

The *Islamic Review*

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

VOL. XXIV]

[No.

SAFAR, 1355 A.H.
MAY, 1936 A.C.

Annual Subscription 10s.

Single Copy

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Published by

THE WOKING MUSLIM MISSION AND LITERARY TRUST,
THE SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE,
WOKING, SURREY, ENGLAND.

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Telegrams { Mosque, Woking
 { ISLAM, LAHORE.

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 { 679.

THE WOKING MUSLIM MISSION AND LITERARY TRUST (REGD.)

(Incorporating the *Islamic Review*, The Muslim Literary Trust, The Bashier Muslim Library and The Risala Isha'at-i-Islam.)

Head Office :

AZEEZ MANZIL, Brandreth Road, Lahore, India.

Office in England :

THE MOSQUE, Woking, Surrey, England.

Bankers : LLOYDS BANK, LTD., Lahore, India. LLOYDS BANK, LTD., Woking.

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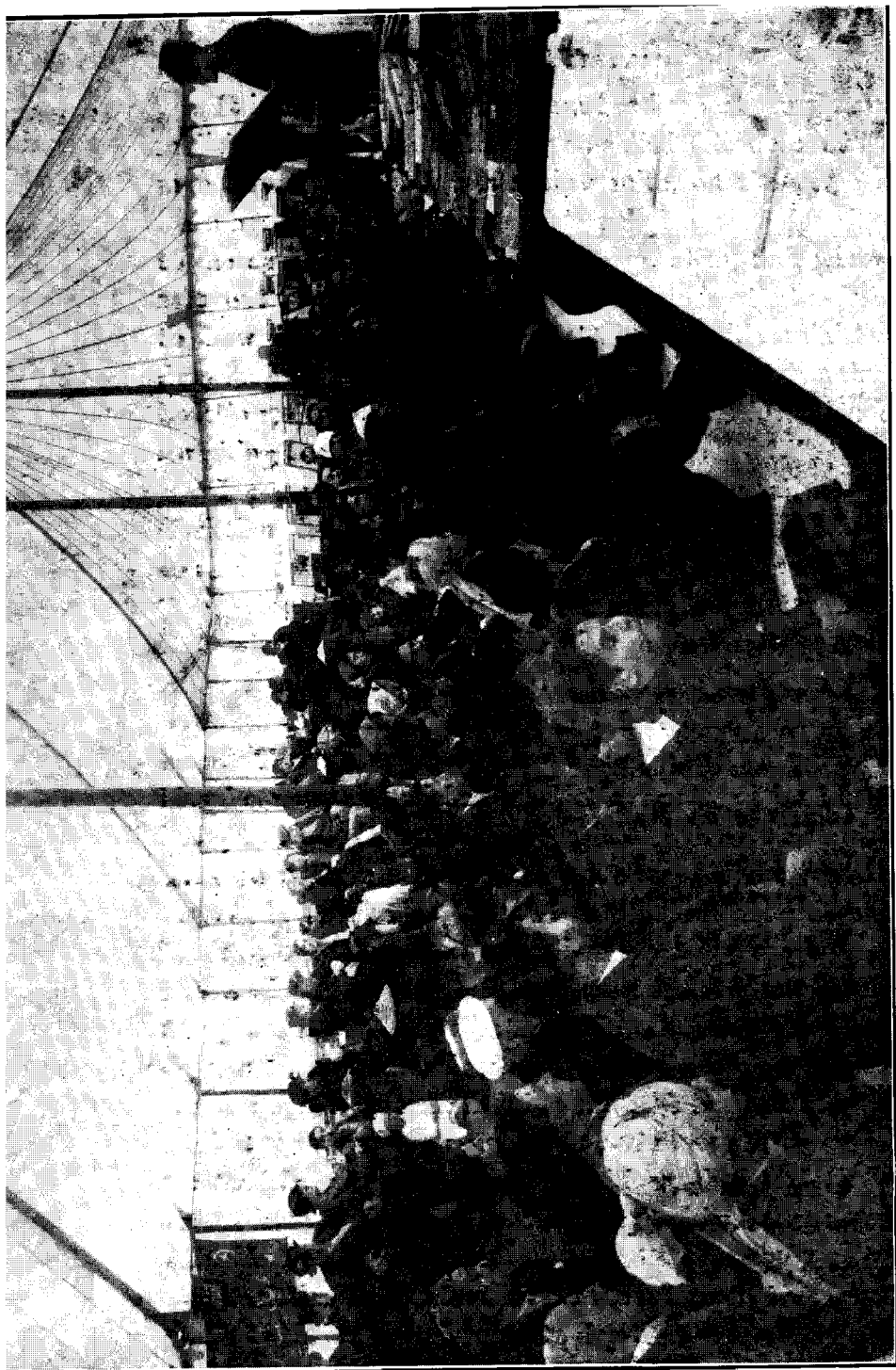
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U'D-UL-AZHIA, 1354 A.H., AT THE MOSQUE, WORKING.
Imam delivering the Sermon after the Prayers.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدًا خَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

VOL. XXIV.]

SAFAR 1355 A.H.

MAY 1936 A.C.

[No. 5.]

A DECLARATION

I, Barbara Robbins, of Boscombe Hants (Zubaida), do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Allah (God) alone ; that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger and Servant ; that I respect equally all Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc., and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

La Ilaha Il-Allah Muhammad-ur-Rasul Allah.

(There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger.)

(Sd.) BARBARA ROBBINS.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

ISLAM'S MESSAGE TO MANKIND

BY EDWIN FELSTEAD

It is a great pity, that Islam has been so grossly and maliciously misrepresented by so-called followers of the man Jesus. When I was a tiny mite, on the verge of learning, the "Muhammedan" religion was described to me as being some entirely foreign, alien, and wicked sect, out to cut the throats of all and sundry that refused to bow head to its leaders. The Christian ministers described Muhammad as "a debauched, tyrannical, boasting, domineering fanatic, with the set intention of smashing the followers of the Cross in the East."

I grew up as a young man boasting about his Christian heritage, his vaunted civilisation, and his condition of being "saved" for all Eternity, simply by "believing" a single sentence in a much re-written Bible. But, when I grew into manhood, there came over me a realisation that all was not well with the blustering, all-powerful civilisation into which I had been unwittingly born. There came the Great War—the most disgraceful, blasphemous, and wicked conflict ever staged by human beings. Now, I am naturally sensitive, and hate bloodshed with all my soul. I realised early in the War that the so-called ministers of the Christian Gospel—save Mark—were themselves actually supporting the conflict. *Not a single, solitary minister made the slightest attempt to cry out against the nightmare, in which 480,000 horses, dogs, cats, and other beasts were cruelly blown to pieces. Not a single clergyman dared to raise his hypocritical voice against the appalling murder of 9,000,000 men, or against the terrible wastage in steel, munitions, food and timber, or against the lunatic destruction of cities, towns, and valuable farming regions.*

Christianity boasts still that she is the one true way to God : but it is a cheerful sign to-day that many Europeans

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a valuable aid to progress, but it is more scientific than religious. It is only the latter when in its higher stages, and I regret to say that the majority of its followers remain in the lower stages. Religion is a way of understanding God, and seeks to raise others to a higher level. Mysticism, on the other hand, seeks to raise the individual above the common herd of humanity. And this is the point at which Islam is higher than all other methods. *Islam is not a religion alone. It is not a form of mysticism either. Islam is both religion and mysticism combined. It seeks not only to save others, but to definitely raise the individual towards God. And Islam is scientific, too. It takes into consideration the material side of being, even politics.*

Christianity, and indeed other religions, tend to segregate Religion from Politics. Religion, to them, is a thing of convenience only. People only believe in being "saved," because of a continual fear of a terrible Hell, which is the product of fanatical, unjust minds. Islam, I say again, teaches that politics cannot be separated from Religion, without disastrous results. There are people to-day who say that every 2,000 years there is born into the world a great teacher. Confucius came, then Jesus Christ, and then the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Almost 2,000 years have elapsed. We—a sick world—are waiting a new Coming. The Chinese Sage has given his message, good and holy as it is. Christ cannot say more than he said. His people refuse to follow him. Islam seems to be the only hope of a wicked world.

There is just one more point. Islam, contrary to what Christians say, does *not* blaspheme Jesus Christ. It *merely explains* the teachings of Jesus, by bringing forward another Man. Islam and true Christianity go hand-in-hand. For what goes to-day under the name of Christianity is nothing short of a terrible libel on the name of Jesus Christ.

ISLAM'S MESSAGE TO MANKIND

Turning to the daily life of the people of the modern world, what do we perceive? Europeans take their modern dress-modes as a matter-of-course, and they fail to see anything ludicrous in their clothing, for the simple reason that they are brought up in its midst. But the native of Arabia, when he arrives in London, must think he is gazing upon a terribly materialistic crowd of people! They wear a terribly unnatural dress. The women are not like women ought to be, but hideously-clad, overslimmed relics of human beings. Food is boiled until it has lost its goodness; rank, canned, stale meat is eaten daily by millions, and pickles and other harmful things are consumed with an indifference that is nothing short of amazing.

What is the root-cause of this evil? It is true that Muhammedans are now wearing European clothing together with native attire, but this is brought about by necessity, and not by choice. European civilisation is insufficient. Something else is wanted, and wanted very badly to-day. Muslims emphatically disagree with the assertion that "politics and economics must be kept apart from religious life." This saying is responsible for the appalling state of the world to-day, and it is clear that this terrible state is the outcome of only one machine—*European, or Western civilization*. Christians retort, "And what indeed has Islam given the world?" The answer to that impudent question is simple. Islam has given to the world an individuality, the life of a unique Man, unique in that the Prophet was so simple, so intensely zealous, so selfless. Islam is the *only* religious system that does away with vestments, images, racial barriers and class, and which offers an economic system so simple that a child can follow it. Islam is the only religion that places the sexes in their rightful positions, to the good of both, and to the detriment of neither. Islam, in short, brings universal peace when all other systems have failed.

ISLAM'S MESSAGE TO MANKIND

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İD-UL-AZHA (1354 A.H.) SERMON

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

Allah (God) is the Greatest. Allah is the Greatest. Nothing deserves to be worshipped except Allah; and Allah is the Greatest; Allah is the Greatest, and unto Allah is due praise. I bear witness that nothing deserves to be worshipped except Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Apostle. Now I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed Devil, and begin in the name of Allah, the Beneficent and Merciful. And to every nation We appointed acts of devotion that they may mention the name of Allah on what He has given them of the cattle quadrupeds; so your God is One God, therefore to Him should you submit, and give good news to the humble. (To) those whose hearts tremble when Allah is mentioned, and those who are patient under that which afflicts them, and those who keep up Prayer and spend (benevolently) out of what we have given them. And (as for) the camels, we have made them of the signs of the religion of Allah for you; for you therein there is much good; therefore mention the name of Allah on them as they stand in a row, then when they fall down 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 Allah their flesh nor their blood, but to Him is acceptable the guarding (against evil) on your part; thus has He made them subservient to you, that you may magnify Allah because He has guided you aright; and give good news to those who do good (to others)."¹

As you know, this gathering of ours is a replica of the world-gathering of Muslims about this time at Mecca on the occasion of the *Hajj*, or Pilgrimage, which every Muslim, man or woman, given the means is expected to undertake at least once in his or her life. Although it merely commemorates an important incident in Jewish history, namely, the attempted sacrifice by the Prophet Abraham of his first-born son, Ishmael, it has come to be regarded as one of the standing Institutions of Islam—nay, one of its five pillars. No doubt there is a great traditional significance in the observance of this day; our Chief, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, being a direct descendant of the sacrificed person, Ishmael—but,

¹ The Holy Qur-ān : 22 : 34-37.

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as it stands to-day—it has attaching to it more than a mere traditional significance. It is the final item in the programme of the Muslim socio-religious life for Unity and Brotherhood between the races and nations of the world.

It is generally known, but seldom appreciated, that the Muslim national life is Theocentric. All our actions have their origin and end in God. We are supposed to derive all motives and emotions for our actions not from the scattered phenomena of physical nature, but from that single undercurrent of moral purpose that gives them Unity in the midst of diversity. In the course of our ceaseless endeavours for self-preservation and self-realisation, we touch this soul of Unity every now and then in spirit individually and try to realise it in the midst of our material surroundings. That is the significance of our Muslim Congregations five times a day, of the weekly Congregational Prayers in the big central Mosques, and finally, of the world-gathering of Muslims at Mecca every year. The races and nations of the world repair repeatedly to Mecca to realise the Unity of the Godhead and of the Human Race. Yes, “repeated repairing”—that is the meaning of the word “Hajj,” which is translated in English as “Pilgrimage.” But this day of the *Hajj* is also called “Yaumun Nahr,” or “I’d-ul-Azha,” the day or the Festival of Sacrifice or Sacrifices. For over 13 centuries, Believers in every walk of life have been repairing thither irrespective of convenience or inconvenience, leaving behind them their country and their pleasant homes which are in most cases far more attractive and pleasant, from the physical point of view, than the hot, sandy deserts of Arabia. An overwhelming majority of them cannot speak the language of Arabia. Most of them spend on this journey all the savings of a lifetime which, in the eyes of non-Muslims, should, instead, afford a comfortable living at the fag-end of one’s life.

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And lastly comes the sacrifice of all human vanities. All dress, the symbol not only of national but also, as we know, of economic distinctions, has to be discarded, excepting a uniform of an unsewn piece of white cotton cloth for one and all, making the great one with the small, the rich one with the poor. A great sacrifice indeed. All these sacrifices the Believers have to undergo on that day. No wonder it is called the day of Sacrifice, or the Festival of Sacrifices.

But, says the sceptic, animals are sacrificed on that day as well. Numerous camels and cows and sheep are slaughtered at Mecca and all over the Muslim world. Yes, that is true. But this is only a secondary aspect of the Festival. As we know, the origin of the Festival lay in the test of that great Believer—Abraham—on the question of Sacrifice—the sacrifice of a thing that is dearer to one than one's own life; and all the affairs connected with its observance at Mecca, as I have just now shown you, are matters of great sacrifice. Compared to this example of Abraham, and these enormous sacrifices of the Believers, the killing of a few animals is nothing. The eating of animal flesh is an everyday method for the vast majority of civilized humanity. Even among those communities in which animal food is forbidden, individuals indulging in this food are getting more numerous every day. As a community we are not pledged to abstention from animal food, although meat-eating is in no way an essential part of our religion. And this policy of meat-eating has been adopted by us not without scientific grounds. Food certainly plays a considerable part in the formation of character. It is not without reason that animals eating meat dominate over animals living on vegetables. And most assuredly certain traits of character are associated with each of the two kinds of food. Qualities such as meekness, humility and forbearance are, as is well known to all, to be found

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in the vegetarian animals, whereas valour, courage, adventure and their likes are the characteristics of the meat-eating animals. And, because perfection of human character lies in a harmonious blending of both these types of qualities, it seems only necessary, from the moral point of view, that a perfect man should have both these kinds of food. Besides, it was not merely by chance that Nature provided us with canine teeth.

Thus, in company with other nations of the earth, past and present, those that have been great materially, and those who, like the Jews, have created a long history of spiritual achievements, we Muslims have been eating meat. We do eat meat throughout the year and a countless number of animal lives must be taken every day to provide this huge nation let alone other similar huge nations of the earth, with the requisite amount of meat.

As for those who do not use animal food, even they cannot ascribe a higher purpose to animal life than its subservience to man. By their treatment of these animals, they only show that the highest object of lower animal life is to live and die for human existence. The argument of cruelty is a superficial one. This is not the occasion for any lengthy discussion. Suffice it to say that, like all other words expressing our moral actions, it is a relative term, resting on the nature of the circumstances under which a thing is done, as also on the result of the action. A man killing another man for private reasons is regarded as cruel by all. But when the murderer, in his turn, is hanged by the order of the Court by the hangman, this hanging is never called an act of cruelty, for it is done with a higher object in view, namely, the safeguarding of human lives from the outrages of human spite and anger.

Coming now to the question of the slaughter of animals —this is done by us every day, and it is difficult to say whether we and the followers of other sister religions always keep within bounds in doing so.

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It is necessary to observe here that Islam is opposed to the killing of animals for luxurious dishes ; it wants us, on the contrary, to keep within the minimum limits of necessity. Thus, when on the occasion of the *Hajj*, or *I'd-ul-Azha*, we slaughter animals, we are doing an act which is an everyday affair. It is repeated on this occasion just to impress upon our minds an important Truth about our existence. Pilgrims have assembled for the *Hajj* at much sacrifice, an amount of sacrifice in a spiritual cause which it is difficult for an outsider even to appreciate. But is it enough ? That is the question which our minds ask us when we have finished the rites. We even say, " Here am I, my Lord, at Thy Service ! " But do we realise the full significance of this avowal ? Behold ! Before our very eyes the slaughter of animals takes place. A scene that forces upon us the greatest law of existence, namely, that the lesser existence must be sacrificed to the greater existence. Can a thoughtful mind escape the impression of this serious lesson ? Can a mind worked up to a high pitch of spiritual emotion, as the mind of a pilgrim surely is after the long course of experience preceding the Pilgrimage, remain impervious to the huge significance of this great Truth ? We have not created these animals—nay, we have no manner of real control over their lives and their existence—and yet without a murmur they give every moment of their lives, and finally lay down these very lives to maintain us in our existence, simply because ours is the higher form of life. How much more complete and willing should be our sacrifice in the way of Allah, Who is the Author of our existence, and without Whose support we could not live even for a moment ? Yes, nothing less than life itself with all its desires and emotions, can be a befitting sacrifice in the way of our Beloved Master. But it is not in any intellectual or emotional perception of a philosopher or a poet that this truth is to be realised.

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Religious perception is, indeed, far deeper than that. It goes straight into the core of human consciousness, whence moral actions proceed.

If the Muslims commemorate the sacrifice of Abraham, if they strive to have a vivid perception of the extent of sacrifice which their objective entails, by holding before their minds the significance of sacrifice in the lives of the lower animals, they have to go very deeply into their own nature to see if the feelings of the occasion have reached the bottom of their consciousness. A nation or an individual that has gone as deeply as that cannot lead an indifferent and epicurean life. Once this realisation comes to us, arrogance of all kinds vanishes from our minds ; our spirits are humbled, and we achieve the object of our existence—Islam, or Submission to the Creator—to the Moral Will behind the Universe. It is this transformed state of our soul that the Qur-án refers to when it says :

“ And give good news to the humble.” But submission is only a negative state of the soul under this impression. When our souls have submitted—in other words, when we have renounced our waywardness, and have submitted ourselves to the moral handling of God—we realise, on the one hand, how helpless we are before the realities of Life, and on the other how strong and perfect is our Beloved Master. When we feel this, our hearts tremble as they tremble before nothing else in the world. This trembling, of course, is not the outcome of a fear of punishment, as some who are spiritually blind suggest. It is, on the contrary, the trembling of a mind face to face with a tremendous reality and responsibility. After all, we are not to behave as the spoilt children of “our Father in Heaven,” as some unfortunate religious communities have done. Responsibility is the soul of our religious life, nay, it is the soul of all real existence. So our hearts do tremble, and should tremble at the

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remembrance and realization of God, and His hold over and control of our existence. I wish the rest of humanity had realised this great truth. I wish it were further realized that all real morality has its origin in this humility and apprehensive amazement of the human mind in the presence of God, and that all the rest that passes for morality is only another name for vanity that breaks out in horrible reactions every now and then.

By the magic touch of this awe, Prayer turns from a dire necessity to a pleasurable adventure, defying all temptations that the world can offer, and all oppositions which material forces can bring together.

Much nonsense has been talked about the Love of God for Man. In the Qur-án, also, the preponderating attributes of God are Beneficence, Mercifulness, Compassion and Love. Ever and anon the Book draws our attention to these Divine attributes to inspire us with hope and confidence about our future. But, unlike some other religions, Islam recognises the supreme spiritual fact of man's absolute dependence on God. It knows that, as created beings, we cannot be independent of the Creator at any stage of our existence. Our destiny has to be guided, and our conduct regulated by the loving hand of God. And guidance presupposes authority and control. One who has got any real knowledge of the spiritual development of human nature cannot deny this aspect of our relation with God. Shocks, disappointments, disillusionments, and like experiences of a progressive mind, indicate that much of our advancement depends on the recognition of certain clearly defined paths, aberrations from which are fraught with grave consequences to our very existence. Thus, while the Qur-án impresses on the minds of the Believers the fact of God's love and concern for us, it also wants us to lift up our souls towards Him, and to be continuously wakeful, so as not to slip back to spiritual unconsciousness, the

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depths of which are as enormous as are the heights of enlightenment.

Thus, when a man is enabled by the Divine Light to see and realize this critical position of the human soul he cannot help being thrilled by the stupendous possibilities between which he has been lying. An extreme perplexity overtakes him, and he runs towards God as a child frightened by a fearful thing would run towards its mother. It is the recognition of this supreme fact of our spiritual existence that gives awesomeness to the conception of Divine Love in a Muslim's mind. And I assert again that this feeling of anxiety and concern is the only factor in our spiritual outlook that can keep our social morals steady. It is the only element in our character that can create that humility of spirit in our mutual dealings which alone can bring peace to the world. Brothers, we are living under a civilization resplendent with external grandeur, but productive of an equal amount of complications in the social life of Humanity. And who will deny that this is because arrogance is the soul of this civilization? It is, indeed, paradoxical that a religious community pledged to a personality that is supposed to be all meekness and humility, should be responsible for the making of this civilization, which has assertion as the watchword of its life! Yes, it is the spirit of assertion and imposition that have been ruling the minds of the Christian nations at the present moment. The actions and reactions of this spirit have, to our great misfortune, been making this world of ours, not so much an abode of Peace, as a pit of Fire. Jealousy, hatred and greed have come to be the basis of our feelings towards one another, and if anything is still holding us together, it is the instinct of self-preservation. The spirit of sacrifice and love, the slogans of Christianity, is nowhere existing to-day in the midst of our social existence. None of the

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different Movements that have been launched in the West within recent times for the bettering of our social conditions has had Humility as its spirit. Capitalism, the product of the theory of Individualism, its reaction in the shape of Communism, and the counteraction of this in the shape of Fascism, have all at their back the spirit of arrogance. It will not be an exaggeration to say that arrogance is the spring of our modern civilized life. No keen observer can miss this tramping spirit of the average modern man. The intoxication of animal consciousness had never before in history reached this staggering height. When one sees all this, one cannot help feeling sorry for that humble preacher of Nazareth under whose name this huge arrogance is passing.

But I make bold to assert that this anomaly is due to the central confusion in Christian Theology, where Love of God is taken to mean the doting of a fond father, whose only hope of the son's coming back to his senses lies in his own mortification. If God were what such Theology would have us believe, He might be an object of pride for a nation of arrogant votaries but He could, by no means, be a comfort to the weak and the distressed nor a source of strength to the humble. If they had a real grasp of the subject, and could give a proper lead to European moral life, humanity would have been saved much trouble and much bitter experience. They would have been able to infuse humility into the minds of their fold, the absence of which is going to prove this civilization of ours the most dreadful of all the civilizations that the world has ever seen.

Much capital has been made by these theologians out of the utterance of Jesus on the subject of resignation to the Divine Will ; but is there any effort on their part to realize the spirit of Jesus in the midst of their social lives ? Have they any institutions through which they endeavour to mould their social life on the lines of the

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precepts of the noble Prophet of Nazareth? Have they, after all these 2,000 years' training, succeeded, even partially, in approaching the Divine Will? Is it not a fact that the followers of the Prophet of Islam have, in the meantime, exhibited a far nobler spirit of resignation to the Will of the Creator? Is it not also a fact that the Divine Will is better realised in an average Muslim's outlook on life than in that of a highly developed Christian mind? Yes, if the indications of the Will of God are humility and brotherly feelings towards one another, Muslims are certainly nearer to Jesus than are the peoples of Christendom.

A religious Community that has no better social achievement to claim than Race-Arrogance, International Jealousy and Colour Prejudice should better *not* refer to the example of Jesus in the matter of Resignation, especially when history of the Muslim peoples is before them.

But no more of this criticism of others. I have indulged in this much of it only by way of self-defence. In fact, a little criticism of others is at times helpful to ourselves, in so far as it saves us from being diffident about ourselves. Now, turning the searchlight of the principles under discussion to our own affairs, the first question we should ask ourselves is—have we realised the Divine Will to the extent that we should? Have we sacrificed ourselves to the Will of our Creator in the way He expects us to, in view of the lesson of sacrifice as imparted by this Festival of *I'd-ul-Azha*, celebrated every year? Have we sincerely been following the example of sacrifice as it is set forth by that ancestor of our Prophet—Abraham?

I should be failing in my duty if I did not point out to you that what little virtue is left to us as a Community, is not the result of any striving on our part, but entirely because of the religion that we have adopted—a religion

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that simply forces these virtues on its followers in spite of all their shortcomings.

For ourselves, under the pressure of foreign influences, and, so far as religion goes, alien influences, we should appear at this moment to be extremely oblivious of the spirit of our religion, as also of the significance of its practices. For one thing, we scarcely can now comprehend the extent of the sacrifice that both our Creator and His Creation expect from us. In these days, Humanity, more especially the Western Section of it, is confronted with some very difficult problems, mostly of a social and economic nature. There are fearful differences and hatreds on this account. The feelings of the peoples appear to be entirely misguided, and their intellects befogged. And all this for want of correct data for thinking and an enlightened guidance to the feelings of the nations concerned.

On the other hand we know it as a fact that, although we are off the rails in many directions, the Qur-ánic guidance for our social life has nevertheless been keeping us on the right lines of perception and thinking with regard to these very questions which have been causing such confusion in the Western countries.

But are we inclined to exercise our minds on these lines? Are we trying to follow the feelings and the thoughts of the Western peoples—which, with all their defects, are based on sincerity of purpose—in order to drop helpful suggestions with regard to the errors that have crept into them? I know that this is a stupendous task. And here comes the question of Sacrifice. It is a fact that politically and economically we are nowhere. We know this fact has seriously affected our physical and mental powers. We also know that we are forced to adopt certain courses of studies which are not only useless for the objectives of our religious lives, but are actually detrimental to the best interests of Humanity, and even of those who force them on us, and that our

İD-UL-AZHA (1354 A. H.) SERMON

comprehension of things that matter is consequently very much clouded. I have often complained of the exploitation of Muslim brains by the Universities of the West, and I repeat it here to-day. I admit that this exploitation is in the natural course of things. But that does not absolve us of the huge responsibility that rests upon us as a religious Community. "You are the best of nations raised up for Mankind," announces the Qur-án in its majestic voice. If we believe in this declaration our spirits should know no drooping, our minds no faltering in face of sacrifices. It is from among ourselves—ill provided as we are with material resources—that the Muslim counterparts of Rosseau, Karl Marx and Lenin have to appear. It is no longer in the fields of battle, but in the fields of emotion intellectually expressed, that we have to fight the forces of Evil. The sacrifice of lives is no longer to be instantaneous, as in ages long gone by, but slow and by degrees, leading by inches to the grave. We are not to follow the easy path of denunciation, but the difficult way of sympathetic correction of the Western mind.

The task is all the more difficult when we have none of the external glitters of material civilization and advancement. We have, of necessity, to so kindle the fire of Qur-ánic emotion in our hearts, as to be slowly but steadily consumed by it, not only mentally but also physically as circumstances demand. Let us always keep before our minds the example of animals slaughtered on this occasion, if we cannot comprehend the higher manifestations of Sacrifice as exemplified by Prophet Abraham. Unless we have this orientation of our minds to-day we shall have missed the real import of the Divine Commandment.

There does not reach Allah their flesh nor their blood, but to Him is acceptable the guarding (against evil) on your part; thus has He made them subservient to you that you may magnify Allah because He has guided you aright, and give good news to those who do good (to others).

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I do not know if I have been able to convey to your mind the full significance of this Festival of Sacrifice as held to-day, the 4th of March 1936. If I have not, may the Holy Spirit of Allah accomplish what I, His frail creature, have failed to do.✓

All praise is due to Allah. We praise Him and seek His guidance and protection. We betake ourselves to Allah against the evils of our minds, and against the bad things of our actions. And whosoever receives the guidance of Allah, cannot be led away by anyone, and whomsoever He leaves to err (as a result of His actions) there is no one to lead him aright.

O Allah! Exalt Muhammad and the followers of Muhammad as Thou didst exalt Abraham and the followers of Abraham, for surely Thou art Praised and Magnified. O Allah! Bless Muhammad, and the followers of Muhammad, as Thou didst bless Abraham and the followers of Abraham, for surely Thou art Praised and Magnified.

Servants of Allah!

Surely Allah enjoins the doing of Justice and Charity and the giving to the kindred, and He disallows indecency and evil and aggression. He admonishes that you may be mindful.

Remember Allah. He will raise you. Call on Him. He will answer your call. And verily remembrance of Allah is greater than everything.

Allah is the Greatest. Allah is the Greatest. Nothing deserves to be worshipped except Allah; and Allah is the Greatest; Allah is the Greatest, and unto Allah is due all praise.

ISLAM

BY SIR JALAL-UD-DIN LAUDER BRUNTON, BART.,

M.A., M.SC., F.R.G.S., F.R.S.

It is a great pleasure to me to be privileged to write on the Holy Faith of Islam. This is an opportunity I was desirous of having.

It has been suggested that it might be an advantage to the English-educated in India to know the true idea that an English Muslim has about the Sacred Faith of Islam. I know that many are anxious to hear some remarks of a kind that will bring you into touch with the great world movements in which Islam, as a religion, is fitted to play so great a part.

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Every religion proposes to have certain claims, and from their point of view these claims are right, and all are anxious to tell how the acceptance of the truth—as it appears to them—is going to help this world.

I think I am right in saying that from the viewpoint of history and of ethics, our Holy Prophet's message is of a universal character, that links it to ages before he lived and to the ages after he had finished his earthly mission.

We are expressly told in the Holy Qur-án that we must not interpret our religion as sectarian or racial, or as confined to a particular country. Our Holy Prophet took, for granted, all the knowledge and wisdom preceding him, and he gave his message in a form that should stimulate research through every country. Our Holy Prophet in claiming that he was proclaiming the truths that existed from the beginning of time and will exist to the end of time, immediately established a Brotherhood which is right worthily called "The World Brotherhood of Mankind."

This Brotherhood is not merely an ideal; it is an accomplished fact, and I have the honour to testify that I have personally experienced the electric force, as it were, on the occasion that I embraced Islam in the Badshahi Mosque in Lahore on the 17th November, 1931, where over sixty-thousands of Muslims had assembled to witness the great event, and everyone of these sixty-thousand "Brothers-in-Islam" were anxious to embrace me and welcome me as their Brother!

Our Prophet set us the example that neither race, colour, country, nor difference of language was to be any bar in the promulgation of his message. Therefore, I claim that from the very inception it became a world's message, and as it made progress it mixed itself with every movement in the world's history. Some are often

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saying that Islam is too much mixed with politics, and that it makes no difference between secular and religious matters. These expressions are indeed great truths, for to us Muslims, our God is not only the God of Heaven, but also the God of this Earth. Our Holy Book tells us this in express terms, and it further teaches that our religion is not for one day in the week, be it Sunday, Saturday, or Friday, but that it goes with us through every day of the week and every hour of the day. Our thoughts are to be inspired with spiritual motives not only when we are together in a building, but when we talk and work and play, when we fight for the right, when we are occupied with high affairs of State, as well as when we quietly hold out a helping hand to a stumbling and struggling brother or sister, of whatever caste, religion, colour, or race. A Muslim can pray under the canopy of heaven as his roof and the plain earth as his carpet. He can speak to and meet with his God, and can pour out his thoughts and his heart's desires to his Great Creator, who is ever-present listening even to the faintest throb of his heart at all times, and in all places. A true Muslim is a missionary of purity, justice and love, ever seeking knowledge and truth to guide his less fortunate brethren to that fountain of God's Love and Mercy.

My brothers and sisters, let us uphold the glorious Banner of Islam in that truth and purity and justice. Let these motives mingle with all the affairs of our lives, be they individual or social, political, military or ethical. This is how we ought to endeavour to build up our institutions on a universal foundation.

When we consider the great questions in the light of history and find that some of our Muslim brothers, having had great advantages, fail to prove themselves worthy of those advantages, it is our duty to consider history not only as a verification of the great Message of God, but as a warning for the failures of mankind.

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When people are prosperous, they attribute their prosperity to themselves, but when they meet with afflictions, troubles, difficulties, and also misery and poverty, they say that these have been sent by another Power. On the contrary, God tells us that if there is good it comes from Him, and if we suffer any evil it is the consequences of our own folly. It is by realising this that we should understand the true place of Islam in these tremendous movements which are shaking the foundations of the world in these modern days. We have many things to ponder over in history to get their true meaning. It is not right merely to read history as a chronicle, that merely records exterior facts, for exterior facts are like a body without a soul. Study life, not death ; spirit, not matter. True history, whether of Islam or of the Muslim people or of the world, should consist in examining life and its wonderful evolution.

What is it that upholds the Banner of Islam with such success in spite of the disadvantages from which it has suffered ?

Did not God make the Light shine in the Holy Prophet's very eyes from the depths of his heart, and bring out his character so that it could stand face to face with life itself in all its phases ? It was his soul illumined by God that made him the Greatest Reformer the world ever knew, or that ever lived in this world's history.

Men ought to read of our Holy Prophet in matters social and political. Rousseau has no doubt elaborated the "Social Contract" and the "Rights of Man," but in our daily life and practical politics even the most advanced nations have not yet reached our Holy Prophet's ideals or the stage he had reached. Nay ! we have treaded in certain respects on wrong lines while trying to reach the stage at which our Holy Prophet arrived ; self-mortification by vicarious atonements cannot inculcate fellow-feeling. Because the man has shunned all worldly

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affairs and relations for his personal interest, and this shunning deprives him of the service to his fellow-creatures, when deprived of this noble service, he cannot make use of nature's works by learning their theory. It is Islam alone, which enjoined its followers to study nature and make use of it in human life, and has laid the greatest stress upon it. The Holy Qur-án explicitly says: "Most surely in the creation of heavens and the earth, and the alternations of the night and the day, and the ships that run in the sea with that which profits man, and the water that Allah sends down from clouds to give life with it to the earth after its dearth, and spreads in it all kinds of animals and changing the winds and the clouds subservient between the heavens and the earth; *These are signs for the people to understand.*" (Qur-án, lxxiii, 5—15).

Islam is a religion of everyday life and is very practicable. This is what a man of understanding requires from the world and this is what the Holy Qur-án offers to the world.

ALLAH is the Fountain of Islam. Islam teaches us to be ever-constant to the All-pervading Allah. Islam takes its followers, higher and higher, day by day, spiritually, socially, and politically. No other religion is so inspiring and at the same time so natural and so simple that a man of small understanding, having faith in God, can attain salvation. To the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may God bless his soul), the mouthpiece of God, was revealed the Will of God. He single-handed, amidst heavy odds, with no man to befriend him, preached the gospel of ONE GOD fearlessly and came off victorious in the end. How could he? Non-Muslims say that Islam was spread by the help of the sword. On the one side he was alone, and on the other side there were a host of savage, illiterate and idolatrous brutes as the then Arabs were. Who was to wield the sword then to defend the

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Prophet ? It was God. It was his faith in God that enabled him to overcome his enemies. His faith was his sword. His successes were the Miracles of Miracles !

It is sheerly irreligious for the Muslims not to stand united. If the Muslims have not that much faith in God and do not stand together as those of yore were, the enemies of Islam are sure to wipe them off the earth. If they stand together, they will bring back the former glory of Islam, and people of other castes and creeds will be drawn to it as metal is drawn to a magnet.

THE HOLY PILGRIMAGE

ITS ORIGIN AND SIGNIFICANCE

BY MISS ZAKIA SULTANA AHMAD, B.A.

Tens of thousands of people from nearly every part of the world go to Mecca every year on pilgrimage. Mecca is the only place in the world which commands the spiritual homage of such a vast section of the world's population. It is the centre of devotion for about forty crores of souls. This sanctity it has acquired, not only since the advent of Islam but its importance as a shrine and a place of pilgrimage is of much more ancient origin. Before Islam was preached, Mecca had a temple on the same site on which now the sacred Ka'ba stands. Sir William Muir writes in his *Life of Mahomet* that this temple is mentioned in Diodorus Siculu's book, which was written about half a century before Christ. The famous historian Gibbon says that it seems to have been existing before the Prophet Abraham. According to Islamic traditions it was built or rather rebuilt by Abraham. When Abraham's son Ishmael was born, he received Divine Command to take the child and its mother Hajira (Hagar) to a desert in Arabia which was then called Faran, and to leave them there. Abraham obeyed and left the mother and the

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child near the spot where the Ka'ba now stands. The newcomers were extremely distressed on account of scarcity of water and there being no water available nearby, Hajira went to a distant place in quest of it, and she happened to run seven times in the quest between Safa and Merva, two hillocks which are at Mecca two furlongs apart. This was the incident in commemoration of which the running from Safa to Merva as part of the Haj ceremony was made obligatory by the Prophet later on. When Hajira came back to her child she was surprised to find a stream of water flowing from beneath the child's feet. Tradition has it that as the child Ishmael was beating the sand with his heels and crying, God caused a stream to arise from the hollow made in the sand by the child's heels. This need not be regarded as a miracle by those who do not want to. It has often happened that springs of water have suddenly spouted out of the desert sands and dried up too, but as proof of the existence of water in that spot was thus found, the place was afterwards dug up and a permanent stream released which exists to this day. It was given the name of "Zam Zam" as Hajira, in her extreme confusion on seeing the unexpected gush of water, cried out "Zam, Zam" (stop, stop). Muslims hold the water of this stream in sacred veneration and many a pilgrim carries cans full of it from Mecca at Haj time to various parts of the world.

Abraham periodically paid a visit to his wife and child, and when Ishmael grew up the father and the son together rebuilt a temple. Ishmael was appointed guardian of the temple and his progeny inherited this office. Out of Ishmael's progeny grew the tribe of Quraish to which belonged Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam. As the holy temple attracted people, they began to come from far and distant places and settle down near it, and in this way the desolate place was gradually converted into a great city which came to be called by various names, Mecca, or

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Ummul Qura (the mother of cities) or Al-Balad (the great city). So it is rightly considered to be the oldest city of Hedjaz. It is remarkable that this peninsula is situated at the meeting place of three continents—Asia, Europe and Africa.

Though the Ka'ba which bears the titles of Baitul Ateeq (old house) and Baitul Muharram (house of sanctity and security) has been a sacred place to the Arabs from time immemorial, yet it was not till the ceremony of Haj was instituted by the Prophet as a duty for the Muslims that it rose to its present importance. It is one of the five 'Faraiz' or incumbent duties of a Muslim to perform the ceremony of Haj at least once in his life-time, provided that he can afford the expenses involved in the journey and make sufficient provision for his dependants at home. The ceremony takes place on the 9th day of Zilhaj, the last month of the lunar year. When the pilgrims reach the outskirts of Mecca they have to prepare themselves for taking part in the rituals of the Haj. This preparation is called "Ihram" and there are prescribed rules in this connection for the Hajees (pilgrims) to be followed till the day of Haj. They are forbidden to indulge in idle talk and are to refrain from all sorts of luxuries, from causing even the slightest harm to any human being and from hunting animals or killing an insect. A special form of dress, consisting of two unsewn pieces of cloth, cotton or woollen, has to be worn by all males, young or old, rich or poor. The dress commemorates the ancient days of Abraham. The formalities aim at a visible realisation of equality among the Muslims, and are meant to teach them a lesson of sympathy and morality, and enure them to hardship and discipline. Not even a king can think of exemption. The unique scene can better be imagined than described when a huge concourse of pilgrims flock round the House of God, bare-headed and bare-footed in a uniform dress in a spirit of deep devotion and humility.

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On the 8th of Zilhaj, the Hajeess start for Arafát, a place at a distance of a few miles from Mecca, where the main ceremony of the Haj is performed and there they encamp during the night. The following morning they assemble to hear the sermon, a sermon delivered practically to hundreds of nationalities at one and the same time.

The rituals of the Haj briefly are as follows—

The pilgrims stand facing the Ka'ba and pray : “ We are here, O God ; for Thee we are here ; we praise Thee Who is the Possessor of this world and of all the blessings. Thou Who hast no partner, Who is One and One only.” They utter this prayer repeatedly and then go round the Ka'ba ; then they kiss Hajarul Aswad (the black stone) in commemoration of an ancient custom of making a sacred covenant. The custom existed in the days of Abraham, who had placed a stone in a corner of the Ka'ba for his followers to confess their faith in his teachings by touching the stone. During the degeneration of the religion of Abraham the Ka'ba was under the guardianship of the Quraish and the practice had gradually been forgotten with the decay of the temple itself till it was revived after the birth of the Prophet.

After performing a few other ceremonies the Hajeess (pilgrims) commemorate the running of Hajira (Abraham's wife) in her distressing search of water from Safa to Merva, by walking to and fro at a quick pace seven times between the two landmarks. The ceremony at Arafát is over by the evening, when the pilgrims must leave the place. Early on the following morning they come to Mina, a village between Mecca and Arafát, where the festival of Id-uz-Zuha, which invariably falls on that day, is celebrated.

THE SONS OF GOD

THE SONS OF GOD

BY SYED MAQBOOL AHMED, B.A.

The Jews say, Uzair is the son of God ; and the Christians say that the Messiah is the son of God ; that is what they say with their mouths, imitating the sayings of those who misbelieved before.¹

Mr. Palmer, in his English translation of the Qur-án, has appended the following note below this passage :—

There is no Jewish tradition whatever in support of this accusation of Muhammad's, which probably was entirely due to his own invention or to misinformation. Baidawi, the well-known commentator, says that it must have been true because the Jews themselves, to whom the passage was read, did not deny it.

Mr. Palmer appears to be right in his note, as far as Ezra is concerned. I myself do not know of any Jew, ancient or modern, who has raised Ezra to a level such as that to which the Christians have raised for Jesus Christ ; and if Ozir of the Qur-án is the same personality as he who is called Ezra in the Bible, then I am afraid it will be difficult to prove this accusation against the Jews, and it is for those who have taken Ozair of the Qur-án for Ezra of the Bible (some Muslim commentators not excepted) to find out, from Jewish tradition, some trace of this belief which the Qur-án has so strongly declared, and was bold enough to proclaim in the face of the Jews.

But Ezra, like Nehemiah, Jeremiah, Daniel and hosts of minor prophets is not mentioned in the Qur-án at all, just as there is no mention of Shu'aib, Zulqarnain (unless, of course, we consider this to be a title, which certainly it was for Cyrus, King of Persia and the Messiah of God), Dhulkifl, Hud, Saleh, Luqman in the Bible. But to identify Ozair of the Qur-án with Ezra of the Bible is a mistake, and a mistake so serious that it is in danger of being challenged by every Jew in the world and it is for those who are learned in Jewish lore to refute

¹The Qur-án 9 : 30.

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the accusation of the Qur-án. This passage rankled in my own mind for a long time and, during my sojourn in Western Asia, I never met a learned Jewish Rabbi with whom I did not discuss this unique challenge of the Qur-án, and if anything saved from scepticism, nay turned my doubt into the staunchest belief that the Qur-án can not possibly be the words of an illiterate Arab of the sixth century A.C., in it was this passage of the Qur-án which I have quoted. For let the fact stand for the greatest miracle of the Qur-án and one which, I am sure, will dispel any doubt from the mind of any thinker as to the divine inspiration of the Book that not only is it proved that Uzair (or Ozir) was a personality of Western Asiatic mythology and an exact replica of Jesus Christ, as the Christians believe him, but that what is said of Ozir and Jesus has been believed, by *those who misbelieved before*, (*the ancient pagans*) of *numberless other sons of God*. Those who have not the opportunity of availing themselves of that admirable but costly book "The Golden Bough," will do well to glance at an illumination synopsis, given by the late Khwaja Kamaluddin in his *Sources of Christianity*. They will realise that the cult of Mithra, Osiris, Attis and Adonis, was not only adopted by the Christians for Jesus, son of Mary, but that the Jews themselves, touched by the paganism of Western Asia and Egypt, took up this belief so rightly condemned by Jeremiah, Isaiah and even by David, and lastly by the Qur-án.

As for Ezra's identity with Ozir, I may mention here that some years back, I contributed an article to the *Islamic Review* on the subject of "Biblical names of the Qur-án," pointing out certain other obscure names occurring in the Qur-án which were being challenged by the Christian critics on the strength of Biblical dissimilarity, Haman and Azar being two typical examples. The Christians mistook Haman for a mythical being of the same name

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who appeared in the rôle of an arch conspirator in the reign of Asverus, the old King of Persia, and as such was certainly not and could not have been the contemporary of Pharoah (whom the Qur-án calls Fir'aun, a word supported not by the Bible but by Herodotus). Muhammad certainly did not know that the Egyptian had a personality and was no other than Ammon, and if there is mention in the Qur-án of Ammon in relation to a Pharoah of Egypt it is yet another miraculous description of a being of which no Jew or any informer of the Prophet in Arabia could possibly have known. Similarly the Azar of the Qur-án, as father of Abraham, was not supported by the Bible where he is known as Tareh, a vastly different name, but Eusebius did mention that Azar and not Tareh was the real name, and I wonder if the Prophet had ever heard of Eusebius, to say nothing of having read his book.

Lastly, it may again be pointed out that Arabic and Hebrew nomenclatures are always similar, these being two sister languages. It is not a case of Arabicising a Hebrew word, for what is in Hebrew is exactly the same as in Arabic, which is not the case with languages other than Hebrew, where Yashua and Yuhan must be converted to Jesus and John. So Ezra is not known to the Qur-án, it is Ozir which the Qur-án knows, and certainly the Jews living with pagans in Syria and Egypt came like them to call Osir son of God, just as the Christian under the same influence began calling Jesus son of God, and transferred the whole myth of the Son-God to Christ; but that is, to quote the Qur-án again, "*in the imitation of those who misbelieved before.*" A wonderful and most convincing proof of the Divine Authorship of the Qur-án.

WOMEN'S POSITION IN ISLAM

BY LATIFA ELIZABETH HADDON

The great power of Islam lies in its simplicity, its unadulterated Monotheism, and in the fact that Prayer is made direct to Allah (God) alone, no other gods being joined with Him.

A Muslim, or follower of Islam, must observe certain rules of conduct and specified times of Prayer, which make his religion part of his life, and enter into his daily conduct.

The example set up for Christians to imitate is Christ, who, they believe, was Divine and, as such, above the blemishes and frailties of physical existence. This being so, it is surely inconsistent of them to strive to attain a semblance of his purity while they themselves are fast bound and fettered by human nature with all its attendant weaknesses. This moral dilemma is, to all appearance, the reason why most Christians to-day are Christians only in name, hardly making any attempt to live up to the standard set by Jesus.

As contrasted with this, one seldom meets a Muslim to whom religion is not a practical and practicable thing—a source of inspiration in his daily life, and a potent factor in the composition of his character.

To us Muslims, Muhammad is the last Prophet in the sense that he came after all the prophets, including Jesus, and that his teaching is a revision of those of the older prophets.

It is a historical fact that the life and character of the Prophet Muhammad were remarkable in many ways. His life exhibited all the divers sides of human character, in its soft as well as its stern aspects. His goodness, kindness and wonderful sympathy, apart from anything else, should secure for him a very important position in the history of the world.

WOMEN'S POSITION IN ISLAM

And yet so many false things are written and circulated about him and his religion that it is very difficult to sort out the false from the true, and this difficulty is aggravated the more by the fact that the average man of the West cares very little to know the truth about the matter.

One of the main objections made by Christian writers against Islam is concerning the position of women in that religion,—the permission for polygamy, and the so-called suppression of women.

Before I say anything in defence of polygamy in Islam, let me point out that actually in Islam polygamy has been a very rare phenomenon, monogamy being the prevailing custom in Muslim countries. Some Muslims even read an actual prohibition of polygamy in the Holy Qur-án where it says: "If you fear that you cannot do justice between them (your wives) then marry only one."

Coming to the actual defence of polygamy, I think that the Muslim woman makes the better wife because she knows that her husband may take another wife. ⁽¹⁾ In England to-day, the modern girl seems to enter into marriage with the idea that it will be rather a "nice change," and that her husband will merely be a kind of household ornament. A Muslim woman knows, on the contrary, that she cannot afford to fool about and that unless she makes "a good job" of her marriage, her husband will take another wife who will pay more attention to him. And the fact that polygamy is so rare in the Muslim Community seems to prove that Muslim women do make a success of their marriages.

Everyone knows how common is the practice on the Continent, particularly among the Latin races, of keeping

¹ The conditions under which a Muslim can take a second wife are rather hard. They are of two kinds: social and private. The social condition lies in this, that at a given time the number of women in a state should exceed the number of men. The private condition, briefly stated, consists of a serious disparity between the parties in the matter of physical and mental health.—Ed. *I.R.*

a mistress. But what is the position of such a woman? She has no social standing, and, if she has a child, it inherits the stigma of her unenviable position. Meanwhile, the man's wife selfishly, if naturally, feels no pity for the woman who has thus suffered because of her husband's lust, and is only concerned with maintaining her own position as the sole mistress of his household. This is undoubtedly a selfish outlook, and the woman who is consecutively able to share her household with another represents surely the most advanced state of broadmindedness. Thus if a Muslim is so incautious as to entangle himself with another woman, that woman need not become a social *pariah*, but may be his legal partner. Yet, among the Muslim Community the second woman or wife is very seldom met with—surely a great tribute to the Muslim wife.

One of the provisions of the Islamic Law is that a husband should set aside a certain amount of his money to be paid over to his wife, should he divorce her. ⁽¹⁾ Women in Islam can possess property of their own, and can deal with it as they please, whereas in England, until 1882 and the passing of the Married Women's Property Act, women were identified with their husbands, and could not make contracts or possess property of their own.

The Qur-án places no constraint on a woman working and is not responsible for the face-veil nowadays associated with Muslim women.

It is an irony of fate that much that is supposed to be Islamic has no foundation whatsoever in Islam.

I wish my English compatriots had known more about Islam from direct sources, and had not been dependent on clergymen and missionaries for their ideas concerning that great religion.

¹ Divorce, like polygamy, is elaborately conditioned in Islam, and the parties concerned have to pass through several stages before the final divorce can be obtained. Divorce, as such, is open to man and woman equally—the wife can apply for divorce in the same way as the husband.—Ed. *I, R.*

CORRESPONDENCE

ETON COLLEGE, WINDSOR.

TO THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.
DEAR SIR,

I am writing to you as I wish to become a Muslim. I heard about you from Mr. A. G. Campbell, who is here at Eton. Could you let me know how to see you ?

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) H. A.

CULVERS AVENUE,
CARSHALTON.

DEAR BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,
Assalam-o-alaikum.

I wish again to thank you for the cordial welcome to me on my visit to you on Sunday last.

On that occasion you asked me to forward to you the name and address of any one who may be a possible convert to the Faith.

A friend of mine showed extreme interest in the copy of the *Review* you so kindly gave me, also in some Muslim literature which I gave him to read. He is an ex-member of the Church of England, and has a profound disbelief in the Trinitarian Doctrine.

He has removed from this district, otherwise I should have taken him under my wing for a while. He is Harold Saltre, of the Avenue Hotel, Church Road, East Ham, E. Needless to say, I regard him as a possible convert to Islam, otherwise I would not bother you.

I took the liberty of telling him that he may expect a letter and some literature from you in the near future.

May Allah prosper you and your Mission.

Yours fraternally,
(Sd.) O. FISHER.

HALL BARN,
BEACONSFIELD.

TO THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

I have convinced myself that my former religion was based on a fallacy, and as I have for some time been interested in Mohammedanism, I would be very pleased if you would supply me with information on that subject, with which I am insufficiently acquainted.

Please send me an answer, if it is not very inconvenient for you.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) J. T. R. WALKERS.

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ALDERSHOT.

TO THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.
SIR,

Your sign bearing the question "What is Islam?" which can be seen from the Southern Railway, aroused my interest to the extent that I am writing to ask if you will favour me by sending any literature and information that you can with a view to more intimate study and consideration of this question.

Thanking you in anticipation of an early reply.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) J. F. YOUNG.

SOUTHBOROUGH, KENT.

DEAR IMAM,

Would you be good enough to send me some literature dealing with Islam?

I have noticed in passing in the train that you are willing to send such to those who ask.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) T. H.

HIGHER BLACKLEY,
MONDESTS.

TO
THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.
DEAR SIR,

I apologise for the long delay in replying to your letter. Very many thanks for all the papers and booklets on Islam that you have so kindly sent me. I have read them all through, and I shall do so again when I have sufficient leisure for so doing.

I have taken due notice of "WHAT IS ISLAM?" of the Declaration Form, and of the Annual Subscription Form. I shall most probably send in my subscription as an Honorary Member. The trouble is, that while on the one hand, there is neither a Mosque nor a Prayer House in Mondests, on the other hand, I am unable to come down to London.

I believe in all the Old Testament Prophets, and in Jesus Christ of the New Testament. Moreover, I believe, that Mohammad was the last Prophet, and that he had an excellent Message to deliver from Allah.

It is my honest belief that if Europe only adopted the Faith of Islam, International Peace would speedily be brought about on that Continent.

Once more thanking you, I shall close here for the present.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) C. A. NEEDHAM.

CORRESPONDENCE

NEW ROW,
COLERAINE,
N. IRELAND.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

Would you be good enough to let me have some information regarding the Mohammedan religion, and oblige?

Yours faithfully,
W. V. WEIR.

GLENCOE ROAD,
MARGATE.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you very much for your welcome letter, which I received this morning. I am pleased to know you have made arrangements for me and that you have obtained an Arab to perform the ceremony. It is very kind of you to go to so much trouble, and I thank you.

I was born in February 1919, and I am 16 next month. I am mostly Irish blooded by my mother. All papers regarding my name should be filled in in the name of DESMOND HENRY. Barrett Griffiths is my step-father's name, whom my mother married when I was 18 months old, and which she has made me use ever since. But please address my correspondence as Griffiths.

I have had a fairly good education at elementary and central schools.

I am glad that Friday is the best day to see you, as that is my free day from work. As soon as I can, I will come to see you, but I will let you know when I decide to come.

I work as an assistant operator in a Cinema. I do not drink intoxicating liquor, nor do I smoke, as I abhor both habits.

I am waiting to hear from you again soon. Please convey my most sincere good wishes to the other members.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) D. H. GRIFFITHS.

BRYN AVON,
EXETER ROAD,
EXMOUTH, DEVON.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

I shall be glad to receive any particulars or information re. Islam.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) N. TAYLOR.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

ISLAM : A STUDY

BY SYED SABAH-UD-DIN ABDUR RAHMAN, B.A.

It is alleged that Islam breeds vices of the worst type and fosters nothing but hatred and bitterness towards non-Muslims ; that the God of Islam is "pre-eminently the God of Battles,"¹ "belligerent," "bloody," "merciless" and "revengeful ;" and that the Prophet of Islam propagated his religion by his sword, thereby causing an enormous waste of human life and a vast amount of human misery. "The sword is the inevitable penalty for the denial of Islam," says Sir William Muir, "and toleration is unknown in Islamism." The misguided zeal of many European historians of Islam has concocted the most dreadful stories of intolerable burdens and disabilities beneath which non-Muslims laboured under Islamic rule.

These charges, falsely imputed to our Faith by the adherents of other religions, are chiefly due to the ignorance of those who make them. I, for one, believe and I have every reason to suppose that all candid and unprejudiced minds will believe with me, that no religion has ever been the promoter of vices, hatred, oppression, bloodshed, or destruction. For Religion is a Divine Gift, and its function must be similar to that of other Divine gifts. Everything created by God strengthens human nature, and helps in the advancement and progress of everything concerning human nature. No religion preaches warfare and jingoism, and if it make war, it is against the vices and passions of humanity, only to establish permanent peace on earth and goodwill among men. Peace is implicit in the idea of religion, which lays down rules and regulations for the raising of humanity from the animal to the Divine ; and for this purpose gives us guidance so that "we may sublimate the root passions in us—anger, lust,

¹ Bosworth Smith, "Mohammad and Mohammedanism."

ISLAM : A STUDY

and cognate passion—into Divine morality.”¹ How in the name of God could there be any religion which does not seek to turn the believer away from passion and vice, and move “in the direction of peace between the creeds, peace between all men of goodwill, as brothers together and children of one Father?” It is, therefore, an agent of peace at once ordered and mystic towards all that is highest in human nature.²

All religions are similar, if not the same in their essential principles. They might differ in forms, ceremonies, the exclusiveness of one dogma and the universality of the other, but these differences are rather in degree than in kind. To say, therefore, that Islam preached violence, war and oppression and not humanity and righteousness, is simply to misunderstand religion, its function and utility, and so make the whole situation unreasonable. The word “Islam” means peace; the name of Islamic God is As-Salam—Peace—and the religion lends itself to peace. One who follows Islam is called “Muslim,” because he makes peace with Allah and extends peace to God’s creatures. A Muslim is one, says the Founder of Islam, who brings about and helps peace among mankind to the utmost of his power.

Again, the Qur-ánic tenets have, again and again, forbidden the use of violence towards anyone on account of his opinions. “Let there be no compulsion,” says the Holy Qur-án, “in religion, for the right direction has been made clearly distinguishable from the wrong one.”³ Again, it asks the Mussalmans to “dispute not, unless in kindly sort with the People of the Book,” and “be not grieved about the Infidels, nor be troubled over their devices,” for “God knoweth best those who stray from His way, and those who have yielded to His guidance.”⁴

¹ Khwaja Kamal-ud-din in “The Ideal Prophet.”

² Prof. Theodore Reinach of the College of France in his speech in the Conference of World’s Religions against War, Geneva, 1928.

³ The Holy Qur-án, 10 : 98.

⁴ *Ibid*, 39 : 45.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

God had sent the Prophet to men as "a herald of glad tidings and a warner,"¹ and "plain-preaching" was all "that devolved upon the Apostle."²

God, therefore, *laid upon Muhammad* the command that "if they turn their backs, still thy office is plain-spoken preaching," for "we have sent thee to them as a guardian, thou hast only thy message to preach."³ And again, He laid upon the followers of Muhammad the injunction to treat the unbelievers kindly and "endure patiently what they say, and depart from them with a decorous departure."⁴ Again, He has strictly enjoined Mussalmans not to denounce the gods and deities of other religions, "lest, exceeding limits, they should abuse Allah out of ignorance;" and yet again, He says, "If any of the idolaters ask thee for aid, then aid him in order that he may hear the word of God; then let him reach his place of safety."⁵

Thus, from its very inception, Islam bore the stamp of a peaceful religion, and the life of Lord Muhammad exemplified the same teachings. When Muhammad claimed to be a messenger of God, he was exposed to every kind of persecution. He was scorned and rejected by the heathen Arabs, who by threats, insults and abuse strove to induce him to abandon the part he had taken up. The little band of his followers was reduced to bitter straits, tortured and imprisoned to make them renounce their faith and return to the worship of idols and the abomination of their former life. But they endured nobly and all they suffered served only to rekindle their zeal. In the midst of these tribulations one of the followers of Muhammad asked him to curse the infidels.

¹ *Ibid.*, 34 : 27.

² *Ibid.*, 24 : 53.

³ *Ibid.*, 42 : 47.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 73 : 10-11.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 60 : 6.

(To be continued.)

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

ISLAMIC REVIEW

Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is Indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the 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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