

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

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

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Mrs. COURCHA

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نَحْمَدُكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ
وَيَا خَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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JAMĀDA'L-ŪLĀ 1357 A.H.
JULY, 1938 A.C.

[No. 7.]

A DECLARATION

I, Mrs. Courcha, 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, and others, and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

La ilaha il-Allah Muhammad-un-Rasul Allah

[There is but one God (Allah) and Muhammad is God's Messenger.]

(Sd.) MRS. COURCHA.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

THE FAILURE OF CHRISTIANITY

BY THE LATE SIR JALAL-UD-DIN LAUDER BRUNTON,
BART., M.A.

Reared under the influence of Christian parents, at an early age I became interested in Theology and Ethics, and followed up Christian teachings very minutely. I was not prepared to accept the commonly understood doctrines as God's Revelation of Himself to Man. And I turned my attention to the Church's teachings, only to find all very unsatisfactory.

Nothing, perhaps, seems easier at the present moment than to speak of the failure of Christianity. But directly we mention the word "failure," if only we are in the habit of reflecting, we are prompted to ask ourselves in what precise sense is such a term applicable to Christianity? What does Christianity really involve, for what does it stand, what should it be expected to perform? Unless we keep these points clearly in view before us we shall be unlikely to reach any valid conclusion.

Probably, the popular conception of Christianity is as well presented by a writer in the *Hibbert's Journal* for January 1916 as could be desired. I cannot do better, therefore, than reproduce the following passage from Professor Browne's article:

"Christianity seems hopelessly to have broken down.

Whatever else one may or may not include in Christianity, this at least it has meant to those who have accepted it in the past—the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man, Redemption through Christ, and the Leadership of the Church. And yet how unreal and far away seems each of these when measured by the grim realities of the present! How can one speak of the

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Fatherhood of God in any universal and all-embracing sense in the light of the terrible calamities which have fallen upon so many innocent sufferers all over the world? How can one believe in the goodness of God when one contemplates this unexampled harvest of agony, of bitterness and of death? The case is still more disheartening when we pass to the second great article of the Christian Faith—the Brotherhood of Man. For what we seem to see to-day is a colossal denial on the part of the human race which has been longest under the influence of Christianity, and which alone calls itself Christian, of this central and cardinal conviction. Whatever else Christianity may or may not be, it is an international religion. It begins as a protest against the doctrine which identified the Kingdom of God with any single nation. It broke the barrier between the Greek and the Jew, and proclaimed the coming of a new social order which should include both. But now we see the revival in the most brutal form of the very barriers which it was the mission of Christ to break down."

Let me observe, however, that while this statement affords us a substantially accurate account of what Christianity should or might be supposed to mean, it is by no means so evident that this is what Christianity has actually been understood to mean.

Of the ethical and personal value of the Christian Faith indeed, for vast numbers of peoples, we surely need have no doubt. That many have jealously clung to the central conception of an all-embracing Fatherhood of God, and its corollary, the Brotherhood of man, none

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would dispute. Nor can it be questioned that these beliefs, however remote they may have seemed from the actual experience of mankind have, upon the whole, tended to exert a beneficial and humanizing effect through their acceptance. Christianity, at least to many Christians, has meant substantially a faith in the efficacy of goodness. When, however, we ask whether this conception exhausts what is popularly understood by Christianity, we must reply in the negative.

To the world at large, to the vast majority of people even to this day, the profession of the Christian religion by no means involves primarily the practical application of the ethical principles which are revealed in the central figure of the faith. On the contrary, in popular Christianity, such ethical features have been made entirely subordinate, with the result that all the weight of emphasis has been laid upon ritualistic practices, emotional beliefs, and the intellectual assent to specific dogmas.

If, then, we are to speak of the *failure* of Christianity, it can be in this sense: that it has failed to become a living principle in the hearts and wills of men; that it has, so far, remained out of touch with the existing aims and emergencies of life; that it has been an ideal—beautiful indeed, but nevertheless impracticable and beyond the reach of mankind. For some time past the Clerics have been loud in their lamentations because, they have told us, Christianity has lost its grip on the multitude; and their pessimism, needless to say, has proved an excuse for much ill-founded solitude for the spiritual condition of the masses. Men, we have been informed, have broken away from the religion; it is no longer a factor in their lives, and its consequence can only anticipate a state of affairs that must go from bad to worse. That the situation may call for quite a different interpretation, or that it may be

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symptomatic of a decline merely in the modes of men's belief, which, instead of retaining the traditional element of official Christianity, may be seeking the essential and internal significance of the faith, is all too rarely realized.

One may perhaps, therefore, best address oneself to the subject under consideration by proceeding to bring an indictment against official Christianity. It is certainly a failure. Not only has it failed to avert the most appalling calamity which has befallen the world, it has failed to convince man of the need of co-operating with a view to making its avowed objects and principles prevail in the course of human affairs. Nor, indeed, to be just to it, has it at any time encouraged the followers of the faith to hope that the practical application of such principles were within the power of mankind. On the contrary, its vision of peace and perfection has invariably been reserved for the hereafter—to be fulfilled in some *post mortem* state for which they were reverently bidden to yearn and supplicate. It is precisely for this reason, and because Christianity has never, in the popular acceptance of the term, introduced any truly volitional appeal that it has not only failed, but deserved to fail. Not alone has it been "supernatural" and "irrational:" it has been exclusively entrusted, for its administration, to a privileged caste, the chance for whose authority has consisted in the weakness and infirmity of will of the masses.

Against the subjection which priestly domination had fostered, it is true there had been witnessed for some time a powerful reaction. This had taken the form of the spread of "Free Thought," and an amazing growth of liberty of opinion. But this movement, which, to all appearances, seems calculated to undermine the abuses to which Clerical authority had previously given rise, by affording men the means of emancipating

themselves from the unreasoning submission to obsolete traditions, does little, in itself, to accomplish the purpose that its promoters conceived. Regardless of the fact that the aim of life called for more than the acceptance of a bare negation, those who looked for rationalism merely to usher in the era of spiritual liberty failed sufficiently to reckon with the emotional needs of men and the social and gregarious impulses which other religions had satisfied.

What has been witnessed, then, in the modern men's alleged indifference to religious interest, I take it, is not only a falling away from the religious forms of Christianity in the past, but a profound, if vague, craving for a more satisfying principle, which, while it shall not outrage the demands of reason, shall yet provide a stimulus to the deeper cravings of the heart and constitute a bond of Union between man and his fellows. Here we see, it is true, no new thing, for Islam has provided for this Real Unity, about fourteen centuries ago, and still provides it, for it is evident that, to make such a religion a living force among men, the existing principles of Islam alone are called for.

To many, therefore, the problem is suggested: To what extent, in the present as well as in the future, will religion so influence men as to make a falling away impossible? Islam, the true world religion, it is coming to be felt, alone, can give mankind the means to the supreme good of life, and a religion which cannot supply these means must necessarily prove inadequate, and its services must forthwith be dispensed with. Mankind's only hope, therefore, lies in the function and application of Islam, a religion which God has "perfected." I cannot do better than recommend to the reader the reading of the standing article at the end of this Journal entitled "What is Islam," which gives in a

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nutshell what religion should stand for and how Islam proposes to accomplish that object of religion.

As one consequence of the war with Germany in 1914—1918, we may reasonably conclude that men are prepared to assume a wholly new sense of responsibility in regard to their leaders. If Christianity is to survive—which is more than doubtful—the Christian religious leaders have shocked the world with the attitude they had assumed as to the significance of that terrible conflict. To a world consumed with a burning sense of moral indignation against the alleged necessity of such a conflict, the Clerics have been content to deliver a series of homilies wherein they have spoken of the occurrence as a visitation from God. In the same issue of the *Hibbert's Journal* from which an extract has already been made, another writer, Miss Robinson, speaks, with the utmost justification of the profound complacency with which, as a rule, the Christian Clerics have accepted that the late Great War—to judge by their deliverances on the subject, it is all in the day's work, a part of the natural order—at variance, of course, with the "ideal"—but nevertheless, like poverty, inevitable. Some little while ago this was especially illustrated in a strangely-entitled book by the Bishop of London. "A Day of God," which drew sundry celestial conclusions that must have seemed to the more reflecting reader to be singularly devoid of point or utility. Another prelate, as Miss Robinson tells us, declared the war to be a sermon preached to mankind by God Himself! "Whose sermons on crucial occasions are long and deeply theological." While Dr. Gore, in his recent volume, "The War and the Church," does not scruple to assert that "God has visited the sins of Europe by suffering them to lead to this natural issue in a tremendous war," the Pope appears to have been similarly inspired, for the

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moral which His Holiness thinks fit to draw from the situation is given in the following pronouncement:

"God allows nations, who have fixed all their desires on the things of this world, to punish one another by natural slaughter on account of the contempt and neglect with which they have treated Him; and other events have happened also, in addition to these, which should constrain men to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God."

On the one hand, therefore, we have the amazing spectacle afforded us in the assurance of the Churches, and on the other the shame and indignation of mankind. For who can pretend that, in such a case, the Churches and mankind can see eye to eye? Do they believe that they fight and die by the will of God? Do we believe that the late war with Germany was a punishment for sin? Do the soldiers believe that it was their sins that sent them on the battlefields to die deaths of agony and torture? Or can we in any way acquiesce in the principle which involves such a calamity? And that the All-Loving God delights in the terrible scenes of torture? With all due deference to the opinions which have just been quoted, I would submit that to mention such a demonstrable absurdity as that which is revealed by the statements of the various Clerics that have been cited, is to perpetrate the most hideous and abominable of blasphemies of which man could be guilty.

True to her policy, however, the Church, both Western and Eastern, has prepared to play a waiting game throughout. Instead of boldly coming out and declaring that the various States have resorted to methods which constitute a violation of every Christian principle, and of the teachings of Jesus, whose followers they profess to be, she has been content to look on, at the same time professing to uphold the spiritual interests

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of the Christian World. Some idea of this attitude, which has characterized the Roman Communion, may be gathered from the following words of the Pope:

"The Roman Pontiff, in so far as on the one hand he is the Vicar of Jesus, who died for all men and for each individual, and on the other hand as he is the common father of all Catholics, is constrained to exercise the same charitable feeling towards all the combatants.

"For on each side there are a large number of his sons whose salvation must be to him an equal object of anxiety. It is, therefore, necessary that he should regard in them, not the several interests which divide them, but the common link of Faith which makes them brethren. If he behaved otherwise, not only would he fail to promote the Cause of Peace, but, what is much worse, he would bring dislike and hatred upon religion, and would expose the internal Peace and Concord of the Church to the peril of serious disturbance."

From such a declaration we are in a position to satisfy ourselves in regard to the value of the Pope's "impartiality." Not a word does he utter that reveals the slightest detestation of the iniquities which, as the upholder of Love and Truth, he should have challenged and denounced. No mention is made by him of the unspeakable brutalities which have been perpetrated, no word of horror or regret at the irreparable loss which the nations have sustained in the cutting off of the flower of their youth and manhood, no hint of the monstrous injustice which has required that the credulous and intimidated peoples should bow to the will of their oppressors and consent to fly at each other's throats.

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The Pope should have issued an appeal to the general conscience of the peoples of the earth. Instead, he contented himself by pointing them to a figment of his own ecclesiastical brain. In the face of it all we may well ask: What are the peoples to make of this dark page of Christianity?

Has Christianity meant no more than an ineffectual principle of non-resistance, which, in the hour of trial, deserts and abandons all to a state of abject cowardice and irresponsibility? What man to-day, if he is a man at all, can proclaim himself a Christian? Or who, in doing so, can feel he is thereby entitled to self-respect? Christianity must go the way of all things, and henceforth perish utterly and for ever to make room for the true religion of God to mankind, and that is Islam, which is Truth, Sincerity, Toleration, looking to the interests of man and pointing him to the Right Way. Islam alone can satisfy the needs of every member of the human family, and Muslims are the only people among whom can be found the True Bond of Brotherhood in reality and not mere "make-belief" as in Christianity.

Volumes could be written on the "Failure of Christianity," but space and time will not permit.

MUHAMMAD IN THE ANCIENT SCRIPTURES—ZEND AVESTA

BY MIRZA MASUM BEG, B.A.

Ar-Rahman, Ar-Rahim—

Of all the attributes of the Divine Being, Love and Mercy are pre-eminent. He is Ar-Rahman, the most Beneficent Lord. He is Ar-Rahim, the most Merciful God. Before bringing man into existence, He furnished the earth and the heaven with all kinds of necessary things whereon human life depended—the pure and fresh air to breathe, the cool and crystal water to slake

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his thirst, the mighty sun to give him heat and light, and the fertile earth to produce for him food and luscious fruits. In fine, one cannot think of any need which had not been met by Providential Wisdom before man made his appearance on this planet.

This, however, would have been only half the story. "Eat, drink and be merry" is not the only purpose for which "the best of Creation" has been sent into this earth. There is, of a truth, a higher purpose in his life, a much nobler aim which he needs must fulfil, to wit the fulfilment of his Higher Self, the Perfect Development of his Soul. He has been created not only to taste the sweet things of this earth, but to do noble and true things and vindicate himself under God's Heaven as a God-made man. The Great Sustainer of man's physical comforts, therefore, out of His infinite love and grace, also made adequate provision for his spiritual needs. For this purpose, He raised particular individuals, technically called the prophets, and put into their mouth His Word of Wisdom for the edification of human kind. These Divine Persons have appeared from time to time, since the dawn of human life, and have guided people into the Right Path, the path which leads to Salvation and Success.

Denominational Prophets—

Far back in the misty past, when the human race spread over this great planet, people went to and settled down at different places. The means of communication, in those remote times, were indeed very poor. Huge natural barriers partitioned them, as it were, from each other. Each nation, shut up within the four walls of its own particular homeland, lived in isolation. The outlook of each was limited to its own immediate environment. Their own section of the human race was all-in-all to every people. Under such conditions of life, it was in keeping with the Providential Wisdom

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that different prophets should be commissioned to different peoples, adapted to their particular needs and requirements. If India had its Vedic Rishis, with Ram Chandra, Krishna and Gautama Budha to follow them, China found its Divine Teacher in the holy person of Confucius. If Zoroaster had been sent to kindle the spiritual fire in Iran, Moses and Jesus had been raised for the guidance of the Israelite nation. In brief, "There was not a people," as the Holy Qur-án has put it (35:24), "but a warner has gone among them."

These various Divine Ambassadors, since they came from the same Supreme Sovereign, bore Messages which, in the essentials, were identical. Succinctly, their teachings may thus be summarized: God is one and there is none like unto Him; He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth and all that lies between them; Him alone shall man worship, and Him alone shall man beseech for help; there is a life beyond the grave wherein man shall account for the deeds done on this earth. They also gave some moral precepts adapted to the particular needs and conditions of their respective peoples.

Each of these Spiritual Teachers, Sacred History tells us, had been raised exclusively for the vivification of a particular nationality. They may, therefore, be aptly called the Tribal or Denominational Prophets. Their mission, as a matter of fact, was restricted to the members of a particular people or country, having no concern whatsoever with the uplift of others. Just read what Jesus Christ, who was the last link in the chain of these denominational prophets, had to say unto a non-Israelite woman when she implored him for spiritual assistance. Turn to St. Matthew's Gospel, chapter 15, verses 22—26: "And behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coast, and cried unto

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him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, *I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.* Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord help me. But he answered and said, *It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.*" Jesus Christ, we have been told in the Bible, went about the land casting out the devil and his spawn, and restoring spiritual decrepits to sound health; but even that gentle Apostle of Love and Lenity had to refuse a poor woman's humble prayer, for no other reason than that she was not an Israelite.

Error of Divine Favouritism—

Human civilization being in its infancy, Divine Purpose, as we have said above, deputed different prophets to different nations. But each nation, ignorant of similar Divine favours shown to others, began to think that only they were the chosen sons of God, and that all others were the *caput mortum*, the rejected residuum. They, while claiming Divine origin for their own faith, disdainfully denied this privilege to the creeds of all other nations. This spirit of exclusiveness, it was but natural, fostered in them the mischievous idea of Divine Favouritism together with a host of concomitant evils. The foul feelings of conceit and contempt for others entered into their minds and caused dissension and discord in the various members of God's Great Family.

The Jews and the Christians to this day claim for themselves the gift of prophecy to the entire exclusion of all other nations. The votaries of the Vedic Religion of India propound a still more fantastic proposi-

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tion. The most High God, they opine, spoke only once on the day of creation some 1960 million years ago. His Word, which He revealed unto the four Rishis, is incorporated in the pages of the Vedas. These sacred scriptures, they would further have us believe, contain the entirety of Divine knowledge and wisdom which again the Almighty God had been pleased to confine to the holy land of *Aryavarta* alone, leaving all the other countries of the vast world to wallow in ignorance and illiteracy. Thus the Vedic Religion, labouring under such an illiberal impression, shut itself off from the outer world and became entirely insular, refusing to admit other nations to an equal share in its benefits.

This deleterious doctrine of Divine Favouritism was indeed in open revolt against the ultimate aim of True Religion which means to establish on earth the Unity of the Human Race in conjunction with the Unity of the Godhead. There shall be One God for all the nations of the world and none beside Him shall be adored; One Book as the Standard of all Law and all Practice; One Prophet to serve them an Exemplar, and the entire Human Race as One Universal Brotherhood. *Advent of the World-Prophet—*

For every ill, there is in the Perfect Scheme of the All-Wise God a corresponding corrective. This malady of the nations had its catholicon too. Divine Purpose, to correct their sense of racial distinction and weld the entire human kind into one compact whole, decreed to commission a World-Prophet, with a message for the whole of the human race. "The Mercy for the Nations," as this World-Redeemer has very aptly been called, made his appearance in the land of Arabia which occupies a central position in the land hemisphere and may appositely be called the Heart of the Old World. All-hail to the Holy Prophet Muhammad who lifted

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man above all barriers of race or country, and restored moral equipoise among the nations. All-hail to the Prophet *par excellence* who emancipated humanity from the shackles of ignorance, superstition and corruption! The prophets who went before him may be likened to so many Divine Lamps which had light enough for this or that room. They shed their Divine lustre all around, and everything that came within their ken was lighted and blazed. But Muhammad, blessed be his name, was the Mighty Sun that arose from the sands of Arabia and illumined the whole world to its uttermost corners. His light was universal, his message cosmopolitan and the sphere of his sympathies co-extensive with humanity. Here are a few of the many verses of the Holy Qurán that speak of the Holy Prophet as having been commissioned for the edification of the entire human race.

1. We have not sent thee but as a mercy for mankind. (21: 107.)
2. Surely We have sent thee for the whole of mankind. (54: 28.)
3. That he may be a warner to mankind. (25: 21.)
4. A reminder to all the nations. (12: 104.)
5. Say, O ye people, surely I am a messenger from the Lord towards all of you. (7: 158.)

The advent of the World-Prophet, Humanity's Greatest Teacher, was certainly no small matter which the all-comprehensive word of the Most High God could skip over and ignore. Through the mouths of high prophets, He gave the glad tidings to the world and took covenant that they shall receive him with open arms when he shall make his appearance. The distinguishing feature of the Great Prophet, they were told, was that he would bear testimony to the truth of all the prophets of the world. Thus, while on the one hand the happy news

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of the advent of the World-Prophet was given to each preceding prophet, the Promised Prophet, on the other hand, was commissioned to vouch for the truth of all the foregoing prophets, wherever and whenever raised on the face of this earth.

Pages of history you may ransack, and rummage all records, but one prophet and only one will you come across—Muhammad, the Apostle of Allah,—who answers perfectly to this description. It was he alone who laid down a belief in all the other prophets of the world as one of the cardinal doctrines of faith. Refer to the following texts of the Holy Qurán :

1. Those who believe in that which has been revealed to thee and that which was revealed before thee. (2: 4.)
2. He has revealed to thee the Book with truth, verifying that which is before it. (3: 3.)
3. And certainly We raised in every nation an apostle. (16: 36.)
4. Surely those who disbelieve in Allah and His apostles and desire to make a distinction between Allah and His apostles and say, We believe in some and disbelieve in others; and desire to take a course between this and that, these it is that are truly unbelievers and We have prepared for the unbelievers a disgraceful chastisement. (4: 150, 151.)
5. They all (believers) believe in Allah and His angels and His books and His apostles; we make no difference between any of His apostles. (2: 285.)

Testifying to the truth of all the prophets of the world, the Holy Prophet of Arabia has evidently enjoined upon his followers to repose full faith in them, without making any distinction whatsoever.

MUHAMMAD IN THE ANCIENT SCRIPTURES

The Prophecies—

We now come to the vital part of our subject, the prophecies in the previous scriptures about the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, but, before entering upon this discussion, we take leave to make a few preliminary observations.

To unseal a prophecy and thoroughly understand its implication is certainly no easy task. For such utterances have not always been couched in felicitous language. Take, for instance, the prophecies of the Bible. Whether they relate to Jesus or to someone else, they are, as a matter of fact, indistinct and obscure, and have to be interpreted as we do a dream. In some cases, as our Christian friends would have us believe, even the very prophet to whom they allude has not been able to understand them. Jesus adjudged John the Baptist to be Elias "which was to come" (Matt. 11: 14), but the Baptist denied that important fact (John 1: 21.) Ram Chandra and Parsoo Ram were both Avatars, *i.e.*, incarnations of God, according to the Hindus; still they could not recognise each other.

Prophetic pronouncements always refer to the attributive and not the personal names of things, for the simple reason that it is not the name of a person but his attributes that count in the eyes of God. Of Jesus, son of Mary, for example, "Yasu'" was the personal, and "Messiah" the attributive name. In olden scriptures you will not once come across the term "Yasu'" but the appellation of "Messiah" occurs in several prophecies. "Jerusalem" shall likewise be interpreted to mean "the city of Mecca," or

ultimately Islam; for, says the New Testament, Galatians (4: 25), "For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia answereth to Jerusalem which now is." Similarly, "Ayudhia" which literally means "impregnable and invincible" shall denote not the Indian city of that name which has ever remained a beaten and conquered place, but "the holy city of Mecca" where fighting is forbidden.

3. A day in the language of prophecy means a thousand years of our reckoning.

4. Should a Book make contradictory statements with regard to one and the same person, only one of these shall be accepted as correct; but this fact of inconsistency shall nevertheless be taken to reflect unfavourably upon the authenticity of the Book.

5. The portion of a prophecy which shall be contrary to common sense and true knowledge shall be rejected summarily, and the portion which happens to have been couched in metaphorical language shall be interpreted in the light of facts.

6. By the second coming of a prophet is meant merely the advent of another in the spirit and power of the former. Jesus explained in this way the second coming of the Prophet Elias (Luke 1: 17). Lord Krishna too meant the same thing when he said that he comes and re-comes into the world according to the exigencies of the times (Bhagavad Gita 4: 7).

The Zend Avesta—

To return to our subject. Ancient scriptures, it cannot be gainsaid, have, in the course of ages, suffered contamination at the hands of their custodians, but fragments of Truth are still found even in their present dilapidated editions. The advent of the World-Prophet Muhammad, we have said, was presaged by all

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the previous prophets. We shall, in the present article, consider the Zend Avesta, the Book of the Parsees, with reference to this point.

Zoroaster was the founder of the Perso-Iranian national religion. He lived and taught some thousand years before Christ. The religion preached by him has been called Zoroastrianism after his name. It has also been called the Magian religion. The scriptures of this creed consist mainly of two big tomes, Zend Avesta and "Dasateer." In spite of the fact that these books, too, like other scriptures, have not remained intact from the ravages of time, they still contain a number of prophecies about the advent of the Holy Prophet of Arabia. We shall, in view of the limited space at our disposal, make references to a few only.

Turn to Zend Avesta, Farvar, Din Yasht 13, where the Most High God is reported to have addressed the following words to Prophet Zoroaster:

"Of the people of faith, O Zoroaster, the mighty souls are those who bear the Law and live up to it, or those believers who are not yet born but who shall kindle new life into the world."

The All-Knowing God means to communicate to the Prophet Zoroaster that just as his followers have attained to spiritual eminence by living up to his Law, in like manner another people shall be born in the time to come who shall infuse new life into the nations and reanimate religion.

Further on the Yasht 28, the prophecy becomes more definite and distinct.

"Compassionate conqueror shall he be (the founder of that people) and سازگار his name. Mercy Personified; a Blessing unto the whole world; Saviour of all the nations; Polytheists shall he reclaim, and the failing of the faithful rectify and reform (*i.e.*, he shall

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amend the enormities of both the polytheists and the Zoroastrians)."

Now there is one prophet and only one, namely, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, who answers completely to this description. The people of Mecca tyrannized over him and his companions in the most terrible manner, and perpetrated dreadful atrocities to wipe them off the face of this earth. But a few years later, when Mecca was conquered and all these deadly foes lay at his mercy, and when even the most humane of generals would have ordered their immediate execution, the Compassionate Victor not only did not utter a single word of reproach but very gladly granted them general amnesty, saying لا تريب عليكم اليوم "There is no reproof for you to-day." History, of a truth, is unable to present another example of similar large-heartedness and magnanimity. The Mighty Muhammad was indeed the Most Compassionate Conqueror.

Astutartiya استوت ارتيا his name. Zend is more akin to Sanskrit than any other language in the world. The term استوت ارتيا has been derived from the root استو which means in both the languages "to praise, to extol, to applaud." The word ستودن of the modern Persian also gives the same meaning. The term استوت ارتيا therefore, means "the praised one" which is an exact literal rendering of the Arabic term معبود. Thus Muhammad shall be the founder of those faithful who shall be born in the time to come and who shall infuse new life into the world and revive religion.

The Holy Prophet, it has been shown at some length, was a Mercy unto the Whole World. رحمة للعالمين. "A mercy to the nations" is, as a matter of fact, one of his appellations in the Holy Qur-án. Polytheism he stamped out in all its various forms, and restored Zoroastrianism which had fallen into the dualistic form of worship, to its pristine purity of monotheism.

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The verse 95 of Zamyad Yasht reads thus:

“His companions shall flourish, the followers of Muhammad, killers of the enemy, well-disposed, sweet of speech, chaste of action, whose tongues spoke not a word of falsehood.”

The saintliness of the Holy Prophet and his companions has passed for a common saying. It has often been mentioned in the prophecies. The Bible also speaks of the “ten thousand saints” (Deut.) who accompanied the Holy Prophet on his triumphal march upon Mecca. And it is, to speak the truth, the touchstone of the success and truthfulness of a prophet—this saintliness and piety of his followers.

We may, in passing, draw the attention of our readers to another prophecy which occurs in verse 9, of *Atish Niyایش*. Zoroaster is reported to have said, addressing the fire:

“Burn on in this house, and blaze in this temple incessantly; thou shalt thrive for a time until a great change, a mighty revolution takes place in the world, and righteousness and piety are firmly established.”

The fire-temples, presaged Zoroaster, shall be abolished when that mighty revolution in the domain of religion shall be wrought. He had, as a matter of fact, ordered the burning of constant fire that it might serve as a sign of the great event. This perpetual fire, said Zoroaster, shall be extinguished upon the advent of the Great Prophet of “Fiery Law.” And so it happened when the Holy Prophet Muhammad made his appearance upon the scene. The Law which he gave to the world is to this day known as “Baiza,” *i.e.*, shining, for it throws a flood of light on all sorts of matters pertaining to the religious, moral and social welfare of man. And it is to this that the Bible has alluded in the words

“from his right hand went forth a fiery law for them.”
—(Deut.).

The “Dasateer”—

We now advert to the other book, the “Dasateer.” Of its 15 treatises, the “namah” of Sassan I records the joyful tidings of the coming of the World-Hero, Muhammad. This edition of the book, wherefrom the following quotation has been culled *verbatim et literatim* was prepared and published by a well-known Parsee doctor, Mullah Firoz, in collaboration with other scholars, in the reign of Nasir-ud-Din Qachar, king of Iran. Mullah Firoz was a savant of great scholarship and a writer of outstanding eminence. He was very well-versed in Zend, Pahlvi, Irani and Arabic languages. It was in consequence of his labour of love that this edition of the “Dasateer” came to be published.

(۵۴) چم چمیم کاجام کمفد هرتوار حیام ورتاه هینال هود-
چون چنیش کارها کند از تازیان مردے پیدا شود-

(۵۵) یوهزار تسامام هو پیرتاک و نیرتاک و سیمراک و امیراک سر دیم ارتد-
که از پیروان او دیمیم و تخت و کشور و آئین همه بر افتد-

(۵۶) و هوند هرور کتام تیودام -
و شوند سرکشان زیود ستان-

(۵۷) بیرون فده شائی نیمار و سیمار و کسوار آباد بی جواد هده نیوستا -
بیفند بجایه پیکرگاه و آتش کده خانه آباد بی پیکر شده نماز بران سو
خانه که در تازیان است در ریگ باماوران ساخته آباد است و در آن پیکرها
اختران بود گوید شود آن خانه نماز برون سو و برورند از و پیکرها -

(۵۸) د هونو هوش شنیشور -
و فرآ آب شورو -

(۵۹) و تدر ایند شائی سیمارام مدیر و انتورام هام و نیغود و نیواک و شایام شمناد
و باستانند جاع آهکده های مدائین و گرد های آن و توسن و بلخ
و جاها ئے بزرگ -

(۶۰) و هابیم هار پیشام ورتاه پامد هرتال و سمین هودم هن بلزیده -
و آئین گزایشان مردے باشد سخنور و سخن او در هم پیچیده -

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To make the matter as clear as possible, we give below a verbatim rendering of the entire passage:—

چم (When) (such) کجام (deeds) کنند (shall the
Iranians do) هژوار حیانم (from among the Arabs) (a man)
هوتاگ (shall be born) هژوار تسامام هو (whose followers)
نیرتاک (throne) (law) امیراک (kingdom) سمیراک
(all of these) ایرتد (shall rout and ruin) هژدر کتام (the
disobedient people) هژوند تیودام (shall be subdued)
هژون (shall turn their faces towards) نه شائی (instead of)
نیمار (idol-temple) کسوار آباد (Abraham's place of
worship) بی جوار (purged from idols) هده (having been)
هژو (shall they be) هوش شنیشور (Mercy for the
nations) (and then) رهند (shall seize) (places) شایم
(of fire temples) برمد (of Midian) داندورام هام (and its environs)
هژایم هار (sacred) شمناد (places) شایم (Balakh) نیرواک (Tus)
نیفود (prophet) هژشام (their) هژرتا (a man) پامد (shall be)
(of miraculous word) هژمژیدنه (masterly and eloquent).

Put into plain English, the prophecy means:—

When the followers of Zoroaster shall cease to live up to his Law and fall into the sin of iniquity, man shall arise from amongst the Arabs whose followers shall seize the crown, the throne and the kingdom of Iran. The disobedient Iranians shall be vanquished and dazed. The Kaaba of Abraham they shall purge of all idols, and turn towards it in worship instead of at the fire-temple. Mercy unto the nations shall they be. They shall also capture Iran, Tus, Balkh, and their suburbs, and all the sacred places. Their prophet shall be a man of masterly and miraculous word.

The Zend Avesta and the "Dasateer," we have stated above, are two different Books of the Religion of the Parsees. Some of them follow the former, while others repose their faith in the latter, but on one point—the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad—both the Books are fully agreed and declare with one voice:

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A man shall arise from among the Arabs. Muhammad shall be his blessed name. He shall be a Mercy unto the nations. His Law shall verify the Law of Zoroaster. At his advent, the temples of fire shall cool down. His followers shall cleanse the Kaaba of Abraham from idols and turn their faces towards it at the time of prayer. The followers of Zoroaster and the polytheists, both, he shall reclaim and reform, weeding out the corruptions and superstitions that shall creep into their creeds.

ISLAM—A MESSAGE OF PEACE

By C. A. SOORMA

(Continued from Vol. XXVI, page 22)

Chapter VII

THE HIJRAT

When the Meccans found that the Prophet was determined to carry on his mission, heedless of suffering, persecution and opposition, they once more approached Abu Talib with a final request that unless the Prophet ceased in his work, more drastic steps would be taken against him. Then the aged uncle of the Prophet sent for him and begged of him to renounce his task. As ever, the Prophet stood his ground and replied as follows:

“O my uncle, if they placed the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left, to force me to renounce my work, verily I would not desist therefrom until God made manifest His cause, or I perished in the attempt.”

Then the Prophet, in sorrow, turned to depart; but Abu Talib was so overcome that he exclaimed:

“Son of my brother, come back. Say whatsoever thou pleasest; for by the Lord, I shall not abandon thee, nay, never.”

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Needless to add that the Prophet was greatly relieved. He was now convinced that as long as Abu Talib lived the Quraish would not dare to adopt extreme measures.

About this time happened an incident which is as eloquent as it is sublime. I refer to the conversion of Omar-ibn-Khattab to Islam. Omar was a distinguished member of the family of Adi-ibn-ka'b, and the son of Khattab. Omar was a bitter opponent of Islam and he had always taken a leading part in persecuting the small band of the followers of the Prophet.

Omar's sister had been converted to Islam for some time before he became aware of the fact.

In secret and in fear of her impulsive brother, she used to recite the verses from the Holy Qur-án. One day, as he entered the house, he heard his sister reciting some verses that had been revealed to the Prophet. When he heard this, he was filled with rage. He at once took hold of a sword and with murderous intent, he rushed straight to the house of the Prophet. He saw the Prophet seated in prayer and reciting the Holy Qur-án. Omar paused. As the meaning of the divine message sank into his head, he at once realised the enormity of the offence which he was about to commit! Overcome with emotion, he at once knelt down before the Prophet and begged for forgiveness. The Prophet raised him at once, embraced him and assured him that there was nothing to forgive, as God was most Beneficent and Merciful!

The light of God had at once penetrated into the heart of Omar-ibn-Khattab and thenceforward he became one of the bulwarks of Islam. In the history of Islam, Omar occupies a very high and noble place, and the bond that linked Omar to Muhammad—the man and the Prophet—was a bond that remained not only unbroken, but received additional strength with the passage of years.

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Ameer Ali, in his great work "The Spirit of Islam" describes the steps taken by the Meccans to kill the Prophet. I take the liberty of reproducing certain striking passages as follows:

"Throughout this period, when the storm was at its height and might at any moment have burst over his head, Muhammad never quailed. All his disciples had left for Yathrib (*i.e.* Medina), alone he remained bravely at his post, with the devoted Ali and the venerable Abu Bakr.

"Meanwhile, the clouds were gathering fast; fearful of the escape of the Prophet, an assembly of the Quraish met in all despatch in the town hall (*Dar-un-Nadwa*), and some chiefs of other clans were invited to attend. The matter had become one of life and death. Stormy was the meeting, for fear had entered their hearts. Imprisonment for life, expulsion from the city, each was debated in turn. Assassination was then proposed; but assassination by one man would have exposed him and his family to the vengeance of blood. The difficulty was at last solved by Abu Jahl, who suggested that a number of courageous men, chosen from different families, should sheathe their swords simultaneously in Muhammad's bosom, all in order that the responsibility of the deed might rest upon all and the relations of Muhammad might consequently be unable to avenge it. This proposal was accepted, and a number of noble youths were selected for the sanguinary deed. As the night advanced, the assassins posted themselves round the Prophet's dwelling. Thus they watched all night long, waiting to murder him when he should leave his house in the early dawn, peeping now and then through a hole in the door to make sure that he still lay on his bed. But, meanwhile, the instinct of self-preservation, the instinct which had often led the Great Prophet of Nazareth to evade his enemies, had warned

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Muhammad of the danger. In order to keep the attention of the assassins fixed upon the bed, he put his own garment upon the devoted and faithful Ali, bade him lie on his bed, and escaped, as David had escaped, through the windows. He repaired to the house of Abu Bakr, and they fled together unobserved from the inhospitable city of their birth. They lay hid for several days in a cavern of Mount Thaur, a hill to the south of Mecca. . . .

“The fury of the Quraish was now unbounded. The news that the would-be assassins had returned unsuccessful, and Muhammad had escaped, aroused their whole energy. Horsemen scoured the country. A price was set upon Muhammad’s head. Once or twice the danger approached so near that the heart of old Abu Bakr quaked with fear. ‘We are but two,’ said he. ‘Nay,’ said Muhammad, ‘we are three, God is with us;’ and He was with them. After three days, the Quraish slackened their efforts. All this time Muhammad and his companion were sustained by food brought by a daughter of Abu Bakr. On the evening of the third day the fugitives left the cavern, and, procuring with great difficulty two camels, endeavoured to reach Yathrib by unfrequented paths. But even here the way was full of danger. The heavy price set upon Muhammad’s head had brought out many horsemen from Mecca, and they were still diligently seeking for the helpless wanderer. One, a wild and fierce warrior, actually caught sight of the fugitives and pursued them. Again the heart of Abu Bakr misgave him, and he cried, ‘We are lost’ ‘Be not afraid,’ said the Prophet, ‘God will protect us.’ As the idolater overtook Muhammad, his horse reared and fell. Struck with sudden awe, he entreated the forgiveness of the man whom he was pursuing and asked for an

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attestation of his pardon. This was given to him on a piece of bone by Abu Bakr. . . .

"The fugitives continued their journey without further molestation and after three days' journeying reached the territories of Yathrib. It was a hot day in June 622 of the Christian Era when Muhammad alighted from his camel upon the soil which was thenceforth to become his home and his refuge. A Jew watching on a tower first espied him and thus were the words of the Qur-án fulfilled—"They, to whom the Scriptures have been given, recognise him as they do their own children." Muhammad and his companion rested for a few days at a village called Koba, situated only two miles to the south of Yathrib and remarkable for its beauty and fertility. Here he was joined by Ali, who had been severely maltreated by the idolaters after their disappointment at Muhammad's escape. Ali fled from Mecca and journeyed on foot, hiding himself in the day time and travelling only at night, lest he should fall into the hands of the Quraish.

"The Bani Amr-bin-Auf, to whom the village belonged, invited the Prophet to prolong his stay amongst them. But his duty lay before him; and he proceeded towards Yathrib, attended by a numerous body of his disciples. He entered the city on the morning of a Friday, 16th of Rabi I, corresponding (according to M. Caussin de Perceval) with the 2nd of July 622 A.D.

"Thus was accomplished the *Hijrat* called in European annals, 'The flight of Muhammad,' from which dates the Muhammadan calendar"—(*Ameer Ali*, "*The Spirit of Islam*," pp. 46—49).

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BY HAMID RAZA, B.A. (ALIG.)

(Continued from Vol. XXVI, page 221)

We say bluntly that, if God will not give the highest revelation of Himself except to those who use such methods, the world He has made is not rational." *³⁶

(My italics.) In his anxiety to have a fresh restatement of Christianity, Dr. Barnes follows Islam by violently rejecting the Church Creed which favours asceticism. History shows that God gave "the highest revelation of Himself" to the Man Muhammad who worked out a thorough reformation in the lives of his people and was yet intensely spiritual. Islam is, in the true sense of the word, a spiritual religion and teaches its followers to restrain and control, to direct and guide, the forces of nature and their own forces. Its wonderful potentiality has led Bosworth Smith to characterise it as a religion "which alone gives stability to the tottering fabric, and is the one principle of life amidst all the jarring elements of destruction." *³⁷ The world of matter is no illusion (*Maya*) but a reality to be reckoned with. The Qur-án says:

"We have not created the Heavens and the earth and whatever is between them in sport: We have not created them but for a serious end: but the greater part of them understand it not." (44: 38.)

And again:

"Verily in the creation of the Heavens and of the earth, and in the succession of the night and of the day, are signs for men of understanding, who, standing and sitting and reclining, bear God in mind and reflect on the creation of the Heavens and of the earth,

* (36) Ernest William Barnes, *Scientific Theory and Religion* (Gifford Lectures for 1927-29), p. 622.

* (37) R. Bosworth Smith, *Mohammad and Mohammadanism*, p. 308.

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and say: 'Oh, our Lord! Thou hast not created this in vain.'" (3: 138.)

The Qur-án, therefore, eliminates all possibility of instituting an order of monks. The modern mind is justified in its revolt. This humanist revolt is the glory of the present age but is inspired by Muhammad. There is no conflict between Islam and a reasonable humanism, rather Islam gives an impetus to the humanist ideals and enables religion to become more and more the instrument of social reform.

"Asceticism is an excess," observes the great Indian thinker, "indulged in by those who exaggerate the transcendent aspect of reality. If the real is yonder, in another sphere, and this world is only appearance, then the real can be found only by those who turn away from the temporal and the finite." *³⁸ This is the logic underlying all the ascetic creeds. The Prophet of Arabia stands unique among all the teachers of mankind for his commendable zeal whereby he emancipates mankind from the mind-petrifying fetters of ascetic cults. The permeation of the anti-ascetic spirit thus aroused by Islam has gone on apace. It is one of the greatest dynamics of our own times. In the West, when it attained self-conscious maturity, it radically altered the face of things during the nineteenth century and produced a Lecky to expound his thesis on monasticism as a system. The new moral demands of the age are thus utterly devoid of the mortification of flesh in the interest of the spirit. C. E. M. Joad stresses the need of a new morality suitable for the modern world: "But while our creed forbids the indulgence of self in the interests of self-mortification, *it forbids no less the mortification of self in the interests of asceticism.* A life of self-denial of the kind which most of the moralities and religions of the

* (38) S. Radha Krishnan, *An Idealist View of Life*, p. 115.

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world have preached is a tired and tiring life, a life of disharmony and frustration, of wasted energy and thwarted impulse." The tone of the passage is frankly Islamic, inasmuch as it shows the current of modern thought inevitably drifting in the direction of Islam. The Qur-án has no liking for the timid, sickly theologies which bring an unusual strain on the psychical and physical faculties of man.

"God desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty." (2: 185.)

It is the Qur-ánic morality which leads our modern thinkers to forbid "the mortification of self in the interests of asceticism" and to take life as something serious and worth living. Islam is, therefore, relevant to human life to-day, and its code of moral discipline remains unshaken by modern science. Hence its ethics are self-propagating, and the modern mind, in fact, is becoming the most fruitful soil for the seeds of Islam. Muhammad is *par excellence* the apostle of the New Era, and the voice of science against monasticism is the historic voice of Islam. In a word, Islam becomes the Rock of the Ages on which the critical faith of man rests.

Islam gives man what Wordsworth called

"Absolute power

And clearest insight, amplitude of mind,

And Reason in her most exalted mood."

An asceticism which flees from the world and develops its saints at the price of abandoning industrial civilization has absolutely no place in the modern world, as "Civilization owes its origin and extension to those faculties by which man seeks to understand the nature of the universe and to turn its forces to the betterment of his condition. When these faculties are weakened, faith is given a free and unrestrained course, and, when not checked by reason, it merges into that abject credulity

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of which religious history affords so many saddening examples."* 30 The Qur-án is the first Book to open man's eyes to this vital truth. By enabling him to discover the means of realising his conquest of nature as an actual fact, it gives a new impetus to civilization:

"Do you not see that God hath made what is in the Heavens and what is in the earth subservient to you, and made complete to you His favours both in relation to the seen and the unseen?" (31:20.)

"And He hath made subservient to you the night and the day and the sun and the moon, and the stars are made subservient by His command; surely there are signs in this for a people who understand." (16:12.)

The Qur-án teems with verses enjoining a study of the universe and of the method to control its forces for man's utility. In an age when Europe was deep in the darkness of ignorance and superstition, the followers of the Qur-án brought the fruits of science and civilization to the whole world. Islam civilised Europe "in the darkest period of her annals" and gave her philosophy and literature, science and art, hospitals and libraries, and universities. Most of the progressive elements of European civilization are a direct heritage from the splendid civilization created by the Moors in Spain. Society, to whom the world of things, persons, history and moral struggle is a world of illusion (or *Maya*), as Hindu philosophy would teach us, can make no progress. There is no more fatal barrier to the efforts of a nation towards a higher standard of life than this thought of "*Maya*." It is easy to grasp the meaning of Gorham's remark in the light of Islamic history. Islam conduces to civilization by awakening in man "the

* (39) Charles T. Gorham, *Christians and Civilization*, pp. 13-14.

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higher consciousness of his manifold relations with God and the universe.”*⁴⁰ Muhammad opens a fresh vista in the domain of religious thought by leading man to have a new power by the conquest of matter. It is due to his teaching that the world to-day has no faith in the absurdity of the extravagances produced by asceticism in the Middle Ages. He thus saves man from falling into the dungeon of “abject credulity of which religious history affords so many saddening examples.” They have, however, been common in the East and the West. Ancient India, China and Japan have suffered under the sway of monasticism. The rise of Buddhism gives strength to the monastic system. The sanction it accords to renunciation tends to lower its value as a vigorous life-force. Even an earnest admirer of Buddhism comes to the following conclusion: “Buddhism as a monastic, and therefore anti-social, system, with its pessimistic aversion from human activity, is evidently unfitted for the role of inspiring and directing any progressive society.”*⁴¹ Japan begins her wonderful progress after she rejects the ethics of asceticism favoured by the cult of Buddha. India, that land of *sadhus* and *yogis*, will perhaps never give up her past monastic culture. The Aryan mind has its deep roots in the ascetic background. Radha Krishnan informs us that asceticism is held up as a worthy ideal, for the gods are supposed to have obtained divine rank by austerity. The history of Hinduism has benefited much from its contact with Islam. If the Hindu mind rebels against the past legacy of its environment, the influence of Islam is certainly there. All modern thinkers of Hinduism are shaking off the oppressive traditions of their cultural past. Radha Krishnan, the distinguished Indian

*⁽⁴⁰⁾ Sir Muhammad Iqbal, “Religious Thought in Islam,” p. 11.

*⁽⁴¹⁾ Arthur Anthony Macdonnell, “Lectures on Comparative Religion,” p. 171.

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thinker, has identified himself with the new movement known as "Neo-Hinduism" which seeks to revitalize the old Hindu culture. Rabindra Nath Tagore and M. K. Gandhi are too sensible to adopt any retrograde move in human thought by preaching the Hindu doctrine of *Maya*. Hinduism has been a stranger to the heroic conception of life peculiar to Islam, as the entire background of Indian thought is ascetic to the core. Modern Hinduism seems to be painfully conscious of the fact that her own gospel of asceticism has imposed on her the slavery of foreign powers or of her own despotic rulers. Hence the anxiety of modern Hindu thinkers to make a restatement of the principles of Hinduism with special reference to the needs of a complex, mobile social order; but the historic weakness of the Hindu attitude is sure to disillusion its followers whom the keen struggle of modern life should lead to give up their ascetic associations. As a religion for the modern world, Hinduism, apart from its caste system and ancient complex ritual, may be judged by its perplexing dichotomy between the flesh and the spirit. It is here that it fails like all non-Islamic systems to impress the modern man. Not so with Islam. The function of religion in modern life is to preach and practise a social Gospel which may be helpful in making a better world, not only ethically and spiritually, but also economically and physically. Judged by any rational standard, Islam impresses the mind of modern man with the essential plausibility and scientific respectability of its fundamental affirmations. It has the most splendid opportunity to stabilize the vacillating spiritual aspirations of mankind to-day. Islam is superior to all other religious systems, because "it embraces life in its totality. It takes world and hereafter, soul and body, individual and society, equally into consideration. It takes into consideration not only the

MUHAMMAD MY MASTER

lofty possibilities of the human nature, but also its inherent limitations. It does not impose the impossible on us, but directs us how to make the best use of our possibilities and to reach a higher plane of reality, where there is no cleavage and no antagonism between Idea and Action. It is not a way among others, but the way and the man who brought this teaching is not a guide among others, but *the* guide." The Ethics of Renunciation find no place in Islam, and, as the Prophet teaches, "*the present world is a tillage for the next world.*" In the absence of such clear-cut teaching, man resorts to bodily austerities as a means of spiritual purity, and his intellectual culture suffers an eclipse. The teaching of the Prophet is far-reaching in its effect on the present concept of the relation between this life and the next. Radha Krishnan's view of the relation is purely Islamic when he writes: "True religion, however, agrees with the social idealists in affirming that life eternal is to be realised on this earth itself. . . . We must seek our evolution through the medium of this life, by transforming it, changing it over,"*⁴² this excerpt is a mere amplification of the Prophet's teaching embodied in his profound saying quoted above. Islam is no spent force, and its efficacy in reconstructing the religious thought of the day cannot be denied. No sophistry or false method is required to demonstrate the universal influence of Muhammad. It is plain and visible to a scientific investigator of truth.

* (42) S. Radha Krishnan, "East and West in Religion," p. 104.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

CORRESPONDENCE

SEND, WOKING,
ENGLAND.

IMAM OF THE SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE,
WOKING, SURREY,
ENGLAND.

SIR,

This afternoon I visited the Mosque and was present at the Service. I helped myself to the literature at the front of the hall, and I have been reading it.

I should like to have more literature concerning Islam, which offer has been provided in the literature I have.

I shall be here until Wednesday only, and would be pleased if you could provide it to me immediately.

Sincerely yours,
MISS IRENE DOWNING.

BENIN CITY.

SIR,

Having been informed that through you one can have a knowledge of the Islamic religion, I beg to apply to you for particulars through which I could make a good start in the religion.

Your brother-in-Islam,
A. I. EBOWE.

SOUTHSEA, HANTS.

DEAR SIR,

I have been reading the *Islamic Review* which is in the Library here, and found it interesting and instructive.

May I ask if you would kindly recommend me some book which would give me some more information about the beliefs and practices. I should be much obliged.

I presume that one may visit the Mosque when the services are being held. Two years ago, being in Paris on holiday, I intended to visit the Mosque at Wilmersdorf, but the time was too short, much to my disappointment.

I am in business at present in this town.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN W. COOKE.

STOCKHOLM.

DEAR SIR,

In the *Islamic Review*, No. 2, I have read an article "My Belief," and I will express my thanks to you.

This article has been a great help to me, and I regret that I have not read the whole series published in the *Woking Review*. (I have only got three copies of the *Islamic Review* from Woking.)

I am interested much in the Islamic religion, but I am still not a member. Of course I acknowledge the fundamental principles of it. I do not know any Mohammedan in Stockholm, but I have come in contact with Islam and its teachings by the "Sufi" movement.

CORRESPONDENCE

Hoping you will kindly tell me where I can get the article series and the price.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
L. KRAUSE.

ABEOKUK MUSLIM SCHOOL.

IMAM,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING, ENGLAND.

SIR,

Through the influence of my dear friend, Mr. D. S. Omorinola of the Railway Motors, Sokoto, I obtained some of the pamphlets of your Mission which were gone through in the usual way during my leisure hours: (1) *The Philosophy of Islam*; (2) *A New Era of Islam*; (3) *The Islamic Review*.

I am a Christian. Your religion shows me that it holds no antipathy towards Christians worthy of their calling as such. Behind all *religions* there is one strong bond of brotherhood. Christianity had been jeopardised by some of its professors who hold the Bible merely as a story book, and have not been able to comply with its ethical principles.

The world problems can be solved by your religion, and I, personally, as a *Christian Headmaster* of a Muslim community have been inclined to express with *Joshua of Old*: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

I am acquainted with the Qur-án in English, and I am digging deep into the Arabic text. Islam appears to be an excellent religion in Europe, where it gives women their right share in society.

My own five-hour prayers are coupled with my one hour reading and study of religious matters. I have obtained the Grace of God more abundantly in the same way that Muhammad obtained the same in his early Arabian way.

Christianity in Nigeria is rendered incapable of battling against the evils of society by its professors. . . .

My staff will be very much interested to read your literature, while I am having with me *Four Mistresses* who are very much interested in English literature, and the literature of their own country.

They are all ready to introduce booklets to their classes and friends. We will contribute to buy as much as we are able to, and to assist the Muslim Mission Fund.

Send to us booklets including the Qur-án in the English language.

Before concluding this essay I cannot but make mention of one *phase* of Islam which has created worldwide discussion, namely *marriage*.

Islam looks upon the married state as the normal state, and hence it enjoins that so far as possible those who are single should be married: keeping of concubines or married slave girls is clearly inconsistent with the teachings of Islam. As a religion, Islam is against celibacy, and considers *parenthood* to be the duty of every human being: the false excuse of insufficiency of means to support a family is disposed of in the simple words of the Prophet of Islam (of the Qur-án—Ed.)—"If they are needy,

ISLAMIC REVIEW

Allah will make them free from want out of His Grace." Prostitution is strictly forbidden in Islam (24:83). Islam sanctions polygamy under certain circumstances: it does not enjoin it, nor does it permit it unconditionally. Polygamy in Islam is, both in theory and in practice, an exception to the rule, and as an exception it is the panacea for many evils prevalent in Western countries.

I repeat again with sincerity of heart that Christianity is in jeopardy.

As for reward *my house* will serve the Lord.

Yours as a Christian,

S. S. GEORGE TAYO,

*Headmaster, Abeokuta Moslem School,
Ijebu, Abeokuta, Nigeria, W. A.*

WHAT THEY THINK OF US?

WENT TO MECCA

In these days of conflicting antagonisms it is good to be reminded of the goodwill which is increasingly manifest among religious bodies. This week Moslems in London have been celebrating the breaking of the month of fast, and their celebrations at Woking have been the subject of many kindly references. During the long fast no food is taken between dawn and sunset, a practice which is regarded as a means of increasing spiritual understanding. Miss Irene Jane Wentworth Fitzwilliam, a cousin of Earl Fitzwilliam, who gave a luncheon to mark the end of the fast became a Moslem some seven years ago when she went to Egypt to make a study of comparative religions. Two years ago she made the pilgrimage to Mecca, and she is now known by the name of Aisha, which means "The Enlightened." Over 100,000 pilgrims make the arduous journey to Mecca every year. The Great Mosque, to which the devout go, is capable of holding 35,000 people, and is surrounded by arcades, with pillars of marble or granite. The population of Mecca depends for a living on the pilgrims, who are overcharged just as much as they would be at any of our seaside resorts. Profiteering knows no boundaries.—*New Castle Journal, December 8, 1937.*

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-AN.—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 Pre-measurement. 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

ISLAMIC REVIEW

the Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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