

"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. XXXI]

JUMADA'L-ULA, 1362 A.H.
MAY, 1943 A.C.

[No

Annual Subscription 10s. or Rs. 7/8/-

Single Cop

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

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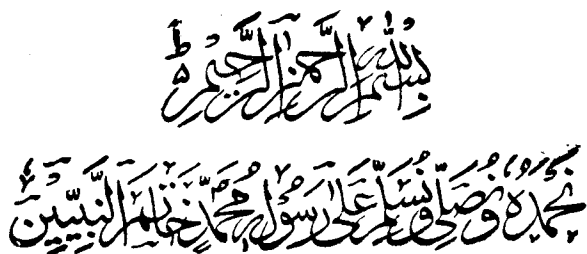
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THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

Vol. XXXI] JUMADA'L-ULA, 1362 A.H. [No. 5
MAY, 1943 A.C.

A DECLARATION

I, (MRS.) MAUREEN ABD-AL-NABI, of Kenton Court, London, W. 14., do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Allah (God), that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger and Servant, that I respect equally all Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and others and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

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

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

(MRS.) MAUREEN ABD-AL-NABI.

Dated 5th December, 1942.

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NEED FOR DIVINE HELP

S. M. TUFAIL, M.A.

The growth of civilization, its progress and prosperity has not been wholly fruitful to man. The time has clearly shown that in spite of all the power, talent and skill man is in loss. Unless he believes in God, and is benevolent, gracious and merciful to his fellow beings, unless his whole material outlook is transformed into a spiritual outlook on life, he is a feeble, weak and helpless creature. To restore the equilibrium he must bring the spiritual truths to his aid. Once again after bitter and sad experiences he has realized the need of Divine help.

The quest for absolute good was thought to be deep-rooted in the nature of man. But the Renaissance in Europe utterly rejected this guiding principle of life. The idea that man possesses an immortal soul was incomprehensible to most of the leading thinkers of that age. The scientific method was applied in every sphere of life with the result that it led to the machine-like conception of man. It was after a long time that consciousness was allowed to human mind. Intellectualism has been prevailing all over Europe since the days of Renaissance. And yet most of the thinkers agreed that they had nothing to do with the metaphysical aspects of life. They had enough of it. Religion, so to say, has been a burden to them, a burden of "error and inhibition"; it was just a "bag of tricks."

Reason alone fails to direct our lives through the vast unexplored regions of human nature. Intellectual speculations miserably fall short of solving these problems. If there is at all a gleam of hope, it is from the revealed word of Allah, the Creator and Sustainer of all the worlds.

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The genuine faculties of heart that He has bestowed on us, quietly modify and chasten our behaviour. Otherwise helpless as we are, we have no capacity to learn all about life. Experience, no doubt, helps us a lot, but the time at our disposal is very limited. So we rely on the experience of others. But if that is unacceptable, why not give it up altogether then? Suppose there is any possibility of unlearning all that we have learnt, how would the matter stand? Last night I brooded over it to the extent of sickening myself. Impartial, independent knowledge, uncoloured by any prejudice must be sought after. Making an end of every beginning I tried to start anew to comprehend all the arguments of agnostics, rationalists or free-thinkers advanced in favour of or against some vital problems of life. I endeavoured to know whether whatever they said against God and religion was dispassionate and not the result of biliousness. Their jeering and sneering, their jugglery with intellectualism all made my mind wander from one subject to another. Dispassionate, disinterested knowledge of things, that is what they labour to preach. They lay so much emphasis on pure logical conclusions that one begins to think like Mr. Joad, that one could easily get rid of the burden of "error and inhibition," mainly by intellectual methods. But is it possible to sway out all the inflows of succeeding generations, to throw away all the predominant influences that have been transmitted to us by ages? Can we neglect all those forces that have gone so far to shape our personality? Psychologists tell us that we cannot. Then how could we know which way to turn, which way to go? Intellect or the reasoning power, or the power of judgment or the capacity to find relation among different things, or the force that modifies the instincts or any kind of consciousness or recognition that man enjoys

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as a mark of distinction over animal, call it by any name you like, cannot and has not guided us so long even in very small matters.

As a child I remember I was advised not to be dirty. I used to make solemn promises. As it happened, how I did not know then, that the next moment I was playing in dust. It was all too bad, I would think afterwards. But some irresistible urge which is named differently by different men of learningyes that irresistible something made me blind to all my sworn promises. Even at present I feel sometimes the rush of that irresistibility. Parents, teachers, friends, books, environments, policemen, etc., all have gone a long way if not the whole way, to teach me the methods of suppressing or sublimating that urge. In lovely moments sometimes my inner nature revolts against all these bindings. Why should I behave in a manner which the society has imposed on me ?

Such waves arise and sink down. We are just infirm, frail creatures floating aimlessly on the surface of life.

It is said that the greatest good of the greatest number should be sought after. But does this conception really make it so significant for us to suppress all our selfish motives ? And how are we to be convinced that this maxim holds good and must be followed in disregard of our own comforts ? Again, was it right to squeeze and crush all those few supporters of Jesus Christ and Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah may be on them) for the sake of a large community of unbelievers, reeking of hypocrisy, fraud and debauchery ? Who would tell those unfaithful servants of Allah that the teachings which they opposed were beneficial to them in this world and the hereafter ?

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And, moreover, things which seem advantageous at first sight to an individual or a group of individuals may prove ill and vicious in the long run. Their efforts thereby would do more harm than good to their own interests.

Evolutionists say that good is that which helps the race to survive. Some restrictions are imposed on an individual by nature or by society that he may help the survival of the race. To put it in another way, virtues turn into habits which are essential for a race to exist. So we must govern or restrain those irresistible urges that are detrimental to the continuation of a generation. Anything which mars or threatens to mar its survival is vice. This savage tendency of mere survival, very often at the expense of other human species, has given rise to so much ruthless bloodshed in the world. When survival is the only end one can imagine what the fear of non-survival will tempt a nation or an individual to do.

The domination of savage impulses have left us so much feeble and morbid.

Then should we believe that vice is "endemic in the nature of man?" If vice is endemic then it is no vice.

Such thoughts kept my mind ailing last night. I tried to start anew but could not. In petty small matters my intellect has failed to guide me. How could I then expect it to direct my behaviour in matters which are ultra-mundane?

Experience guides our intellect to a great extent in our daily life. In other fields intellect is guided by knowledge—knowledge of all kinds. In spiritual life we are told that we are guided by the great philosophers of the world. We learn to understand the meaning of life as a whole by the sheer help of philosophy. But that is not so safe to claim as most of us think.

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Dr. Joad in his *Introduction to the great Philosophies of the world*, after mentioning that the conclusions reached by different philosophies are hopelessly at variance says that "there seems to be no sort of agreement even as to the subject which should be discussed. If philosophers do not know what they are looking for how, he (the reader) may be tempted to ask, are they to be expected to find it, at which time he will call to mind some time-honoured gibe about a philosopher being like a blind man in a dark room, looking for a black cat that is not there." It is because the philosopher seeks to comprehend the universe as a whole, says Dr. Joad in defence of the philosopher. It may be due to anything but the fact remains as it is. And can any philosopher be certain about his conclusions? Well, nobody can be absolute about anything in this world. Here we feel the necessity of absolute guidance, the necessity of Divine help. Our savage experiences have forced us to pay homage to the spiritual truths of life. We need the guidance of that supreme intellect which is free from all impurities and which must be, so to speak, above all human passions, emotions, impulses, if at all we are to be directed on the right path. If nature has provided us with all the means of gratifying our physical desires and appetites, should it deprive us of spiritual satisfaction? Something there must be, that should soften our natural ruggedness. Our low, degraded, anti-social attitude must be transmuted into a pure, noble, refined behaviour. It seems unnatural that the inquisitiveness deep-rooted in the hearts of men for their Creator, should be allowed to starve. The Creator if He is a mechanical thing cannot naturally answer this inward call of human nature. He must be all-knowing, all-hearing and all-seeing. I cannot imagine myself worshipping a God who neither hears, nor sees, nor helps us in the least. The question

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which was put by Abraham (peace be on him) also arises in our mind—"O my sire, why do you worship what neither hears nor sees, nor does it avail you in the least? " (Al-Qur-án 19 : 42). And once we realise the fact that God spoke and has not ceased to do so, the whole mist of doubt disappears. And what is most important is that the realization of this fact does not leave a man neurotic, superstitious or a prey to hallucinations. He is more healthy and more of a normal being because he has by the help of Allah perceived the facts of life.

The power that helps our intellect in the meta-physical aspects of our life is something above mere experiences of life or mere knowledge of history or science, it is something which is beyond all these. We are, at this stage of spiritual elevation, enlightened with *Ilham* or the revealed word of Allah. The history of Islam has borne testimony to this fact in every age.

This discussion will lead us far, but it will suffice here to mention that the quest for absolute good which is innate in man must be directed by a Book which is free from all alterations and abrogations, a Book whose guidance is not detrimental to human progress, a Book that lives throughout the ages like a piece of nature, a Book that brings us in contact with a living God, Who knows, hears and speaks. Unless we come into direct contact with such a living Book and with such a living God we are in danger of being led astray. The mechanical conception of a being cannot help us in the least.

"Man is of God," declared Rabbi Akiba, "and what is far more, he knows that he is of God." He is not conscious only but also he is, so to say, conscious of this consciousness. Man may have any biological origin but there is a kind of spiritual kinship that exists

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between him and the Almighty. Those scientists and philosophers who have been endeavouring to prove that human action is determined by external stimuli alone or that man is a bundle of instincts and these can be measured mechanically and their working can be estimated by physical automatic responses or that intelligence is also shared by the animal kingdom must at least admit that man is unique in developing a sense of goodness or guilt, religious, moral, ethical or social, in evolving a sense of art and the appreciation of beauty.

But this sense alone as we have seen cannot guide us through the thick and thin of life. It could not make Macbeth see the evil consequences of his action. The evil that he had desperately embraced brought heart-sickness to him. The words that Macbeth uttered on the last day of his life expose the torture of his soul, the futility of all that he had done.

“ Out, out brief candle !

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more : it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury
Signifying nothing.”

“ And (as for) those who have earned evil”, says the Holy Qur-án, “ The punishment of an evil is the like of it, and abasement shall come upon them. . . . as if their faces had been covered with slices of the dense darkness of night, these are the inmates of the fire, in it they shall abide ” (10 : 27).

“ This is what you hoarded up for yourselves, therefore taste what you hoarded ”. (9 : 35).

Good naturally reacts against evil. The evil is expelled but the tragedy is that so much good is wasted. The struggle between evil and good is a step towards the perfection of good. In this process the good is agonised, it endangers its very existence but evil is barren, weakening and self-destructive. The evil that masters the good in man destroys the man and itself.

“ O men, your rebellion is against your own souls ”.
(Al-Qur-án 10 : 23).

THE CROWN OF HUMANITY

Human mind has failed to guide itself in worldly affairs, it has frustrated itself in matters concerning the inner self. It has isolated, disunited what is left of humanity. It has rendered men to the lowest of the low. "Certainly We created man in the best make," says the Holy Qur-án. "Thus We render him the lowest of the low, except those who believe and do good, so they shall have a reward never to be cut off." (XCV. 4—6).

THE CROWN OF HUMANITY

BY RABI'AL KARIM, M.Sc.

(Continued from page 136 of the last issue.)

He had to suffer endless torments, torture and persecutions to fulfil this mission of his. During the first thirteen years of his preaching the Truth, ceaseless and incessant oppressions tortured him but he kept on the flow of Truth by the flow of his blood. Sorrows and sufferings are no strangers to the life of a great man. Every great man who has preached Truth has to suffer tortures and ridicules. Oppressions and tortures become their ornaments and man's sin and vice, ignorance and doubt burn their hearts every moment. Corporeal torments can never approach comparison with anguish.

Yet it must be said that the first thirteen years of Hazrat Muhammad's preaching the Truth when he was residing at Makka passed in such an inhuman torture over his body and soul as has never been experienced by any other great man of the world. No other person has ever been entrusted with such a heavy task of refreshing the burning desert with the eternal elixir, no other person has ever been called by the Almighty to radiate the glow of self-effulgence in such a dark abode of vice and sin. It would not do to

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keep silence over the din of his battles at Madina but it must also be taken into account which way and how his triumphant call entered Madina. His perseverance in diffusing the Truth through all adverse circumstances at Makka must have a proper appreciation. No strong arm was raised to defend him nor was there any brave army at his command then. From day to day he had been subjected to all sorts of torments and tortures and this for several years. Not a day passed but they had caused some annoyance or other to his holy person. Not a night merged into day but had seen some dirty plot or other hatched against his safety. We wonder at his undaunted courage, and his calm patience fills the human mind with deep reverence and loving regards.

The message of love from Buddha and Chaitanya were accepted cordially in India. Man did not try to wipe out these holy luminaries by brutal force. No one ever thought of murdering the hermit Shankaracharya. Of course no power-intoxicated Namrud arranged any ordeal of fire for Hazrat Muhammad nor any Pilate ordered for him any crucifixion but more terrible and fierce than the anger of a king or royal officials was the rage of a blood-thirsty nation that tried to crush and ruin him. No maddened elephant advanced to trample him under feet but hundreds of poisonous fangs, most of them tiny, have bitten him in the dark at every step of his life. His relatives abused him, his neighbours mocked at him, and his countrymen ridiculed him. Even the boys called him mad and threw dust and stones at his holy body—and heaped filth in his courtyard. This was at the very first stage of his preaching. The tremendous amount of persecution which followed these fails to find any parallel in the annals of the world. Men not

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only caused him anguish by their age-long superstitions and disbeliefs, but struck him with all their might from all sides like the beating of the fiery desert wind. What heart-rendering tortures he was subjected to—what terrible obstacles he had had to surmount—what a fearful storm of dangers blew to put out the light of his life with its swift and powerful gust—these are written in letters of gold in history. Now his clansmen try to put an end to his life and with it the Truth to which it was devoted, by wringing his neck from behind; now they strike him senseless finding him alone in the summit of a hill; now they threaten his uncle to compel him to drive him away from his shelter. An endless chain of such nerve-breaking and unbearable agonies and torments he bore with patience and fortitude year after year.

When all their ridicules and laughters, persecutions and persuasions, threatenings and oppressions had failed equally, they boycotted him totally and resolved to put an end to his life and with that view they attacked his house in a body fully armed with weapons. For three long and weary years he was a captive in a hill-fortress. This was designed to starve him to death with all his followers by inches. By this means they tried to strangle his body and along with it the spirit in him. But his mind was never muffled—his heroic words never ceased to flow—the triumphant march of Truth was never checked: “If the Quraish place the sun on my right and the moon on my left yet will I not cease to preach the Truth. Must I say what I have found to be true. Either Truth will win or I will perish in that attempt.” The great hero Umar rushed sword in hand with a most terrible appearance to sever his holy head from the trunk—even the air felt an awe and seemed to get frightened, the men in the street fled away for fear of life, yet

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that great Apostle of Truth was not moved in the least. With the spirit of Truth latent in him he welcomed this death personified peacefully, serenely and tenderly, and his loving embrace turned this erstwhile demon into the greatest saintly king ever known to the world. The rhythm of truth swelled a new melody of triumph and joy in the lyre of death on the bosom of eternity.

He perceived the self-effulgent radiance of Truth. His vision crossed the dark deep ocean of ignorance and reached the horizon of the all-radiating Truth. He had neither fear in soul nor anxiety in mind ; his heart never flickered either in doubt or hesitation. In the most critical juncture of his life his great and ever-memorable words : “ No fear, we are not two, but God is in our midst a third ” uttered in the dark cave of Thaur, with the enemy at his heels, fill the human mind with the greatest admiration and highest reverence and affords it the sublimest inspiration.

Nothing has ever daunted him in his preaching the great glory of the Lord. He did not fly away from Makka to Madina for fear of life. The agonies of death had touched him many a time, and he had attained immortality by subduing the fear of death. It is true that he had not to drink the cup of hemlock like Socrates for the sake of Truth, nor had he any chance of offering his life on the Cross like Jesus, but in the course of his life he had, in a way, more than tasted of the hemlock juice and agonies of crucifixion—oppressions as bitter and severe, perhaps more. The eternal joy expressed itself in its glorious magnificence through the flow of blood in his life. Lo, his body bathed in his own blood at Taif ; remember how blindly and cruelly this great spiritual hero was persecuted. Think of his sufferings and the patience with which he bore them. He called men to the worship of the One—the Supreme—the Almighty—and for this man

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hurt him most brutally, pelted stones at his delicate limbs and his whole body was bruised and battered—the blood flowing and gushing out of the wounds. He brought the eternal elixir from heaven for the welfare of mankind and man, blinded by his ignorance and superstition, struck at the bearer of this greatest blessing. As a reward for the elixir man wounded him with stones. Ponder over this bath in blood of his own. His whole body wounded, blood coming out of these wounds and flowing down to his feet, he yet speaks about his Lord, he praises His Name, he is absorbed in singing His glory, calling everybody in his sweetest voice to the way of Allah, the Beneficent and Merciful. Man did not give him shelter nor allowed him rest even for a moment. Can hemlock or crucifixion or any kind of death from a few moments' suffering be compared with these repeated shocks of death? They chased him from one place to another, all the time pelting him with stones. They left him only when he had fallen down senseless from sheer loss of blood. And the men in appearance returned home with a triumphant yell thinking they had killed the Eternal Truth.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad weeps when he comes to himself, his eye lashes are wet with drops of tears. But this weeping is not for the pain of his own body. His tears are, as it were, the drops of blood coming out of his heart at the brutality and blindness that hold mankind in their savage grip. In these wailings of his, one can see the sufferings of Jesus for the love of mankind, the mental agonies of Sakya Sinha (later on The Buddha) in his palace amidst all sorts of royal pomp and grandeur when with the melody of the palace lutes his heart throbbed at the thought of the suffering humanity. The vices and sins of the erring mankind are melting the heart of the Prophet

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and the same is, as it were, coming out in drops of tears. The heart of the Superman has been shattered. Why has man become so blind? Why does he neglect the Eternal Elixir? Why like a fiend does he kick away the noble and glorious life which is his birth-right? His heart swells and blooms like the morning lotus and he expresses the experience through the greatest tie that has bound humanity with mankind—the eternal and universal relationship of man with man. He does not curse his oppressors, nor does he become impatient in his bodily tortures; he takes all their faults on his own shoulders and tries to find out the cause of the failure of mankind to adopt Truth and religion in his own weakness. “My Lord! my pain-offerings are to Thee and Thee alone for my want of strength, for my destitute condition before mankind. I do not care for anything if I get Thee as my Friend and Guide. Thy radiant light—the light that fills the earth and heaven with its glow—the light that expels darkness and superstition and reduces them to nothingness—the light that beautifies this world and hereafter in all its glory—that light divine and holy is my shelter. Lead kindly Light—lead Thou me on.” Something to this effect a prayer went forth from him. This, indeed, is the way how great men embrace in their love the superstitious, the ignorant and the blind, and weep for the wrongs of men as their own failures and pray for the welfare of mankind and redeem the universe from its sufferings and afflictions.

IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TRUTH

The call of the Eternal Absolute Truth came to Hazrat Muhammad. The invitation of the glorious radiance which he took as his shelter was awaiting him. He would have to answer the call—he would have to accept the invitation—and this was nothing but the establishment of the Absolute Truth for ever and for

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good. He was not prepared to see the Truth failing to gain its position. And that is why his heart and soul gave itself up to place the glory of Truth on the most solid foundation in his own life and not in his death.

That is why he did not desist from preaching the Truth though he was bathed in his own blood at Taif and invited men to accept the Truth when he returned to Makka, brave and undaunted, but men disbelieved and treated him as cruelly as before. The lives of his followers were made unbearable, and at last the persecutors attacked his peaceful home in a body to put an end to his life. But he who had been sent to establish the Supreme Truth survived all these tortures and shone forth in the most brilliant radiance.

At this time this natural question must have arisen in the mind of that great person—"Will Truth die? Will Evil and Untruth smile in triumph and Truth perish? No, it can never be so." His hopeful strong mind was not prepared to admit this. He had seen the sublime glow of Truth. It would not do for him to die. He had not been sent to this world to be overpowered by disbelief. He was to fulfil his mission through life-long efforts and to triumph over untruth. Man has suppressed and driven away Truth in all ages. For Truth man has made fire-bed, has swelled with the roars of the ocean waves, has erected the cross and prescribed hemlock juice. Truth should not be allowed to shine even temporarily. But the day is now come when Truth should be made to stand face to face with superstition, untruth and disbelief, and it must be shown that Truth has not died,—it cannot die, it shall conquer. The oppressed Truth of many ages comes out to-day with all its might and power and declares—Truth has not died, Truth will not die—it will triumph over everything. It had so long been lying in silence, in torture,

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in death so to speak, but now it will have to be placed in life, in work and in success in its own glory. Arise, arise, thou Soul of the Universe! Arise ye the forces of Truth! Declare ye men! with all the might in you, declare with all the command in you: "Truth has not died, Truth will not die, it cannot die, it will win. The day of peace is coming when a single rider will travel from San'a to Hazdramaut with ease, without any fear of anybody except of Allah."

This is the second phase in Hazrat Muhammad's achievements in the diffusing of Truth. This embodies the history of his leaving Makka for Madina. He did not sacrifice himself to untruth in passive resignation, but attempted and succeeded in establishing Truth through his life's actions—and that is the greatest chapter in the annals of mankind.

Hazrat Muhammad could have sacrificed his life like Jesus. He knew that Truth never dies. It becomes the more brightened when burnt, it gains fresh vigour when covered under the earth, it embraces more warmly when crushed—till finally, it has to be accepted and adopted. He knew this, and that is why his active mind did not want to see even a temporary death of Truth. He was not willing to see Truth rising out of death-like silence after centuries. This life is true, and must also be successful—the garland of victory must adorn it. He had been sent to the earth and he was to fulfil the mission allotted to him. He turned his sight away from the all-enveloping darkness on all sides and fixed it on the radiant rays of success gleaming afar. The seed which he sowed in the sandy stretch of Makka brought forth a luxuriant growth in trunk, branches, twigs and leaves in the fertile land of Madina by some unseen hand in an unknown moment. In the rustle of the leaves of that tree one could hear the proclamation of his victory

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—the triumph of Truth. In the thick clouds hovering in the sky above he saw the might of victory. In the gentle breeze he heard the words of hope. He must have to show the triumphant march of Truth. And this is why he accepted the invitation of Madina and left Makka.

RELIGION—TRUE AND FALSE

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

In a debate that took place in a Lahore college the other day the subject for debate was "Religion alone can solve the present-day problems."

One noticeable feature of the debate was that the arguments were mostly very thoughtful. Deep thinking on questions religious could scarcely be expected from college students a few years ago. The charm of Western civilization had then an absolute spell on the minds of our youths, brought up under the Western system of education. The views of scientists and Western philosophers were regarded as the last word on any subject. The situation has, however, changed since. The affairs in Europe and the menace of war knocking at the door of India have broken the spirit of complacency in our youths. Whether to support or to oppose, they have begun devoting serious thoughts to the question of religion. Should we take to religion instead of science, politics and economics for a solution of our worldly problems of the day? Is religion still capable of being a force in our worldly life? Has the world outgrown the need for religion? Questions such as these have begun to disturb the minds of our new generation. Were they the same confirmed believers in the theory of religion being a spent force, as they were a few years back, they could not have dared to think in terms of the subject chosen for discussion.

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The subject itself is thus an indication that the possibility of religion once more taking the field has been swaying the minds of our youths who till lately, misguided by the views of Western thinkers, had been despairing of any future for religion. We welcome this change because it accelerates the onward march of Islam in the world. Because if there is any religion that can reasonably afford any guidance to the social problems of man to-day it is Islam. But before thinking, understanding humanity can welcome religion to guide its destiny it is entitled to thoroughly examine its credentials. It is entitled to ask if religion will not create more mischiefs than it is invited to remove, if indeed there are *prima facie* grounds for believing that it is at all competent to bring about an improved state of affairs. The debators on the opposition did full justice to this needful examination of the question. In fact, the debator who proved the best speaker of the evening was a member of the opposition. It was contended that religion has in all ages sided with conservatism and with the vested interests, has encouraged fatalism and superstition, has persecuted knowledge and progress, has exploited the poor and the ignorant. But even the most formidable oppositionist could not deny that the state of affairs that obtained at the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his four rightly-guided Caliphs had nothing to be criticised even from the extreme communistic point of view. Nay, if an ideal state ever existed in the world, a state in which the labour had as much dignity and self-respect as the entrepreneur, the ruler considered himself as the servant of the ruled, the criminal acted as his own policeman, the rich considered himself as the trustee of the money in his possession on behalf of the poor and lastly in which every talent and virtue was afforded

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the freest field for its play, development and recognition, it was the state established by the Holy Prophet of Islam and carried on by his four immediate successors. But, it was rightly asked, once it was established why was it disestablished again? Does it not show that as a system religion is unworkable? It may have its private use in the private life of man but not in its application in the public life of a people. Be that as it may, once, at least, it was conceded, religion was established as a workable system, however short its regime. One speaker, while counting the mischiefs created by religion, went to the length of citing the tragic event of the crucifixion of Jesus, as an instance of the disservices of religion to the cause of humanity. It was religious fanaticism of the Jews that was responsible for this great tragedy in human history. True, but it is exactly here that the members of the opposition stumbled on an aspect of things that has been persistently ignored by most of those that have given any thought to the utility of religion in human history. Not only Jesus but all founders and reformers of religion have to suffer persecution at the hands of religious fanaticism so much complained of by the rationalists of our times. Indeed, if the sympathy of these people goes out to Galileo and other martyrs to the cause of the intellectual development of humanity there is no reason why this sympathy should be withheld from those whose appearance from time to time acts as a signal for revolution deep and fundamental in the human mind, and who are invariably persecuted by the conventions and vested interests of the day. It is remarkable that the persecution of a Jesus, a Muhammad, an Abraham and a Moses takes place at the hands of people regarded as the custodians of religion. Should not, then, a distinction be made between the religion that persecutes

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and the one that is persecuted? Can a scientific-minded rationalist conscientiously put the two in the same category? If both stand for one and the same thing why should the one persecute the other? If the one is true the other must be false and *vice versa*. If the one is blind fanaticism the other must stand for the reverse of it. Thus it is only expected that there must be something common between those who sincerely stand for rationalism and toleration in our times and the religious reformers that have been persecuted in different times in different countries. It is, therefore, neither logical nor charitable to include these religious revolutionists in the list of the blind fanatics that block the path of progress in every age. The fact is that all religions in their pristine purity are messages of freedom and progress in the very real sense of these terms.

The founders of religions are invariably the embodiments of all that make for peace, progress and happiness in human society. So long as a religion is a real force it has nothing but persecution at the hands of the generality of people. And so long as this state of affairs continues the cause draws towards itself such people alone as are absolutely selfless and sincere champions of truth and virtue. But gradually as the material forces of the world come forward to lend their support to the cause, and demands on the moral resources of the convert become lessened, nay joining the new cause becomes a more or less paying proposition, it draws towards itself men of less and less religious sincerity. As a matter of fact, such people as would oppose a religion tooth and nail on account of their inordinate love for the things of this world, are found to become its champions when it comes to settle down as an established system, conformity with which is no longer any hinderance to worldly progress. And while playing this part, these people take good care to

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see that the recognised standard of morality does not remain too high for them to follow. Thus it is that the Qur-án makes a distinction even between those that fought for the cause of Islam before the conquest of Makka and those that did so after that event (See Ch. 57, VII). And this rule applies to all religious movements. In a vicious circle, the ever-wider recognition of the new faith and the consequent smaller demand on the proselytes' character act and react on each other until a time comes when like other avenues of national life the leadership of religious thought is captured by clever men, capable of capturing any department of worldly life. The net result of the whole struggle is that the old order is re-established under a new name. Gradually the forces of vice and retrogression take shelter under this new name instead of an older one. This is a recurring phenomenon in history. And this has given a handle to the cynics who are never tired of saying that religion or no religion the world is the same ; in other words that religion may have good intentions, but in the world of practice it has failed. But this is a wrong way of thinking. What we need to consider is what the world would be like in the absence of this repeated struggle of religion. Nay, we must realise that the very sense of the frustration of religion is itself a product of religion. The ideal that makes us feel disgusted with the current order of things is the contribution of religion to human thought. All we can rightly complain is that organised religion has repeatedly failed. But as we have said, this is because organised religion has worldly gain and honour associated with it. In whichever institution there are considerations of a worldly nature, it is bound to draw men undesirable from religious point of view and it is these who frustrate the object of religion. And yet this is no discredit to the religion proper, which

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like a light illuminates everything that falls within its range. It enlightens the general conscience, and this no philosopher, no poet and no scientist can do. The unfortunate fact that there are but too many false leaders of religion should not tempt us to ignore the more important fact that this is because there are genuine leaders of religion as well, however rare their appearance. Once a proved and tested religious leader is known to exist, the attraction for religious life and value of things religious becomes so great that people otherwise worldly-minded are actually tempted to pose as religious men and even leaders of religion. As everywhere else, when you prepare the soil for useful plants, you cannot stop the weeds from taking advantage of your labour. It is a matter of common sense that a counterfeit and forged thing presupposes the original and the genuine. As a matter of fact, the more precious a thing is, the greater the chances of forgery. You notice this in all departments of life—in arts, in literature, in articles of trade, as well as in currency. People will try to copy the Venus of Milo but not an ordinary piece of art, which is of little value. Thus people try to pose as religious leaders because and when the position of a religious leader carries with it much influence and power and prestige, and these are no spurious growth as some would make us believe. Were the human mind naturally inclined to pay its homage to religion, the readiest homage paid would be to the founders of religions, who are admittedly the greatest forces for religion and purity. The testimony of history, however, has a different story to narrate. It is these persons who are the most ruthlessly persecuted and dishonoured. Thus, far from being greeted with any honour kept ready for religion, these makers of moral history have to sow the seed for such honour with the agony of their body and soul. The honour

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and prestige that attaches to religion, which is so much exploited not only by unworthy leaders of religion but as often by those who call themselves laymen, is thus an achievement and like any other achievement of man has to be irrigated by sacrifice, labour, patience and perseverance. Nay, the amount of these moral qualities required for this achievement far surpasses that needed in any other achievement in the world. One must needs understand this before one can understand the position of religion in the life of social humanity. It is sheer injustice and utter lack of charity to those great figures of human history whose very names are an inspiration to men in times of greatest distress, that they rear their prestige and influence on the dark superstitions of the common people. Far from receiving any ready-made honour, they, by the utmost of sacrifice, have to create a sense of honour for religion, nay, the very sense of sanctity in the minds of people. And it is remarkable that whenever this sense in man is reduced into a mere sham and hypocrisy because of their falling in absolutely unworthy hands, a champion of the real sense makes his appearance in the field, as if to atone for the mischiefs of the less scrupulous. It is, thus, not a question of failure of religion, but the failures of man to be constant in the path of religion, or the failure of the generality of mankind to make a ready response to the call of real religion. Religion, however, is not tired of fanning the flames of moral sense in the minds of men as often as it is needed. Banish religion from human mind and you will banish the basis of active goodness in man. Agnostic moralists are a confused lot. They think in terms of religion and yet they disavow religion. Purely secular attitude towards things will find no justification for denouncing sin, crime, and indecent and immoral acts. As a matter

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of fact, there is no logic, so to speak, in calling an act or a thought good or bad. Materialistic logic will fail to prove the need for virtue like charity, mercy, sacrifice and the like. One should realise that the moral sense in man is definitely a creation of religious teachers. By creating a higher and purer atmosphere around their own personalities they demonstrate the ugliness of the lower atmosphere of impurity and vice. This is the greatest of all logic in religion as much as in culture. One can easily understand how the habits of physical cleanliness or social refinement are effectively learnt through contact with higher circles. The same law applies to moral refinement. You get it by contact. An unbelieving moralist gets it or rather imbibes it unconsciously by contact with his parents and society. It is not possible to deny this. It is so very evident. Thus the camp of religion is very precariously erected. While most of those that pass under the flag of religion are irreligious in reality, many of those that feel proud to regard themselves as outside the pale of religion are yet in reality religious in their feeling and behaviour. In this, as in many other cases, the division of the world of matter differs widely from the divisions instituted by the standard of the spirit. The mind that revolts against the lifeless rites and rituals of religion and against the hypocrisy of false men of religion, is, at bottom, working under the influence of true religion, to be found in circles that have no vested interest in religion. After all, religion is not a commodity that can be patented and exclusively stocked by a dealer. It is like the fire of life and is so often found in quarters untouched by man's ingenious devices of organisation and control. Superficial observers and thinkers, oblivious of this great fact of existence, confuse religion proper with man's shout for religion, and thus father the iniquities of mischief-makers on poor religion.

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And were it not for the repeated emergence of true religion in human history, this weakness of the human mind progressing still further would have developed into an utter inability to be annoyed with false religion. Passing waves of such moral depression have appeared so often even in societies regarded as civilized and enlightened that it would be futile to try to deny this possibility. Thus if mischiefs are created in the name of religion, religion itself is wronged more than those who come forward late in the day to criticise religion on their basis. Moreover, the secularists that enjoy this privilege of criticising the mishandling of religion invariably take their cue from a religious movement launched with this object in view. The initiative for the reformation of corruptions in religion always come from religion itself, even revealed religion. People too ready to prove the futility of religion should do well to remember that long before free-thought movement came into existence in the West, nay, long before Martin Luther felt annoyed with Papacy, Muhammad the Prophet of God, protested against the demoralising superstitions of the then Christianity and the immoral practices of the Church. This fact alone is enough to make people think twice before claiming any credit for lay reformers in righting wrongs done in the name of religion.

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ANGLO-TURKISH FRIENDSHIP

BY M. A. C. M. SALEH

The comments in all the leading British newspapers regarding the recent Adana Conference between the Premier of England and the President of Turkey show to what extent Turkish neutrality has been of advantage to the cause of the United Nations. It is interesting to notice that the problems discussed include post-war reconstruction of the world in which Turkey has an important part to play. To all those who honestly endeavour to promote lasting friendship between Great Britain and the Muslim world, the Adana Conference is a matter for universal gratification. "Although Turkey is wedded to a policy of strict neutrality, her stand for peace has essentially brought her into an ideological alignment with the democratic powers and Anglo-Turkish friendship and collaboration have remained the pivot of her foreign policy."

Turkey is the only independent sovereign State in Europe which professes the faith of Islam and Great Britain has the largest Muslim population in her far-flung Empire. Turkey's wise foreign policy and able statesmanship enabled her to retain her benevolent neutrality beneficial to the Allied Nations, while being armed and ready to defend herself against any violation of her neutrality. Her faithful adherence to treaty obligations characteristic of the Turkish nation, gladdens the hearts of many millions of His Majesty's Muslim subjects who are proud of the fact that their co-religionists in Turkey have preserved their neutrality "with exemplary correctness." "The Nazi failure, despite threats and cajolery, to divert Turkey from the path of neutrality is proof enough that these expressions of Turkey's determination to maintain her territorial integrity by armed resistance were no idle vaunts."

ANGLO-TURKISH FRIENDSHIP

Turkey under the Ottoman regime suffered a good deal and lost her Empire. She is now beginning to assert herself and consolidate her position without any designs on territorial expansion. Realising the danger of Axis aggression, Turkey has been fully alive to the situation to avert the disaster that befell her in the last Great War. The uneasiness with which the Muslims watched events in Turkey during the critical period of the present war has now happily passed away and it augurs well to learn that the Adana Conference is a hopeful prelude amounting to a virtual guarantee for the future security of Turkey and restoring mutual confidence in each other who would soon be called upon to shape the destiny of the world at the cessation of hostilities.

Referring to Turkey in the House of Commons on his return, Mr. Churchill put it succinctly as follows :—

“ It is no part of our policy to get Turkey into trouble. On the contrary, a disaster to Turkey would be a disaster to Britain and all the United Nations. Hitherto Turkey has maintained a solid barrier against aggression from any quarter, and by doing so even in the darkest days, rendered us invaluable service in preventing the spreading of the war through Turkey into Persia and Iraq and preventing the menace to the oilfields at Abadan, which were of vital consequence to the whole Eastern war. It is of important interest to the United Nations and especially to Great Britain that Turkey should become well-armed in all the apparatus of a modern army and her brave infantry shall not lack essential weapons. These weapons we and the United States are now for the first time in a position to supply to the full

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capacity of the Turkish railways and other communications."

Let me conclude with the words of a Turkish journalist :

"England will probably have many friends before the war is over, but only in Turkey will she have cause to remember a friend in bad times as in good."

CORRESPONDENCE

20 PIETERMARITZ ST.,
PIETERMARITZBURG,
NATAL.
18th January, 1943.

To

EDITORS OF THE
WORKING MUSLIM MISSION GAZETTE,
AZIZ MANZIL, BRANDRETH ROAD,
LAHORE, INDIA.

DEAR SIRS,

Someone has done me the favour of sending me a copy of the *Gazette* of November 1942 in which you reviewed my pamphlet "Jesus Christ in the Qur-án". I am very thankful to have this candid attack upon my publication for two reasons. I believe I am absolutely sincere in my desire to know *the* truth. There is only one Truth and Truth is eternal. Seeking God and seeking Truth is the same quest, but in this letter I do not propose to enter into any theological argument, but only to ask you whether you will permit me to reply in your *Gazette* to some of your criticisms. I believe you are as sincere as I am in seeking for the Truth about God, and our relations to Him, and I desire enlightenment from the Headquarters of the Muslim Faith. I will confine myself to the two points. I referred to in my pamphlet, namely the question of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity,—three Persons in One Godhead—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—and the essential deity

CORRESPONDENCE

of Jesus Christ and his claim to be son of God, and son of Man.....I cannot and do not expect to be allowed six pages of the *Gazette*, but to be fair to me, and my case, please give me space to reply concisely to each of the points you have made against my position. If you accede, perhaps you might awaken the interest of your readers by publishing this letter. I do not want to sail under false colours, nor to compromise anybody else. I represent no denomination. I am not a reverend gentleman, but in Mahatma Gandhi, his life story, chapter 7, page 107, you will get an idea of who and what I am. That friendship and correspondence last to the present day. Psalms 103, 14 says, "He (God) remembereth that we are dust." Lovingly yours in Christ's glad campaign for the redemption of India and of humanity,

A. W. BAKER.

REPLY

LAHORE :

2nd March, 1943.

DEAR SIR,

Yours of the 18th January to hand. We are sorry we have referred to you as a "reverend gentleman" while you are not one. Your manner of writing gave us that impression. Anyway we stand corrected.

You will be sorry to learn that owing to the scarcity of paper we have to suspend the publication of our fortnightly since we reviewed your pamphlet in its columns.

Still, if you desire that your replies to certain criticisms of ours should be published and discussed in some of our journals we gladly extend to you the hospitality of the pages of our monthly organ—the "Islamic Review."

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In order to provide you with sure grounds for your replies, we take the liberty of sending you per registered post one copy each of the "Ideal Prophet" and "The Sources of Christianity" both by the founder of this institution.

We assure you of the utmost toleration and goodwill from our side.

Yours in the general cause of humanity,
AFTABUDDIN AHMAD,
*Editor, The Islamic Review and The Working Muslim
Mission Gazette.*

READERS PLEASE NOTE

Due to the scarcity of paper, it will not be possible for us to publish a separate issue of this journal for the month of June. There will be a double number coming out in the month of July, 1943.

MANAGER.

WHAT IS ISLAM?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its technique. For further details, please write to the IMAM of the Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.]

ISLAM: THE RELIGION OF PEACE.—The word Islam literally means: (1) Peace; (2) the way to achieve peace; (3) submission, as submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code, whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

THE PROPHET OF ISLAM.—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, *i.e.* the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's Prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

THE QUR-AN.—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-án, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.—These are seven in number: Belief in (1) Allah; (2) Angels; (3) Books from God; (4) Messengers from God; (5) the Hereafter; (6) the Premeasurement of good and evil; (7) Resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life, but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the Hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in Heaven. State after death is an image of the spiritual state in this life.

The sixth article of Faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination; he believes in Pre-measurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

PILLARS OF ISLAM.—These are five in number: (1) Declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; (2) Prayer; (3) Fasting; (4) Alms-giving; (5) Pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine at Makka.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.—The Muslims worship One God—the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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