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Founded by the Late AL-HAJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN.

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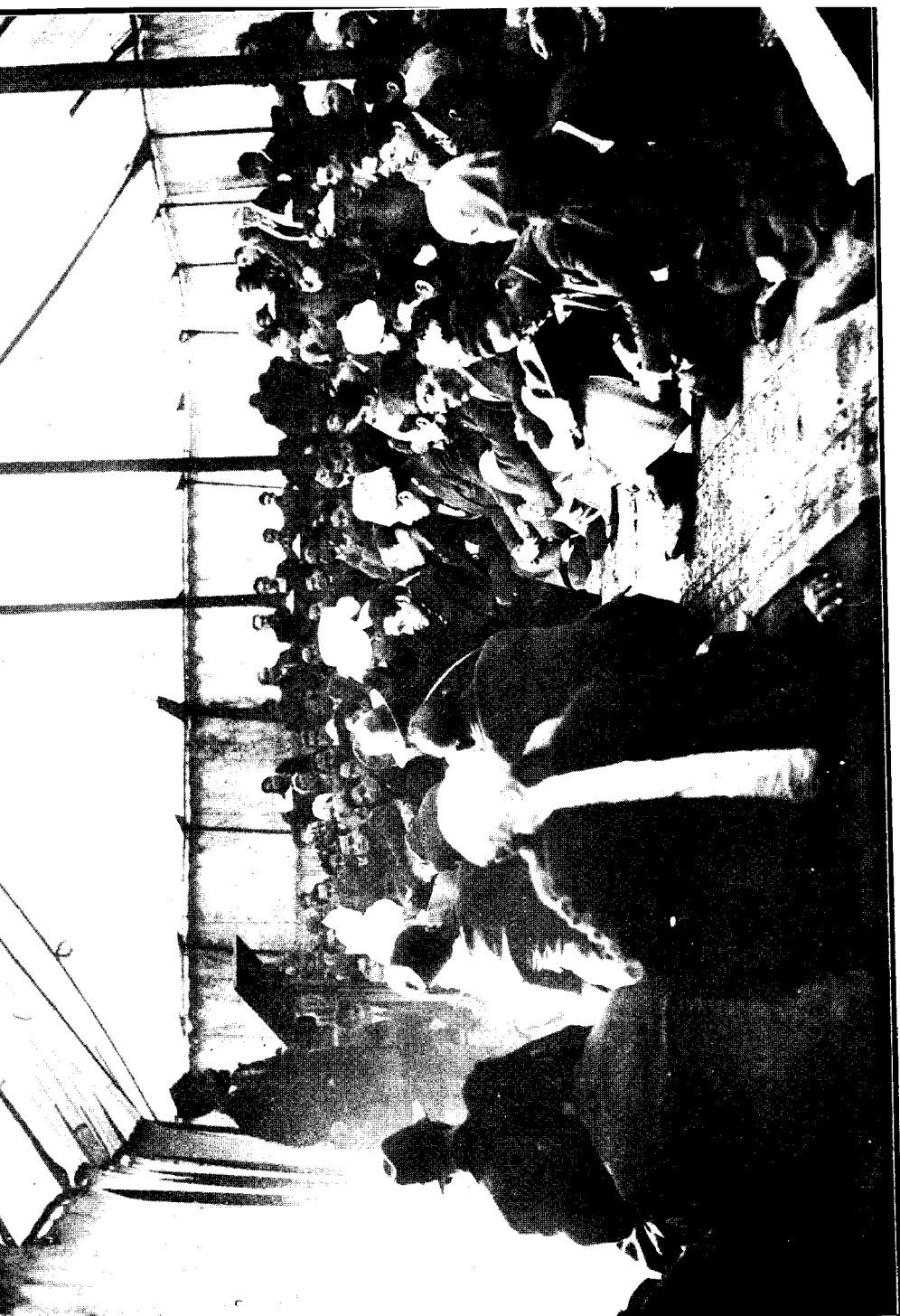
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Eid-ul-Fitr (1351 A. H.) Congregation at the Mosque, Woking.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
شُحْرُوهٗ وَصَلَّى عَلَى سُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

## THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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SAFFAR, 1352 A.H.

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No. 6.

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### EID-UL-FITR (1351 A.H.) AT THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

All praise to Allah the Most Merciful,— the Eid-ul-Fitr, terminating the month of Ramadhan, celebrated at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, on the 28th January 1933, served the purpose for which it was ordained by the Holy Prophet Muhammad. The English weather, against which complaint is useless, was, though inclement, more kindly than we could have hoped, being fine and frosty. Friends numbering more than 300, representing all nationalities flocked from all parts of England to the Mosque to offer thanksgiving to God the Beneficent, Who had enabled them to gain control over 'self' through the marvellous institution of fasting. The congregation would have been even more numerous had not a large number of Muslims been kept away because of the influenza epidemic, which is prevalent everywhere. The Rt. Honourable Lord Headley was unable to attend.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

All necessary preparations had been taken to mitigate the rigors of the English winter; a large marquee occupying a portion of the spacious lawns of the Mosque, in which stoves had been installed, maintaining an equal warmth, while the floor was strewn with carpets. The prayers, as usual, began at 11-30 a.m., and were followed by a sermon from the Maulvi Abdul Majid, Imam of the Mosque, Woking. The Imam dealt with the essence of Islam, which to him lay in the very word Islam, which signifies "Peace." This, he remarked, pervaded all the teachings of Islam, and was the guiding principle of all the actions and achievements of Muslims throughout the 14 centuries of their history. The attitude of Islam, it appeared to him, was, and is, one of the most important questions which every student of religion ought to study; for much lay in the right understanding of this problem, upon our careful study of which, its ease or difficulty depended. The attitude of Islam towards all other religions was contained in the very beautiful verse which reads:—

Yea! whoever submits himself entirely to Allah and he is the doer of good to other, he has reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for him, nor shall he grieve <sup>1</sup>

and also in another which says:—

So he who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it. And he who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it. <sup>2</sup>

It may interest the readers of this short description to know that Muslin Festivals, unlike the Christian or Hindu festivals, are quite independent of all astronomical considerations, seasons, or personality worship. Muslim festivals are not celebrated to appease an angered deity. They are not connected with the birth or death of a personage. They don't mark the changes in the stars. The Eid-ul-Fitr is a token of thanksgiving to God the Almighty for enabling us to perform our duty, while the Eid-ul-Azha is in commemoration of the great sacrifice of Abraham.

<sup>1</sup> 2 : 112.

<sup>2</sup> 99 : 7—8.

## EID-UL-FITR (1351 A. H.) AT WOKING

By way of comparison let us take the Hindu festivals. *Rakhri* is observed to mark the beginning of the rainy season in India; *Diwali*, another Hindu festival, marks the end of that season and the beginning of the season of sowing. *Holi* is observed to celebrate a successful harvesting. In the case of our Christian friends, their most important festivals are, indeed, ostensibly connected with the birth or death of their founder; but these festivals have now been exclusively demonstrated to be replicas of pagan festivals. For example, Christmas observed to celebrate the birth of Jesus for which a convenient date—December 25—was selected from the pagan calendar, was in its origin a pagan festival to mark the birth of the sun. Further to illustrate the point, take Easter. It is now agreed that all the festivals which pass under the cloak of Christianity, are either astronomical or pagan in origin. The annual festival of Easter is in commemoration of the Resurrection of Jesus. The word “Easter”—Anglo-Saxon “Eostre, Eoster”: German “Ostern”—like the names of the days of the week is a survival from the old Teutonic mythology. It is derived from Eostre or Ostera, the Anglo-Saxon Goddess of Spring and Light, to whom the fourth month of the year answering to our April, thence called Easter-Month, was dedicated. There is no trace of the celebration of Easter as Christian festival in the New Testament or in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers; what is clear is that this is but a later accretion to the Christian social system.

Even the festivals which originally were invented to make an eventful happening degenerate into mere frivolities. By way of illustration, we may refer to the manner in which “Carnival” is celebrated in European countries. The Carnival originally was a feast which preceded the Christian period of fasting—Lent. But nowadays the Christian feast has lost its original significance and denotes nothing but riotous revelry and unfettered licence.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

Islam, owing to the compulsory and judicious inclusion of prayers, the remembrance of God—"verily, prayers keep you away from open indecencies" (Qur-án)—has managed to keep its festivals dignified, ennobling, edifying. Islam knows that all social functions, if dissociated from the remembrance of Allah, are liable to get out of hand, and to degenerate into reckless indulgence. That is why that before everything else at these festivals it has enjoined the saying of prayers.

The Imam closed his sermon by wishing all the friends a happy Eid. Upon this the congregation broke up to wish each other a happy Eid. Cordial embraces were exchanged. Then followed the light refreshments.

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### THE FESTIVALS OF ISLAM

BY BAKHSI HAZUR ALI

Islam being the youngest of all the revealed religions claims to be the most perfect, rational and practical of all and the one best suited to the needs of the human race. This is not a vain assertion ; its truth is manifest from all the phases of this wonderful faith. Islamic festivals are no exception.

It might be interesting to note that the word *Eid*, meaning ever-lasting happiness, occurs in the Holy Qur-án in reference to a prayer of Jesus. It is stated :—

Jesus, son of Mary, said, O Allah, Our Lord, send down to us, food from heaven which should be to us an Eid—ever-lasting happiness—and grant us means of subsistence and Thou art the best of providers<sup>1</sup> ?

It would be of further interest to notice the connection of this prayer of Jesus with that portion of the Lord's Prayer in which Christians pray God to give them their daily bread.

<sup>1</sup> 5 : 114.

## THE FESTIVALS OF ISLAM

Both the *Eids* are annually celebrated by Muslims to mark the two important pillars of Islam, *i.e.*, its fundamental institutions—fasting and pilgrimage.

The one which was celebrated on the 28th January 1933 is known as *Eid-ul-Fitr*, the Festival of the opening of the Fast, signifying the close of the month of fasting. It takes place on the first of the lunar month following the month of fasting.

The other, known as the *Eid-ul-Azha*, the Festival of Sacrifices, occurs after a lapse of two months and ten days, *i.e.*, on the 10th day of the *Zil-Hajj*, the last month of the lunar year of the Islamic calendar. On this occasion, as the name denotes, Muslims all over the world commemorate that wonderful occasion on which Abraham, the father of all nations, saw a vision, and in compliance with it, showed his readiness to sacrifice one who was nearest and dearest to him, *i.e.*, his son Ishmael. The matter needs more than a passing reference, and I shall revert to it again.

Before dealing with the distinctive features of Muslim Festivals I may say a few words on how they are observed.

*Eid-ul-Fitr*, as I have said before, is celebrated to observe the close of the month of fasting. The genuine pleasure which a Muslim feels in having performed an important religious duty can only be realized by knowing what fasting means and by actually practising it for a full lunar month.

Fasting is one of the fundamental doctrines of Islam. It is an injunction to every Muslim to abstain from eating, drinking, and having sexual intercourse during the lunar month of Ramzan from dawn to sunset. The weak, the old and the sick, pregnant women and nursing mothers are exempted. The Holy Qur-án says ;

Allah desires ease for you and He does not desire difficulty for you.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 : 185.



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

Again, it lays down:—

God never burdens anyone beyond the extent of his power.

Islam does not claim to be a new religion. All the prophets deputed to the various countries all over the world and their true followers were as good Muslims as those of to-day. Neither, therefore, are its institutions new. Fasting and sacrifice were known to the world before the advent of Islam, but Islam has rationalized and regularized those institutions, and has purged them of the superstitions which had been associated with them on account of the passage of time, and has made them a source of spiritual elevation for which they were originally meant.

The object of fasting as given in the Holy Qur-án is

O you who believe, Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard against evil.

Fasting therefore does not mean abstention only from eating and drinking, but from all indulgence in deed as well as in thought. The way in which it is effected and the spiritual fruits which follow can best be realized by experiment only, which is decidedly a more reliable test than theorizing.

Fasting is a great spiritual tonic, and partial fasting, as observed by some people of other faiths, does not give us a test of what complete fasting, as enjoined by Islam, stands for. Besides its physical and spiritual utility, it is a great moral force. It has got an inherent power to enable those who practise it to desist from evil.

I remember having read about a Muslim soldier who had to remain from home for a long time on account of active service. Once finding himself mad with passion, he ran to a Qazi (a Muslim theologian) for advice. The Qazi bade him start fasting. The soldier obeyed, and all his evil desires vanished.

## THE FESTIVALS OF ISLAM

Fasting helps physically to restrain passions. It also helps by a constant reminder that one may not lose the fruits of abstinence from legitimate desires by yielding to illegitimate.

For the last ten days of the month of fasting there is a direction for the observance of *I'tikaf*. This period is spent in a mosque. Complete silence is observed during these days, and the whole time, excluding that spent in sleep, is passed in devotion and prayer.

Islam being a practical religion does not make *I'tikaf* compulsory. It is left as a voluntary recommendation for those whose circumstances permit it.

Fasting has an equalizing effect. The rich by denying themselves food and drink are able better to realise the needs of the poor. Besides this every man truly realizes the gratitude he owes to God for His bounties.

It is also noteworthy that the month of Ramazan has not been selected arbitrarily. Islam being the true religion of God, never fails to sanctify its functions by associating them with God. The revelation of the message of God, the Holy Qur-án, began in the month of Ramazan. No better selection could have been made of the month suited for the observance of fasting.

Abstinence from food and drink, howsoever favourable the climate or length of the days may be, is not so easy as it may appear to a non-Muslim. When it is accompanied by a constant struggle to abstain from all evil deeds and desires and the further restrictions of *I'tikaf*, the nature of the ordeal is very trying. The happiness which is felt by a Muslim at the successful discharge of this onerous duty is naturally great and well-earned.

The close of the month depends on the appearance of the Crescent. The eyes of every Muslim at the time of sunset on the last day of Ramazan are turned to the sky

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

in search of it. Its observance is acclaimed with universal joy by young and old, rich and poor. Everyone begins to congratulate the other. It is no wonder why some Muslim countries have begun to regard the 'Crescent' as their national emblem.

But the sense of duty of reverence to God, which is inculcated in the heart of every Muslim, which runs through his whole fabric, and in which, in fact, he lives, moves and has his being, can never be over-shadowed by any pleasure, however great. The first thing he does at the sight of the Crescent is to raise his hands and to offer thanksgivings to the Almighty. The manifestations of joy and the greetings only follow.

The next morning he purifies his body generally by taking a bath and dresses himself in his best and proceeds for *Eid* prayers. Prayers, it is noteworthy, precede all Muslim festivals.

In certain mosques in big towns arrangements are made for the separate congregations of ladies. Where no such arrangements exist they say their prayers at their houses.

After the prayers are over, embraces are exchanged, and all the mutual enmities are expected to be drowned in the happiness of the auspicious occasion.

Fraternal feelings prevail, and the day is spent in festivities.

Ladies in their charming silks and ornaments and children clad in various colours show happiness in every home. Even the babies are not forgotten. The whole atmosphere makes it a gala day.

The liberality of a Muslim's table is proverbial. On this occasion its display is even more generous. Those in London can avail themselves of it in attending the Woking Mosque on any *Eid*.

## THE FESTIVALS OF ISLAM

The poor and also the domestic servants receive generous monetary gifts. Generally a place is selected in every locality where children and other people fond of fun assemble and partake of innocent pleasure. In short, everybody tries to spend the day in his happiest way without losing sight of moral obligations and religious injunctions.

Vermicelli is regarded as a light diet, and is therefore a speciality at the *Eid* which follows the month of fasting. Meat in various forms being common on the occasion of the "*Eid of Sacrifices*" is frequently used then.

The *Eid-ul-Azha*, the Festival of Sacrifices, as the name signifies, is a festival in commemoration of that unique event in the life of Abraham which imparts the lesson, so dear to Islam, that nothing in this world should be dearer to a Muslim than his devotion to God. There is very little difference in the saying of prayers and other festivities on the occasion of both the *Eids*.

The idea of sacrifice appears to have been closely connected with the history of man from very early ages. Even Christian Scriptures tell us about the sacrifice made by Abel, son of Adam. (Gen. 4 : 9). The Holy Qur-án, when referring to this incident makes it clear :

Allah only accepts offerings from those who guard against evil.

This noble lesson was soon forgotten and lost in the clouds of superstition, and sacrifice came to be regarded as a means of appeasing an angered deity—sacrifices of animals were followed by sacrifices of human beings.

Once Abraham dreamed that he was ordered by God to sacrifice his son. As described in the Holy Qur-án :

He said : "O my son, surely I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice you. Consider then what you see." He said, "O my father, do what you are commanded. If Allah please, you will find me of the patient ones."

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

When Abraham was actually going to kill his son, he was forbidden by a revelation from carrying his vision into effect. It struck a death blow at the custom of human sacrifices; the Muslims all over the world commemorate it by sacrificing a goat or a sheep. Those who can't afford to do so, club together, and by mutual contribution of a small share sacrifice a cow or a camel. Those who can't afford even such a petty contribution are of course exempted. The sacrifice is made either on an *Eid* day or any of the following two days. The meat is freely distributed amongst friends, relations, and the poor. Thus rich and poor alike get an opportunity of enjoying a good feast. Its poor members are never forgotten by Islam, and a specific portion of the meat is compulsorily set apart for them.

Islam's beauty is that instead of wiping off and forbidding the old traditions, it has tried to convert them to use by leading them in the proper channel and by making them consistent with its magnificent ideals.

Islam cuts at the root of associating any superstitious idea with sacrifice by explicitly stating that the flesh and blood of the beasts never reach God.

The Holy Qur-án says :—

Of the animals which are slayed; eat of them and feed the poor man who is contented and the beggar; thus have we made them subservient to you, that you may be grateful. There does not reach Him their flesh nor their blood, but to Him is acceptable the guarding against evil on your part. Thus hath He made them subservient to you that you may magnify Allah, because He has guided you aright, and give your good news to those who do good to others. Surely Allah will ward off mischief from those who believe. Surely Allah does not love anyone who is unfaithful, ungrateful.

Sacrifice thus stands for (a) teaching us to surrender completely to the Will of God by reminding us of Abraham's instance, (b) teaching us to be pious and subject ourselves to the Will of Allah by reminding us how he has subjected other animal life to us.

## THE FESTIVALS OF ISLAM

The Holy Qur-án has made repeated references to having granted man control of and superiority to the rest of creation. Shaikh Sadi, in translating one of them, says :

Clouds, winds, moon, and sun are ever busy in the discharge of their duties to provide nourishment for you. When all these are made to be obedient for your sake, surely it is not just for you to be unmindful of your duty to God and not to obey His commandments.

Muslims have further been enjoined to perform the Pilgrimage to Mecca, known as the *Hajj*, on this occasion, once in their lives, provided they can afford to do so and circumstances permit safety of life in the journey.

The chief ceremonial functions consist of divesting one's self of all clothes and covering the body with two white spotless sheets, known as *Ehram*, an emblem of purity of heart and signifying the disappearance of all distinctions of rank and wealth.

*Tawaf* is performed by taking seven circuits round the "*Ka'ba*" re-built by Abraham for the worship of the One God. It implies one's complete surrender to the devotion of God. This feature of complete surrender to the Will of God permeates the whole life of a Muslim. In fact this is the literal translation of the words *Islam* and *Muslim*. The Holy Qur-án puts the following words in the mouth of the Holy Prophet :—

Surely my prayer, and my sacrifices, my life, and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of the worlds.<sup>1</sup>

When the enclosure of the *Ka'ba* was to be re-built, the foundation stone, by a strange coincidence, was laid by Muhammad, when he was only a youth. The Muslims naturally love this stone, and kiss it at the time of *Hajj*. There is no idea of worshipping it as some ignorant critics of Islam have said.

To those uninitiated to the History of Islam, it would be interesting to know how this stone was laid in the walls of the *Ka'ba* by Muhammad.

<sup>1</sup> 6 ; 163.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

A traditional sanctity being attached to the place of this particular stone in the wall—there was dispute among the principal tribes of Mecca as to which of them should have the honour of doing so. Muhammad, then a young man, was passing that way, and in view of the unique confidence he enjoyed amongst the people, even in his youth, he was called upon to arbitrate. He laid down his mantle on the ground and placing the stone on it, asked the representatives of all the tribes to hold the mantle by edges and to carry the stone to the wall. There he picked up the stone and placed it in the wall. Who knew at that time that this was the foundation stone of the regeneration of the world, by putting before it the ideal of brotherhood of the whole human race under the Fatherhood of one God? Who knew that this very youth was one day going to make this *Ka'ba*, then the place of idol worship, once more the place of worshipping One God, and the cynosure of the believers in one God all over the world?

Was it then merely a coincidence that Providence made this foundation stone to be laid by Muhammad? To the thoughtful there is more in this incident than a mere chance.

Islam and its followers have always jealously guarded against any of its rites degenerating to superstition. The Caliph Umar lost no time in making it clear that the attachment in kissing the stone was to the memories associated with it and not to the stone. On an *Hajj* occasion he declared on oath that he was kissing the stone in memory of the Holy Prophet, otherwise it was to him nothing more than any other stone in the world.

The pilgrims visit Mina, where Abraham took his child Ishmail. They then assemble at a further distance of six miles in the plain of Arafat, where this flood of humanity

## THE FESTIVALS OF ISLAM

presents a spectacle (a living testimony) of complete equality of all men in the presence of one God.

The distinctive features of Muslim festivals lies in their purity from such vices as drinking and debauchery.

Islam has not denied its followers on occasions of rejoicing, the relaxation of the mind from every day worries and indulgence in legitimate pleasures. But it has been mindful of the weakness of human nature in being prone to exceeding the proper limits on such occasions, and has taken every precaution to prevent such excesses.

No sooner was the prohibition of the use of liquor announced, than the Muslim world at once abandoned it. Hundreds of broken pitchers of liquor were lying in the streets of Mecca. Islam achieved with one stroke what America has not yet completely accomplished with millions at her disposal !

Islam further took the precaution of fixing the festivals on such occasions and by sanctifying them with such associations as would check evil doing. How, after denying himself legitimate pleasures for thirty days, could a man possibly think of rushing to illegitimate pleasures on the day immediately following the fasting ?

How could a man possibly dream of exceeding the proper limits when he is commemorating the event teaching him to be ready to sacrifice his dearest things and desires for the sake of God ? Millions of people of both sexes assemble to perform pilgrimage. All the women are without veils. No idea of impurity enters any mind. The police are conspicuous by their absence. The ceremony lasts for several days in a most orderly manner without any unbecoming event.

Islam has jealously guarded against any of the rites being converted into superstition. There is no festival connected with any event of the life of Muhammad him



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

self. Even the commemoration of his birthday appears to be of a recent origin in imitation of similar institutions of the followers of other faiths. The Prophet Muhammad forbade the worshipping of his tomb. Hali, the Indian poet, has verified the Prophet's injunction thus :—

Do not make an idol of my tomb,  
Do not bow down to my tomb,  
Because you and I are human beings equal.  
We both equally look to God as our Protector.  
The only difference between us is that I am also a Messenger  
of God.

When people began to show signs of reverence to a tree under which the Prophet Muhammad before his entry into Mecca, had taken an oath of fidelity from his companions, the Caliph Umar destroyed the tree by having it uprooted.

Last but not least is the democratic spirit which marks all the institutions of Islam. A king and a beggar stand shoulder to shoulder at the prayer time.

Dr. Iqbal, the philosopher poet of Islam, says :—

Even when active war is in progress, at the time of prayers, all the warriors stand in rows. King Mahmūd and his slave Ayaz are seen in the same row. There is no distinction between a master and His slave. All distinctions of rank and wealth disappear when they assemble to pray before Thee, O God !

They are expected to assemble five times a day in the mosque of their locality. Once a week, on Fridays, there is a bigger assembly of the chief sub-divisions of a town, of the whole town, if it is a small one.

Twice a year, the assembly is of the whole surrounding locality and even of the neighbouring villages. Once a year, several millions of Muslims of both sexes representing all nations assemble together in Mecca.

The social, commercial, and political advantages of these assemblies are obvious. The world has not yet known any better democratic organization of human society than that contemplated and illustrated by Islam.

## MATTER AND EVIL

BY THE LATE KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

A wrong conception of good and evil also contributes to our undoing. The problem of evil has baffled all the old explanations, and evil remains an invincible entity, to the constant peril of our moral fabric. Almost all the ancient religious systems have tried to explain the genesis of evil in the same way, a most unsatisfactory way, seeing that it made of it a wrong without remedy. Ancient philosophy and religion regarded the Soul and Matter, which is commonly called Flesh in Christian theology, as two separate entities, not created by God but eternal in their origin. Though the Christian Church did not consider these to be the creation of the Lord, it believed, like other systems, in the doctrine of Duality, according to which the Soul and Matter, though separate in origin, were combined in the human frame. Matter was believed to be the personification of evil, the soul that of good, but when contaminated by reason of the said amalgamation, it became subject to various low passions and gross cravings. Thus was evil created. The separation of the soul in its original purity from the clutches of the flesh was considered as the only remedy, and it was usually called "Salvation." This problem of evil brought into existence several schools of thought,—Zoroastrianism and Christianity, both of the West and in the East Hinduism and Buddhism. But it was left for Islam to explain the existence of evil on entirely new conception. The Zoroastrian faith believed in Yezd and Aharman as the gods of good and evil. These in their ascendant turn gave birth to respective cycles of good and evil in the world. Man thus remained for ever a play thing in the hand of the deities of good and evil. To remove the heinousness of the doctrine, certain modern apologists in the ranks of the Fire-Worshippers liken this co-eval existence of good and evil to the principle of contrasts as seen in the day and night, male and female,

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positive and negative, and the like. But this would seem to be a false analogy. Antitheses in the physical world are not injurious in themselves. They are all conducive to good in their own way. But good and evil are moral entities, and always act beneficially or banefully. Evil, according to the Zoroastrian conception, has a constant existence and cannot disappear from the world. The Church theologians also took evil as an invulnerable foe to man. Man was defenceless before it, and God had to devise a new scheme for man's salvation, through the blood of Jesus. It may propitiate Divine Wrath and save the sinner from punishment if he believes in the Crucifixion, but it cannot banish evil from the human frontiers. Participation in the Eucharistic Meals can hardly work any change in human nature as far as the problem is concerned. The ancient philosophers of India approached the question from a similar point of view. They thought that human salvation lay in the destruction of all evil impulses and low passions, and that, this being done, the soul became liberated from the flesh. But inasmuch as the extinction of evil passions could not be accomplished in one human generation, man must come again and again into the world for his purification, and thus pay the penalty for sins. He has entered the world again under new circumstances, since his new birth has to be in accordance with his past actions. But while he paid the penalty for sins, he was continually committing new ones for which also he must be re-born—thus he became inextricably involved in the 'Round of birth and re-birth.' But here the philosophers begin to differ. Some believe that man can never become relieved of the curse of this vicious circle. Others hold that his final emancipation is possible. In this connection, these two schools of thought have indirectly done a lot of good to human society.

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Buddhism, for instance, evolved a beautiful code of morality, which favoured the cultivation of tender emotions, by which evil passions were to be fought and expelled. But real salvation depended upon their absolute "annihilation;" and then and only then real bliss or "truth" was attained. The philosophy of Upanishads—the other school of thought—proposed various systems of 'Sadhana' (cure), for the subjection of evil passions. The victory of man lay in his full subjugation of these passions. But it has to come to him after so many births and re-births.

I do not know what to say of the Divine Economy in amalgamating Soul and Matter, since it has caused so much trouble in the world and made of sin a permanent indefensible evil for nothing. The root of the whole mischief lay, first, in the belief in the eternity of matter and the soul, and, secondly, in their being considered as permanent sources of evil and good which came to the surface when they were combined in the human frame under the doctrine of "Duality." Had the question been only a mental conundrum, it could have been passed over as insoluble and a thing unworthy of a busy man's notice. These false notions have wrecked the superstructure of human society on every plane of activity. They have not only been, to a great extent, subversers of morality, but have also frustrated every prospect of material progress. Our civilization depends chiefly upon due provision being made for our various cravings and appetites, but these appetites themselves were considered by these philosophers to be the spawn, as it were, of evil passions and a pampering of the flesh, as a Calvinist in the Western Church might have said. Provision for these needs was, therefore, discouraged and material progress became an impossibility. This is no mere theory, as facts and figures have proved. These pestilential ideas had their strangle-hold

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on the human mind everywhere before the advent of Islam, and we find, therefore, no signs, in the West, of any civilization such as that which is at work in the East. What thing other than these sickly, nay, poisonous theologies could be responsible for the utter stagnation of those days. Islam went to the root of the matter. It explained the phenomena of good and evil on satisfactory and intelligible lines. It made evil an after-acquisition, and its disappearance a possibility. It had nothing to do with the combination of the soul with matter at the beginning. They were neither eternal, nor were they the respective embodiments of good and evil. They came into existence fifth or sixth in order after "Emanation." It was light, created by the Lord, and not matter that, in the beginning, gave birth to the Heavens and the Earth, and science has recently come to the same conclusion. It says that energy becomes converted into light, which, in the course of evolution, passes gradually through various worlds—gases, *nebulae*, stars, electrons, atoms and molecules,—before it turns into matter. It is in the seventh generation that elements—the mother of matter—become created and pass through many stages of growth until matter itself is born, in the long run. Thus the theory of its eternity comes to nothing. Matter without consciousness must needs be incapable of good or evil, while the latter are produced when various elements in their advanced stage are brought together in an animal frame. Elements appear first in the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms. It is in the last stage that it gives rise to consciousness—an assemblage of the various passions. But even in that condition there is no evil, for evil is the product of the human mind only. The whole world of Nature is peaceful and free from discord though swarming with antitheses. But no sooner has consciousness taken its place in the human body, than good and evil are born. Even

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among the animals evil appears, but rarely. The animal has been gifted with passions, but in different measures and for different occasions when they have to be exhibited. But the brutes do not abuse their passions, for they do not possess the requisite knowledge. Again, all animals do not possess the whole range of passions. If the cat is clean by instinct, the pig is dirty by nature. Nature has given root-passions, lust and wrath, to all animals, but in different measures to suit their environments. All of them have got lust and wrath. If the former urges them to procure those things by which they must live, the latter was given as a weapon of defence to protect their lives as well as the proceeds of their labour. Anger is a life-tendency, but if the camel has been given a double portion thereof, the ox has received the meagrest. This differentiation was due to different causes. The camel and the cow are both the companions of man. One has to act as a ship in the desert, while it is for the other to supply us with rich milk. If the camel has to work in the desert where he cannot find much nourishment and is in constant danger from savage beasts, the latter has to live with man in places where they can find a sufficiency of milk-producing food in the form of grass and the like, while, therefore, the latter was given a stomach of large proportions, the former a small belly to be filled with the spare and thorny produce of the jungles. But the food by its very nature also produced thorny passions in the camel, prompting him to guard his life from beasts of prey. These two classes of animals possess the same passion—anger, but in different measures. They know, too, by instinct, the occasions for its use. The cow has few such, but the camel, which is as docile as the cow when in human society, becomes fiercer than the lion or tiger when confronted with either in the desert. But as our race had to face all the circumstances and hardships of life, all passions in

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their full extent became concentrated in the human breast. Human consciousness became, as it were, a menagerie of all wild animals, in which is needed the wise eye of a custodian to keep them separate from each other. So man was given the knowledge of measure and of the occasions on which he had to use his various passions. He needed all this knowledge. His ignorance of them gives rise to what is usually called evil. The camel and the cow are both represented in him in the form of passions, but he must possess proper knowledge of the occasion when he has to bring the two brutes into action. Therefore, it is neither matter nor passions that create virtue or evil, but our own knowledge or ignorance that is responsible for the two. What a waste of time and ability is represented by these various learned schools of philosophy in the days of yore, which laboured so abundantly, and all to put us on the wrong scent as to the exercise of these passions. We should control them by virtue of our knowledge, but not so as to cripple or kill them. They are the foundation of a sound moral building, though difficult to deal with in their initial form. Knowledge, whether attained through revelation or experience, teaches us their use. Moreover, they have given rise to various cravings, which in their turn could have brought the highest civilization into existence, had not beautiful and pernicious books, like those of the Upanishads or Buddhistic literature, been written to kill them, and thus made the world remain without material progress in the East as well as in the West for a considerable time.

# THE SPIRIT OF ISLAMIC IDEALS<sup>1</sup>

BY SIRDAR IKBAL ALI SHAH

*Science and Islam.*

Unlike other religions, in Islam there is no dogma. So far as the belief in the prophethood of Muhammad is concerned, it will readily be admitted that in all ages and in all countries prophets and teachers have arisen as guides and torch-bearers to mankind. Muhammad was not egregious in this respect, and if his prophethood be regarded as implying a dogmatic belief, this must in reason be posited of all other prophets, who have ever appeared. Why belief in the abilities of Muhammad as a prophet should be particularly selected as an evidence of the dogmatic character of the Islamic faith, it would indeed be hard to guess. Nor is the statement of his infallibility more extreme or dogmatic than that concerning the prophets of any other religion. It is certainly laid down that divine revelation terminated with him, because his preaching struck at the very root of ancient superstition, and especially at those gross fetishistic beliefs which personalised the forces of nature. The sacred writings, revealed through his agency, demonstrate in a practical manner the absurdity of the worship of Fire, of the Sun, Moon and Stars, of the Wind, of fetish stone and of the elements of nature: thus it is reasonable to believe that the advent of Islam encouraged scientific research.

The consequence of this was that men's minds received a fresh impetus to liberty of thought. Hitherto this had been repressed by the notion that the forces of nature were in themselves sacred, and must not be brought to the use of Man. For the first time, therefore, these processes of thought were released, which gave Man free play with natural forces and which eventuated in the institution of modern Science, with all its liberal opinions as to the utilisation of natural forces wherever they were to be encountered. It was the destruction of the fear of

<sup>1</sup> Extracts from a remarkably fine book of recent publication entitled: "*Muhammad: The Prophet*" profusely illustrated. Published by Wright and Brown. Red Lion Court, London, E.C. (4). Price 21 shillings net.



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these forces, of the superstition that lay behind the belief in the potency of inanimate things, that in the first place made it possible for men to explore the potentialities of nature. Before his time, the mere fact that they worshipped these forces and were thus afraid to examine or harness them for the behoof of humanity, had made a scientific attitude impossible. Within the following generation not one but many schools of scientific effort in thought, in chemistry and in early engineering, arose in various parts of the Islamic World. One has only to point to the extraordinary genius of the Arab and Moorish schools of Chemistry, upon which all modern chemical endeavour has been founded, to prove that this is so. Indeed, it is not too much to say that had it not been for the liberal and modern outlook of the Prophet, the position of Science to-day would certainly have been many generations behind. The false taboo broken, men at once addressed themselves to the study of the physical nature of those elements they had previously adored, and in so doing unloosed possibilities and marvels besides which the ancient magics, supposed to be resident in the subjects of their studies, paled into insignificance. If nothing else suffices to prove the finality of Muhammad's prophethood, the inspiration which he thus set free would demonstrate its divine quality, nor is this of which we speak in any way related to dogma, justified as it is by science.

### *Divine Right of Personality.*

A point worthy of note regarding the Prophet is the veiled character of his personality. This extraordinary man who changed the course of human history, how much is actually known about him? He was not divine, no divine birth is claimed for him. But he certainly possessed the divine right of personality in the wordly sense of the term. The phrase "Divine Right of Kings" describes the significance of the term in this respect.

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Kingship has usually rested upon three bases—armed force, wealth and segregation from the public. The army always established the power of the king, money supported it and rendered him popular, but undoubtedly the most powerful instrument for creating an atmosphere of divine right is personality. Legends were woven around the name of king until to the minds of the people he appeared almost as a god. He was unapproachable, he did not mix with the people, the mass mind conjured up legends regarding him until he appeared remote and dwelling in an almost non-human sphere.

But when the Prophet began his mission he was destitute of any of those advantages. He had no armed forces behind him, the people were hostile to him, he was without means, and so far from being remote from the public they could have access to him at any time, for Muhammad had practically no private life. In this he was unlike most Oriental kings and potentates, who at that period were seldom seen in public. It was, indeed, the open book of his personality which made him so popular as a ruler and which permitted him to alter the relationships between monarch and subject. Muhammad indulged in no supernatural manifestations, he lived a plain and simply life, a poor man's life indeed, he never flinched from practical work, he fought like a common soldier in the ranks, bought and sold goods like an ordinary tradesman, mixed with people of every kind and made no difference between persons as regards conditions of birth or wealth.

At length by this means the whole of Arabia lay at his feet and gave allegiance to one God. The old idea of the peculiar sanctity of prophets and leaders was broken for ever so far as the Islamic religion was concerned, for Muhammad showed that it is the part of the true leader to identify himself with those he leads and not to

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appear as on a different plane from them. If this liberal attitude was not carried out by later Islamic rulers, it was certainly not the fault of the Prophet, nor was it due to the weakness of the lesson which he had bequeathed to them—a lesson which might well be taken to heart by all governors of men wherever their lots may be cast.

On his death-bed, and when too feeble to join his followers in the worship of Allah in the Mosque at Medina, he faced his end cheerfully. “My mission is fulfilled, praise be to Allah,” he said, lowering the curtain of his room that looked towards the Mosque. Pagan Arabia had been redeemed to the eternal glory of this wondrous man, who, single-handed, approached the gigantic task of changing a world, and succeeded in changing it to his own virtuous desire.

### *The Prophet's practical bend of mind.*

It was on a particularly hot day when the government of the Muslims gathered in the quadrangle of the Mosque of Medina, awaiting the Prophet. In the meantime the gathering of the faithful was split up into two sections one section deliberated on the pure ethical questions of the creed, and the other sitting under another tree were grappling with some practical points. “I am a practical man,” said the Prophet upon entering, as he joined the latter section: “for I have been sent to show to the people how to live as God wishes them to live.”

Another point about Muhammad which is apt to be forgotten is, that he has left an indelible mark upon the history for one particular reason that alone distinguishes him from others. Quite apart from the fact that he is acknowledged as a prophet, even as a personality, as a general, a statesman, a merchant, a father and a husband he has created a pattern infinitely superior to anything known in the history of Man. And that is his personal influence, his personality.

## THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN ISLAM

In this particular Muhammad has no rival, for within his own lifetime people so far apart as Basra and Mecca, Medina and the cities of Yemen were behaving, acting, even thinking in the way Muhammad did. That he transformed a pagan people, and such inveterate warriors as the Quraish, into a humble, peace-loving people, so as to act according to the injunctions of the Prophet, as they were, is possible only for a man whose claim for the mastery of the world is indisputable. His birth was shrouded in no mystery, from a human father and mother he was born, he lived an ordinary life, and yet lived to deliver his people from the slough of degradation—all within ten years,—is a task which staggers imagination. If that does not mean a personality without a compeer what else is it? If that did not mean that his message had a more than ordinary potency how would one account for the progress of the law of Allah proclaimed in wondrous language as of the Qur-án, regarding which even the pagan poet-laureates declared *laisa haza bi kalam-ul-bashar*—"These are not the words of a human being?"

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## THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN ISLAM

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMED

(Continued from Vol. XXI, page 58.)

It is a thousand pities that when so much blood has been shed in Europe to vindicate the sanctity of man's rights to things material, the jealousy for the sanctity of Womanhood is regarded, almost humourously, as the "cave-man—spirit," and its whole culture has been allowed to be based on erotic thoughts and imaginations. As contrasted with this state of things, Islam is emphatically anti-phallic. With all corruption and degradation which has crept into it in these latter days it has throughout preserved this spirit because it knows that real

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honour to Woman consists in this spirit, and not in a few items of so-called liberty with regard to physical movements. Ball-room dancing, Parisian nudities, and, most dangerous of all, promiscuous intermingling of the sexes, are considered as hateful in the Islamic conception of social life, since they are regarded as man's cunning devices for exploiting the sexual weakness in woman ; and, indeed, as a most treacherous outrage on womanhood. Islam believes in a certain amount of control of Man's movements—because, it is, after all, the machinations of man which is at the bottom of all these deceptions. The Qur-án lays down :—

You who believe, do not enter homes other than your own homes, until you have asked permission, and saluted their intimates. This is better for you that you be mindful.<sup>1</sup>

Again :—

Say to the believing men that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts ; surely Allah is aware of what they do.<sup>2</sup>

After this there is a corresponding warning to women, and then :—

Say to the believing women that they cast down their looks, and guard their private parts, and not display their ornament except what appears thereof, and let them wear head-coverings over their bosoms, and not display their beauty except to their husbands, or their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women.....or the male servants not having any need of a women, or the children not having any knowledge of what is hidden of women.<sup>3</sup>

It is quite patent that in all these precautions the attitude of distrust is always towards the men. These injunctions do not in the least insist on total seclusion, rather do they assume a condition of society in which women move about freely. And as a matter of fact the Muslim women *do move about freely*—of course decently dressed, and not with “ my young man ”— excepting in the cities and in highly aristocratic families. In these families,

<sup>1</sup> 24 : 27.

<sup>2</sup> 24 : 30.

<sup>3</sup> 24 : 32.

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*the idea is not at all the confinement of woman.* The women themselves regard it as a sign of aristocracy thus to remain hidden. Of course, in all Muslim families there is a separate quarter for women, as I have pointed out, and the reasons for its existence has also been explained. This reserved quarter, I must make it clear, contains not only the wife but also the wives of near relatives, widows of the family, in the broader sense, say, mother, aunt, etc. Eastern families live mostly in joint families—and the unmarried girls, one's own and those of the poorer relatives. With regard to its character, Von Hammer has very correctly said :—

The Harem is a Sanctuary ; it is prohibited to the stranger—not because women are considered unworthy of confidence, but on account of the SACREDNESS with which custom and manners invest them.

Speaking of the position of the wife in a harem, John Davenport says :—

So far from the harem being a prison to the woman, it is a place of liberty, where the husband himself is treated as an interloper. The moment his foot passes the threshold, everything reminds him that he is *no longer* Lord and Master ; children, servants and all *look to the principal lady* ; in short she is paramount ; when she is in good humour, everything goes on well, and when she is in a bad humour, nothing goes right.

Thus the Islamic system of the segregation of the sexes aims at a truer liberty and dignity for womanhood. Owing to her motherhood and the tremendous responsibility which it involves, she is made an object of adoration rather than a toy, which, after all is, generally speaking, her position in Europe. It is not correct to say that women are kept in subjection in Islam, but rather that, in the enjoyment of true liberty, Muslim men and women voluntarily subject themselves to certain restrictions.

In conclusion, I make bold to say that in the pursuit of its own conception of liberty, Modern Europe, though

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calling itself Christian, is, in practice, not far from re-enacting those ghastly scenes of Pagan times to which Christianity is supposed to have put an end. Are not the histories of Athens, Pompeii and Rome repeating themselves to-day in London, Paris, New York and Berlin ? Let Christianity pause and think. The points raised by Mr. Justice McCardie show the direction whither affairs in Europe are drifting. I may tell you that nature will never forget to take its revenge, and Christian Europe is positively heading towards the doom which overtook the pagan nations of old. Islam surely cannot be a party to this kind of destructive libertinism. It has its own ideals. Let Europe remain contented with the production of a few Amy Johnsons and Greta Garbos. In its glorious days Islam also had produced noted women possessing, perhaps, finer traits of human nature and proving more useful members of society. But its chief interest has always lain elsewhere. While Europe has remained contented with the *worship* of Mary, Islam's ambition has been to *produce* lesser or greater Maries in every age, and, as a matter of fact, this is what it has been doing through the ages. To me it seems that the cause of Europe's inability to appreciate the Islamic ideal of womanhood lies in its low level of spirituality, for which, perhaps, the doctrine of Atonement by Blood is responsible.

Unless, therefore, Europeans set themselves to cultivate a real spirituality, they will never see eye to eye with us in certain matters of the very highest importance which vitally affect the progressive social life of Humanity. Let us see what movements like Theosophy and Spiritualism can do in this respect. But the goal seems to be still very far off. May God help us.

## SWEDISH LAW REFUSES TO RECOGNIZE MUSLIMS

According to Swedish law, a Swede who wishes to change his belief may only convert to another Christian faith. Thus, he may become a Baptist, a Methodist, or a Catholic, but he cannot become a Muslim or a Buddhist. This is in accordance with the law and the Church. This clause of the law has become of current interest, as a Swede, who having been converted to Islam abroad, and recently returned home, requests that his faith should be recognized. The register office has, within its rights, refused to remove his name from the Swedish Church. No objection has been raised against his becoming a Muslim privately, but formally he must remain a Christian. A petition has been sent to the town authorities of Stockholm, and now there remains nothing else but to wait and see how the matter will develop.

The newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* published the following interview with Mr. Abdullah Uno Küller who gave a good deal of information about the facts :—

“ I have been a Muslim for several years : ever since 1928, to speak exactly. But I was born of Swedish parents here in Sweden, and was both baptised and confirmed. I have spent a very long time abroad, chiefly in Northern Africa, in Tunis, where I have stayed on three different occasions about one year at a time. I have also been to England several times, but I have now returned to Sweden, where I am going to settle down for good. As I told you, I became converted to Islam abroad, and now I wanted to apply for my secession from the Church. But this application was refused. I was asked to give a reason, and when I told them that I was a Muslim, I was denied the right to secede from the Church. And of course, their refusal was in full accordance with the law.

“ But this matter does not only concern myself. I have come home to gather other Swedish Muslims, and endeavour to get Islam recognized in this country. I



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don't want to found a new congregation, that would be saying too much, I only want to gather the members of the Islamic faith. We don't want to be formal Christians and have our religion as a private affair. What we desire is to be Muslims also outwardly. Sweden is a civilized country, isn't it? And gives absolute religious freedom? Well, then, my opinion is that this is a rather absurd clause. Everywhere else in Europe there are Islamic congregations; for instance, in Paris, where most tourists have seen the wonderful Mosque, and in England, where you have the very much frequented Mosque, in Woking. In Holland and Belgium there are congregations, and, as far as I know, also in Denmark. But here in Sweden, there are no such possibilities. I find it so curious that Sweden refuses to recognise a religion which has about 400 million adherents in the world.

“Why I have become converted to Islam? Well, the reasons are many. The principal reason is perhaps that the idea of God of the Muslims is so strikingly clear and pure, so sublime. But you must not forget another very important fact. Islam is very tolerant. It bears no animosity against other religions, and does not persecute them. It is as tolerant as the ancients used to be. Thus, the Qur-án contains laws which only in our times have begun to be adopted in other countries. We need only mention the decrees about the compulsory support of the poor. Thus, I have become a Muslim because Islam is such a vital and living religion. Of course, there are fanatics and verbalists also among the Muslims, but where don't you find such people? Besides, I can't understand the animosity of the Christians. We recognize Jesus Christ, and we regard him as a great Prophet.

“With regard to our work here in Sweden, our efforts aim chiefly at getting a good translation of the Qur-án. The available translations are absolutely wrong and mis-

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leading. The Qur-án is difficult to understand even for Muslims. But above all, we want to have our religion fully recognized.”

The *Dragens Nyheter* has addressed some theologians who are acquainted with the question, and their answers have proved that the difficulties for the recognition are no inventions whatever.

“Yes, it is true,” says the Reverend Lindgren, the rector of the Engelbrekt parish of Stockholm, “a person who secedes from the Church must become a member of some other Christian community, otherwise the secession will be refused.”

“I am acquainted with this question,” says Doctor Henning Wijkmark, “it has been discussed both in the Riksdag and the Church Congresses, but the law is still valid. As is well-known, such questions are only slowly dealt with; in this case the persons in question will probably have to regard their religion as a private affair and formally belong to the Christian Church unless they may get a license. My private opinion is that the clause is not a good one. But I suppose it will be removed later on.”

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## “WHAT IS ISLAM?” IN SWEDISH

[Most probably our readers will not be able to read the reproduction of the Swedish version of our pamphlet: “What is Islam?” We print it so that our friends may have an idea what solid work is being done by Muslims in the West. The Swedish version is from the pen of Mr. Abdullah Uno Küller whose photo appeared as a *frontispiece* to the *Islamic Review* for October 1932.—Ed. *I. R.*]

### VAD ÄR ISLAM ?

(Här nedan lämnas en kort sammanfattning av Islam och dess lära. Närmare upplysningar lämnas av THE IMAM THE MOSQUE, Woking, England, eller genom Postbox 462, Stockholm 1.)

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*Islam, fridens religion.*—Ordet Islam betyder, ordagrant översatt : 1) frid, 2) sättet att vinna frid, 3) undergivenhet, eftersom undergivenhet inför en annans vilja är den säkraste vägen att vinna frid I sin religiösa betydelse innebär ordet fullständig undergivenhet inför Guds vilja.

*Religionens ändamål.*—Islam har givit sina trosbekännare den fullkomliga skriften, genom vilken dessa kunna utfinna det som är ädelt och gott hos människor och sälunda vidmakthålla friden mellan människorna.

*Islams profeter.*—Muhammed, populärt känd som Islams profet, var emellertid trons sista profet. Muhammedanerna (Muslims), d. v. s. Islams anhängare, godtaga alla sådana profeter i världen, däribland Abraham, Moses och Jesus, vilka uppenbarat Guds vilja för att vägleda mänskligheten.

*Koranen (Qur-án).*—Muhammedanernas heliga skrift är Koranen. Muhammedanerna tro på det gudomliga ursprunget i alla andra heliga skrifter, men i den män som sådana tidigare uppenbarelser blivit förvanskade genom textförfalskning blev koranen, Guds sista bok, en sammanfattning av äldre evangelier.

*Islams trosartiklar.*—Dessa äro till antalet sju : Tron på 1) Allah, 2) änglarna, 3) Guds skrifter, 4) Guds budskap, 5) livet efter detta, 6) yttersta domen, 7) uppståndelsen efter döden.

Livet efter döden är enligt Islams lära icke ett nytt liv, utan blott en fortsättning av den jordiska tillvaron, varvid dennas fördolda verklighet uppenbaras. Det är ett liv av obegränsat framätskridande. De, som i detta liv göra sig förtjänta av detta framätskridande, komma till Paradiset, vilket är ett annat namn för sagda liv av framätskridande efter döden, medan de, som förkväva sina utvecklingsmöjligheter genom synd i denna jordiska tillvaro, komma

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till helvetet. Här skola de renas från all synd för att därefter kunna bli mogna för saligheten. Livet efter döden är en avspeglning av detta livs andliga tillstånd.

Den sjätte trosartikeln har stundom förväxlats med vad som populärt kallas Fatalism. En Muhammedan tror varken på fatalism eller predestination. Han tror på en på förhand gjord värdesättning av hans gärningar. Allt som skapats av Gud är gott för ett givet ändamål och under givna omständigheter. Allt missbruk härav är av ondo och medför lidande.

*Islams dogmer.*—Dessa äro till antalet fem : 1) Tron på Gud som en enhet och på Muhammeds gudomliga kallelse som Guds budbärare, 2) bönen, 3) fastan, 4), allmosor, (5) pilgrimsfärden till det heliga templet i Mecka.

*Guds egenskaper.*—Muhammedanerna bekänna sig till en enda Gud, den Allsmåktige, den Allvetande, den Allvise, värdsalltets övervakare, Vännen, Ledsagaren, Hjälparen. Ingen är hans like. Ingen är honom jämbördig. Ej är Han född, ej har Han fött någon son eller dotter. Gud är en. Han är himmelens och jordens ljus, den Barmhärtige, Förbarmaren, den Härlige, den Store, den Evige, den Oändlige, den Förste och den Siste.

*Tro och gärning.*—Tro utan gärning är en död bokstav. Tron är i sig själv otillräcklig, savida den icke omsättes i handling. En Muhammedan tror på den personliga ansvarigheten för sina handlingar här på jorden och i livet efter detta. Varje människa måste bära sin egen börda, och ingen kan gottgöra sin medmänniskas synder.

*Islam etik.*—Du skall genomsyras av Guds godhet, säger den ädle Profeten. Gud är människans prototyp och hans godhet bildar grundvalen för muhammedanismens etik. Rättfärdigheten enligt Islam är att leva ett liv i fullständig harmoni med Gud. Att leva annorlunda är synd.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

*Människans anlag enligt Islam.*—Muhammedanen tror på syndfriheten i människonaturen, vilken natur är Guds verk och vilken är mäktig att utveckla sig obegränsat, varigenom människan blir förmer än änglarna och ledes till Gudsriket.

*Kvinnans ställning enligt Islam.*—Man och kvinna ha samma ursprung, ha samma själ och besitta samma förmögenheter för att uppnå intellektuell, andlig och moralisk fullkomning. Islam ställer samma krav på man och kvinna och de ha samma skyldigheter gentemot varandra.

*Människornas likställighet och Islams brödraskap.*—Islam är läran om Guds enhet och människans likställighet. Börd, rikedom och släktutmärkelser äro timliga ting, dygd och förmåga att tjäna mänskligheten äro de sanna dygderna. Islam drager ingen gräns, mellan olika hudfärg, raser och trosbekännelser. Hela mänskligheten tillhör en enda familj, och Islam har lyckats sammansvetsa de svarta och vita till en broderlig enhet.

*Det personliga omdömet.*—Islam främjar uppövädet av det personliga omdömet och respekterar olik tänkande, vilket profeten Muhammeds lära är en välsignelse från Gud.

*Kunskap.*—Inhämtandet av kunskaper är enligt Islam en plikt, och det är förvärvandet av kunskaper, som ställer människan före änglarna.

*Arbetets helgd.*—Varje arbete, som befordrar ett hederligt liv, ätnjuter aktning. Sysslolösheten betraktas som synd.

*Välgörenhet.*—Alla de egenskaper som människan besitter ha anförtratts henne av Gud till välsignelse för hennes medmänniskor. Det är människans plikt att leva för andra, och den givmildhet hon visar mot andra utövas utan hänsyn till person. Enligt Islam medför ett givmilt sinne lag att hon kommer närmare Gud. Välgörenhet och allmosor äro obligatoriska, och varje människa, vars ägodelar överstiga en viss storlek, måste erlægga en skatt, som kommer de fattiga till-godo.

# CORRESPONDENCE

SARAJEVO, JUGO-SLAVIA.

THE EDITOR,  
THE ISLAMIC REVIEW,  
WOKING.

DEAR BROTHER,

Since last month we have begun to issue a new weekly under the title of *Islamski Svijet*—(Islamic World). Our organ shall deal with the main Islamic problems of our country as well as all events which may concern the Islamic World. In order to have the material for this purpose and to enable us to inform our people about the cultural and social life of our brethren in your country, we have the honour to appeal to your kindness to let us have your esteemed *Review* in exchange for our journal, if it does serve you in any way, for it is in the Serbo-Croatian language.

Moreover, we have taken the initiative to found a society for the purpose of editing the books dealing with Islam which should make a collection under the title of "Islamic Scientific Library." We are already sure of a reasonable amount of success, and hence we shall begin this work from the beginning of next year. Knowing that you dispose of such books, we request you to send us some for translation. If this is not possible, please send us a prospectus of each one of them.

One of our contributors understands the English language, and if you want some information about the state of living of Muslims here we shall be glad to meet your desires.

Your brother in Islam,  
VELIKI CURCILIK.  
(*Islamski Svijet*).

---

THE ACTING IMAM,  
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR BROTHER IN ISLAM,  
*Assalamo Alaikum wa Rahmat-allah wa Barakatahu.*

Referring to your No. W. 26 of July last, I apologize for not replying to it before this. As I am constantly on the move these days, my mails always reach me late. Please find herewith a postal order for ten shillings. I would like one copy of the *Review* sent to some English man or woman who, you think, might be interested in Islam, and to remove thereby a part of the barrier of lies that has been built around our Holy Faith

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

by people of other religions, especially the Christian missionaries. "They wish to put out the Light of God with their mouths, but God will perfect His Light." I have been living in the Faith of Islam now 40 years, having been converted and made my first Hajj in the year 1311 A.H., and have constantly been working amongst my European friends to clear the Faith of Islam from the lies that have been built up like a wall around it by its enemies. I am certain that from the first days of Islam the preachers of other faiths were afraid that if the truth about our Holy Religion were known, there would be very few that would adhere any longer to those other religions which Islam came to supplant.

Yours fraternally,

(AL HAJ) ABDULLAH FADHIL WILLIAMSON.

THE IMAM,

THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

My trend of religious thought was fast slipping into agnosticism and atheism when, by chance, I came upon a copy of the *Islamic Review* in the Public Library at Hartford, Connecticut, U.S.A. Its very name arrested my attention. I read and re-read the *Review*, and in doing so I found great consolation and tranquility of mind. Before this I had detested Islam, and did not even regard it worthy as a religion to be considered at all. The constant reading of the *Review* has, however, brought both truth and light to me. It has opened my eyes, and shattered my old beliefs. The *Review* is a real light to the benighted portion of the world. It has given me a new conception of religion, inspiring that which had become insipid and stale with a fresh and vital interest.

The able article by Mr. Kidwai on the Divine Attributes has presented Islam to me in a most practical form. The perusal of such thoughtful articles indicates that the religion we have followed hitherto is folklore with no bearing whatsoever on practical existence, while the religion presented by the *Islamic Review* is the best and, indeed, the only practicable code of life. From the little I have already gleaned from the pages of your valuable journal, the religion of Islam seems to me to be at once sound, liveable, reasonable and beautiful. It is a true guide for every path in human life and worthy to be accepted by all.

Yours,

J. P. TYLER.

## CORRESPONDENCE

PEMBROKE DOCK,

S. WALES.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

*Assalamo Alaikum.*

You ask if I would like a Muslim name. Certainly, why not ? I think " Muhammad " would be very suitable, as it will always tend to keep me in remembrance of him who brought the Good Tidings (praise be his name.)

It was a great privilege of mine to see a procession of the " Holy Carpet " in Cairo. It was very impressive and inspiring to see the devotion of the people. It is not to be wondered at, that we should be prepared to follow Allah who levels the barrier of social superiority and binds us in unity of spirit and brotherhood. Oh, that I could have surrendered myself before. However, one must learn to live through tribulation. One is worthless if in his love for Allah he cannot suffer to prove himself worthy of His acceptance.

Now, my reasons for embracing Islam are as follows :—

- (a) Sub-consciously I have always been a Muslim, but for years have struggled against the fear of social ostracism, which, thanks be to Him, is no longer a hindrance,
- (b) Islam is unity, and has successfully broken down the barrier of racial differences and has consolidated humanity as no other Faith has ever done.
- (c) Its prayers are unvarying, yet devotedly beautiful and substantial,—“ and, like the flowers of the narcissus, feed the soul. ”
- (d) It demands pilgrimage, to test the earnestness of man, and gives him the experience of satisfaction, for in giving so little he receives so very much.

Could you tell me where I might get the knowledge of what is required to perform the pilgrimage, for I have not much here that binds me? Also can you give me a list of the Feasts of Islam that I may observe them duly ?

Trusting I will hear from you soon, and thanking you a thousand times for your aid. I wish you every success in your work for the extension of Islam.

May Allah bless you amply.

Yours fraternally,

In Allah's service,

ERNEST T. W. BLACKMORE.



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

PORTSMOUTH.

DEAR BROTHER IN ISLAM,

Yes, the name which you have chosen for me will do very nicely, and I will adopt it forthwith. A lady called upon me two days ago to ask if I would care to attend her Church—Wesleyan. I informed her that I was a Muslim. Her reply rather shocked me. She said : “ I myself do not believe in the Christian religion, and in reality I hate it, but I am employed by a minister to deliver tracts and to try to increase the membership of the Church, so I cannot afford to quarrel with my bread and butter.” Do you think it is “ playing the game ” and acting honourably to accept payment for assisting a particular religion and then saying bad things concerning it to others ? I am afraid that I was not very polite to that lady after she told me that, for I think that if one does not believe in one’s religion one should change it for a religion of which one has no doubt whatever.

Yours fraternally,

E. J. SADIK BROMLEY.

---

## PRECIOUS GEMS

All Muslims are like one wall, some parts strengthening others ; in such a way must they support each other.

\* \* \* \*

The best of you is he who behaveth best to his household.

\* \* \* \*

Women are the twin halves of men.

\* \* \* \*

A true Muslim is thankful to Allah in prosperity and resigned to His will in adversity.

\* \* \* \*

He is not a perfect Muslim who eateth his fill and leaveth his neighbours hungry.

\* \* \* \*

Islam doth not allow asceticism.

MUHAMMAD.

# WHAT IS ISLAM ?

## WHAT IS ISLAM ?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The sixth article of faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination; he believes in 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 at Mecca.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

**ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.**—The Muslims worship One God—the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of All the Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is Indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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