

"Muhammad 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

Vol. XXVII]

[No. 1

SHABAN, 1358 A.H.
OCTOBER, 1939 A.C.

- Annual Subscription 10s.

Single Copy

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Published by

**THE WOKING MUSLIM MISSION AND LITERARY TRUST,
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RELIGION: ITS VALUE TO THE WORLD

BY BEGUM SULTAN MIR AMIRUDDIN

(Continued from Vol. XXVII, Page 356.)

The changes effected in the condition of women constitute another unique achievement of Islam in the field of human relationship. One of the essential teachings of the Prophet Muhammad was "Respect for Womanhood." He enjoined that "Paradise lies at the feet of Mothers" and, from the most degraded position that women occupied, he suddenly elevated them to the status of equality with men and granted to them, more than 1,300 years ago, similar legal rights and privileges, namely, the right to inherit, own and dispose of property and enter into contracts and agreements on their own account and these they have since enjoyed.

Some modern thinkers of the West entertain doubts as to the value of religion and assail it with the argument that it retards material advance instead of inspiring progress. In support of their contention, they vividly portray the picture of Medieval Europe when learning was relegated to the domain of neglect, free thought discouraged, science banned, and the children of light consigned to the flames. *Prima facie* this would seem to make a plausible case against religion. Investigation, however, discloses that the conditions prevalent during the period known as the "Dark Ages" were not the result of true religion but of the priesthood who adopted the policy of keeping the world enchained in fetters of ignorance and inflicted distortions and disfigurements on spiritual values.

True religion which helps man to discern himself and rise to the highest plane must, inevitably, be a supreme force in the development of civilisation which connotes culture and material progress. All humanitarian principles which have contributed towards the

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well-being of mankind have drawn their inspiration from religious truths, one or other of which is imminent in whatever is true and good. Oswald Spengler rightly observes that "Great cultures are entities, primary or original, that arise out of the foundations of spirituality." The truth of this statement is borne out to a remarkable degree by the history of Islam. Advance in humanity, in freedom, in intellect, and in the multifarious arts of life in Arabia was the outcome of the birth of Islam, and proceeded everywhere in proportion to the influence and acceptance of its teachings. In the Muslim world, adherence to the rules of religion was accompanied by material progress. This was the natural effect of the laws promulgated by the Qur-án which were such as would lift man to the height of civilisation in all pursuits of life. As long as the Muslims implicitly obeyed the injunctions of these sacred laws, they prospered, and when they transgressed them, they did so at their peril. The welcome accorded to the gospel, preached by Islam, that Nature, with all its resources, was created to subserve man's ends, and should be harnessed to his use, gave a mighty impetus to the cultivation of the various sciences—the fulcrum of human progress. The teaching that "Allah (God) has not created anything better than reason; the benefits that Allah giveth are on account of it," the exhortations to men and women to acquire knowledge since it "lights the way to Heaven," the repeated emphasis on the necessity of seeking knowledge "though it be in China" raised people sunk in a slough of degradation, mental, social and political, to eminent cultural heights. When, however, Muslims reached the acme of their civilisation, the evils that abundance of wealth and power brought in their train made this nation their captive; extravagance and self-indulgence crept in, and utter disregard of religious precepts culminated in the disruption of the Muslim Empires.

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The resources of religion are indispensable for the improvement of the conditions that dominate modern society. The characteristic of the times is an over-emphasis on the pleasures of the sense oblivious of the need for nourishing the soul. The existing spiritual anarchy is corroding the foundations of morality. New-fangled cults claim the allegiance of the young; indulgence is regarded as synonymous with self-expression, and licence is conceived to be identical with freedom. When man makes Hedonism his "summum bonum" in life and gives himself up entirely to the exaltation of the ecstasy of the flesh, he descends to the level of the animal. What society needs is a re-valuation of its values. If the present-day ideals persist and the "god" of a "good time" does not release his hold on the minds of his innumerable votaries, the future does not present a prospect for gratification. Oswald Spengler, in his morphology of civilisations, entitled "The Decline of the West," regards "religion without God," which the humanists are now striving to establish, to be the symptom of a dying civilisation. History reveals that spiritual bankruptcy has been the cause of the decadence of many a mighty Empire. The formidable power of Rome could not withstand the overwhelming forces of destruction that irreligion let loose upon her. The exhortations of Juvenal, Livy and Tacitus remained unheeded and the grandeur that was Rome's was soon no more.

Philosophies of history give us a vivid insight into what is likely to occur if certain conditions persist. Adherence to the policy of *laissez faire* will not solve the problems of to-day; to lose sight of the seriousness of the situation and turn a deaf ear to the forebodings of the gloomy Jeremiah is hardly consistent with wisdom. The inference from this is not that we should give ourselves up to despair. Despair has the tendency

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to make history confirm its theories. Optimism and pessimism are both dynamic forces, it being the general law of life that what we believe with passionate intensity exerts a profound effect on our minds and brings about good or evil as is foreseen. There is no cause for despondency as the situation is not beyond control. If we seek the succour of the spirit, we shall be able skillfully to navigate the boat of civilisation amid the tumult of wild waters through which it is rushing to-day and land at the farthest haven of progress. When the spiritual needs of the soul are satisfied along with material desires, and when the flaming spirit of love for humanity, lit by religion in the heart of each individual and in each nation, which comprises a group of individuals, fires the mighty Mother Heart of Mankind with virile power for the benefit of all its members, we may make bold to assert that modern civilisation, which has harnessed the steam, which has snatched the lightning from the clouds and conquered the air, will soar to heights immeasurable.

The value of religion in imparting dignity, meaning and worth to life by its doctrine of the hereafter can hardly be overlooked. To hold that human life is like "the grass of the field that to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven" would place us below the level of other forms of creatures, which is not consistent with facts. Since the whole of creation is fulfilling a purpose, namely, to minister to the needs of man, it cannot be conceived that man, the Lord of all, is destined to drift and lead an aimless existence.

Man is a religious animal and nothing can expel his innate tendency to look behind phenomena and pry into the great darkness which encompasses him. With all the superficial materialism of to-day, there is an inexhaustible craving in human nature for a spiritual reality and response. The decay of material things and the temporary duration of our body suggest the need

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for the results of this life to be sought for and preserved in the super-physical life of the soul; otherwise, this world would appear to be hardly rational. If we were to be deprived of the belief that physical death does not mark the final stage of our journey but is a further step in the evolutionary process of the "Mighty Atom," our earthly existence would be meaningless and futile.

It is inconceivable that man, the tempest-tossed mariner "sailing on life's solemn main" can ever do without the stable anchorage that religion provides. Without "one adequate support for the calamities of mortal life," the anguish that wrings the heart could hardly be appeased. It is the conviction of a transcending purpose that endows us with an unconquerable will and helps us to face the gravest crises. We may be crushed by the weight of material disaster, but if we have faith in our soul and in the spirit of the universe, we can still rise up to our feet and go forward. The hope of the Beyond urges us on, draws the sting out of our affliction and saves us from the clutches of cynicism and despondency. As long as the elixir of unmixed and unending happiness remains to be discovered, so long will the human heart crave for the solace that the consciousness of an Infinite Power and the life hereafter alone can give.

Recent statistics foreshadow the collapse of the anti-God movement in Russia. It has been reported that the membership of the Militant Godless League has fallen from 5,000,000 in 1933 to below 2,000,000 at present and that many anti-religious organisations there are threatened with disintegration. Religion, properly understood and genuinely practised, is conclusively a *sine qua non* for the happiness and well-being of man. The most urgent desideratum for the world at the present moment is a sustained endeavour for a spiritual awakening that will evoke and vitalise the forces of

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good latent in modern civilisation, resist the reactionary forces of degeneration and decay, lead men to apprehend the universal fullness of truth, and teach them to realise the organic character of the universe. The sceptics who criticise religion have no alternative to offer in its place.

We must, however, not forget that, before religion can become a dynamic factor in the establishment of a better world order, for which are inherent in it necessary ingredients, it needs to give a new orientation to its outlook. It has to adapt its philosophic idealism to the practical demands of life and accommodate itself to the intellectual needs of the generation. It has been rightly said that, "mere philosophic perception of the essence of divinity is barren if it does not generate volition or give movement to human life in consonance with the qualities or attributes of that essence." Removed from the sphere of theory to the sphere of practice, religion should be made to permeate every institution and every phase of our modern life—the home, the school, art and play, commerce and industry, and, in particular, politics. It should concern itself not merely with social problems. Its efforts have, in a great measure, to be directed towards the solution of racial and political questions. Moreover, it should be life-affirming and aim to impart a fullness to our earthly existence, and not life-denying, lulling men into quiet contentment with interests centred only in the life to come. The essence of true worship is to serve humanity, not to detach oneself from it; to counsel the soul to seek its happiness in changing and not in becoming independent of circumstances. The Scylla of excessive other-worldliness which shatters the spirit of progress is as much to be avoided as the Charybdis of inordinate this-worldliness which engulfs into the abysmal deep the progress already achieved.

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Further, in our epoch of enlightenment, religion cannot afford to remain divorced from reason. To expect supernatural paradoxes to make an appeal to the minds of the present generation is mere delusion. A large measure of free thought is indispensable to human progress and this is not incompatible with true religion, which is dynamic and not static in character. "When the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the Suns," the dominant note should be not the letter but the spirit of the Scriptures. What we need to realise is that "the dry bones of a religion are nothing ; the spirit that quickens the bones is all." The permanent articles of faith must not be confounded with the temporary injunctions that were called forth by the passing necessities of a bygone age and regarded as immutable to the end of the world. It is because of tenacious adherence to outworn theological dogmas and later accretions, because of the emphasis placed on rites and ceremonials rather than on essentials that we find religion in the rear instead of in the vanguard of forces struggling for human progress.

At a time when spirituality is threatened with dissolution by materialism, the World Congress of Faiths has struck the right note in placing a call to religion in the forefront of its programme. It is, indeed, essential that the different religious systems of mankind should no longer remain apart, but unite and muster their forces against the common foe, so that the fundamental truths which constitute the hope of the world may be kept preserved and intact. This Congress is further imbued with the lofty ideal of building a magnificent superstructure of fellowship on the foundation of the different faiths. The dominant factor in the achievement of this objective is the cultivation of a positive attitude of mutual good-will among the adherents of the various religions and not a mere negative ideal which

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manifests no ill-will towards other creeds. Such an outlook is engendered by the principles of Islam which affirm that the religious emotion in man has a variety of experiences and which deprecate narrow exclusivism. A Muslim believes that the grace of God encompasses peoples of all ages and climes and that, just as physical sustenance has been granted to each nation, similarly each has been endowed with spiritual sustenance in conformity with its special requirements. The Qur-án proclaims in categorical terms: "There is not a people but a Warner has gone among them." (XXXV, 24.) Not only does it recognise diversity of spiritual experience but it also makes it incumbent upon Muslims to extend their allegiance to all the religious personalities of the world. It declares, "Say: 'we believe in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what has been revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and all the tribes, and what was given to Moses and Jesus and to the prophets from their Lord; we do not make any distinction between them, and to Him do we submit'." (III, 83.) It goes even further and maintains that salvation is dependent not on creeds but on conduct and is not to be withheld from the followers of revealed faiths. The following verses bear eloquent testimony to its generous attitude:

"Surely, those who believe and those who are Jews and the Christians and Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the last day and does good, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve." (II, 62.)

"Surely, those who say, 'Our Lord is Allah, and then continue on the right way, shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve.'" (XLVI, 13.)

Fellowship of faiths can be achieved only by the cultivation of such a liberal attitude as Islam advocates. Critics and sceptics are not wanting who scoff at the

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idea of world fellowship being realised through religion, but to me, as a Muslim, such a fellowship forms part of my creed. When I was a girl, my father, his Eminence the late Muwayyid-ul-Islam of Iran (Persia), a renowned Orientalist who had made a profound study of the Arabic language and the Holy Qur-án, a lineal descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him!) and a devout Muslim, gave strong injunctions to my European governess to teach me the Bible—both the Old and the New Testaments; and, not satisfied with my cursory acquaintance with the same, declared that it should constitute one of my examination subjects. This insistence on the knowledge of a different religion from one's own to be imparted to a child at an impressionable stage of her career demonstrates the attitude that a Muslim entertains towards other faiths.

The various religions differ, one from another, not in their inward essence but in their outward manifestations, in theological details. Underneath their variety, that which binds all men together is the fundamental unity of their allegiance to the great ultimate spirit of Reality and Truth and the similitude of their spiritual aspirations. The Arabic term for religion is "Mazhab," which denotes a path. The followers of the different faiths are all fellow pilgrims who, though pursuing diverse paths, are marching towards one and the same "far-off divine event towards which the whole creation moves." Let us, therefore, go forward with hearts animated by genuine good-will and minds filled with a true understanding of one another to the achievement of our common goal.

THE PLACE OF ISLAM IN THE WORLD OF RELIGIONS

By A. M. S. SAYED ABOOBAKER

From the historical point of view Islam's place in the world of religions is unassailable. Unlike the holy books of other religions, Al-Qur-án, the Book of Al-Islam, alone is admitted, even by the enemies of Islam, to be free from corruption and interpolation even unto this very day. To posterity, too, it will continue to be as pure; for Allah has promised to keep it so.

Muhammad, the chosen Apostle of Allah, and the chosen exemplar of mankind, is not a legendary, but a historical, figure. His illustrious life and glorious teachings are recorded and preserved by irrefutable authorities which have stood the test of time. Muhammad is the great scion of Abraham, Al-Khalil, the friend of God, through the House of Ishmael, the sire of the House of Hashemites. Muhammad, the destined one, is the very embodiment of all the best virtues of mankind. He is meek, yet courageous; modest, yet brave; a great lover of children, yet in the company of the wise he is the most respected, the most exalted; ever honest, always truthful, trustworthy to the last; a loving husband, a benevolent father, an obedient and grateful son; constant in friendship and brotherly in assistance—unmoved either by adversity or by prosperity, by wealth or poverty, by peace or war; kind, hospitable, and liberal, yet for himself always abstemious. He is "severe against perjurers, adulterers, murderers, slanderers, prodigals, covetous people, false witnesses, and the like; a great preacher of patience, charity, mercy, beneficence, gratitude, honouring of parents and superiors, and a frequent celebrator of the divine praises." Such is the verdict of Spanhemius, which has earned the spontaneous approbation of Sale—both of whom are avowed antagonists of Muhammad.

Again, in character Muhammad is pure and perfect—an unparalleled example to humanity. Unlike

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the Hebrew prophets, who themselves entertained and indulged in the plurality of their marriages, and unlike the Aryan lords (who not only took pride in their several marriages but who also delighted in infatuating and breaking the virgin hearts of innocent young maidens, and took active part in the intrigues and love affairs of their friends and followers), Muhammad on the contrary never once forced into marriage any single woman—the noble Lady Khadija herself not excepted. He led to the exalted altar of marriage only such ladies of his day who themselves wished to give themselves in wedlock to him—for doing so was to their own advantage for sentimental, social, political or economic reasons.

Certainly Muhammad waged wars—wars to crush evil and defend truth—wars always in self-defence. Even to-day wars in self-defence are admitted to be an unavoidable necessity.

Neither the Hebrew prophets nor the Aryan lords reveal any tendency towards mercy. They professed to purge the world of its evil by death and destruction. Yet they departed from this world, with their professed mission unfulfilled—even as Jesus found evil still rampant in the land. But Muhammad stands alone, a unique figure who has achieved the purpose of his mission—even without causing either death or destruction. Consider the fall of Mecca! The serpents and scorpions of Muhammad's life are at his very feet, but the magic wand of his unrivalled mercy is waved over them, and at once their poison and evil are vanquished, and they become gentle as lambs and brave as lions—ever ready to take up the banner and march with their Leader unto the eternal Kingdom of Heaven.

At the time when the world was honoured with the birth of Muhammad, the Hebrew and Aryan religions, even as they are to-day, were steeped in pomp

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and pageantry, and in impractical and dogmatic principles, revealing many a false stitch in the sacred robe. In contra-distinction to these, Almighty Allah revealed to Muhammad the religion of Al-Islam, noble in principles and simple in practice, free from dogmatism and consistent with reason and intelligence—a religion of daily action, good morals and implicit duty. It is a religion free from all ceremonialism—so much so that even the turning of the face towards Mecca is of no value when the actual principles of Islam are not put into full daily operation (Holy Qur-án, 2:177).

Of all the religions of the world, Islam alone has laid down definite rules for the protection and care of the poor and the indigent, the orphan and the slave, the weak and helpless women. It has also made education incumbent on all—irrespective of sex.

Read through the Vedas and the Bible. They speak of the rise and fall of, and promises and rewards to, a particular nation, tribe or caste—the chosen people. But the Holy Qur-án speaks of and for all mankind, irrespective of nation, tribe or caste. God and man are its eternal theme—the relation of man to God, and the relation of man to man in his social, economic, political and moral environment. The Qur-án points out the ways and means whereby man may reach the highest of the high or, by disobedience, sink to the lowest of the low—giving man himself the full power of discretion.

According to Islam every child is born immaculate. Sin accrues as a result of man's actions in this world, and a man can become free from his burden of sins by his own sincere repentance and atonement. But St. Paul suffixed to Semitic Christianity the Aryan conception of man born in sin—from which he may be redeemed by annihilation. So, to St. Paul, the Western Aryan in spirit, the annihilation of Jesus, a single individual (personified into a deity as is customary among

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Aryan peoples) was sufficient to redeem all others from the "inherent" sin, provided those others had faith in the Blood and its grace. But to the Eastern Aryan, as exemplified best in Lord Buddha, each man must annihilate himself, if he is to reclaim himself from his in-born sin and to attain *Nirvana*, the Buddhist state of virtue. Thus, whereas the Pauline and Vedic teachings aim at bringing man to the state of virtue from his inborn condition of sin, the Qur-ánic teachings raise man to the portals of Divinity at his death from a condition of virtue at his birth.

The Hebrew prophets regarded woman as an inferior being. If silence denotes approval (as it necessarily must in the case of a Reformer) over what at a much later date came to be regarded as a social evil, then Jesus is of the same opinion. To St. Paul and his compatriots, the Western Aryans, woman was the creator of all evil tendencies. So was she to Manu, the great Eastern Aryan Law-giver. But to Muhammad, the Ishmaelite, Womankind is the better half of Mankind.

One very common and prominent feature of the Bible and of the Vedas is the absence of definite and specified articles of faith and articles of action. Consequently divisions and dogmas crept in accompanied by dissensions and schisms. From all this unhappiness and misery of uncertainty Islam rescued the Muslims when the Holy Qur-án laid down definitely and specifically in the most lucid form, the Islamic articles of faith as well as of action, each as a separate entity.

These, then, are the noble qualities of Muhammad, and these, then, are the simple, pure, and grandly noble conceptions of Al-Islam that earned the conspicuous admiration of Goethe and the great applause of Gibbon, that exhorted spontaneous laudation from Wells and fragrant laurels from Shaw. Such is the religion, that,

SOME GEOGRAPHICAL POINTS IN THE QUR-AN

according to Lord Zetland, is no more in a defensive stage in Europe—for it has smashed the iron ring of European prejudice and Church bigotry. It has laid its solemn foundation deeply and firmly even in the land of Gladstone, despite his avowal to extirpate every mosque from European soil. In Asia, Islam is still on the onward march. In Africa, the organised Churches of Christendom have resorted to armaments of all kinds—gold, silver and iron—to stem the tide of Islam's advance. Nevertheless, to General Smuts, Islam is the natural religion of the African; and, finally, the new continents of America and Australia have opened their doors to Islamic literature, and their ears to the radiant message of Al-Islam.

SOME GEOGRAPHICAL POINTS IN THE QUR-AN

BY PROF. SYED MUZAFFAR-UD-DIN NADVI, M.A.

(Continued from Vol. XXVI, page 394.)

CHAPTER V

THE HIMYARITES

Yemen is divided into two distinctly-marked provinces, eastern and western. The eastern division, which is adjacent to the interior, was the Sabæan country, while the western division, which touches the Arabian Sea on the one hand and the Red Sea on the other, was the Himyarite dominion. After the abandonment of the commercial route, the Sabæans declined and the Himyarites prospered, and the centre of Yemenite power was transferred from the east to the west. The tribes of the east began to starve; some of them had to migrate to the western part, and others went to different places, such as Yamama, Bahrein, Hejaz, 'Iraq and Syria. It should, however, be noted that the Himyarites and Sabæans do not signify two different peoples but two families or two periods of the same people. They

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spoke the same language, professed the same religion and shared the same civilisation. This view is confirmed by the fact that even in the Himyarite inscriptions the word *Saba* is mentioned in the place of *Himyar*. It was the Greeks and the Abyssinians who referred to them as Himyarites in their inscriptions in 20 B.C. and in the 4th Century A.D.

Himyar.—Arab genealogists say that Himyar was the name of Saba's son and successor and, consequently, they always use the word *Himyar* in the place of *Saba* in history. In the inscriptions so far available, the word Himyar does not occur. The Himyarite kings designated themselves as "Kings of Saba and Raidan." In some of the Abyssinian inscriptions, we come across the words "Himyar" and the "land of Himyar." The word Himyar is derived from "Himr" which means "red" in Arabic and Abyssinian languages, and so a fair-coloured person is called "Ahmur." As the Arabs call the Abyssinians "Aswad" (black), the latter might have called the former "Himyar" (red). King Abraha, the Abyssinian conqueror of Yemen, writes in one of his inscriptions:

"The Abyssinian king came with the Himyarite army."

The Kingdom of Himyar.—After the disintegration and destruction of the Sabæans, the Himyarites extended their power up to Ma'rib. In the beginning, they were designated as "Kings of Saba and Raidan." Some time after, the title of "King of Hadramaut" was also added, and finally they assumed the title of "Kings of Saba, Raidan, Hadramaut and Yemen." This shows the different stages in the expansion of their power. Their last king, Dhu Nuwas, was defeated by the Axumite Abyssinians who ruled for about 40 years, after which period they were displaced by the Persians. Then rose the sun of Islam and its rays illuminated the whole country.

SOME GEOGRAPHICAL POINTS IN THE QUR-AN

The Time of the Himyarites.—"The Himyarite inscriptions of the latest period present a series of dates—669, 640, 582, 573, 385—of an unknown era. . . . Halevy observes that the fortress of Mawyyat (now Hisn-i-Ghorab) bears the date of 640, and is said to have been erected when the Abyssinians overran the country and destroyed the king of Himyar and his princes. Referring this to the death of Dhu Nuwas (525 A.D.) Halevy fixes 115 B.C. as the epoch of the Sabæan era." (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. XXIII, p. 955.) From the observation of Halevy, it is clear that the Himyarite (or Sabæan) era began in 113 B.C., but it does not necessarily follow that the Himyarite kings of Saba and Raidan began their rule also in that year. A manuscript (Br. Man. 33) reads "Ilsharh Yahdib and Yathil Bayyin, the two kings of Saba and Raidan, sons of Far'i Yanhab, king of Saba." This Ilsharh may be identical with the "Ilsharh," king of Ma'rib, at the time of the Roman invasion (20 B.C.).¹ But in our opinion the "Ilsharh" that was attacked by the Romans was "Ilsharh Yahmil" and the "Ilsharh" of the above inscription (*viz.*, "Ilsharh Yahdib") was the king of Saba and Raidan. Consequently the beginning of the Himyarite rule should be fixed not later than the middle of the 1st Century B.C. Mabhud bin Abhad, to whom the Himyarite era is ascribed, might have been the first soothsayer of Himyar (after the destruction of Saba), in whose memory the Himyarite era might have been inaugurated, as had been the practice in Babylon.² According to this view, it must be admitted that the Himyarite rule began in the middle of the 1st Century B.C. and ended in 525 A.D., on the death of Dhu Nuwas. The duration of the Himyarite period will, therefore, be nearly 550 years. The Greek historians mentioned the Himyarites for the first time in 20 B.C.

1 "Encyclopaedia Britannica," Vol. XXIII, p. 956.

2 "Encyclopaedia of Islam," Vol. I, p. 377.

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The Periods of the Himyarite Rule.—The history of the Himyarite rule for 550 years is not continuous. The first period of the Himyarites or the third period of the Sabæans, extended from the 1st Century B.C. to the close of the 3rd Century A.D., whence another period of the Himyarites began. Only a few kings of the latter period had ruled when the Axumite Abyssinians penetrated into Yemen in the middle of the 4th Century A.D. Some time after, the Himyarites again succeeded in driving out the foreigners (Abyssinians) and established a government of their own. They continued in power until 525 A.D. when they were finally conquered and displaced by the Abyssinians.

The two periods of the Himyarite rule differ in several points. In the first place, the rulers of the first period were entitled "Kings of Saba and Raidan," and those of the second period "Kings of Saba, Raidan and Hadramaut." Whenever any new province or town was conquered by them, that conquest was also indicated in the title, which shows that the jurisdiction of the kingdom in the first period was limited to Yemen, while in the second period it extended to Hadramaut and neighbouring countries also. Hamza of Isfahan writes: "Of the descendants of Qahtan, the first king was Himyar *bin* Saba who ruled throughout his life and died at an advanced age. His kingdom continued to remain in the possession of his descendants for several centuries until it passed into the hands of Harith-ur-Ra'ish, who was the first Tubba' king. Before him there had been two kings (in Yemen), one in Saba and the other in Hadramaut, as all the Yemenites were never united under one ruler. When Harith became king, the whole of Yemen agreed to come under his rule and hence he was designated as Tubba'." ¹ In the second place, the Himyarites of the first period were generally

¹ Vide his book, p. 108 (Cal.).

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star-worshippers, and their inscriptions are full of the names of stars, gods and idols, whereas in the second period some of the Himyarite kings were Christians and (most of them) Jews, and consequently in their inscriptions the name of Rahmanan (Rahman) is found.¹

Himyarite Kings.—The above passage of Hamza Isfahani indicates that the kings before Harith constituted the first Himyarite period, and he and his successors constituted the second period. The names of the kings of the first period, as mentioned in Arabian history, are confusing and hence unacceptable. They do not bear any affinity to the names of the kings of the second period, as given by Arab historians, and supplemented by inscriptions. For this reason, most of the reliable Arab historians have not cared to mention the names of the kings of the first period. Hamza Isfahani, whose book is our chief source of information on the ancient history of Arabia, does not mention altogether the names of the kings who flourished before Harith-ur-Ra'ish (*vide* the passage quoted above).

The Rulers of the First Himyarite Period.—Only those names of the early Himyarite kings are authentic, which have been found inscribed on the old coins of Yemen in letters of stone and silver, and have been deciphered by many people, and can be verified even now. So far, the names of two kings of this period have been ascertained with certainty from the inscriptions and the contemporary Roman evidences, viz., Kariba'il (Charibael) and Ilsharh (*Elisaros*). Again, we find the names of two Ilsharhs, uncle and nephew, in this inscription (*viz.*, Ilsharh Yahdib and Ilsharh Yahmil). One of these lived in 20 B.C. at the time of the Roman invasion. The historian Periplus (d. 80) referred to Kariba'il (Charibael), king of Saba and Raidan, in the middle of the 1st century A.D. From the inscription,

¹ "Encyclopaedia Britannica," Saba, Vol. XXIII, p. 956: and Hamza Isfahani—Himyar.

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it is evident that "Ilsharh Yahdib" was the first king of Saba and Raidan (*vide* inscription quoted above).

The following is the list of the Himyarite kings of the first period, known as "Kings of Saba and Raidan":¹

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|-----------|--|---|
| The same family | { | 1. | Ilsharh Yahdib, son of Far'i Yanhab.
(50—30 B.C.) | |
| | | 2. | Yathil Bayyin, son of Far'i Yanhab.
(50—20 B.C.) | |
| | | 3. | Ilsharh Yahmil, son of Yathil Bayyin.
(20 B.C.—1 A.D.) | |
| | | 4. | Dhamar'ali Bayyin.
(1—30 A.D.) | |
| The same family | { | 5. | Kariba'il Wátir Yuhan'im, son of Dhamar'ali.
(30—60 A.D.) | |
| | | 6. | Halik-amar, son of Kariba'il.
(60—80 A.D.) | |
| | | 7. | Dhamar'ali Dharrih, son of Kariba'il.
(80—100 A.D.) | |
| | | 8. | Far'i Yan'am.
(100—120 A.D.) | |
| The same family | { | 9. | Haufa'atht, son of Far'i Yan'am.
(120—140 A.D.) | |
| | | 10. & 11. | Theid and Aiman, sons of Haufa'atht.
(140—160 A.D.) | { The two names appear together in the inscription. |
| | | 12. | Wahiba'il.
(160—190 A.D.) | |
| Of different families | { | 13. | La'z Naufan Yuhasdiq.
(190—220 A.D.) | |
| | | 14. | Yásir Yuhasdiq.
(220—240 A.D.) | |
| | | 15. | Dhamar'ali Yuhabirr (Yahbar).
(240—270 A.D.) | |
| | | 16. | Yásir Yuhan'im.
(270—280 A.D.) | |

(The dates given above are only approximate and, in some cases, hypothetical.)

¹ The list is prepared from Cl. Huart's *Histoire Des Arabes*, Chap. III, and the inscription published by J. Halevy in the *French Asiatic Society Journal*, 1874.

ISLAM—A MESSAGE OF PEACE

By C. A. SOORMA

(Continued from Vol. XXVII, page 306.)

CHAPTER XIV

A.—MARRIAGE IN ISLAM

Concerning the question of marriage, the Qur-án says:

- (a) "Forbidden to you are your mothers and your daughters and your sisters and your paternal and maternal aunts and brothers' daughters and sisters' daughters and your mothers that have suckled you and your foster-sisters and mothers of your wives and your step-daughters who are in your guardianship (born) of your wives to whom you have gone in; but if you have not gone in to them, there is no blame on you (in marrying them), and the wives of your sons who are of your own loins, and that you should have two sisters together, except what has already passed; surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."
(IV: 23.)

When dealing with the conditions prevailing in Arabia before Islam, we observed that the limits of relationship within which marriage was prohibited were narrow and defined only by the closest degree of consanguinity. Those among them that followed the Magian religion married even their own daughters and sisters. All this the Qur-án forbids, and defines the limits of marriage quite clearly:

- (b) "And all married women except those whom your right hands possess: this is Allah's ordinance to you, and lawful for you are (all women) besides those, provided that you seek (them) with your property, taking (them) in marriage, not committing fornication. Then as to those whom you profit

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(by marrying) give them their dowries as appointed; and there is no blame on you about what you mutually agree after what is appointed (of dowry); surely Allah is Knowing, Wise." (IV: 24.)

The above verse prohibits marriage with women who are already married to Muslims. By the phrase "except those whom your right hands possess" is meant female captives of war. The Qur-án legalises marriage with such women even though they may be married at the time of their capture, provided they become Muslims, since Islam forbids marriage with an idolatress, by the verse (Chapter II: 221) which opens "And do not marry the idolatresses until they believe. . . ."

(c) "And whoever among you has not within his power ampleness of means to marry free believing women, then (he may marry) of those whom your right hands possess from among your believing maidens; and Allah knows best your faith. You are (sprung) one from the other; so marry them with the permission of their masters, and give them their dowries justly, they being chaste, not fornicating, nor receiving paramours; and when they are taken in marriage, then if they are guilty of indecency, they shall suffer half the punishment which is inflicted upon free women. This is for those among you who fear falling into evil; and that you abstain is better for you, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful." (IV: 25.)

The above verse may be analysed, and means as follows:

- (1) Maiden captives of war may be married if they become Muslims, when the man is poor and cannot afford to marry a free-born woman.

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- (2) If such maidens belong to others, then the permission of their masters is necessary.
- (3) Marriage with such maidens is made obligatory and also the giving of dowries.
- (4) The taking of such maidens as concubines or mistresses is forbidden, as it would be fornication, which is expressly forbidden by this verse.

The verse clearly destroys the common charge hurled at Islam, that it sanctions concubinage. Nothing can be clearer than the words "not fornicating, nor receiving paramours." Again, the following verse may be cited to show that Islam forbids concubinage and in the clearest terms:

(a) "And marry those among you who are single and those who are fit among your male and female slaves; if they are needy, Allah will make them free from want out of His Grace; and Allah is Amply-giving, Knowing."
(XXIV: 32.)

(b) "And let those who do not find a match keep chaste until Allah makes them free from want out of His Grace . . . and do not compel your slave-girls to prostitution, when they desire to keep chaste in order to seek the frail good of this world's life."
(XXIV: 33.)

Reverting to Chapter IV: 25 given above, we may note the remaining characteristics:

- (5) If such maidens when married be guilty of an indecency, then only half the punishment that is normally inflicted on free women may be inflicted upon them, the reason being that their captivity is enough punishment for them, and the full penalty of the law need not be enforced.

A Muslim marriage is a civil contract needing no priest, requiring no sacred rites. The contract of marriage gives the man no power over the woman's person beyond what the law defines, and none whatever upon her goods and properties. A Muslim wife retains in her husband's household all the rights which the law vests in her as a responsible member of society. She can be sued as a *femme sole*; she can receive property without the intervention of trustees. She has a distinct lien upon her husband's estate for her antenuptial settlements; her rights as a mother do not depend for their recognition on the whims and fancies of individual judges. She can enter into valid contracts with her husband and proceed against him in law, if necessary. Her earnings, acquired by her individual exertions, cannot be wasted by a prodigal husband, nor can she be ill-treated with impunity by him.

B.—CONSENT TO MARRIAGE NECESSARY

The Theory of "Jabr."—All contracts, therefore, of a minor under the Muslim Law are void just as they are void under English Law. There is one exception, however, and that is the contract of marriage. According to Muslim jurists, a minor can contract a marriage subject to the approval and ratification of his or her guardian. At the same time, a minor, whether male or female, can be given into marriage during minority by his or her father or grandfather. This is known as the doctrine of *Jabr*. There are, however, very salutary checks on this power. Though the right of *Jabr* (*i.e.*, the right of marrying minors without their consent) is theoretically an absolute right, there are numerous conditions attached to its exercise. The father, without any difference among the jurists, is prohibited from marrying his child to those who are diseased, to slaves, idiots or other ineligible persons. . . . In fact, the law is particularly attentive to the interests of the child. .

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It takes care that the right of *Jabr* should never be exercised to the prejudice of the infant; any act of the father which is likely to injure the interests of the minor is considered illegal and entitles the Qázi or Judge to interfere in order to prevent the completion of such act, or if complete, to annul it. . . . Even in the case of a marriage contracted by the father or grandfather as guardian, the presumption that it is for the benefit of the minor is not conclusive, and such a marriage is liable to be set aside in certain cases, where it is plainly undesirable and injurious to the minor. The accepted view (of the jurists) seems to be that, if the father was not a man of proper judgment and was of a reckless character and married his minor daughter to a man of immoral habits, such a marriage is liable to be set aside." (Ameer Ali, *Mohammedan Law*, Vol. II, pp. 278-9.)

The above right of *Jabr* is vested in the father or grandfather, and we have seen how qualified and restricted this right is. Where the minor is given in marriage by any relative other than the father or grandfather, the law on the subject is as follows:

Where a minor is contracted in marriage by any person other than the father or the grandfather, such minor on attaining puberty has an absolute right to ratify or rescind the contract. Further, the minor has an option even in the case of a marriage contracted by a father or grandfather, if the latter was a prodigal or addicted to evil ways or if the marriage was manifestly to the minor's disadvantage. The above right vested in the minor is called the "Option of Puberty."

It follows, therefore, that if a female minor, on attaining majority, does not wish to be bound by the marital contract, she can repudiate it and, in that event, she would be absolutely free, and no suit will lie against her for restitution of conjugal rights. (Ameer Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 290.)

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It has been recognised by all schools of Islamic Law that it is not lawful for a guardian to force an adult virgin into marriage. None, not even a father or the sovereign, can lawfully contract into marriage a woman who is an adult and of sound mind, without her permission, whether she be a virgin or not. This principle of Islamic Law is recognised by all courts in British India. (Ameer 'Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 279.)

With regard to her other contractual rights, there can be no doubt that a Muslim female, if *sui juris*, is entitled to enter into any contract either of skill or of service. She can carry on any business or trade. She can adopt any profession which may specially appeal to her. All incomes and profits derived and obtained by her are her own property and no person has any right or control over the same. She can sue her debtors in any Court of Law without the necessity of joining a next friend, or under cover of her husband's name. She can likewise be sued in her own name independently of any male, for all debts or liabilities arising from her contract or her wrongful acts. She can alienate and devise her property without asking the leave of any person. She can act as an administratrix or executrix or be appointed *Muttavali*. She can hold any office, public or private, without let or hindrance. In other words, a *Muslimah* (or *Muslim lady*) enjoys all legal and civic rights on a footing of absolute equality with man.

C.—ANTENUPTIAL AGREEMENTS

With regard to antenuptial agreements, the law may be broadly stated thus:

That all conditions in the contract of marriage which are not opposed to the policy of Mohammedan Law will be binding on the husband. It follows, therefore, that a woman before her marriage can enter into

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valid contracts with her intended husband, imposing certain conditions on him.

A few such conditions are as follows:

- (a) That the husband shall not contract a second marriage during the existence or continuance of the first.
- (b) That the husband shall not remove the wife from the conjugal domicile without her consent.
- (c) That the husband shall not absent himself from the conjugal domicile beyond a certain specified time.
- (d) That the husband and the wife shall live in a specified place.
- (e) That a certain portion of the dowry shall be paid down at once or within a stated period, and the remainder on the dissolution of the contract by death or by divorce.
- (f) That the husband shall pay the wife a fixed maintenance.
- (g) That he shall maintain the children of the wife by a former husband.
- (h) That he shall not prevent her from receiving the visits of her relations whenever she likes.

All these conditions, being antenuptial agreements, made in consideration of marriage, are valid and enforceable in law.

It may be of interest to learn that, in Turkey, prior to, during and subsequent to the War but before the Republic was established, educated women took full advantage of the freedom allowed to them in making antenuptial agreements with their intended husbands. All such agreements have been given effect to by Turkish, Algerian and Egyptian Courts. It is now

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recognised that a stipulation on the part of the wife, that she shall be allowed to divorce herself in certain contingencies is valid at all events if the contingencies specified are such as would render the step a reasonable one. It seems to be immaterial whether such an agreement is antenuptial or post-nuptial. The High Courts in India have upheld such agreements in a number of reported cases. I have no doubt that our courts will recognise the main principles of Islamic Law in this behalf.

JEWS UNDER CROSS AND UNDER CRESCENT

BY O. V. ABDULLAH

Ignorant and biased critics have left no stone unturned in attacking Islam and the Muslims on the ground of intolerance towards other faiths and creeds. The marvellous triumph of Islam, as a religious and political ideal, has dazzled the eyes of her critics; and in their attempts to find a clue to this splendid phenomenon, these critics have been led away by their prejudices. But God's ways are inscrutable. The renewed persecution of the Jews under the Christian governments of the twentieth century, contrasted with their enviable position under Muslim sovereigns in the past, has set all serious people thinking. And in this moment of doubting and questioning, an impartial study of the conditions of the Jews under the Cross and under the Crescent will be interesting.

Ever since the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70, the Jews have been a persecuted race. They had to suffer inhuman persecution at the hands of their masters. If under the pagan rulers their condition was bad, under the Cross it was worse. "From the moment," says Lecky, "the Church obtained civil power under Constantine, the general principle of coercion was admitted and acted on, both against the

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Jews, the heretics and pagans." The Jews were marked out as a distinct race. They had no civic rights, and it was enough if they could keep body and soul together. The Law did not allow them to own lands. Even to exercise their religion was forbidden. The Roman Emperors of the eighth century forcibly converted them. Jewish massacres were a matter of common occurrence. "It is said that 50,000 Jews were slain by the Romish Christians while 10,000 were slaughtered at Damascus. Leaving women and children aside, more than 1,200 Jews were imprisoned and made captives by the Romans. Smith Williams tells in his "History of the World" that the number of slaughtered Jews must have amounted to 40,000 at this time." (K. B. Ahsanullah in "History of the Muslim World," pages 533—44.)

In this savagery, it was not the Romish Christians alone that indulged, but all Christian nations. In France, in England, in Poland, in Russia, nay, in all countries where the Cross reigned, the Jews were the underdogs. The detestable and inhuman pogroms and Ghettos speak for themselves. "The few Jews who had made their homes in England," says Ramsay Muir, "were expelled from the country by Edward I in 1290; the much more numerous Jews of France were expelled by a series of edicts during the fourteenth century." Under the Tsarist régime, they were subjected to systematic persecution and humiliation. In 1882 there was a wholesale massacre of Jews in Nijni Novgorod.

Even in the twentieth century, the Jews are not allowed an honourable existence. Under the Christians, modern or medieval, the Jews seem destined to suffer persecution. Before and after the Great War the Jews suffered very much. "Early in 1923 there were reported to be 100,000 homeless Jewish orphans in the Ukraine, and in Odessa the Jewish death rate in 1922 is said to have reached 200 per 1,000. (*Encyclopædia Britannica*,

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Vol. II, 13th Edition, page 606.) The accession of Hitler has renewed Jewish persecution. The Nazis are trying to rid Germany of Jews. Their children are even denied education. All the barbarous methods employed by the medieval Christians are being used against the Jews by the Nazis. "Jews are not allowed to bathe in the public bathing places on the days when the Germans bathe there." The famous scientist—Professor Einstein, the musician—Bruno Walter, the painter—Max Liebermann and the author of "All Quiet on the Western Front" besides a host of other Jews have been exiled because they happened to be Jews.

To those who contend that laying the blame at the door of the Christians for Nazi excesses is not fair, the writer can only quote Plato: "The State is the citizen writ large." And as long as the citizens remain Christians, my conclusion is valid. Moreover, dictatorship is a transitory phenomenon, and simply because dictators have succeeded in making the masses politically "hyper-sensitive," we cannot conclude that agelong beliefs and prejudices have been cast away. Even if we admit, somewhat reasonably, that the German persecution of the Jews is the result of Jewish treachery during the Great War, we cannot explain why this tide of anti-Semitism has swept over the whole Continent. Italy has begun to ape Hitler. Rumania and mutilated Czechoslovakia, may, all countries vie with one another in persecuting the Jews. The capture of Austria by Hitler has been the signal for Jewish persecution, and Jewish suicides were frequent with the fall of Austria.

Such has been, and is, the plight of the Jews under the Cross. To what are we to attribute this hostility? The Christians have sullied the fair name of Jesus (on whom be peace!) by interpolating matter into his teachings to suit their own whims and fancies. And in the Bible, there was no clear-cut guidance whatever to help

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man to solve social problems. The things of God were separated and made distinct from the things of Cæsar. Thus, in the matter of their attitude towards *non-Christians*, the followers of the Bible could find no valuable guidance at all. Left to themselves, naturally the Christians groped in the dark. This, I think, is the real explanation of the unnecessary hostility of the Christians towards the Jews.

So far we have shown the way in which the Jews were treated under the Cross, and we have traced their hostile treatment to a deficiency in the Christian religion. Now let us see how the Jews were treated under the Crescent. We will show by and by how the Jews enjoyed personal and civic rights under the Muslim sovereigns. If, under the Cross, the Jews were heavers of wood and drawers of water, under the Crescent, they were the equals of their Muslim conquerors. Perfect even-handed justice was meted out to them in matters political, religious and economic. Why this radical difference in the attitude of the Cross and the Crescent? Every action has a definite philosophical and psychological background. Therefore, the beliefs of a community, and the personality of the character which the community adores, reflect and influence its action. Thus it is evident that the tolerance showed by the Crescent to the Jews was inspired by the Qur-án and the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him!) The Qur-án gave clear guidance to the Muslims with regard to their attitude towards sister faiths. For example, the Holy Book says:

“Let there be no compulsion
In religion: Truth stands out
Clear from Error: whoever
Rejects Evil and believes
In God hath grasped
The most trustworthy
Hand-hold, that never breaks:
And God heareth
And knoweth all things.” (II: 256.)

And again:

"If one amongst the pagans
Ask thee for asylum,
Grant it to him,
So that he may hear the Word
Of God; and then escort him
To where he can be secure.
That is because they are
Men without knowledge." (IX:6.)

And the Prophet, whose life was a commentary on the Qur-án, showed by his personal example, how non-Muslims should be treated. All who have any knowledge of the Prophet's life, will bear testimony to the fact that he was the most tolerant of men. His own life was in danger at the hands of the Jews, and yet he did not bear any malice towards them. They would use abusive terms against him: but he would meekly bear the insults without wreaking vengeance on them. Once he was invited to a repast by a Jewess. He gladly accepted. But the Jewess poisoned him and his followers. As a result, one of his followers died instantaneously. The Prophet himself suffered much owing to the poison, and eventually it proved the cause of his death. With all this, he magnanimously forgave the woman, and she was allowed to live unharmed. Such was the noble example given to his followers by Muhammad Mustafa. His Charter to the Jews is a standing testimony to his statesmanship and tolerance. It runs thus: ". . . The jews who attach themselves to our Commonwealth shall be protected from all insults and vexations; they shall have an equal right with our own people to our assistance and good offices: the Jews of the various branches of Auf, Najjar, Harith, Jashm, Thalaba, Aus, and all others domiciled in Yathrib, shall form with the Muslims one composite nation; they shall practise their religion as freely as the Muslims; the clients and allies of the

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Jews shall enjoy the same security and freedom; the guilty shall be pursued and punished; the Jews shall join the Muslims in defending Yathrib (Medina) against all enemies; the interior of Yathrib shall be a sacred place for all those who accept this Charter; the clients and allies of the Muslims and Jews shall be as respected as the patrons. . . ." Has any democratic government given to its minorities, especially to the Jews, such freedom in all walks of life? And yet people accuse Islam of intolerance! A strange irony of fate indeed!

The Holy Prophet, no doubt, dealt severely with some Jewish tribes. But it was in retribution for the arch-treachery of the Jews. They did not find any scruples in breaking the Covenant into which they had entered with the Muslims. And if there were a people to show mercy to whom was a sin, then without a shadow of doubt they were the very Jews whom the Prophet dealt with severely. Moreover, such measures were perfectly justifiable in view of the fact that Islam was in its embryo then, and it was the duty of the Prophet to see that it was not nipped in the bud. So long as the Jews attacked his person, he forgave; but when the community was threatened with extermination, he had no alternative but to fight the enemy.

The noble example of the Chosen One was continued by his followers. In 637 A.D. when Caliph Omar captured Jerusalem, the Jews and the Christians inhabiting the city were granted full personal and religious liberty. But, when some six hundred years later, the same city fell into the hands of the Crusaders, it was converted into a pool of blood. The Jews were herded into their synagogues and there burnt. A world of difference indeed! The capture of Alexandria by Amru also shows how the Jews were treated by the Muslims. "No doubt, when the tide of Moslemite conquest spread along the shores of Africa, the Jews exulted, rather than

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deplored, the change of masters; forty thousand of their race were found by Amron in Alexandria, at the conquest of that city, and suffered no further oppression than the payment of tribute." (H. H. Milman in "History of the Jews." (Vol. II, page 251.)

An incident during the Caliphate of Ali shows not only the real democratic nature of the government of Islam, but also how fairly the Jews (and for that matter all non-Muslims) were treated by the Muslims. The Caliph had purchased some armour from a certain Jew, and had paid the amount due there and then. But the Jew began to dun him for the supposed debt. The Caliph told the Jew that he had already paid the sum claimed. Nevertheless, a suit was filed against Ali, and he had to appear before the Qadi. The Caliph pleaded his innocence. So he was required to bring witnesses. Ali told the Qadi that his son and his slave were his only two witnesses. But this the Jew would not accept. In short, Ali was made to pay the sum twice to the Jew. Thereupon the Jew declared in the open Court that he had tried the trick merely to see to what extent one could expect justice at the hands of the Caliph and the Qadi, and that he was perfectly satisfied with the even-handed justice which others obtained under the Caliph. The Jew embraced Islam afterwards. Such was the liberty the Jews enjoyed under the Crescent. They could even file a suit against the Commander of the Faithful and get justice meted out to them. Can the Jews ever dream of such justice at the hands of the Christians? Let the author of the "Spirit of Islam" answer that question: "The non-Christians—Jews, heretics, or pagans—enjoyed, under Christian domination, a fitful existence. It was a matter of chance whether they would be massacred or reduced to slavery. Rights, they had none; enough if they were suffered to exist." And even now, in countries like Nazi Germany, the Jews have no rights at all.

JEWS UNDER CROSS AND UNDER CRESCENT

Under the shadow of the Cross the Jews found no shelter whatever. They had to quit their native lands because of oppression. The plight of the Jews in Spain before the Saracens conquered that country, defies description. And so with North Africa under the Cross. But in the case of Islam, it was different. The Muslim rule was so tolerant and just that the Jews actually came and settled in Muslim countries to breathe a free and tolerant air. "For centuries," says M. N. Roy, "the Saracen Empire offered hospitable asylum to the persecuted Jews as well as to the unorthodox Christian sects of the Nestorians, Jacobites, Eutychians and Paulicians." To quote Syed Ameer Ali: "Fifty thousand Jews at one time accompanied by their women and children settled in Andalusia." And according to the author of the "History of the Muslim World," the Jews exiled in hordes from their native Spain by the Christian rulers, took refuge for themselves in Muslim Turkey.

Everywhere the Muslims were hailed as the liberators of the down-trodden. The Muslim Empire was a refuge for the oppressed. In fact, Muslim sovereigns were actually invited by the common people to relieve them of the oppression of the Church and the nobles. It was not the lust for power, but the instigation and entreaties of the oppressed Spanish Jews, that made the Saracens the conquerors of Spain. The Jews "held secret correspondence," to use H. H. Milman's words, "with their free brethren in Africa, to accelerate the march of the victorious deliverer." And the prayers of the Jews were effective, for they returned "to the enjoyment of all rights and privileges of freedom—not indeed under Christian kings, but under the dominion of the Moorish Caliphs, who established their rule over almost the whole of Spain. . . . At all events, when Toledo opened her gates to the Moorish conquerors (whether the Jews were openly or secretly active in the

ISLAMIC REVIEW

fall of the city) with what infinite satisfaction must they have beheld the capital of the persecuting Visigothic kings, of Recared, and Siselut, and Ervig, and the seat of those remorseless councils which had forcibly baptised, or exiled their devoted ancestors, or deprived them of their children, now become the palace of kings, if not kindred in lineage, yet Monotheists like themselves, under whose rule they knew that their brethren in the East and in Africa were permitted to enjoy their lives and their religion undisturbed. under whom they found equal justice, rose to high honour, or at least laboured under no proscription, dreaded no persecution!" (*History of the Jews*, Vol. II, pages 261-2.) And when in 1492 Granada fell, the Jews again became the object of persecution. Ferdinand and Isabella mercilessly expelled the Jews from Spain while those who escaped expulsion were forcibly converted. Thus, the moment the protecting wing of the Crescent was taken away, the Jews fell on evil days. And with the setting of the Crescent on the horizon of Spain, the country again reverted to barbarism.

Dealing with the condition of the Jews under the Cross, we found that even education was denied them. Even at the present day, we know that Jewish professors and students are badly treated. But, under the Crescent, from the first century of the Hegira, Jews were not only allowed to acquire education, but the able among them were made the rectors of universities. What the result of such liberal-mindedness was, we shall see while speaking of the Jewish contribution to literature.

In every state department and in every council, the Jews were amply represented. Important offices were held by Jews, Magians and Christians. In the Council of Mamun, we find Jewish representatives. We also hear of hundreds of synagogues as well as thousands of

JEWS UNDER CROSS AND UNDER CRESCENT

churches within the vast Empire of Mamun. In Spain the Jews were even allowed to follow their own laws within healthy limits. May we not ask whether the Jews under the Cross had any voice in the government? And, have the Jews of the present day a hand in the government in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy?

Naturally, as a result of such complete tolerance enjoyed by the Jews, we find that they enriched art and literature. It is only in a free and tolerant atmosphere that literature and art flourish. And the fact that the Jews have contributed valuable treasures to Arabic literature, speaks volumes for Arab tolerance. Indeed, it is difficult to say, in the case of this Arabic culture, where the Jew ends and the Arab begins, so important and essential were its Jewish factors." From the tenth to the fifteenth centuries, that is, as long as the Crescent ruled in Spain, the Spanish Jews were foremost in art and literature. And, as Sir Ramsay Muir points out, the revival of learning and literature, which began in the thirteenth century in Europe, was due to the influence of the cultivated Jews of Spain.

Such, in brief, were the remarkable results which Islam achieved in the lives of a people who had known nothing but persecution at the hands of the Christians. And if the persecuted Jews of to-day, instead of showing gratitude to the Muslims for giving them home and shelter when they were chastised by the iron rod of persecution by the Christians, actually try to stifle the Arab demands in Palestine, we can only wonder at their sense of gratitude.

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CORRESPONDENCE

2401 MILITARY ROAD,
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA.

THE EDITOR,
Islamic Review,
WOKING,
SURREY, ENGLAND.

DEAR MR. AHMED,

Thank you for the permission to use "Affinity between Islam and Christianity" from your September issue and also for general permission to digest articles from your magazine.

If you have not already received a copy of the first issue of *Religion* you will have it within the next day or two. I should very much like to receive at this (Arlington, Virginia) address the *Islamic Review* on an exchange basis.

I hope that the magazine meets with your approval. It is timely now when America seems in danger of losing many democratic institutions in her attempt to preserve religious freedom and racial justice. It is, moreover, the only type of magazine that can circulate among adherents of the various faiths.

I feel that you are sympathetic with the aims of *Religion* and I should greatly appreciate a review of it in your columns.

Yours sincerely,
JEROME T. GASPARD,
Editor.

HAREWOOD PLACE,
N. W. I.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

I heard your speech on Monday in Kensington Town Hall and I thought what a great thing it would be to hear from you personally more about your religion. I am working in a Christian movement (which originates from Germany) but I always felt very much drawn towards the Islamic World. Mr. Jakman of the W. C. O. F. encouraged me to write to you.

CORRESPONDENCE

Could we meet one day next week in London?

I would be much grateful if you would let me know in case such a thing is possible for you.

Yours sincerely,
J. WALK KRUGER.

HAWES MOUNT,
LEEDS, 6.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

I am taking the liberty of writing in the hope that you will help me. I am a Roman Catholic but have had a very great interest in your religion for some time. If you could help me to a better understanding of it, I should be more than grateful. A lecture given at the Leeds University gave me the idea of writing to you; I did not hear it personally, but friends told me about it, and I seized the opportunity to ask where it was possible to gain more information. I have not the vaguest idea as to how you can help me, but I am sure you can, and look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,
(Miss) S. H.

LEVEN STREET,
SALTBURN,
YORKSHIRE.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING, LONDON.

DEAR SIR,

I am writing you to ask if you would be good enough either to have a copy of the Qur-án sent to me or kindly to let me know where I can obtain one. I particularly wish to obtain the English Translation edited by Muhammad Ali, with the Arabic Text, Commentary and Index.

As soon as I know the cost of the above, I shall be pleased to forward a cheque for the same amount.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

A reply at your early convenience will be much appreciated as I am soon embarking for West Africa.

Kindly excuse my writing to you on this matter, but I have done so only because I do not know otherwise how to secure the copy I desire.

I would like to mention that although I am a Christian I have been greatly interested in the religion of Islam for some years, partly through meeting Mohammedans in West Africa, and partly because of some of the publications I have read of Muhammad Ali, which were sent to me from Lahore.

Thanking you,

I am,
Yours faithfully,
W. MARKHAM.

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY,
74 GROSVENOR STREET, LONDON, W.1

DEAR SIR,

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Sir,

Your obedient servant,
DENIS HALYSTED,
COLONEL,
Secretary.

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1 اللَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِنْ تُبْدُوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ

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Printed at the Press of The Civil & Military Gazette, Ltd., The Mall, Lahore,
by Khwaja Abdul Ghani, Secretary, The W. M. M. and L. Trust, and published by him
from Azeez Manzil, Brandreth Road, Lahore (India).
Hon. Editors—K. N. Ahmad and M. Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad.