

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

The
Islamic Review

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

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The Muslims in England celebrate the birthday of the Holy Prophet

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THE
ISLAMIC REVIEW

Vol. XXVII]

JAMADA'L-ULA 1358 A.H.
JULY, 1939 A.C.

No. 7

A DECLARATION

I, Nothmiel S. Wolf, of Rochester, New York, U.S.A., 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 and others,—and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

La ilaha il-Allah Muhammad-un-Rasul Allah.

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

(Sd.) N. S. WOLF.

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THE MUSLIMS IN ENGLAND CELEBRATE THE BIRTHDAY OF THE HOLY PROPHET

By S. A. TOTO.

The Muslim Society in Great Britain, under the chairmanship of Mr. Ismail De-Yorke, B.L. (Hons.), Bar-at-Law, celebrated the Birthday of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, on Tuesday, the 2nd May 1939. The place chosen for the occasion was the Grand Hall of Portman Rooms, Baker Street, London.

To befit the dignity of the occasion, the main Hall and the adjoining Reception Hall were beautifully decorated. Before the appointed time, friends of all denominations and nationalities arrived in crowds to pay their humble tribute to the memory of one whose name is permanently bound up with the destiny of mankind.

In the assembly could be seen Afghans, Indians, Egyptians, Turks, Syrians, Arabs, Sikhs, Hindus, English (both Muslim and non-Muslim), Iranians, Palestinians, Moroccans and Nigerians.

One of the most interesting features, which lent additional and far-reaching importance to the occasion, was the presence of all the diplomatic representatives of the Muslim countries and non-Muslim friends.

After the formal reception, the Chairman took the chair at 8-30 p.m., and the proceedings of the evening were opened by the recital of the Holy Qur-án in Arabic by our English Muslim brother, Mr. Abdul Latif Arnold who also gave its equivalent in English. The Chairman, in his opening remarks, explained the solemnity of the occasion and welcomed the guests on behalf of the Muslim Society. He remarked that he was delighted to see all the nationalities of the Muslim world represented there.

He then called upon Al-Haj Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali, who, with his usual eloquence, explained

BIRTHDAY OF THE HOLY PROPHET

that the chief function of Prophethood had been very much misunderstood. It was not to foretell the future nor to perform miracles, but to preach the truth efficiently, and this was always fraught with bitterness. He observed that *Surah Húid*, like some other passages of the Holy Qur-án, recounts the stories of the old Prophets, one of the objects being to show that all the qualities that were exhibited by the other prophets were possessed in one person by the Holy Prophet Muhammad alone. He added that the Prophet's kindness and generosity towards those who surrounded him, his forgiveness to his old enemies, his patience in face of persistent rejection of his message by his nation, his anxiety for widows, orphans and slaves, and his perpetual reference to God in everything he did or achieved were personal qualities not to be found in the life history of any one else.

In conclusion, the learned speaker exhorted the Muslims to take to heart these lessons from the Prophet's life and not to be satisfied with a merely superficial knowledge about him.

The second speaker was Begum Ikramullah, who, in a short speech, observed that the outstanding miracle of the Prophet's life was his unique success in establishing his religion in the face of a complete absence of national resources. His greatness could also be seen in the perfect system of law which he propounded—a system giving a definition of the rights and position of women, a law of divorce and a principle of international relationship which are still unequalled.

The next speaker, Sir Abdul Qadir, said that in celebrating the Birthday of the Holy Prophet, they were, in fact, celebrating the birthday of liberty, fraternity and equality. It was the Prophet Muhammad who first proclaimed that the greatness of a man or a woman was not in his or her race, colour or nationality, but in the personal virtues of each individual.

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At the end of his speech, he introduced Maulana Hasrat Mohani, who had just arrived from Egypt, and who recited a poem in Urdu in memory of the Holy Prophet.

Before concluding the meeting, the Chairman called upon Mr. Rashid, the General Secretary, who thanked the speakers and visitors on behalf of the Society. He said that it was really comforting to note the great importance attached to this occasion by our English Muslim brethren as he could see that some of them had travelled from such great distances as York, Jersey, Bournemouth, Southsea and Manchester.

After the programme was over, refreshments were served. The crowd remained meeting friends and exchanging views till 11-30 p.m.

The occasion was, in every sense, a success. Our thanks are due to the organisers for arranging this function, the importance of which cannot be overestimated. The Holy Prophet is still greatly misrepresented in the West, and festive occasions, such as this, dispel the prejudices towards the religion and serve to counteract anti-Muslim propaganda.

Among those present were: His Excellency Abdur Rahman Hakki Bey, His Excellency M. R. Zada, His Excellency the Iraqi Minister, Sir Ernest Bennet, M.P., The Right Hon'ble Lord and Lady Lamington, Lady Headley, Major Birdwood, Sirdar Bahadur Mohan Singh, His Majesty's Indian Orderly Officers, the Secretary of the Arab Centre, the Secretary of the Royal Egyptian Club, the President of the Jamiat-ul-Muslimin and Colonel Hamid Nusrat.

THE PROPHET'S SERVICES TO THE CAUSE OF HUMAN MORALITY*

BY AL-HAJ ALLAMA ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI

The life which we are celebrating to-day is so full of incident, so rich in moral lessons, and so far-reaching in its influence, that a whole hour or even a day would not be sufficient to do justice to it. In the few minutes I have at my disposal, I wish to draw attention to three qualities or virtues which are referred to in the Qur-án (Sura XI: 75) with reference to the Prophet Abraham, the fountain-head of Prophethood in our sacred history. *Inna Ibrahima lahalimun awwahum munib.* Names in these cases are symbolical. The various qualities and virtues referred to various prophets in that Sura are combined in the comprehensive mission of our Holy Prophet. He, as it were, summed up in himself the fullness and significance of the lives of all the prophets and teachers that came to instruct mankind.

People sometimes have strange ideas about a Prophet's position and functions. Some think of him as "foretelling events." This would be a very minor function and is more appropriately referred to Káhins than to the Great Teachers of mankind. The Prophet Muhammad's visions into the past and the future were concerned with far more vital matters than mere external events.

Again, some people think that a Prophet's life is so pure and sacred that everybody would honour him and welcome him. Alas, human nature, when it is worked upon by evil, descends so low that it is jealous and envious of good, that it hates some of its noblest benefactors, that it persecutes and slays those who come to help and guide it. Were not some prophets crucified, some held up to public derision, some boycotted and persecuted till their followers were in despair and cried

*A lecture given at the celebration of the Holy Prophet's Birthday held at the Portman Rooms, London, on 2nd May 1939.

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out: "When will the mercy of God come?" Muhammad was a mercy of God. Did they not persecute him and his disciples? Did they not lay thorns in his path? Did they not inflict physical injuries on him and try to slay him? Did they not threaten him and banish him from the sacred city that he loved, and plot and lead armies against him in the new city where he found refuge? Yet through it all he was forbearing and long-suffering (*halim*), and humbly went about seeking the good of those who were his enemies. He had wide sympathies and compassion (*awwah*) and always tried to understand the difficulties and points of view of other people, so that he could help and guide them. Widows and orphans, slaves and the needy, women in sorrow, doubt, or trouble, any one who may be labelled the "underdog" in modern life, would find him a loving friend and a sympathetic counsellor.

Again, some people think that a Prophet is crowned with success in all his undertakings, and all human things are ready at his command. But a Prophet's life and function are spiritual, and his successes are in regions beyond the ken of material minds. In worldly goods he may be poor. He may use or despise worldly instruments, according to the needs of his holy mission at any given time. Did not our Holy Prophet mend his own clothes and live in his own simple way when embassies from great princes were seeking to get a hearing from him? He relied on God in all things (*Munib*); in trouble he turned to God; in sorrow his faith in Him was unshaken; in triumph he celebrated God's praises as the author of all good. The lessons of his life teach us to seek not merely material remedies but things of far higher and more permanent value in the spiritual world. This point needs special emphasis in our time. Shallow people seek shallow causes and forget God. Religion,

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becomes a matter of worldly routine and not the spiritual fire which will burn sin, injustice and wrong.

The Prophet's life touched both the individual as a precious personality for its own sake, and the community as an association of individuals banded together for the service of God and man. His magnetic personality harmonised all sorts of antagonistic elements among his contemporaries. But his influence remains as a living influence in history. It remains to the present day and can heal and help us in all the extraordinary developments of a changing world.

PREFACE

BY DR. SIR SHAH MOHAMMAD SULAIMAN,

M.A., LL.D., D.SC.

To

"The Introduction to the Study of the Holy Qur-án."

BY THE LATE KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

It is a privilege to write a Preface to a posthumous work of the late Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din of world-wide renown. His knowledge of Muslim theology was vast, and his learning great and thorough. The immense literature which he produced testifies to that. He was a pious Muslim who sincerely devoted his whole life to the service of Islam, and worked hard till the end for its propagation in Western countries. Every one who met him was impressed by his charming personality, affable manners and kind-heartedness. It may not of course be possible to agree with all his interpretations of the Qur-ánic texts; but there can be no doubt that he presented Islam in a new light, and his presentation was superb. There is no man who was more responsible for a wide dissemination of Islamic teaching and thought, or who showed the light of Islam better to the Western people.

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The false calumny that had been spread against Islam from the Mediæval Ages needed a thorough exposure. Alarmed by the simplicity of the Islamic doctrine of the Unity of God, which clashed so unmistakably with the complicated doctrine of Trinity, Christian Missionaries had carried on a well-organised propaganda against Islam, distorting its tenets, misrepresenting its doctrines and misinterpreting its teachings. For centuries, the European peoples remained under a delusion, and their notions about Islam were ridiculously absurd. Many European authors, prejudiced by religious bias, while pretending to reproduce Islamic doctrines, deliberately gave a false colouring to the real picture. For example, they distorted the metaphorical expressions used with reference to Heaven and Hell, and substituted crude and often misleading literal translations. As the Islamic texts lay concealed in the Arabic language and were wholly inaccessible to the Western peoples, calumny and falsehood could stalk abroad without detection. In his Introduction, the late Khwaja has thoroughly exposed such false conceptions.

Shunning all sectarianism, Khwaja Sahib endeavoured to present a united Islam to the English people. The success achieved by him was marvellous, and it can hardly be denied that his efforts culminated in bringing about a complete change in the outlook towards Islam. His twenty years' work (1912—32) for the Woking Mission will ever redound to his credit. He started with little resources, but his indomitable faith brought him a signal success. The Woking Mosque built by Her Highness the late Begam Sahiba of Bhopal, of revered memory, was opened, and the headquarters of the Mission transferred from London to the new centre. He was the true founder of the Woking Mission, and its remarkable achievement was due entirely to his guidance. Even if success were to be judged only by

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the number of converts, the Woking Mission has indeed been a success. Unlike the Indian converts to Christianity, who have come mostly from the poor and needy classes, the English converts to Islam came from the educated, cultured and enlightened sections of society. The *Islamic Review* founded by him in 1913, and followed by the *Ishaat-i-Islam*, was the vanguard of the Movement. He was the pioneer of missionary efforts in the West, who unfolded the true Islamic tenets; and his numerous lectures, learned sermons and eloquent orations will ever be remembered.

Khwaja Sahib has in Chapter II emphasised the miraculous beauties of the Holy Qur-án, and its teachings of Monotheism, Universalism and Democracy, and also shown how several prophecies were fulfilled. In itself it presents a great miracle. It contains at several places God's own promise to be its preserver; and we know that the Holy Qur-án has been handed down intact from generation to generation, wholly free from corruption and tampering. No other sacred book can equal the Holy Qur-án in its pristine purity. It was the ennobling character of its spiritual teaching which transformed barbarian Arabs into civilised saints.

The entire Islamic civilisation is imbued with religion through and through. Religious ideas dominate our everyday life and are inextricably associated with our thought. The apparent division of Islam into subsidiary sects has been chiefly due to the divergence of views on the authenticity of Traditions handed down from mouth to mouth. But the basic point of agreement among all is the unaltered text of the Holy Qur-án, accepted with complete unanimity, which forms the great foundation, the very bed-rock of all the religious schools of thought. Interpretations may slightly differ, but the unsullied text still remains available for every seeker after Truth to read and interpret it for himself.

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Islam is the only religion which preaches the absolute Equality of Man. Our Holy Prophet (peace be on him!) was ordered by God to announce "Verily I am only a man like unto you." He never proclaimed any superiority over other men. The only difference between him and other human beings was that the true religion had been revealed to him. All distinctions of caste, creed and colour were abolished by Islam, and the entire Islamic society was unified into one organisation and not split up into grades of social order.

Khwaja Sahib has pointed out that "there have been times in the world's history when Nature was worshipped as God, and its various manifestations accepted as deities." All the ancient peoples were polytheists, believing that not only their deities, but even their kings and heroes, were descended from gods, and were thus above the common run of men, occupying a position due to their ancestry to which the ordinary people could never aspire. Among the Greeks and the Romans also, society was divided into aristocrats and commoners, patricians and plebeians. As Khwaja Sahib has said "The Jewish Patriarchs plumed themselves on being the people chosen for His message and for this reason they proudly called themselves Sons of God." The Jews believed themselves to be the only favourite people, for whom specially the blessings of God were meant; the rest of mankind were Gentiles, who could never become Jews. The inequality of Man is ingrained in the Indian Society, and has assumed a most acute form of a sharp division into the four castes, it never being possible for the Sudras to belong to any of the three high-born classes which themselves are graded. Inter-marriage and even inter-dining between them are absolutely prohibited. Happily, the barriers are now in the process of obliteration. The followers of Christ are not immune from such prejudices, as colour prejudice is

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more rampant among Christians than among the followers of any other religion. The colour of the skin, determined by the climatic conditions of the various countries, is with many the only criterion of civilisation and culture. In some countries even churches are not thrown open to coloured people, who must offer prayers separately. And now the ancestry of the Jews evokes social ostracism and persecution, notwithstanding the historical fact that Christ himself was of Jewish origin.

As against all these narrow prejudices, Islam stands highest among all religions in proclaiming that all men are equal, that no man is born sinful, that every man has a divine soul and, despite all defects and deformities, is capable of being a spiritual equal of another, the only test of greatness being piety. "Verily the most honourable of you in the eyes of God is the one who is most careful of his duty." (49:13.) The test of merit is the standard of virtue and not race. In the words of Khwaja Sahib "Islam came with a universal dispensation. It took the whole world as its diocese, and preached its truths to the whole human race. It preached Universalism. It declared that all mankind belong to the same family (And are not people but a single nation) and are one race. The Holy Qur-án demolished all artificial barriers, which separated one nation from another. It welded black and white into one harmonious whole and established universal brotherhood throughout the whole world." On the occasion of the Haj al-Wida (Farewell Pilgrimage) our Holy Prophet (peace be on him!) announced to the world that all men are brethren to one another and equal in the eyes of God, and declared that on that day he trampled under his feet all distinctions of caste, colour and nationality. The equality and fraternity of mankind was the new universal doctrine which Islam offered to the world. This great philosophy of the Equality of Man and the

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Brotherhood of Mankind taught by Islam is not yet fully appreciated, and it may still take centuries before the full value of this great doctrine comes to be realised.

Not finding any other vulnerable point, the Western Missionaries have made the permissibility of polygamy a target for attack, forgetting that monogamy is a purely social institution. In fact, there is no religion which prohibited polygamy absolutely. The Greeks did not consider it unlawful, for even Alexander the Great and his father Philip had each more than one wife. Polygamy was a common practice among the Egyptians. There was no prohibition of it in the Babylonian Code of Hammu Rabi, which recognised cases where a second wife could be taken. The Aryans not only permitted free polygamy, but even practised polyandry. The five Pandava brothers had a common wife, the well-known Draupadi. The Hebrews never objected to plurality of wives. Levirate marriage was common. Indeed the book of Deuteronomy compulsorily enjoined a second marriage with a childless brother's widow. There was originally no limit put on the number of wives that could be taken by a single husband. Abraham himself had two wives. David had numerous wives. Solomon had about 700 wives, besides 300 concubines.

Christian Missionaries assert that their Bible advocates monogamy. This is wholly contrary to fact, as the New Testament does not contain any express text whatsoever prohibiting polygamy. It is only the use of the singular 'wife' that is interpreted as implying monogamy; but the singular always includes the plural. The text of St. Matthews (9:6): "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder" is obviously against divorce (which is now permitted in all Protestant countries), and not against polygamy. Commentators admit that the following 9th verse, which is now construed

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as being in favour of monogamy, is "very uncertain." According to the ancient authorities it merely ran as "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, maketh her an adulteress." Indeed, during the first two centuries polygamy was freely practised in Christendom. The origin of strict monogamy is undoubtedly traceable to the Roman influence as it was really the Roman civilisation engrafted on Christianity which brought about a gradual disappearance of polygamy. It is a matter of history that even in the 8th century, Charlemagne, who was honoured as a great Missionary King, had been given the keys of the Holy Sepulchre and had been the recognised Protector of Christendom, had two wives at one time, besides divorced ones and some concubines. Even in later years, Philip of Hesse and Frederick William II of Prussia obtained the sanction of the Lutheran clergy for contracting bigamous marriages. After the termination of the Thirty Years' War in Europe, when peace had been declared at Westphalia, the Frankish Kreistag at Nuremberg passed a resolution in 1650 that henceforth every man should be allowed to marry two women. The Anabaptists freely preached that a true Christian must have several wives; and the Mormons regard polygamy as a divine institution.

It was Islam which for the first time not only limited the number of wives to four as fixed in the Talmud, but enjoined further strict conditions which were difficult of fulfilment. "But if you fear that you will not do justice (between them), then marry only one" (Ch. IV, Sec. 1, V. 3). "And you have it not in your power to do justice between wives even though you may covet it" (Ch. IV, Sec. 19, V. 129). These injunctions taken together discouraged polygamy and gradually brought about a common practice of monogamous marriages. It was the Holy Qur-án which by enjoining the strict con-

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dition of absolutely equal treatment first made polygamy impossible in practice. With a clearer realisation of the necessity for domestic happiness and the raising of the status of women, monogamy is an institution just as much practised by Muslims now as by the early Christians, who first had adopted it as a result of a change in the social conditions following upon the emancipation and independence of women.

Islam alone can claim the glory of announcing the great doctrine of the Unity of God in its purest sense. The non-Jewish religions of the world believed in the primitive conception of a polythean, populated by millions of divinities, immortal in themselves and yet capable of procreation. The heavens were full of millions of gods who were continually multiplying in number. They constituted a reflex of the increasing population of mankind. It was not easy to visualise how conflict or clash between them could be avoided. Indeed, warfare among the gods was by no means uncommon. Jealousy, greed and revenge prevailed among them. It was difficult to evolve out of such intricate mythology any rational system of allocating divine powers. The god of preservation and the god of destruction had overlapping jurisdictions, and reconciliation of these contrary powers by propitiation of both was by no means an easy matter.

Even though the cardinal doctrine taught by their prophets had been the Unity of God, the Jews had frequent lapses, as they fell an easy prey to the opposite doctrines current in the neighbouring countries. The doctrine of Sonhood, though wholly alien and foreign to the Jewish faith, now and again cropped up as a result of the misinterpretation of the texts. In Ch. 6, V. 2 of the Genesis men had been described as "the sons of God." In the Exodus Ch. 4, V. 22, the Lord had said "Israel is my son, even my first born." In 2,

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Samuel, Ch. 7, V. 14, the Lord had said "I will be his father, and he shall be my son." In Job, Ch. I, V. 6 and also Ch. 2, V. 1, the sons of Job were called "the sons of God." In the Psalms No. 2, V. 7, David declared that "the Lord hath said unto me thou art my son. This day have I begotten thee" and again in V. 12 "Kiss the son." It is no wonder then that a section of the Jews misinterpreted the metaphor and began to believe that David was the begotten son of God.

It was the common practice of the Hebrews to address God as Father. This form has been borrowed even by the Christians in their prayer "Our Father which art in Heaven etc." Jesus Christ also when praying to God addressed Him as Father, and mankind as the sons of God. According to Muslims, this was mainly responsible for the later belief that Jesus Christ was the begotten son of God. It is only in the last of the Gospels, St. John, Ch. 3, Vs. 16 and 18, that Jesus Christ is called "the only begotten Son of God." Such words do not occur in that emphatic form in any other Gospel. Such a belief destroyed the doctrine of Unity, and substituted for it that of Trinity. Worship of the Father and the Son later necessitated the worship of the Mother as well.

It would not be out of place here to refer to the great masterpiece of the late Khwaja Sahib—"The Sources of Christianity"—which has done more than any other book to expose and dispel superstition that had surrounded pure religion. The late Khwaja Sahib in his masterly style has collected together the ancient beliefs which were the direct precursors of some of the notions of Christianity. Quoting several authorities, he showed how the ancient deities were sun-gods born of virgin mothers near about the winter solstice and were called Saviour and Deliverer. They descended into the under-world and rose again from the dead. In particu-

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lar, he quoted extracts from Robertson's 'Pagan Christs' to show how the Christian doctrines had a very close similarity with those of Mithraism, which had been flourishing in Persia for about 500 years before Christ. Remains of Mithraic monuments have been discovered in England. "Mithra was believed to be a great Mediator between God and Man. His birth took place in a cave on December 25. He was born of a virgin. He travelled far and wide; he had twelve disciples; he died in the service of humanity. He was buried, but rose again from the tomb. His resurrection was celebrated with great rejoicing." Similar legends were current regarding other sun-gods, particularly Baal of Babylon and Buddha of India. But the Holy Qur-án proclaims "Say: He is God, the One and Only; God the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him." (Ch. 112.)

The last Chapter on the 'Riddles of Life' deals with the difficult question of Fate or Predestination. A clear distinction exists between natural phenomena and human actions. All Natural Laws are unchangeable and admit of no infringement. The Law of Causation works inexorably. A natural event is the inevitable result of a cause, but free-will has been granted to every human being who possesses a certain amount of freedom of action. He has the option of taking the right or wrong course, for which there is no compulsion on him. It is for him to elect to adopt either. God has set all human beings on the right path and then left them to their discretion. Of course there are restrictions and limitations placed by the environments in which a man is placed. In that sense there is a partial restraint on his physical actions, but there never is an absolute compulsion for committing any sinful act which depends mainly on his volition. In the words of *Shams Bazigha* by Mulla Mahmud "Man has deter-

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mined freedom and constrained volition." But the Holy Qur-án has made it perfectly clear that we all are under the eye of the Omniscient God, Who sees everything that may be hidden to human eyes, or even concealed in the innermost recesses of our minds. He foresees the entire future, and His Prescience as to what will happen involves no interference with human volition, as knowledge of the future does not imply any compulsion or forced action.

AL-ISLAM

THE ISLAMIC FAITH

By J. D. COCKBAIN

Introduction.—"Amongst us Europeans," wrote the French writer Pierre Loti, "it is commonly accepted as a proven fact that Islam is merely a religion of obscurantism, bringing in its train the stagnation of nations, and hampering them in that march to the unknown which we call progress." But such an attitude shows not only an absolute ignorance of the teaching of the Prophet, but a blind forgetfulness of the evidence of history. The Islam of the early centuries evolved and progressed with the nations, and the stimulus it gave to men in the reign of the ancient Caliphs is beyond all question. To impute to it the present decadence of the Muslim world is altogether too puerile. The truth is that nations have their day; and to a period of glorious splendour succeeds a time of lassitude and slumber. It is a law of Nature. And then, one day, some danger threatens them, stirs them from their torpor and they awake.

This immobility of the countries of the Crescent was once dear to me. If the end is to pass through life with the minimum of suffering, disdaining all vain

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striving, and to die entranced by radiant hopes, the Orientals are the only wise men. But now that greedy nations beset them on all sides, their dreaming is no longer possible. They must awake, alas!

Although the peoples of the Muslim countries had lost their one time material prosperity—before the dis-integrating invasion of modern industrialism—they still retain the secret of inward happiness, the intrinsic vivifying and stabilising power of the Islamic faith. Marmaduke Pickthall, relating of the early nineties of the last century, could write: “What struck me even in its decay and poverty was the joyousness of that life compared with anything I had seen in Europe. These people seemed quite independent of our cares of life, our anxious clutching after wealth, our fear of death Intercourse was free between all classes of society, so was inter-marriage, and everybody talked to everybody.”

The strength of Islam in its early days, as to-day, is that it knows nothing of race or colour prejudice: “Let not a man pride himself that he is a lover of his country, but let him take pride that he is a lover of his kind” (Baha-Ullah). And it is of portentous historical significance that England, the Netherlands and France, the three European nations which since the sixteenth century have been in the van of man’s struggle towards democracy, together hold suzerainty over the great part of the Muslim world.

The Arabic word “Islam,” which signifies the peace that is to be experienced in “submission to the Will of God,” is employed to denote both the Muhammadan religion and the Muhammadan world. One who professes the faith of Islam is called a Muslim. The creed of Islam is confined to the simple assertion: “There is no god save God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God.”

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Islam, "an attitude towards life both exquisite and durable," reveals the true nature of Theocracy.

ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY: WHERE THEY DIFFER

Here it is not possible to do better than to first quote from the philosopher-poet of modern Islam, Sir Muhammad Iqbal:

The main purpose of the Qur-án is to awaken in man the higher consciousness of his manifold relations with God and with the universe. It is in view of this essential aspect of the Qur-ánic teaching that Goethe, while making a general review of Islam as an educational force, said to Eckermann: "You see this teaching never fails; with all our systems, we cannot go, and generally speaking no man can go, farther than that." The problem of Islam was really suggested by the mutual conflict, and at the same time mutual attraction, presented by the two forces of religion and civilisation. The same problem confronted early Christianity. The great point in Christianity is the search for an independent content for spiritual life which, according to the insight of its founder, could be elevated not by the forces of a world external to the soul of man, but by the revelation of a new world within his soul. Islam fully agrees with this insight and supplements it by the further insight that the illumination of the new world thus revealed is not something foreign to the world of matter but permeates it through and through.

"Thus the affirmation of spirit sought by Christianity would not come by the renunciation of external forces which are already permeated by the illumination of spirit, but by a proper adjustment of man's relation to these forces in view of the light received from the world within. It is the mysterious touch of the ideal that animates and sustains the real, and through it alone we can discover and affirm the ideal. With Islam the ideal and the real are not two opposing forces which cannot be reconciled. The life of the ideal consists not in a total breach with the real which would only tend to shatter the organic wholeness of life into painful oppositions, but in the perpetual endeavour of the ideal to appropriate the real with a view

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eventually to absorb it, to convert it into itself and to illuminate its whole being. It is in the sharp opposition between subject and object, the mathematical without and the biological within, that impressed Christianity. Islam, however, faces the opposition with a view to overcome it. This essential difference in looking at a fundamental relation determines the respective attitudes of these great religions towards the problems of human life in its present surroundings. Both demand the affirmation of the spiritual self in man with this difference only, that Islam, recognising the contact of the ideal with the real, says "yes" to the world of matter and points the way to mastering it with a view to discovering a basis for a realistic regulation of life."

For Islam matter is spirit in space-time reference: as it was for the Hebrew prophets of the Old Testament. *Logos* (individuated divinity), on which the Christian faith is founded, is inconclusive when divorced from the pristine sense of *atonement* with the outer universe. The "marriage feast" of the imagery of the Gospel can be no other than a reference to the final reconciliation of the Platonic with the Cosmic element of religion. To again quote Sir Muhammad Iqbal:

"Socrates concentrated his attention on the human world alone. To him the proper study of man was man and not the world of plants, insects and stars. How unlike the spirit of Qur-án, which sees in the humble bee a recipient of Divine inspiration and constantly calls on the reader to observe the perpetual change of the winds, the alternation of day and night, the clouds, the starry heavens, and the planets swimming through infinite space! As a true disciple of Socrates, Plato despised sense-perception which, in his view, yielded mere opinion and no real knowledge. How unlike the Qur-án, which regards 'hearing' and 'sight' as the most valuable Divine gifts and declares them to be accountable to God for their activity in this world."

The ultimate effect of this incompleteness of Christianity has made itself only too apparent to the

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more recent prophets of Western Democracy. To quote but one, D. H. Lawrence:

“We have lost the cosmos. The sun strengthens us no more, neither does the moon. In mystic language, the moon is black to us, and the sun is as sackcloth.”

Modern man's restlessness derives from his having lost his pristine consciousness of atonement with the outer universe, non-human and human. And this must be attributed to the cycle of Platonic philosophy, of Christianity and of science.

“The cosmos became anathema to the Christians, though the early Catholic Church restored it somewhat after the crash of the Dark Ages. Then again the cosmos became anathema to the Protestants after the Reformation. They substituted the non-vital universe of forces and mechanistic order, everything else became abstraction, and the long, slow death of the human being set in. This slow death produced science and machinery, but both are death products.”

Albeit, this “long, slow death” has a very necessary part to play in human evolution. It is the long, slow death of society which parallels the ‘death’ and ‘rebirth’ of the individual ego in its effort to experience the peace of atonement with the ultimate Reality.

Biological and social renewal, through redemption to man's pristine consciousness of atonement with the outer universe, is to be anticipated through self-isolation and dynamic assimilation of the outer universe—*i.e.*, through sensual enjoyment of the outer universe freed from the restraining influence of mental consciousness.

This final redemption of man to his pristine consciousness of *oneness* with the outer universe, of living

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“breast to breast with the cosmos,” is bound up with the *first* resurrection.

Islam does not, like Christianity, argue the question of resurrection on the evidence of the actual resurrection of an historical person, but as “a universal phenomenon of life, in some sense, true even of birds and animals.” (Between Death and Resurrection the ego exists in a state of suspense.) According to the teaching of the Qur-án the ego’s re-emergence brings him a “sharp sight”—*viz.*, not only will the ego be conscious of its immediate space reference but also of its entire time reference.

RELIGION AS RESOLVING THE ANTINOMY BETWEEN SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

BY RAZAUDDIN AHMAD, B.A., B.T.

A study of early Greek Philosophy shows that, in the beginning, Science and Philosophy were identical. There was no distinction between the world of Nature and the world conceived as Will and Idea. There was no conflict between the data of the senses and the critique of pure reason. The outer world of objects was not clearly distinguished from the inner thoughts of the self. In short, the antinomy between appearance and reality was undreamed of at the dawn of the Grecian urn.

The growth of civil life and authoritative political institutions stimulated a consciousness of the cardinal differences between the physical and metaphysical sides of life. Socrates laid emphasis on the human personality and made ethical problems so vivid and clear that it became easy for Plato to construct an ideal political theory and assign a suitable place to the individual in the republic. Plato’s theory of Ideas was the greatest of all Greek attempts at metaphysical thinking. In Plato we perceive, for the first time in Greek history, the growth

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of a metaphysical genius independent of scientific pride and prejudice. He reduces the natural world into ideas or types and resolves the individuality of the particular into the nature of the universal. An aristocrat by birth, Plato renounced the scientific method of studying reality analytically; he submerged the special parts of reality into reality as a whole; he submerged the individual into the state; so that the lower may feel the presence of the higher.

The beginning of the Antinomy.—But the scientific spirit of studying special parts of reality separately incarnated itself in the person of Aristotle who was the first European philosopher to write different books on different sciences. He wrote on physics, politics, ethics, rhetoric and poetry. Thus he set up an example of separating the particular aspects of reality in such a way that they enable us to understand the problems of a particular science from its own point of view. He also wrote a book on metaphysics in which he discussed those questions which lay beyond the physical questions. Thus the antinomy between Science and Philosophy became obvious. The purpose of science, it became clear, was to acquire systematic knowledge of the natural world. This was likely to increase man's control over nature. But the purpose of philosophy was not as intelligible. It involved a variety of intellectual interests. The philosopher was not an out-and-out realist like the scientist. He took nothing for granted. In doubt was reflected the glory of his intellect. He doubted the existence of the external world; he doubted the existence of the self, he doubted the existence of God, and even when he proved the existence of any one of these, the man-in-the-street failed to understand him.

The ultimate result of the development of the above features of Science and Philosophy was that science became generally practical and philosophy essentially

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theoretical. Both of them were one-sided and it was high time to get a new guide to human salvation.

Influence of Christianity.—This guide was found in Christianity whose advent in Europe gave a new turn to civilised life and constructive thought. Christianity, one of the greatest religions of the world, contained the theoretical element of Philosophy and the practical element of Science. The theoretical element can be seen in the spiritual and mystical teachings of the Bible; the practical element can be observed in the social and moral aspects of Christianity. Man was no longer to perplex himself with the physical and metaphysical problems whose solutions had been so far unsatisfactory. He was to remain content with certain dogmas of Christianity. He was bound to take everything as authority. Everything was supposed to be right or wrong according to the standards set up by the philosophy of Aristotle and the religion of Jesus. “Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,” when the soul of Greek criticism left the tabernacle of Europe. Europe, in the Middle Ages, was not modern Europe. It was Christendom. The gulf between Science and Philosophy was bridged by Christianity under the Empire and the Papacy. The scientist or the philosopher was not free to express his opinion in defiance of the Imperial or the Papal authority. It was an age of self-suppression rather than of self-expression.

The very dualism of authority—the Emperor on the one hand and the Pope on the other—culminated in a jealousy which paved the way for the individual to express freely his views on all subjects. The revolt of the individual against religious and political authority assumed two definite forms in modern history—the Renaissance and the Reformation.

The failure of Christianity.—In the later part of the Middle Ages, European Society was perverted on

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account of the selfishness of the emperors and the clergy. Clergymen had become brilliant secular princes with all sorts of worldly ambitions, paying no heed to their religious and moral duties. This state of affairs marks the tragedy of Christianity in Europe. Thus Christianity failed to remove the antinomy between Science and Philosophy; for the torch-bearers of Christianity in the Middle Ages gave no stimulus to the growth of experimental Science and constructive Philosophy with a view to reconcile them and make their aims and objects identical.

Growth of the Antinomy between Philosophy and Science in Modern History.—The spirit of Science and Philosophy, therefore, avenged itself by destroying the political and religious institutions of the Middle Ages. The universal authority of the Pope was challenged by the protest of Luther. The “idols” of belief were broken by the inductive method of Bacon. The dogmatism of the Middle Ages received a shock by the doubt of Descartes. Thus in Germany, England and France these children of the motherland declared themselves independent of the Roman Catholic yoke. Bacon was the father of modern Science just as Descartes was that of modern Philosophy.

Modern scientists have discovered those wonderful things in Heaven and Earth which were undreamt of in scholastic philosophy. There is no air of mysticism about their methods of investigation. These methods are observation and experiment as explained by Bacon and J. S. Mill. The growth of modern Science has made man master of nature. The kingdom of man is not confined to land and sea; it has been extended to the realm of air; and the conquest of the Mars, if accomplished, may be the stepping-stone to the extension of man’s power over the heavenly bodies.

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Decline of European Morals.—All this sounds quite optimistic, but the moral result of this is rather disappointing. It has enabled man to acquire the virtue of courage to a certain extent, but the individual and the nation of the modern age are so proud of these achievements that an attempt at world-unity seems an idealistic scheme. One of the glowing examples of a modern nation's vanity was the French Revolution of 1789; another the German mentality before the Great War of 1914. Individual vanity began in modern history with the revolt of Luther in Germany, and reached its height at the Russian Revolution of 1917. The present Bolshevik personified the highest type of the individual's vanity.

Modern Philosophy is at the root of this moral catastrophe. The national element is predominant in modern philosophy. For example, modern English philosophers are out-and-out empiricists, modern German philosophers essentially idealists.

The failure of Islam in Europe.—In the principles of the modern philosopher we see the characteristics of this age miniaturized. The development of European nations and the recognition of the rights of the individual have opened all religions to criticism. Roman Catholicism was the first object of attack. Islam was the second universal religion to meet disappointment in Europe. Neither the Moors in Spain nor the Turks at Constantinople succeeded in spreading their religion throughout Europe. The Moors were expelled from Spain and the Turkish Sultan died sick at heart. So the antinomy between Science and Philosophy continued in modern Europe in spite of Christianity and Islam. Both Christianity and Islam have been preached in Europe, but their interpretations have been so different that it has become impossible for the average citizen of Europe to grasp their essential principles.

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How to understand Christianity and Islam.—As a matter of fact these religions cannot be understood at all unless we study the lives of Christ and Muhammad with a view to appreciate their teachings. The life of the prophet holds a mirror to his religion. The principles of Christianity and of Islam are thus photographed in the biographies of Christ and Muhammad.

The Prophet, the Scientist and the Philosopher compared.—It is the whole life of a prophet—both mental and moral—that shows the realisation of his religious ideal; but, in the case of the scientist or the philosopher, it is not the whole life which matters in the appreciation of his genius. What is a Scientist? Nothing more and nothing less than his observations and experiments systematised. What is a Philosopher? Nothing more and nothing less than his mode of thought. It is not the whole of life or conduct which matters in the life of the Scientist or the Philosopher. But in conduct are involved both perception and thought. Observation of facts is the first stage in the development of voluntary activity, and deliberation or thought the second. Thus the scientific and the philosophical elements are arranged in the forms of two different steps of the same ladder—conduct. Science and Philosophy, so different in form and matter, are thus harmonised. Iqbal was right: “Philosophy appeals to thought, art to motion, and religion to the whole man.”

Defects of Philosophy and Science.—One of the first criticisms of Philosophy is that it unduly emphasises the value of thought, and the great charge brought against the Scientist is that he unduly ignores the value of life. In some important systems of Philosophy, feeling has little or no place. In scientific experiments hundreds of animals are killed by dissection and vivisection.

An Appreciation of Religion.—Religion, however, continues the two opposite elements of sensibility and

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reason. It does not overestimate the value of thought in the development of the human personality. Nor does it sacrifice the life of other animals to satisfy the mere curiosity of man. It is a mean between the two extremes. Thought is refined when it is wedded to faith; the sanctity of life is established when vivisection is substituted by self-sacrifice. The philosopher's sacrifice consists in the sacrifice of the sentient self at the altar of the rational self. This type of sacrifice is nothing but rigidity and austerity carried to their logical conclusion. The scientist's sacrifice is unfortunately not one's own. He sacrifices others, but he does not believe in self-sacrifice. The prophet or the religious man is a curious continuation of sensibility and reason. He respects life as it is, and yet he is ready for self-sacrifice. In the history of Philosophy there is only one example of noble self-sacrifice—the trial and death of Socrates; but the sacrifices made by prophets and saints and religious people are innumerable.

Conclusion.—Religious life is, therefore, higher and nobler than philosophical thought and scientific discovery. Religion is a synthetic unity which combines thought and nature. Its beauty lies in regarding thought and nature as two modes of Divine manifestation. Religious dogmas appeal to the masses. Religion makes it clear that Philosophy and Science are meant for man, not man for Philosophy and Science. Mind and body must be subordinated to something deeper: "the humble and contrite heart," in the words of Rudyard Kipling. We should not boast of our intellectual achievement and our control over the physical world. We ought to remember that we have been created by God and therefore we should devote our lives to the realisation of the Divine ideal. We should learn by heart these lines of Tennyson:

"Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be,
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord! art more than they."

IS SUFISM ALIEN TO THE SPIRIT OF ISLAM?

It is the act of religious worship or prayer that actually resolves this antinomy between mind and body, between thought and expression, between the Ego and Nature, or between Philosophy and Science. A ray of hope is thus visible; but it is the experience of the East, not of the West—of Jesus of Nazareth and of Muhammad of Mecca. The irresistible logic of European history has left no room for “the humble and contrite heart” in the bosom of the West.

IS SUFISM ALIEN TO THE SPIRIT OF ISLAM?

BY P. J. CARRUTHERS

Many people have made some acquaintance with Islam and Sufism and, because of the wide superficial differences they observe, come to the conclusion that one is quite alien to the other in spirit; and that the rise of Sufism in Muslim lands must be due to some historical circumstance. These superficial observers look on Islam as a harsh, narrow and militant creed, having no place for the mysticism of the Sufi. Hence the theory has been put forward that Sufism represents the natural reaction of the Persian or Indian mind against a conquering Semitic religion (Islam).

Professor R. A. Nicholson, the greatest Western authority on the subject, does not subscribe to this theory; and most dictionaries define Sufism as a kind of “Muhammadan mysticism.” In the 14th edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, we read that “mysticism in Islam goes back to Muhammad.” (Vol. 21, p. 522.)

I hope to show briefly in this article that Sufism is a natural development of Islam; that in fact, Sufism is the mystical aspect of Islam, and has never been an organised body separated from Islam as a whole.

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Although Sufism flourished most strongly in Iran and India, many of the early Sufis were Arabs by race; and it is not for nothing that Al-Ghazzáli, perhaps the greatest Sufi of all, has been called "the Proof of Islam."

In order to show, however, that Sufism *is* a natural development of Islam, we must look for its sources in the Holy Qur-án itself, and in the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

Firstly, it must be stated that Islam has been much misunderstood and misrepresented in the Western world. Too often it is forgotten that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was teaching a primitive and barbarous people, so that he had to instil into the Arabs the elementary principles of decency, courtesy and hygiene.

People taking a superficial view of Islam encounter these rudimentary teachings for the education of a primitive people, and jump to the conclusion that Islam is fit only for the lower races of mankind still in the tribal stage, and that it has no higher spiritual teaching. Islam, however, is a universal religion, with a message for the guidance of humanity in every stage of mental and spiritual development.

Bearing these facts in mind, we may now consider the principal ideas of Sufism and their relationship to Islam as a whole. Sufism in all its various forms has always taught the Unity of God, which is no mere intellectual dogma, but an idea which governs our whole lives. In the words of Jami, the great Persian mystic—
"Dismiss every fancy, and abandon every doubt;
Blend into one every spirit, and form and place;
See One—know One—speak of One—
Desire One—chant of One—and seek One."

The immanence of God is among the most important of Sufi teachings: Allah is not only the transcendent Ruler of the Worlds, but is also intimately

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near to each one of us. This beautiful idea finds expression in these two verses of the Holy Qur-án:

“And when My servants ask thee concerning Me, then surely I am very near.” (2:186.)

“Certainly We created man; We know his inmost thoughts and We are nearer to him than his neck-vein.” (50:16.)

Closely akin to the idea of God's nearness, we have that of His love for His creatures, and man's communion with the Divine. This is where Christian and Hindu critics confusing the outward forms of Islam with its spiritual teaching, assert that Islam and Sufism have but little in common.

The word “Islam” is usually interpreted as “submission” but in its inner meaning it conveys the idea of devotion—and what is devotion but the highest form of love?

Now the Divine qualities *Rahmán* and *Rahím* occur hundreds of times in the Holy Qur-án, and both convey the idea of mercy and love. Also it is written: “My mercy encompasseth all things.” (7:156.)

Muhammad illustrates the love of God in a very striking way: “Dost thou wonder at the affection of the mother-bird for her young? Verily, God is more loving to His creatures than the mother to these young birds.”

Only he who has completely submitted his individual will to the Divine Will can know God as the Beloved. The true Sufi is a true Muslim, and *vice versa*.

The ideal of communion with the Divine is not only common to all forms of mysticism, but it is an essential part of every true religion, and therefore of Islam. “Prayer,” said Muhammad, “brings the faithful into communion with his Cherisher.” Another

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saying of the Holy Prophet shows the relationship between the spiritual man and his Lord :

“God saith : “The person whom I hold as beloved, I am his hearing, by which he heareth; I am his sight by which he seeth; I am his hands, by which he holdeth; and I am his feet, by which he walketh’.”

Sufism lays much stress on the acquiring of knowledge, thereby followed the spirit of Muhammad’s teaching. Knowledge at its highest is not mere book learning; it is spiritual realisation.

“To him whose soul is illuminated
All the Universe is the Book of God Most High.” (*Mahmud Shabistári.*)

That this high conception of knowledge has its basis in the Holy Qur-án is shown by the following text :

“In the earth there are signs for those who have faith :

And in your hearts also; will ye not therefore perceive? (51 : 20, 21.)

The idea of evolution—spiritual and physical—finds expression in many Sufi works, especially in the *Mathnavi* of Jalál-ud-Din Rúmí; but can we find it in the Holy Qur-án? Now the word “Rabb” which occurs frequently in the Holy Qur-án, as an attribute of God, is said by many learned commentators to contain the idea of evolution. According to Raghíb, the word means “fostering a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another, until it reaches its goal of completion.”

The universalist teachings of great Sufis like Omar Khayyam, Jalal-ud-Din and Omar-ibn-al-Farid have their basis in the verses of the Holy Qur-án. For example, the great fact, emphasised by Sufi teachers, and admitted by all broad-minded people, that there are

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righteous people in all religions, is shown in the Holy Qur-án. (3:112—114.)

The Holy Qur-án also teaches that all the great religious teachers were inspired messengers of Allah, and that in every nation a prophet has appeared. (35:24.)

When the Sufis acknowledge Socrates, Buddha, Zoroaster and other teachers whose names do not appear in the Holy Qur-án, they are not deviating from Islamic teaching, for the Book itself says:

“We sent apostles whom We have mentioned to thee before, and apostles whom We have not mentioned to thee.” (4:164.)

All the universalist ideas which we find in Sufism are based on the Qur-ánic teaching that there is one true religion revealed in all ages and nations—that is Islam, which means submission to the Divine Will, and leads to peace, harmony and brotherhood.

The Sufi teaching concerning the future life is that the material descriptions of heaven and hell, which we find in the Qur-án, are not to be taken literally, but are symbols of spiritual realities.

The Holy Qur-án itself indicates that this is so, for in Sura 47, verse 15, it refers to “a parable of the garden.”

The word “Jannat” (garden) is the name for paradise most frequently used in the Holy Qur-án, and since a garden is a place where things grow, it may well be that the inner meaning of “Jannat” is a state of spiritual growth and development towards perfection. The prayer of the righteous in paradise is: “O our Lord, make perfect for us our light.” (66:8.)

In reality, the heavenly life is a spiritual state of peace, harmony and joy, and communion with God. In the words of Muhammad, “The most favoured of God will be he who shall see Lord’s face night and

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morning, a joy which will surpass all the pleasures of the body, even as the ocean surpasses a drop of water.”

In conclusion, it is the duty of all true Muslims to put away both superstition and materialism, and to try to live in accordance with the great spiritual ideas which are the glory of Sufism—and Sufism, as I have tried to show, is a natural result of Islamic teachings.

CORRESPONDENCE

PARK ROAD,
BATTERSEA,
LONDON, S.W. 11.

DEAR SIR,

I would be very grateful if you will kindly send to me some literature concerning Islam: also if you will inform me where I could buy an English translation of the Qur-án.

Yours faithfully,
(MISS) JOAN ATKINSON.

THE MOSQUE, WOKING
THE 18TH MARCH 1939.

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN ISLAM,
Assalam-alaikum!

In the course of my sermon I drew the attention of the Congregation towards two very important duties of the Muslims in Great Britain:

1. The attendance at the Juma Prayers. This is needed not only because it affords the opportunity for the refreshing of our minds with our own ideals of life, but also because we have at all costs to create the tradition of these congregational prayers for the growing plant of Islam in this country. For the information of my London friends I may say that we assemble at 18 Eccleston Square every Friday. The prayer together with the subsequent sermon does not take more than three quarters of an hour—from 1-15 P.M. to 2 P.M.

If one cannot come every Friday, he or she need not hesitate to come on such Fridays as he or she may find time for it. If everyone takes up this matter seriously, even the irregular coming of friends will keep up a nice regular gathering.

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2. An individual effort on the part of the members to carry the message of Islam to their Christian and Jewish friends. I need hardly tell you that this is your great opportunity and privilege while living in this country. With a little effort you can increase the volume of our work tenfold—perhaps more. You have only to be actively proud of your religion, and this Mission is ever at your service.

Yours fraternally,
AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD,
Imam.

CAIRO.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING,
SURREY, ENGLAND.

DEAR BROTHER IN ISLAM,

I have in front of me your letter addressed to me some years ago—the 14th March 1932. I had been an enquirer into the Spiritual Truth for a number of years. I am a born Hindu. When I was about nine years old, I was taken over to Christianity not by any conviction of my heart towards that religion but by sheer circumstances. I remained in this faith until recently. But all these years, I have had no definite convictions. I have lived in Egypt for over ten years. I have studied Muslims and their ways and enquired into the Islamic Truths.

I have just come to the conviction that Islam, as it is implied in real spirit and truth, is *the only* religion. My decision at this moment is to embrace this religion. Owing to lack of knowledge of the Arabic language, I lack real understanding and co-operation with local Muslim brethren. I just thought that in case it is possible, I shall consult you and visit the Mosque, Woking, with a view to acquiring deeper knowledge of the religion of Islam, which I have just come to appreciate and adopt in the mode of my life and actions.

Now I am appealing to you for assistance and advice. Do please write to me and enlighten me, brother, as to what steps I should take to fulfil my desire, namely, to be a Muslim in every respect, not only within the heart but in all other things.

Please write to me and let me know your advice.

Thanking you,

I remain,
Yours in Islam,
M. T.

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ADEN, S. ARABIA.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

Assalam-alaikum!

Since childhood—or, more correctly, since I began to read and write English—I had been reading with interest your publication "The Islamic Review," which I find very interesting and very useful—even for Muslims by birth.

My father—Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah—had been a regular subscriber until lately when he resigned from his post at Jeddah and through him I used to see your publication. I hope he will soon become a regular subscriber after he settles down here.

I enclose herewith a cheque for shillings 10 on account of my subscription and hope you will enrol me for one year. I shall be very happy to receive specimen copies of other publications published by you.

If I can be of any use to you in furthering the cause of Islam, I shall be very glad to be of service towards this sacred cause and shall do it with pride.

I had been an admirer of the work of the Mosque for a long time and it would be very interesting if I can, one day, be of some service towards the great cause undertaken by you.

Yours with gratitude,
OMAR IHSANULLAH.

FARNCOMBE,
SURREY.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

Would you kindly send me free literature concerning the Muslim religion.

Thanking you in advance,

Yours faithfully,
C. M. McINTYRE.

THE QUR-AN

THE QUR-AN

It was the comprehensiveness and integrity of the Qur-ánic revelation which led the greatest of German poets, Geothe, to say: "You see this teaching never fails; with all our systems, we cannot go, and generally speaking no man can go, farther than that." And it was the Qur-án's constant appeal to reason and experience which made the same genius exclaim: "If this is Islam, then every thinking man among us is, in fact, a Muslim."

The difference between the imagery of the Bible and the cognitive content of the indicatory precepts of the Qur-án is a difference of thought-mode: it is the difference between the artist and scientist. And where the one is history, *i.e.*, the experience and actions of man as they recorded them through the centuries, the other is a philosophy of history, *i.e.*, the interpretation of that self-same history in the experience of a single ego.

(In reading the Qur-án it must be remembered that the "basic principles of universal import," revealed therein, are interspersed with a whole social fabric of ready-made judgments—applicable only to the historical and geographical environment into which Muhammad was born.)

ISLAMIC REVIEW

TWO GREAT RELIGIONS

ADDRESS ON ISLAM AT CATERHAM

At the meeting of the Caterham Adult School on Monday, "Islam," the first of the subjects under the heading of "Two Great Religions," was opened by Maulvi Aftab-ud-Din Ahmed, Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking.

The speaker remarked that it was a promising sign that he had been invited to the Adult School and it emphasised the fact that the nations of the world were attempting to understand one another. He pointed out that both Islam and Christianity originated from the same source—Abraham—and traced the history of his religion, the life of Mahomet, and also described how the Koran was compiled. He suggested that it was because man was divided into geographical regions with little inter-communication in early times that the peoples of the world were divided into separate religions each with their own prophets. This spiritual alienation he felt was the root cause of international disturbance.

Muslims do not believe in a chosen race and feel that God requires the united worship of all the nations of the world. Muslims have supported Christianity in the past and respect Christ as a prophet, but do not believe in His divinity. The Imam described Islam as a practical religion and mentioned its socialistic policy, and showed Mecca as a point where all ranks and peoples assumed a common dress and came together to worship the one God. He concluded by stating that all nations have their birth, growth and death, and unless there is a missionary spirit at work among the religious people of a nation the religion will die with the nation.

Following discussion, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the Imam for his enlightening address.—*Caterham Weekly Press.*

WHAT IS ISLAM?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its teachings. 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) Almsgiving, (5) Pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine at Mecca.

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

ISLAMIC REVIEW

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 sayings 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.

SANCTITY 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.

By the late Al-Haj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, Founder of the
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