

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

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A DECLARATION

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THE QURANIC CONCEPTION OF GOD

BY THE HON'BLE SHEIKH MUSHIR HUSSAIN KIDWAI
OF GADIA, BARRISTER-AT-LAW

(Continued from Vol. XXV, page 148)

(c) *The Islamic God-idea is the basis of culture, civilization, Communistic organization of human society and scientific progress.*

This section (c) is the natural corollary of the one preceding it. When the Qur-ánic God-idea was helpful to individual man in his advancement it could not but be helpful to him collectively.

The very fact that every book which any Muslim wrote on whatever subject it might have been, religious or scientific, on history or geography or mathematics, began with the name of God the Beneficent, the Merciful, in itself proves that all the Islamic culture was based on the Qur-ánic God-idea. The very first message of God to the Prophet was :

“ Read in the name of your *Rabb* (Evolver and Sustainer) Who created. He created man from a clot. Read and your *Rabb* is Bounteous : Who taught with the pen. Taught man what he knew not.” (xvi: 1-6.)

The untutored Teacher was thus called upon to read in the name of God and his attention was drawn to the use of the pen in the very first revelation. The use of the pen was very little known anywhere in the world, and least of all in Arabia, in those days when the above message came. And it came in the name of God—the *Rabb*. So it was natural that all knowledge, learning and culture of Muslims was given as its basis the Qur-ánic God-idea and every composition on whatever subject it might be was begun with the name of Allah and with His praise as if it was dedicated to Him.

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Professor Lake writes :

“ The Islam of Muhammad also contained a germ which when fully developed has spread its influence in Europe and has been heavier on Western idolatry than its arms were upon the East. It began in the establishment of schools by Muhammad and to assist in these and his educational plans, he released such of his prisoners of war as could read and write. As soon as they had taught, a certain number of boys, to do the same, and if any were willing to remain and take charge of schools they were liberated at once.”

The result of this earliest possible schooling of Muslims was that they mastered all subjects and began to write on history, statistics, travels, voyages, chronology, numismatics, pulpit oratory, agriculture, rural economy, irrigation, pure and mixed mathematics and sciences, topography, geography, medicine, chemistry, zoology, botany, natural history, geology, etc. In fact Muslims left no subject unstudied and whichever subject they chose to write upon they wrote in a way that reflected their genius and their mastery. “ They were no triflers in those subjects.”

There is no nation and no state up to the present day which can claim to have surpassed, in culture and civilization, the Abbaside period. Baghdad was then the hub of the wheel of the world. It was the capital of Islam : it was a Metropolis when London was a village : all culture and civilization emanated from it : all culture and civilization was centred on it. Communications were established, at the time of the world-famous Haroun ar-Rashid, with the West as well as with the Far East. The Great Haroun received embassies from Charlemagne and the Emperor of China at the same time.

Gabriel, the renowned physician, Asmani, the well-known litterateur and grammarian and Ibrahim (of Mosul), the famous musician, graced his court. Under

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his rule the clock was invented. He sent one to the European Emperor Charlemagne which is up to this day regarded as "a wonderful piece of Mechanism."

The period of twenty years of the reign of Haroun ar-Rashíd's son, Mámún, was "the most glorious epoch," says a famous historian in "Saracenic History." It has left enduring monuments of intellectual and cultural developments of the followers of Islam in *all* directions of thought and in all departments of life—in philosophy, belle-lettres and exact sciences. During that glorious period of Asiatic culture mathematics, medicine and astronomy made as gigantic strides as fine arts and literature, poetry and romance. The *Alif Laila* ("One Thousand Nights") holds up to this day the very first place in imaginative, descriptive, instructive as well as interesting romance.

Abul Hasan invented the telescope and Mansúr established the first Observatory at Shamassia.

The Abbaside period produced well-known travellers and voyagers.

Although the Arabs were the sons of "sandy deserts," but because they were taught by the Qur-án that the seas were made subservient to them for sailing on ships, they learnt to be as much at home on the waves in a boat as in the sandy desert on the back of a camel. They sailed as far as Madagascar in the South and colonized East Africa. The Sultanate of Dar es-Salaam, alas! now only a protectorate, is one of the relics of the great Arab Empire in Africa. In Java and Batavia, on the other side, the huge Muslim population of our days is a constant reminder of Arab enterprise. In Europe, Malta and Sicily were under Muslim sway. Sicily became a seat of Arabic learning. In fact the Mediterranean became a Muslim sea.

In the Arab Empire colleges and hospitals were established everywhere. The Nizamiah College built by

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Nizam al-Mulk and the Mustansaryah by Mustansar Billah are well-known to the Arab historian. The University of Al-Azhar in Cairo still lives to tell the story of the Arab's love for disseminating knowledge and patronising learning.

Improvements in agriculture were made as in manufacture. Refined sugar was supplied to the world from the fields and factories of Fars and Ahwaz ; cotton from Tyre, Beirut and Aleppo ; dates and other fruits, rice, barley and wheat from other parts of the Arab Empire. Basra had glass and soap factories. So had Samarra and Baghdad itself.

At Samarkand, Khorasan, Bokhara and Damascus looms were busy turning out carpets, brocades, satins and silks. In Tabriz and Ispahan there were State industries of gold and silver embroidery, and paper was made at Baghdad.

On the whole the Islamic contributions to sciences and arts are really unique. The " Book of Science and Wisdom " (the Holy Qur-án) itself gave an impetus to learning. It brushed up the brains of all its readers with the result that the Islamic world produced experts in all the branches of science and literature.

The latest achievement of the European mechanical skill is the flying machine, but the first two martyrs among the conquerors of the air were Muslims, centuries ago. Muslims compiled encyclopædias, such as " The Historical Dictionary of Sciences " by Muhammad Ibn Abdullah of Granada. Usamah wrote on topography and statistics. He was not only an eminent writer, but also a brave soldier who was killed in the invasion of France (720 A. C.). Ibn Síná (Avicenna), 1037 A.C., the world-famous physician, whose " Materia Medica " is still in full vogue all over India, was the father of present-day European Medical Sciences. He wrote on " The Treatment of Leprosy," " Methods of Preparing Diet and Medicine,"

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and on metaphysics, logic, philosophy, physics, ethics, etc. He anticipated the latest discoveries of the great modern Indian Scientist Dr. Bose by attributing a "kind of mind" to plants and vegetables. His writings were versatile as well as profound. Some of his famous works are :

- (i) Utility and Advantage of Science, (ii) Euclid,
- (iii) Astronomical Observations. (iv) Health and Treatment, (v) Mathematical Theorem,
- (vi) Physics and Metaphysics and (vii) An Encyclopædia of human knowledge in twenty volumes.

Ibn Síná alone stands head and shoulders above all his contemporaries in Europe and Asia and can compete favourably with modern physicians in Encyclopædic knowledge. Ar-Rázi (Rhazas) wrote comprehensively on "Small-pox." He anticipated the use of vaccine also. Up to the sixteenth century his great work was the subject of lectures in European universities.

Al-Kandi wrote two hundred books on such subjects as geometry, arithmetic, meteorology, medicine, optics and philosophy.

Abul Qasim Zahravi (Abucases) in his work on surgery has left minute details of the instruments and the different types of operation on men and women. Muslim surgeons used "to put their patients to sleep" before undertaking painful operations. The "sleeping draught" called *daru-e-baihoshi* in Persian was not unknown to Muslims.

Abu Mansur Mowaffik can be called the inventor of Chemical Pharmacy and Ibn Zoar (Avenzoar) was an authority on the same subject. Al-Bucasis of Cordova was an expert surgeon, more particularly in the obstetrical branch. In operations on females the services of properly trained women were secured.

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Chemistry was the particular science of Muslims. Professor Holmyard says :

“ Out of the inchoate body of mystical doctrine which represented chemistry in the Alexandrian School the Muslims had extracted a definite system in which experimental facts and theoretical speculations 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.”

Abu Musa Jabir, known to Europe as Geber, was the father of Al-Kimya (Chemistry). He discovered nitric acid and *aqua regia* as well as certain peculiarities of metals.

The Muslim contributions to the *Materia Medica* have been very large indeed. They introduced such medicines as alcohol, camphor, ammonia, sanna, amaltas, rhubarb, etc. etc. They created up-to-date pharmacies. The preparations of several drugs and ointments in use in our own days are due to them. Apothecaries of Europe still use Saracenic pharmaceutical terms like elixir, julip, syrup, naphtha, arak, etc. etc. Draper says : “ In whatever direction we may look, we meet, in various pursuits of peace and war, of letters and science, Saracenic vestiges.” Muslim chemists, like their fellow professionals to-day, prepared emulsions, syrups, ointments, pomades, etc., and Muslim physicians treated small-pox, typhoid, cholera, plague, cataract and hemorrhage, etc., centuries ago on almost the same lines as modern physicians do. The world-renowned Averroes (Ibn Rushd), on whose philosophy and works the famous Renan has written his “ *Averroes and Averroism* ” was a great Jurist. He was

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the chief Qazi (Justice) of Seville and later of Cordova. He combined with his knowledge of jurisprudence a knowledge of astronomy. He discovered sunspots. He tried "to unite the doctrines of Aristotle with those of the Qur-án." Ibn Rushd was a great scholar. Aristotle's philosophy was reshaped and revised by him and he must have found that all that was based on truth in that was covered by the Qur-án.

Abd ar Rahman Sufi improved the photometry of Stars. Al-Mamun had determined the obliquity of the ellipse. Abu Junas was a great astronomer. It was the translation of the works of Muhammad Fargani that introduced astronomy as a science in Europe. Abul Hasan speaks of tubes, to the extremities of which ocular and object diopters (sights) were attached, i.e., of telescopes. These were actually used at Maragha. Muslims were the first to build observatories in Europe. The first was established by Geber at Seville in 1196, but the most famous and complete was that of Maragha at Taurus built in 1259. Abul Maashir (Abumazar) and Abul Wafa were astronomers of great repute. Ibn Junas (1008) and Nasir ad-Din Tusi, Ibn Nabdi constructed astronomical tables of great merit. The Persian Poet Omar Khayyam, who is the most popular poet of his day in Europe, was a great astronomer. Many stars such as Fomalhaut (Fum-ul-hut), and signs of Zodiac still carry Arabic names in European languages. Many astronomical words are up to this day Arabic used in their corrupted form in Europe. Al-Batarqius and Sabit bin Qurrah determined the length of the year. Alhazen (Abul Hasan) discovered atmospheric refraction. Abu Osman was an expert zoologist. Ar-Razi, Al-Abbas, Al-Baithar wrote on botany. The last mentioned was a practical botanist. He wrote his valuable books after having travelled personally in different parts of the world collecting specimens. The first mentioned discovered sulphuric acid.

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Al-Beruni, the geographer, travelled to India. His visit was not like a present-day tourist. He lived among the people of the country (Hindus), studied their language, their literature, their philosophy, their customs and modes of life, their laws, their religion, the geographical and physical conditions of their country and the few sciences they could teach. He has left a monumental record of his travels in which he quotes from Plato and Homer. He lectured on physics, chronology, mathematics, astronomy and gems. He was followed by Nasir Khusro, who, like Ibn Batuta, had travelled over a large part of the then known world and has left a *Safarnámah*.

In history the names of Ibn Khaldún, Tabri, Mas'údi and Ibn Athir are world-renowned up to this day. The prologue of the first on the science of history is unparalleled.

Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Yahya (Ibn Bajja) besides being an eminent scientist, philosopher and historian was a remarkable musician and he attempted to introduce a musical scale playable by all nations alike which may be said to be the foundation stone on which the music of our days is written in Europe. Muslim inventions, now alas! mostly used by Europeans, are innumerable. They introduced the use of gunpowder in Europe. They invented the pendulum, the compass, the astrolabe and the areometer.

Muslims improved agriculture and brought to Europe rice, sugar, cotton, saffron (all adopted from Arabic words), mulberry, spinach, ginger, myrrh, bananas, etc., and nearly all the garden and orchard fruits. They introduced the Egyptian system of irrigation by flood gates, wheels and pumps. They improved the manufacture of textile fabrics, earthenware, iron and steel. Innumerable industries flourished under them like ship-building, iron and copper

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utensils, glass, woollen carpets, cotton clothes, paper, silk, etc. Up to the time that the English came to India, muslin, cotton-fine-cloth of Dacca and Tanda and the woollen shawls of Kashmir were imported to Europe for the use of the rich and prominent people there. Up to the present day they remain unsurpassed in beauty and refinement. So does the gold and silver embroidered work of Benares, and fine, hand-needle work of Lucknow.

Muslims of old mastered every art, every science. They were experts in physics. They introduced Algebra, sines and cosines in trigonometry, and the tangent in astronomical calculations. Abu Raihan "was the first of the race of men" to construct a table of specific gravities. Muslims had invented areometers to measure the temperature. They had several kinds of clepsydra. They had detected variation in density due to heat.

Abul Hasan (about 1100 A.C.) was the first to trace the curvilinear path of a ray of light through air. He is best known to Europe through his optical works which have been translated into Latin. He was the first to correct the Greek misconception as to the nature of vision showing by anatomical investigations and geometrical calculations that the rays of light come from external objects to the eye and do not issue forth from the eye. He determined that the retina is the seat of vision and that impressions made by light upon it are conveyed along the optic nerve to the brain. He explains that we see single when we use both eyes because of the formation of the visual images on symmetrical portions of the two retinas. He is perfectly aware that the atmosphere decreases in density with increase of height. He shows the cause of "illusions" and why we actually see the sun and the moon before they have risen and after they have set. He explains the causes of the twinkling of the fixed stars. He explains the nature of the twilight. He determines

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the height of the atmosphere, deciding that its limit is nearly $58\frac{1}{4}$ miles. In his work, "The Book of the Balance of Wisdom." Abul Hasan sets forth the connections between the weight of atmosphere and of gravity. He knows correctly the relation between the velocities, spaces and times of falling bodies. He knows "capillary attraction." The determinations of the density of bodies as given by Abul Hasan are very near to the determinations of the present age. In the case of Mercury they are even more exact than those of the last century.

Draper, after describing some of the discoveries of Abul Hasan, says: "Though more than seven centuries part him from our time, the physiologists of this age may accept him as their compeer since he received and defended the doctrine now forming its way, of the progressive development of animal form." "Not one of the purely mathematical or mixed or practical sciences," says Draper again, "was omitted by the Arabs." And this was at a time when the Christian peasant, fever-stricken and overtaken by accident, hied to the nearest saint's shrine and expected a miracle. And when the students of sciences were persecuted and even burnt alive as sorcerers and witches in Europe.

MUHAMMAD : HIS LIFE AND MISSION

BY M. ABUL HASANAT

(Continued from Vol. XXV. page 166.)

It is an erroneous conception of the Prophet to consider him a mere automaton moved solely by God or a mere gramophone through which God chose to speak. We must not forget the great part played by him, for it was he who took up the cause of man and on man's behalf sought for Divine guidance. The Qur-án embodies the broad features ; the details were worked out by him. It was the honest craving of his soul for its own uplift as for that of others. and the Qur-án represents only his soul's response to stimuli from the Source. He set the example in his own life, and based his precepts on the highest good to Humanity.

Thus we can place him before the world as a man and a reformer. Immense is his contribution to the world's progressive thought, wonderful his solution of the practical problems of our lives ! He does not forget the world altogether. He indicates the true relationship between man and man. If we owe our existence to the Will of One, if we are absolutely powerless in the matter of our own being, should we not discard all theories of high birth and blue blood ? He places mankind on an equal footing. A common fraternity embraces all. He adopts Zaid, a slave, as his son ; he marries him to a proud girl of the Quraish, and when he sends out an expedition to Muta in Syria, he nominates Zaid as its leader. There is no murmur or grumbling among those of proud Quraish descent, that they have been so placed under a slave, for Islam had erased all such notions.

When the Meccans arrive as exiles at Medina the new converts acclaim them as brothers and go halves with them in their homesteads and fortunes.

MUHAMMAD : HIS LIFE AND MISSION

A Prince of a certain state embraces Islam. He comes to visit the Ka'aba. In the vast crowd that gathers, a poor Muslim inadvertently tramples on his cloth. The Prince is enraged and strikes the Muslim. The latter retaliates. The Prince complains to Umar and urges his claim as a Prince. Umar replies, "Now, no more of that. Islam has wiped all those notions out. It is a private wrong and, if you please, you yourself did the wrong thing." The Prince foams and frets, swears he will leave the Faith if Islam does not respect his position. Umar replies that he does not care. "The law of God cannot be altered to suit personal whims."

And this brotherhood in Islam has come to stay. History records how slaves have married princesses and ascended thrones. In the present world to-day, when geographical limits define Nations, when racial animosities are reasserting themselves, it is the Islamic brotherhood that remains unaffected. Islam has beautifully arranged that Muslims meet one another. Take for instance the congregational prayer. The daily prayers bring round high and low of the same household together. The *Juma'* gathers together weekly people of an entire village or it may be a larger area. Rich and poor, high and low, friend and enemy, stand shoulder to shoulder and forget all distinctions, all differences of opinion. The *'Ids* collect a far greater number, and the *Haj'* is a supreme institution. There it is that the reality of Islamic Brotherhood can be fully understood. The Turk, the Egyptian, the Bengalee, the Chinaman—all stand on a common platform, worship the same God, greet one another in the warmest terms and look, each upon each, as but parts of one body. Nobody is conscious of any flaw in the relationship; none claims precedence. It is there that the Muslims, scattered the world over, forget the accidental barriers, and, moved by a community of purpose

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and interest, are in a mood to exclaim with the famous Poet :

“ *Chin o Arab hamara, Hindostan hamara,
Muslim hain ham-watan hai sara jahan hamara.* ”

“ China as well as Arabia are our homelands and so is India
We are Muslim ; the whole world is our motherland.” (*Iqbal*)

The Prophet was the spiritual head, and later the temporal head as well. His task it was to indicate to the individual the path of righteousness, to see that, collectively, society was well-ordered. He sets up an ideal democracy in practice. When the Roman Emperors and the Persian monarchs were rolling in wealth and revelling in irresponsible luxuries, he chose to live as a poor man with nothing, beside his poor homestead, to call his own. The Mosque that belonged to God was his Court and Council Chamber. He prayed there with others, sat there deliberating on the problems of the state. At home, he was the same old Muhammad, mending his own clothes, working for his own bread. The Public Treasury was for the people. The disabled and the decrepit, the widows and the orphans, were numbered and each had an allowance from the Public Fund. The rich paid the poor tax, the *Zakat*. He created the right for the poor to the purse of the rich. He brooked no distinction in the eye of the Law. He himself claimed no special exemption. He encouraged free trading but condemned “ Usury ” in the strongest terms. Thus we see him in peace and at war, at home and abroad, as a humble preacher and an undisputed dictator—but in all these phases, the true Man in him shines forth pure and undimmed.

He raised the status of women. Girls were being buried alive at birth. A girl-child was regarded as a curse. Islam declared, “ Woman is the sovereign of your house—the same is due to her as is due from her.” Islam denounces celibacy. “ *An-nikahu nisful Iman* ”—

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“Marriage is half of the Faith,” he says. It was never intended that a man should live by himself. It would make him absolutely self-centred and atrociously selfish. Satan would far more easily play with him for there are in him in such circumstances the promptings of evil passions. Even though he were to succeed in keeping straight, he would still be shirking the great tests of our lives as human beings—the great responsibilities of a husband, the selfless struggles of a father in maintaining his children and bringing them up, the widening sympathies for relations growing out of family connections, and eventually the kinship to the entire human race !

Look at the Prophet himself. He had a family even as other people have. He had to work for that family. He had the same pleasures out of family life—he had to shed tears as he saw dear ones parting. “Be good to the family,” was his cry. “The best of you,” he said, “is he who is the best disposed towards his own family.” Charity begins at home, so also does the sympathy for humanity. The poet says, “*Dard-e-dil ke waste paida kiya insan ko*” (“Man has been created for the sake of human sympathy). This is the true interpretation of the Islamic idea.

Umar was one day fondling his children. A governor spoke disapprovingly : “I have so many children,” he said, “but I seldom feel disposed like this towards them,” thus hinting that the Caliph was perhaps a bit too tender. “Is that so ?” the Caliph wondered : “Then how can I expect you to extend your sympathy to the people at large—to children of other people of whom you have been made the guardian ?”

It is in this aspect of Islam that its practicability lies. Islam recognises the family, the neighbours, the fellow-countrymen and the people at large in their relationship with the individual. The great test of man consists in his true behaviour towards the Creator, and

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towards his fellow-men. The Prophet visited his sick neighbours. He has laid it down as a virtue for Muslims. He even visited his enemies on their sick beds. A certain woman used to scatter thorns every day on the way the Prophet used, to take revenge for the death of her son who had been killed in a fight with the Muslims. He carefully avoided them, until one day he found there were no thorns on the way. He felt aggrieved, and thought within himself "Surely the woman must be ailing." He visited her, and comforted her on her sick bed. Could such an example be set by a renouncing *Fakir* or a secluded *Sanyasi* ?

The impetus he gave to education is incomparable. "*Al-ilmo farizaturun ala kulli Muslimin wa Muslimatin.*" "Learning is compulsory on every Muslim, male and female." Knowledge and learning were no longer the monopolies of priests or of a favoured class. We talk of compulsory education nowadays but it was laid down centuries ago by Muhammad. If we have not profited by his lessons, we have been the poorer ourselves. He expected man to study nature, to unravel its mysteries and understand his true place in the economy of the world. The book of Nature, as well as books revealed by God and those written by men, were thrown open—open to men as well as women, rich as well as poor, high as well as low. He enjoined upon man to exert himself in the pursuit of knowledge, and gave it a position equal to dying in holy warfare. Thus Muslim scholars wrote on the arts and on the sciences. Science has done wonders. It has subdued the forces of Nature to add to the comfort of man, as well as to assist in his self-destruction. Islam has never fettered the scientist. It encourages him always. If it has laid stress on anything it is on this, namely, that man should by no means forget his true position; should not flatter himself too highly on account of his own little achievements and, most of all,

MR. H. G. WELLS ON ISLAM

should not relegate to the background the supreme source of all illumination. The deepest scientist ought to be the most religious, for he it is that realises the immensity of the Power behind Nature, and the insignificance of his own intellect. It is a pity that, in the estimate of their own might, scientists to-day should forget the Almighty; that the amenities of Nature should be enjoyed by the favoured classes to the exclusion of those that are weak, and that the unequal distribution of wealth should be making the gulf between man and man wider and wider. While millions are struggling for their very food others of their fellow-men are rolling in superfluity of wealth. No such condition of affairs would have been possible in the state conceived of by the Prophet, and set up by himself and the Caliphs immediately following him.

Islam has solved the puzzling problems of the past and it will solve many a problem with which the world is faced to-day. It will transcend countries, climes and ages. If the world has to be grateful for the lessons it has received from great men from time to time, the Prophet of the Desert is not the least deserving of its gratitude and that for all times.

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“A few words of digression upon the future of Islam may not be out of place here. The idea of a militant Christendom has vanished from the world. The last pretensions of Christian propaganda have been buried in the Balkan trenches. A unification of Africa under Latin auspices carries with it now no threat of missionary invasion. Africa will be a fair field for all religions, and the religion to which the negro will take will be the religion that best suits his needs. That religion, we are told by nearly every one who has a right to speak upon

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such questions, is Islam, and its natural propagandist is the Arab.

Both the French and British have the strongest interest in the revival of Arabic culture. Let the German learn Turkish if it pleases him. Through all Africa and Western Asia there is a great to-morrow for a renascent Islam under Arab auspices. Constantinople, that venal city of the Waterways, sitting like Asenath at the ford, has corrupted all who came to her; she has been the paralysis of Islam. But the Islam of the Turk is a different thing from the Islam of the Arab. That was one of the progressive impulses in the world of man. It is our custom to underrate the Arab's contribution to civilisation quite absurdly in comparison without doubt to the Hebrew and Greek. It is to the initiatives of Islamic culture, for example, that we owe our numerals, the cult of modern mathematics, and the science of Chemistry. The British have already set themselves to the establishment of Islamic university teaching in Egypt, but that is the mere first stroke of the pick at the opening of the mine. English, French, Russian, Arabic, Hindustani, Spanish, Italian: these are the great world languages that most concern the future of civilisation from the point of view of Peace Alliance that impends. No country can afford to neglect any of these languages, but as a matter of primary importance I would say, for the British, Hindustani, for the Americans, Russian or Spanish, for the French and Belgians and Italians, Arabic. These are the directions in which the duty of understanding is most urgent for each of these peoples and the path of opportunity plainest.

The disposition to underrate temporarily depressed nations, races and cultures is a most irrational, prevalent and mischievous form of stupidity. It distorts our entire outlook towards the future. The British reader can see its absurdity most easily when he reads the ravings of

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some patriotic German upon the superiority of the "Teuton" over the Italians and the Greeks—to whom we owe most things of importance in European civilisation. Equally silly stuff is to be read in British and American books about "Asiatics." And was there not some fearful rubbish, not only in German but in English and French about the "decadence" of France? But we are learning—rapidly. When I was a student in London thirty years ago, we regarded Japan as a fantastic joke; the comic opera, "The Mikado," still preserves that foolish phase for the admiration of posterity. And to-day, there is a quite unjustifiable tendency to ignore the quality of the Arab and of his religion. Islam is an open-air religion, noble and simple in its broad conceptions; it is nonetheless vital from Nigeria to China because it has sickened in the closeness of Constantinople. The French, the Italians, the British have to reckon with Islam and the Arab; where the continental deserts are, there the Arabs are; and their culture will never be destroyed and replaced over these regions by Europeanism. The Allies who prepare the Peace of the World have to make their peace with that. And when I foreshadow this necessary liaison of the French and Arabic cultures, I am thinking not only of the Arab that is, but of the Arabic that is to come. The whole trend of events in Asia Minor, the breaking up and decapitation of the Ottoman Empire and the Euphrates invasion, points to a great revival of Mesopotamia at first under European direction. The vast system of irrigation that was destroyed by the Mongol armies of Hulagu in the thirteenth century will again become populous. But the local type will prevail. The new population of Mesopotamia will be neither European nor Indian; it will be Arabic and with its concentration Arabia will lay hold of the printing press. A new intellectual movement in Islam, a renascent Bagdad, is as inevitable as 1950."—*What is Coming.*

MUSLIMS IN ROUMANIA

BY PROF. M. WALI KHAN, EDITOR, THE "CRESCENT."

At the outset I crave the indulgence of the readers of the *Islamic Review* for a slight digression—an outline of Roumanian History.

Only a few decades ago Roumania consisted of merely two provinces, or, to be more exact, of two principalities, namely, Wallactria and Moldavia. The native princes, styled "voevods" in the local lingo, owed nominal allegiance to the Sublime Porte, but were hostile to their liege-lord, the Sultan-Caliph, owing to the nefarious activities of Czarist Russia.

To make matters worse for the Suzerain Power, that invidious European curse—"peaceful penetration"—was resorted to by the Greek Orthodox Church, who thus formed the advance guard of the Russian bear.

Undue Turkish forbearance encouraged these wolves in sheep's clothing to incite the illiterate and simple peasants to open rebellion, with their slogan, "Destroy the last vestige of the terrible Turk."

Massacres, *en masse*, of Muslims—men, women and children—were perpetrated in the name of orthodox Christianity. Orgies, reminiscent of the gruesome scenes enacted now in Spain, became then the order of the day. At long last, the tolerant and slow-moving Turk of those days gave up his "Yawash, Yawash," i.e., slow movement or action.

Taken unawares and incensed at the treacherous and cowardly behaviour of their Christian subjects, the Sublime Porte decided to put an end, once and for all, to these wanton misdeeds. Turkish troops nipped the mischief in the bud, and the two disloyal voevods (princes) were taken in captivity to Constantinople, where they received pardon at the gracious hands of the reigning Sultan. Such is the glorious, unbroken record of Muslim magnanimity, dating from the time of the sagacious ruler

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of mankind, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, of hallowed memory.

Can Dame Europe, with her talk of civilization, humanity and her plague of "isms," cite a single instance of proving true to her pretensions?

To prevent a recurrence of such outrages, Turkey, very wisely, poured into the disturbed zone a portion of her sturdy Anatolian population. These imported Anatolians were the forefathers of the Muslims of this country.

I decline to encroach further on the valuable space in the pages of the *Islamic Review*; otherwise the history of their patient labour and industry, which turned the rugged landscape into a happy valley, would read more like a romance than a *fait accompli*. Their accomplished facts certainly gave the lie direct to savage Europe's turkophobe adage, "no grass grows under the Turk's feet." Let those innocent lambs—I mean the gangsters of the press and Christian missionaries—pay a visit, if only once in their lives in search of truth, to the two Muslim districts of Dobraja and Silistria, and see things for themselves.

The Immigration Agreement recently concluded between Turkey and Roumania seals their fate. Thanks to Angora's solicitude, Turkish steamers—modern, spick-and-span—have lately been calling at Constanza, Roumania's port on the Black Sea, to pick up those families who have been departing by themselves. Their joy and gratification can better be imagined than described.

If this exodus continues, it is estimated that this country will be entirely denuded of her sturdy and brave Muslim population.

A highly-placed Roumanian bewailed this irreparable loss. He told me that they (the Muslims) were the best fighters, and they could be implicitly relied upon. Roumania's loss is, however, Turkey's gain.

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In the capital here, there are nearly a thousand Muslims—Turks, Iranians (Persians), Kurds and Albanians. There is a beautiful tiny mosque situated on the lake in the middle of King Carol Park. Once a week Friday services are held there. The Imam is a young Tartar student whose knowledge of, and interest in, the Qur-*ân* is as superficial and defective as that of any so-called Orientalist in the West. Apparently it is no part of his duties to preach to the assembled masses, most of whom are, unfortunately, illiterate. The Imam before him was fairly educated though he, too, was by no means an *‘âlim* or doctor of Islam. He quitted his stipendiary Imamate to gain a little more filthy lucre. That is the so-called nationalist Tartar's sense of obligation to Islam and the Muslims.

Three Muslim States—Turkey, Iran (Persia) and Egypt—are represented at the Roumanian Court. Of these, the Turkish Legation alone has the credit of receiving Muslims and Muslimahs with open arms on festive days. The popular Minister and Madame Saleby Bey extend their traditional Turkish hospitality to one and all, and make them feel at home.

Another good, perhaps the noblest, Islamic act of H. E. Saleby Bey was the rescue from ruin and obscurity of the Muslim cemetery here. He found it in a dreadful state—dilapidated and covered with undergrowth and brushwood. His patient dealings with the Roumanian authorities restored the *Mazar Jilik*, as the graveyard is known in Turkish, to a fairy garden. More than a thousand tombs of "Shuhada" (martyrs), Turkish soldiers who fell in the World War (1914-1918), have been restored, their names and regiments deciphered and inscribed on their tombstones. The Muslim cemetery has now become an attractive, though pathetic, centre for visitors, both Muslim and non-Muslim.

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**LA ILAHA IL-ALLAH MUHAMMAD UN-
RASUL-ALLAH**

BY THE HONOURABLE MR. M. T. AKBAR, K.C.

VIII.

(Continued from Volume XXV, page 110.)

The first five verses of the *Surah al-Mulk* (Chapter 67) is as follows :

1. “ Blessed is He in Whose hand is the Sovereignty,
and He is Able to do all things.
2. Who hath created life and death that He may
try you, which of you is best in conduct. And
He is the Mighty, the Forgiving.
3. Who hath created the seven heavens in harmony.
You see no incongruity in the creation of the
Beneficent God ; then look again, can you see
any disorder ?
4. Then look again and yet again ; thy sight will
return unto thee weakened and made dim.
5. And verily We have beautified the world’s heaven
with lamps and We have made them missiles
for the devils, and for them We have prepared
the doom of flame.”

Each line in these five verses has its special significance, as indeed it is so in every line of the Qur-án. Allah in this magnificent chapter calls attention to the harmony that is in Nature, that is the rule of law. And He asks man to reflect on it and dares them to find any flaw or defect in the laws of nature. He also asks man to try and pierce through these laws and He assures man that if he were to do so, his intellect and his senses will begin to reel and that man will only find himself staring at himself ; his intellect will only recoil on himself. Now compare this passage with the latest discovery of science as recorded by the greatest living scientists of the present age. Professor Sir Arthur S. Eddington says as follows

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in one of his latest books : “ We have found a strange footprint on the shores of the unknown. We have devised profound theories, one after another, to account for its origin. At last, we have succeeded in reconstructing the creature that made the footprint. And lo, it is our own.”

Dr. Paul Karlson in his great book “ Du und die Natur ” (“ You and the Universe,” translated by Bernard Miall) begins his preface as follows :

“ We physicists have always endeavoured to obtain a clear image of the environing Universe ; that, after all, is what we are for, and we have regarded our problem as difficult, but solvable. We have seen our goal in the distance—the Universe itself—and towards it we have eagerly fought our way, now rapidly and directly, now along by-paths and through obstructions ; we reinforced our eyes with spectacles and telescopes and we thought we could see a clear, sunny landscape with trees, houses, and machinery. Now we stand close before it, and with a shudder we realize that all the imagined clearness has vanished. We are confronted by vague, colourless, drifting wreaths of mist, which melt away as we approach them more closely. Indeed, we could almost fear that the whole animated landscape was a mere delusion : so many smears on our lenses. This is what is known as the revolution of physics ; and it is of this revolution that we shall speak in this book.”

In this book Karlson demonstrates that modern physics having reduced the whole universe to electricity, positive and negative, has still further reduced it to equations in mathematics. These equations explain the universe in mathematical language, but they are incomprehensible to man. He cannot visualize the truths demonstrated in the equations, much less conceive them.

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They, however, reflect the truth, because with their help every phenomenon in Nature can be explained and predicted. The final result is as exactly stated in the *Surah-al-Mulk*. Man can see for himself the rule of law in Nature, and on research he can even put down the course of natural phenomenon, in mathematical language, but he cannot pierce through these equations and get at reality. In the end he is face to face with these equations, which are the products of his own intellect. In the words of Eddington, the footprint is our own. This is how Karlson ends his book :

“ So, in the semi-darkness of a room at twilight, shapes and shadows form before the dreaming eye ; a cushion, thrown down at random, and the deep cavity of a cupboard, give rise to mysterious figures ; a grimacing, menacing face seems to emerge, or dim mountain landscape. Suddenly my attention is directed to the fact ; I fix my eyes upon the strange form, and it melts away—light and shadow in the creases of the cushion—nothing more. In this peculiar parallel of matter, life and intellect, we ought perhaps to see something more than chance. For centuries the world was regarded as a great piece of clockwork, the mechanical plaything of a god. The image proved to be inadequate, and had to be discarded. The small, rigid, lifeless pellets, tossed hither and thither by inexorable mechanical laws, have disappeared. The heavy substance of the matter of which they were formed and in which they remained imprisoned has gradually evaporated. Electrical fields, oscillating tensions, have filled space and banished the mechanical models. And this image, too, is melting in the light of the new knowledge. Only mathematical symbols, the creation of the intellect, are left.”

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I ask my readers in all sincerity : are these five verses alone not sufficient to demonstrate the Divine origin of the Holy Qur-án, the life-blood and soul of all Muslims ?

When the scientist tries to probe beyond the barrier placed by his own intellect, in the words of the Holy Qur-án (see Chapter 72, verses 8, 9 and 10), "We had sought to reach heaven, but we found it filled with strong guards and flames."

9. "And we used to sit in some of the sitting places thereof to steal a hearing, but he who would try to listen now would find a flame lying in wait for him.
10. "And we know not whether harm is boded unto all who are in the earth or whether their Lord intendeth guidance for them."

The flame that scorches the scientist in his further research is the confusion which has entered as an element in modern science, barring further progress, *e.g.*, the theory of indeterminacy, the expanding of the universe, Planck's constant h , the velocity of light, etc.

Let me quote again from Karlson :

"The layman thinks too objectively—it is for this reason that he finds it so difficult to understand modern physics. But until the present century all the physicists had thought thus objectively, and only recently have our eyes been opened and our minds liberated from the fetters of superannuated modes of thought. Physics has had to take up an absolutely different standpoint. It seems that our human contribution to the perception of Nature cannot be evaded ; that we shall possibly never know Nature herself—that which lies at the root of everything—but only our perception, our image of Nature ; that the smears upon our spectacles are unavoidable.

“Every attempt to penetrate into the interior of an atom and dissect its mechanism destroys the thing we wished to investigate: the functioning of the mechanism—just as every attempt to track down the mystery of life by dissecting the individual parts of a living creature, down to its very atoms, destroys life itself. Niels Bohr has given expression to the idea that something more is concealed behind this external analogy: ‘In every experiment on living organisms a certain uncertainty must remain—an uncertainty in respect of the physical conditions to which the organism is subject. And we are forced to conclude that the minimum of freedom which we are obliged, in this respect, to grant the organisms, is quite great enough. It enables them, in some degree, to conceal their ultimate secrets from us. From this point of view the existence of life must be conceived as an elementary fact for which no more definite reason can be given. It must be accepted as the starting-point of biology; much as in the realm of the material we accept Planck’s constant h , which appears, from the standpoint of the classic mechanical physics, to be an irrational element, unsusceptible of proof, but which, together with the existence of the smallest particles, such as electrons, protons, forms the basis of atomic physics.’ ”

Further, in the words of the Jinn, in the second passage from the Qur-án quoted above, man cannot say whether his efforts to probe into the secrets of Nature with their consequent discoveries bode evil to this earth or the opposite. What with poison-gas, fighting-planes, tanks and the other paraphernalia of modern war, the condition of the world at the present juncture is exactly reflected in this verse from the Holy Book.

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In my last article I referred to the statement in the Holy Qur-án that everything is created by Allah in pairs. We see the pair even in the mathematical equations, the positive and the negative symbols. We also see the pair in the Islamic formula of faith. The first half referring to Allah is the positive pole and the second referring to the Holy Prophet is the negative. To comprehend the mystery of life and the ultimate reality both halves of the Islamic formula of faith must be understood and conjoined, and it is only then that the ultimate reality, which is a Unity, can be dimly sensed.

As stated in my last article, the female half of man's unity must be in touch throughout life with the male half, if man is to be himself. This is the true *Dhikr Allah* so frequently referred to in the Qur-án, as the greatest of all prayers, and which gives self-possession to man's soul (13 : 28). But (and this is what I wish to impress on my readers), this male half of man is the Haqiqat al-Muhammadiyah, the reality of Muhammad, which is implanted in every human heart. It is not the direct reality of Allah, which cannot be borne by any created being, but the projection into or reflection from the spirit of our Holy Prophet of so much of Allah's attributes as He has measured out for man in this life of ours on earth, out of His great mercy. There is a *Hadith* of our Holy Prophet relating to one of his companions, who was a Jewish convert to Islam. When the Jews of a certain district were besieged and surrounded by the Muslims this companion was sent to the Jews, who wished to negotiate for terms with one who was a Jew at one time. This *Ashabi* in a moment of inadvertence blurted out to the Jews the probable fate that was in store for them if they rejected Islam. He immediately begged Allah for forgiveness and vowed that until Allah forgave him for his sin he would die of starvation. With this resolve he chained himself to one of the pillars in the Mosque at

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Medina (named after him to this day) and refused all food. He was slowly dying of starvation and when the other *Ashabis* begged our Holy Prophet to ask for Allah's forgiveness for him, our Holy Prophet replied that if the *Ashabi* had only come to him direct he would have prayed for him, but as the *Ashabi* had appealed to Allah direct he must wait for the forgiveness from Allah Himself. I wish my readers to reflect on this *Hadith* to realise why it is Syed Ahmad Badawee (the great Muslim saint buried at Tantra) referred to our Holy Prophet as the opener of the easiest door to Allah. They will also realise why it was that the great Muslim saints, Rabiah and Mansúr al-Halláj, and the Yogi Indian saints had to undergo such intense suffering in their attempt to reach Allah direct without going through the easy path indicated in the Islamic Article of Faith.

The Holy Qur-án repeatedly refers to the all-encompassing mercy of God and that this quality surrounds everything and every person. The Qur-án also speaks of man as the vicegerent of Allah on this earth. If so, why should the prizes of life only go to a few extraordinary persons who have the capacity and the time to lead unnatural, abnormal lives and to play fantastic tricks with their bodies and minds? Readers of Paul Brunton's "A Search in Secret India" and Upton Sinclair's "What God Means to Me" will understand what I mean.

To us Muslims the rules laid down by our Prophet are sufficient to train us to be perfect slaves of Allah. Allah Himself asks us to call down blessings on our Holy Prophet and the very form of the words in which we ask Allah to shower His blessings on our Prophet indicates that by this means we can not only restore self-possession to our souls but get relief and comfort in our misery and distress and protection from danger, for does not Allah Himself say in the Qur-án (Chapter 9, verses 128 and 129) :

“Certainly an Apostle has come to you from among yourselves, grievous to him is your falling into distress, excessively solicitous respecting you, to the believers he is compassionate, merciful.

But if they turn back, say: ‘Allah is sufficient for me, there is no god but He, on Him do I rely and He is the Lord of Mighty Power.’”

In reading the *Salawât* my readers should try to form mental pictures, for instance, the picture of the holy tomb at Medina, and it may be that one day their persistence will be rewarded and they will behold a sight with their inner vision that will live with them for ever, in this life and the hereafter.

Is it a wonder then that our Prophet in his mystic moments said that Allah addressed him as the light of His Light, the secret of His Secret, and the treasury of His Knowledge, and that but for him Allah would not have created the whole universe? It is only the perfected soul who can understand the inner significance of everything that occurs in Nature at every instant, not only as the human artist sees them but as the Divine Artist designed them to be seen. It is only this soul which acts as the perfect mirror of Nature.

ISLAM—THE LEAVEN OF IRANIAN CULTURE

BY H. H. THE AGHA KHAN

Just as in ancient Egypt, so in ancient and pre-Islamic Persia, philosophical, spiritual, poetical thought and effort (or such parts as still remain) are singularly arid and (at least to us modern men) rather repetitions of vain-glorious titles or somewhat unconvincing and worldly-wise prayers. It may be that man at that stage had all the great powers of execution and enterprise, the fruits of which we see in the vast monuments of ancient Egypt, and the remains of similar monuments in Western Asia and Iran. But till the impact with Judaism, Christianity and Islam, man in Western Asia had not yet learned the full value of the greatest treasure in his possession—his own entity and being.

Whatever the cause, after Islam had for three or four centuries taken deep root in Iran, the genius of the race blossomed out, and for all the centuries right down to our own times that garden, in spite of the terrible visitations that so often submerged it, has never ceased to bring forth roses of rare fragrance—*Asiatic Review*.

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CORRESPONDENCE

BARNET, HERTS.

DEAR SIR,

It is a pleasure, let alone a duty, for me to write and thank you for your kindness and hospitality extended to Mr. Kitchen and myself at your celebration of the Eid al-Azha festival to-day.

We were greatly impressed by the sincerity and happiness of all those present. It would be better if many of we Christian people followed that example and tried to carry out the selfless ideals mentioned by the Imam.

I had the added pleasure of unexpectedly meeting the Chairman of your Muslim Society, Mr. deYorke, who was at school in my year.

Once again we thank you for your welcome to us.

Yours very sincerely,

JOHN W. BEARD.

22nd February, 1937.

STREATHAM, LONDON, S.W. 16.

THE IMAM,

WOKING MOSQUE.

DEAR SIR,

I am anxious to know about the activities, etc., of Islam in England, and wonder if I might visit your Mosque some afternoon this week. I wonder if 3 or 3-30 would be a convenient time. Are you far from the station at Woking? Should also be glad to have copies of any literature you may have.

Yours truly,

(REV.) G. F. S. G.

24th January, 1937.

CAMBRIDGE.

DEAR SIR,

Having seen from the Railway Board offering to send particulars of Islam, I thought I might write and ask you to send them to me. As a Christian, I think it is necessary to know the message of other religions, and so should be very much obliged if you would kindly send me the information to which you refer.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours truly,

G. H. W. B.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Primate's Recall to Religion

The broadcast speech of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Cosmo Gordon Lang, on the 27th December 1936, is still ringing in our ears. It was a recall to God and religion, which, as the leader of religion in this country, he certainly owed to the nation. He is wise enough to perceive the forces of disintegration that are threatening the social life of the nation and in his pious indignation he gave the nation a stern warning. We congratulate the Primate on his courage and frankness. His spiritual sense was at its best, when, to serve as a warning to the nation, he quoted the following words from the Bible: "If thou do at all forget the Lord thy God I testify against *you* that *ye* shall surely perish."

The Antagonists of Religion

It seems, in the opinion of the Primate, that the slackening of religious feeling has come from two quarters—from the economic theory of social life as upheld by Communism, and from the advancement of science providing the "ever-increasing haste and hurry and distraction of modern life."

Communism and Religion

One may rightly wonder what an economic theory like that of Communism has to do with religion and God. It is natural that Communists will fret and fume against all other economic systems and the administrations based on them, but why should they be so anxious to disprove the existence of God and to dislodge religious principles from people's minds?

The truth is that, as exemplified in history, the Church has come to be associated with capitalist exploitation and persecution. In spite of the rebuke of the Master, "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God," the Church

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has never sided with the poor and the down-trodden, but always with the rich and the powerful. It is this which accounts for the fury against the Church that is characteristic of proletariat movements in Europe; and, as the people here cannot think of God and religion apart from the Church, this fury also involves God and all that religion stands for. We wish the masses of the West had known that there are other religions and systems of religious life besides the one upheld by the Christian Church.

Communism and the Church

Communism, therefore, is not ultimately a danger to religion as such, although it seems so for the time being. Knowledge of real religion will ultimately bring the fanatical amongst the Communists around the banner of God and all that it means, although in their ignorance they are striving at the moment to pull it down. For whatever damage this drastic movement has caused, and is still causing to religion in general, we have to thank the Church of which the Primate is an important figure. Whatever may be the complaints of religious humanity against Communism, they will be far less than those against the Church which is solely responsible for the whole trouble. That the fury of the much-calumniated Communist movement is not directed against religion as such but against the Church is shown by the recent declaration of religious freedom in Soviet Russia.

And a fresh evidence of this truth is afforded by the report of the British delegation that was sent to investigate the complaints of religious persecution against the Socialist Government of Spain. This delegation consisted of some leading figures of the Church in this country, and they are unanimous that there is no anti-God movement in Socialist Spain: but there is certainly an anti-clerical spirit everywhere, and even this anti-clerical

NOTES AND COMMENTS

feeling is absent in places where the Church has sided with the popular movement. So, in the long run, it is not religion that will have to suffer at the hands of the Communists, but the institution which the Primate has the misfortune to represent, *viz.*, the Church. We are sorry for this, but "God fulfils Himself in many ways, lest one good custom should corrupt the world."

Science and Religion

Speaking about the contribution of scientific advancement to the nation's indifference to God and religion, the Archbishop said: "Consider the influence of the new scientific outlook on the universe and on man's life within it, which seems to see no place for a personal God. Consider, perhaps, most of all, the ever-increasing haste and hurry and distraction of modern life. God is not so much denied as crowded out."

Arising out of this statement by the Archbishop there are three questions to which he ought to reply. First: Does he propose that in order to be religious the nation should go back to the times when science had not so advanced? We shall not be surprised if he has this at the back of his mind, as this is the traditional attitude of the Church towards science, however much the Christian enthusiasts may attribute the scientific progress of Europe to the religion of Christianity. Second: If it is a fact that, in Christendom to-day, God is not denied but merely crowded out of the national life, is that any prerogative of Christendom? Is it not the fact that the same was the case, and is the case even to-day, with all pagan nations? No pagan nation has ever denied the existence of God. Such nations are merely too busy to think of God.

The third question which is connected with the second is: "Is science actually responsible for people's preoccupations which are detrimental to religion?"

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As men of common sense, we fail to see how that can be. The diversions that take people's minds away from God are practically the same to-day as they ever were. Eating, drinking, sexual indulgence, games, trivial entertainments and exciting competitions—these are, briefly speaking, people's preoccupations to-day, and we can emphatically say that they were the same even before Jesus was born to Mary. Neither do we think that these have any stronger attractions for people in our times than they had in times gone by. Science may have given some of them a new form but the attraction of novelty, as we know, lasts for only a short time. It may also be urged that science had multiplied these diversions, but, to our mind, the Devil's snares have ever been too numerous or else how are we to account for the repeated forgetfulness and lapses not only of other religious communities, but also of that community which bears the personal seal of God—we mean the great Hebrew people. Even if it be granted that amusements are far more numerous to-day than ever they were to our thinking, the quicker means of communication are sufficient to combat and, as it were to counterbalance their multiplicity and thus leave us free for a timely thought of God and of the life spiritual. For our part, we fail to see what fundamental difference science has made with regard to the unbridled orgies of sensual pleasure indulged in by men and women, whether in this scientific age of ours or in the pre-scientific age of the Greeks and the Romans. After all that can be said for the distractions caused by the marvels of science, we know that there is a goodly percentage of English people rich and poor, who suffer from no other trouble than want of occupation.

The Poor—and Irreligion

The fact that baffles our understanding of the Primate's statement most is the attitude of the Western

NOTES AND COMMENTS

poor towards religion. Granting that the attractions of sensual life are too numerous to allow rich modern men to think of God, the poor are certainly expected to be immune from the disease of irreligiousness, as they are not blessed with the resources that can buy these attractions, or, at all events, to be comparatively more religious than the rich. What, however, do we find in fact? If the rich are simply indifferent towards religion, or sneer at it, the poor are found to be positively opposed to it. We know very well who swell the ranks of atheistic communism. This is, indeed, a new feature of irreligiousness, and it is peculiar to Christianity. It certainly smashes the theory of Dr. Lang that the luxuries and the attractions of worldly life are the causes of all the Godlessness that is prevalent to-day.

The Church and the Nation

Whatever may be the causes, the fact remains that God has actually ceased to be a force in the minds of the Western nations. and the Archbishop spoke a simple truth when he said that God has no place in an average Englishman's life to-day. Nevertheless, the Primate, while saying this was unconsciously accusing himself or, at least, the system of which he is the head in England, *i.e.*, Episcopatism. The Church in this country is a highly-organized institution. Its resources have kept pace with the intellectual and material advancement of Great Britain. It can even afford to send its Evangelists to distant lands. Its foremost duty evidently is to see that a little room is reserved for God in the mind of the nation. It is, as it were, a distinct department of the Government, and it is expected to look after the spiritual needs of the nation as efficiently, at least, as the other departments, such as the Navy, the Army, the Health Department or the Department of Commerce, have been performing their respective duties.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

Yet the Archbishop's speech, recalling the nation to God, is virtually an admission that the Church has failed to keep the mind of the nation secure for God against the onslaughts of inimical forces. However great the forces of opposition may be, it is expected of the Church that it should not deliver the national mind to the attacking forces of materialism. The Archbishop's lamentations sound to us like the lamentations of a Commander-in-Chief who has failed to defend his country against the invading forces of a foreign and inimical power. It is a condemnation by the Church of its own self. Let the English nation take heed of this situation.

Religion not to be left to the Church

What is most amazing, however, in the Primate's sermon is the statement: "The cause of recalling the nation to the Christian Faith and way of life cannot be left to the ministers of religion. It must be the concern of all those who profess and call themselves Christians."

We do not think that anybody need be told that a particular department of Government can do nothing without the co-operation and the help of the people. There is no reason to believe that the English nation has refused to give this help and co-operation to the Church. The very fact that the Archbishop receives the salary that he does, as do also his whole army of English Churchmen is ample proof that the nation has been faithfully performing its own part of the contract. It remains, however, with the Church to take effective measures that would ensure the people's enthusiasm for religion in the same way that enthusiasm is kept up in the people's minds for other affairs by their respective departments. Certainly religion should be the concern of every member of a religious community, but where people pay heavily for an elaborate Church system, they are certainly entitled to expect that the Church should adopt such means as

BOOK REVIEWS

would make people feel concerned about their spiritual welfare. Besides, the Church in Christianity is not to be taken just as a department of national life. It is far more than that. It claims mysterious powers for the transmission to the people of "Divine saving grace." The Church is the "Ark of the Covenant" so to speak for living moral humanity. Are we to take the Archbishop to mean that the Church, at least the English Church, is renouncing that claim to mediation? We wonder!

BOOK REVIEWS

The Arab Woman and the Palestine Problem.—

by M. Matiel E. T. Mogannam. With a Foreword by Anthony Crossley, M.P. (Published by Herbert Joseph, Ltd., London. 1937 : pp. 319, with nine illustrations). Price 12s. 6d.

The most disgusting thing about present day Western politicians is that they unscrupulously appeal to the religious prejudices of their respective nations in order to enlist their support in a measure against the down-trodden Muslims of the East. Amongst these pseudo-religious misstatements of European politicians is that the Muslims are the persecutors of their women-folk. The meanness of this policy has justly roused modest Islamic womanhood to action.

The authoress, Mrs. Mogannam, a Syrian Muslim lady married to a leading nationalist Palestinian Arab, not only presents the Arab case in the present Zionist-Arab tangle in Palestine, but boldly challenges the allegation that the Arab woman does not play any part in the national life of the Arabs. Incidentally she traces the history of Muslim womanhood from the times of the Prophet Muhammad, the founder of Islam.

To Europeans who, apart from being interested to know the mind of the Arab woman on the Palestinian question, may also have any misgivings with regard to the actual position of woman in Islamic Society, this book will undoubtedly be of great value.

The Origin of Islamic Polity.—By *Haroon Khan Sherwani*, M.A. (Oxon.), *Barrister-at-Law*, *Head of the Department of History and Political Science, Osmania University, Hyderabad*. 1936 : pp. 29.

This is the sixth of a series called “Studies in Islamic Political Philosophy.”

Attempts like this unmistakably show that the Renaissance of Islam is already well started.

The author not only dives into the unfathomable ocean of Qur-ánic knowledge to bring out from it the pearls of political and administrative doctrines and principles, but also gives briefly the background of world conditions on which this priceless panorama of the social drama of humanity was depicted. We very much appreciate the author's devout labours in this connection and hope that they will be consummated in a more solid and extensive work at no distant date. We may say without hesitation that in the reconstruction of the social life of humanity through Islam they will be very helpful.

Samples of the The Holy Quran

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