

"Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Seal (the last) of the Prophets . . ."—
HOLY QUR-AN 33: 40. "There will be no Prophet after me."—MUHAMMAD.

The **Islamic Review**

FOUNDED BY THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

Vol. XXVIII]

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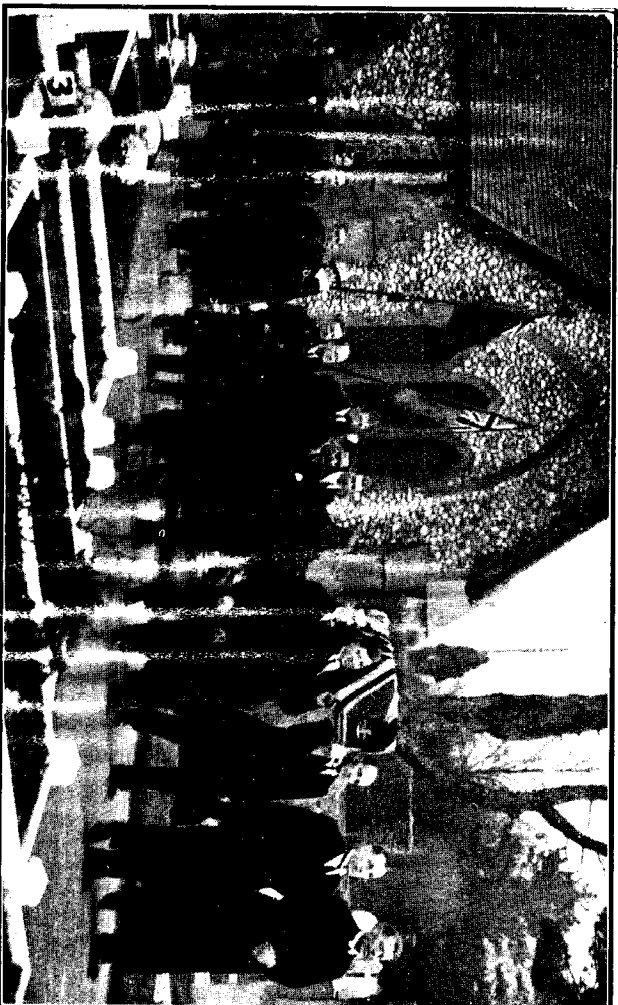
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INDIAN MUSLIM SEAMEN BURIED AT NEWHAVEN.

Two Muslim Indian members of the Crew of S. S. Domala which was bombed and machine-gunned by a Nazi airplane succumbed to death after being brought ashore at Brighton

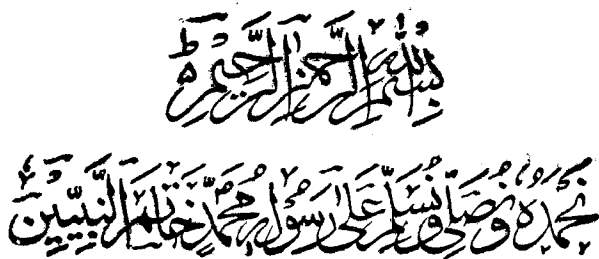
Inna lillahe wa inna ilaihe rajen

The above photograph shows one of the bodies being carried to the Newhaven Cemetery, where they were buried on Friday, the 8th March, 1940, according to the Muslim Rites under the direct supervision of the Woking Mosque authorities. Our thanks are due to the High Commissioner for India for the assistance given to the Mosque authorities in this direction. The funeral was attended by the representatives of the local Council, The Merchant Navy, The Shipwrecked and Mariners Society, British and India Steam Navigation Co., Royal Navy, East Sussex Police, and the Newhaven Civil Defence. The Members of the local branch of the British Legion were also in attendance with their Standard.



The activities of the Woking Muslim Mission in England cover a wide field. No effort is spared by its workers to give good cheer to our Muslim brethren in need. The above group shows the survivors of the Indian Muslim crew of the torpedoed boat 'Mattrra' coming out of the Hospital at Margate some hundred miles from Woking, with the Secretary of the Mosque (Second from left) and on their way to attend to the funeral of the two sailors who had succumbed to injuries.

(Photo by courtesy of Gaumont British News).



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JULY, 1940 A.C.

RENUNCIATION OF THE AHMADIYYA

BY A MUSLIM ENGLISH LADY

In the following pages our readers will find the text of the letters exchanged between ourselves and our sister-in-Islam, N. D. She and her father accepted Islam at the Putney Mosque in London which, unfortunately for the world of Islam, represents the anti-Islamic and heterodox views and beliefs of the Ahmadiyya movement at Qadian (India). The correspondence will show how serious is the nature of the doctrines held by the Ahmadiyya. If it were not for the danger to which the world of Islam is exposed by reason of their calling themselves Muslims and professing beliefs that are the very antithesis of Islam, we would not have given prominence to this correspondence. We, as is known to our readers, keep aloof from, and maintain a disinterested attitude towards, all those petty differences which ought and should exist and do exist on matters

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of secondary importance in the healthy, ever-growing community of the world of Islam. We always take good care to differentiate between what concerns the principles of Islam and what involves only matters of subsidiary importance. We always raise our voice whenever the existence of a principle is at stake. The present correspondence is an example of this. In a country like England where Islam is misrepresented enough, our adherence to this line of action has brought untold advantages to the cause of Islam.

To the average Englishman a mosque is a mosque, and he repairs there to enquire more about Islam. He is gladdened to find that the views about religion that are presented to him by the people in charge of such mosques are identical with his own. In the case of a serious student of comparative religion this often leads to the acceptance of Islam. It is in this way that English visitors to the Mosque at Putney are introduced to Islam. So far so good. But it is exactly at this point that one of the most formidable dangers known to the history of Islam and its solidarity rears its head at the Ahmadiyya Mosque at Putney, which propagates the damaging views of the Ahmadiyya movement at Qadian in India. After an enquirer has accepted the at once sublime and simple teaching of Islam, then the heterodox view—the alleged claim of the late Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to prophethood—is calmly presented to the initiate, who, as can be readily understood, because of his mental furniture which he inherits by way of legacy from the illogical teachings of the Church, fails not only to understand the doctrine as it is, but also cannot foresee the implications of his subscription to such a belief. He is thus initiated to the Ahmadiyya and accepts the late Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet of God, belief in whom henceforward becomes an integral part of his faith. Even at this stage the initiate is not

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informed of the logical consequences of such a belief. If anything, he is made to feel superior, and a better Muslim than the rest of the world of Islam by virtue of his having accepted Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet of God !

He is never made to realise that by this step of his he has dealt a death-blow to one of the fundamentals of Islam—the finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad. This, in a few words, is the technique that is employed by the workers of the Ahmadiyya at the Putney Mosque in London. This will be amply borne out by a perusal of the letters reproduced here.

But there are always to be found some indomitable spirits that will persist in knowing everything about the various institutions of Islam in England. To forestall the growth of such an otherwise natural and commendable desire, the technique is further developed. And at this stage it is our humble selves who step into the picture. The policy of “slander stoutly, some will stick” is pursued. We are shown up to such inquisitive new Muslims as unorthodox, lax in the observance of the practices of Islam and, last but not least, it is pointed out that the Woking Muslim Mission was initially a part of the Ahmadiyya and that it was the rank egotism of the late Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din of blessed memory, that created the rift between them. This picture is enough to frighten anyone, the more so an initiate, who is, as a rule, more earnest and observant than those born in the fold of the faith. But this technique does not always succeed. For some intrepid, persevering minds refuse to be satisfied by hearsay, and every now and then we receive letters from such friends as have accepted Islam at Putney desiring to know more about us. A few months ago a certain Muslim Englishman named Mr. A. Brown became aware, through exchanging letters with us, for the first

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time, after his conversion to Islam at Putney, of the nature of the heterodox dogmas of the Ahmadiyya of Qadian, and subsequently renounced that movement. It was on more or less similar lines that N. D. came to know of our existence. She made up her mind to find out more about us. The Imam of the Woking Mosque invited her and the family to lunch, after which the unpleasant question of our difference with the Ahmadiyya was discussed. The Imam began by asking them the reasons that had brought them to Islam. The reply was that it was the simplicity and the sublimity of the creed of Islam and the practical brotherhood of man in Islam. The Imam proceeded to put a question. Supposing there was a movement which inculcated dogmas that cut athwart those very things that had brought them to Islam, that had been instrumental in their acceptance of Islam, and which they believed to constitute the essential charm of Islam, well, what would they think of such a movement? The logical reply was that they would repudiate it in the strongest terms. The Imam thereupon pointed out to them the beliefs of the Ahmadiyya, emphasising how they ran counter to the spirit of Islam. The Imam also asked the lady if they had accepted Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet of God. They said they had. Asked if they realised the implications of such a step and such a belief, the lady expressed surprise. When told that such a step would put the whole of the world of Islam outside the pale of Islam, if all those within it who did not accept him as a prophet of God were to be considered unbelievers, she expressed further surprise. When told that the Ahmadiyya representatives at the Putney Mosque in London *did really* hold that we were outside the pale of Islam, on the score of our refusing to accept Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian as a prophet, and that this was the only reason why they did not say their prayers

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behind any one of us, and that this was the only reason why they would not say their *salât-ul-Janá'iz* on any Muslim who was not a member of their Ahmadiyya community, she expressed still greater surprise. By way of a casual observation, it was asked as to how the name of the man, that was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, could have been changed into "Ahmad" (for it is as "Prophet Ahmad" that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is presented to the public), she said that she would ask all these questions of the Imam in charge of the Ahmadiyya Mosque at Putney in London. The following is the result of the first interview which is embodied in a letter received from N. D.—ED., *I.R.*]

Correspondence relative to "Renunciation of the Ahmadiyya by a Muslim English Lady"

WALLINGTON, SURREY.

4th March, 1940.

THE IMAM,

THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR IMAM SAHIB,

Assalamo-Alaikum!

What you told me when we visited you has made me think a great deal. Yesterday I visited the London Mosque to see just what the Ahmadiyya explanation was.

Referring to the fact that Ahmadies will not pray behind a non-Ahmadi Imam, the Imam Sahib quoted from the Holy Qur-án which says that in later days when the world is full of darkness, a prophet shall arise among you, and his name shall be Ahmad (Ghulam was only the family name of Ahmad's family, therefore it is perfectly correct to call him Ahmad), and from among his followers will come the Imams. Therefore, from this I conclude that a bad Ahmadi would be preferable as Imam to a good Muslim of some other sect.

As for the funerals, the Imam did say that other communities could arrange for the burials of non-Ahmadies, but he would arrange for Ahmadies wherever they were in the British Isles.

Both of these things seem to be alien to the spirit of brotherhood. At the moment I really do not know what to think. Perhaps the best thing to do is to find out more about both sects. Does your community belong to any special sect of Islam?

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The Imam Sahib here says that you are breaking one of the traditions of the Holy Prophet by shaking hands with women, and to say that you do not care about shaking hands means that you renounce those traditions which should be a perfect example.

I should be very glad for any more information that you could give me and hope that we may have the pleasure of seeing you again soon.

Yours sincerely,
N. D.

This is the reply to the above :

THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

7th March, 1940.

DEAR MISS N. D.

Assalamo-Alaikum !

I am grateful to you for your kind letter of the 4th March, 1940, which makes interesting reading. I am glad to learn that you are taking the matter seriously.

I am also glad to learn that at least one thing has become clear to you as a result of your visit to us, namely, that the ways and beliefs of our friends at the Putney (Qadiani) Mosque are clearly professing things which are alien to the spirit of the brotherhood of man in Islam. I am afraid your further studies in this (to a European) knotty problem will reveal many more difficulties, which, let me hope, in the long run, will lead to the same conclusions to which I referred at our last interview. But much confusion will be saved if we could become clear on our fundamentals and scrupulously subject every issue, premise and conclusion to the fundamentals agreed upon. In passing, I may remark that if the same problem had been presented to me I should have cut myself adrift from the Qadiani movement altogether, not so much on casuistic reasons, of which there is no end, as on the score of their doing things which on the face of them are contrary to the spirit of the brotherhood of man in Islam. But it seems to me that you are prepared for the casuistic niceties and the new science of dogmas which is unknown to the history of Islam and has been invented by the Qadiani movement. I wonder, therefore, if you can make it convenient to come to Woking once again to discuss the matter further. It will save us a good deal of correspondence.

There is a passage in your letter which I am inclined to regard as classic in the domain of casuistry. I am referring to the explanation when you say : " Ghulam was only the family name of Ahmad's family, therefore it is perfectly correct to call him Ahmad." There could be no more ludicrous explanation for calling Ghulam Ahmad, Ahmad. I am referring to it because anyone to whom I have shown your letter has burst into laughter. If it were not for the gravity of the question with which you and I are concerned I would not have referred to it. You see, the truth of the matter is that there are no family names in India, at least not in the sense in which the phrase " family name " is used in England. The name of the gentleman, the founder of the Qadiani movement, is Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The word " Mirza " represents the title of

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his family, and, if there is any family name, it could not be other than Mirza. The word Ghulam Ahmad whether read in the Persian way, which is Ghulam-i-Ahmad, or read in the Arabic way which is Ghulam-u-Ahmad means "the servant of Ahmad." I would not take you into grammatical intricacies. Suffice it to say that the relation of the word Ghulam to the word that follows it is called *Idāfa* in the Arabic language; the word Ghulam is called *Mudāf* and the word Ahmad, *Mudāf ilaih* (genitive). Ahmad in this case is the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. In India there are many names like this. For instance, Ghulam Muhammad, which means "the servant of Muhammad," Ghulam Murtaza, which means "the servant of Murtaza," Murtaza being one of the attributive names of the Prophet Muhammad; another name, Ghulam Mustafa, is coined on the same lines; the word Mustafa is also one of the appellations given to the Prophet Muhammad. Mustafa means the chosen, whereas Murtaza means the favourite. Besides, if Ghulam is the family name, as you say, then why is it that his son, the present leader of the movement, styles himself Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad and does not use the word Ghulam as part of his name? The name of the father of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, I believe, was Ghulam Murtaza. I have already explained the meanings of this word. There is no getting away from the fact that in the case of the family of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the family name is not Ghulam and that if there is any family name at all it is the word Mirza.

As to the verse referred to in your letter and which occurs in Chapter 61 of the Qur-án, it is true that there is the mention of the advent of a prophet whose name would be Ahmad. But read the verse and you will see the word Ahmad does not refer to Ghulam Ahmad but to the Prophet Muhammad. I quote the verse: "And when Jesus, son of Mary, said: O children of Israel! surely I am an apostle of Allah to you verifying that which is before me of the Torah and giving the good news of an apostle who will come after me, his name being Ahmad. . . ." In these clear words Ahmad is the name of Muhammad. And besides it is Jesus who is talking, not Muhammad. There would have been some sense in your assertion if these words had come from the lips of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. This is again another example of the way in which friends like you who are not familiar with the casuistic manipulations of our Qadiani friends are misled. The commentary of Maulvi Muhammad Ali on the verse quoted above is very illuminating. He writes: "Jesus's verification of the Torah, or the books of Moses, refers to the prophecy therein about the advent of the Holy Prophet, which is clearly stated in the latter part of the passage, where Jesus is spoken of as prophesying the advent. It should be borne in mind that the Holy Prophet had two names: he was called Muhammad as well as Ahmad, both names being derived from the same root *Hamd*, which signifies praising, the word Muhammad meaning a man praised much or repeatedly or time after time, and Ahmad meaning one who praises much. It should not be supposed that Jesus uttered the very words which are reported in the Holy Qur-án, for he spoke the Hebrew language and not Arabic. Another difficulty is that the actual words of Jesus are not preserved in the Gospel and we have to depend on a

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Greek translation in which we find the word *Paraclete* which is translated in English as Comforter. We are well aware how translations are sometimes misleading, and, therefore, the use of the word *Paraclete* in the Greek version or that of Comforter in the English version does not show what the language spoken by Jesus was. But all those qualifications which are given in John, 14 : 16 and 16 : 7 are met with in the person of the Holy Prophet. He is stated to be one who shall abide for ever and so is the Prophet's Law ; for after him comes no prophet to promulgate a new law. He is spoken of as teaching all things and it was with a perfect law that the Holy Prophet came."

The whole of the Islamic World is agreed that the word Ahmad in this verse refers to the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Only a person who has got his own axe to grind would construe it as referring to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Now, having settled this, I have to point out another grave mistake which you make—most probably you are not responsible for it—when you use words without understanding their connotation. A case in point is the use of the word Imam in your letter when you say " And from among his followers will come the Imams." Firstly, nowhere in the Holy Qur-án are the Imams predicted; secondly, an Imam is not the same as a prophet. Both the words have got different meanings implying two different functions. Please do not use words in such a loose manner. Much confusion is caused by this habit. The coming of the Imams is foretold in the Traditions of the Prophet and that is all. It must be understood that the rejection of an Imam does not put you outside the pale of Islam. I need hardly add that the above conclusion is valid only if I accept the authenticity of the tradition concerning the appearance of Imams. In any case an Imam is not a prophet. It is only the rejection of a prophet that makes one a *kafir*. For a Muslim must believe in all the prophets of God.

You use in your letter two more expressions which I, for one, cannot understand. What is a bad Ahmadi ? And what is a good Muslim ? Who are you to adopt the role of calling a person good or bad ? Do you not think that such an attitude is arrogant and presumptuous ? You and I can only judge a person on the basis of his or her beliefs. If a person accepts all the fundamentals of Islam and observes them, you and I have no right to call him a *kafir*. If you adopted the attitude or the role of styling one good and another bad, you would be behaving in no way better than those who were responsible for the Inquisition. Let us in all humility confine ourselves to the real points at issue. Neither you nor I can have a measuring rod to gauge the goodness or badness of any individual.

As to ourselves, we belong to no sect. Let us be quite clear about this. In the first place I maintain that there is no sect in Islam. At best, you can use the word section or school of thought. When we use the word sect we wish to emphasise the difference in fundamentals. And I have already pointed out to you that there is no difference in the matter of fundamentals in the world of Islam. We differ in minor points, which is quite natural ; but on fundamentals we are all agreed. For instance one of those principles is the finality of the Prophet Muhammad after whom no

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prophet would come. In the first place no one has made any claim to prophethood after the Prophet Muhammad and in case any one did, then either he was rejected or regarded as a lunatic. These conclusions were arrived at in the light of the consensus of opinion on the finality of the Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad. In this way if Mirza Ghulam Ahmad did make a claim to Prophethood, as is alleged by our friends at Putney, then I, for one, without discussing the matter any further, would reject the proposition altogether and would either think that the man was deluded or a lunatic or, if he was not responsible for the claim, that it was his adherents who were making a prophet out of him. Any way, no matter how you look at the point, as long as you adhere to the agreed principle of the finality of the Prophet Muhammad, you cannot escape those conclusions. But once you let the principle drop out of your sight, then all sorts of casuistries and hair-splittings will appear. Now the question for you is to find if you wish to go with the world of Islam or against it. This, I believe, is the simplest way of solving your difficulty. Get hold of the principle firmly and judge everything in its light. It would be confusing issues if you referred yourself to the writings of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. He could not be an authority on the matter ; for it is his claim that is involved. You and I have to have some independent way of judging the truth of his claim. Under the circumstances the right understanding of the meaning of the " last of the Prophets " would settle the question. From the above remarks will have become clear to you the importance of subjecting every new idea to the principles agreed upon.

To the history of Islam only two men are known who, at least according to their followers, laid claim to prophethood after the Prophet Muhammad. The one was Ali Muhammad the Bab (died in 1850) and the other was the leader and the founder of the Qadiani movement. Ali Muhammad flourished in Persia, whereas Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in India (died in 1908). Followers of the Bab declare themselves to be outside the pale of Islam. Thus they are not so dangerous as our friends at Qadian, who while trying to remain within the fold of Islam, brand the whole of the world of Islam as *kafirs*.

Thus with a Qadiani you can never be sure of your ground. He would, to all intents and purposes, treat you as one of the Muslim community and, what is more, would try to pass as Muslim in the Muslim community he may be living in and yet regard you as a *kafir*. Thus the people of Qadian have been regarded as a great danger by the world of Islam ; because they, so to say, stab the Muslim community in the back.

Now to come back to the question of our belonging to any sect. I have already, in the first place, denied the existence of sects in the world of Islam. Thus I could not belong to any sect ; because there is none in Islam. Islam has known only two fundamental schisms—Babism and Ahmadism (Qadianism). And we definitely do not belong to either of them.

Now you may ask me if I belong to any section. Yes, I belong to the Sunni world and out of the Sunni world to a section which goes under the name of Hanafite. But it should not be forgotten that these schools of thought are based upon legal rather than religious differences in which matters of principle are never involved.

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I regard every one who accepts God as one and the finality of the Prophet Muhammad, in the sense in which it is understood by the whole of the world of Islam, as a Muslim and say my prayers behind him. I have no time for the useless and casuistic and sophistic discussions that our Qadiani friends are fond of and that, instead of bringing the world of Islam together, create a rift and a schism in it. I, as a humble Muslim, have no desire to assume the responsibility of calling one person good and another bad. This is the function of the All-Knowing and not yours or mine.

From the above it will also become clear that if the word "sect" is, or could be, used at all, it will be used to describe the Babis and the Qadianis. The beliefs of both of them are contrary to the spirit and fundamentals of Islam. I am sure, as time passes, these two dangerous movements in the heart and bosom of Islam will, by reason of the firm stand of the rest of the world of Islam against their false dogmas, eventually disappear. I take the liberty of adding that the word "sect" could only be used to describe the dissensions of Christendom where the followers of Christianity are not agreed even on the text of the Bible. Each different church has its own Bible and rejects the canonical books held by the other church as revealed as apocryphal and spurious.

As to the shaking of hands by men with ladies, we shall leave it for the present. For, as I tried to explain to you, it does not involve the sacrifice of a principle. You and I are at the present moment concerned with a more serious thing. Suffice it to say that I hold the traditions of the Prophet in great esteem and try to observe them whenever and wherever I can. I never flout them as you try to convey in your letter. I well know the high place the Qur-án gives to the words of the Holy Prophet.

I shall feel very happy if I could have the pleasure of seeing you in our midst on Sunday, the 17th instant. Of course, your mother and your father and sisters will also give us the pleasure of lunching with us.

Please give them my kind regards and respects.

With respects,

I am,
Yours sincerely,
ABDUL MAJID,
Imam.

Reply to the above.

WALLINGTON, SURREY.

13th March, 1940.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR IMAM SAHIB,

Assalamo-Alaikum!

Thank you very much for your letter received this morning, and for the invitation to visit Woking on Sunday, the 17th instant. We shall be very pleased to accept it. I shall also be very glad if you could help me. For a long time I have wanted a Muslim girl friend in Tunisia, N. Africa, but seem unable to get one, even though

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I have tried through some correspondence clubs. Do you know of any way in which I could succeed?

As for my letter, the information in it was just as the Imam Sahib at Putney told me. Referring to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's name, I do not very often understand the order or significance of Indian names, and I was only quoting the Imam Sahib. Thank you very much for making this point clear to me, and also the exact meaning of the passage referred to from the Holy Qur-án. Now that you have pointed it out, it certainly seems strange that Ghulam Ahmad's son did not have the name of "Ghulam."

Perhaps in my statement about "good Muslims" and "bad Ahmadis" I should have been more correct to have said "sincere Muslims" and "insincere Ahmadis." I certainly agree that I am not in a position to judge between "good" and "bad" Muslims. I did not mean to do so. It must have been the bad way in which I expressed myself—I seem to have done so very often in my last letter. I did not mean to convey in my letter that you ever flouted any of the traditions of the Holy Prophet and, surely, if you belong to the Sunni world, you would hold them in higher esteem than the Ahmadis.

I have not written much in this letter as I do not want you to misunderstand me. I would much rather discuss them when we meet on Sunday next, *Inshallah*. There are many points on which I must be absolutely decided.

With sincere regards,

Yours sincerely,
N. D.

WALLINGTON,
SURREY, ENGLAND.
21st March, 1940.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.
DEAR IMAM SAHIB,

Assalamo-Alaikum!

Thank you very much for inviting us to to-day's very interesting lecture. We enjoyed it very much indeed.

Referring to the subject under discussion at our last meeting, I have decided, in view of the facts that you have pointed out to me, to no longer recognise Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet and therefore to no longer accept Ahmadiyyat as the true Islam.

Hoping to see you again soon, God willing, with kindest regards and salaams from us all to Mr. Mahmud and yourself.

Yours sincerely,
N. D.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

A CHARTER OF PROTECTION GRANTED TO THE NESTORIAN CHURCH IN A.D. 1138, BY MUKTAFI II, CALIPH OF BAGHDAD

[We reproduce below, with the kind permission of the Librarian and Editor of the Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Manchester, an article that appeared in its Volume 10, No. 1, 1926. The translation and annotations are from the pen of Dr. A. Mingana, D.D.]

The Charter is one of the most eloquent commentaries of the inimitable verse of the Qur-an which reads : " There is no compulsion in religion." (2 : 257.)—ED., I. R.]

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

We give in the following pages the translation of an official document of some importance. It is an original copy of a charter granted by the 'Abbasid Caliph Muktafi II (1136—1160) to the Nestorian Patriarch 'Abdishō' III (1138—1147), and its wording settles a question that interests a large section of mankind.

The need has always been felt for an authoritative statement throwing light on the relations between Official Islam and Official Christianity at the time when Islam had power of life and death over millions of Christian subjects. Individual Christians may have suffered persecution at the hands of individual Muslims ; isolated cases of Christian communities suffering hardship through the fanaticism of a provincial governor, or a jurist, or the hallucinations of a half-demented Sheikh or Mullah are also recorded in history ; a Caliph or two—such as Mutawakkil—did, certainly, subject the Christians to some vexatious measures ; but such incidents, however numerous, are to be considered as infractions of the law, and the men who brought them about were breakers of the law, as all criminals are

A CHARTER OF PROTECTION

breakers of the law.¹ The statutory attitude of Islam on this subject is laid down in clear terms in the present document which proves beyond the possibility of doubt that, however imperfect Official Islam may have been in some social aspects, statutory intolerance was not among its defects. The Charter emanates from the Chancery of an 'Abassid Caliph, but could an English King, a Dutch Queen or a French President write in the twentieth century a more tolerant Charter in favour of their numerous Muslim subjects? It is not the Qur-án that was the cause of some cases of persecution of Christians in early times, nor of their wholesale massacre in contemporary history, any more than the Gospel was the inspiring factor of the barbarities of the Inquisition. Politics, personal ambitions or economic expediency should not be confused with religion.

The Charter was written in the twelfth century (more precisely in A.D. 1138) but the Caliph who granted it states that he is following in the steps of the first four Caliphs after the Prophet, and copying the model of all the 'Abbasid Caliphs, his predecessors. The praiseworthy keynote of tolerance that runs through it is therefore that of all the Muslim Caliphs, and not of one of them only. This is best illustrated by the memorable sentence of the Nestorian Patriarch Isho' Yahb III (A.D. 650—660): "The Arabs to whom God has given at this time the government of the world . . . do not persecute the Christian religion; on the contrary they favour it, honour our Priests and the Saints of the Lord, and confer benefits on churches and monasteries."²

The Charter sheds also great rays of light upon the procedure followed in the election of the Nestorian

¹See, however, T. W. Arnold in Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion*, 1921, xii, 365—369.

²Assemani, *Bib. Orient*, iii, 121.

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Patriarchs, the most important ecclesiastical dignitaries under Islamic domination.

The MS. of which the following is a translation is Arab. 694 of the John Ryland's Library. The text of the Charter is preserved as a model of good Arabic composition in the anthology entitled *Tadhkirah* and compiled by Ibn Hamdún who died in A.D. 1167. The author informs us that it was composed by his own brother, evidently the one called Abu Nasr, the Secretary of the Caliphs, who died in A.D. 1150.¹ Portions of this voluminous work are found in a more or less truncated form in some public libraries of Europe, the most complete being that preserved in the British Museum and dated A.D. 1596.² The Rylands MS. seems to be the oldest in existence, as palæographically it cannot be much later than A.D. 1200. It was thus written some forty years after the death of the author.

The Charter is composed in rhymed prose and in a highly florid style. Our translation, although literal, is sometimes free and gives only the broad sense of the text.

TRANSLATION

[COPY OF THE CHARTER TO THE CATHOLICOS, COMPOSED
BY MY BROTHER—MAY GOD HAVE MERCY UPON
HIS SOUL !]

*This is the Charter granted by our Master and Sovereign,
the Commander of the Faithful, to 'Abdīsho', Catholicos
and Patriarch.*

Praise be to God Whose bounty is universal and
Whose power is great, Whose praise is obligatory and
Whose followers are victorious, Whose attributes are

¹See Ibn Khallikán's *Wafayát* (life 665 ; vii, 66-67, edit. Wüstenfeld) ; *Kámil*, xi, 217 ; *Haj. Khalfa*, ii, 253.

²See Rieu's *Supplement to the Catalogue of the Arabic MSS. in the British Museum*, Nos. 1137-1138, pp. 715-718.

³*Shar'* is the Sacred Law of Islam, and *Dhimma* refers to the "Covenant of Protection" through which the *People of the Book* were allowed to live in peace in a Muslim country, and even protected, by their payment of the capitation tax.

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perfect and Whose justice is all-embracing. He is known without an eye having ever perceived Him, He created the world spontaneously without revolving thoughts and cogitations in His mind, and He comprehends the nature of all things, visible and invisible. He is high above the pictures that our imagination may form, and the subtle subjects that our mind may apprehend. He made the universe without previous pattern, and created all things without pre-existent plan. In favour of His Oneness He set in order an imposing array of cogent proofs, and in favour of His transcendent wisdom He produced wonderful testimonies which strike our inner mind and intelligence, our perceiving heart and discerning conscience, and compel us to proclaim that He has no consort and no son, and that He is not in partnership with anyone through whom He may be circumscribed or conceived to have an offspring. The Most High is far above what is attributed to Him by the ignorant.

Praise also be to God Who chose Muhammad from the most honourable Arabian stock and distinguished father and mother; Who sent him with irrefragable proof, resplendent truth and clear evidence at a time when mankind was immersed in the ignorance of aberrations and straying from the right direction and at a time when there was an interruption in the ministry of apostleship and the bewildered religious sects were on the increase and fast clinging to their errors. The Word of God prospered through him; he emptied it in the reservoirs of truth of the Arab nation, until the waymarks of falsehood were submerged and the crookedness of those who procrastinated in the matter of their conversion was obliterated. The roots of Islam spread then to all directions and its divine mission was established through a victory the upshot of which is known to all. The Most High God fulfilled then

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His promise by making His religion prevail over every other religion, by consolidating its triumph, by strengthening its followers and adherents, and by abrogating all the preceding religions, which thus came to an end through His religion.

In confirmation of His promise the Most High revealed also to him the Book with all the guidance and testimonies of truth that it contains for the followers of His religion. *It is He Who has sent His Apostle with guidance and true religion to make it prevail over every other religion, however averse the polytheists may be* (The Holy Qur-án, ix: 33). God blessed him therefore, and his family and his companions, with a blessing that enhances his prestige and is in keeping with his dignity and his merits, as long as evening follows morning and calamities are removed by the hidden grace of God.

Praise also be to God Who invested the Commander of the Faithful with the glory of the Caliphate—the inheritance of his fathers—and clothed him with its robe: the best of all favours; Who made him take possession of the high office before which faces fall down in awe and on account of which the honours of religion and state are offered to him; Who caused the stars of justice to shine in the firmament without setting, under his administration, and gave a vigorous impulse to commercial undertakings so that their marketable commodities should suffer no restriction and no diminution to buyers.

By his prudent government he has defended the inviolable Land of the Faith so that its flocks should be under no fear, and the purity of its water should suffer no pollution, that the sharp edge of the sword of the faith should bear no notch and its adherents should not be smitten by any calamity. He has further been gracious to single out his subjects for a gift which warded off all harm from them, straightened their

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spear after it had twisted, brought together the scattered remnants of their prosperity, and nurtured the causes of their progress. They are surrounded by the arm of his justice, pleased that by his favours they have shaken off unhappiness and entered into the path of comfort and ease. In their abundance they have firmly set their hearts to obey him and to pray for his ancestors ; they have raised their expectations after the restrictions imposed upon them, and have crushed those of their enemies who had assailed them. He, on his part, only asks God to inspire his subjects with gratitude for this gift, and his constant mention of it is a sign that he esteems very highly his share in it ; his success is exclusively through God : in Him he has placed his confidence and to Him he will eventually return.

Because God has placed in the hands of the Commander of the Faithful the management of the affairs of His servants, and laid on him the burden of His land and His countries, he governs his subjects with vigilant eyes, watches over their welfare with great care, and works for their prosperity with a solicitude which removes all their anxiety, joins all their ropes together, fills their pastures with grass, and fulfils all their eager desires. In this solicitude participate not only Muslims but also those with whom he is on terms of alliance whether they be near or far, and those of his different subjects from the *People of the Book* who stand within the limits of the terms of the " Pact of Protection " guaranteed by the convention of the *Shar'*, concerning the *Dhimmah*. The shadow of his kindness extends to them all, and to it their eyes and their ears bear witness.

I brought thy petition to the notice of the Commander of the Faithful and informed him that thou wast the worthiest of thy people in devotion and the nearest of them all to goodness in saintliness and other accomplishments, and that thou wast possessed of

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qualities and merits which singled thee out from all of them, and that thou hadst contained in thee all the prerequisites, provisions and qualifications of the Catholicate known to thy people. With me there was a deputation of Christians well versed in the regulations affecting this high office, and they submitted that after a careful and searching examination of thy claim they had come to the conclusion that they were in need of a Catholikos to look after their affairs and minister to their collective needs, and that by a spontaneous and unanimous decision they had acquiesced in thy elevation to the headship of their religion for regulating their affairs, satisfying their needs and rendering justice to the strongest and the weakest among them. They asked for the confirmation of thy election in the form of a Charter which would place it on a solid basis and unassailable foundations.

The Commander of the Faithful ordered, therefore, that their request be granted and their wish be gratified. The Charter of the highest Imamate of Islam—may its orders be always crowned with success—is hereby granted thee to be the Catholikos of the Nestorian Christians inhabiting the “City of Peace” and all the lands of the countries of Islam; thou art empowered to act as their head and the head also of those Greeks, Jacobites and Melchites, whether represented here or not, who might oppose them in any country; thou art singled out from all thy co-religionists to wear the known insignia of the Catholicate in your churches and meeting houses of your devotions, without any Archbishop or Bishop or Deacon having right to wear them or share them with thee: they are a mark of their dependence on the dignity and the high office to which thou hast been promoted. If any of the above-mentioned clerics enters through the door of contention with thee and recalcitrance against thee, or treads in

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the path of revolt against thy orders, or refuses to accept thy decisions, or disturbs thy peace, he will be prosecuted and punished for his conduct, until he retraces his steps and his obstinacy is broken, in order that others may be deterred from adopting a similar course and the enactments of your canons may be preserved in their entirety.

Following the precedent sanctioned by the Imams, his predecessors, in their dealings with the Catholics, thy predecessors, the Commander of the Faithful does also hereby bestow upon thee and upon thy followers the statutory prerogatives: thy life and property and those of thy people will be protected; great care will be taken in the promotion of your welfare; your ways of interring your dead will be respected, and your churches and monasteries will be protected. In all this we are in conformity with the method adopted by the orthodox Caliphs with your predecessors, a method that has been followed by the high Imams, my predecessors—may God be pleased with them!—in their interpretation of the terms of our Convention with you: that we shall be satisfied with you by your payment of the capitation tax, levied upon the males of your community who have passed the age of minority, and who are rational and solvent; that all your females and your males in their minority shall be exempt from it; and that it shall be levied once a year in strict conformity with the kindly rules of the *Shar'*.

The Commander of the Faithful was also gracious to be willing to mediate between the different Christian communities in their law-suits in order to exact justice from the strong in favour of the weak, and to direct to the right path any one who was straying from it; to look after them according to the requirements of their religion, and to follow it in its clear path and straight course.

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Be thou worthy of all these favours granted to thee, which fulfil the desires of thy soul, and set up prayers and invocations for the Commander of the Faithful as a token of thy gratitude and a sign of thy allegiance. It is also the duty of all the Archbishops, Priests and Bishops of the above-mentioned denominations to show submission in this way to the Commander of the Faithful, and to meet his kindness with subordination and obedience.

AGGRESSION AND ISLAM

BY SIRDAR IKBAL ALI SHAH

When men, being confused regarding the reason of their purpose in life and standing bewildered, ask : "How ?" "Whither ?" and "Why ?" only Islamic teaching can give a satisfying reply, for the Qur-án tells us that we are born in this world for no other reason than to worship and obey God. Around this conception God has thrown a limitless plan of human creation and existence. The Plan has to be carried on according to that Divine Command. Whosoever does not act according to the Plan is an Aggressor—an unacceptable one.

Now, prayer and obedience being our only purpose of life, we note that the object of devotion is congregational. We are drawn within the ambit of society : this association with our fellows helps us to open up our inner selves to the working of a single impulse. It assists us in our spiritual expansion of humanity at large. And thus the object of the Great Plan is fulfilled.

Aggression in Islam will tend to mean the hindering of God's Plan : and, inasmuch as the Plan is Social, it is not arguable to say that it does not appertain to those laws which are established for peace and prosperity of mankind.

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“It is not righteousness,” says the Qur-án, “that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteousness is this, that one should believe in God and the Last Day and the Angels, and the Book and the Prophets, and give away wealth out of love of Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for the emancipation of the captives and keep up prayer. . . .” (Chapter II : 177.)

From the foregoing it is obvious that a people, which is unable to exercise any control over its free actions and upon the disbursement of its wealth in the above-mentioned manner, is one suffering from aggression, be it a system of government or an individual: such persons or peoples are styled “tyrants” (*zalim*), and the guilt is further increased when the aggressor usurps the very right of ownership of another’s land or country: for the Prophet Muhammad has said: “Whosoever takes the land of another unjustly shall be punished on the Day of Judgment by being thrust through seven layers of earth.”

In order, therefore, to check such an aggression, which makes self-protection only a natural instinct of mankind, the Muslims are commanded to lift up their hand in battle. Thus war is permitted as a measure of self-defence in the circumstances when an aggression has been perpetrated, and the legitimate rights and interests of the Muslim people are threatened with destruction, thus hindering the smooth running of the plan which gives peace and security.

It was only upon such provocation that Muslims were compelled to take up arms for self-protection against aggressors. “. . . Fight against those infidels,” says the Qur-án, “who fight with you, till the time that the disturbance is removed from the land and every man may serve his God freely: and

when such desist from that tyranny, then you should stop fighting : for you are not permitted to fight against any but the aggressors." (8 : 38.)

From which it is clear that the command to fight is against those who aggress, and as soon as that aggression ceases, the disturbances are removed and the continuing of war is prohibited : because, if carried on further, then that war which was started to remove aggression shall itself be classed as aggression when the original aggressive party has been brought to destruction. *Jihad*, or Holy War, therefore, is enjoined only when the limit of persecution has been reached, when no further toleration can be of any avail, and aggression leaves no option between utter destruction or battle.

In the light of known history, therefore, we must examine the position and see whether the situation of the Muslims was really such at the hands of aggression as to leave them with no alternative but to fight.

In the first instance, during the stay of the Holy Prophet at Makka, the persecution of the Makkans against Muhammad's followers had become intolerable. He was publicly insulted ; he and his followers were not allowed to worship ; they were often beaten ; their property was confiscated ; they were segregated from civic life ; several of them were murdered and some of them fled to Abyssinia : the Prophet was stoned at Taif, and finally the Makkans resolved to murder him. But he escaped just in time and took refuge at Madina. If this was not tyranny and aggression against a people, nothing else could be.

In spite of an extensive search for Muhammad and the placing of a sum upon his head, the Prophet's pursuers were unable to intercept his flight and, immediately upon hearing of his safe arrival amongst the Madinites, the aggressors demanded the Prophet's

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repatriation in these terms :

“ You have given refuge to Muhammad. Expel him from amongst you and fight against him ; or we will invade you with our entire army, and will kill all male members of your clan, and will consider your women lawful to ourselves. . . . ”

In Madina the Muslim community, it is reported, could not sleep at night for fear of the aggressors' attack. Over and over again, therefore, news of invasion reached the Holy Prophet, but in no circumstances did his followers take any initiative in launching the attack ; and the first battle of the Muslims against the Makkans is historically proved to be in consequence of the attack of the Makkans upon the Muslims. If the Muslims took up the sword, then it was to ward off aggression.

On another law of principle, too, the Muslims are not permitted to fight : and that is megalomania. For the sons of Islam are prohibited from coveting another man's country.

“ Do not lift up thine eyes,” says the Qur-án, “ to those worldly benefits which We have bestowed upon other nations in order to try them in their actions. That which thy Lord has bestowed on thee is best for thee and most lasting.” (Chapter XX : 13.)

From this quotation it is apparent that Muslims are precluded from waging a war against another nation merely to add to their possessions : but must fight to suppress aggression, which is regarded as “ disturbance,” and disobedience to the rule of law and peace established by God as the only reason for unfolding this panorama of life.

From the foregoing it must be clear that the Muslims have never taken up the sword, except to fight an aggressor, and in self-defence.

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ISLAM AND JESUS

By MRS. NADIRE F. IVES OSMAN (NEW YORK)

(Continued from p. 238 of the last issue)

By now we have passed beyond the bounds of true Jewish thought and are entered into strange and new fields. Here we meet with the unfamiliar forms of two persons associated with God, declared to be made of the one substance of the Trinity. It may be positively predicted that there will never be a uniform concurrence of opinion among Christian peoples on the subject of the Trinity. We shall speak more of this device later. The shamrock, gathered by St. Patrick, has sufficed to resolve doubts in simple trusting minds which are not distressed by any recognition of the dissimilarity between plant life and personality. Many erudite hypotheses, in addition, have been framed by those who for ever must continue to speculate upon the mystery of the Christian Trinity. In the last resort, the solution is admitted to be beyond the grasp of our intelligent reason. The Episcopal Church (of America), for example, can offer three expositions, and you may choose that one to which your constitution—providing you have sufficient mental strength to reason them out—makes you the most amenable. Yet the confession eventually is made that our human intellects are much too feeble to envisage so great a mystery. We are, therefore, required to accept on faith the doctrine of the Trinity. Thus there must ever be a vortex of opinion wheeling about that which cannot exist,—Three Persons in One God.

While a few verses in the New Testament would make the distinction that Jesus was “the only-begotten” son of his Heavenly Father, we find that Hebrews XI:17 applies this same discriminative participle to Isaac, with respect to his earthly father, Abraham;

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“ Abraham . . . offered up his only-begotten son.” As Abraham had several other sons beside Isaac, we find this a noteworthy error. It is obvious that we cannot rely on the texts.

An interesting commentary upon what has been under discussion may be had in the fact that twice in the history of the Israelite nation incorrect statements have appeared about a son. The first instance occurred almost at its birth when Isaac was called Abraham’s only son (Genesis XXII : 2), whereas we know that Ishmael was Abraham’s first-born. This inaccuracy is reflected in that verse of Exodus to which we have twice referred : “ Israel is my son, even my first-born ” (Exodus IV : 22), although this time it is the nation of Israel which is under discussion, and not the Prophet.

The second instance came at the end of Israel’s life as a nation when assertions were thrust upon it that Jesus was God’s “ only-begotten Son.” Verily history repeats itself upon occasions, and a Divine Justice often calls forth a scourge that is the fruit and similitude of our favourite weaknesses.

What we have here written is meant to be a direct challenge to the uniqueness of that appellation, “ The Son of God ” as applied to Jesus. The few places in the Gospels where the word “ only-begotten ” may be found should not be taken seriously in view of the foregoing facts, and when we consider the many inaccuracies which likewise exist. For example, the strongest evidence upon which the doctrine of the Trinity has been based is that passage of I John V : 7, where the “ three heavenly witnesses ” are spoken of. Modern research has discovered that this verse cannot be found in the oldest manuscripts : it is, therefore, not included in the revised version of the Bible. Likewise, the last 12 verses of the Gospel of Mark are

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missing in the two oldest extant manuscripts. Yet even previous to these discoveries, the Catholic Church was forced to admit that "numerous textual errors existed in the Greek manuscripts from which the Bible has been translated." They hastened to add, however, that these "seldom interfere seriously with the primitive reading of any important dogmatic or moral passage." (*Catholic Encyclopedia*.) To those whom the idea that the special divine origin of Jesus can be discredited comes as a blow to their most cherished sentiments, we make haste to offer the consolation that, if the foundations upon which the theory of Jesus's miraculous birth has been built are discovered to be unable to bear the burden placed upon them, they can still sustain the analogy that Jesus was the Son of God,—but that has brought upon the world so tragic a chain of circumstances.

Mutual distrusts and hatreds have not been the least of the disastrous effects. The misinterpretation of the revelation of Jesus, pushed to its extremity, has penetrated deeply into the lives of men and women, as disastrously as did that Oriental custom of veiling the faces of women, which was utterly foreign to the religion of Islam.

It has often been asserted by those who should have known better that Jesus brought a revelation of the fatherhood of God far in advance of the Hebrew conception. It is dwelt upon that the Israelites worshipped a tribal God, named Jehovah, who, however, was little better than a tyrant who must be placated through fear: such is the general impression given, despite the existence of that most tender of documents, the Twenty-third Psalm—one of the most precious possessions of the followers of Christ—and many other evidences to be found in the Old Testament.

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One of the misconceptions involving the Hebrew religion, partly responsible for this distrust of Jehovah, lay in the misunderstanding of the principle underlying sacrifices with which He was associated. On the contrary, it was not the intention that they should serve to mollify God: rather they were intended to purify the spirit of the giver through the relinquishment of something contributing to his wealth (man's most vulnerable point). The greater part of the offering went to those of the temple and was used as food. The act of giving thus provided the means of working upon a stubborn spirit, just as when the parent hopes to wean the child from evil by punishment or by offering him the opportunity to exercise his soul by giving. In the offering of sacrifices to God, the original resentments became sublimated. This same principle of expiation is to be found in Islam although it has not been applied in exactly the same way. It is required of us that the number of our good deeds should outweigh our evil. Mere repentance is sometimes not enough.

A great injustice has also been committed by associating the name "Jhwh" (or its other form, "Jehovah") only with the process of nation-building. It is true that it was first given to Moses in a vision at Mount Horeb (Ex., III: 4—15) and that it had been previously unknown to the patriarchs (Ex., VI: 2, 3). It is understood that the various names by which God had spoken to the Hebrews did not imply any complication of individuality.

The most satisfactory explanation of "Jhwh" is "He is" or "He lives," the verb being given in the third person singular. In Exodus, III: 14, we find it expressed in the first person: "I am." In both cases, it is representative of the Living God, the Source of Life. It is the solemn statement of being, out of which

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proceeds the constructive might of God's Power, which nothing can obstruct. It is a fact that God has used this same solemn declaration of being to His favoured ones in other languages. Those who can look only to the definition of love as expressive of the One Deity, and who cannot comprehend other realities, may be compared to him who would have his favourite colour dye all flowers.

With the Hebrews, however, the fatherhood of God never passed beyond the bounds of a figure of speech. It but enhanced in dignity and importance the true rôle of the Hebrew father. The devotion of the head of the family and its reciprocation from the members marked the Jewish people for a special admiration even in that period preceding the last World War when, as a race, they were ignorantly despised by their Christian neighbours.

With the attribution by the Christians of an actual fatherhood to God and the rebirth of the initiate into the spiritual family, it was but natural that asceticism should be the logical result. The same process may be observed in other systems as, for example, in Buddhism, where the desire to become a Buddha is comparable to that wish to possess "the mind of Christ." Both of these ambitions, pushed to their ultimate goal, remove the aspirant from the limitations of family life, losing him in that sphere, alleged to be superior, of more cosmic relationships. The result has been that the most spiritually-minded young men and women have been led away from that province where they could pattern the most elevated examples of parenthood and of noble living and persuaded instead to attempt to lead lives of self-denial (which has often wrecked their health) without producing a profound influence upon family life itself. Practice is better than precept alone. The greatest motivating power

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cannot come from theory. Only those few unable to enter the cloister or the monastery, through force of circumstances, remained without, with the disastrous result that women predominated, for maternal instincts are usually more cultivated in children than are the paternal, and hence become more difficult to overcome in later life. The tone of family life has thus been lowered. In a Buddhistic country like Japan, the family religion of Confucianism has been like a balance wheel, with the result that the nation, as a whole, has produced great spiritual values in the home.

It is to be remarked in passing that certain Christian metaphysicians have gone even further by informing us that, as we are indebted to Jesus for that approach to God the Father, as witnessed in the Lord's Prayer, so we have to thank Mary Baker Eddy, their leader, for having revealed to us the motherhood of God: "Our Father-Mother God," they pray, or rather affirm. This has not been a unique discovery. The deification of the mother-principle is also to be found in Hinduism where the divine manifestation, as the mother, is worshipped as Káli; and in Buddhism where a Bodhisatva appears as the Compassionate Mother, Kwannon: even in Catholicism, maternal protection is sought with the "Mother of God," Mary. Each of these religions or sects has celibacy at its core, that seems to create the demand for the consoling ideal of beneficent womanhood,—a phenomenon not to be met with outside of ascetic faiths. Christian Science thus shows itself to be more closely related in principle to Catholicism than to Protestantism.

A late phase of Christian evolution may be observed in those countries, notably in the United States, where the threat of matriarchalism has seemed to be real to observers. The so-called emancipation of women originated in Europe among freethinkers. It gained

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great momentum in the United States under Christian auspices, securing a real support—as from the Young Women's Christian Association. The realisation of God filling the outline, in the minds of respectable and sincere women, of their fathers, doubtless contributed greatly towards their original self-assertion in independent fields. At the same time, the extra-activity of women found an abettor in Plato's Republic, from which its author, an older and wiser man, had eventually turned. (This is not the only time we find Greek thought as an accessory to Christian action.) It is to be further remarked that the more metaphysical forms of Christianity, where the spiritual fatherhood of God is the more continuously dwelt upon, have played a predominant part in sustaining the struggles of women in æsthetic fields.

A by-product has been the phenomenon of the gradual loss in prestige of the male parent. In their devotion to the Heavenly Father, the shining facets of the earthly one became dimmed (although the more decadent the civilisation, the more rapidly this change will come about). The result has been the destruction of the balance of the sexes, rather than their equilibration. Attempts towards readjustment are being made in certain non-conformist countries which, however, are without a living religious inspiration, beyond that of dependence upon old national religions which Christianity was supposed to have superseded. Likewise, in the United States, an effort is being made through public education to bring about a happier family adjustment and to reinstate the Father in a more appealing rôle. As the fundamental principles of the relationship, however, are not disengaged, disequilibrium will continue.

The Holy Qur-án, while casting its full light upon the treacherous shoals of the confounding of the terms

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of fatherhood, leads us on to a logical conclusion as to the vital significance of that state to which the Divine Relationship should be only superficially compared : it also strikes, at the same time, at another and growing evil,—modern methods of adoption : “ God has not made those whom you assert to be your sons, your real sons : these are the words of your mouths Assert their relationship to their fathers But if you do not know their fathers, then they are your brethren in faith and your friends ” (Holy Qur-án, XXXIII : 4, 5).

ISLAM AND CIVILISATION

BY ABDUL LATIFF KHAN

(Continued from Vol. XXVIII, Page 51.)

As to the influence of the Islamic Civilisation on the revival of learning in Europe the same great authority (Lecky) says :

“ The second revival was produced by the action of Moorish civilisation. It was shown chiefly in an increased passion for Natural Science, which gradually substituted the conception of harmonious and unchanging law for the conception of a universe governed by perpetual miracles. With this passion for science, Astrology gained an extraordinary reputation and it necessarily involved a system of fatalism which, in its turn, led the way to a philosophy of history. From the same quarter arose many of those pantheistic speculations about the all-pervasive soul of the universe, to which the writers of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were so passionately addicted. In all these ways, Moorish influence contributed to shape the old faith, to produce

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new predispositions, and thus to prepare the way for the coming change. Roger Bacon, who was probably the greatest natural philosopher of the Middle Ages, was profoundly versed in Arabic learning, and derived from it many of the germs of his philosophy. The fatalism of the astrologers and the pantheism of Averrhoes tinged some of the most eminent Christian writings long after the dawn of the Reformation. In one respect, Mahomedan influence had somewhat anticipated the classical revival. The Mahomedan philosophers were intense admirers of Aristotle, and it was chiefly through translations made by the Jews from the Arabic versions that the knowledge of that philosopher penetrated to Europe.”—*History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, pp. 295-96, Vol. II.

As to the influence of the immortal Muslim philosopher, Averrhoes, over the whole intellect of Europe, the same competent authority says :

“And the form of Averrhoes began to assume those gigantic proportions which, at a later period, overshadowed the whole intellect of Europe.”—Vol. I, p. 48.

As to the impulse given to the study of cultivation of Psychology in Europe by the school of Averrhoes the same learned authority says :

“We find, however, sometime before the Reformation, evident signs of a desire on the part of a few writers to rise to a purer conception of the soul. The pantheistic writings that flowed from the school of Averrhoes, reviving the old stoical notion of a soul of nature, directed attention to the great problem of the connection between the worlds of matter and of mind.

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The conception of an all-pervading spirit, which sleeps in the stone, dreams in the animal and wakes in the man, the belief that the hidden vital principle which produces the varied forms of organisation is but the thrill of the Divine essence that is present in them all—this belief, which had occupied so noble a place among the speculations of antiquity, reappeared, and was, perhaps, strengthened by the rapid progress of mysticism, which may be regarded as the Christian form of pantheism.”—Vol. I, p. 341.

The following remark of the same learned authority is very interesting :

“ Their horror of pagans and Mahomedans diminished more and more as they acquired a relish for the philosophers, of which the first were the physical sciences, of which the second were the repositories. Every step in knowledge increased their repugnance to the coarse materialism which was prevalent, and every generation rendered the general intellectual tendencies manifestly hostile to the Church.”—Vol. I, pp. 49-50.

The following extracts from the Preface to the celebrated work, *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science*, of the competent authority, Draper, are highly interesting :

“ The point in dispute had respect to the nature of God. It involved the rise of Mohamedanism. Its result was that much of Asia and Africa, with the historic cities of Jerusalem, Alexandria and Carthage, were wrenched from Christendom and the doctrine of the unity of God established in the largest portion of what had been the Roman Empire.

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The political event was followed by the restoration of Science, the establishment of Colleges, Schools, Libraries, throughout the dominions of the Arabians.

* * * * *

The result of this was a second conflict, that respecting the nature of the Soul. Under the designation of 'Averrhoism,' there came into prominence the theories of emanation and absorption. At the close of the Middle Ages the Inquisition succeeded in excluding those doctrines from Europe, and now the Vatican Council has formally and solemnly anathematized them.

* * * * *

We are now in the midst of a controversy respecting the mode of government of the world, whether it be by incessant Divine intervention, or by the operation of primordial and unchangeable law. The intellectual movement of Christendom has reached that point which Arabism had attained to in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and doctrines which were then discussed are presenting themselves for review, such are those of Evolution, Creation, Development."

Before proceeding further on the subject, we consider it worth while to cast a hasty glance at the life and work of Jesus Christ as depicted in the four Gospels. Lest it be thought that we are biased in our opinion on the subject, we quote below the words of an authority, Mr. H. G. Wells :

"In the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, a great teacher, arose out of Judea, who was to liberate the intense realizations of the righteousness and unchallengeable Oneness of God, and of man's

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moral obligation to God, which was the strength of orthodox Judaism, from that greedy and exclusive narrowness with which it was so extraordinarily intermingled in the Jewish mind. This was Jesus of Nazareth, the seed rather than the founder of Christianity.

* * * * *

Almost our only sources of information about the personality of Jesus are derived from the four Gospels, all of which were certainly in existence a few decades after his death, and from allusions to his life in the letters (epistles) of the early Christian propagandists. The first three Gospels—the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke—many suppose to be derived from some earlier documents ; the Gospel of St. John has more idiosyncrasy and is coloured by theology of a strongly Hellenic type. Critics are disposed to regard the Gospel of St. Mark as being the most trustworthy account of the personality and actual words of Jesus. But all four agree in giving us a picture of a very definite personality ; they carry the same conviction of reality that the early accounts of Buddha do. In spite of miraculous and incredible additions, one is obliged to say, ‘ Here was a man. This part of the tale could not have been invented.’

But just as the personality of Gautam Buddha has been disturbed and obscured by the stiff squatting figure, the gilded idol of later Buddhism, so one feels that the lean and strenuous personality of Jesus was much wronged by the unreality and conventionality that a mistaken reverence has imposed upon his figure in modern Christian art. Jesus was

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a penniless teacher, who wandered about the dusty sun-bit country of Judea, living upon casual gifts of food, yet he is always represented clean, combed and sleek, in spotless raiment, erect and with something motionless about him as though he was gliding through the air. This alone has made him unreal and incredible to many people who cannot distinguish the core of the story from the ornamental and unwise additions of the unintelligently devout.

And it may be that the early parts of the Gospels are accretions of the same nature. The miraculous circumstances of the birth of Jesus, the great star that brought wise men from the East to worship at his manger cradle, the massacre of the male infant children in the region of Bethlehem by Herod (as a consequence of these portents) and the flight into Egypt, are all supposed to be such accretionary matter by many authorities. At the best, they are events unnecessary to the teaching and they rob it of much of the strength and power it possesses when we strip it of such accompaniment. So, too, do the discrepant genealogies given by Matthew and Luke, in which there is an endeavour to trace the direct descent of Joseph, his father, from King David, as though it was any honour to Jesus or to anyone to have such a man as an ancestor. The insertion of these genealogies is the more peculiar and unreasonable because, according to the legend, Jesus was not the son of Joseph at all, but miraculously conceived.

We are left, if we do strip this record of these difficult accessories, with the figure of a being, very human, very earnest and passionate,

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capable of swift anger, and teaching a new, simple and profound doctrine—namely, the universal loving Fatherhood of God and the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. He was clearly a person—to use a common phrase—of intense personal magnetism. He attracted followers and filled them with love and courage. Weak and ailing people were heartened and healed by his presence. Yet he was probably of a delicate physique. There is a tradition that he fainted when, according to the custom, he was made to bear his cross to the place of execution. When he first appeared as a teacher he was a man of about thirty. He went about the country for three years spreading his doctrine, and then he came to Jerusalem and was accused of trying to set up a strange Kingdom in Judea ; he was tried upon this charge, and crucified together with two thieves. Now it is a matter of fact that in the Gospels all that body of theological assertion which constitutes Christianity finds little support. There is, as the reader may see for himself, no clear and emphatic assertion in these books of the doctrines which Christian teachers of all denominations find generally necessary to salvation. Except for one passage in St. John's Gospel it is difficult to get any words actually ascribed to Jesus in which he explained the doctrine of the Atonement or urged any sacrifices as sacraments (that is to say, priestly offices) upon his followers. We shall see presently how later on all Christendom was torn by disputes about the Trinity. There is no evidence that the apostles of Jesus ever heard of the Trinity—at any rate from him.

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The observance of the Jewish Sabbath, again transferred to the Mithraic "Sun-day," is an important feature of many Christian cults, but Jesus deliberately broke the Sabbath, and said that it was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. Nor did he say a word about the worship of his mother Mary, in the guise of Isis, the Queen of Heaven. All that is most characteristically Christian in worship and usage, he ignored. Sceptical writers have had the temerity to deny that Jesus can be called a Christian at all.

* * * * *

As remarkable is the enormous prominence given by Jesus to the teaching of what he called the 'Kingdom of Heaven,' and its comparative insignificance in the procedure and teaching of most of the Christian churches.

This doctrine of the 'Kingdom of Heaven,' which was the main teaching of Jesus, and which plays so small a part in the Christian creeds, is certainly one of the most revolutionary doctrines that ever stirred and changed human thought. It is small wonder if the world of that time failed to grasp its full significance, and recoiled in dismay from even a half apprehension of its tremendous challenge to the established habits and institutions of mankind. It is small wonder if the hesitating convert and disciple presently went back to the old familiar ideas of temple and altar, of fierce deity and propitiatory observance, of consecrated priest and magic blessing, and—these things being attended to—reverted then to the dear old habitual life of hates and profits and competition and pride. For the doctrine of the

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‘Kingdom of Heaven,’ as Jesus seems to have preached it, was no less than a bold and uncompromising demand for a complete change and cleansing of the life of our struggling race, an utter cleansing without and within.”—*The Outlines of History*, pp. 270—272.

As to the great influence of Paul on Christianity the same authority says :

“And presently there arose a second great teacher whom many modern authorities regard as the real founder of Christianity, Saul of Tarsus, or ‘Paul.’ ‘Saul’ apparently was his Jewish and ‘Paul’ his Roman name; he was a Roman citizen and a man of much wider education and a much narrower intellectuality than Jesus seems to have been. By birth he was probably a Jew, though some Jewish writers deny this; he had certainly studied under Jewish teachers. But he was well-versed in the Hellenic theologies of Alexandria, and his language was Greek.

* * * * *

The present writer has been unable to find any discussion of the religious ideas of Paul before he became a follower of Jesus. They must have been a basis, if only a basis, of departure for his new views, and their phraseology certainly supplied the colour of his new doctrines. We are almost equally in the dark as to the teachings of Gamaliel, who is named as the Jewish teacher at whose feet he sat. Nor do we know what Gentile teachings had reached him. It is highly probable that he had been influenced by Mithraism. He uses phrases curiously like Mithraistic phrases. What will be clear to anyone who reads his various

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Epistles is that his mind was saturated by an idea which does not appear at all prominently in the reputed sayings and teachings of Jesus, the idea of a sacrificed person, who is offered up to God as an atonement for sin. What Jesus preached was a new birth of the human soul, what Paul preached was the ancient religion of priest and altar and propitiatory bloodshed. Jesus was to him the Easter lamb, that traditional human victim without spot or blemish who haunts all the religions of dark white peoples. Paul came to the Nazarenes with overwhelming force because he came to them with this completely satisfactory explanation of the disaster of the crucifixion. It was a brilliant elucidation of what had been utterly perplexing.

Paul had never seen Jesus. His knowledge of Jesus and his teaching must have been derived from the hearsay of the original disciples. It is clear that he apprehended much of the spirit of Jesus and his doctrine of a new birth, but he built this into a theological system, a very subtle and ingenious system, whose appeal to this day is chiefly intellectual. And it is clear that the faith of the Nazarenes, which he found as a doctrine of motive and a way of living, he made into a doctrine of belief. He found the Nazarenes with a spirit and hope, and he left them Christians with the beginning of a creed.”
—*The Outlines of History*, pp. 277-78.

(To be continued.)

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