

"Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and 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. XXIX]

JUMÁDA'L-ŪLA 1360 A.H.
JUNE, 1941 A.C.

[No.

Annual Subscription 10s.

Single Cop

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Sergeant Richard Blunt

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Published by
THE WOKING MUSLIM MISSION AND LITERARY TRUST,
THE SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE,
WOKING, SURREY, ENGLAND.

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MOHAMMAD IN WORLD SCRIPTURES

A unique and wonderful work by Maulana Abdul Haque Vidyarthi, a book of which Muslims and non-Muslims alike felt the need for centuries.

The fundamental assertion of the Holy Quran that the Holy Prophet held all his predecessors to be true messengers of God, so did they anticipate him in their writings, and gave the happy news of his advent to their communities.

Maulana Abdul Haque has presented such a logical and rational account of a claim, put forward by the Holy Quran. He has treated separately the Hindu, Buddhist, Zoroastrian, Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, and has collected all the prophecies about the advent of the Holy Prophet. The text with necessary references is reproduced in photographic plates. The literal translation of the text is that done by scholars of that particular religion, and it is proved that scriptures of all nations and of all times contained a fore-knowledge of the Holy Prophet's advent.

Mohammad in World Scriptures is thus a loud confession on the part of all the world religions as to the divine origin of the mission of the Holy Prophet. It shows the World Scriptures to proclaim out of their own mouth that Mohammad (peace be on him) was the World Prophet, whose advent was foretold.

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"Far from disbelief in Jesus, I believe in him but I cannot persuade myself that he was Divine. I cannot find any reference that he called himself so and though no Biblical scholar, I am well-read in Biblical writings on account of my profession. I cannot believe God, Who has made all things so perfectly and to work in such order and harmony i. e. moon, stars, night and day, trees, flowers, animals and last but by no means the least, man, should have found it necessary to bring forth a son by some hokey-pokey means with a virgin who conceived a man without the human agency. I was worried over this for a long time and though I love the Church of England and the music of it is my work, the theology defeats me. I have been a good son of the church, I have worked for it in the music capacity for ten years and I hope I shall continue to do so when this present struggle of nations is over. The man to blame for the Christian religion being in the state it is, is Saint Paul".

Dated 9th September, 1940.

RICHARD BLUNT.



THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

Vol. XXIX]

JUMÁDA'L-ŪLĀ 1360 A.H.
JUNE, 1941 A.C.

[No. 6

A DECLARATION

I, SERGEANT RICHARD BLUNT, of York, England,
do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own
free will that I worship One and Only Allah (God)
alone ; that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger
and Servant ; that I respect equally all Prophets—
Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc., and that I will live a
Muslim life by the help of Allah.

Lá iláha ill-Alláh Muhammad-un-Rasul-Alláh.

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

-Dated 9th September, 1940.

(SD.) R. BLUNT.

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THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

BY THE LATE KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

[*Contd. from p. 175 of the Islamic Review, Vol. XXIX.*]

Next to civil affairs, the maintenance of the social structure rests upon our respect for criminal regulations. All criminal laws are associated with the law of retaliation. This law of retribution is not, as is alleged by ignorant critics of the Qur-án, prompted by any feeling of grudge or revenge. There can be no civil security unless proper arrangements are made for the punishment of crimes. To award punishment to the criminal constitutes retaliation or retribution. Accordingly, the next verse tells us that the safety of life depends on the enforcing of the law of retaliation. Mention is made here of the greatest offence calling for retaliation, i.e. murder. All other crimes hold a secondary position as compared with this one. Even here the Holy Qur-án introduces a reformation. Before the advent of Islam, it was the custom in Arabia not to kill a murderer if he happened to be of aristocratic birth. It was considered enough if he just paid the blood-money. The Qur-án rejected all such customs. It insisted on life for life, irrespective of whether the murderer were a slave or a free man. Where, however, the murder is not *intentional*, it makes an allowance for a reprieve. It permits the acceptance of blood-money. This is, in fact, an amendment in the law of retaliation. Accordingly, it is called "a mercy of God." This amounts to providing for the atonement for homicide through blood-money, if the killing is not *intentional*. And if a person violates the limits set by God in spite of such considerations, he will incur the chastisement of God. We see, therefore, that a distinction is made, in the criminal laws, between culpable homicide amounting to murder and culpable homicide not amounting to murder.

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Even our British Penal Code provides for this differential treatment nowadays, although it does not altogether exempt the one guilty of the latter crime from physical punishment. True, the use of discretion ultimately rests with the judge, yet, circumstances permitting, the Qur-án empowers him to dispose of such cases of *unintentional* crime by making the offender pay the blood-money to satisfy the legal heirs of the murdered person. Thus, in the foregoing verses, the Book touches upon three very important questions. First charity, then obligation and, lastly, retaliation. The idea in this order is that charity stands first in importance. The Qur-án, however, does not require us, in showing our charity to any one, to violate or ignore the rights of someone else. It is for this reason that the Holy Qur-án has given the heirs of a deceased person their due rights to his property. The reason is clear. If our successors take their share of our merits and demerits, it is only just and fair that they should also have a share in our property. So the Qur-án gives them a right to it after our death, since our bequests take effect only after our death. If, therefore, we transfer our property by will in favour of someone to the exclusion of other heirs, we, undoubtedly, deprive these others of their due rights. Cases are not wanting in which a person deprives his legal heirs of their due share in his property on account of mere displeasure. There are two kinds of transference in our law—one is called *hiba*, the other *wasiyyat*. Whereas the former takes effect in one's own lifetime, the force of the other is in operation only after the testator is dead. Now, if a person owning property makes a gift of it to any person or persons by *wasiyyat*, the transference of right in question does not affect himself at all. If it affects anyone, it is the heirs. Whereas, if he makes this transference by *hiba*, he

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deprives himself of his possession in his own lifetime, when it belongs to none but himself. This is why the Qur-án gives full liberty to a person to dispose of his property through *hiba* in whosoever's favour he likes, but not so through *wasiyyat*. There is only one principle working in the whole system, *viz.*, that the deceased ceases to be the owner of his property after his death, when the ownership passes on to his legal heirs. Hence the deceased has no right to interfere with the right of others by any discriminative will. Of course, he is entitled to satisfy his natural impulse of charity. This is provided for by this verse, inasmuch as it permits the testator to make a *wasiyyat* of charity if there is plenty for the legal heirs to inherit. The Holy Prophet, in view of this permission, has given the ruling that, providing there is more than enough left in the inheritance, one can bequeath to the extent of one-third of one's possession for purposes of charity. No heir, however, can benefit by this marginal freedom of *wasiyyat*. The ideas underlying these laws can be summarised as follows: Firstly, after setting apart the portion meant for charity—*wasiyyat*, there should be enough for the heirs.

Secondly, the portion so bequeathed should not exceed one-third of the whole property.

Thirdly, nothing of this *wasiyyat* property should go to benefit any heir.

181.—With all these provisions, however, there will still be some who will violate the purpose of the law on some plea or other. Let such remember that God hears and knows everything. They cannot escape due punishment.

182.—It is further added that if some outsider senses any bias on the part of an owner of property against any legal heir, *e.g.*, in the case of a testator wanting to disinherit the heir on grounds of personal

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displeasure, it is recommended that attempts should be made to bring about reconciliation between the testator and the heir concerned.

183.—The laws necessary for the maintenance and security of society are those that have been discussed in the foregoing sections. But the thing that is most desirable is that the propensity in man's mind for violating the law should disappear altogether. We have certain necessities of life which we are, by nature, obliged to satisfy. When we satisfy them in an improper way, it amounts to sin. The inclination to sin has invariably its origin in these necessities of life. If we satisfy them through a permissible channel, it is right conduct and results in virtue. On the other hand, if we satisfy them in a forbidden way, it will be bad conduct and result in sin. Keeping in view these natural tendencies of the human mind, the Holy Qur-án has appointed certain institutions by means of which we may with pleasure, and of our own accord, part with such of our acquisitions as have come to us through rightful sources. The object of their observances is evident. If a person can part voluntarily with such of his possessions as have been rightfully earned, it is not natural for him to avail himself, for the satisfaction of his needs, of such things as have been acquired by improper means.

For example, if a person can give away his honestly-earned property as a gift to others, it is improbable that he will obtain such property in an unlawful way. It is more reasonable that he should retain possession of his own original property. It is to this truth that the word *taqwa* points. If *taqwa* (piety) means, on the one hand, charity and benevolence, it also, on the other hand, means "giving up." In other words, we can attain to the stage of real *taqwa* when we possess

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the capacity for parting with our lawfully acquired possessions. In short, we cannot be virtuous in the true sense of the term unless we are able to deprive ourselves of our dearest possessions just for the pleasure of God. The Holy Qur-án has enunciated this principle very clearly in the first verse of the fourth part, where it says that we are not virtuous unless we have spent in the way of God out of that which we love. The well-known five institutions of Islam have their basis on this very principle. Thus, wherever there is a discussion of any one of these institutions, the object assigned for it has invariably been *taqwa* or virtue. Generally speaking, there is no religion in the world that has not prescribed fasting for its followers. Even Jesus Christ issued instructions for the observance of fasting. These fasts, however, were generally observed in times of calamity and strain. The Qur-án issued the injunction for fasting irrespective of circumstances, since its object was to create in man a state of piety, of which he is always in need. We not only acquire moral and spiritual strength through fasting but we also realise the hardships of those whom the inclemency of circumstances compels to remain hungry and thirsty. Through the experience of fasting, we become acquainted with their sufferings and are thereby inclined to lend them a helping hand. Over and above this, the observance of fasting enables us to acquire patience and perseverance. Indeed, it is unthinkable that we should have the quality of patience unless and until we deprive ourselves of needful things and fight the hardship consequent thereon. In discussing the philosophy of calamities I have said that God fosters the virtue of patience in us by creating a state of deprivation for us. But here, by voluntary fasting, we deprive ourselves by our own effort towards the same result.

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184.—We have to fast the whole month of Ramadhan. Incidentally, the Book observes that the sanctity attached to this month is owing to the fact that the Quranic revelations had their beginning in it. The reason for the adoption of the lunar calendar in this matter is to make the observance see every season of the year—summer, winter, spring and autumn. If any one fixes upon the month of April, for instance, for the observance of this fasting, simply because of the physiological reactions that take place in our physical bodies, he will achieve only one object of fasting, *viz.*, the improvement of physical health. He will miss a higher purpose in doing so, *viz.*, the fostering of a pious frame of mind, the one aspect of which is patience and perseverance. These qualities, as we can easily understand, can come to us only when we observe this fasting in every season of the year.

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BY M. L. M. MUHAMMAD HUSSAIN

Everywhere to-day the hearts of men are crying for peace. The world is full of suffering. It has been like this ever since man began to think and it has to be so, perhaps, throughout the future, till realisation comes to the individual. The world cannot be changed *en masse* overnight, but the individual can, and very often does, change. Far-reaching consequences occur in the life of a man in the twinkling of an eye, unseen by society and even—sometimes—by the person himself till it is pointed out to him by somebody else. Such is the world of ever-conflicting desires, passions, jealousies, greed and lust. This is a fact not often recognised; none-the-less people, particularly men whose names do mean something to the average man, have realised the futility of undertaking the impossible job of reforming the world *in toto*.

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Variety is the spice of life. Monotony is poison to the spirit of man. Absolute unity of outlook simply does not exist. Were it not for the fact that the thrill of life consists in creating new worlds of happiness and sorrow, of ugliness and beauty, of war and peace, many of us would have found life a dead matter unworthy of our attention. Every time we wish to improve our lot, the lot of our family and of our country, we are pitted against new obstacles. Conflicting desires clash. If we are strong, we survive the shock. If weak, we perish. The doctrine of might and strength takes its alarming toll as the aeons roll on.

Man suffers because he is full of wants. He is happy when either he gets what he wants or is in the enviable position of controlling his wants. Those who cannot do either make history bloody. They provide the missing link, the unseen jerk in the progress of human life. They inevitably stand between ages of peace. So long as nations keep on asking more and more, so long will there be war. Nations must either supply their wants themselves or, alternatively, if they cannot get them, control and regulate their wants, which is not to be expected when others do not play fair. A compromise under the circumstances, is not possible unless the needy but unsatisfied group succumb and bring about a change in the existing state of things in their own way. Consequently there cannot be peace in the world so long as individuals remain unsupplied with their wants; and they will continue to remain so if the suppliers themselves are subject to wants. The result is periodical wars between those who want and have not and those who want and have and yet want still more.

Though the world cannot be changed, the individuals comprising the world can definitely be

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changed. Did I say "changed?" I was wrong. I should have rather said they can *change themselves*. There is one golden maxim for the average reformer. If you think of changing the world, drop the idea. Teach man to *change himself* and the world will change as surely as you know that night and day cannot exist at the same time. More than 13½ centuries ago the Prophet of Arabia analysed this problem. Contrary to the prevailing notion, he did not come as a Reformer of the world but as a Reformer of MAN, which is altogether a different thing. He sent his call to the heart and soul of man and told him that the God of Peace, that he was so anxious to find, was not to be found anywhere but in his own self; God does not rest on the throne of the Heavens and the Earth but in the Heart of man.

This basic principle on which his teaching is founded is unfortunately not generally well known. We often look for a God outside of and unconnected with ourselves. That is where we err. The moment we recognise the mistake of looking for an external and separate God we find as a matter of course our traditional values change, revealing an absolutely new world of wonderful beings where hate changes into love, sorrow into happiness and ugliness into beauty. No contradictions then exist. Only then does the understanding come that neither Russia nor Germany nor America nor Japan can give us the peace we all yearn for but that we must search for that peace within our own selves. When we have found that we have found world peace.

Therefore, peace to the world will be denied until every individual attains inward calm and tranquillity. This, however, should not be taken to mean that those whose economic positions do not permit them to reflect on this aspect of the question must yield to the hand

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of Providence blindly and lead a life resigned to their fate. This, doubtless, is being done to-day, but how long could you continue to do it? A man can think calmly and meditate on the greatness and beauty of his soul-force only if he is free of financial worries, and in the present state of the world this is a privilege only of a few—and many grossly abuse it—who have gathered around them by honest or questionable ways the where-withals of life. The majority of mankind is poor and is chiefly concerned with the struggle for existence. Hence the majority are averse to thinking about God and loathe organised religion, and rightly so. Whoever can rely on a man who says, "If you are born poor, it is because you deserve it: be patient till your time comes"? Such knavery has been used by priests to comfort the helpless sufferers. However, it is foolish to proclaim it for ever because the modern mind knows that it is not God that created such glaring disparity but man. God says in the Qur-án, "We shall not change the condition of a people until they themselves change their own condition." "Man will not get but what he strives for." It is sacrilegious even to believe that God was the cause of all human sufferings on earth. Nor did the Almighty create the human family into tribes so that the rich may oppress the poor or that the white may rule the black or the Aryan the non-Aryan. Says the Holy Qur-án: "We have created you in tribes so that you may KNOW each other" and *not* tyrannize each other.

By a gigantic sweep of his foresight into the unwritten pages of the closed future Muhammad anticipated the struggles of man for bread, and the recognition of his human rights and so formulated a scheme of economic policy based on the fundamental rights of man to ensure an equitable distribution of wealth

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and power. Indeed no Teacher of mankind was more Socialistic than Muhammad. To every man according to his needs and to every man his natural rights, may well have been attributed to the Prophet of Islam than to the Marxian Doctrine.

A comparative study of religions reveals the interesting fact that there is a great difference between all the Middle and Far-Eastern group of religions on the one hand and Islam on the other. The distinction is unique in that it affords a definite clue to the singularity of Islamic philosophy of life. No Teacher was able to cover so much ground with amazing results as did Muhammad. Nothing was too big for him ; nothing too small. With a deep love for details at no time did he let unimportant issues mar his generalizations. His principles of thought and conduct are universal. His profound knowledge of the fundamentals of human existence endowed the world with basic formulas embracing such subjects as economics, law, evolution, nature study, biology, politics and ethics, to enumerate but a few. Truly there is no system of religion in the world that so richly merits the adjective " comprehensive " as Islam.

The teachings of Prophet Muhammad are based on the fact of universal experience that man, being born in this world, must live through its many phases of happiness and sorrow, stagnation and progress. He did not encourage the development of wisdom that is unconnected with man and his environment.

The essence of the Prophet's teaching as embodied in the Holy Qur-án may be summarily expressed as the path for the attainment of peace for the service of man. Service is the Ideal and peace the Means. He recognised that man was the soul of the Universe and that the sun and the moon, the heavens and the earth, could be made subservient to him and that man is

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born to live in and not to run away from the world. The salvation of man did not rest on the annihilation of desire but on the perfect control of it. Even Buddha, who preached the eight Noble Paths as a means of deliverance from sorrow and to the attainment of Nirvana, the supreme Bliss, in his omniscience, lost sight of the realistic side of life, the government of human society. His principle of absolute renunciation of material pleasures as a forward step in the approach to the Mental Domination of man is an obvious denial of any necessity to organise the social and economic movements of life. Buddha encouraged the cultivation of wisdom, but he failed to understand the futility of any such wisdom as is unconnected with society.

War is the conflict of passions. War is the result of imperfect ideals of life. In a Perfect Society there will be no war. And war cannot be done away with by the mere satisfaction of the bare economic needs of man, though it is the first essential step towards such an ideal. Feeding the stomach will not by any stretch of imagination subdue the cravings of human nature nor stifle those feelings of primitive violence which are embedded in the subconscious. The Prophet of Islam realized this turn in the tide of human affairs and, therefore, to curb man from dashing himself against the rock of false wisdom made him realize that the religion of nature could only be successfully worked in a socialistic regime when the individual is secured against any contingencies of unemployment or selfish accumulation of wealth to the detriment of society. Hence economic equality was made the preliminary step towards the attainment of peace of mind and heart by pure intelligence so that the attainment of the ideal of service may be realized in all its depth and greatness. The whole of this scheme is embodied in the *Sharia*, which broadly means the Law, as promulgated by

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the Prophet under Divine revelation and containing the essence of his spiritual knowledge, wisdom and experience. Such an interpretation affords a working basis for the individual to develop his latent faculties and understand the secrets of self in relation to the Greater Self. It has two aspects. First, it is introvert and secondly, extrovert. Particularly the *Sharia* is a law of do's and don'ts requiring the individual to adhere to the sovereign will of the Community, following the Qur-án.

The sum total of Islamic Philosophy is the creation of a unique personality in man that can invade the world of semi-conscious existence and harness all the forces of goodness, beauty and creativity so as to permit the free development of conscious thought and selfless service. Man is endowed with unlimited possibilities and the opening of the Way to realize them is the aim of Islam. Just how it proposes to achieve this gigantic object is something worth a more detailed explanation. In the course of the analysis of our generalizations we may have occasion to discuss these questions minutely. For the present much may be gained by founding our line of thought and action on the unconditional acceptance of man as the heart and soul of the Universe, the power of which is not independent of the Spirit of Man. Proceeding on this line it becomes increasingly obvious that families, communities, and nations change only when the inner potentialities of the individual are completely realized.

Therefore, everything is on the understanding that the conscious development of the Sciences and Arts as means to the ultimate purpose of man should be a vivid reflection of the evolution of the human personality and should counterbalance the progress of spiritual thought. A disproportionate increase in either of these aspects of life inevitably inclines towards

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extremes. If there is an enormous increase in the material prosperity of man while the stabilising force of the spirit remains undeveloped the natural tendency is to lead the Ego to a complete disregard of the beauty and fullness of life. Unconscious of the cause of things the Ego begins to have ambitions that can only end in the total destruction of the world. Such cataclysms would appear, no doubt, as vital necessities in the preservation and maintenance of what is usually wrongly called the "better civilization" but they may be averted with great benefit if the notion be removed that progress is only possible by jerks of revolutionary periods preceded by inactivity and not by an incessant change that goes on as it were behind the scenes of human thought.

On the other hand, the super-normal evolution of the spirit of man makes the Ego forget for a time the world of sentient beings and stay put in the blissful experience of the beatific vision of the Cosmic ; but it is only a possibility. The Mind that apprehends its relation to the eternal Thou is made to return to the world to build a more dynamic Universe worthy of its greatness. When it does, mankind witnesses a rare sight of universal reformation. A change for good in the life of man is made known to society by a tremendous upheaval in the lives of those who are in immediate contact with him.

For one man the world undergoes a complete metamorphosis and before his creative spirit mountains and rivers, the sun and the moon and all creatures bow down in homage for certainly it is the spirit of God. "Ye ask, who are those that draw us to the Kingdom, if the Kingdom is in Heaven? The fowls of the air and all beasts that are under the earth or upon the earth, and the fishes of the sea, these are they which draw you, and the Kingdom of Heaven

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is within you, and whoever shall know himself shall find it. Strive, therefore, to know yourselves, and ye shall be aware that ye are the sons of the Almighty Father ; and ye shall know that ye are in the City of God, and ye are the City.

“Let not him who seeks . . . cease until he finds, and when he finds he shall be astonished ; astonished he shall reach the Kingdom, and having reached the Kingdom he shall rest. Wherever there are two, they are not without God, and wherever there is one alone, I say, I am with him. Raise the stone and there you shall find me ; cleave the wood, and there am I. Thou hearest with one ear—but the other thou hast closed.”—*Jesus*.

These are memorable words indeed in that they refer to the very core of religion. No teacher ever said that the goal of man is outside himself, either in the High Heaven above or in the deep caverns of the earth below. A definite clue in this direction is given in the Holy Qur-án in reference to the story of Abraham's search for the One True God. Neither the stars nor the moon nor the sun were convincing enough to proclaim that it was the Supreme Power. The Heart of the Believer is the Throne of God. And says the Qur-án : “Lo ! We offered the trust unto the Heavens and the Earth and the hills, but they shrank from bearing it and were afraid of it. And man assumed it.” More pregnant, however, are the words : “Al Insānu Sirri Wa anā Sirruhū.”—Hadith Qudsi. “Man is my secret and I am man's secret.” Could there be any more doubt when Allah Himself assures man that He is closer to him than even his jugular vein ? Are not the unique pointers of the Prophet worthy of deep thought ? “Lo ! I, even I, am Allah,” came the revelation to Prophet Muhammad.

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“There is no God save Me. So serve Me and establish worship for My remembrance.”

The Transcendence of God is something that the mind cannot conjecture. It is infinity. But His Immanence may be apprehended. It is the living God towards which man travels.

To attain this goal man has to overcome the spectre of Death hovering over his head to smite him into the entrails of Hell. Death is the great mystery that science and philosophy have not solved. Any attempt to probe into its mysteries is bound to end in despair. Many have made that mistake. Even that eminent scientist-spiritualist, Sir Oliver Lodge, could not unravel the secret, though his researches in regard to the immortality of the human soul have brought conviction to many a sceptic. The region beyond this terrestrial life is the land from which no man returns. The Holy Qur-án, however, states that every soul that dies the physical death enters into Barzakh, a world of darkness and suffering, unless it has voluntarily and consciously undergone death before the final disintegration of the elements. “Die before you die,” is the well-known watchword of the seekers after truth.

The Qur-án declares that when the corporal body disintegrates, sinners would realize that death is a curse to them. Man loses his chance of realizing his inner potentialities and of perfecting his life cycle in the material world if death pounces upon him suddenly. Whoever, therefore, dies unborn in Reality will be born in the spiritual world of darkness, deaf, dumb and blind, a prey to the torments of unfulfilled aspirations, and whoever causes himself to die before the awful Angel of Death grapples his heart without his knowledge will be reborn in the Kingdom of Sublime Majesty.

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As Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi says :

“ To die before death is to be safe from torment,
“ To die before death is to be safe, O youth !
even so hath Mustafa commanded us,

“ Who said, ‘Die all of you, ere death come ; else
ye will die in that grievous affliction.’ ”

Death is but a means to a far greater end. It is a necessary Ticket to the land of the Spirit from which man draws all his inspirations. Of his own will man cannot attain to the highest stage of Cosmic Power, for effort is of no avail nor can effortless tend to bring one even to the fringe of its beauty.

“ Who seeks me by knowledge shall not find me.
Who seeks me without knowledge shall become the
child of the cursed one.”

Then how is it to be ? Each man within himself must realize the meaning. The Grace of God is the only redeeming feature in a complicated problem.

“ There is no more likeness between the blind and those who have sight than there is between darkness and light, or between the pleasant coolness of the shade and the torrid heat of the mid-day sun.

Neither are the living and the dead any more alike than these. Howbeit that God causeth whom He will to hear and understand ? It is not for thee to rouse those who are buried fast in the tomb, or to cause them to hear and arise. Thou art but a watchman and messenger.

We raise the dead to life. We note down their deeds while they live and we mark each of their footsteps.” (35 : 19, 21, 23, 36.)

Some commentators of the Qur-án have explained that the soul does not die.

It would appear contradictory to the Qur-án, but the contradiction is only apparent, due especially to the ambiguous meaning of “death.” Death on this

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planet means the disintegration of corporeality. In reality death means unconsciousness of Truth. The soul that has not surrendered itself to the Will of God, will not distinguish delusion from reality until the body is separated from it, for there is only one door to the Realm of Power—Death, whether initial or final.

The revelations in the Qur-án are very clear. "Every soul (*Nafs*) will taste of death. Then unto Us will ye be returned." (29 : 57.) But man does not die in reality. As some commentators believe, *Nafs* could not allude to mankind in general. In truth, *Nafs* is of seven degrees of intensity. They are *Nafs Ammara*, *Nafs Lawwama*, *Nafs Mulhima*. These are of the lower order belonging to the vicious substratum of passion. *Nafs Mutmainna* is the intermediate, the soul at rest. At this stage of evolution, God invites Man into His Realm.

*But ah ! thou soul at peace,
Return unto thy Lord, content in His good pleasure !
Enter thou among My bondmen !
Enter thou My Garden !*

—The Holy Qur-án, 89 : 27—30.

The following three in the ascending order belong to the realm of safety : *Raziya*, *Marziya* and *Kamila*. They are all aspects of the Reality of man but not his Reality, which is different and is far holier and higher than these. Man came to being when God breathed into the form of clay His spirit (*Rūh*) and the existence of the *Nafs* was evidenced when *Rūh* manifested itself in Limitation. The *Nafs* and Corporeality may, therefore, be called the accidents of Man. Particularly those who are subject to the domination of the three lower degrees of intensity of the *Nafs* are not conscious of their *Rabb*, and hence are in the woeful limitation of suffering and death. From the fourth onwards the

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seeker is in the happy process of conquering death, until eventually he attains absolute permanency in *Nafs Kamila* (the perfect soul), when the spirit of God is breathed into him. Then man becomes Man, then death ceases to have any meaning, since the Infinite has entered "the loving embrace of the finite. As for such He hath written faith upon their hearts and hath strengthened them with a spirit from Him, and He will bring them into gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide. Allah is well pleased with them, and they are well pleased with Him. They are Allah's party. Lo ! is it not Allah's party who are the successful ? " (The Holy Qur-án : 58—22.)

Such is the process of Death before death for the purpose of assimilating all the properties of the Cosmic. When the torments of a delusive mind are overcome—and many great men, not excluding scientists of the type of Professor Einstein and Whitehead, have not unloosened the fetters of the Mind—the chain of time and space, cause and effect are shattered by the consequent ascension (*Mi'rāj*) of the spirit towards its original abode.

There is the opportunity for every man to look into the future as though he were reading an open book, to free himself from the limitation of the dimensional world, a veritable privilege to conquer death and attain to the eternal life and be absolutely conscious of it, while living the life of routine in a dreary world.

The possibility of such an achievement is only to those who welcome death but are not invited by it. It is they who live in the eternal Spring of Everlasting youth consciously happy, perfect in knowledge, righteous in judgment, loving in disposition, simple and fearless in outlook.

"Know that the life of the world is only play, and idle talk, and pageantry, and boasting among you,

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and rivalry in respect of wealth and children ; as the likeness of vegetation after rain, whereof the growth is pleasing to the husbandman, but afterward it drieth up and thou seest it turning yellow, then it becometh straw. And in the Hereafter there is grievous punishment, and (also) forgiveness from Allah and His good pleasure, whereas the life of the world is but matter of illusion." (The Holy Qur-án, 57 : 20.)

Life is but a waking dream only with a minor difference. The consciousness that he is dreaming in his sleep does not come to the sleeper until he wakes up in the morning. None-the-less it has been conclusively proved that there are many who in their dreams, are perfectly conscious that they are dreaming and have, therefore, closely observed their dream world, its life and inhabitants with a view to record their observations on waking up. Similarly, there are not a few who do not know that this life is also a dream and that their Reality is dormant or dead. When they wake up in the real life in the Hereafter, need it be said how frightful their dream would appear ? " . . . and those who did wrong will say : ' Our Lord ! Reprieve us for a little while. We will obey Thy call and will follow the messengers ' (It will be answered) : Did ye not swear before that there would be no end for you ? ' " (The Holy Qur-án, 14 : 44.)

If, however, man can, in his ordinary walk of life, obtain consciousness of the life of the Hereafter like the man who is conscious of the dream world while in full possession of all his faculties, then surely there is no doubt that he has merged into the Eternal Life. Such indeed are the Prophets, Saints, *Sufis* and all Perfect Men, to whom physical disintegration could mean nothing. They will be as if they are absolutely alive, since they have crossed the hurdle of death while seemingly engrossed in their material existence.

MUHAMMAD'S VIEWS OF A FUTURE LIFE

For that matter no man who dies in the way of Allah is dead as the Holy Qur-án explains; "And call not those who are slain in the way of Allah 'Dead.' Nay, they are living, only ye perceive not." Nor is Prophet Muhammad dead in truth. If he were, the world would not have existed according to the saying: "Were it not for you (O Muhammad) I would not have created the Heavens and the Earth." (*Hadith Qudsi.*) Muhammad is as much alive to-day as he was 13½ centuries ago, though his material cloak lies buried in Madina.

MUHAMMAD'S VIEWS OF A FUTURE LIFE*

BY GEO. LINDSAY JOHNSON, M.B., B.C., F.R.C.S.

I have carefully examined the translation of the Koran (or Qur-án, as it should be written), by Maulana Muhammad Ali, M.A., LL.B., and I find it very different from the Christian conception of it. This gentleman is one of the most erudite exponents of the Prophet in the world, and everything which he says respecting the Muslim religion may be accepted as authentic.

The ignorance displayed by most Christians regarding the Muslim religion is appalling. They overlook the fact that a religion which is accepted and followed by a sixth of the human race must have a great deal of good in it and be built on very sound foundations, for it is absurd to suppose that it should form the conduct of such a multitude of people and have no solid foundations on which to rest. Muhammad alone, among the nations at that time, believed in one God to the exclusion of all others. He insisted on righteousness as the source of conduct, of filial duty,

*Courtesy, *The Two Worlds*, Manchester, for August 10, 1940. The writer of the article is a non-Muslim.—ED., I.R.

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and of frequent prayers to the Ever-living God, and of respect to all other peoples, and of justice and mercy to all. He believed in total abstinence from intoxicants, and of moderation in all things, and to hold in great respect learning of every kind. But, as I mentioned before, his views became rapidly ignored and distorted soon after his death. That Muhammad was a spiritualist and an advanced psychic, as well as being a true prophet of God, I have no doubt whatever, nor about his having had intercourse and revelations from spiritual beings on the "Other Side."

For a right understanding of the Qur-án (from "qurá," to read or recite), it is necessary to consider it as a whole, and to compare one passage with another. The more the book is studied in this way, the clearer does it become. Most of the absurdities which Christians would have us believe to exist in the Qur-án were never uttered by Muhammad himself, nor are they to be found in a correct translation of the work. They were, as a matter of fact, invented at a later period, when the pure religion of the Prophet had been corrupted, just as in a similar way the sayings of Jesus became distorted after the first two centuries when the Christian religion became recognised as the State religion by Constantine in the year A.D. 325.

As every portion of the Qur-án was committed to memory, and taken down in writing as soon as it was revealed, there could be no question about its ever being forgotten or lost. No book in the world other than the Qur-án can be credited with keeping alive a language for thirteen centuries. But what is more, while the Christian religion was slowly drifting away from the lofty ideal of its founder during the Middle Ages of "Faith," the Moors along the whole of the Mediterranean shores, and especially in Spain—down to their defeat by Charles Martel at the battle of

MUHAMMAD'S VIEWS OF A FUTURE LIFE

Tours A.D. 732—had become the leaders of civilization and of scientific progress. Mathematics, Astronomy, Physics, and Medicine had all made astonishing progress, and had attracted all the greatest philosophers and thinkers of the world to their museums and lecture halls.

Now let us turn to what the Prophet said about spiritualism. On one occasion, addressing the Christians, Muhammad said, "I am commanded to do justice between you ; God is our God and your God ; we shall have our deeds, and you shall have your deeds;" and again on another occasion he said, "We believe in that which hath been revealed to us, and revealed to you, and our God and your God is one." (Sura 29 : 46.)

According to the Qur-án, death does not end our personality and self-consciousness ; it merely opens the door to a higher form of life. "Have you considered the life-germ ?" says Muhammad. "Is it you that create it, or are We the creators ? God has ordained death among you, that He may change your attributes, and make you grow into what you know not." (Sura 56 : 58—60.) This passage shows that man's life in this world is not without an aim, and that aim is to attain to a higher life.

Heaven and Hell, he points out, are not the places of enjoyment or misery to be met with only after death ; they are just as much realities on this side as on that. Muhammad points out that there is a new world in front of us, before which the progress in this life sinks into insignificance. "And whoever desires to progress in the Hereafter their striving shall be recompensed." (Sura 17 : 19.)

Muhammad shows very clearly that the law of requital of good and evil affects this life just as it does

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the next, a complete manifestation taking place when the limitations of the body are removed by death. Death thus, according to the Qur-án, becomes the starting-point of a new and better life.

Again, the Prophet says: "He who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it; so every good deed shall bear a fruit, and every evil deed shall bear an evil consequence, whether he be a true believer or a non-believer." (Sura 99 : 7-8.) Then the Prophet uttered these remarkable words: "Owing to the infinite mercy and love in God's nature, good brings with it tenfold fruit, while evil is either forgiven when the sinner repents and turns from his evil ways, or he is recompensed with the like of it." This evidently means that man punishes himself for all the evil he has committed, and causes others to suffer in this world. Is not this what all the messages from the "Other Side" tell us? "And most surely," he says, "there are keepers (i.e. angels) over you, honourable recorders; they know what you do." (Sura 82 : 10—12.)

What does the Prophet say about a future life?

He says that the life after death takes two forms: A life in Paradise for those in whom good preponderates over evil, and a life in Hell for those in whom evil preponderates over good. The word "Paradise" has for its equivalent in Arabic "Firdaus," which means a "resting place" or a "park" where camels and travellers on foot may rest in the shade and take nourishment; but generally, the word "Jannat" is employed to indicate the abode of the righteous, or precisely "gardens in which rivers flow," the rivers implying "Faith," and the gardens the good deeds which man has done, or is doing.

MUHAMMAD'S VIEWS OF A FUTURE LIFE

Is not this precisely what St. Paul tells us in the first letter to the Corinthians, where he says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." (1 Cor., 2: 9.) In the "Bukhari" we find the following tradition, exactly identical with the words of St. Paul: God says, "I have prepared for my righteous servants what no eye hath seen, nor ear heard, and what the mind hath not conceived." As to the Houris, Fruits, Fountains, Milk, Honey, Cushions, Thrones, and Jewels—which things are described in the Quranic description of Heaven—suffice it to say that they merely represent Oriental symbolic imagery of such things as they appear most desirable to us on this earth. We find in the Revelations of St. John exactly the same kind of description of the Holy City. Moreover, the Prophet gives us to understand that time and space have no real existence in the life hereafter, a statement which is in strict accordance with what our physicists of the present day tell us.

When the Prophet was asked where Hell was, if Paradise filled the whole expanse of the heavens, he replied, "Where is the night when the day cometh?" This clearly showed that he considered Paradise and Hell to be only *mental* conditions, and not actual places—a statement which is in strict accordance with what we are told in all the messages from the "Other Side." "Between *Heaven* and *Hell*," said Muhammad, "there is only a veil." Heaven and Hell, according to Islam, have no physical existence, as was believed by all the priests and monks throughout the "Middle Ages," and in fact by nearly all the Christian Churches even up to the present day, but certainly not by the Prophet.

The Christian conception of Heaven and Hell was put into words by Dante in his "*Inferno*," and a more

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horrible description of both places could hardly be conceived. The Qur-án, on the other hand, distinctly tells us that Heaven and Hell begin in our lives on earth. He further tells us that "*the chief delight of the 'Blessed' is in praising God by active service in carrying out His commands.*" Is not that exactly what the spirits still tell us repeatedly through messages from the "Other Side?" The Prophet further tells us that there is no grief, no fatigue, no hatred in the breasts of the angels (i.e. spirits), but Love reigns supreme everywhere. I am convinced that *Muhammad must have had repeated revelations from the other side*, for in no other way can we account for the complete accord between his accounts and those which we hear through mediums at the present day. The Prophet's views about Hell are in harmony with those about Heaven. Muhammad never intended that his followers should take these messages in a literal sense. His idea underlying Hell is that some should, under the inevitable laws which compel everyone to reap what he has sown, be subjected to a course of treatment of the spiritual diseases which he has brought about by his own acts. *Muhammad points out that there is a new world in front of us, before which the progress in this life sinks into insignificance.* "And whoever desires to progress in the Hereafter, that striving shall be recompensed." (Sura 17 : 19.)

ISLAM AND THE WESTERN SCHOLARS

BY M. Y. KHAN

(Continued from p. 187 of May 1941 issue.)

European authors are mostly ignorant of traditions. Their criterion for finding the truth is quite different from that of a Muslim who would seek to establish whether the tradition is genuine, or of only mediocre credit, or weak or untrustworthy; who would also desire to be assured of the authenticity of narrators, so far as their learning and legal acquirements were concerned; who would accept traditions from those only who seldom committed mistakes, whose integrity and honesty are unquestionable; whereas a European would accept views of persons of any rank, provided the accounts have been carefully worded and the gaps cleverly filled up. Opinions of anonymous persons are not rare. This difference in principles has greatly affected works by European authors. Faulty premises yield faulty conclusions. The inferences which led foreign writers and hostile critics into serious mistakes must not be taken as true principles of religion. Eminent scholars with their vast knowledge are as likely to commit mistakes as any of us. Our law books contain principles and decisions, the one being authentic and faultless and the other inaccurate. It is the duty of those who investigate them to distinguish one class from the other and any fault thus found out should on no account be laid at the door of this Faith, but the doctors or divines who draw such faulty inferences are to be blamed and they have been in no way superior to the Four Imams who were the Exponents of the True Faith and who explicitly told us that if their decisions or principles differ from those of the Qur-án and the Traditions, they must be cast to the winds. The Four Imams hold the same opinion. They recommended the consultation of the Qur-án and the

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Traditions, in spite of their superior views. Imam Abu Hanifa, one of these doctors of law, declared that so long as better opinion is not available, his views should be regarded as the best. Imam Malik held that a principle enunciated by any one but the Prophet was liable to error. Imam Hambal insisted that entire dependence was not to be placed on his version, but that the consultation of the Holy Qur-án and the Traditions was essential. Imam Shafa'i instructed one of his pupils, Ibrahim, not to rely upon his opinion but to form his own opinion on any subject which must be based on the Qur-án and Traditions as the sayings of everyone were likely to err except those of the Holy Prophet.

The attitude of the Christian is very well confirmed by the following lines of the Rev. John E. Merrill, PH.D. :

“Historically, the preponderating attitude of Christians towards Islam has been that of an enemy towards an enemy. It has varied from simple rivalry, through self-defence, to ridicule, condemnation and armed attack. Where Christians have been subject to the forces of Islam, it has been covert. Elsewhere it has been open.”

This covert or open hostility of the Christians against Islam was not confined to one country, one people or one race. Malicious propaganda under state patronage was set on foot by the so-called civilised governments. Poisonous literature was forged, published and distributed to foment hatred against Islam and to breed dissatisfaction amongst non-Muslim races. Their fanaticism and race hatred found vent in all their actions, their writings, speeches, proverbs, allegories and fictions. Islam thus reached Europe through

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adulterated channels, ignorant writers, incorrect translations, interested critics and biased historians and politicians who never faithfully attempted to think the matter out to its conclusion. Ignorance and malice, which completely enshrouded the Western horizon some centuries back, are still to be traced in some of their present works. Learned doctors and eminent scholars have displayed great enthusiasm in the study of Muslim theology, history, philosophy and jurisprudence, have shown keen interest in acquiring Muslim art, science and literature and have evinced commendable energy in researches. In spite of the fact that numerous Arabic works translated into European languages have now made the task of becoming familiar with Oriental culture more easy than in the past, and that rare historical manuscripts that have been printed in Oriental languages and that enormous Muslim territories have passed directly or indirectly into the hands of these Westerners, nevertheless darkness reigns so supreme that the truth cannot be winnowed out from the chaff of falsehood. The Church has played a prominent part in indulging in invectives, abusive language and harsh and uncharitable expressions against Muhammad and all Islamic institutions. So long as their influence was supreme, they wreaked terrible vengeance on Islam and the Muslims. Islam was thus known to Europe in the distorted manner described in the words of Henry de Casteri :

“What would be the feelings of the Muslims who would hear the queer stories and songs relating to Islam current in the Middle Ages? These fables and poems are full of hatred and animosity due to ignorance of their faith. All errors have arisen from those fictitious sources that are existing even to-day.”

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When priestcraft was found to be an obstacle to the wholesome growth of nations and as superstition waned, people began to throw off the yoke of the ecclesiastics. But whenever any political arena was set a spark of fanaticism was enough to kindle the smouldering ashes. Merciless attacks were directed against the Holy Prophet, the Qur-án and its teachings, "till the fragments of real history," according to Margoliouth, "were absorbed beyond recognition in the artificial stories." Islam was thus portrayed before the world in alarming colours as something extremely reprehensible, as something repulsive to look at. In their blind fury the priests referred to it absurd statements that do not at all occur in the Holy Scriptures, and ascribed to it evils which Islam has successfully withstood, *viz.*, Polygamy, Seclusion or Harem, Slavery, the Holy Wars and the *Jizyah*. Much has been said on the first four charges against Islam by eminent writers. I propose to confine myself, in a subsequent article, to the question of *Jizyah*—a tax which reveals the generosity of the Prophet Muhammad and his unbounded love for humanity.

ISLAM AND CIVILIZATION

BY ABDUL LATIF KHAN.

(Continued from p. 107, Vol. XXIX.)

As to the entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem and his crucifixion upon the hill called "Golgotha," the same authority says :

"In the year A.D. 30, while Tiberius, the second emperor, was emperor of Rome and Pontius Pilate was procurator of Judea, a little while before the feast of the Passover, Jesus of Nazareth came into Jerusalem. Probably he came there for the first time. Hitherto he had been preaching chiefly in Galilee, and for the most part round and about the town of Capernaum. In Capernaum he had preached in the synagogue.

"His entry into Jerusalem was a pacific triumph. He had gathered a great following in Galilee—he had sometimes to preach from a boat upon the lake of Galilee, because of the pressure of the crowd upon the shore and his fame had spread before him to the capital. Great crowds came out to greet him. It is clear they did not understand the drift of his teaching, and that they shared the general persuasion that by some magic of righteousness he was going to overthrow the established order. He rode into the city upon the foal of an ass that had been borrowed by his disciples. The crowd accompanied him with cries of triumph and shouts of 'Hosanna!' a word of rejoicing.

"He went to the temple. Its outer courts were cumbered with the tables of money-changers and with the stalls of those who sold doves to be liberated by pious visitors to the temple. These traders upon religion he and his followers cast out, overturning the tables. It was almost his only act of positive rule.

"Then for a week he taught in Jerusalem, surrounded by a crowd of followers who made his arrest by the authorities difficult. Then officialdom gathered itself

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together against this astonishing intruder. One of his disciples, Judas, dismayed and disappointed at the apparent ineffectiveness of this capture of Jerusalem, went to the Jewish priests to give them his advice and help in the arrest of Jesus. For this service he was rewarded with thirty pieces of silver. The high priest and the Jews generally had many reasons for dismay at this gentle insurrection that was filling the streets with excited crowds, for example, the Romans might misunderstand it or use it as an occasion to do some mischief to the whole Jewish people. Accordingly the high priest, Caiaphas, in his anxiety to show his loyalty to the Roman overlord, was the leader in the proceedings against this unarmed Messiah, and the priests and the orthodox mob of Jerusalem, the chief accusers of Jesus.

“How he was arrested in the garden of Gethsemane, how he was scourged and mocked by the Roman soldiers and crucified upon the hill called ‘Golgotha,’ is told with unsurpassable simplicity and dignity in the Gospels.

“The revolution collapsed utterly. The disciples of Jesus with one accord deserted him, and Peter, being taxed as one of them, said ‘I know not the man.’ This was not the end they had anticipated in their great coming to Jerusalem. His last hours of aching pain and thirst upon the cross were watched only by a few women and near friends. Towards the end of the long day of suffering the abandoned leader roused himself to one supreme effort, cried out with a loud voice, ‘My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken me?’ and, leaving these words to echo down the ages as a perpetual riddle to the faithful, died.

“It was inevitable that simple believers should have tried to enhance the stark terrors of this tragedy by

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foolish stories of physical disturbances similar to those which have been invented to emphasise the conversion of Gautama. We are told that a great darkness fell upon the earth and that the veil of the temple was rent in twain, but if indeed these things occurred, they produced not the slightest effect upon the minds of the people of Jerusalem at that time. It is difficult to believe nowadays that the order of nature indulged in any such meaningless comments. Far more tremendous is it to suppose a world apparently indifferent to those three crosses in red evening twilight, and to the little group of perplexed and desolated watchers. The darkness closed upon the hill, the distant city set about its preparations for the Passover ; scarcely anyone but that knot of mourners on their way to their homes troubled whether Jesus of Nazareth was still dying or already dead

“The souls of the disciples were plunged for a time into utter darkness. Then presently came a whisper among them and stories, rather discrepant stories, that the body of Jesus was not in the tomb in which it had been placed, and that first one and then another had seen him alive. Soon they were consoling themselves with the conclusion that he had risen from the dead, that he had shown himself to many, and had ascended visibly into heaven. Witnesses were found to declare that they had positively seen him go up visibly in his body. Soon they had convinced themselves that he would presently come again, in power and glory, to judge all mankind. In a little while, they said, he would come back to them and in these bright revivals of their old-time dream of an assertive and temporal they forgot the greater measure, the giant measure, he had given them of the Kingdom of God.”—*The Outline of History*, pp. 276-277.

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CORRESPONDENCE

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING (SURREY.)

LONDON, N.W. 11 :
August 5, 1940.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you very much for your kind letter of July 29th and also for the books which I am reading with considerable interest. I note your remarks on the *Everyman* edition of the Qur-án and will later secure an edition in which there is a commentary. My not being able to read Arabic, alas, is to some extent a disadvantage although that ultimately might yet be overcome. I have been particularly interested in the work by the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din (*The Ideal Prophet*) and find it a very clear and very well written exposition. It should be of considerable value to the English-speaking peoples for, as I know myself, the average English interpretations of Muhammad—as of other prophets and teachers—are generally coloured with a certain amount of prejudice. I shall read more works by this author, as well as others, and hope that you will be willing to advise me.

Your courtesy in inviting me to lunch at Woking is much appreciated, and if Sunday, the 18th, would be agreeable to you perhaps you will kindly let me know. I should be very happy indeed to come then, or later if it should be more convenient to you. I have, of course, read a great deal on comparative religion, and although I was in my youth brought up in a Christian fraternity, I myself never felt any kind of bias against any creed of which I from time to time naturally heard.

Again thanking you :

Yours sincerely,
C. W.

LUTON,
14th August, 1940.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

Assalam-Alaikum!

DEAR IMAM SAHIR,

First I wish to thank you and your Secretary for the warm hospitality accorded me when I visited you last Friday. You both made me feel as if we all were old friends and I felt very much at home.

Well, I have attended to a good deal of the business connected with my acceptance of Islam. Enclosed herewith is the signed declaration form and a short essay as requested. I have not been able to get my photograph yet but I will send it as early as possible.

An auspicious occasion like this for me needs celebrating, and to do so I am paying a little over my poor rate, to be used in whichever way you deem best for the good of our community. So my actual poor rate will be 2/6 weekly (there is 17/6 extra) and with

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the remaining 10/- will you please order me the *Islamic Review* for the year starting next month.

Thanking you once again for your kind help and best wishes and prayers for your welfare, I remain,

Yours sincerely and fraternally,
HASSAN MATTHEWS.

LIVERPOOL, 1.
19th August, 1940.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR IMAM,

I thank you for sending me the book, "What is Islam." It has been a great help to me and I am now absolutely convinced that Islam is the one true religion. Any doubts I might have had have been entirely dispelled by what I have read and what I have learnt by observing my Muslim friends.

I know I have a great deal more to learn before I can be accepted as a true Muslim and I would be so grateful for any advice or assistance you can give me.

I would so like to possess a copy of the Holy Qur-án in English. Could you tell me? It would be such a great help.

I am, sir, most grateful for your kindness and understanding.

I remain,
Yours respectfully,
(Sd.) B. B.

WAREHAM,
DORSET
4th September, 1940.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

Having had so much contact with Muslims whilst serving abroad I have become deeply interested in the Faith and would like to know all.

Could you please oblige me with literature or the like so that I may understand all that your belief stands for and to enable me to study it to my own satisfaction.

Thanking you in anticipation,

I am,
Yours truly,
(Sd.) S/Sgt. A. G.

WINCHESTER,
5th September, 1940.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

It has been my recent good fortune to meet and converse with a very charming and able member of your faith, Muhammad Abdullah Warren. As a result of much talk together he has aroused in me an interest in Islam which cannot be allowed to remain static

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and I should, therefore, be very grateful for helpful literature which you might graciously care to send me.

Yours truly,
(Sd.) W. T. S.

MIDHURST,
5th September, 1940.

THE IMAM

THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

My husband (Paymaster Lt.-Comdr.....of Royal Navy), who is at present unable to write himself, has asked me to ask you to send him some of your publications.

He recently spent a considerable time in Turkey and acquired there an interest in the teachings of Islam.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) MRS. H. C.
OXFORD,
16th September, 1940.

THE IMAM,

THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

I am a student of Theology in the Church of England. I am extremely interested in Islam and would be grateful to know if you have a list of pamphlets and publications on that subject.

I would also like to subscribe to the *Islamic Review*.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) L. W.

MILLWALL, E. 14.
September 20, 1940.

THE IMAM,

THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR IMAM SAHIB,

As you will see from the above address, I am now in the Army, having been in for the last two months. I find the life hard and quite different from my former mode of living. I finished my training last month and am now on active service . . . I pray that this terrible war may soon end and that peace may reign once again upon mankind.

The reason for my writing, however, concerns my enquiries about Islam which you may remember I made some months ago and when I also visited you at the Mosque. I now wish to accept and embrace Islam definitely as I am more than ever convinced that it is the true religion of God and man's only hope for the future.

Now, it has occurred to me that very soon will be the 'Id-ul-Fitr and I propose to apply for special leave so that I may attend the function and officially embrace the Faith at the same time.

I hope that this will find you in good health.

Yours very sincerely,
(Sd.) B. I. J.

BOOK REVIEW

THE NEW WORLD-ORDER SERIES—No. 1

By C. PARAMESHWAR PILLAI.

Published by Pandit Omprakash Shastri, Vedic Ashram, Krishna Nagar, Lahore ; 1941 ; pp. 64 ; Price As. 8 or 10d., postage extra.

The author is not unknown to the readers of these pages. He is one of those few Hindus living in our times, whose religious outlook is free from the blinding influences of territorial patriotism. From personal acquaintance we know him to be one of those whose sincerity in religious matters is overpowering.

The book consists of six chapters. In the first chapter he quotes the leading thinkers of the world—Hindu, Muslim and Christian—to show that deep beneath the political wranglings of the day there is a universal desire for religious unity and spiritual peace in the world. In the second chapter there is a stirring appeal to Indian patriots, which is at the same time a serious warning. It will not be out of place to quote here a passage that gives the gist of the chapter :

“India has to and must make herself doubly sure, truly sure, that she does not aspire for, work for, live for or die for any national independence or building up a political fabric which is bound to prove, now or in a distant future, to be a sham and a mockery, a supposed freedom of citizenship which is emasculating thralldom.”
(P. 20.)

No clearer understanding of the true nature of the so-called political aspirations of India can be imagined. In no more forceful words can the danger lying ahead be described.

In the third chapter there is a forceful argument against those who adore intellect to the exclusion of Divine Revelation. In this the author has done a

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work which should be the exclusive mission of a Muslim's life in these days of atheism and agnosticism. The fourth chapter is in reality a mild and polite rebuke to the Muslims. It purports to say that the Quranic ideal of human brotherhood, which transcends all communal and sectarian feelings, has yet to be realised by the Muslims. In his disappointment he has the following bitter criticism to offer in respect of Muslim shortcoming in this matter :

“Of all enemies of Islam, Musulmanism, which is communalism, is the worst, since it attacks and undermines the universality, that is, its soul, from within . . . Quite subtle as its influence is, it is the most deadly for Islam, acting all the while the least suspected. To chisel out “Islamic Brotherhood” so as to make it tally with any sinister cult of communalism is, truly, to chisel away Islam itself altogether out of existence.” (P. 47.)

As coming from a person whose measure of judgment is no other than the Holy Qur-án, the criticism should be taken due note of by the Muslim community. The fact must be appreciated that if he finds fault with the Muslims, it is because he is enamoured of the ideal upheld by the Qur-án. We assure the author that it will not displease the Muslims in the least to be told that their life falls short of the Quranic ideal. Nor will they be surprised to learn that materialistic tendencies are at work in their present struggle to realise the Islamic brotherhood. With all this, however, it would be an overdrawing of the picture to suggest that historically the Muslim confraternity has been no nearer that ideal than the followers of “other religions.” The feeling of international oneness based on religious ideas, which still animates, however weakly, the Muslim mind all the world over, is an achievement of no mean

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value in the spiritual struggles of man in this world of matter. We should not overlook the fact that the Muslims are the only people to-day in whom territorial patriotism has not totally killed the universal aspects of their social life. We admit this spirit needs to be waked up, but the fact that it exists, should be a matter for encouragement for all true reformers of humanity. From this to a living philanthropic spirit for which the author argues is not a very big step. Moreover, however much we may resent any tinge of communal patriotism in the working of the universal ideals of human social existence, it is in a way inevitable. As the ideals have to be fought for on the physical plane and with the help, among others, of physical things, the physical interests of the workers have to be looked after, to the extent, of course, of their not harming the ideals themselves. The point, therefore, that has to be seen is not whether a community has any unity of physical interests, but whether those interests are an end in themselves or means to the fulfilment of some ideals that are calculated to pave the way for human unity and brotherhood and enable humanity to be nearer the ideal of absolute selflessness. While rightly denouncing sectarianism in religion, it will be a mistake to lose sight of this very important aspect of the question. It is, in fact, this which is implied in the Holy Prophet's saying "Verily the believers are but brothers."

To the credit of the author, however, it must be said that if he is critical of Islamic brotherhood he is no less critical, in the fifth chapter, of the Hindu social fabric. In an equally strong language he addresses the Hindu community thus :

"Customs and practices, rituals and ceremonials, we, doubtless, still observe. But it is evident that something which is supremely vital and

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true is wholly absent in our observances of these time-honoured Hindu customs and practices."

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OPINIONS

ON

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