

'Muhammad is ... the Apostle of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets ...'—Holy Qur-ān, 33 : 4
"There will be no Prophet after me."—Muhammad.

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

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدًا خَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

VOL. XXIII.]

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WHY I EMBRACED ISLAM

Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim

I have been asked why I embraced Islam. Here are some of my reasons. The first is that I do not believe the Christians of to-day are following the true teachings of Jesus Christ who, I am convinced, taught the very same thing as was taught by Moses and by Abraham, and the other Messengers of God, and that is Islam, which means submission to the Will of God, and universal brotherhood, irrespective of colour or nationality. There I have always been doubtful and confused about the idea of God coming on Earth as Man for our salvation. Surely it will be more seemly for us to strive to uplift ourselves to Him by effort and prayer, and *this* for our salvation. Again, if Jesus were Almighty God, why did he always speak of my Father in Heaven and say: "Thy Will not mine. be done?" Again and again Jesus told his followers that without the Will of the Father, he could do nothing. He prayed to God all night in the garden of Gethsemane for strength and courage, and later, he cried "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" and then it is said that he "sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty."

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How could Jesus do these things and at the same time be God Almighty ? It does not make sense. To my mind, God is Supreme, Universal, and very Loving. Jesus is one of His messengers. In Islam. Allah is the Universal God, Merciful and Compassionate, and Jesus is one of His Prophets sent to guide His creatures in the right way as Moses did, and to teach the same as Abraham taught (peace be on their names).

Muhammad (peace and blessings on him) was sent to teach the very same Laws of God for man's benefit, and I believe that all the prophets, including Jesus, came to teach Islam, which is submission to the Will of God ; and that a man becomes a truer Christian or Jew by way of Islam, than by any way advocated by the Christian or Jewish people to-day. For *we* are in direct line with the teachings of Abraham while *they* have gone astray through misunderstanding. My point of view now, as a Muslima, is that I can esteem all the Prophets and say "Peace be on them." For as Muhammad (peace be on him) did, so did they also teach submission to the Will of One Eternal Universal God, tolerance, peacefulness, as opposed to aggression, steadfastness in one's faith in Allah Who alone knows what is for our good, the love of children and endurance through suffering for the Truth. It is indifference to, and laxity in faith that have made discord between nation and nation. People have become intolerant one to the other merely because they do not follow closely the teachings of their prophets. In Islam there is tolerance and an acknowledgment of universal brotherhood. So, I may say, that I have accepted Islam because it fits in so well with my own ideas about Allah and His bountiful plan. It is the only Faith I really can understand. Indeed, such is its simplicity and beauty that even a little child can understand it.

Rabbana walaka'l Hamd.

AMINA LE FLEMING.

ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY ¹

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

My subject to-night is the more difficult for me in that it suggests a comparison between two religions, and comparisons, as you know, are always odious. But as these have already been made between the two religions in question by the people of the opposite camp, and one side of the picture has, unfortunately, been overdone, it may perhaps serve as a relief to the other side if I stress it a little in the course of my speech.

Let us recall the start of Islam. It was in the seventh century of the Christian era, when Christianity, in the words of Sir William Muir, decrepit, corrupt and disabled by contending schisms, had substituted the puerilities of superstition for the true and expansive faith of the early age, that Islam made its appearance. "The civilized world" of the time stood, says J. H. Demison, on the verge of chaos. Civilization, like a gigantic tree whose foliage had overreached the world, stood tottering, rotten to the core....." Arabia was the darkest spot in a dark world. It was inhabited by a wild race knowing no code of law, religious or secular, bursting ever and anon into bloodshed and ferocity of every sort.

The man Muhammad, the Founder of Islam, was born among these people, preached to them, and gave the lie to the proverb that "a prophet is not without honour, save in his own country." Arabia, under his leadership, was united into one religion, and one code of life and, through Arabia, the whole world of East and South. In the words of Carlyle—"Within one century afterwards Arabia as at Granada on this hand, at Delhi on that; glancing in valour and splendour and the light of genius, Arabia shines through long ages over a great section of the world."

¹ A lecture delivered in the Leeds University Refectory. The meeting was held under the joint auspices of the Islamic Society, the Church of England Society and the Students' Christian Movements.—*Ed. I. R.*

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It will be remembered that at the time of the rise of Islam, Christianity had behind it the power of the Roman Empire and the glorious traditions of Judaism, and of Greece and Rome to its advantage. And yet Islam prospered, and that simultaneously and in all directions. Christian supremacy and Christian prosperity were forecast to recede before the advancing tide of Islam; and a time came when Muslims were the important persons everywhere and in everything that counted in the world. In spite of the proud legacies of the three grandest civilizations of the world, Christianity failed miserably in competing with Islam in the fields of culture and learning, administration and statesmanship. Unfortunately, this glorious past lies for various reasons so deeply buried in current history that for the average man of the present world—Muslim or non-Muslim—it seems almost inconceivable that Islam could, at any time, compete with Christianity in the race of life. Thousands of zealous preachers of the Christian Faith, according to which the kingdom of this world is a temptation, are busy, these days, proving to the people the superiority of their religion over Islam on the basis of present civilization which, rightly or wrongly, is associated with the former religion, as if Islam never had any brilliant period to show. Hundreds of books have been written to show that Islam cannot be a religion for civilized humanity, as if Islam had never fostered a civilization, as if Christians were always civilized as at present and as if Christianity had produced and nurtured the civilization of to-day. For these reasons, I think, it will be worth while to give you a few glimpses into the past of Islam, as also to recall to your mind some of the salient features in the relationship between Christianity and modern civilization. As for the glories of Islamic civilization, let me take you with me on a flight into antiquity.

ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

Like Sindbad the Sailor we alight on the banks of the Tigris, in the Baghdad of "Arabian Nights" fame. Under the Abbasides, Baghdad was known as "the capital of Islam, the eye of Iraq, the seat of Empire, the centre of beauty, culture and the arts. Mansur was as broad-minded in his ideas of government as he was in his patronage of the arts. It was related of him that once he was summoned before the Qazi of Medina, at the instance of the camel-owners, and recognising the equality of all in the eyes of the law, he personally attended, accompanied only by his chamberlain. He stood as an ordinary litigant before the judge, who did not even rise from his seat to receive him. The suit was decided in favour of the plaintiffs, and Mansur recognised the integrity and independence of the Qazi, and rewarded him handsomely afterwards. It was this monarch who laboured to make Baghdad a centre of learning and culture; founding also a department for the translation of scientific words into Arabic.

Harun 'ar-Rashid, recognised by historians as one of the greatest rulers of all times, continued the work so ably begun by his grandfather Mansur. Among the eminent men who flourished in his reign may be mentioned Asmái, the grammarian, Ibrahim Musáli, the musician, and Gabriel, the physician. Rashid himself was a poet, and, naturally, he was especially kind to the devotees of the muse. He established communications with the West, as well as the Far East, and he was the first to receive at his Court embassies from the Emperor of China and from Charlemagne. The wonderful cloak which he sent to Charlemagne as a present is regarded, even to-day, as "a wonderful piece of mechanism."

"Mamun's Caliphate," says Ameer Ali, "constitutes the most glorious epoch in Saracenic history, and has justly been called the Augustan age of Islam. The twenty years of his reign have left enduring monuments of

ISLAMIC REVIEW

the intellectual development of the Muslims in all directions of thoughts. Their achievements were not restricted to any particular branch of science or literature, but ranged over the whole course of the domain of the intellect; speculative philosophy and the *belles-lettres* were cultivated with as much avidity as the exact sciences. Mathematics, astronomy, the science of medicine, etc., all made gigantic strides during this glorious period of Asiatic civilization; its intellectual heritage passed both into Saracenic Spain and Christian Constantinople, whence it descended to modern Europe."

To the undying fame of Mamun must also be added his toleration and political wisdom. Mamun established a regular Council of State, or Parliament composed of representatives from all the communities under his sway. Muslims, Christians, Sabaeans, Zoroastrians and Hindus had an equal voice where their respective interests were concerned. Liberty of conscience and freedom of worship were strictly observed. But Mamun went even a step further. In his reign some eleven thousand churches besides some hundreds of synagogues and temples were in existence, yet no attempt was made either to confiscate the trusts belonging to them or to deprive the priests of their rights and privileges.

The translation of words from Greek, Syriac and Chaldaic was under the supervision of Costa, the son of Luke, from ancient Persian under Yehya bin Harun; from Sanskrit, under Duban the Brahmin. The size of the earth was measured at a time when Christian Europe was asserting its flatness. Abul-Hasan invented the telescope; and the first observatory in Islam was established by Mamun at Shamassia, on the plains of Tadmor.

The Arabs were undoubtedly the inventors of the Mariner's compass, which enabled them to sail as far as Cathay, the Malay Archipelago, especially to Java and Batavia, where their descendants can be seen to this day.

ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

Towards the south, they went to Madagascar, and, of course, colonised East Africa, the relic of whose powerful empire can now be seen in the Sultanate of Dar-es-Salaam. Inland, they penetrated eastward to Multan in India, and westward, as far as Spain and Southern France. Both Sicily and Malta were conquered, and their ruins can be seen to this day.

Under the Abbasides, manufacture of every kind was fostered and encouraged. The glass and soap factories at Basra were then famous all over the world, and Venice, as a rival, had to hide herself in shame. Mutaassim established new factories at Baghdad, Samarra and other important towns. Workmen and foremen were brought from Egypt to make paper in Baghdad, while royal factories for gold and silver embroidery existed in Ispahan and Tabriz; and the looms for silk, satin, brocade and carpets were busy at Samarkand, Bokhara, Damascus, Khorasan and Shiraz.

The empire was equally rich in raw produce; barley, wheat, rice (called *ruzz* in Arabic), dates and fruits of all kinds, were largely grown. Cotton was cultivated at Aleppo, Beirut, Khilat, and Tyre, while the sugar plantations and factories of Ahwáz and Fars supplied the greater part of the world with refined sugar.

Colleges and hospitals were established in all the important towns, where free education and free treatment was given to the poor; the Nizamiyyah College, built by Nizam-ul-Mulk, and the Mustanseriyah built by Mustansir Bi-llah, are well-known to the students of history.

Under the Omeyyads in Spain, the same brilliancy and culture was to be found. I cannot enumerate at length the contribution which they have made to world-culture. But I shall mention a few facts to show that to them we owe much of what we know to-day.

To Rhazes we owe a comprehensive work on small-pox, and up to the sixteenth century the ninth book of this

great work was the subject of lectures in the Universities of Europe. The greatest name in Arab medicine is, of course, that of Avicenna (Abu Ali Ibn Sina), who is regarded as one of the greatest physicians and philosophers of all times. He was a prolific writer, as versatile as profound. Among his more famous works may be mentioned (a) Utility and Advantage of Science, (b) of Health and Remedies, (c) on Astronomical Observations, (d) Mathematical Theorem, (e) an Abridgement of Euclid, (f) Physics and Metaphysics, and (g) an Encyclopædia of Human Knowledge in twenty volumes.

Abu 'l-Qasim Zahravi, known as Abucassiss, wrote a chapter on Surgery, in which he has left such minute details, both of the instruments and the different types of operation on males and females, that he is entitled to rank as a pioneer of this science.

When Christianity was persecuting the students of chemistry as followers of witchcraft and sorcery, the Arabs had made some notable progress in that branch of science. Geber, or Abu Musa Jabir Ibn Hayyan, was the father of Arab Chemistry. He discovered Nitric Acid and Aqua Regia. Geber also made discoveries of the nature of metals, which was a distinct advance upon Greek theories. Rhazes also discovered Sulphuric Acid. The Arabs, of whom Abu Mansur Muwaffik is easily the leader, invented chemical pharmacy. The origin of modern dispensaries we owe to the Arabs. Professor Holmyard, writing of these researches, says :—

Out of the inchoate body of mystical doctrine which represented chemistry (known to the Arabs as Al-Kimiya) in the Alexandrian school, the Muslims had extracted a definite system in which experimental facts and theoretical speculation were for the first time brought into their true relations. The practical applications of chemistry were acknowledged to be an important factor of the whole, so that Europe was able to start its chemical studies with a firm basis of fact, a coherent body of doctrine, and a realization of the value of chemistry to everyday life, ready to hand. For this privilege of our ancestors, let us make haste to pay our homage to the followers of the Prophet.

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The Arabs discovered the manufacture of ice, which was unknown to Europe until the latter half of the sixteenth century.

Mathematics were permanently enriched by the discoveries and researches of the Arabs. They borrowed the decimal system from the Indians, but improved upon it. Algebra owes its development to the Arabs who discovered many new formulas. Ibn Musa, in the ninth century, substituted lines for chords in trigonometry, and also invented the quadric equations. Al-Kindi wrote two hundred works on various subjects such as Arithmetic, Geometry, Philosophy, Meteorology, Optics and Medicine. The tables of Abu Ma'ashar (corrupted into Albumazar) and Abú Wafá have always remained one of the chief sources of astronomical knowledge. The first observatory in Europe was established in Seville, under the supervision of Geber, in 1196. In the tenth century, the rival school of Cairo produced the great Ibn Yunus, whose work was continued by Ibn 'un-Nabdi—both eminent Astronomers.

Al-Beruni, the Geographer, travelled into India, lived among the Hindus, studied their language, their sciences, their philosophy and literature, their customs and manners, their laws, their religion and their peculiar superstitions, the geographical and physical conditions of their country, and embodied his observations in a work diversified by quotations from Homer and Plato and other Greek writers and philosophers. Besides the monumental work, he also wrote and lectured on astronomy, mathematics, chronology and physics. He was followed by an equally brilliant scholar, Nasir Khusru, whose *Safarnameh* is regarded as the most entertaining work of its kind in existence, as he travelled over the greater part of the then known world.

In history, the names of Mas'udi, Tabari and Ibn Athir shine with worthy lustre. Abu Bakr Muhammed bin Yahya, known in the West as Ibn Bajja, was eminent not only as a historian, scientist and philosopher, but

attained the highest proficiency in music, and he attempted to *introduce a musical scale to be playable by all nations alike, and which may be said to be the foundation stone on which the music of to-day is written.*

In Jurisprudence, the name of Ibn Rushd, the great Averroes, is easily the first. Descended as he was from a line of eminent judges, he was the Chief Qazi of Seville, and later of Cordova. He was a great friend of Ibn Tufail, who himself was a most renowned Arab scholar of his time. But this brief account of the civilization of the early Muslims would be incomplete if I fail to mention the great part played by women.

The Empress Zubaida was a gifted woman, and an accomplished poetess, and it is to her generosity that Mecca is provided with that much-needed canal which is named after her. *Under the Abbasides, Arab maidens went to fight on horseback, and commanded troops.* The mother of Muqtader herself presided at the High Court of Appeal, listened to applications, and gave audiences to dignitaries and foreign envoys. The Shaikha Shuhda in the sixth century of the Higeras, lectured in Baghdad on History and *belles-lettres*. One of the most famous lady jurists was Zainab, daughter of Muwayyid, who was a pupil of some of the great jurists of her time, and she was licensed to teach law. Again, under the Omeyyads, women were foremost in culture and refinement. Both Granada and Cordova produced eminent women in the arts and the sciences such as Nazhun, Zainab and Hamda, Hafsa, Safiyya and Mária.

It is interesting to note here that Islam has always treated woman as a *feme sole*, legally capable of owning and acquiring property, and rendering herself liable for her contracts and torts. But under Christian Europe this was not the case. In most European countries, the separate property of the wife passed to her husband on marriage. In England, under the Common Law, a married woman

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became identified with her husband, and was incapable of personally holding, or acquiring property, and could not make contracts. But by the Married Woman's Property Act of 1882, every married woman was made capable of acquiring, holding and disposing of her separate property, and of entering into and rendering herself liable in respect of and to the extent of her separate property, and of suing and being sued in contract. But this Act, it has been held, does not affect the Common Law liability of a husband for his wife's torts during the subsistence of the marriage, and consequently a plaintiff can elect whether he would sue the wife alone or join her husband as co-defendant with her. Therefore, when the wife has no separate property which may be rendered liable, a plaintiff, in spite of this Act, can sue the husband in respect of a tort committed by her. Clearly, the Islamic conception of treating woman as a *feme sole* was far in advance of anything conceived by Western jurists. Again, no woman—or man—can be deprived of her or his rightful inheritance. Each is entitled to his or her share. When we compare this with the unfettered power of testamentary disposition given under English Law, we are thankful to the Arabian Prophet for having remembered the rights and obligations of family relationship. I have been obliged, in this brief survey, to leave out of account the high pitch of civilization achieved by the Muslims in Iran and India. But even here one cannot but be struck by the amazing proficiency of their learning and culture. The impress of the Saracenic culture was so widespread, so powerful and so adaptable that the history of the world would have been quite different had not the Arabs penetrated into India. First under Mohammed, the son of Qasim, the Arabs led an expedition into Sind, captured Multan and occupied the Punjab as far as the Beas, and afterwards, under Mahmud of Ghazni, their position was consolidated here. It would not be too much to say that

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Iran could not have produced names like Omar Khayyam, Nizami, Rumi, Sa'adi, Hafiz and Firdausi, nor India such rulers as Babar, Akbar, Shah Jehan, Aurangzeb, Nur Jehan and Faizi, had not the Crescent flown over their myriad cities. The Taj Mahal may not have been built to be a pearl in the vast ocean of human achievements, bright with the lustre of untold pain and sufferings—a testimony to the undying love of an Emperor for his Queen, nor Fatehpur Sikri existed to show “the petrification of a passing mood in Akbar’s strange nature”—that romance in stone! Perhaps the toiling and teeming millions of India would still be regarding the millions of idols as their true gods, and the curse of that abomination—untouchability—may still be heavy on the whole country. Democracy may not have been there, as it was, and is, so relentlessly opposed to the caste-system, that illegitimate offspring of Brahminism!

Come with me, and I shall show you some of the patches of the dark Continent which still bear decaying traces of the once powerful Muslim Confederacy. In Nigeria, in Ashanti, in Kenya, in Tanganyika, on the outskirts of the Sudan and the Sahara, and in some parts of the Upper Congo, you will see *Amirates* of Berbers and negroes professing Islam. The inhabitants of these territories are far in advance of the barbarous savages who are their neighbours. They are law-abiding, have a high sense of morality, and, in short, are better civilized than the primitive tribes whose status is almost that of the palaeolithic and neolithic man. The European colonizers have very little difficulty in administering these territories, for they find some form or type of government already in existence. The civil law is almost always left intact; only the criminal and the military laws are replaced. Ask any missionary, and he will tell you that in these districts he has practically no success, as these tribes had been reclaimed centuries before they saw a white man. The Arab

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traders—especially during the “Augustan age of Islam”—had carried to many of them the message of peace and civilization ; not as a precursor of economic and political exploitation, as is the case to-day, but in all sincerity and purity, as a duty which the Arabian Prophet had asked them to perform.

But, it may be asked what have these achievements of the early Muslims to do with Islam ? The answer is, everything. In pre-Islamic days Arabia was sunk in the depths of ignorance and vice ; and in its Islamic stage of vitality it set enthroned proudly on the heights of progress and culture. The cause of this remarkable and revolutionary change was the teaching of Islam, whose Founder once said, “ The ink of the scholar is more precious than the blood of the martyr.” As one modern writer puts it :—

“ Would the boat of human knowledge have been stranded if there had been for it the hospitality of Arab waters ? Yes ; one has to thank the Arabs, who salvaged the precious cargo (Greek literature and philosophy) and guarded it for five hundred years. The Muslim Empire, when Muhammad had been dead only ninety years, extended from the Himalayas to the Pyrenees, and they determined, being proud, imaginative and ambitious, that their conquest should be of the *spirit* also.”

Thus we see that, but for Islam, mankind might still be groping in the darkness of ignorance and barbarism, since the flame of the lamp of knowledge had buried very low indeed. It was flickering, and about to go out. There would have been no Renaissance in Europe, no light to dispel the gloom of the Dark Ages. To the Saracens, then, belongs the credit not only of having kept high and burning the torch of culture and civilization, but also of having added immeasurably to the sum-total of human happiness and knowledge. Their work has not been transitory but permanent and enduring.

And now I turn to the counterpart of the question, namely, “ Does Modern Civilization, in its wholesome aspects, owe its existence to Christianity as such ? But

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before we touch that question I should like to call your attention to a very important fact of history, namely, that Christianity was born in the midst of a great civilization, however cankered that civilization might have been, and instead of reviving, it expedited its collapse, and remained, in the words of Johnson, the Queen of the Night for several centuries that followed; and that it was not until the warmth of the Muslim civilization had reanimated the whole world, from the extreme East to the extreme West, that Christian nations showed any signs of civilized life. This is not the time nor the place to discuss how Islamic civilization helped the growth of modern European civilization. To those desirous of investigating this subject, Draper's "Intellectual Development of Europe" will be of great assistance. Neither, in telling you the attitude of Christianity towards the progress of modern civilization, am I going to give details of that gruesome story, of which every student of Mediæval History knows enough. I will simply give you the conclusions arrived at by Lecky after his exhaustive discussion of the subject.

He says until the seventeenth century every mental disposition which philosophy pronounces to be essential to a legitimate research was almost uniformly branded as a sin, and a large proportion of the most deadly intellectual vices were deliberately inculcated as virtues. It was a sin to doubt the opinions that had been instilled in childhood before they had been examined. It was a virtue to hold them with unwavering, unreasoning credulity. It was a sin to notice and develop to its full consequence every objection to these opinions; it was a virtue to stifle every objection as a suggestion of the devil. It was sinful to study with equal attention, and with an indifferent mind, the writings on both sides, sinful to resolve to follow the light of evidence wherever it might lead; sinful to remain poised in doubt between conflicting

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opinions ; sinful to give only a qualified assent to indecisive arguments, sinful even to recognise the moral or intellectual excellence of opponents. *In a word, there is scarcely a disposition that marks the love of abstract truth, and scarcely a rule which reason teaches as essential for its attainment, that theologians did not for centuries stigmatise as offensive to the Almighty.* By destroying every book that could generate discussion, by diffusing through every field of knowledge a spirit of boundless credulity, and, above all, by persecuting with atrocious cruelty those who differed from their opinions, they succeeded for a long period in almost arresting the action of the European mind, and in persuading men that a critical, impartial and enquiring spirit was the worst form of vice. From this frightful condition Europe was at last rescued by the *intellectual influences* that produced the Reformation, by the teachings of those philosophers who clearly laid down the conditions of enquiry, and by those bold innovators who, with the stake of Bruno and Vanini before their eyes, dared to challenge directly the doctrines of the past. By these means the spirit of philosophy, or of truth, became prominent, and the spirit of dogmatism, with all its consequences, was proportionately weakened.

As long as the latter spirit possessed an indisputable ascendancy, persecution was ruthless, universal and unquestioned. When the former spirit became more formidable, the language of anathema became less peremptory. Exceptions and qualifications were introduced ; the full meaning of words was no longer realised ; persecution became languid ; it changed its character ; it exhibited itself rather in a general tendency than in overt acts ; it grew apologetic, timid, and evasive. In one age the persecutor burned the heretic ; in another he crushed him with penal laws ; in a third he withdrew from him places of emolument and dignity ; in a fourth, he subjected him to the excommunication of society. Each stage of

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advancing toleration marks a stage of decline of the spirit of dogmatism, and of the increase of the spirit of truth."¹

It is evident from these findings of Lecky that the credit of Modern Civilization, in its best aspects, can by no means be ascribed to Christianity. It is not because of Christianity, we may say, but in spite of it, that present-day civilization exists. But the reverse is the case with Islamic Civilization. It grew and thrived simultaneously with the religion, that gave it birth and deteriorated only when that religion became unprogressive and inactive.

Now the question arises—why did Islam lose its vitality and energy? and the answer is not far to seek. A religion may be enduring and living from age to age, but a nation cannot live in that way. A nation, like any other organism in creation, has its birth, youth and death. A religion, if it is to be an enduring one, has to shift from nation to nation for its expression. So long as Islam continued doing this, it remained active and alive. The moment it ceased to expand, it showed signs of lethargy. It will be remembered that it was the conversion of the virile German races that enabled Christianity to see the glory of the present civilization. It was they who protested against the original Christianity and, bringing about a reformation in the mental outlook of people, called into being the elements of daring speculation, bold research and all the impulses that go to make the life of present civilization. It was the Pilgrim Fathers that founded modern America. Thus the inclusion of new nations is a matter of vital importance in the life of a religion, and after a long period of oblivion this truth has once more been realised by the slumbering Muslim nations. They are once more awake and determined to expand. That a community groaning under a double bondage, as are the Indian Muslims, should establish missions in various countries of the West, shows the depth of that

¹ Rationalism in Europe.

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determination, and the extent of the sacrifice which they are prepared to make for this purpose. Let Christians ask themselves if they can show a similar determination in the matters of their religion, and if they can be equally optimistic about the future of their faith. So what strikes one at first sight is the staying power of the Islamic Faith. This is really remarkable. Speaking of this Carlyle says—and rightly: “Above all things it is a religion heartily *believed*. These Arabs believe their religion and try to live by it! No Christians, since the early ages, have ever stood by their faith as the Moslems do by theirs—believing it wholly, fronting time with it, and eternity with it. *Allaho Akbar, Islam*, sounds through the souls and whole daily existence of these dusky millions.” Carlyle may or may not be regarded as a just writer and a fair critic, yet this opinion of his has not been challenged by any other writer, however ruthless his attitude towards Islam as a religion. But when I say this I should not be taken to mean that Jesus was a pretender, or that his religion was false. Far be that from me. As a Muslim it is my creed that the mission of Jesus was Divine, and that he preached nothing which had not the Divine sanction behind it. But to a Muslim, the teachings of Jesus and the teachings of the Christian Church are two different things. It is not the real Jesus that sways the minds of Christians, but a Jesus of their own creation. Here lies the Muslim reply to the question: “Why Christianity has not the same hold upon its votaries as Islam has upon its followers.” But, one asks perhaps, what are the defects in Christianity, as it stands to-day? “And what are the good points in Islam that bring these advantages. The reply is that Christianity, as it stands to-day, does not fulfil the demands of a true religion. A religion, to be true to its name and function, should give a synthetic and understandable solution to the different problems that confront our existence. I assert that Islam does present

to a man and a nation such solutions, whereas Christianity does not. Christianity simply divides a thing, it tries to define. I will give you some examples to make my meaning clear.

Let us begin with the question of God. To explain the opponent chaos in the diversity of creation there ought to be an assertion of its Unity. Islam proclaims this Unity with all the force at its command. The Qur-án says :—

“ Say : He, Allah, is One. Allah is He on Whom all depend He begets not, nor is He begotten. And none is like Him.”

But Christianity, by dividing the Godhead into three divisions, makes a mystical question still more mystical. No human being will ever say, with his hands on his breast, that the doctrine of the Trinity has ever appealed to his brain and heart.

Take again the question of matter and soul. Christianity pronounces them to be two antagonistic forces, irreconcilably at war with one another. The one has to be crushed and killed in order to enable the other to live. Surely, such a view of things cannot appeal to an optimistic mind, synthetically inclined. With Islam, on the other hand, the ideal and the real are not two opposing forces. The life of the ideal consists not in a total breach with the real, which would tend to shatter the organic wholeness of life into painful oppositions, but in the perpetual endeavour of the ideal to appropriate the real, with a view eventually to absorbing it, converting it into itself, and illuminating its whole being. In other words, to Islam matter is spirit, realising itself in space and time. The Qur-án says :

“ To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and in the earth, and He is Mighty and the Wise.” And again : “ He has made subservient to you whatever is in the heavens and in the earth.”

It is the appreciation of this mighty truth in Islam that made the great German philosopher, Neitzsche, cry out in pious indignation :

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“ If Islam despises Christianity, it is justified a thousand times over for Islam presupposes man.”—*Antichrist*.

(*To be continued.*)

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BY THE LATE KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

The Holy Qur-án has declared Allah, and Allah alone, to be the sole ideal of man. He alone should be the object of man's existence, Him alone should man obey, and to Him alone should he turn; hence the Holy Prophet's comment upon the well-known formula of the Islamic Faith *La ilaha illa Allah*—“ My ideal and the object of my devotion is no other being than Allah.”

In order to raise man to this plane of unity, the Qur-án has focussed all its teachings upon this word “ Allah ; ” and having described the ninety and nine Attributes of Allah, has determined human conduct by the standards set up by them, that is to say, has called those actions which are in keeping with the Divine Attributes good or virtuous ; and those, which are not, bad or vicious. Further, it has formulated commandments and prohibitions in accordance with these “ Beautiful Names ” or Attributes, and actions which create in us characteristics akin to these beautiful names are termed commandments (*Awámir*), and actions by the avoidance of which we come under the shadow of His negative qualities are styled prohibitions (*Nawáhi*). In other words, the Qur-ánic injunctions are but the corollaries following from these beautiful names ; and forms of worship and articles of Faith alike are formulated in harmony with them. These injunctions have, in certain instances, actually been demonstrated by the phenomena of nature ; while the

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Qur-án has made mention of persons who by virtue of observance of the commandments and prohibitions, or in other words, by making their lives in accord with the spirit of these beautiful names, have become the favoured ones of God ; and has branded others, who did not do likewise as *Maghzubeen* and *Zallin*.

This is the gist of the Qur-ánic teachings—namely, Allah, the Names of Allah ; worship in accordance with these names ; commandments and prohibitions, the followers of which are known respectively as the people of the straight path (*Sirátul Mustaqim*)—the favoured ones ; while those who do not follow are called the accursed or erring ones. In short, Allah is all in all which is the significance of the saying, that the whole of the Qur-án is embodied in *Sura Fatiha* ; and the whole of the Sura is encompassed in the word Allah. All these are the manifestations of the One and Only Supreme Being ; and the whole universe is nothing but the reflections of the Divine Names. Consequently, if the believer in the Unity of God becomes successful both in this world and the next, it is exactly in the fitness of things mentioned above. The tradition “He who declared ‘there is no god besides Allah’ shall enter paradise” is nothing but plain truth. This declaration, however, should not be lip-profession—a verbal repetition of a familiar formula.

Nearly all these Beautiful Names pertain to those morals and ethical virtues the acquisition of which is certainly within the range of human possibility, and we can even make manifest those names which have been styled by certain mystics the “qualities of the essence” (*Asmá-i-Zát*). It goes without saying, that we can comprehend those objects only which are within the compass of our knowledge. Whatever the essence of God may be, we may apprehend only that aspect of it of which we can form some concept in our mind. We can never realise

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the true nature and significance of the Compassionate, the Forgiving, the Concealer (of defects), the Admirer (of goodness), the All-Powerful and the Mighty Being, unless the attributes of compassion, forgiveness, concealment of defects, gratitude, power and might, be inherent in our own nature ; but this does not necessarily imply that man has conceived of God in his own image and clothed Him in his own attributes. Had such been the case others too could have been the recipients of this revelation, and wise men in all ages might have evolved these ideas by their own personal efforts. Certainly an illiterate Arab, such as was the Holy Prophet, could never of himself have attempted to unravel the mysteries of Divinity. The explanation is, however, that God manifests Himself according to the receiving capacity of the human intellect, and reveals Himself only so far as it is possible for man to grasp the beauties of His nature ; and this fact is amply borne out by those of our own nature. Everything in nature is pregnant with numerous potentialities ; but we understand an object only so far as our own intellect is capable of doing so, from which it follows that our conception of a thing does not necessarily exhaust its contents. A particular conception is nothing but a mirror of our own capabilities and the same is the case with the Divine Attributes. We cannot comprehend the Deity ; and we can only apprehend His Attributes to a certain extent. This is why the Fashioner of human nature reposed therein certain faculties and revealed Himself in conformity with them. In other words, He bestowed upon us the potentiality of acquiring for ourselves certain aspects of His Attributes, and then set His own Being before us as the model to be copied ; and made Himself our ideal in order to enable us to try to give perfection to ourselves, and the tradition " God created man in His own image " points to the truth expressed herein.

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With these facts in view, one can readily understand how necessary is belief in the Unity of God for the perfection of the human ego. We have been endowed with potentialities which are in harmony with the Divine Attributes and by turning them into actualities we can imbue ourselves with high ethical virtues. The Divine Attributes are, so to say, the criterion of our morals, and ethical virtues, therefore, are but another name for those feelings and emotions of ours which become saturated with the Divine Attributes; vice being the outcome of those passions which are contrary to them. Consequently, a belief in the Unity of God is tantamount to modelling ourselves in the likeness of the Divine Attributes without the alloy of any foreign element. Such a process is, it need hardly be pointed out, very far from child's play; but if a man succeeds in his attempt he will have become clothed in Angelic qualities.

By pondering over the Attributes of God, as depicted in the Qur-án, we can realise that human society can reach the acme of perfection, if its individual members consciously and conscientiously endeavour to display the characteristics of the Divine Attributes in the performance of their respective duties. Then the kingdom of God will have become established on earth and His Will be done here, as it is in Heavens. This was the real meaning of Jesus' prayer known as the Lord's prayer—and it can be fulfilled only in this manner. This is no mere idealism; it was actually realised by the Companions of the Holy Prophet in Arabia.

Let us then, by way of example, apply this doctrine of the Divine Unity to the affairs of the State. If the earthly potentates of to-day were, in sincerity, to believe in the Oneness of God, all vexed political problems and international complications would be solved almost before they had arisen. Muslims regard their kings as the 'shadows of God;' and if a kingdom or a king were faith-

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fully to seek to display the characteristics of the Divine Attributes in his dealings with others, the permanence of his sovereignty would thereby be guaranteed beyond a doubt. All these Divine Attributes are comprised in the Attributes mentioned in *Sura Fatiha*, that is to say *Rabb*, *Rahman*, *Raheem* and *Malik-i-Yaum-id-Deen*; and it is for this reason that these Attributes are known as basic Attributes. In the government of the *Rabb-il-Alameen*, so far as the implication of this phrase goes, there is no distinction of nationality, country, language or colour. His gifts—the gifts of Providence—are available for all. If He is worshipped by His votaries with a uniform type of love, it is because His gifts are lavished upon all without discrimination. The Being of God is certainly different from the being of man; but His impartiality has made His government equally acceptable to all. Since His rule over us is for our own benefit, certainly it should not be insuperably difficult for a mundane government to set to work to imitate these Divine morals. In theory, be it noted, every government expressly states that it rules only for the good of its subjects; but this is of course merely a diplomatic cliché which, by now, deceives nobody. Had the ruling nations adopted the characteristics of the *Rabb-il-Alameen* and done away with the distinctions existing between them and their subjects, the Home-Rule problem, for example, would have been solved and forgotten long ago. Then the second step would be to establish various useful institutions, such as schools and colleges and to set on foot various industrial concerns without any request on the part of the subjects without imposing any additional taxation on them in order to develop their potentialities and employ to the best advantage the natural resources and the hidden treasures of the dominions. Of course, a government that seeks thus to help its subjects will have to defray the cost from the public exchequer, yet in doing so it can, in a certain

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manner, impart the tone of *Rahmānīyat* (compassion) to its dealings with its subjects. *Rahmānīyat* means to do good to somebody without any idea of a return. Now, if a government, after collecting its revenue, expends it for the good of its subjects by providing them with various benefits, it does thereby impart a tone of *Rahmānīyat* (compassion) to its attitude towards them but the crux of the problem is that the government of to-day, to whatever creed or race it may belong, carries on its business in its own self-interest, the armies of the modern governments unlike those of the second Caliph of Islam, do not conquer other countries in order to free their inhabitants from the yoke of bondage and rule them for their own benefit. To-day the ruling nations carry on their government from the business man's point of view. To begin with, they make sure of the fact that the revenue of a certain subject country far exceeds its expenditure, and see to it that the major portion of that revenue shall be utilised for the good of the ruling nation rather than the ruled, for nobody cares to govern a country merely for the good of that country and its inhabitants. It would not be "business."

In accordance with His Attribute of *Rahīmīyat*, i.e., mercy, God grants towards tenfold or an hundredfold to the doer of a virtuous act. Let any foreign administration to-day act faithfully on this principle and it would win, forthwith, the hearts of its subjects. But the ruling powers of to-day contemplate no such proceeding. Even if they were to show a certain generosity in return for services rendered by their subjects, that generosity would be neither particularly creditable nor praiseworthy. The salaries drawn by officials in various departments of state are not commensurate with the amount of work done and it is, to say the least, an unfortunate circumstance that the Western criterion of value should differ utterly from the Eastern. An Asiatic sees the Grace of God

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personified in his rulers, and naturally expects to find gifts and favours flowing from them freely and reaching everybody whether deserving or not. This is no idle talk. Such is a traditional characteristic of Eastern monarchs, but the nations of the West, on the other hand, regard everything merely from the business point of view ; and since kings are, in the Eastern saying, the “ shadows of God ” on the earth, and even an ordinary individual can be called a “ perfect man ” when he possesses the characteristics of the Divine Attributes, this “ business ” spirit of the West can never make any government popular amongst its subjects.

Lastly, the Attribute of *Málikiyyat* (Sovereignty) demands that the law of retribution should work consistently and that each man be rewarded and punished according to his deeds. In this particular respect the law of compensation remains always in force, but the process adopted in punishments is as follows : If a man commits a sin, which violates the rights of another, punishment follows necessarily ; but if it is against God Himself, His government—let us call it the government of Providence—deals mercifully with the culprit. This character of *Málikiyyat* would appear in earthly governments if they could bring themselves to pardon those persons who commit an offence against the state. Forgiveness of this sort would necessarily have to be kept within proper limits as, for instance, when the motive of such offences is to uproot the government itself, the door of mercy must needs be closed.

But, in my opinion, modern governments lack the first three qualities altogether ; though they may possess the fourth characteristic to some extent and in some form ; but there is yet another aspect of this Attribute of *Málikiyyat* which if borne in mind by mundane rulers would be conducive alike to their popularity, their well-being and their permanence. If the relation

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between ruler and ruled is that of *málikiyyat* (possession) then the ruler should punish his subjects—chasten them, with a view to their ultimate good ; but no master would care to see his servant crushed under such a weight of punishment as would result in loss of service to himself ; in other words, *Málík-i-Yaum-id-Deen*'s punishment is not vindictive, like the punishment or torture inflicted by man upon his enemy. On the other hand, a master may punish his servant for that servant's own good ; so that he may make amends for past shortcomings and be a better servant in the future. If officials of state to-day were to give up their vindictive attitude in dealing with those guilty of crimes against the government and refrain from inflicting such punishments upon them as will eventually kill them, and instead punish these offenders for their own good and that of the government, so that after serving their time they may become useful citizens of the state, then even a foreign government can become popular with its subjects and deserving of popularity.

These things pertain to our theme only so far as all the individuals concerned adopt the doctrine of the Divine Unity and having done so, try to show, in their conduct, the Divine Attributes as depicted in the Qur-án, for, if such were the cases, this world would soon be free of all its troubles and inasmuch as governments and kingdoms are necessary elements in the fabric of society, so also the ministers and officials of such governments and kingdoms should strive continually to follow in the footsteps of belief in the Divine Unity ; and never in the world's history has there been greater or more urgent need for such belief than there is to-day. Since the difference between the ruler and the ruled is generally a difference of race and therefore every action of the former breeds suspicion in the latter. To-day India also is in the midst of great unrest ; but in a country containing many diverse nationalities and languages it is comparatively easy for

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a foreign government to make itself popular, provided its officials display in their conduct even the faintest signs of mercy, compassion and grace, *i.e.*, the Divine characteristics of *Rabubiyyat*, *Rahimiyyat* and *Rahmāniyyat*.

And apart from the rulers, subject races too can learn much from these verses, and by pondering over the Beautiful Names under which commands and prohibitions are set out in the Holy Qur-ān. In this respect, also, the Qur-ān excels all the other revealed books, for, whereas the other inspired writings are, practically speaking, silent on this point, here it is made ended that if any government desires to create the spirit of loyalty amongst its Muslim subjects, it must seek the aid of Qur-ānic teaching. God expresses His dislike and abhorrence of transgression, strife, treason, rebellion, breach of the law, and violation of the right of others and the Qur-ān while favouring national or independent rule has also made obedience to the established government, even if it be alien, obligatory upon Muslims. The Book says: "Obey God and obey the Prophet and those in authority amongst you." It is certainly difficult to find a parallel to this injunction in any other book. Opinions may and do vary as to the real meaning of the phrase "in authority amongst you." Some say the word *minkum* (from amongst you) means Muslim rulers; others are of opinion that it refers to any who may be in power whether Muslim or non-Muslim. Some say that we should obey only the Muslim rulers; and others that we must obey our rulers, whoever they may be. But even if we accept the same view, we should remember that the reverse of any logical proposition is not necessarily right. Hence, if *minkum* refers to Muslim rulers alone, it does not thereby logically follow that non-Muslim rulers are not to be obeyed. A religion which aspires to universality and whose Book claims to be the final expression of the Will of God, cannot possibly order its votaries to put aside their Islamic

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principles of life when living under a non-Muslim government.

The Qur-án has, after all, prohibited Muslims from transgression, rebellion and breach of the law. How, then, can it be possible that these prohibitions should be enforced only in Muslim governments, and become abrogated under non-Muslim rule? The Qur-án has nowhere made any such distinction ; and moreover, it clearly states that the Christians and the Jews will abide till the last doom ; likewise Muslims and non-Muslims should stand side by side till the end of the world. No particular nation has been guaranteed rule and sovereignty exclusively. Some are fit to rule, some are not. The Qur-ánic verse, "We will see, who of you possesses virtuous deeds" refers to this very truth. God grants the sovereignty to that nation, which, whatever may be its creed, makes itself fit for rule. In reality that nation is to this extent a believer in the *Málik-ul-Mulk* or the "possessor of kingdom." When, however, that nation falls a prey to luxury and general decadence and forgets its high principles, then it prepares the way for the fulfilment of the latter part of the verse : "And Thou takest away the kingdom from whomsoever Thou wilt." How can the Book, which inculcates these principles and the religion whose very name means Peace, and which honours peace so much that it has bidden its followers to say "Peace be unto you" whenever they meet one another—how can such a religion, I repeat, inculcate rebellion? So to suppose this betrays not only ignorance of Islamic teachings, but implies a libel on the very name of Islam.

This *ulil amr-e-minkum* or "those in authority among you" may include both the Muslim and the non-Muslim governments. If the officials of an alien government were to abolish racial distinctions, they would eventually become one with the subject races, no matter what religion they might profess. Governments which adopt the

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policy of making sharp distinction between their nationality and that of the governed, which treat the individuals of their race in a way quite different from that of the subject race, prove by their action that they are not to be included in *minkum*. After long pondering over this verse I have come to the conclusion that the word *minkum* is so wide in its range as to admit of no distinction of race or creed. For, according to the teachings of Islam, sovereignty also has a creed of its own and that creed is justice and equity, and the government which does not follow this particular creed cannot be included in *minkum*.

MUSLIMS IN YUGOSLAVIA¹

BY SMAIL AGA CEMALOVICH

(Continued from Vol. XXIII, p. 358.)

Scholars who have completed their studies at this *medressa* are qualified as state *imam-maticars* (priest-recorders). These *imams* are distributed among the *imamats*, which are formed on a territorial basis (about three hundred houses to each) and among their duties are not only the carrying out of the usual religious services in and outside the mosques, but also the proper ordering of their *imamat*, that is to say, the registration of births and deaths among the Muslim population. This work is entirely new for the Muslims, whereas other religious faiths had similar duties even in the times of Turkish rule. In the territory of the Sarajevo Ulama-medjlissa, which includes 130,669 houses and 753,126 Muslims, there are in all 1,726 religious functionaries, of whom 312 are *imam-maticars*. In this territory there are 1,043 *mektebs* (schools for the study of Qur-án) which instruct 53,804 children. There are 1,120 mosques. In the territory of

¹ Courtesy, *South Slav Herald*, Belgrade.

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the Skoplje Ulama-medjlissa, where, according to the 1931 census, there are 841,636 Muslims in 136,113 houses, there are 1,131 mosques and 419 *imam-maticars*.

In addition to this is appointed, for the religious needs of the army to each division a special military *imam*, who holds the rank of captain and is paid by the state, and in the Ministry of War there is a senior military *imam* as "referent." As well as the *medressas* there is in Sarajevo a *shariat* school (gymnasium) of eight classes, where, in addition to the usual instruction given at a gymnasium, the Arabic language is taught, as well as advanced theology. Qualified pupils of this school may undertake further studies at any State University.

In Sarajevo there has been, for close on forty years, a *shariat* school for *shariat* judges. Of these *shariat* judges there are in the Kingdom one hundred and eighty-five. In Skoplje, after the liberation in 1918, the King Alexander I Great Medressa was founded, having eight classes. This is equal to any full gymnasium in the country and is directed by the state. In the Belgrade University there is a chair of Eastern Philology and *shariat* law. In marriages and similar matters, the Muslim *shariat* law is fully recognized, the only instance where this is so in Europe.

All religious functionaries are paid out of the budget of the Islamic Religious Union, to which the state gives a yearly subsidy of 15,102,000 dinars. Besides this source of income the Religious Union controls the revenue from the religious tax paid by Muslims (10 per cent. on the direct tax) and the income from *waqf* property the value of which can be reckoned at about a milliard of dinars.

The yearly income from *waqf* property is now at a minimum since it is reckoned on the value at which these properties stand to-day. This is because a great part of the property is in the form of land which is undeveloped and also because of bad administration. Thus the income of the Sarajevo *waqf* property amounts yearly to about

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11,275,133 dinars in all, while the income of the *waqf* in Skoplje is 11,662,477 dinars. The income of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian independent *waqf* is about 13,000,000 dinars and of the *waqf* in South Serbia, Montenegro and Novi Pazar, 3,500,000 dinars. In all the total income is 56,641,610 dinars, reckoning in the state subsidy. The administration of the *waqf* is situated in Sarajevo and Skoplje.

The Muslims, in almost every town, small town or city in Bosnia, Herzegovina, South Serbia and the Sanjak, are in an absolute or relative majority. In the villages they are employed in agriculture, stock-raising, tobacco, opium and silk-worms culture and so forth, while in the towns they are employed in handicrafts and trade. They are also to be found in industry, especially dealing with timber, hides, textiles and in the metal trades and as goldsmiths. They have also their own printing press. They have also a few financial institutions, among which the most important is the Bank *Gairret*, which has a capital of 42,000,000 dinars. In Sarajevo there is an orphanage for male Muslim children, directed by the *waqf*. This orphanage is organized on the most modern lines and the children are brought up to learn trades and are educated. In Sarajevo there is also a school of artistic handicrafts, the first of its kind in the world, according to Dr. Arnold, Professor of London University. This school is exclusively Muslim. The Muslims have also many different cultural organizations, sport clubs, choral societies, humane societies, trade guides, anti-alcoholic societies, etc.

The cultural position of the Muslim Yugoslavs in Yugoslavia is closely bound up with the foundation and development of the cultural and educational society called *Gairret*. At the time of the foundation of *Gairret* in 1903 Muslims who had attended even a secondary school were very few while practically none had attended a high school. With the foundation of *Gairret* and its extension

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into all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina the cultural and educational position of the Muslims improved rapidly. Through *Gairet* and by its help the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Muslims soon acquired the character of a cultural people. The *Gairet* society is to-day a universal national movement including about 26,000 regular members. The *Gairet* society was first limited only to its cultural work, but with the appointment as secretary of the late Osman Djikic, the creator of the national *Gairet* political philosophy, the work of *Gairet* assumed an importance from the national point of view. From the year 1910 the society extended its aims and worked actively for the national enlightenment of the Muslim element. *Gairet* to-day controls in its nine boarding schools (*internats*) almost six hundred students of both sexes of secondary school standard, as well as about two hundred apprentices in its apprentice home. In addition to this, *Gairet* grants regular subsidies to secondary and high school students. There is also the special *Gairet* workshops for Muslim women: (Seamstresses, carpet-weavers, national embroiderers, etc.).

In all districts *Gairet* concerns itself with the instruction of illiterates and with domestic science schools. *Gairet* sends every year at its own expense some students to the famous Muslim Universities in Cairo and Algiers. As well as the *Gairet* in Sarajevo there is also the Belgrade *Gairet* which last year completed its students' home, in which about 150 Muslim students of both sexes studying at Belgrade University are housed.

Besides the *Gairet* there is also the Muslim National Friendly Society, *Uzdanica*, which controls boarding houses for the secondary schools in Sarajevo. As a result of this and similar work, we can now quote these statistics and give the total number of Muslims in professional or

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Government service in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia :

Lawyers	28
Doctors	67
Engineers	41
Professors	..	..	..	89
Judges	..	..	..	235
Teachers	..	..	..	128
Other Government Officials				1,578

Besides these there are also Muslims in the gendarmerie, financial and railway administrations both as officials and subordinates.

Under the present laws the way to any position in the hierarchy of State is open to any Muslim. To-day there is one Muslim President of a District Court (Kurbegovic), one State Prosecutor (Glavovic), one judge of the Court of Appeal (Skalic) and one State Councillor (Nuri-Hadjic).

Also from the year 1918 up to the present time Muslims have been received into all sections of the Yugoslav Army as officers and N. C. Os. in ever-increasing numbers. They have been entrusted with the most responsible positions. For example there are two Muslim officers in service with the General Staff. There is also a Muslim captain, Alija Kurtovic, in command of the town gendarmerie at Gaoko.

At the philosophical faculty of the University there is an Honorary Professor of Oriental Studies, Dr. Fehim Barjaktarovic, and the chair of the Sheriat Law is held by Dr. Mehmed Begovic. In Zagreb, Salih Ljubicic is a Professor of the High Pedagogical School.

From the year 1918 till now there has been in almost every cabinet at least one Minister of the Muslim faith and in 1924 there were three. Up to the present there have been ten ministers who were Muslims and some individuals have been Ministers several times. In the present Government there is one Muslim. Dr. Karamehmedovid, Minister without portfolio.

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From 1918 onwards Muslims have been taking an ever more active part in parliamentary life and have always had twenty or thirty of their own representatives. To-day there are eleven representatives in the National Parliament (Skupstina) and seven Senators in the Senate.

From the foregoing information it is easily concluded that the Muslims in Yugoslavia are taking their place as the most advanced Muslims in Europe, and that they have continued to progress in spite of the difficult general conditions throughout the entire world.

CORRESPONDENCE

ALDERSHOT.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

It is my earnest wish at the moment to embrace the Mohammedan Religion. I am at the moment a Member of the Church of England, but am entirely dissatisfied with various things in both the religion of the Church, and also of its other counterparts such as the Roman Catholic Church.

I would be extremely grateful if you would furnish me with particulars.

Yours truly,
P. B.

LONDON E. 2.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,

I am anxious to join up with your goodselves. Please tell me how I can proceed to be a brother in Faith.

Of course, I have been pro-Islamic for years.

Yours sincerely,
R. J. CLEMENTS.

12, VIOLET STREET,
NEW CASTLE.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,

Assalam-o-Alaikum.

It was with great pleasure that I read in the June issue of "The Islamic Review" of the conversion of Brother Musham of

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Gateshead. There are, alas, far too few English Muslims in this part of the country, and it is pleasing to find another so near at hand.

I suggest it may be possible when we have one or two more converts, to hold public meetings with the sanction of the Mosque Authorities.

For some months there has been a Buddhist Movement operating with some success, and this I believe, from Gateshead. So I think when Islam enters the field it will not be any too soon.

There is a large number of Indian Muslims here from Bombay, but they speak very little English. However, I made myself understood to one, and he was very surprised when I recited the "Salat" in Arabic. His name is Ghulam Muhammad, and he is now a regular and welcome visitor to our home.

My wife, a recent convert, as you will recall, is making good progress with the Prayers.

May the Blessings of Allah further your good work.

Yours fraternally,
OMAR FISHER.

CHARGES AGAINST THE PROPHET OF ISLAM REFUTED

BY MUHAMMAD ALI AL-HAJ SALMIN

It is well that all should know how Christendom has treated and is still treating Islam and its Prophet. If I were to begin at the beginning and recount the whole story of Christianity's vituperative propaganda against Islam, together with its concoction and distortion of facts for the belittlement of Islam in the eyes of the world, I should fill volumes and more volumes. In spite of his so-called Orientalism and Oriental studies, all that the average Christian's conception of Islam is of a religion of horror, cruelty and intolerance in public life, of polygamy, easy divorce, and licentiousness in private,—and this because through religious instruction imparted in schools and sermons broadcast from pulpit, press and platform, Christian teachers and ministers have all along been telling their fold that Islam is not just than this lest the sheep be tempted to stray into the dens of the wolves. Even in the field of history, when Christian writers take up the pen to write Muslim History, they twist historical events to suit their own dishonest purpose, and, not content with mere distortion of facts, they brazenly draw con-

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clusions, however wrong and remote they may be, from the facts so disturbed and pass them on as the result of scientific investigation and scholarly research. We should not be justified in blaming or upbraiding them if their allegations were to be attributed to ignorance, but such is not the case, for with full cognizance of the truth they deliberately conceal it, or present it in such a way as to make of Islam a horror, and of its Prophet a sham leader and a selfish man. The duty of a historian is only to record events faithfully, not to pass judgment on them, or to find the whys and wherefores of this one or that. The right to pass judgment on an event and to criticise it in the light of facts and the principles of ethics is that of the philosopher, and the moralist ; but these self-styled historians have given whatever reasons and causes have appealed to them for events Islamic, for alas ! there is hardly a European writer who is not biased, or who has been faithful in recording Muslim events, nay, in many instances, these writers have drawn on their invention as best might serve their purpose, and have dressed up the results in the disguise of real historical events.

Let me give an example. A certain Christian writer says that the Prophet of Islam had a pet pigeon, which he trained so that it would come and sit on his shoulder when called, and pick the grain from his ear. This the Prophet would do, according to this writer, to deceive people into believing that the angel in the form of the bird was coming to him to reveal the word of God ! It would appear at first sight that the author has at least taken this alleged occurrence from some reliable source, and afterwards, it may be, added his own opinion on the subject, but the truth is that there is no event whatsoever of this nature in the life of the Holy Prophet. What seems to have happened is that there was in the author's mind the event of the Holy Ghost coming to Jesus in the form of a dove. He thought that some similar phenome-

non must have happened to our Prophet, but inasmuch as he believed our Prophet to be a false prophet he attempted to prove him so by introducing a purely imaginary story about the pet bird and its training.

It is lamentable to see men of education taking events from the life of one person and fathering them on to another, adding, at the same time, their own fabrication so as to paint the latter in the blackest lines. The mischief fulfils its purpose. Many readers are confused, and if any be non-Muslim, they are, as often as not convinced. Thus the ball is set rolling and another writer of the same kidney will quote such fictions by way of authority, because they will believe anything that goes against Islam and its Prophet. All sense of fairplay is forgotten when they write about Islam. I have given one instance of this, but here is another.

A Christian writer says that the Prophet was subject to fits of epilepsy, and that each time he had an attack he would pretend that he was receiving revelation. Now there could be nothing more absurd than such an allegation because this able author, in his zeal to defame the Prophet, has written something which neither external facts nor medical opinion can support. He has no authority to cite in this contention. Had the Prophet been a victim of epilepsy, it must soon have been found out by the Quraish who were his enemies, and they would have eagerly utilised it as a weapon to put an end to him and his preachings. History tells us that the Arabs did all in their power to end his career, but even to them it never occurred to frame this particular charge. And why? because they knew that it was not a fact and would not be worth the attempt. As to epileptic fits, Ostler in his *Practice of Medicine* writes :

After the attack the patient may be dazed a few seconds and perform certain automatic actions which may seem to be rotational. As mentioned, unpressing is a common action, but all sorts of odd actions may be performed.

None of these symptoms could ever be traced in the Prophet. Epileptic fits are the results of a sick brain, the victim of which becomes irritable, cowardly, irresolute, exhausted and dull, suffering indeed from general debility. The colour of such a person becomes pale, and his blood

CHARGES AGAINST THE PROPHET

thin. Now whoever has read the life of the Prophet, even as told by Christian writers, cannot say that he suffered from any of these weaknesses of body and mind. On the contrary, the accounts of his life all go to show that he was brave, active, alert, sagacious and possessed of the best of health. If he had been subject to epileptic fits he could never have achieved, as he did, the greatest success of which a man is capable. To bring a social and moral revolution to a successful termination; to change the people's outlook of things from the bestial and depressing to the human and bright; to subdue a fighting, ignorant, wild, and idolatrous race by moral force and argument—all this cannot surely be the achievement of a diseased brain. All his words and deeds show that he possessed an extraordinary healthy brain, which could foster a complete scheme for the salvation of the world, and see it successfully worked out to the end. He was active, as no other man has ever been. His foresight can never be equalled. It is, therefore, inconceivable that he could be subject to the disease, from which he is alleged to have been suffering. The sayings and words of wisdom which came from him and the prophecies he uttered, seeing well-nigh miraculous fulfilment, some of them after the lapse of ages, can never have been the products of a sickly brain.

Now, allegations such as these are nothing but dishonest propaganda against the Prophet. One is inclined to think, as I have said, that the allegations themselves are the outcome of a diseased brain, for no sane person could have ever dreamed of writing such palpable untruths of such a Benefactor to Humanity. What is most painful in this connection is that these are not stray cases, but common amongst those entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel of love and charity !

I would, therefore, request all fair-minded people to take whatever these Christian writers say about Islam and its Prophet not only with just a pinch, but a big pinch of salt.

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.

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

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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.