

mmad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets . . . " HOLY QUR-AN 33  
"There will be no Prophet after me."—MUHAMMAD.

*The*  
**Islamic Review**

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

XXVII]

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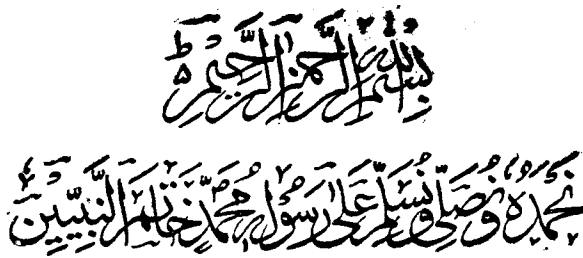
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Mr. MUHAMMAD ABDULLAH WARREN



# THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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## MESSAGE FOR THE NEW YEAR

DEAR READERS,

Praise be to Allah, this journal, first to take the field, is going to enter the 26th year of its existence. You know what the world of religions was like when it began its career, and you see what it is like to-day. For a European to change his or her ancestral faith for Islam, by the grace of Allah, is no longer an extraordinary incident. Nay, we are looking forward to the time when there will be a wide-spread religious revolution in Europe, making Christianity recede before the rising tide of Islam. As the Review has been fanning the flames of this oncoming revolution, let us strive hard to see that it maintains its position with dignity as it approaches the hour of final success after this long period of single-handed struggle! As a matter of fact the last hours of a struggle are the most trying ones!

May Allah sustain us in our efforts in His Sacred Cause!

AFTABUDDIN AHMAD

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

### THE TRUE RELIGION

BY M. L. M. MUHAMMAD HUSSAIN

A famous cynic, when once asked what constitutes a true Religion, observed that it would be quite inadequate for him to try to define Religion as it is commonly done but added with characteristic precision that a true Religion is that which teaches everything of LIFE. How far this critical idea of a true religion is correct would not be quite apparent at first. To the average man it would be a difficult task indeed to reconcile our earthly struggle for existence, or our endeavour to introduce a new mechanical apparatus for the successful development of agriculture with our prayers for the attainment of spiritual purity in the sanctity of a monastic conclave. While the former would be regarded as grossly materialistic and hence entirely irreligious, the latter would be admitted as forming the core of a divine Religion. This is quite an erroneous conception of Religion even though Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and other similar cults teach us that it is so. It cannot, however, be called a Religion which only preaches of the spiritual side of our life, and touches upon our material existence in passing or with contempt and disregard. Neither is any system worthy of our consideration which exhorts its votaries to lead a life contrary to Nature, for while Nature has been created for the good of man, man must live in conformity to the Natural Laws. Dependent as we are on the uniformity or regularity of the Natural Laws for our health and happiness, it behoves us to observe our share of the covenant if harmony and peace are to be obtained. But our knowledge, even scientific knowledge, is so limited that it is necessary that some sort of a system or Religion must be given us to act as a guidance in our blind struggle for existence. It is also necessary that such a

## THE TRUE RELIGION

system or Religion, in whatever corner of the globe it may originate, must have a dual purpose. First, it must teach us the intrinsic character of our surroundings in relation to our adaptability to them. This is of utmost importance because no creature can hope to live in concord unless it first knows of its fitness to suit itself to its environment as regards organization, government, society and the economic principles that lead to peace and agreement. Secondly, it must educate us into the mysteries of the Unseen and lay down in clear and definite terms the rules we are to follow to attain spiritual perfection without in any manner injuring our material life.

These, therefore, are the constituents of a True Religion which may be said to be a very comprehensive system of harmoniously blended spiritual and material laws for the guidance of humanity towards the realization of peace and happiness both in this and the world to come, and the inevitable condition of which laws is Divine Inspiration. Now it may be asked with pertinence: "Where is the Religion that teaches us everything of LIFE?" A very clear examination of the comparative Religions of the world would give us the solution we seek. The dualistic doctrines of Zoroastrianism and the primitive culture of Judaism have fallen into decay for obvious reasons. The universal application of Hinduism is rendered impossible by its varied and multifarious god-recognitions which are detrimental to our spiritual evolution and intellectual advancement. Buddhism is excluded from the category of Religions for three reasons: First, Buddha paid more attention to the spirit than to the matter and thus made his teachings clash with Nature. Second, his ideals are hopelessly fatalistic and allow of no scope for individual application for mutual progress. Lastly, his Divine Conception was inconclusive and derogatory.

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We observe identical discrepancies in the structure of Christianity as well. Christianity, unlike other Religions, is impracticably confused. Jesus neither taught the science of material improvement nor defined fully the path of spiritual uplift. Beyond giving utterances to his inspirations, which are mainly psychological, he made no effort to instruct man on the intricacies of his material existence which must necessarily precede supernaturalism. Furthermore, his doctrines for attaining spiritual purification are quite impracticable to the layman unless he acts in a way that clashes with the first principles of Nature. This incompleteness in his teachings and, most of all, the want of a harmonious unity between spiritual and material laws, has now made itself apparent to the world, and the claim put forward by eminent Christian Theologians of the universality of the teachings of Jesus has been shattered by time and civilization. If the opinion of some pre-eminent thinkers of Christian Europe were to be taken as an indication of the feeling of the Christian world towards the cult of Jesus, then there is no doubt that Christianity is no longer alive, even though one perceives at intervals the feeble attempts of "Churchianity" for existence.

Even the great theologian, Dean Inge, admits that the influence of Christianity upon European society is no longer felt and rightly bemoans that a sad fate is indeed in wait for her unless a civilizing spiritual and moral force takes hold of her scattered children. Christianity has failed to do this because, in surviving the ravages of twenty centuries, the effect upon her resources and elasticity are painfully straining. It is very unsafe now to change her constitution without actually affecting her fundamentals, upon which the entire edifice now stands in a dilapidated condition. The downfall of Christianity is wholly due to its unsuitability for universal acceptance.

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Against this we have a comprehensive religion capable of satisfying all minds and of coping with the ever widening needs of modern society. I refer to Islam, the Religion of Peace. The claim of Islam as the only True Religion is based not so much on dogmas and sentimental quibbles as on its well balanced and rational teachings, for Islam is at once a spiritual and moral light that has led and will continue to lead erring man safely through the maelstrom of tumult and confusion. The beauty of Islam lies in its simplicity. The entire teachings are so easy to practise that one naturally accepts them without any reservations. The obligations and duties of men, women and children are so definitely stated and their responsibilities to themselves and to society so clearly stressed that the application of them never fails to bring happiness and success. The greatness of Islam is more emphasised by the fact that its teachings are in no way contrary to Nature. Rather, it may be said to be a valuable adjunct to the Laws of Nature. The great tolerance, freedom and facility that are permitted in Glorious Islam are an object lesson of its universality. Its incomparable charm and simplicity are made very distinct by the truth of its scientific treatment of matter and spirit. And the very performance of the Islamic prayers makes us live (in every sense of the word) and yet be outside the world. So peerless is the sweet concordant blend of the spiritual and moral laws of Islam.

There is no problem Islam has not solved, no demands it has not satisfied, no questions it has not answered. Crisp, comprehensive and commanding, the entire structure of Islam is enshrined in the Miracle of all Miracles—the Holy Qur-án of which alone it can proudly and without any exaggeration be said that not one sign or letter has been changed, added to or amended since its revelation 13½ centuries ago. Unshaken



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and triumphant, Islam has stood the merciless test of time for the one reason that it grasped the full significance of the word "LIFE" and lent it a unique charm so far denied by all other Religions. There is no god but the one universal God and Muhammad (may peace be upon him!), His Messenger, is the corner-stone of Islam. Whoever believes in Allah, the One God, and in the Prophethood of Muhammad, and follows his very simple teachings, is a Muslim. It does not matter whether he be of Aryan stock, Semitic descent, or Teutonic origin, for he loses his nationality and enters the beautiful fold of Universal Islamic Brotherhood to attain that perfect peace and calm for which we all yearn so much.

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### THE STUDY OF NATURE

BY O. V. ABDULLAH

Nature was once the object of worship. Primitive man adored wonderful manifestations of Nature. He could not explain them. To him natural consequences were supernatural ones. To him, thunder and lightning, famine and disease were different gods, manifesting their anger.

For ages man could not study Nature. He idolised its various forces. He was not conscious of his capability to harness Nature for his own use. He elevated Nature to the status of Divinity. This retarded his progress.

Man was not, however, to serve those forces which ought to have served him. He was not even to remain unconscious of his own capacity, his own destiny, his own relationship with the rest of the universe. Muhammad was to come—and he came. He (may God bless and keep him!) came to emancipate human reason from the bonds of superstition and ignorance. Muhammad (peace be on him!) came with rational views of Nature.

## THE STUDY OF NATURE

He came to enlighten man as to his own capacity. He widened the range of human study. He made the study of nature an act of worship. He said: "*One hour's meditation on the works of the Creator (in a devout spirit) is better than seventy years of prayers.*" He it was who, while the rest of the world lay in the depths of ignorance, urged his faithful followers to reflect upon the wonderful creations and marvels as exhibited in the universe. He could say with Wordsworth:

"Happy is he who lives to understand,  
Not human nature only, but explores  
All natures—to the end that he may find  
The law that governs each."

Indeed, the very religion of Islam is founded upon the study of Nature. Its Holy Book, the Qur-án, wherever it enunciates a truth, illustrates it with a corresponding natural phenomenon. It never urges its adherents to obey the laws promulgated in it, at the risk of insulting their intelligence. On the contrary, it asks man to reflect upon Nature. Again and again does the Qur-án ask its readers to "reflect," to "ponder" and to "consider" the natural phenomena.

It was the Qur-án that gave impetus to learning. It was the Qur-án that first taught man that everything in the universe has some purpose or other, that nothing created is in vain. No other Scripture has thus broadened man's outlook on Nature.

A critical study of Nature will clearly show that not a blade of grass, not a grain of dust is without its purpose. Some purpose or other there must be. Every atom has inherent in it some utility which will be exhibited when the occasion arises. "Everything around us appears to possess inherent qualities. The atomic world and its various combinations are repositories of numberless

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capacities. They await only favourable circumstances to bring their latent faculties to fruition." 1

This is the greatest wonder in Nature. Things which seem to us harmful for man are really useful to him. It is the duty of man to discover the use that an apparently harmful creature has. It is his duty to study its nature. The Holy Qur-án wants us to make it subservient. And this control can come to us only through a knowledge of the laws that govern it. Investigations in this field are, indeed, pregnant with thrilling discoveries. For example, it is now common knowledge that snake venom, possessing great power of coagulating the blood, is effective in arresting the bleeding of sufferers from haemophilia. Dr. Hariz of the Pasteur Institute in Paris reported that he had been able to cure malignant internal growths with cobra venom, and his findings have been submitted to the British Medical Association.

Those who have suffered the sting of either a bee or a wasp have found themselves, if they formerly suffered from rheumatism, to be strangely free from the complaint afterwards. 2 Yes; the various apparently harmful creatures that we find in Nature are not to harm man, but to be of use to him. In like manner, everything in the universe should be subservient to man. Man can make Nature subservient only if he studies it deeply and he must make it subservient if he wants to ascend the ladder of human progress. Then only can he exclaim: "Our Lord, Who looks to our sustenance and maintenance, Thou hast not created all this in vain. Glory be to Thee!" (Qur-án, 3:190.)

Thus we find how intelligently the universe is created. Nevertheless, proud Man often makes hasty conclusions. Sometimes, when men cannot explain the

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1. Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, in his book "Message of Islam," p. 19.

2. W. J. Cunningham in an article "Curing by Poison."

## THE STUDY OF NATURE

utility of a certain structure or form, they consider it useless. It is absurd to say: "In our own human organism, we have similar useless rudimentary structures in the muscles of the ear, in the eye-lid, in the nipple and milk gland of the male, and in other parts of the body."<sup>1</sup> The professor, as a famous biologist, should have discovered their utility instead of remarking thus.

He has, however, made one rational research into the realm of nature and says:

"Mechanical and chemical energy, sound and heat, light and electricity, are mutually convertible; they seem to be but different modes of one and the same fundamental force and energy. Thence follows the important thesis of the unity of all natural forces, or, as it may also be expressed, the 'Monism of Energy.'"<sup>2</sup>

There is unity in diversity. This goes to prove the existence of One God, which is the rational conception of the Deity, based on scientific principles. One thousand and three hundred years ago, Islam proclaimed the Unity of God. The Qur-án points to Nature for the rational proof of this unity, and Man, through his deep study of Nature, comes to the same, though belated conclusion. Here we have to remember that Professor Haeckel, who found unity of forces in Nature, was an atheist. A thousand pities! Had he studied Nature more deeply, he must have believed in God. He did not believe in God because he did not care to seek grounds for the existence of God. Joseph McCabe, himself an atheist, admits that "hardly one person in ten, in modern civilization, ever troubles about grounds for believing in God."<sup>3</sup> Man must not be foolish

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<sup>1</sup> Professor Haeckel: "Riddle of the Universe," page 217.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, page 208.

<sup>3</sup> Professor McCabe: "Existence of God," page 65.

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enough not to seek grounds for the existence of God. Study of Nature will prove that there is a God. Let men of science study impartially, and they will soon be convinced of a greater power. Let us not be discouraged when we find absurd conceptions of Deity. There is a rational religion—Islam—and it is the only religion that can stand the test of Science. It stood the test in the past. It will always stand unshakable. It is this religion, and this alone, that promoted the study of Nature to elevate humanity. Moreover, it was Muhammad (peace be on him!) who often asked Man to reflect upon Nature, to use his thinking faculty. His “persistent and unvarying appeal to reason, and to the ethical faculty of mankind, his rejection of miracles, his thoroughly democratic conception of divine government, the universality of his religious ideals, his simple humanity,”—all serve to differentiate him from his predecessors. “All affiliate him,” says the author of “Oriental Religions,” “with the modern world.”<sup>1</sup> How far Muhammad (peace be on him!) loved the study of Nature can be understood from his prayer: “God! grant me knowledge of the ultimate nature of things.”

Knowledge of Nature draws us nearer to God. Nature is the manifestation of the God-Mind. “The knowledge of Nature is the knowledge of God’s behaviour. In our observations of Nature, we are virtually seeking a kind of intimacy with the Absolute Ego; and this is only another form of worship.”<sup>2</sup>

The various laws of Nature are the wills of God. We see how impartial God is when we examine the chain of Cause and Effect. Man, high or low, black or white, must abide by the consequences of his own acts. If he breaks any Divine Law, he suffers its consequences. There is no partiality in Divine Government. This

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<sup>1</sup> Syed Ameer Ali in “The Spirit of Islam.”

<sup>2</sup> Sir Muhammad Iqbal in “Six Lectures.”

## THE PROSPECT OF A REAL UNIVERSAL RELIGION

Truth we know only when we study Nature. Study of Nature thus shows the behaviour of God, and this helps us in moulding our character. For, according to the Prophet, we must "imbue ourselves with Divine attributes." God manifests His will in Nature. "God says," says Muhammad, "do not abuse the Universe, as I am the Universe:"—a great truth, and an undeniable reality. It means that all the manifestations of Nature are the manifestations of the God-Mind, and characteristics of the Divine Being.<sup>1</sup>

We must study Nature, for then only can we really know God—and we must know God in order to shape our character. Thus it is that Islam encourages the study of Nature.

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## THE PROSPECT OF A REAL UNIVERSAL RELIGION

BY THE REV. G. MAURICE ELLIOT (*of the Anglican Church*).

*[We publish this lecture of our learned friend, the Rev. Elliott, to show our co-religionists that even the Anglican Church has been moved by the times' call for a higher conception of religious life than the one prevalent in the West.—Ed., I.R.]*

Years ago, when most men received but little education, they very naturally accepted as true what their priests told them.

In this country, they believed that the Bible was the "inspired word of God" from cover to cover and that the only persons who understood its meaning were the ordained priests of the Church. There was nothing for it but to believe what the Church, through her priests, taught. And they taught a three-storied universe—heaven, earth, hell. All who were believers in Church teaching would go to heaven, and all unbelievers would go to hell and perish everlastingly.

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1. Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din in "The Threshold of Truth," page 68.

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To-day all that has changed. Education has broken the fetters of ignorance and given men a faith that rebels—

- (a) Against an unreal heaven and an unreal hell.
- (b) Against the fictitious belief that the Bible is the inspired word of God from cover to cover.
- (c) Against a Churchism which has misunderstood the message of Jesus—almost from the beginning.
- (d) Against that ridiculous bigotry which would have us believe that the other religions of the world are false religions and their prophets false prophets.

And the duly informed minds of to-day are not content merely to study what is called "Comparative Religion" which purports to discover how much better this religion is than that and so on. Educated men know that most people accept the religion of the country, or of that part of the country in which they were born and received their training.

They also know that three great religions each claim to be universal and final, that each believes its religion to be the best. And cultured men see clearly that it is religion—so called—that has made, and is still making, universal brotherhood impossible. The uncultured, though partly educated, are so puzzled and perplexed by this seemingly hopeless state of affairs that they simply do not know what to believe. And in Russia religion is practically banned, and in Germany there is little belief in survival and things spiritual. In our country there are multitudes who have no effective belief in survival, and many no belief at all. "They live a half-dead life knowing they must die."

Well, now, the message we bring them is primarily this:

- (1) Men cannot die for the life of them.

## THE PROSPECT OF A REAL UNIVERSAL RELIGION

- (2) They must continue to live after death whether they like it or not.
- (3) They will be judged, not by any creed they may have held, but by their character.

And that is a rousing and revitalising message. It changes half-dead men into healthy men who are conscious of, aware of their immortality.

Among all peoples, civilized and uncivilized, from the dawn of history, and doubtless before, there have been those who claimed, and have been acknowledged to possess, super-normal powers. These powers are not of themselves, but from God, or, from God through the medium of His messengers. And they are to-day being acknowledged and observed by scientists. Every religion on earth owes its origin to the exercise of these powers. All religion is revelation—something revealed from the other world.

So the message we are blazoning throughout the land, and which is meeting with such an enthusiastic reception wherever we go is this:

That survival is a proven fact.

That we continue to live whether we like it or not.

That we shall be judged by "the deeds done in the body" by character.

That God is father of all.

That all men, of every class, colour, clime and religion are brothers.

And that the time has come for the brothers to unite in the one, great, universal religion which is common to us all.

That does not mean uniformity, but it does mean friendship, brotherhood, love, peace—among the members of the different churches and the different religions.

We all live in different houses but all agree that a house is necessary. We all have different furniture,



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but we all agree that furniture is necessary. We all eat different food, but we all agree that food is essential to the life of the body.

And so we visit each other in our various houses—we make use of other peoples' furniture—we eat different food from our own, because we are friends, because we love one another, because friendship and love mean peace.

And when this world of ours—this unfriendly, unloving, unpeaceful world, sees that men and women of all churches and of all religions have united upon universal and eternal principles, and are one in friendship, love, and peace, then will the world's statesmen and governments seek to emulate our example—for they will be breathing the air of friendship, love and peace. No governments could stand against peoples who are united upon the fundamental of all religious beliefs, *viz.*, survival and its implications.

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### WHY I ACCEPTED ISLAM?

BY MR. MUHAMMAD ABDULLAH WARREN

In my attempt to write an explanation of the reasons which caused me to accept the faith of Islam, for the benefit of readers of the *Islamic Review*, I find myself beset with many difficulties, inasmuch as my reasons were so many and varied. However, I will try to make my position clear, trusting to your charity to make allowances for any deficiencies in writing technique.

As a youth I was appalled and sickened by the history of the horrible atrocities committed against their "Brothers" by the early and middle-age Christians. Especially was this the case when I learned of the beastliness of the Holy Office and Inquisition, under whose direction the "Image of God" was torn asunder, burned

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alive, flogged and mutilated unspeakably. The story of such vile crimes as these, committed by Christians in the name of Christ, shall never die; it will remain for ever as evidence of the terrible contradiction between the commands of Christ and the acts of his followers, and it will be an ever-present reminder of what mankind would receive at the hands of these followers of him who said "Blessed are the merciful," should they ever regain the power that they have lost.

The years passed, and I took opportunity as it arose to study more closely the Christians and their works. I could not, of course, accept the main dogmas of the Christian Church as they are so obviously mere survivals of Pagan idolatrous belief. But I held to a belief in the Divinity of Christ and the Atonement; the latter was a very comforting belief to such a morally lazy man as myself. I also comforted myself with the theory that the barbarities practised by the Christians in the Middle Ages were merely the result of an inhuman environment and a lack of kindly thought which was common to those ages, until I discovered that not so very long ago the churches were opposing the abolition of slavery with all the means at their command, whilst at the same time they supported the exploitation of child labour.

What a scene it is that history presents to us in glorious England after nineteen hundred years of Christianity. . . . Mere babies driven off to factories in the early hours of the morning, their timid eyes hardly open in their wan, pinched faces, some even with the marks of the overseer's lash of the previous day still to be seen upon their tender limbs, where the skin shows through the rags that clothe them, and the fear of Christ in the person of their Christian masters, deep hidden, like a loathsome monster, in their fear-deadened souls.

Retrospectively, we can see that, from the very beginning, Christianity has exerted a retrograde influ-

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ence upon the march of human intellectual development. The first Christian Roman Emperor destroyed all the reforms that had been introduced into the slave system of the Roman Empire by the humane teachings of the great Seneca and, from that time onwards up to the year 1860, the story of slavery within the Christian sphere of dominion is one of abject horror and frightfulness.

If we are to suppose that his followers are obeying the commands of Christ, we are amply justified in regarding Christ as the arch-enemy of God, for, whilst we know that God is good, and we are certain of his kindness to mankind, we are equally certain of the evil that Christianity has done to man in the past, and we have no reason to suppose that it will not do evil in the future.

I will not maintain that all Christians are bad; on the contrary, I think that most of them are good and have the welfare of mankind at heart, but I do believe that the system of Christian thought is too vague and elastic to be of any lasting good to man; it allows of too loose an interpretation of the meanings of the terms "right" and "wrong," and throughout the Christian era unscrupulous individuals have seized upon this fact and used it to gain their own ends, with the result that the dominating section of Christian Society, the Priesthood, is filled with these doubtful characters and has become rotten and degenerate. The very real danger to society arising out of this state of affairs can only be realised fully when we understand that, through long ages of suppression, the Christians have developed a servility towards their priests that forbid criticism whilst it supports authority.

After long and careful consideration, I have come to the conclusion that the days of Christianity are numbered, more and more people each day are realising that the faith of Christ is a mocking absurdity and, daily,

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Christian congregations are becoming less in number. There are a few, it is true, who remain loyal to their faith, but their loyalty is an unthinking one whose chief supports are prejudice and habit; it definitely is not one of a considered scientific basis. Intellectual activity has no part in the emotional conviction.

We cannot expect the thousands of priests, and the churches with their vested interests, to give up their good, fat incomes without a struggle, and for many years the battle has been on, but it is a battle of ignorant sentimentality against enlightened intellect and humanity, and the latter must win. Even the leaders of the Christian churches are now admitting the falsity in the fundamentals of Christianity. The Dean of St. Paul's said recently: "It becomes more and more evident that the Christian Church, as it now exists, cannot fulfil its mission." Dr. Major, Editor of the *Modern Churchman*, said: "Problems of belief are very simple for traditionalist Christians who believe in the infallibility of the Bible or in the infallibility of the Church or perhaps in the infallibility of both. All that is needful for them, is to find out what the Bible teaches and to believe it, or what the Church teaches and to believe it. But a more complete and exacting knowledge of what the Bible teaches and of what the Church teaches has created insuperable difficulties in the way of belief of this kind of the mentally alert and open-minded. Literary criticism and historical research have shown convincingly that in a number of cases the Bible narratives are self-contradictory and that the statements of the Church's Doctors, Fathers and Councils are also self-contradictory.

"Moreover, the advances in scientific knowledge prove that in a number of cases where these authorities do not contradict each other, they are, nevertheless, in error. In short, for the modern man, belief in the

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infallibility of Bible and Church has become an impossibility."

Within Islam I have found the very reverse of the above picture. Here there is no uncertainty or looseness of doctrine, no scientific inaccuracy, no terrible contradiction between command and practice, no warring dogmas or creeds, and no selfish priesthood to lead the people astray from the clear glory of the worship of the one God. Islam stands as strong to-day as it has for centuries past, a mighty rock of simple faith set amid the thundering seas of life, a God-given sanctuary and haven for tormented human souls, a guide and comforter for the wandering and distressed, a giver of hope to the hopeless and a light to guide the feet of those who live in darkness.

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### THE ULEMA OF ALGERIA

BY FAZAL KAREEM SAUNDERS

If one were to ask a hundred non-Muslim inhabitants of North Africa their idea as to what the Ulema is, there would be perhaps three who would reply that the word itself is the plural of *Alim* (Arabic: a savant, an intellectual), and that the Ulema of Algeria is an intellectual association of Islamic formation. The remaining ninety-seven would offer varying definitions: a political party, a religious fraternity, a set of fanatical "marabouts," or even a pan-Islamic society with anti-French tendencies—a centre of propaganda preaching Arab nationalism in North Africa, financed and supported by foreign powers, and receiving its instructions from the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, from Egyptian autonomists, Arab nationalists at Paris (belonging to the recently banned society "The North African Star") or, what is even more serious, from His Majesty King Ibn Saud of

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the Hedjaz and Nejd, the head of the Wahabi Movement.

In modern "Sheikh" fiction of the "Garden of Allah" and "Greenmantle" type, one may sometimes find references to the "Mysterious Ulema of the East," who are supposed to control the destinies of individuals or even whole continents by a wave of the magic wand or by some other occult agency, much after the fashion of the hidden masters of the Himalayas or the "Yogis of Tibet," who have palatial residences in the middle of some inaccessible desert, treasure caves full of gold, silver, jewels, havens of beautiful women, a fleet of private aeroplanes, and agents in all the principal stock exchanges in the world; and who foment world-wide revolution, the annihilation of Christian races, and the downfall of this or that government; in short, modern versions of the Old Man of the Mountain. Such romantic figures, fortunately, do not exist outside of story books.

The general public may be pardoned for entertaining such fantastic conceptions, for the information is confined mostly to the dramatic paragraphs, hastily cabled or telegraphed to head offices at Paris, and written by Star newspaper reporters, who, entirely unequipped for the study of Muslim questions, are sent by their editors on their tours of enquiry, which cannot, from the very nature of things, be anything but superficial. North African journalists, living in the country itself, and much better equipped for such study, have shown a quite understandable ignorance with regard to Arab problems, especially matters of dispute, not because they are afraid to study them, but because they hesitate to awaken Muslim susceptibility or French suspicion by publishing the results of their studies; and also for fear of touching on subjects about which the Arab community itself is divided in opinion, thus aggravating any new or long standing philosophical conflicts.

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This "journalistic" reserve has made the Ulema still more open to misrepresentation by newspapers and other publications, when they treat of the activities of the Society. "The silence and the reticence of the Algerian Press with regard to us," says a well-known Muslim journalist of Algiers, a member of the Ulema, "has invested us with an air of mystery, has facilitated the propagation of the most fantastic accusations, and the most outrageous insinuations: we are deeply embittered at seeing ourselves treated as political sectaries, especially anti-French."

According to the rules of the Association, the Ulema is a society for moral education, constituted in strict conformity with the French law of the 1st July, 1901, regarding associations and similar bodies. Article 4 is as follows:

"The object of this Association is to wage war against the social scourges: alcohol, games of chance, prostitution, idleness and all that by its nature is forbidden by religion, reprehensible from the moral point of view, or prohibited by the laws and statutes in force."

Article 5 runs:

"To achieve its ends, the Association reserves the right to employ every adequate means not contrary to the laws in force."

With regard to politics, article 3 says:

"All political discussion, and any kind of intervention in a political question, is rigorously prohibited in the Society."

In Algeria, the Ulema is strictly confined to Algerian nationals, and only men of outstanding intellectual ability are admitted to membership. It includes members who, like Sheikh Ben Badis, the President, Si Larki Tebessi, the General Secretary, and Sheikh Mohamed Khair-ud-Din, the Inspector, have studied at

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the Theological University of Litouna, near Tunis, or like the Vice-President, Sheikh Basheer Brahimi at the University of Medina in the Hedjaz; others are diplômés of the Al-Azhar University of Cairo, or like the Sheikh El-Okbi heads of communities; or old scholars of Zaouias (monasteries), French schools and colleges, or the official Madrasas. The activities of the Algerian Ulema are strictly confined to Algeria.

The Holy Qur-án being a social, legal, and political code, as well as a religious authority, it might, perhaps, be thought that, in an association composed of intellectuals and Qur-ánic scholars, it might be rather difficult to keep political matters entirely out of discussion. To a certain extent this is true, though the disputes between the Ulema and the French administration—which were the initial cause of what has been termed in recent years “Le malaise Franco-Mussulman” (the Franco-Mussulman crisis)—have been politico-religious rather than political in nature, on the border line between religion and politics, *e.g.*, State intervention in the management of mosques; the refusal of permission to preach in mosques to those not accepted by the State, etc., etc.

In the Algerian Muslim world, the Ulema represents rationalism in religion. From its inception six years ago, it quickly came into conflict with the “Marabouts,” who degrade religion into a superstition or a trade. Originally, the Ulema had, as the Islamic law prescribes, the right of access to the vast congregation of the public who attend the mosque. This proved fatal, for the conflict between the Ulema and the Marabouts developed into a conflict between the Ulema and the French administration, when, on the demand of the Marabouts, the Ulema were forbidden the liberty of preaching in the mosques. This second phase of the conflict brought about some rather striking developments. Many



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Muslim functionaries do not become members of the Ulema because of their official positions, though all their sympathies are with the Society. Their hesitation is quite natural; if a Qur-*anic* professor becomes a member of the Ulema, or if he receives the Society's journal "Al Bassair," permission to teach is withdrawn by the State; if a Muslim is a candidate for the post of Imam, his application is not considered unless he is neither a member of the Ulema nor a reader of its journal.

"Relatively speaking, that is only a minor detail," says the Sheikh Ben Badis, the President of the Society. "The important thing is that, after a long period, the Algerian Muslim world is beginning to wake up, to take stock of itself. One indication of this is seen in the way it is beginning to formulate its claims, its rights to self-expression along peaceful and harmonious lines, methodically and with dignity. In the way that the Muslims of Algeria have, by their own social transformation, become conscious of fresh needs in the material sense, so an intellectual and moral evolution in the direction of rationalism is taking place. One cannot ignore either of the movements. In a world where science now reigns supreme, the French administration, with the Marabouts on the one hand, and the Ulema on the other, is at the parting of the ways, but, practically speaking, there is only one choice; the new current of thought and aspiration is too imperious, too much in harmony with the natural laws of evolution and the needs of the hour, to be avoided."

From the religious point of view, the principal demands of the Ulema are as follows: The right to preach in the mosques; the right to give religious teaching in the mosques; the unrestricted management of the mosques by the faithful, through the intermediary of councils chosen by the Muslim community and under the control of the French administration. In a word,

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there is the application of the laic principle—the separation of the Church from the State. The whole of the present-day Algerian “malaise,” says the Sheikh El-Okbi, “arises from these few points. I cannot agree to the State appointing the Imam behind whom I can pray.”

As regards politics, hostile critics have pointed out the socialistic tendencies of the Ulema, and its supposed definite political activities. “My answer will be very simple,” says the Sheikh Ben Badis. “Since the Society was founded six years ago, the administration has always turned a deaf ear to our claims in the sphere of religion. The coming to power of the “Front Populaire” (“The People’s Front”) in France has given the whole democratic world, athirst for justice and equity, renewed hope. After so many years of rebuffs and indifference, is it not natural that to-day we should give our entire support to the new Government? The French came to Algeria to accomplish a double task—colonisation and emancipation. The work of colonisation has succeeded magnificently, but, unfortunately, very much at the expense of moral and intellectual emancipation. Our Ulema has no other *Raison d’Etre*; but all our activities are confined, and will always be confined, to Algeria, within the jurisdiction of French Law. Therefore no one can accuse us of having relations with foreign powers. We can do without external influences. We have, in this country, enough enlightened intellectuals among the faithful, so there arises no need of instructions from outside, whether from the deserts of Arabia or from any other country.” What will be the reaction of the French patriot, the Colonist, anxious for the future of the work of France in North Africa, to the philosophical movement which the Ulema represents? “Without doubt,” says the Sheikh Ben Badis, “the Cartesian

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rationalism of the French will find in the rational teaching of the Ulema a meeting-place where the common ideals and aspirations can unite, thus immeasurably helping forward the work of moral and social emancipation in North Africa."

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### THE WAY OF ACTION IN ISLAM

BY W. B. BASHYR-PICKARD, B.A. (CANTAB.)

Although Islam is the religion of peace and although Islam means submission to the Will of God as the sole way of attaining that peace, nevertheless action is of the very essence of Islam. Mere recognition by mental affirmation of the laws established by God throughout the universe is not enough for the true Muslim; he must also *act* in accordance and in harmony with those laws. His belief must be the well-spring and motive power of action. Otherwise it is, in truth, but a shadow and not a sincere belief. Belief is the urge to life, the basis and foundation of the life-progress of the individual. From belief springeth up action, and from true belief is manifested the true life. Indeed, in Islam that only is considered belief, which is freighted with action: all else is regarded as idle, empty and worthless.

So we come to realise that Islam, the religion of submission and of resignation, is also, at the same time, the religion of active and ardent striving. It is not enough to dwell upon the beauty and majesty of sublime truths; but, for mankind upon this earth, Islam inculcates a practical well-doing as an essential part of righteous life.

Therefore, both action and belief being essentials of Islam, let us endeavour for a while to outline the true path of action in Islam.

Obviously, all actions of a Muslim must be in accordance with the teaching of the Qur-án, and must be a

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progression upon the path of submission to the Will of God, as marked out by the Qur-án and by the collected authentic Traditions of the acts and sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (the Hadith).

What then? Now here I want to make a very definite point, a point which may possibly have escaped the consideration of some Muslims. It is said, and rightly, that Islam is a very convenient religion (by "convenient" is meant well adapted to the needs and aspirations and frailties of human nature). It is said that religion was made for man rather than man for religion. But here we have very definitely to guard against a misapplication. By "convenient religion" we do *not* mean a religion that can be dispensed with or disregarded, as occasion arises, or as indolence or negligence suggests. Quite otherwise. Islam has a certain discipline, a certain curbing of human forces and a definite regulation of human affairs, by which a rhythmic peace and happiness is introduced into human life at all times and in all conditions of fortune.

Islamic life progresses and the individual is peacefully secure, alike against the blandishments of prosperity or the buffetings of adversity.

It should be remembered that the ordinances of Islam are for a definite purpose. For instance, the frequency of repeated prayers every day and the definite appointed times of prayer form an effective bulwark against the surging tide of materialism and the clamouring insistence of worldly affairs.

To say that to have prayers five times a day is very inconvenient and very troublesome for business is to disregard the purpose of prayer and to throw away the benefit of repeated remembrance of God.

If your worldly affairs are so insistent that they do not leave you time for prayer, then something is radically

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wrong with your way of life: your way of life is not Islamic.

There are two voices calling: Firstly, *Iyyaka* (the worship of God), and secondly, *hayat-ud-dunya* (worldly affairs); and the true Muslim life is in harmonious answer to both calls; neither apart from the world, concerned only with religious life, as a monk, nor apart from God, concerned only with mundane material affairs, as some unbeliever.

Passing on, then, we come now to describe more in detail the path of action in Islamic life, and it is thus: Keep up prayer both in the day and in the night according to the ordinances of Islam within the times appointed for this observance; forsake and eschew anything that seriously hampers or troubles your regular access to prayer, to the presence of God. Say not: "Prayers are troublesome to business," unless you are also prepared to say: "Business is troublesome to prayers." Remember that both in prayers and in business may God be faithfully served. Remember that courage and energy may come from prayer, and that daily life in the world is the field for action for the display of that courage and energy in righteousness.

Prayer is the corrective and guiding power of action. Forsake not prayer, lest action strike amiss or wander in frustrative aimlessness. Yet, remember also, that not alone by prayer and faith shall ye tread the path of success from God: striving in action is also required.

I will mention a few passages from the Qur-án in illustration of my remarks. Thus: "*O man, thou must strive to attain to thy Lord a hard striving, until thou meet Him.*" (Qur-án, 84:6) and again, "*Has he not been informed of what is in the scriptures of Moses? and (of) Abraham, who fulfilled (the commandments): that no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another and that man shall have nothing but what he strives for;*

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*and that his striving shall soon be seen; then shall he be rewarded for it with the fullest reward."* (Qur-án, 53:39—41). And a third passage: *"I will not waste the work of a worker among you, whether male or female, the one of you being from the other."* (Qur-án, 3:194).

Now all action, presumably, or at least the best action, is devoted to some end, to achieve some accomplishment or to effect some progress. Wherein, then, lies the path of progress for Islamic action?

I venture to say that Islamic action, consistently, fearlessly and rationally carried out, opens up a possibility for the achievement of world-wide happiness for humanity. Islamic progress is not a mere Westernisation, a mere adoption of very questionable benefits and advances of material civilization, whereby man's inner serenity and nearness to God is seriously jeopardized. No, Islamic progress is something very different: for by Islam is dethroned the domination of the world and that grasping greed, which has eaten its way into men's thoughts to such an extent that money and brute force have become the foundation of civilization. We find the world pervaded by racial suspicion, racial antagonism, even racial hatred. By Islam these things would vanish, these demons of evil evaporate into thin air.

Say not that modern conditions are inimical to Islam, that Islam is unsuited to modern conditions, but rather follow Islam, adhere to the way of the Qur-án and thereby regenerate modern conditions, which those who praise them most highly will readily admit are essentially and fundamentally lacking in peace and contentment and the true sanity of existence. There must be something radically wrong with a society, wherein trade depression and widespread economic distress walk hand in hand with the paying of colossal salaries to film stars.

Islam could restore to its balance this crazy, top-heavy social order, which otherwise, it seems, must crash from the very rottenness of its own foundations.

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But there is another very desirable path for Islamic action and energy.

Islam still has so many different sects (not that that in itself is a drawback, where difference of opinion is considered a blessing) and so much energy and endeavour, I feel, is wasted internally upon sectarian divergencies. The body of Islam, I hold, would be more healthy and humanity would be better served, if internal sects, while keeping their differences, if they so wish, would yet realize that they are members of the brotherhood of the Faithful, of world-wide Islamic Society, and would amicably co-operate, devoting their energies externally to the general well-being and furtherance of Islam, rather than to belittling disputes tending to strife and disruption. Can there not be some general conciliation—some amicable mutual recognition of differences, that will give Islam greater power and freedom of action for the regeneration of world order, for the emancipation of world society from the devastating evils of racial hatred, class hatred and the money-mindedness of this materialistic, explosive age?

The benefit of the release of this wasted Islamic energy and of its proper direction upon the needs of mankind would be both to Islam and to the world at large.

Now let me briefly take one or two points, which seem to offer a promising path of Islamic action.

To begin with, there is the pioneer Mosque at Woking. Without having the exact details at my finger tips, I feel deeply convinced that the time is now ripe and that the record of the Mosque's activities during the past twenty years or so fully merits that the Mosque should be given a more established position by influential quarters in the Muslim world. For the Mosque continually to be obliged to send out distressing appeals for normal working funds is totally unworthy of the

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wealth of Islam; and I may stress this point further that financial worries attaching to the Woking Mosque are very damaging to the furtherance of the cause of Islam in this country.

Cannot the Woking Mosque be definitely endowed by some wealthy Islamic country or by the joint action of several wealthy Islamic bodies? Would not this be better than a series of spasmodic, and perhaps sometimes inadequate, donations in response to urgent appeals of distress?

I mention this matter, as it is a cause of wonderment and painful surprise to me that Islamic action has not already accomplished this so desirable an object. While freeing the Woking Mosque from financial worries, a strong impetus would at the same time be given to enlarging the scope of the Mosque's activities in ousting agelong ignorance and spreading the Faith abroad in the light of essential truth.

Now, apart from the Mosque at Woking, which has its time so much taken up with routine work and with necessary propaganda and with supplying information to enquiries concerning Islam,—apart from the Mosque, on a separate, but also self-supporting basis, there should be a strong Society, of recognised authority, for safeguarding the social interests of Muslims in England.

Beyond these two lines of action, there is a third, which I would now suggest.

The power and function of a Khalifa seems, for the time, at any rate, to be in abeyance. And yet would it not be a great advantage to have some unity of temporal allegiance—some central point, from which ordered Islamic power would emanate over the world of Islam, strengthening, conserving and directing its forces in unity?



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If the revival of the Khalifa finds not favour, could there not be some permanent representative body, bringing Islam together as a well-ordered world-republic—some world-wide representative Parliament or Council of Islam, upon which representation might be either by nationality or by every existing sect of Islam.

In brief, I would suggest that the time has come for the organising of Islam, for raising up the power of peace that exists in Islam. And I suggest this for several reasons, the reasons and the suggestions being found embodied together thus:

1. A Treasury of Islam should be formed, into which Zakat money could be paid (instead of being aimlessly and fruitlessly squandered broadcast).
2. The resources of Islam should be definitely and wisely administered to endow Mosques and Missions and to spread education amongst Muslims to reduce the shamefully large proportion of illiterates.
3. Muslim Colleges should also be founded, wherein it should be definitely and permanently arranged for equal numbers of Muslims of different nationalities to receive education together and to participate in social life together on equal terms.
4. The Muslim Press and Muslim propaganda should be aided and consolidated by the establishment of a Central Muslim Information Bureau of world-wide scope.

Thus there may arise (*Insha-Alláh*) a religious awakening of the dormant world of Islam into an active, sane and peace-bringing religious Empire of Islam.

*Allah guide and aid and bless!*

Peace be with you!

## IS ISLAM GAINING ON CHRISTIANITY?

BY ABDUL LATIF ARNOLD

The various examples of propaganda directed against Islam and emanating from Christian sources cannot fail to be of interest to Muslims.

One is, however, always tempted to wonder whether the perversions of fact which are such a monotonously regular feature of these presumably well meant criticisms are due to a genuine ignorance of the religion against which they are directed, or to a deliberate endeavour to discredit, however unfairly, a faith which manifests an obvious superiority—on the basis of the Jesuitical formula: "The end justifies the means."

An article appearing in a recent issue of the *Christian Herald* will serve as an illustration. It is entitled "Is Islam Gaining on Christianity?" and takes the form of an interview with the Rev. E. J. Poole-Connor.

In that article, the reverend gentleman asserts that—

"Islam is the easiest religion in the world. Provided a Muslim performs certain Islamic rites, it practically does not matter how he lives. There is little moral restraint in his faith. The moral conditions in most Muslim countries are simply unspeakable."

Such a remark is somewhat ill-advised, coming as it does from one who, as an orthodox Christian, presumably subscribes to the doctrine of the atonement, *i.e.*, that Christ having died to atone for the sins of the world, all that is necessary to gain salvation is to believe in him, irrespective of one's moral qualities, a doctrine notable for its convenience if for nothing else.

In point of fact, Christianity, by virtue of its entire disregard of the law which its Prophet Christ (peace be

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upon him) came to fulfil is by far the easiest of all religions. For information on this point, one may read the gospel according to St. Matthew, Chap. 5, verse 17: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets. I am not come to destroy but to fulfil."

Paul, however, was acute enough to foresee that the Gentiles would not be inclined to accept such an inconvenient matter as a religious law and therefore abolished it, thereby making Christianity an extremely easy religion to accept, even if, strictly speaking, it could no longer be called Christianity.

In addition, as a passing remark, we might mention that the Christian countries have not made themselves conspicuous by any noteworthy displays of "moral restraint."

Mr. Poole-Connor is General Secretary of the North Africa Mission, and we are told that he has studied for many years "the problem of the conversion of Mahomedans by missionary methods."

One does not care to believe that his statement was made with deliberate attempt to mislead and to deceive; it is more charitable to assume that his knowledge of Islam is as small as his prejudice is great, which does not, incidentally, augur very favourably for conspicuous success in the missionary field.

Quite contrary to his statement, it is a fact that, whereas Islam demands of its followers, if they are to call themselves Muslims, that they should relinquish material concerns five times each day for the purpose of devoting themselves to prayer, Christianity on the other hand may be, and generally is, laid conveniently aside for six days of the week to be brought out, like a new hat, on the seventh.

From this aspect alone, it is not difficult to judge which religion affords the conditions most conducive to moral restraint, prayer being, as it is, the greatest

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medium by which mankind may attain to communion with God.

It is as natural that Islam should be gaining on Christianity as it is that the former should eventually prevail over all other religions.

The precepts of the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) have long been lost under an edifice of pagan superstition and fable which has completely obliterated the message he came to bring. It is no wonder, therefore, that every day the clergy are finding fewer people to listen to the pagan polytheism which disgraces the name of Christianity.

On the other hand, Islam offers to its sincere followers not only the assurance of salvation in the hereafter but also peace of mind and happiness in this world. It also provides standards of conduct which enable a man or woman to attain the highest levels of which their natures are capable.

Is it any wonder, then, that the Christian clergy, in an attempt to prolong the life of a religion from which the vitality is all but extinct and truth almost vanished, have no scruples in *forging* any weapons which may be useful in their endeavour to prejudice the minds of their followers against that religion which is a living reproach to them?

It will be in future ages a matter for astonishment that a religion full of such puerile doctrines and superstitions as the trinity, divinity of Christ, atonement, etc., could have held such a prominent place in the history of a civilization as advanced as our own. Without doubt also the attempt by missionary effort to impose such a religion upon the followers of Islam will seem strange to future generations.

In conclusion, then, whilst sympathising with Mr. Poole-Connor's efforts in a losing cause, we would recommend that, in the interests of his religion and of his own

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integrity, he should abstain from wild statements which do credit neither to himself nor to the organ in which they are published.

It is curious, in the same article in the *Christian Herald*, to note a reference to "our brethren and sisters" in Morocco. These "brethren and sisters" if they had the good fortune to come to England, would probably consider the relationship a somewhat strange one!

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### WOMAN IN MUSLIM SPAIN

BY ABDUL GHAFFAR

The Arab from the days of Jahallya was famous for the forceful and impetuous flow of his verse, rising spontaneous and effortless from the inner springs of his heart and finding expression in language, bold and free as the wind of the desert. This glorious tradition was kept untarnished by the ladies of Moorish Spain. Al-Makarri gives an impressive list of a brilliant galaxy which includes littérateurs, poetesses, musicians, calligraphists, juris-consults and physicians—a talented group who, owing to the happy discovery of the true significance of Islamic purdah by the Spanish Moors, could associate with men in literary gatherings with due decorum and matronly reserve, appear at the tournaments, engage in poetical contests, and deliver eloquent homilies and addresses side by side with men.

A remarkable feature of this group is the high percentage of slave-girls who attained great fame for the excellence of their diction and the beauty of their style, a natural consequence of the most equitable laws of slavery in Islam and the clearly-laid strict injunctions of its founder for the better treatment of the slaves. Of course, there was a natural urge in the slaves, hitherto treated worse than animals and denied all human rights, to avail themselves of the opportunities afforded by a

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benevolent religion, and most of them thoroughly justified that trust and confidence that Islam enjoined upon its followers to repose in human nature. Some of them, like Walladah, held assemblies and invited great scholars and learned persons from all over the Peninsula and, on such occasions, they would preside themselves over these literary functions, springing surprise on some of their unsuspecting guests by competing successfully with renowned scholars in capping a verse or disputing over fine legal or philosophical subtleties.

The educational system of Andalusia provided ample opportunities for female education, and several ladies of high reputation are said to have kept schools, not for the tiny toddlers but for elder pupils who pursued higher branches of learning. It is interesting to note that some of the girl students were often given as difficult a test as were the boys, were examined orally on extempore versification and appear to have given general satisfaction.

The brightest jewel of this distinguished company was Walladah, a princess in mind as well as in lineage, the daughter of al-Mustakfi, once the Caliph of Cordova, a lady of remarkable literary talents and social graces who will live eternally in the undying verses of her admirer, Ibn Zaidun. The comments of al-Makarri on her great talents and sociable manners are most significant. "Her father was a recluse and of retiring habits but his daughter was the resplendent sun of wit and poetry whose rays illumined every nook and corner. Her assembly was the resort of the scholars and humorists of Cordova and of other towns, while the visitors were dazzled by the brilliance of her scholarship and they could not help bursting into praises of the highest strain." Then there was that noble pair of sisters, the daughters of Ziad, the bookseller, "both excellent

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

poetesses, thoroughly versed in all the branches of science and learning. Their love of learning brought them into the company of scholars with whom they mixed on perfect terms of equality, with great composure and dignity and nobody could accuse them of forgetting the rules of their sex."

Rumaikiya, the wife of the ill-fated Abbaside prince al-Mutamid, was a slave-girl of charming skill and ingenuity in verse who first attracted the attention of her royal spouse by her prompt skill and originality in capping a verse, while the gifted boon companion of the prince, Ibn Ammar, was fumbling for words. Her witticisms, graceful play upon words and poetry adorn the pages of many a chronicle of Muslim Spain. Her daughter, Thubania, was also a poetess of a high order, and her lines to her parents in exile, asking for their consent to her marriage with a merchant, were still remembered with a melancholic interest in the days of al-Makarri.

Indeed, the poetical talent was so widespread and came so naturally to the Arab that poetry was used as frequently as prose in everyday life, and poetesses indulged in this literary pastime by composing private letters, formal epistles, often hurried notes, petitions and memorials in poetry.

Hasanata was granted a generous maintenance allowance when she approached the Caliph al-Hakam with a petition in verse on the death of his father. Once more, when the local Amil had committed certain excesses, she managed to obtain access to the Harem and recited a touching poem before Abdur Rahman who had succeeded his father, celebrating the excellences of his father and calling upon his successor to maintain his noble traditions of justice and mercy. The response was immediate and the Caliph personally redressed her wrongs.

## WOMAN IN MUSLIM SPAIN

These were the most dazzling stars but there were a host of lesser luminaries who, though paling into comparative insignificance, would have been, nevertheless, an embellishment to any age or any clime. There was Ayesha of Cordova whose orations and poems were frequently read in the royal academy, al-Ghassania who wrote eulogies in praise of the Caliph, and Maria who was honoured with the title of "Arabian Corinna."

There were equally renowned figures among scholars and preceptors and there were woman scholars at whose feet even great savants were proud to sit. A slave-girl of Abul Mutrif, who was styled "Urúzia" or "the metrist," studied syntax and philology from her master and ultimately excelled him in scholarship. Abu Daud Sulaimán bin Najáh writes that he studied prosody and literature under her. Hafdha bint al-Háj al-Rakúnia, a blue stocking of Granada and a pen-friend of the Vizier Abu Bakr bin Yahya, was a famous preceptor of her age and was employed in educating the ladies of the Harem in the days of al-Mansur. Mariam bint Abu Yaqub Ansari of Seville was a famous poetess and an outstanding literary figure of her age. She used to deliver lectures on literature to female students.

Several women were distinguished for their high attainments in science and philosophy and, at the top, stands Labena of Cordova, well versed in poetry, philosophy and arithmetic, who was entrusted with the highly honourable post of private secretary to the Caliph al-Hakam.

Others were equally notable in Muslim jurisprudence and law. It is said that the wife of the Qazi of Losha had surpassed him in the knowledge of the intricacies of law. She sat behind a curtain in the court room and the Qazi often consulted her on the disputed points. When a friend railed at him for seeking the advice of his wife, she sent him a crushing reply in verse.



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Among the fine arts, the Muslims cultivated calligraphy and music to a very high degree, and ladies of Spain vied with men to win a name for themselves. "Safia was a celebrated master of the art of calligraphy, and her penmanship was at once the subject of admiration and an example for the most skilful scribes." Abadiyah, a slave-girl of Mutamid's father, was a wit, littérateur, calligraphist and a poetess. She knew several languages and was an erudite scholar in philology.

Music was the favourite pastime of the Spanish Moors and the ripples of the Guadalquiver danced as merrily to the tunes of the canon and the rabab as the banks of Tigris were flooded every night with sweet harmony during the reign of the good Haroun-al-Rashid. From there, the influence of Muslim music pervaded Europe, toning down the barbarous ferocity of the war-dances of the Teutons and the crude music of the primitive races. Walladah, the accomplished princess, was a gifted musician, while Zaryab, one of the greatest minstrels, composers and inventors the Islamic world has ever produced, discovered his best disciples in two slave-girls, Hunaidah and Ghazzalan, to whom he communicated his inspired compositions, and these dexterous pupils soon caught up the melody on their aloe-wood and thus preserved the fleeting inspirations of the great master.

It would be unpardonable to ignore the marvellous development of the art of medicine and surgery of Andalusia during the study of the *Kulturgeschichte* of the Muslims—nay, that of Western Europe—and the womanhood of Spain contributed distinguished names to this important branch of philanthropic learning. Umal Hasan bint Qázi Abu J'afar Tanjálí had received regular medical education and was acquainted with the aims and objectives of the science and the causes and predisposing conditions of the various maladies. When she

## WOMAN IN MUSLIM SPAIN

came in the company of her father from al-Maghrib, she was given a test by the scholars of Spain and was not found wanting in linguistic attainments but she was not as skilful in calligraphy.

The above is a sketchy and brief account of a few and hardly does credit to that noble array of fine womanhood in Muslim Spain. We ransack the annals of Christian Spain in vain for their compeers in science and learning. Now we see Isabella, a veritable Fury of dark vengeance, enjoying an unholy zest and fanatical pleasure in extirpating the Moors from Spain and, according to Lanepoole, the Christians never knew that they were sending out along with the last Moor all culture, learning and enlightenment. Another tragic figure flits across the stage, with a face bearing the signs of age, long-suffering and persecution and she is Catherine of Aragon, the Catholic Queen of Henry VIII, a martyr to a monogamous Church whose persecutor was, by a strange irony of fate, the founder of the Church of England, Muslim Spain can claim an al-Hakam who waged a frontier war, reckless of its risks and consequences in answer to the cry of a helpless, unknown woman, an outstanding example of chivalry shown by a knight, while Henry VIII condemned a virtuous wife to a living hell, and the history of the establishment of the English Church is intimately related to the unhappy conjugal relations, the divorce proceedings and the flagrantly unchivalrous attitude of its founder.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

### CORRESPONDENCE

CAMBULSANG,  
GLASGOW,  
SCOTLAND.

THE IMAM, SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE.

DEAR SIR,

I must thank you for your literature and letter of 15th June 1938. I am not well educated, and learned in religions other than my own, and your books opened my mind a lot. I must admit my ideas on Islam have been all wrong, and at fifty-three years of age it is hard for me to write this. A schoolmaster in Germany writes to me he is surprised about your so being kind. I am sending on your books to him to show him that I have different experience to him regarding Islam.

Now I do not want to waste your time asking you questions; my brain is too slow, or I am rather late in life learning but I am going to get books from the library about the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and when I am on firmer ground I will ask questions.

I could not make out handwriting regarding your name, but I gratefully thank you for the trouble you have taken.

I beg to remain,  
Yours sincerely,  
GORDON NEAL.

WEYBRIDGE,  
SURREY.

DEAR SIR,

In reply to your letter of the 15th, I wish to make you acquainted with my desires. First, I wish to thank you for the courteous welcome I got when I visited the Mosque, and made my request known to the gentleman who showed me round.

For many years I have studied, first Atheism, then Christianity, then Mormonism, and I have also delved into sundry other cults in my search for the truth.

I live in the north of England for some time, and in the reading rooms in a town in the West Riding of Yorkshire I just came into contact with the "*Islamic Review*," which I read with interest. I proposed at the first opportunity I had to visit Woking, and make further inquiries about the Islamic faith.

I must confess I cannot see eye to eye with all you divines say; so I determined to purchase a Qur-án and read it for myself, one with an English translation preferably. About ten shillings will satisfy me adequately.

If you wish me to forward you a remittance, as a guarantee, I will do so. Or I will send you the exact amount, if you wish it so.

Yours faithfully,  
ARTHUR CLEGG.

Supplement to "The Islamic Review", January, 1939

*In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful*

## MESSAGE FOR THE NEW YEAR

Dear Readers,

Praise be to Allah, this Journal, first to take the field, is going to enter the 26th year of its existence. You know what the world of religions was like when it began its career, and you see what it is like today. For a European to change his or her ancestral faith for Islam, by the grace of Allah, is no longer an extraordinary incident. Nay, we are looking forward to the time when there will be a wide-spread religious revolution in Europe, making Christianity recede before the rising tide of Islam. As the Review has been fanning the flames of this oncoming revolution, let us strive hard to see that it maintains its position with dignity as it approaches the hour of final success after this long period of single-handed struggle! As a matter of fact the last hours of a struggle are the most trying ones!

May Allah sustain us in our efforts in His Sacred Cause!

AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD,

Imam, The Mosque Woking, Woking, England.

Supplement to "The Islamic Review", January, 1939

*In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful*

Dear Readers,

Assalam-o-Alaikum.

The services you have rendered to the cause of Allah in the West by continuing as a subscriber to "The Islamic Review" will not perhaps get enough in rupees, annas and pies by way of remuneration but you will certainly gain some reward (ثواب Sawab) from the Almighty God and will have the satisfaction of belonging to the group of persons who used to strive hard in the way of Allah (مجاهد في سبيل الله Mujahid-fi-Sabi-Lillah)

The Review has been pulling the strings in world affairs during the course of its existence of 26 years. Whether you feel it or not and whether the Muslim people recognise it or not, it is an admitted fact that, in moulding public opinion towards Islam and in determining the shape of things to come, it is the only Muslim Magazine which has played the leading role. Whatever credit the Muslims may take for themselves, they have had to depend on "The Islamic Review". The Review has given them the proper place which they deserved; otherwise they would have been completely forgotten.

It is evident that the Islamic articles which appear in the Review and the Islamic sentiments conveyed through its pages, make a much wider and deeper appeal to the non-Muslim minds than does any Muslim Missionary, however exalted his position may be.

KHWAJA ABDUL GHANI,

Secretary,

The Working Muslim Mission  
and Literary Trust,  
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