OFF ”

is an expression of perfect contentment, and his clear eyes are looking outwards and beyond without a trace of fear. You can almost hear him repeating the lines which form the subject of this picture :

“ Abide with me, fast falls the eventide ;  
The darkness deepens ; Lord, with me abide ;  
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.”

In the presence of this aged saint of God, who has lived a good life and now reposes on the protection of Allah, surely we feel that this is “ holy ground.”

Again, as we pass along life's highway we realize that it is very full of tragedy. Let us look again at one or two typical cases, and see how grief sanctifies life. You see a room, where a widow is found kneeling against her bed, sobbing her heart out, because she has just received the fatal tidings that the husband she depended upon has been taken from her. She clutches the letter in her hand : her face is grief-stricken. Upon the bed, her little child is playing with his toy, in blissful oblivion of the cause of his mother's prostration, and upon the wall hangs the portrait of the husband and father.

The vision fades, and another scene appears, an almost similar one to the last we saw. In the kitchen of a humble fisherman's cottage a woman sits before a table, with her head bowed upon her arms, while an elder woman tries in vain to comfort her. From the window of the room we catch a glimpse of the sea, now subsiding into calm after a wild and stormy night. The poor woman's husband, out in his fishing smack to gather the harvest of the sea, has been overwhelmed in the storm. All night she has kept her vigil, waiting and watching in vain for the return of her beloved, and now in the early dawn we behold her a picture of hopeless despair, refusing to be comforted. In both these cases there remains no more hope, no comfort in this world, no relief except in prayer to

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful. These scenes are sanctified by sorrow and suffering, and here indeed is "holy ground," from which we reverently withdraw.

"Peace; come away : the song of woe  
Is after all an earthly song :  
Peace; come away : we do him wrong  
To sing so wildly : let us go."

One more picture, and this is a brighter and happier one, and so simple and easy to understand. A young married couple, the husband in the prime of his handsome manhood, and the young wife still in the flush of her youthful beauty, are seen bending together over a tiny cot in which sleeps their first-born, a chubby infant, in whom it is obvious that the deepest pride of both are centred—the offspring of the union of two human hearts, blessed by Allah the Maker of all things :

"A tiny feather from the wing of Love,  
Dropped in the sacred lap of Motherhood."

And as the curtain falls on this picture of perfect human bliss, once again we feel instinctively that we stand upon

"Holy ground, while life shall last."

So back we come to this little Mosque, where it is our high privilege to bear witness to the need of religion in an irreligious and profane world, a religion which takes count of day-time and night-time, of week-days as well as of Sundays, and we look up to the blue-vaulted dome and think how Allah reigns evermore on earth and in the starry spheres. Outside, the crescent is a visible sign that Allah has been pleased to bless the work of His holy apostle in this land of ours, while, within, this building has been sanctified by the presence and prayers of many hundreds of Muslims who have visited it from all the four corners of the world, carrying out the precept

## THE CHARACTER OF MUHAMMAD

of Holy Qur-án to "Remember your Lord within yourself humbly and fearing" (Part ix, ch. vii, verse 205). Men and women of all classes, some in most distinguished positions, have here joined together to say the simple Muslim prayers. They are scattered abroad again, but the recollection of their humble and fervent demeanour at worship still abides with us, as a comfort for the present and an inspiration for the future, and as you think of them and the good examples they have set us, you will realize the holiness of this place, made so by many years of devotion to the unstinted and undefiled worship of Allah, the Holy, the Beneficent, the Maker of all.

Meditating on this holy ground, let us consider whatsoever things are true, or honest, or just, or pure, or lovely, or of good report; and if there be any virtue or praise in them, think on these things, and worship Allah in reverence and godly fear, in spirit and in truth. And let me as your brother beseech you, yea, in Allah's Name I bid you, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is *holy ground*!"

FRANCIS A. H. WILLIAMS.

---

## THE CHARACTER OF MUHAMMAD

By MASUD ALI VARESI

### XIV

### TRUTH

TRUTH is the foundation-stone of all the finest virtues in man. It is the essence of the creation of the world. It is the revelation of what we call divine. It is the ennobling nectar drunk so deliciously by the lovers of the Almighty God. It is *truth* that the greatest of human beings have endeavoured their best to breathe in. It is the dream of a life which is *life*. It is light. It is the guiding star. It is the word of God. It is love. It is the eternal

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

breath of Allah the Great. It is Allah Himself, so near and dear to us.

Truth is the stepping-stone to the highest and noblest aspirations of life, ultimately leading to nearness to our Creator. Without truth, life is dull, dim, monotonous and barren of happiness. In short, it is that indispensable reality which is unparalleled, most beautiful, most sublime and transcendental.

To test the truth of our Prophet would be the most heinous crime and impudent action. But for the sake of *truth* itself, so dearly loved by the Prophet, we feel quite justified in shedding a light on it in order to convince those who are blind to the effulgent beauties of Islam and the noblest character of its Founder in the world.

Before the mission of Prophethood was entrusted by the Gracious God to Muhammad, he had already made his personality eminent for "truth." His most inveterate enemies and incorrigible foes had the fullest conviction, based on experience, that he never spoke a lie. The following facts will serve as a guiding light to my readers, and it is hoped that they will leave no stone unturned to follow the Prophet for their own good.

Abdullah bin Umar narrates : " ' Which is the best means to be entitled to paradise ? ' asked a man who had called on the Prophet. ' Truth,' said the Prophet, ' for when a man speaks truth, he does good ; and when he does good, the light of honesty streams forth in him ; and when he is honest, he enters paradise ' " (Targheeb wa Tarheeb, p. 501).

The gradual development of truth into its antecedent analogous virtues may alone, without a shadow of doubt, prove enough to any human being who cares to mould his character and to embrace the teaching summed up with such exquisite fineness and delicacy and so soundly condensed in the above extraordinarily fascinating tradition.

## THE CHARACTER OF MUHAMMAD

On another occasion the Prophet said: "You are warned to be always truthful, though you may perceive death therein, for verily, salvation lies in truth" (Targhib wa Tarhib, p. 501).

Yet another tradition is narrated. The Prophet said: "Always cling to truth, for truth leads to virtuous acts, and virtuous acts pave the way to paradise. And whoever always clings to truth, his name is registered as truthful in the Court of God. Mind you, keep aloof from untruth, for it leads to mischievous acts, and the latter guide towards fire (i.e. hell). And whosoever speaks a lie, he is enrolled as a liar in the Court of the Great God" (Bokhari; Muslim; Abu-Daood; Tarandi, Targheeb and Tar-heeb, p. 501).

The Prophet's truthfulness and his smooth course of life was in its highest perfection. He never dreamt even of untruth, for its very thought was foreign to his nature. His spirit mutinied against it. Whatever he said of the past was a fact in itself, but whatever he said of the future, that was predestined to happen. The Prophet's heart was a radiant mirror on which reflected the history of the past and the future, and which glowed with all the fascination of sumptuous reality. These words are no exaggeration. Their testimony is borne out by historical facts. In spite of all this he never claimed the powers of the Sibyl to know the unknown and impenetrable mysteries of the universe. He rejected such claim altogether, as being beyond the scope of man. His pious and truthful pronouncements were believed without the slightest suspicion by his enemies even. It is accordingly traditioned that in the battle of Badar, Akhnas Ibne Shariq met Abu Jahl and addressed the latter thus: "O Aboul-Hakam, I want to ask thee a question. There is none else besides ourselves to overhear our conversation. Tell me truly, whether Muhammad is truthful or a liar." "By God," answered Abu Jahl, "Muhammad does

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

certainly always speak truth, and he never spoke a lie" (Shafa, p. 59).

Hazrat Ali says: "One day Abu Jahl himself said to Muhammad (peace be on him) thus: 'We do never doubt thy truthful words and thy veracity, and we do not hold thee a liar. But what thou hast brought and whatever thou preachest, we treat it as false and do not put our faith in it.' It was on this accordingly that the following sacred verse of the Holy Qur-án was handed down by God to the Prophet: 'We do certainly know, that the words they speak to thee will grieve thee. So, these tyrants do not hold thee false, they rather reject the symptoms of God'" (In-aam, Ruku 4).

Ibne Abbas (blessings of God be on him) says that when this verse was revealed to the Prophet, "and thou warn of terror thy nearest relations," the Prophet ascended on Mount Safa, and called all the members of the Quraish community. Hearing his call, all the Quraishites assembled there, and those who could not attend sent their representatives to bring intelligence of the occasion. The people asked the Prophet why they had been called there. The Prophet said: "Tell me, if I enlighten you with the fact that behind this mountain, in the valley, there is lying in ambush an army to attack you in the evening or in the morning, will you believe me or not?" "Yes, certainly," the voices resounded in a chorus, "for we never heard thee speaking a lie." "Well," said the Prophet, "I put you in terror of an impending calamity to fall on you shortly." Hearing this, Abu Lahab said: "May thou perish. Didst thou summon us all for this only?" On this was revealed the Sura-e-Abu Lahab (Bokhari, p. 702).

Bai Hagi, with reference to Ibne Abbas, says: "Naseer bin Haris told the dignitaries of the Quraish about the Prophet thus: 'When Muhammad was a boy amongst you, he was looked upon as the best

## THE CHARACTER OF MUHAMMAD

character, the most truthful of all, and a trustee. But when his beard turned grey, and he began to tell you what he says, you say now that he is a sorcerer or a magician. No, by God, he is not a sorcerer. We have seen the artful workings of sorcerers. And you say that he is a priest. Certainly, by God, he is also not a priest. We have also witnessed the farces of priesthood. And you say that he is mad. By God, he is not mad also. We are sensible of the madness of the lunatics. And you say that he is a poet. By God, he is not a poet also. We are thoroughly conversant with all the technicalities of poetry. So, ye members of the Quraish community, reflect seriously on this affair. By Allah, this is the most extraordinary phenomenon that has ever befallen you' ” (Sirat Ibne Hisham, p. 159).

This man, Naseer bin Haris, was a very great enemy of the Prophet. He was always doing something or other to torment him. He is consequently called the Devil of the Quraish. This man was arrested in the battle of Badar and killed (Sirat Ibne Hisham, p. 412).

These facts clearly show that the infidels of the Quraish party did not come forward to embrace Islam particularly because of the stubborn-headedness and pride that prevailed on them. They reposed their fullest confidence in the veracity of the Prophet, but still they would belittle his mission and fight with him. We have, however, nothing to do with the attitude adopted by the infidels. What we want to lay special stress upon here is that, without a shadow of doubt, the Prophet's most bloodthirsty enemies never had a single occasion to find fault with the truth of what he said. They only rejected him as a prophet mainly on account of their pride and the long-standing custom of idolatry prevailing among them and their forefathers. They thought it derogatory to their position to be the follower of a man of their own blood who had grown up from



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

boyhood amidst them, who was trying to supplant the deep-rooted heathenism inherited by them from their ancestors. It was shocking to their feelings, repugnant to their predominating conceit, uncongenial to their taste, to give up the traditional and immemorial customs of their predecessors, to reject the worship of their so-called shabby gods and goddesses, to discard their beliefs, however demoralizing they were in contrast with the truth inculcated by the new faith of Islam. Better the persistent and never-ending agonies of the flames and wrath of Hell than to submit to the truth of the unity of God. Such was the characteristically hard and brutal nature of the pusillanimous heathen of Arabia, sunk in the blackest forms of ritual and given to immodest and palpably shameful and diabolical practices. Verily their hearts were sealed by God as a punishment for their indefatigable energy to trample the truth under their relentless feet—the truth so graciously revealed to them by the Merciful and most Compassionate Allah through His Messenger, the Prophet Muhammad. It was, however, predestined by God that the new order of true faith should supplant the order of heathenism, and it happened so with electric speed.

Now to the subject. The fulfilment of one's promise is also a branch of truth. It is, however, rather a tedious and difficult thing, for there are occasions when one has to face tremendous difficulties in the carrying out of one's promise. The fulfilment of a promise and to keep to one's word is particularly appreciable because of the difficulties occasioned thereby. It is on this basis that the traditions of the Prophet strongly urge one to stick to one's word and to carry out an agreement entered into with the most honest and purest of motives. The Prophet says that there are three symptoms of a hypocrite, notwithstanding his regularity in prayers, fasts, and his knowledge of and belief in Islam:

## THE CHARACTER OF MUHAMMAD

First, one who cannot talk without speaking a lie; secondly, one who does not keep his word; and thirdly, one who commits criminal breach of trust and misappropriates property (Sahihain with reference to Mishkaat, p. 8). Considering the divergent conditions of truth analytically, the above three symptoms attributed to a hypocrite pertain to falsehood. In fact, a truthful person never speaks a lie, never breaks his promise, and is never guilty of breach of trust.

Before Muhammad became a prophet, Abdullah ibn Abil Hamae purchased something from him. A part of the price still remained to be paid. "Wait here; I am just now returning with the price," said the man to him. But he forgot his word. Three days after, he remembered it. When he went to the spot, he found Muhammad (peace be on him) there. The latter looked at him, and simply said: "You have given me a great trouble. I have been waiting here for you for the last three days" (Shafa, p. 56). This is strength of character. It may perhaps sound strange to the advocates of modern civilization. But honestly and strictly speaking, this is how to keep one's word. One whose conscience is dead, and one whose feelings are averse to truth, cannot appreciate the beauty of Muhammad's character.

Some light has already been shed on the Treaty of Hudaibia in the chapter on justice. One of the stipulations of the peace was that if any of the Meccans were a Muslim he should be repatriated to the other party by the Prophet. It is obvious that this was very outwitting to the Muslims. The Muslims in general raised their common voice against it, exclaiming that it was next to impossible to hand over a Muslim who sought an asylum among the heathen. The point was being discussed when in the meanwhile Abu Jandal bin Suhail came upon the spot clanging the chains with which he was

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

bound. This condition was not yet inserted in the agreement in writing, when the prisoner of war had escaped from the lower portion of Mecca and had managed to reach the Muslim camp. Suhail saw his son, and said to the Prophet : "O Muhammad, this is the first man whom I want to be returned to the other party." "The agreement has not yet been executed," answered the Prophet. "By God, if you refuse to do it, I will never make peace with you on any terms whatever," protested Suhail. The Prophet did his best to soften the man and convince him with plausible arguments, but he would accede under no circumstances. He was as self-willed, stubborn and hard as steel. Abu Jandal thereupon said : "O chief of the Musalmans, I am a Muslim, and I am now being handed over to the unbelievers. Are you not alive to the misery in which I am involved?" Everyone knew full well that the escaped Abu Jandal had to suffer these calamities simply because he had embraced Islam. He had to face a storm of troubles and had to undergo the blackest forms of atrocities for the sake of Allah only. Ibne Ishaq says that the Prophet consoled Abu Jandal thus : "O Abu Jandal, have patience. Do not be uneasy. Certainly we do not go back from our word. And certainly Allah would make a way for you and widen it." Saying this, the Prophet handed over Abu Jandal to his father Suhail. This shocked the feelings of all the Muslims, and Hazrat Umar protested very strongly against this procedure. But the Prophet would not even allow the most trivial doubt to creep into affairs. He did not at all care for controversy in the matter.

Afterwards, when the Prophet went to Medina, a man named Abu Baseer, who had embraced Islam, had escaped from Mecca and taken refuge in Medina. The Quraish, in conformity with the agreement, sent envoys to Medina to take Abu Baseer back from there. The Prophet entrusted him to the

## THE CHARACTER OF MUHAMMAD

Meccans without any reluctance. When the men with their prisoner reached Zul-Haleefa, they thought of breaking their journey to take their meals. Abu Baseer showered praises on the sword of a member of the party, and asked him to show it to him. The owner was flattered with the praise, and gave Abu Baseer the sword. He took it, attacked the owner of the weapon and killed him. The second man fled baffled, and went direct to the Prophet's mosque. He appeared before the Prophet and said: "By God, my comrade has been killed, and I have had an hair-breadth escape." In the meantime Abu Baseer also came up, and exclaimed: "O Prophet of God, by God, God has released you from the obligation of your word, for you had made me over to the enemy, but Allah released me from their grip." "This man is stirring the conflagration of war," said the Prophet. His tone led the audience to believe that he would again return Abu Baseer. Fearing this, Abu Baseer at once left the place, and took an asylum by the beach. Thereafter, whoever of the Quraish community became a Musalman, he fled from Mecca direct to the seashore. Gradually Abu Baseer had a large company with him. To save themselves from starvation, they began to plunder the caravans of the Quraish bound for Syria. Ultimately the Quraish were in a dilemma, and they most humbly besought the Prophet through their representatives to send for these people to Medina, adding that no man who embraced Islam and fled from Mecca was required to be returned. Thereupon the Prophet allowed Abu Baseer and his companions to return to Medina. Thus was the condition shattered to pieces which looked so intolerable to the Muslims at first, but in the long run became so fearful a curse to the Meccans themselves that the latter had to get rid of it with the most humble prayers and entreaties and invocations to the Prophet (Bokhari, p. 380).

What better proof of the wonderful veracity and

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

adorable trustworthiness of the Prophet can be had than the following illustration? Before he made his flight from Mecca, his bloodthirsty enemies were up to all sorts of mischief and were bent upon causing him every possible injury within their reach. Yet in spite of this they had such an implicit and irrevocable faith in his truthfulness and held him in such great esteem for his trustworthiness, that whenever they feared some of their property or a valuable article might be lost, they lodged it with him. The real reason why the Prophet left Hazrat Ali in his bed when making the flight was no other than that Hazrat Ali was entrusted with the whole paraphernalia of the trusted goods and articles and directed by the Prophet to make their safe delivery back to their sundry owners (Sirat Ibna Hisham, p. 273). It is plain that it was by no means advisable to leave behind Hazrat Ali in the midst of the people prepared to commit murder and other shameful offences for the realization of their object. But the weight of trust was heavy on his mind, and the articles must be returned to their owners. There was every possibility that the enemies might have wreaked their vengeance on Ali when Abu Talib was dead. Hazrat Ali was advised by the Prophet not to fear them at all. He remained behind and fulfilled the arduous trust. This was all in perfect harmony with Allah's words: "Certainly Allah commands you to return the entrusted things to their owners; and whenever you settle mutual disputes of people, settle them with justice."

The above tradition sheds a light on the remarkable fact, for which the Prophet was well known, that he loved his enemies very well. In fact, his mission was a mission of love, truth and all the noblest ideals of an accomplished life. Picture his broad-minded hospitality and his undisputed love for humanity at large. He kept things entrusted by his enemies, kept them as a sacred trust, and went so far as not to care at all even for the danger of his

## REVIEW

dear cousin Ali, for the fulfilment of the trust and the delivery of things to their owners had a superior claim on his attention. But he could not fear his enemies. He had his most reasonable and perfect trust in Allah, without whose permission not a single particle can move. This is real reliance on the Creator. Danger should be braved and God's commands should be preferred. The triumph of evil may be for a time, but truth is truth, and it always prevails. But truth should be truth in the strictest sense in which our Prophet took it.

(To be continued.)

---

## REVIEW

*An Englishwoman in Angora.* By GRACE ELLISON.  
Hutchinson & Co. Price 18s. net.

So colossal is the ignorance still prevalent among Englishmen in the mass, with reference to Turkey and the Turks, that the task of its removal seems wellnigh as hopeless as the problem of the sand suggested by the Walrus to the Carpenter. The Great War—and its little progeny—have come and, for the most part, gone; the Lausanne Conference has drawn to a presumably successful if somewhat belated close; the newspapers have teemed from time to time with Turkish news and illuminating tit-bits of information respecting that country.

Yet of the mass of printed matter with which this progressive land is deluged morning and evening, but a comparatively minute proportion is seriously considered by a free and enlightened people; and that proportion is comprised in the pages devoted to sport. It follows that the general attitude of mind of the Englishman to-day towards the Turk and all his works, has not changed materially from that which presented itself to Archbishop Cranmer when, four hundred years ago, he drafted the Third Collect for Good Friday, which still holds its place in the Book of Common Prayer.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

Any attempt to ameliorate a condition of affairs so deplorable is to be welcomed; and many have, in fact, from time to time been made. But their subject has been against them. It has never been a popular subject. Now and again some brilliant study of the Near East has caught the taste of the town, but it has been always as a mere *succès d'estime*, never a "best-seller"—and it is the latter which alone can aspire to rank as the chosen guide of intelligent democracy.

And now comes Miss Grace Ellison's fascinating volume, which should, we think, be lacking in none of those qualities which make a common appeal as well to the general reader as to the serious student of Eastern affairs. It is a record of a not unadventurous experience brightly told. If in no sense profound, it states, nevertheless, with scrupulous and temperate fairness (and in a manner eminently readable), the other side of a question which has, all along, been intemperately prejudged by British public opinion.

Miss Ellison as a *raconteuse* has a charm that is all her own, but we fear that her public will be the same limited public that has always interested itself in the doings of the East, and that British democracy will let her lesson alone.

We are perhaps less concerned with the author's excursions into high politics than with her vivid pen-pictures of a brave, simple, courteous, kindly and patient people; and her actual experience of Islam as a practical workaday Faith, wherein honour is paramount, and a trust never betrayed. For these, as well as for the qualities of insight and shrewd observation with which the book abounds, we may well forgive a spice of egoism and a veritable deluge of inverted commas.

The volume is handsomely produced and attractively illustrated with the author's sketches and photographs, and a cartoon by Mr. L. Raven Hill, the celebrated artist of *Punch*.

## WHAT IS ISLAM ?

## WHAT IS ISLAM ?

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

**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 to maintain peace between man and man.

**THE PROPHETS 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-ÂN.**—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-ân. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, but, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-ân, 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 measurement 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 Premeasurement. 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 of Mecca.

**ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.**—The Muslims worship one God—the Almighty, the All-knowing, the All-just, the Cherisher of all the



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

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 heaven 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 is of itself 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 IN 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.**—Men and women come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainment. Islam places man and woman under 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.