

The Islamic Review

Edited by AL-HAJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN.

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THE HOLY QUR-ÁN

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

JUMÁDI-UTH-THÁNIYA, 1345 A.H.

VOL. XIV.

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NOTES

The Celebration of the Holy Prophet's Birthday in London.

Before proceeding to give the details of the celebration of the Holy Prophet's Birthday in London, it is our pleasant duty to record the support given to the British Muslim Society by some of its members, and of the keen interest taken in its welfare by the Rt. Hon. Lord Headley, Mr. Lovegrove (the Secretary), and Mr. Omar Wilkins, in whom we are specially fortunate in having the services of a tireless worker for the interest of Islam, and for the carrying on of a very active propaganda.

The crowning event in the year of the British Muslim Society always is the celebration of the Birthday of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, which was commemorated this year at Stewart's, Old Bond Street (Corner House), on Friday, October 29, 1926, at 7 p.m., when a fairly large gathering of over one hundred and fifty Muslims and non-Muslims from London and its suburbs participated.

Lord Headley (El-Farooq), President of the Society, took the chair, and the proceedings commenced with the recital

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of Al-Qur-án by Mr. A. Halim, an Egyptian friend, the English version of the text being read out by Mr. A. W. Azzam, of the Egyptian Legation.

Mr. Qadir Dad Khan, with his melodious voice, entertained the audience by reciting a beautiful poem in praise of the Prophet. Next followed Lord Headley, who delivered a long lecture depicting the Prophet's chivalrous and magnanimous character, by quoting from his life-history examples of his leniency towards the vanquished, his resolute mind and firmness of purpose in launching his principle of universal brotherhood in the face of every conceivable opposition, which place him above any hero, before or after him.

Then rose Mr. Omar Wilkins, Joint Secretary of the British Muslim Society, who impressed upon his audience the significance of the hygiene of the body and purity of mind taught first by the Holy Prophet ; for there exists a reciprocal relationship between the two. This able speaker proved that what is a detriment to physical growth is also a detriment to mental and moral growth. Islam alone satisfies the physical and intellectual side of the human character, thus making an evolved and well-balanced state of human activity.

He was followed by Mr. Abdul Mohyi Arab, Mufti of the Mosque, Woking, who gave the audience an Arabic ode. Then came Mr. Abdul Majid, Acting Imam of the Mosque, Woking, who delivered a scholarly lecture on the significance of the life of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him), the last Prophet, with a special reference to his relations with his fellow-beings. Further, he laid stress on the fact that, while all the rest of the reformers were enveloped in myth and folklore, the last messenger stands out as a true historic personage by reason of the abundance of intimate and minute details of his life, carefully and diligently recorded by his devoted followers, who loved his mission, and, with true resignation, in order to advance it, laid down their own noble lives on the great altar of sacrifice.

After the proceedings, which ended with a devout prayer led by the President, those present were served with delightful refreshments to recuperate the nerves of the audience which

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had been well-nigh exhausted by a series of long but useful lectures. Thus ended a glorious meeting in commemoration of the greatest historical personage of all time. All the credit of so successful a gathering goes to the selfless effort of Mr. Habibullah Lovegrove, the zealous Secretary of the Society.

A Christian Saint as an Ideal.

The 4th of October, 1926, was the seventh centenary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi. St. Francis has been styled "God's Troubadour"; and he called himself God's "Jongleur." His aim was to "observe the Gospel purely" and to proclaim the story of Christ in its simplest truth and beauty, not merely by word, but by a life conforming as closely as possible to the Christ-life as set forth in the Gospels. He renounced wealth and social position and became as the poorest of the poor.

The Bishop of Birmingham,¹ Dr. Barnes, in the course of an address at the pro-Cathedral, Birmingham, said the seven hundredth anniversary of St. Francis had been widely used for religious propaganda, and personally he was greatly distressed and repelled by the superficiality and calculated bias of much that had been written to honour St. Francis. He continued:—

"We must not be content to see a man through a haze of false sentiment. Harsh truths are a good tonic for the soul. An examination of the probabilities of St. Francis involves medical details that are somewhat repulsive.

"St. Francis, from an ascetic sense of duty, wore no linen, but rough woollen garments, and he seldom washed. His attitude towards body vermin was not ours, and we are told that he sometimes begged his friends to scratch him.

"In his last illness he was in a state of semi-ecstasy and semi-delirium.

"He was obsessed by the thought of imitating Christ, and he would touch his side, his hands, and his feet, thus irritating his already irritated skin. A modern nurse would have bathed him in warm water, with which a little antiseptic was mixed."

The Bishop, referring to St. Francis' precepts, said if the absolute poverty he commanded was in truth a Christian ideal, then we were committed to a communism which would rapidly degenerate into barbarism.

¹ *Daily Express*, October 8, 1926.

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We are neither concerned, nor anxious to join issue, with Bishop Barnes, whose plain speaking is decried as "lack of common good taste and reverence for sacred ideals that mark his repeated outbursts against the Sacramental system of the Catholic Church which he persists in describing as mere 'fetishism.'"¹

Our story is quite of a different nature. The life of St. Francis of Assisi takes us back to the days when the Muslims—the Nasrids of Granada—were still ruling in Spain. We have often wondered what the present-day world would have looked like if the Christian world had even tried to imitate a few of the unhygienic habits of St. Francis, whose ways, as it is alleged, are a reflection of the life of the Gospel Christ! Least said, soonest mended. It certainly would not have been worth inhabiting for us Muslims!

Of course, it is true that the followers of the Gospel Christ are not true Christians. They are the followers of the Muslims—at least in the practice of hygienic ways of life. For as Draper says in his *A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*, vol. ii. page 33 (London 1910):—

To these Saracens we are indebted for many of our personal comforts. Religiously clean, it was not possible for them to clothe themselves according to the fashion of the natives of Europe, in a garment unchanged till it dropped to pieces of itself, a loathesome mass of vermin, stench and rags. No Arab who had been a minister of State, or the associate or antagonist of a sovereign, would have offered such a spectacle as the corpse of Thomas à Becket when his haircloth shirt was removed. They taught us (the Christian world) the use of the often-changed and often-washed undergarment of linen or cotton which still passes among ladies under its old Arabic name.

In Memory of Worthy Sons of Worthy Ancestors.

To-day even, when priestcraft wields no temporal power, we get now and then echoes of the mediæval vandalism practised by the followers of Holy Writ. The *Daily Express* of the 18th September, 1926, states that Mr. H. G. Wells's *The Outline of History* was burned publicly a few days ago at

¹ *Catholic Times*, October 15, 1926.

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Harlan, Kentucky, U.S.A., by a certain Rev. Mr. Black, a minister of the Baptist Church. The minister described the book as "poisonous and unfit to read," because of its alleged conflict with the Book of Genesis.

The act of Mr. Black is, in itself, of a harmless nature. But it establishes with still greater force the truth of the statement that the only condition necessary for the Church to revive, as if by the waving of a magic wand, all the old barbaric traditions which cling so tenaciously to and indissolubly with its name, is opportunity. This special aspect of the Church's problem has been well put forward in a masterly work, *The Warfare of Science with Theology*, by A. D. White.

But it would be unkind, if we were not to appreciate the courageous, if somewhat childish, act of Mr. Black. It in itself is a great achievement. For he at least has tried, even at the price of ridicule, to live up to the traditions of which he alone is a lineal descendant, and has thus proved to be a worthy son! He has, to his satisfaction, glutted his rage for vandalism—his sole mental legacy—by burning a single copy of Mr. H. G. Wells's over-discussed masterpiece, together with a novel by an American author.

Obviously Mr. Black, the extremely particular Baptist, has forgotten one point, which is this: the burning of a solitary copy of a book serves merely to advertise it. For, as an Arabic proverb says: "People hanker the more after that from which they are forbidden." Moreover, "Mr. Wells's book is in print, and if Mr. Black reduced a thousand copies to ashes, the printing machines could produce a hundred thousand in reply. Most probably, if asked nicely, Mr. Wells's publishers would let Mr. Black have as many copies as he cared to burn publicly in sight of a camera. Publishers are not of the stuff of which saints are made, but they are very keen business men, and know on which side their bread is buttered." ¹ This "Book of Genesis" has, we must say, caused lots of trouble!

¹ *The Freethinker*, October 17, 1926.

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How Fictions are Spun.

We, for our part, are so much accustomed to hearing and reading misconstructions about ourselves, that we are sometimes apt to ignore them. But in order to let our readers share the amusing mood which at times overtakes us when we read them, we take notice of a sample which affords us a peep behind the secrets that attend the spinning of fictions about nations. The Rev. Dr. Thomas Carter, the General Secretary of the Zenana ¹ Bible and Medical Mission, is reported to have said in the course of a lecture, delivered in New Zealand : “ There are sixty million women in India, secluded in zenanas. That is, they are locked by their husbands in the harems and live utterly secluded lives. It is the great work of the Mission to carry the Gospel to these unfortunate creatures, who are regarded by their husbands as little better than beasts.”

To characterize this utterance as “ exuberance of missionary zeal,” as the *Guardian* does, is but a poor attempt to veil a naked distortion of facts, which game, we must say, is quite common, and perhaps a speciality exclusive to the men of Dr. Carter’s profession.

Nevertheless, the spirit in which the *Guardian* takes this Church dignitary to task is commendable. While criticizing the sweeping statements of Dr. Carter, it says :—

To present the system of purdah before the eyes of the world as a deliberate attempt, on the part of Indian husbands, to humiliate their women and to treat them as cattle, is an insult to Indian sentiment. To picture the Indian purdanashin as caged in a dark and gloomy room, all by herself, without the respect and love to which her sex entitles her, is a perversion of facts.

But we get rather sceptical when we read in the same paper : “ We do not agree with those critics who accuse such missionaries of bad faith and of a perverse intention to misrepresent the state of affairs in missionary lands.” We are not sure whether the *Guardian* does not aim at disarming every further criticism. And we beg to be excused if we differ—our experience, bitter as it is, makes us think otherwise. For is it not true that if the exaggerated, distorted

¹ Cf. the *Swarajya*, quoted by the *Guardian*, Calcutta, September 16, 1926. The word *zenana* means female.

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conceptions of foreign social institutions be not placed before the public, then there is left no justification on earth for the Zenana Mission which directs its energies at nothing else but to graft upon the Indian home life certain extraneous social institutions? What message has the Gospel for those "unfortunate creatures"? one wonderingly asks.

It is the truth, and nothing but the truth, to say that it is by putting exaggerated, distorted conceptions tempered with a touch of authority, which the reverend gentleman unfortunately enjoys in his official capacity, that the chords of the sentiments of man can be sufficiently deeply touched—sentiment being as it were the Achilles' heel in man, and especially in woman—to the end that Dr. Carter may win moral support for his activities and milk money from the public. And it is equally true that it is these irresponsible utterances which do most of the unkindly work in widening the gulf between one religious denomination and another. But the danger which looms large before our eyes is this: that the reverend gentleman's "exuberance of missionary zeal"—an apt euphemism for the art of misconstruction—will very soon pass into missionary literature as an authority, and will furnish a secure foundation for the future mental exploitation of the people whose sympathies are kept alive by reason of their ignorance of Indian social customs—and the result of it all will be a beautiful fiction spun out with the figures of sixty millions for its basis.

Young Muslim League (Colombo) and the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din.

When Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, Imam of the Mosque, Woking, was still busy touring South Africa, with the aim of arousing Muslims to respond to the appeal for contributing towards the spread of Islamic literature amongst non-Muslims, the Young Muslim League (Colombo), in co-operation with the rest of the local Muslim Associations, expressed an earnest desire to welcome the Khwaja to their shores.

It was practically settled that the Imam, on his way to India, should visit Colombo and its suburban area; and there was an expectation of something more than a mere gesture

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of sympathy with the present Trust for the Encouragement of Muslim Religious Literature—a movement that has already taken tangible form.

But “Man proposes, God disposes,” and the sudden call of the Khwaja to his home circle has, alas, delayed the long-intended journey to Ceylon. We must, nevertheless, express our most sincere thanks to the Young Muslim League—and especially to Mr. M. A. C. M. Saliey—of Colombo for their religious zeal ; at the same time emphasizing our regret that such delay should have proved inevitable. We live in hope—for hope is the lodestar of human life—of seeing this meditated tour materialize at some future date, for we know that it cannot fail to be a priceless factor towards promoting the growth of Islamic unity in support of a Cause which in its essence is social as well as moral.

COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS

By AL-HAJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

THE world has emerged from the war the wiser for the experience. A new religious consciousness has dawned upon the Western mind—a desire to strip the current religion of all that was foisted upon it in the Middle Ages, and to see it in as simple a form as possible ; but those who have already emancipated themselves from the shackles of the Church have found a new haven of religion. Their motto is “Upliftment and advancement, and not salvation.” They are mostly interested in psychic research, and try to bring the latent faculties of the human mind into prominence. They seek to pass from the normal to the abnormal regions. They want to see what the naked eye cannot see. They want to hear what the average ear cannot hear. Clairvoyance or clairaudience, healing-power, thought-reading, telepathy and the like, are in demand. But these, in their fullest development are Divine powers. In their perfect form they are attributes of the Divine mind. But we also have been made after the image of God ; God breathed His spirit into us, as the Qur-án says

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in xv. 29 : " So when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My inspiration, fall down making obeisance to him."

Our mind is a reflection of God's mind, and if we aspire to assume the Divine colour it is simply natural that the object of our sojourn on this earth is to reproduce Divine morals and to equip ourselves with Divine attributes—at least Muhammad demands from his followers that they do this. He makes it a watchword of life when he says : " Imbue yourself with Divine morals."

But the Divine spirit in us is concealed in the welter of passions, low and carnal in their inceptive condition. We spring from the animal world and carry along with us the animal nature, but our goal is very high. It is for us to sublimate the animal mind ; but that cannot be achieved unless we refine our consciousness of its animal cravings.

Consciousness is a sum total of passions that may be classified under three main headings : appetitive passions, the cognate passions, and the active passions. We are clothed with various appetites and cravings which, in fact, are the life-tendencies. These appetites, carnal as they may be, are responsible for all progress, culture and civilization. Their impulse leads us to find means of self-satisfaction, and in doing so our cognate passions begin to work at the instance of appetitive passions and we increase our knowledge. Every form of knowledge has come to us in this way. Then out of knowledge is born action. To take a homely illustration : we feel thirsty, we think of things that may quench our thirst and then we move to get them. So the levers of all knowledge and activity are our appetites.

The animal possesses consciousness, and this very consciousness, unless it be uplifted, is the chief impediment in our progress to the Divine goal. If we are interested in achieving any of the qualities of the Divine mind, we must create the Divine Consciousness in ourselves, which, in other words, is called cosmic consciousness ; that is, the faculty of feeling for everything in the cosmos or in the universe as we feel for ourselves, and of caring for the needs of every creature of God as we care for our own. Unless we attain that high

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state, or a stage near to it, all our interest in the cultivation of occult powers is simply lip-talk.

There are seven stages between the animal and the Divine consciousness. They are as follows : animal consciousness, individual consciousness (sometimes called self-consciousness), family consciousness, tribal consciousness, race consciousness, species consciousness, and cosmic consciousness.

Unfortunately most of us border on the verge of animal consciousness. "Everything is mine" is the ruling feature of animal consciousness which ignores the rights of others. Take an average animal—a dog, for instance. The minute his hunger is excited, he snatches at the very first thing that comes in his way. He is not conscious of others' rights. He will not leave the bone ; the moment it comes in his mouth, he will not allow any other dog to have it. How many, even of those who think themselves civilized, are above this canine consciousness ? Animal consciousness is most clearly seen in a baby ; anything that takes a baby's fancy is claimed by him as his own, no matter if it belongs to another. He will cry for it and will not be quiet until he gets it. He cannot bear the idea of others possessing the same thing. "Mine" is the ruling spirit in him. Look around you in the world and consider how many of us have crossed the frontier of animal consciousness. We may be fully grown in age ; we may have attained culture and civilization, but the animal within us is still master. We usurp others' property, and no sooner do we get hold of these possessions than we loathe the very sight of them.

Every religion came to raise humanity from the animal state. Every teacher laid down principles and enunciated doctrines to enable the human soul to soar above this sordid selfish nature. The old Rishis in India led the lives of anchorites. They left towns, severed themselves from mundane affairs, went to the jungles and secluded places to kill the animal consciousness, and attain higher states of consciousness, in order to work out latent faculties. They, however, failed to appreciate the fact that Divine Consciousness, the goal of their exertions, consisted of some of such high moralities as

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could only be cultivated and exercised when in direct and immediate contact with human society. Beneficence and generosity, for example, are the most prominent features of the Divine Mind ; and how can one develop these high morals in a jungle, where there is no one to benefit by them ? Moreover, you cannot afford to be beneficent to others, in the true sense of the word, if you have not yourself troubled to earn something. To be liberal on the proceeds of others' labour is not generosity. Try to acquire things through your honest labour, and part with it for the benefit of others. This is true beneficence, and how can it be compassed in the jungle ?

Bravery, or courage, is another Divine attribute which comes into play when you have to defend an oppressed person or right some wrong. This, again, demands contact with human society. Honesty, continence, constancy, patience, high moralities—all these cannot be developed in secluded or desert places. The Hindu system of Yoga will not suit present-day life, nor will it enable us to reach the goal. Jesus came to elevate humanity. He aimed at the same grand idea of raising man from the animal state towards the Divine, when he preached socialistic principles. He wanted to wean his people from sordidness and self-indulgence, and create in them a feeling for others ; but his followers only a generation after him, obsessed with the idea of propagating their religion in the pagan world, evolved a system which nipped Christianity in its very bud and brought it to complete failure. Paganism was engrafted upon it when it was a mere seedling, and every form of self-aggrandizement and selfishness came in its train.

Christianity began to wade knee-deep in human blood, and committed more sins in the name of religion than the world had ever seen before. If beliefs in the grace of Blood, or participation in Sacraments, is sufficient for salvation, as the Christian Church teaches, and actions are of less importance, then there is no chance for the cultivation of high morality. A visit to some of the colonies will help us to appreciate what sort of consciousness has been developed under the influence of the Church Christianity. If Jesus could hasten his second

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coming, he would bitterly regret his visit to those lands that pass under his name. The very moment he sought to land at any of these Christian colonies, he would be declared a prohibited immigrant, because not European. He is coloured and an Asiatic. His movements from district to district would be dependent on sanction from the officers concerned. He would not be allowed to breathe freely, to act freely, and eat and drink freely. He would not be wanted. He would have to leave the territories inhabited by his own followers, he would not be allowed to earn his livelihood. This is the sort of consciousness that works in his own people, for he will labour under the colour bar. Have not non-European Christians been brought under such civil disabilities by their European co-religionists? And yet we saw a great conference in January last at the Central Hall at Westminster, the Bishop of Salisbury being in the chair, where it was declared that there is a world-call to the Church. The salvation of the world is through Christianization. If the Church has created that sort of consciousness, that niggardly feeling, that grabbing spirit that saps the life of other nations, the salvation of the greater part of humanity will rather seem to lie in seeing the Church religion disappear from the world. I ask the Bishop of Salisbury to give his best consideration to these facts. He should try to re-Christianize his own people. He should infuse first that spirit which characterizes the teachings of the great Nazarene, into the minds of various European nations, wherever they may be, and then enter on his evangelizing campaign in the non-Christian world. Things as they stand at present in the Christian world give quite a different meaning to these proselytizing efforts of the Church. They seem to seek to bring the non-Christian races under the yoke of Europe, and to find out more and more nations to bear the burdens of the whites. Have not the Foreign Missions been a complete failure? And is it not owing to that spirit which the European Christians have displayed towards others? A coloured Christian is not allowed to enter into the very house of God, as it is meant for the white races. What a mockery of religion! What hypocrisy on the part of these people who, every morn-

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ing and evening, say, when upon their knees, "Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name!" Do they regard other creatures of God as their brethren, equally sons of God? Do they believe in the brotherhood of man and the Universal Fatherhood of God? Do they practise the sayings of the Master, "My Father and your Father are one"? In short, the religion of the Church as it stands at present, so far from helping to edify mind and soul, degrades the average human consciousness into something far worse than animal consciousness, and for obvious reasons as I have pointed out. If to please God or to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven or to reconcile "man to God," to use the Church phrase, is taken to be the sole object of religion by a certain class of people; and if that object can only be attained by belief in certain dogmas or participation in certain sacraments, unaccompanied by actions, as are the tenets of the Christian Church, no wonder that it totally fails in developing that which is noble and good in humanity. If I have to please my God, by believing in the grace of the Blood, and that this is sufficient to secure my entry into Heaven, and no actions are needed, as the Church creed teaches, a selfishness will prevail and it will assert itself until human legislation intervenes. This is not a mere theory; go and see with your own eyes the state of affairs obtaining in lands where the Christian element is in the ascendant. The Christians there do not admit that others have the right to call themselves men. No doubt things are not so in England or in some of the European countries, but that is owing to the emancipation of the countries from the Canonical Fathers. So long as the Church maintained its hold upon Europe, there was no sign of culture or science or knowledge that led to and sought to establish humanitarian principles. Belief in God is belief in high morality, seeing that morality exclusively consists in the evolution of Divine morals. This truth was taught by Islam, and to-day it is dawning on some of the nobler minds in Christendom. Dean Inge remarked only the other day: "Islam taught us of God Who is the creator and nourisher of all the human race, whose providence is universal, whose

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beneficence reaches to every unit of humanity ; Who makes no distinction between man and man, whose blessings come to us without our merit or deserts, whose rewards are thousand-fold in compensation for one action ; Who is not an angry God, but the most compassionate and merciful, and if He punishes His creatures it is for their reclamation ; Who is ever thus forgiving, but if chastisement is more efficacious in reclaiming us from our iniquities, then comes this punishment, otherwise He is all love. Nay, the very punishment that comes from Him is the expression of His love in a harsh form." This is the God of Islam, Who through His attributes as Rabb, Rahman, Rahim, and Malik exhibits such morals, and if man believes in Him as such, his actions should be the translation of his belief in these Divine morals. The whole code of Islam shows the way to work out these morals. The peace and happiness of the human race lies in accepting such a God, and not in accepting the angered Deity who demands propitiation and sacrifice.

SOME FAMILIAR TUNES

Of all the three great Semitic religions of the world—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—it is the religion of Islam alone which has suffered much from misconstruction and misrepresentation. There are many reasons for this deliberate attitude which its calumniators adopt towards Islam—and one of them is their intrinsic moral weakness. They know that Islam will eat them up gradually. This is no lip-talk ; they have learnt it from their experience in the countries whose sheep they seek to round up into the fold of Christ. The only weapon which they can ever think of wielding against the Muslims is that of misrepresentation. For they know that it is only by throwing mud at their opponents that they themselves can escape criticism. They know that some will stick—enough to disfigure an ideal in the eyes of the unthinking.

Below we print a letter sent to a reverend gentleman in

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answer to a letter of his. His letter is typically Christian. We print the letter and our reply, whereof the contents, though long, are to be justified on the grounds for which they are being reproduced. We are painfully conscious of the fact that we are guilty of repetition; but is there anything better than repetition if you want to counteract blunders; especially when you have to contend against prejudices, so many unfavourable prejudices, so many hindrances, as we have to contend with in defending the religion of Islam? Islam suffers from accusations which have been handed down from father to son, and which have been sanctified by the exalted status of a successive heritage of all the European nations. These time-honoured allegations, namely, that Islam was spread by the sword, that Islam encourages slavery, that Islam gives no status to women, and that Islam has been guilty of vandalism in having burnt the Alexandrian Library of Serapis, and many other absurd things, are not peculiar to the illiterate and the ignorant. They are as popular with the literate. Moreover, people—and this is one of the perplexing absurdities of human nature—even if they realize the untenableness of their views, and the absurdity of their opinions, show no great disposition to discard them. A habit once formed moves of its own force.

August 5, 1926.

DEAR MR. KAMAL-UD-DIN,

I was greatly obliged to you for sending the *Islamic Review* [for July], as our private clerical circle met yesterday for study and discussion of a paper on the "Moslem World" report published by the Church of England Assembly. I lent the *Review* and your *Origins [Sources] of Christianity* to fellow-members. The prevailing opinion seemed to be that although professed followers of Christ, or people born in Christian countries, lived lives often dishonouring to Christ, yet these were entirely contrary to His teaching in the N(ew) T(estament), whereas the use of force in propagating the tenets of Muhammad and polygamy and slavery, were openly sanctioned by the Qur-án.

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I alluded to your ideas of womanhood and the equality of races, regardless of colour, as expressed on the last page of the *Review*, but my hearers replied that that was not the teaching of the Qur-án and that there were very few who held up to your high standards of life. If you happen to have a copy of the Report I mention, I should be glad to have some criticism of it ; if not, I may send my own. I nearly came to see you on Friday, July 23rd, but felt I had done too much. Could I have been present at your service at the Mosque ?

To what do you attribute the failure of Islam to make headway in South Europe after the eighth century, except in Spain, and after the fifteenth westward, if it was intrinsically superior as a religion ? Lord Headley comments on the heights to which it attained in both mental and physical sciences up to the fifteenth century, but doesn't explain its apparently stationary condition since then, at least in natural sciences.

In what Moslem Universities are empirical sciences studied ? The Al-Azhar of Cairo seems to be mainly concerned with theology and literature. Perhaps Aligarh takes a wider range.

Please give my kind regards to your two assistants, and believe me still,

Very truly yours,
R. A. J.

Is the chronological arrangement of the Koran (should I say, Qur-án), etc., adopted in the version by Dent correct ? . . .

The Reply.

Islamic Review OFFICE,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING,
August 26th.

REV. R. A. J.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter addressed to Mr. Kamal-ud-Din, who is now in South Africa, has been opened by me. There are certain questions which you raised in your letter. As you know, it is not always easy to deal with such questions in letters.

The allegation that Islam was propagated by the sword,

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and that the Qur-án countenances such a use of force, is based on an erroneous conception of the teachings of Islam. My arguments may or may not convince you. But I presume if I were to quote European authorities on Islam in support of what I say, they may, perhaps, have weight with you.

The fallacy concerning the spread of Islam by the sword is now out of date, discredited, and has been exploded times without number. Professor Becker, Professor of Arabic at the University of Berlin and editor of the magazine *Der Islam*, says in his book *Islamstudien*, page 332 (Leipzig, 1924) : " . . . the acceptance of the Islamic religion was throughout voluntary : nay, it was sometimes discouraged. . . . To talk of the spread of Islam through the sword can only be said to have occurred in very, very rare limited cases." So also says Sir Thomas Arnold in *The Preaching of Islam* (London, 1913). It was the meteoric spread of Islam within a hundred years of the death of the founder of Islam, from China on the one side to Spain on the other, that has led the carpers at Islam to believe that it was spread by the sword ; for it was just the reverse with Christianity, which had hidden itself in by-ways and corners for centuries. Not until half-pagan monarchs had come to its assistance with edicts and orders was it able to rear its head among the creeds of the world ; but Islam, within thirty years of the death of its founder, had found its way into the hearts of millions of people. The Qur-án does not sanction the use of force. It says : " Let there be no compulsion in religion (ii. 257). " If thy Lord had pleased, verily all who are in the world would have believed together." " Adhere to those who forsake you ; speak truth to your own heart ; do good to everyone that does ill to you." These are the precepts of a Teacher who has been accused of fanaticism and intolerance. Let it be remembered that these are not the utterances of a philosophical dreamer, or a powerless enthusiast ; these are the utterances of one in the plenitude of his power ; utterances of the head of a strong and well-organized State, able to enforce his doctrines with the edge of his reputed sword. And this very spirit continued amongst his followers during the centuries after.

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Muslims never interfered with the religions of their subjects. You know, I suppose, that the so-called capitulations are the outgrowths of the tolerant spirit of Islam. Islam, as you would admit, was not so weak some seventy years ago. Turkey could have extirpated once for all the cat's-paw of the European diplomats—Armenians. But religion intervened. No doubt Muslims have paid heavy toll for this ; but principle must be upheld even at the sacrifice of one's own interest.

As to Slavery, I need only quote the view of Professor Hurgronje, an authority on Islam, of Leyden University, from his book *Mohammedanism*, page 150 (Putnam) : " The Law of Islam regulated the position of slaves with much equity ; there is a great body of testimony from people who have spent a part of their lives among Muhammadan nations, which does justice to the benevolent treatment which bondsmen receive from their masters there. Besides that, we are bound to state that in many Western countries, or countries under Western domination, groups of the population live under circumstances with which those of Muhammadan slavery may be compared with advantage.

The only legal grounds of slavery are to be a prisoner of war or to be born from slave parents. The captivity of the enemies of Islam had not necessarily the effect of enslaving them ; for the competent authorities might dispose of them in any way and more especially in the way prescribed by modern international law or custom. In proportion to the realization of the political ideal of Islam, the number of its enemies must diminish and the possibility of enslaving men, consequently, decrease. Setting slaves free is one of the meritorious works, and at the same time the regular atonement for certain transgressions of the sacred law. According to the Muhammadan principle, slavery is *an institution destined to disappear.*" ¹

Islam does not enjoin slavery in any case. The Qur-án says : " And what will make you comprehend what the uphill road is ? *It is the setting free of a slave* " (xc. 12, 13). These verses give a direct lie to the accusation that Islam

¹ Italics are ours (ED. I.R.).

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makes slavery one of its social institutions. To think otherwise one requires an uncommon mentality! It was Christian Europe which revived it, after it had been abolished in Islam. History gives us ample proof of this. Sir John Hawkins's slaver called *The Jesus* is a matter of history. How is it that no Christian raised a voice of protest in those days against it, or saw anything religiously wrong in it? And it is a fact that the slave parties in the United States never ceased to appeal to both the Old Testament and New Testament in support of their slave traffic. In 1698 every English subject was authorized to raid an African village and carry off its inhabitants. If slavery has disappeared and been abolished, it is not due to the influences of the Christian teachings, but to the influences outside. The Bible--the New Testament and the Old Testament--both are silent on the miserable condition of slaves. And undoubtedly there were slaves in the days of the Prophet Jesus. In fact, social amelioration is not one of the aims of the Bible.

As to Polygamy. This, again, is a thing which Islam does not countenance. It does allow polygamy under certain circumstances. Of course, there are people who abuse the law. It says quite clearly that a Muslim should not marry more than one wife, and this is the practice among the Muslims. You may go to any country in the Muslim world, and you will not find them polygamous in the sense in which it is understood in Europe. Polygamy is more a completion of the law than a slur on Islam. It makes provision for certain cases, when polygamy is a necessity, e.g. when the wife is barren or suffering from a chronic disease. Europe, with all its boasted Monogamy, is in no way less polygamous than the Muslims. You know this fact as well as I do. In Turkey there never was polygamy. I quote Turkey, because Turkey is always quoted as an example of this. I quote the words of Professor Vambéry from his book *Sittenbilder aus dem Morgenlande*, 1876, page 21: "Polygamy, although a very sad institution of Muslim society, is in no way so common and widespread as it is believed to be in Europe. In the Muslim countries which are known to me—I am not afraid of the statement I make—

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one does not find even one family amongst thousands where the legal permission of polygamy is made use of. With the Turks, Persians, Afghans, and Tartars, it is practically unknown—nay, unthinkable—because many wives involve a greater house-keeping, great riches and expense. In the same way, seldom, very seldom, do we find it in the middle classes. . . . What I have said in connection with polygamy applies equally to divorce, which according to the Islamic law can be resorted to with proportionate ease ; but in spite of this fact it is of rarer occurrence in the Orient than in Protestant England or America.” It would interest you to know that Professor Vambéry resided for many years in Turkey.

But why go so far back ? Mrs. Margaret Blake, speaking at the second annual meeting and dinner of the Council on Turkish-American Relations, held at the Astor Hotel, New York City, on Thursday, May 6, 1926, said : “ I searched Turkey for harems, and I was unable to find any . . . ” “ Among the middle classes and the upper classes of the Turkish people I have never seen a single harem ” (see page 94, *The New Orient*, June, 1926).

Similar is the case with India and Persia.

If you find a man with two wives in some Islamic countries, how many would you find, then, in the so-called monogamous countries of the West, leading a secret polygamous life ? This I leave for you to decide. Please do not think I am holding any brief for polygamy ; for we Muslims are not polygamous. What I want you to realize is the true significance and the proper place of polygamy in the social system of Islam.

As to equality of races, regardless of colour prejudice, Islam is unique. To say that “ there were very few who upheld our standard of life ” is no argument. Let your hearers show that Islam makes any difference between race and race and colour and colour. The Qur-án abounds in verses which declare all men are equal, and these we follow. You would have been quite welcome at our services on Fridays. The Prophet himself entertained the Christians of Najran (a town in Southern Arabia) in his Mosque. The Mosque still stands and is known by the name of The Prophet’s Mosque.

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He allowed them to hold their services in his Mosque. We follow our Prophet and hold him as our model. And this occurred fourteen hundred years ago, when tolerance was unknown !

As to the stationary condition of the Muslims ever since the fifteenth century, I would request you to peruse the historical facts contained in the few following sentences and find out their cause. The Chinese mind has shown itself quite as inventive and versatile as the European, and the Japanese even more so. Take the case of the Greeks, and we find that the whole swing of their mental vigour falls into the period between the sixth century B.C. and of the decadence of the Alexandrian Museum under the later Ptolemy in the second century B.C. There were Greeks before that time and Greeks since, but a history of a thousand years of the Byzantine Empire shows the Hellenic world at least as intellectually stagnant as China or the Muslim nations of the present days. Then I would draw your attention to the comparative sterility of the Italian mind during the Roman period and its abundant fertility since the Renaissance of learning. The English mind, again, has a phase of brightness in the seventh and eighth centuries and it did not shine again until the fifteenth. How do you account for these facts—mental slumbers during certain periods of the history of a nation ? Again the mind of the Arabs blazed out like a star for half a dozen centuries after the appearance of Islam, having never achieved anything before or since then. The truth is that nations, like individuals, become exhausted. This is quite a natural phenomenon. I believe in the exhaustion of races. But have you not noticed that during the last twenty years the Muslims have produced men of world-wide fame ? It is not a mere chance or coincidence of events that men of the calibre of Mustapha Kemal, Reza Shah Pehlavi of Persia, Abdul Karim, Amanullah of Afghanistan, have appeared on the stage of the world ? This all shows that the Muslim nations have awakened from their long sleep, which was the result of their labours in the cause and for the furtherance of the civilization of the world.

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Although I believe in the exhaustion of races, yet I know that the eternal truths, in the form of teachings of the Qur-án, are still with us, and that they are only waiting for a fresh store of energy. Then, another thing which differentiates Christianity from Islam is, that the former has never been lived, while Islam has once been lived. Europe, as long as it was Christian, was plunged in darkness. The teachings of Islam are only, as I remarked above, waiting for a fresh store of energy. History tells us that it takes a nation at least one thousand years to recuperate its lost energy. The modern progress of Europe is in no way due to the Christian, but rather to the European. And Christianity and Europe are two different entities. For instance, Professor Einstein, the promulgator of the Theory of Relativity, is not a Christian but a European. He is a Jew. Once a Muslim Divine was asked—the name of the Divine was Syed Djemaluddin Afghani, the self-same gentleman who wrote a rejoinder to the pamphlet on Islam by Renan—the cause of the present-day decline of the Muslim and the progress of the European nations; his simple reply was: “Because the Europeans had left the Bible and the Muslims had left the Qur-án.” Muslims could not, owing to their exhaustion, uphold and follow the sublime teachings of the Qur-án, and the sayings of the Prophet which are still intact: I mean that nothing of the sayings or of the Qur-án is lost to us in these days. They have been handed to us in the same form. If they succeeded in working as a lever so many centuries ago, they must once more do the same. But, on the other hand, if Christianity were to be introduced, it would introduce the mental blight which enveloped Europe during the Middle Ages. Europe, for its scientific pursuits, got a stimulus from the Muslims in Spain. Stimulus is always necessary. In the case of the Arabs it came from the Qur-án, and in the case of the Europeans it came from the Muslims. Anatole France says in his *La vie en Fleur*: “The most tragic event in history is that of the battle of Poitiers when in 732 the science, the art, and the civilization of the Arabians fell back before the barbarism of the Frank.”

Yours truly,

(Signed) ABDUL MAJID.

SOME FAMILIAR TUNES

ALEXANDRIAN LIBRARY AT SERAPIS.

THE MOSQUE, WOKING,

August 19, 1926,

THE EDITOR, *Occult Review*,

Paternoster House, London, E.C.

DEAR SIR,

May I call your attention to a historical misstatement concerning the burning of the Alexandrian Library by Omar. Your reviewer, Regina Miriam Bloch, says on page 58 of the June issue of the *Occult Review* :—

“ One cannot but voice again the regret which surrounds the destruction of the great Library of Alexandria by the Muslims . . . ”

I do not in the least begrudge her this misstatement ; for it is the common heritage of the literate and illiterate in Christendom, which they have inherited from the Church which did not shrink from imputing a course of barbarism and vandalism to its enemies. The case of the Alexandrian Library of Serapis, the burning of which has been ascribed to Amru, the field-marshal of Omar the Great, is one of those sordid samples of deliberate disregard of historical decency—let alone accuracy—which seeks solely to foist lies upon others. The character of the field-marshal is incapable of conforming to this kind of false imputation. New researches have once for all proved beyond any doubt that Omar did not burn the Library. Here are some of the pronouncements on the question.

Humboldt, in his book, *Cosmos*, page 215 (London, 1846), translated by Sabine, says : “ The tale of the burning of the Alexandrian Library, by Amru, 40,000 baths being heated for six months by its contents, rests, however, solely on the testimony of the two writers who lived 580 years after the supposed event.”

Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, says on page 346, vol. v. (Dent & Sons) : “ I am strongly tempted to deny both the fact and the consequences.”

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Renan, in his essay, *Der Islam und Die Wissenschaft*, page 8 (Basel, 1883) : " Omar did not burn, as we are often told, the Library of Alexandria ; that Library had, by his time, nearly disappeared. . . ." Compare the English edition of the same, in *The Poetry of the Celtic Races and Other Studies*.

I shall be greatly obliged if you will lend us your valuable assistance in the task of eradicating this hoary falsehood in the name of Truth, by printing these few lines in your influential *Review*.

Thanking you in anticipation,

I am, dear sir,

Yours faithfully,

ABDUL MAJID,
for EDITOR, *Islamic Review*.

MESSAGE OF ISLAM

BY KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

RELIGION dawned when man was born. It was given to our first parents, in the Garden of God, in Eden or elsewhere. It was the religion of commandment and obedience—permission and prohibition, to bring them complete happiness. But they made a mistake. It was not intentional but through forgetfulness.¹ They forgot the warning and made wrong use of discretion, and this brought the whole trouble. They trespassed beyond the allowed limits, and so evil was born therefrom. They lost all that contributed to their happiness ; they lost the heaven they were in ; fear and grief overtook them, and they were groping in the dark. God, in His mercy, came to them again and showed² them the way to happiness ; they were also assured that their children too would receive such guidance from time to time, to keep them on the right path, and the Divine promise was never allowed to remain unfulfilled during all the centuries to come.

The children of Adam became scattered in the course of time, they became separated from one another by natural or

¹ The Qur-án, xx. 115.

Ibid., ii. 37, 38.

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artificial barriers ; but the need for guidance from the Most High was ever present, and God in His Beneficence was pleased to bless each and every community and race of man with a religion. Every country and nation had their message from the Lord, through His chosen ones. They brought the same truth and drank from the same fountain. But those were the days when there were no reliable means of preserving the Message in its entirety, as the Word of God went from mouth to mouth. Defects inevitably crept in, seeing that man's memory was its only custodian. The Divine gold became alloyed through human hands. Accretions and additions to, or subtractions from, the Word of God were constantly made. Besides, the languages in which the Revealed Word was couched were in a constant state of flux as to both form and meaning. The Books of God consequently could not remain in popular language for ever. Thus came the necessity of their being rendered into a language that all could understand. But these new translations shared the same fate, as the languages were changing incessantly. Translation after translation came. It affected the pristine beauty and purity of the Books. The result was that almost every Book of God disappeared or became, from the text point of view, corrupt. The Bible met the same fate, and to-day no Christian can honestly believe in the genuineness of his Scriptures. The religion could not, therefore, remain in the form in which it was originally given. Christianity "was corrupt and decrepit," to quote Sir William Muir, at the advent of Islam. Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, in short, every religion of God, became crippled and could not exercise its healthy influence in the moulding of human character. Religion, even in its best form, at that time was taken as an institution of prayers, hymns and offerings—and that only to get more worldly things from the Lord ; otherwise its chief features were ritualism or sacrificialism. Salvation through blood was not a new dispensation through Jesus, but a re-echo of the ancient world. Jesus was, in fact, only the last of the Slain Gods. There had arisen many a Christ before him, to save humanity through their blood, who, as the Pagans believed, were begotten Sons

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of God, born of Virgin Mothers on the 25th of December, killed on the Friday before Easter, resurrected on Easter Sunday and ascended to heaven on the Easter.

In reply to a letter written by me to the editor of a famous Free Church paper in London, I received the following reply :—

25th August, 1925.

THE KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN,

DEAR SIR,—Thank you for your letter of the 24th instant. I think you misread the paragraph in the *Baptist Times* in reference to your book. Bishop Barnes speaks for himself, but he is not entitled to speak for Free Churchmen ; certainly not for Baptists. On reference to the paragraph you will see that it is distinctly limited and does not cover the wide area set out in your nine paragraphs. Without entering into any discussion of the matters to which you refer, I may say that Christians do not claim that the birth of Christ occurred on 25th December. The 25th December was a convenient date arranged by the Church for the celebration of the event. Neither is it claimed that the crucifixion actually occurred on the Friday before Easter Sunday, or that Easter Sunday was the actual date of the resurrection ; here again the Church fixed on these days as most convenient for the celebration and not as identifying them with the occurrences. The other matters would require far more space than could be given in a brief letter of this character. You are aware that many volumes have been written upon the subject.

Thanking you for your courteous note,

Yours faithfully,

THE EDITOR,

Baptist Times.

But the editor forgot to note that the events narrated about Jesus in connection with these dates are entirely the same as those that occurred on the same dates in the lives of the Pagan deities. It is not only the dates, therefore, which were conveniently taken by the heads of the Church of the first and second centuries, from the Mystery Cult, to popularize their faith in the Pagan World, but the convenience went farther. Every bit of the heathen story was incorporated in the story of Jesus on Easter Sunday, but this was only a myth with which Jesus was clothed.

Moreover, the moral conditions of the time when Islam appeared were deplorable. Depravity had reached its lowest ebb. Righteousness had become wellnigh extinct,

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and the blackest evil was practised to earn merit in the eye of God. Beliefs were perverted and actions rendered corrupt. In the Confessionals in Christendom, more sins were committed than were washed away. In Persia phallicism was at its height. Mazdak, the prophet of the cult, had allowed partnership in women, and the deity was worshipped with every species of Bacchanalian orgy. In India the conditions were even worse. A Shaktic priest was privileged to claim the company of any women he liked for his pleasure. Evils of every kind had become, as it were, canonized into various gods and goddesses, who were worshipped through the practice of these evils. The world, since its birth, had never seen such sinful days, when the thick clouds of impurity, wickedness and ignorance had darkened the whole horizon. Complete death—moral, mental and spiritual—had overtaken the world.

If a Messenger from the Lord comes to a nation at a time when evil of some sort is sapping her very life, the vile conditions obtaining in the world in the sixth century of the Christian era most certainly demanded the appearance either of several prophets, in different parts of the world, or of a prophet of a master mind, enhaloed with Divine Light sufficient to remove the darkness from the whole world. Muhammad was chosen for the task, and appeared in Arabia, which at that time was this blackest spot on the earth of God, and there he brought the Message of Islam.

Islam literally means, implicit submission to Divine Laws, or the complete subjugation of our human will to the Will of the Lord. This obeisance to God does not mean the bondage of man, in any sense, or the rule of an Arbitrary Will over him, but it means Divine Guidance in this working out of the real object of religion.

The Message draws our attention—bids us contemplate the whole universe around us ; everythng therein is in a state of progress. It contains innumerable latent properties, and only awaits favourable circumstances to favour their evolution. We are similarly told in the Qur-án that man, the best product of Nature, has accumulated in him every other thing in the

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universe ; that every physical thing in the firmament on high, or in the bowels of the earth, became transferred to the human frame in a conscious form. These took to themselves the shape of passions ; human consciousness got, as it were, its constitution from the ether and the earth, and whatever shines in the heavens or comes out from the earth is reposing in man's heart. He has to work it out, not on the physical, but on the mental, moral and spiritual planes. We needed guidance for this, and that guidance is to be found in the Revelation of the Holy Qur-án. The Message declared that God was not an impersonal God, that He was not clothed with human passions, that His wrath is not like that of man, nor became He, ever, so angered with man on account of his sin that a wide gulf began to yawn between the two and that His wrath, for its propitiation, demanded not great sacrifices, such as the blood of man—nay, that of His only begotten Son—to bridge the yawning gulf. The Message told that God was nearer to us than our jugular vein. He was ever ready to accept man's repentance and return to him.¹ His pleasure was not like that of man, nor His anger like ours. His pleasure consisted in the fulfilment of the object for which man was created, and became manifested in the fruition of human faculties. Similarly, His wrath was aroused when we went through our inordinacy, deliberately neglected the Guidance He had provided. We had to praise and glorify Him ; but lip-gratitude, as the Message warned us, carried no weight with the Lord. Divine glorification consisted in self-edification.

In short, God gave us religion, so that we might work out all that was best and noblest in us. The Message told us that the " best and noblest " in us was the Divine Spirit which the Lord had breathed into us when we were created.²

The Creative Agency in us is concealed in our passions in their initial form ; we have to remove these coverings that impede the progress, and thus bring the Divine Flame smouldering in our hearts to full lustre. If our clay was fashioned after the image of the Lord, we have to vivify the

¹ The Qur-án, xl. 3.

² *Ibid.*, xxxii. 72.

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We hope to supply later.