

"Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets . . ."—Holy Qur-án, 33 : 40.
"There will be no Prophet after me."—Muhammad.

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Founded by the Late AL-HAJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

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MISS JOSEPHINE JAMILA GLASER.

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A DECLARATION

I, Miss Josephine Glaser, of Paris, 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.) JOSEPHINE JAMILA GLASER

ISLAMIC REVIEW

ISLAM—ITS DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE*

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

Historically speaking, the religion of Islam (the word should be pronounced with the stress on the second syllable) was founded by the Prophet Muhammad, a descendant of Abraham, the great Hebrew Prophet, through Ishmael, his first-born son from Hagar, the Egyptian princess, reduced to the position of bondswoman through slavery, and given in marriage to that patriarch by his first wife, Sara.

Muhammad started his ministry in the year 610 A.C., when he was forty years of age.

During the first 13 years of that ministry, Mecca, the city of his ancestors, where stood the Kaaba, the most ancient house of Monotheistic worship, which had been rebuilt, under the orders of God, by Abraham and Ishmael conjointly, remained the headquarters of this new religion, and the revelations that came to him from time to time helped his soul to realise all the different aspects of spiritual life. It was, so to speak, the period of complete spiritual training both for himself and for the devoted band of workers who gathered round him, for the prospective gigantic task of establishing the kingdom of God on earth, earnestly prayed for by his predecessor in office, the great Jewish Prophet, Jesus of Nazareth (peace be on his soul), and longed for by all virtuous men and women of all ages.

The following nine years of his ministry in Medina, which also formed the closing period of his life, saw the establishment of this kingdom of God on earth, by this determined band of workers.

It has been a common weakness of the human mind to adore an ideal as long as it remains in vision and

*Text of a lecture delivered by Maulvi Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad, B.A., Imam of the Mosque, Woking at Besant Hall, under the auspices of the Theosophical Society in England. Sir E. Denison Ross presided.

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prospect, but the moment that ideal is translated into the hard facts of earthly existence it loses its charm for the ordinary mind. The average mind is apt to forget that an ideal that cannot be more or less translated into the hard facts of physical existence, however mundane the process may be, is not an ideal worth having.

Apart from this, people suffer from a confusion of thought with regard to the true meaning of idealism. They do not realise that everything which our emotions, aided by the imagination, may create is not an ideal. It is no idealism, for instance, to think of a man walking on his head, eating through his nose, and smelling through his ears. Nor is it an idealism to think of all things in the world becoming of the same shape or colour. Idealism, on the contrary, must be based on the established order of the creation, and it should harmonise with its immutable laws. Indeed, it needs a scientific training of the mind to entertain ideals of the proper type, and to appreciate an ideal in the midst of material surroundings, that have of necessity to pass through a hard process in order to frame their setting. To a mind so trained, the latter part of Muhammad's life, with its revealed teachings from God regarding enormous works of social reconstruction, is, in a way, more attractive even from a spiritual point of view than the preceding and the Meccan part of it, of which the main elements were suffering and purification, with their corresponding revelations. It is true, from the sentimental point of view, that there is a certain unpleasantness in the kind of task which Muhammad undertook in Medina and carried out to his entire satisfaction. A sensible man, however, will certainly wish that what Muhammad accomplished in his own time for his people could be even half done to-day in the world even with ten times the unpleasantness which he caused

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to his objectors of a distant age. Indeed, it will be not only uncharitable to Muhammad, but unfair to the whole field of human achievement, not to acknowledge that Muhammad laid the foundations of the first and the last socialistic state in the real sense of the word—a socialism liked and voted for by those on whom it was enforced. Those who have read the history of the Islamic state in the hands of his second successor, the Caliph Omar, cannot deny this, whatever else of Muhammad's achievements they may be inclined to deny. Indeed, the Meddanite revelations of the Qur-án, the Scripture of Muhammad, are of immediate interest to modern humanity, suffering, as it is, from a lack of equilibrium in its political outlook, material spirit, commercial and economic policy, and social understanding, as it is in revelations alone that one can find positive and well-tested instructions in all these matters. In later times, though the social and political ideals of Islam, as demonstrated by Muhammad and his immediate successors, were overwhelmed by the storm of pagan emotions through which the religion had to pass, the spiritual trail left by them gave birth, in time, to a huge material culture, the first international one, that saved humanity at the critical period of the Middle Ages, and safely handed over to modern humanity all the best traditions of the ancient civilisations. But for Islam and the material civilisation which it brought into existence, there would have been no reformation in Europe, and no renaissance. Even to-day, the best minds of the West see in Islam that emphasis on the spiritual aspects of things and that depth and naturalness of social feelings, which alone can save the one-sided civilisation of the West from a tragic collapse. On the other hand, the Muslim enthusiasm for an intellectual interpretation of Islam, suited to the needs of modern times, that has

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been expressing itself, of late, in all the different languages of Europe, shows the spiritual confidence of that community in the matter of the help which they can render to the West in the spiritual and moral reconstruction of European social life.

Theologically speaking, Islam is as wide as human history. It is the exposition, in the words of the Qur-án, "of the nature made by God, on which He has created mankind." It was revealed to the first morally-conscious human being, and it has been ever since the religion, as Goethe has very rightly remarked, of all those men who have lived any moral life. Nay, it has also been the religion of the whole universe which could not exist without following this religion.

The essence of this tremendously comprehensive religion is proclaimed in the name itself. Incidentally, the name Islam is the only one of its kind. It is not tinged with any connotation of a racial or personal nature, as has been the case with every other great religion of the world, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Confucianism and even Christianity. The term "Islam" means "making peace," but the conception of "peace" in Islam is very different from its conception in idle sentimentalism. Islam is also a message of life—life of perpetual striving. The Qur-án says: "Certainly We have created man to face difficulty." The peace of Islam cannot, therefore, be the peace of sleep or stupor, of cessation of struggle, or of fatalism. It is, on the contrary, the peace that comes as the result of the spiritual realisation of the ultimate harmony of all the destinies. The restless world of phenomena tends to cast its baneful influence on the inner calmness of the soul of man. The listless soul that idly keeps on gazing on this phenomenal world, tries in vain to realise that tranquillity which is of its very

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nature. Islam's message to the soul is that it should not be carried away by phenomena, but should struggle in their midst to realise the peace which is at the root of all creation. In other words, its message is of struggle in the right direction, in the direction of the immutable laws of existence, the only direction of real peace. It is really childish to think that nature can be made to fit in with our vain desires. Not only in the desires of the flesh, but also in the so-called noble sentiments, we have to follow the immutable laws of nature. Indeed, humanity would have been far happier if it had realised that its own idle sentimentalists are responsible for a considerable portion of its miseries and troubles. It is the human mind that has to submit to the laws of creation, and not these laws having to submit to the fanciful mind of man. The secondary meaning of the term "Islam," which is "submission," points to this unavoidable necessity of subordinating our so-called noble sentiments to the fundamental laws of creation—and one of those immutable laws to which we have thus to submit is that evil has to be resisted. Indeed, no life is possible without resistance to the forces of disruption and disintegration that surround invariably all life and existence. Our physical body has been intuitively following this law every moment of our life in order to save us from death through the innumerable diseases, which are constantly attacking our health. My standing here is possible only by the fact of resistance—I am resisting the force of gravitation all the time I am standing. Rightly does the Qur-án say: "There is life for you in the law of resistance and check; O men of understanding, that you may guard yourselves" (2:179). Indeed, this law of resistance is as prevalent in the moral as in the physical world. Hence the word that stands in the Holy Qur-án for "piety," *wiz.* "Taqwa," implies a

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“watchfulness” and “a guarding against evil.” In fact, the moral sense in man is entirely dependent on this resistance. Morality presupposes resistance to temptations. The only question we may, therefore, have to answer from a die-hard pacifist is whether this moral resistance should or should not manifest itself within the physical sphere.

The reply would be—as long as man continues giving physical expression to his mental feelings, as long, for example, as he weeps in pain and smiles in pleasure—he cannot at times help expressing his moral resistance in a physical form. The question for sensible men to consider, therefore, is not how to stop these expressions, but how to minimise them. They can, certainly, never be stopped altogether. Moreover, if evil does manifest itself on the physical plane, its resistance must, at a certain stage, express itself on the physical plane also.

Now, for any achievement there must be some formula, some workable hypotheses and some enunciation of principles. Similarly, for the successful resistance to and the overcoming of all evils, there have been different formulas given by different religions. The Islamic formula begins with a belief in God—One Universal God, Who is anxious equally for the material and for the spiritual welfare of all nations and peoples, individuals and groups; with Whom there is no chosen people either for the bestowal of His spiritual gifts of revelation and dispensation or for the bestowal of physical gifts like the sun, the rain and others. He is One, in the sense of being Indivisible. Man should be in no divided mind while placing the burden of his soul on his Creator. He should not have to recall different persons and manifestations while invoking the help of the Originator of the soul and the Controller of its

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destinies. Islam is opposed to all ideas of Incarnation. It conceives of God in all His attributes of perfection. In the words of the Qur-án: "For Him are all the attributes of perfection." To come under the law of Time and Space by assuming physical shape, runs counter to this conception. It is wrong to argue the possibility of this phenomenon on the basis of God's Omnipotence. The quality of Omnipotence cannot, consistently with the position of God, include imperfections. If this distinction be not observed, one may as well ask if, by His Omnipotence, God has not the power to destroy Himself.

Following this line of thought, Islam has scrupulously avoided in any way identifying the Creation with the Creator. The Creator may be supporting the inner soul of the creation with His Light, and He may be pervading it through and through, but He is nevertheless distinct from His Creation. The highest object of Creation, namely man, has no doubt been given life eternal, but that eternal life is only a sufferance from God—not an original and independent quality of man.

As for God's relationship to man, the Qur-án says that He is "nearer to him (man) than even his jugular vein," supporting him every moment of his existence. In fact, God's care and control of man is so intense, according to the Qur-án, that the word "Father" has been considered insufficient to express that close relationship. The reason seems to be that, apart from the carnal associations of the term "father," no father has control over the destiny of his son. God has this control. Hence the word chosen by the Qur-án to express His relationship to man is "Rabb," which has the sense not only of creating and sustaining, but also of leading the creature step by step towards its ultimate destiny.

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On the subject of communion, Islam holds that man can have such a near approach to God that God may begin to function through him in a direct way, setting aside his individual human will. Beginning with the Prophet Muhammad, the whole history of Islam is replete with such experiences of merging in God. Statements, bewildering to the uninitiated, have also been made by believers while in this state of complete immersion in God—statements on the basis of which many religious heroes of the past have been confused with the Divinity. Guided by the Qur-án, Muslims have never felt confused by this phenomenon. They know that man's position in relation to God is like that of a piece of iron in relation to fire. If the piece of iron is left in the fire for a considerable time, it apparently loses its identity and becomes, so to speak, a part of the fire, but the piece of iron is, after all, iron and, when it has been separated from the fire and allowed to cool, it will invariably assume its own colour again.

I may mention in passing that the meaning of the word "belief" in "Islam" is different from its meaning in other religions. To give an illustration, in innumerable places, the Qur-án speaks of the Devil, speaks of its origin, its function and its ultimate fate, and yet it wants us to disbelieve it. It is evident, therefore, that by belief in a thing the book means "receiving inspiration from it." An appreciation of this point is very necessary for an understanding of the second item in the Muslim Creed—belief in the angels. By this Islam means that, although on the surface of it the world seems to be governed by animal powers and unjust standards, fundamentally it is controlled by angelic forces and governed by the beneficent rules of God. Our belief in angels means our remaining unaffected by the apparent prevalence of evil ways, and our developing persistently good

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faculties with the help and the inspiration of angelic forces, however meagrely they may be visible on the surface.

The third item in the Creed of Islam is a belief in the revealed dispensations. This is a kind of challenge to the general tendency for the secularisation of our social affairs, based on a sense of the self-sufficiency of the human intellect. According to Islam, the intellect of man is capable of understanding only the laws governing the world of matter, and it is worse than useless in trying to discover the laws governing the emotions of man. A knowledge of these laws has to come from beyond the intellectual horizon of man; in other words, they have to be revealed to the mind of man from the Divine Court. Like the shower of rain we have to receive this revealed guidance for our emotions, not only for our continued and progressive moral existence, but also for the sake of our living faith in the Ever-Living and Ever-Awake God, which gives life to all the efforts of humanity. Thus, this belief asserts the revelational basis of the moral existence of humanity, as it implies that the moral training of the different nations, making it possible for them to respond to any progressive movement and moral appeal, is not a thing of immediate growth, but is the result of age-long struggles of inspired teachers who must have appeared in those nations from time to time. While approaching a nation with any moral proposition, we must, therefore, acknowledge the services of these known and unknown teachers, and bow in reverence to Him Who sent them. In the words of the Qur-án: "Believe in that which has been revealed to you, and in that which was revealed before you." By the expression "revealed to you," the Qur-án refers to the revelation vouchsafed to the Prophet Muhammad. The Qur-ánic revelation, there-

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fore, is in the position of the last brick of a huge structure the foundation of which was laid by the first morally conscious human being, and the construction of which has proceeded, step by step, through the good offices of every successive revelation that has been given to different peoples according to their progressive needs. As a matter of fact, in a saying of his, the Prophet Muhammad himself gives this illustration and calls himself the last brick of the spiritual structure of humanity. While on this subject, we should do well to understand the Qur-ánic theory about revealed guidance. According to it, religious principles have been the same throughout—the path of God-realisation being unalterable. But the application of these principles to social duties and obligations has had to vary according to the growing social consciousness of man. From family consciousness to international consciousness there has to be an infinite number of stages in the development of man's social outlook, and revelation has to reinterpret religious principles at every new stage of this gradually unfolding consciousness.

It is this phenomenon which explains the need for newer and newer revelations claiming to supersede the previous ones. When, however, the international stage of man's social consciousness has been reached, there can evidently be no further expansion of outlook. Social humanity has reached its maturity, so to speak, and it is not expected to outgrow the revelational guidance provided for it by the Qur-án in terms of international duties and obligations. Indeed, it is premature, if not idle, to discuss the possibility of further evolution in this direction just now, when we see in actual fact that humanity at large, even the most advanced sections of it, is far far short of the consciousness which the Qur-án came to provide. So the finality of the Qur-ánic

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revelation should, for all practical purposes, be taken as a valid claim.

Bound up with the subject of revealed guidance is the matter of the personalities of the teachers who act as the mediums of these revelations. It is well to remember that, apart from its internal merit, the greatest tangible proof of a truth being revealed is the personality of the recipient. People talk glibly of revelation without realising the character of a real piece of revelation. A revealed truth brings not only the intellectual understanding of a problem, but also, which is far more important, the perfect form of the spiritual realisation of the truth which permanently transforms the conduct of the recipient in the corresponding aspect of his life. In other words, a real medium of divinely-revealed truth proclaims the divine source of the truth in his very conduct. This is why such personalities bring about moral revolutions in the minds of men far beyond the scope of any preaching.

It is on this ground that Islam holds all prophets, *i.e.* recipients of Divine Communications, as above sinful acts. Its argument is something like this: sinful acts proceed from man because of his lack of sufficient faith in God. In other words, man falls a victim to the temptations of the flesh because his spiritual destiny, as held by the hand of God, is more or less outside his vision. When, however, God comes into full vision, so much so that speaking contact is established between God and man, the sight of the spiritual destiny is bound to overwhelm the whole field of the emotion of man, leaving no room in it for any intrusion of the carnal desires. Indeed, unless such a transformation has taken place in the human mind, it is blasphemous to think of the source of all holiness speaking to it. We do not see an earthly king employing as his emissary a man who is

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capable of, far less guilty of, a breach of the State laws. How much more impossible is it for the Omniscient and Holy God to speak to and appoint as His agent a man who has been guilty of sins! The prophets or the persons to whom God has revealed His Will to be communicated to the rest of the people, are the living embodiments of positive virtuous qualities. Their virtues are not traditional and conventional, but original and independent. It is necessary, therefore, to take into account not only the religious truths revealed to a personality but also the expression of that personality and its impressions on the people. Every one of these teachers, again, manifests in his conduct one or other of the numerous truths about the moral existence and spiritual struggle of man, in a more prominent way than the others according to the peculiar needs of his people. Only a complete collection of all of them can give us a perfect picture of the moral perfection of humanity. So it is that the Qur-án requires its believers to pay an unconditional allegiance to all such personalities without any distinction being made between them. To use its actual words: "We do not make any distinction between any of them, and to Him (God) are we resigned." This belief has, accordingly, come to take the third place in the Islamic creed of beliefs.

The fourth item in this creed is a belief in the life after death—a belief shared by almost all religions of the world—with this difference, that in Islam the spiritual existence which is to survive death is already in course of preparation by the moral actions which proceed from the individual man. Hidden behind the physical activities of man is a spiritual body which is being fostered by the physical body in the same way as a baby is carried and fostered in the womb of the mother. At death, this body will be ushered into a new world governed entirely

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and manifestly by the perfect standards of spirituality, which is not the case in the world of matter, where these laws work rather obscurely and underground, encountering the hostile forces of untruth at every step, so to speak. If the spiritual body nurtured here is a healthy one, immediately on its emergence into the world beyond, it proceeds on its way of natural advancement, and this is called heavenly life. If, however, the spiritual body has been neglected and under-fed and famished while on this planet, it has to go to a hospital to shake off its infirmities. The spiritual process that a man has to go through in the course of this recovery is called the life in hell. It is in no sense a vindictive punishment, but a cleansing process arranged by the mercy of God. There is no eternal damnation in Islam—as a matter of fact there is no damnation in it at all. Nor is there any cheap and miraculous salvation promised. The salvation is a gradual process, depending on right conduct, the progressive stages of which can be felt by the individual while in this life. The foretaste of the heavenly and of the hellish life which awaits one in the life after death is to be given to him in his earthly existence to convince him of the rectitude or otherwise of his conduct.

Incidentally, Islam does not regard sin as an innate factor of man's nature. Potentially, every human being that comes into this world is virtuous, capable of obeying the laws of God and traversing the eternal journey to Him. The Qur-án says: "Certainly We created man in the best make." In the words of the Prophet, "every child that is born is born with the capacity of obeying the laws of God." Nevertheless, the sinful inclination is there, and there are the external circumstances to fan it; but, because the sinful tendency is found in the mind of man, we should not jump to the conclusion that man

SECRET "FARMAN" OF A MOGHUL RULER

is inherently sinful. It would be the same kind of argument as to say that, because man is prone to fall ill, or does fall ill, the original nature of human physique is that of illness. Just as, given a certain amount of carefulness and knowledge of the laws of physical health, a man can be permanently healthy, similarly a man having the fullest knowledge of God and having sufficient anxiety for his soul, can remain permanently virtuous; like disease, sin is a sort of acquisition through negligence. What is more, just as in the physical world, even if a man contracts disease through negligence or otherwise, there are certain processes, internal as well as external, provided by nature by which he can get rid of the injurious results of the disease, similarly, even if a man has been a victim to a sinful urge, there are spiritual means that can restore the soul to its original health. The methods adopted by Islam are such, as I have just said, that the existence or recovery of the spiritual health can be felt by the person concerned while living in this world.

SECRET "FARMAN" OF A MOGHUL RULER

BY MR. N. C. MEHTA, I.C.S.

I spent three very pleasant days in Bhopal recently. Apart from the unforgettable experience of a visit to Sanchi—one of the great legacies of ancient India and scrupulously treasured by the Bhopal State—my stay there was unexpectedly fruitful in another direction. His Highness the Nawab is a graduate of the Allahabad University and he was due to deliver the Convocation Address at his old University. It was therefore in the

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fitness of things that at a dinner party the conversation should drift not only to matters of agriculture or the immediate present but also of the great past. Talking about the tolerance of the Moghul Princes and the number of Imperial *farmans* granted from the time of Hamida Begum, the mother of Akbar, His Highness told me that he possessed one given by Babar, the founder of the dynasty itself. This *farman* was shown to me the following day in the Hamidia Public Library.

(The transliteration of the Persian text.)

Al hamd-o-lillah.

933H.

Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babar

Badshah Bahadur Ghazi.

Wasiyyat nama makhti Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babar Badshah Ghazi ba Shahzada Nasir-ud-Din Muhammad Humayun, Taal Allah 'umrohu.

Ba istihkam-i-saltanat nawishta shud. Ai farzand momlokat-i-Hindustan az mazahab-i mukhtalifa mamur ast. Ba hamd ullah kih Haqq Subhan hu Taala badshahi an ba to karamat farmud. Bayad kih t'assubat-i-mazhabi ra az lauh-i-dil pak namuda muwafiq tariq-i-har millat m'adlat kun. Khasusan az qurbani-i-gao ba parhez kih taskhir-i-qulub-i-ahl-Hindustan ast. Wa r'aiyyat-i-in walayat ba ihsanat-i-badshahi wabasta shawad. Wa manadir wa m'abudgah-i-har qaum-i-kih zer-i-farman badshahi ast kharab makun. Chunan 'adl gustari ikhtiyar kun kih Shah az r'aiyyat wa r'aiyyat az Badshah asuda shawad. Taraqqi-i-Islam az tegh-i-ihsan bihtar ast na az tegh-i-zulm. Az munaqishat-i-ahl-i-Sunnat wa Sh'ia chashm-poshi kun wa illa z'uf-i-Islam maujud ast. Wa r'aiyyat-i-mukhtaliful qulub ra ba hukm-i-arba'i anasir qaim kun kih jism-i-saltanat az imraz-i-mukhtalifa pur amn bashad. Wa karnama-i-

SECRET "FARMAN" OF A MOGHUL RULER

Hazrat Taimur Sahib-Qiran pesh-i-nazar bayad dasht kih
ba 'umur-i-Shahryari pukhta shawad.

Wa ma 'alaina illal-balagh

Yakam Jamadi-ul-awwal 935H.

(English translation.)

God be Praised

Secret testament of Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babar Badshah Ghazi to Prince Nasir-ud-Din Muhammad Humayun. May God prolong his life.

For the stability of the Empire this is written. O my soul! The realm of Hindustan is full of diverse creeds. Praise be to God, the Righteous, the Glorious, the Highest, that He hath granted unto thee the Empire of it. It is but proper that thou, with heart cleansed of all religious bigotry should dispense justice according to the tenets of each community. And in particular refrain from the sacrifice of cow, for that way lies the conquest of the hearts of the people of Hindustan; and the subjects of the realm will through royal favours be devoted to thee. And the temples and abodes of worship of every community under the Imperial sway, you should not damage. Dispense justice so that the sovereign may be happy with the subjects and likewise the subjects with their sovereign. The progress of Islam is better by the sword of kindness, not by the sword of oppression. Ignore the disputations of Shiah and Sunnies; for therein is the weakness of Islam. And bring together the subjects with different beliefs in the manner of the Four Elements, so that the body-politic may be immune from the various ailments. And remember the deeds of Hazrat Taimur Sahib-Qiran (lord of the conjunction) so that you may become mature in matters of government.

"And on us is but the duty to advise." First Jamadi-ul-Awwal 935H.—11th January, 1529.

(Written in Lotus Garden)

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Such is the secret testament of Babar to his 20 years old son and successor. It was not till 1526 that the trans-border adventurer—Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babar—was firmly seated on the throne of Delhi. The *Wasiyat*, as he calls it, was written while he was camping in the Lotus Garden at Dholpur near Agra (January 9th—20th, 1529).

The nature of the document—the fine paper, the careful handwriting, the Royal Seal and the present custody of the document—all go to establish the genuineness of this very important historical document.

THE QUR-ANIC CONCEPTION OF GOD

BY THE LATE HON'BLE SHEIKH MUSHIR HOSAIN KIDWAI
OF GADIA, BARRISTER-AT-LAW

(Continued from Vol. XXV, Page 420.)

In the early days of Islam, the Qur-anic God-idea had become the actuating motive for all culture and civilization and love of territorial conquests. Mahmud of Ghazni infused his soldiers with the idea that he was invading India to destroy idols and to establish the Unity of God. With this idea the soldiers underwent sufferings which they could not have accepted with any other idea.

Before Mahmud, in the sixty-second year of Hijra (684 A.C.) when the Muslim Commander Okaba-bin-Nafi arrived at the extreme Maghrib on the Atlantic shores, he rode his steed into the waves of the ocean and cried, "O God! if the waters of this ocean did not prevent me I would have gone on to the lands beyond (to America) to claim the Glory of Thy Name."

Othman, the father of the Ottoman Turks, the predecessors of the "Ata-Turk," had also the same ambition.

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He called his son Orchan to his death-bed and said: "Lean not on tyranny . . . cultivate justice . . . promote the learned to honours so the Divine Law shall be established Glory not in thy armies, nor pride thyself in thy riches. Keep near thy person the learned in the Shariat (Divine Law) and as justice is the support of kingdoms, turn from everything repugnant The Divine Law is our sole aim and our progress is only in the path of the Lord Embark not on vain undertakings or fruitless contentions, for it is not our ambition to enjoy the empire of the world, but the propagation of the Faith was my particular desire which therefore it becomes thee to accomplish."

How wonderful indeed is it that the Qur-ánic God-idea inspired every Muslim with heroic deeds in every walk of life and brought out the best of every people. These very Turks! What were they before they were imbued with that Qur-ánic God-idea? They worshipped the "white wolf," and behaved like the white wolf. They were a scourge wherever they went. They knew nothing but destruction. They were best known as freebooters. Even Hafiz calls them that. They were not much known then to Europe, but in the East Turk was a synonym for savagery and barbarism.

But soon after they became Muslim, they became great empire-builders and the God-idea brought into them very noble qualities. Their barbarism changed into nobleness. From Halaku they became Muhammad the conqueror, and Sulaiman the magnificent. In our book "A Defence of Islam's Standard-Bearers," which was a close and critical study of the question of the Muslim Ottoman Empire with reference to the memorandum of the Ottoman Delegates and its reply by the "Council of Ten" at Paris, a book which

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was admitted to be one of the causes of the new life in the vanquished Turks, we enumerated the qualities of the Turks which were a gift of Islam to them. We wrote previously: "Who would not be proud of a race that is the most virtuous in the world, that is sober, truthful, honest, faithful, brave, gentle, religious, persevering, forbearing, collected and calm, disciplined and devoted, hardy and robust and trustworthy, free from all cunning, low meanness of every kind."

From wild freebooters, Islam changed them into noble empire-builders and perfect gentlemen. The present trend of those who hold authority in modern Turkey, who lay so much stress upon secularism and who do not encourage religious teachings for youth is beyond the comprehension of every well-wisher of theirs. Do they want to make the Turks again a curse as they were before they came under the influence of the Qur-ánic idea of God?

A European writer in *The Post-War World*, 1918—1934, has truly said: "Under the necessity of ridding themselves at once of old shackles the Turks have torn off much of their living flesh doing violence to their own traditional culture." Let us hope and pray that this self-inflicted wound, which is an unnecessarily inflicted wound, *because every beneficial reform could have been undertaken under Islam*, will not become incurable or poisoned by the self-destroying materialism of the West and a nation numbering only six or seven million souls will not cut herself away from a body of six hundred and eighty-five millions spread all over the world who felt a pride in the Turkish nation even when that nation was in a state of decay.

How sincerely the six hundred and eighty-five millions would have welcomed that nation of six millions as their leader and exemplar now that, due to its

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own great leader, Turkey was on the onward march of progress and power, and how big that nation of six millions would herself have felt of its world position as the leader of six hundred and eighty-five millions of people, can well be imagined!

(d) *The Qur-ánic God-idea prompts Social Service.*

One other of the most unique characteristics of Islam is that unlike all other religions it does not lay much stress upon formalities.

The Qur-án plainly warns: "*Laisal birra an tuwallu wujoohakum qiblat mashriqe wal maghribe.*" It is not righteousness (or piety) that you turn your faces towards the East and the West. (II: 177.)

Then, as to belief, the Qur-án expects a Muslim, if he is righteous, to believe in all that every other monotheistic religion offers for belief, and continues the above verse with the words which mean: "But the righteousness is belief in Allah, and the last day, and the angels and the Book and the Prophets."

However, the *mere belief is not enough.* It is no use our saying that we believe in one God, and in all the Prophets sent by Him. God is self-sufficient. To Him it does not matter whether one of His creatures, even though he be that to whom He has given greater intelligence than to any other creature, believes in Him or not. Nor does it help man much whether he accepts the scientific God-idea or not. Whether there is a first cause or not, whether this world was created or evolved, are mere academic questions. They are not of much help to man in his daily life. Nor does our repeating some *mantras*, hymns or prayers, nor our attending temples, synagogues, churches or mosques in itself make us righteous. The crux, the chief point, the essential of being righteous, and pious, and good, is to *act aright* (*Amela Salehan*) and *be a benefactor* (*Mohsinun*) for

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others. So the verse—given above—of the Qur-án describing the qualities of the righteous runs: “*Va atial mal ala hubbehi zavil qurba val yatama val masakeena va ibnassabila vas saileena va firreqab. Va aqamas salata va ataz zakata val mufana be ahdihim iza ahadu vassabireena fel basae vazarrai va heenal base. Olaekal lazina sadaqu va olaika humul muttaqun.*” And give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and the supplicants, and for the captives and keep up prayer and pay *zakat*; and the performers of the promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflict; these are they who are true and these are they who are righteous. (II: 177.)

The Qur-án is replete with such injunctions as above for social service. One other runs as follows: “And serve Allah, and associate naught with Him. And be good to parents, and relatives, and orphans, and the needy, and the neighbour who is a kin of yours, and the alien neighbour, and the companion in a journey, and the wayfarer, and whom your right hand possess (employed or workers). Surely Allah does not love the proud, vainglorious.” (IV: 36.)

What a great and wide field for social service has been indicated in the above passages and in many other places in the Qur-án! In fact the Qur-án has not left out one case which needs sympathy, help and kindness. And what a grand and noble character a man must possess to be called righteous or pious! Mere repetition of certain phrases will not do.

The two words “*Ala Hubbihi,*” for His love, base the love for social service also upon the Qur-anic God-idea. It elevates our social service to the distressed portions of humanity to the highest plane of selflessness. It means that we should do good to others even if we do

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not expect any return from them, even if we have to undergo some kind of sacrifice on our part. We should be good to others for Allah's sake. It is our own Cherisher and Sustainer whose love demands from us goodness to our fellow creatures. It is a duty assigned by God Himself. If we desire that God may be helpful and merciful to us we must be helpful and merciful to our fellow creatures who need our help.

THE STATUS OF WOMAN IN ISLAM

[Speech delivered by Begum Sultan Mir Amiruddin at the Woking Mosque]

Before dealing with the subject of my lecture, I should like to give a brief outline of the general condition of women prevailing throughout the world in ancient times. In primitive times, society, as you know, was founded on the principle of force. The regard paid to the life, possessions and earthly happiness of any classes of persons was measured by what they had the power of enforcing, and every resistance of the weak to authority, on any provocation whatsoever, was regarded as a sin against social obligation. Laws and systems of polity always begin by recognising the relations they find already existing. Thus the physical fact of the domination of man over woman came to be established as an accepted and legal institution.

If we consider social history, we shall find that, in the past, women everywhere, even in countries at the height of their civilisation, have been treated as inferior and unworthy of consideration. Greek culture and Greek mentality were in their time unrivalled, yet Greek philosophers repeatedly declared woman to be a necessary evil, to be tolerated only as a useful household

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drudge. It was customary for Greek women to be confined to their homes, and they were under perpetual tutelage throughout their lives—during childhood under the tutelage of the father; after marriage, under that of the husband; and, on widowhood, under the tutelage of the sons or other male relations. Roman poets and dramatists certainly sang in eulogistic terms about women, but their praises were all centred in the influence of women as mothers. Legally, the Roman woman was, like her Greek sister, under perpetual tutelage and, on marriage, became her husband's property in the truest sense of the term. In Europe, in the Middle Ages, woman who, according to Western theologians, was responsible for man's fall from Heaven, was placed under a ban, was denounced in the strongest terms and was bereft of all rights and privileges. As late as the 18th century, even Rousseau, the radical reformer of his day, regarded woman as merely supplementary to the nature of man.

When we consider the conditions prevailing in Arabia before the advent of Islam, we find that women there were in an even more abject condition. They were looked down upon as the most degenerate section of society. The Arab's abhorrence of womankind was such that often a female child was buried alive as soon as born and, far from possessing any rights of inheritance, women were themselves subject to inheritance and, after a man's death, passed on, like his other goods and chattels, to his heirs. They had no individuality, no status, and no privileges and were constantly maltreated.

Such was the condition of women in Arabia before the advent of the Holy Prophet. Before Muhammad, no Prophet had been moved by the miseries and disabilities of this half-section of the nation; of all the

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Prophets that appeared in the various ages, it was Muhammad alone who realised that social justice required that one half of society should not be left out of consideration; and he proved to be the greatest champion of woman's rights that the world has ever produced. As if by a magic wand, he completely transformed their position and raised them from the lowest step in the social ladder to an equality with men in almost all matters.

The preliminary step taken in this direction was to remove the stigma of responsibility that had hitherto been put upon woman with regard to original sin and the fall of man. Islamic theory about this incident is that both Adam and Eve were simultaneously and equally deceived and that the blame attaches not to Eve alone but to Adam also in like proportion. The Qur-án does not say, as said St. Paul who had a strong antipathy against the female sex, that "Adam was not deceived but the woman being deceived was in transgression." In the Qur-án, Adam bravely confesses: "Our Lord, we have done wrong to ourselves" and he does not say that it was Eve who deceived him. The Qur-ánic text is: "Wa Azallahummush Shaitan," which means Satan made them both fall.

Next, the Holy Prophet undertook to promulgate and to enforce reforms for improving the condition of women. These may be classified as legal and social. Taking first the legal improvements, we find that the Prophet granted to woman rights of inheritance, which entitled her to a share with her brother in the property of her parents. The rule in this regard, however, that a girl's share should be half that of a boy was based on a just comprehension of the relative circumstances of a son and daughter in those days; for a man had to provide for his wife and children whereas a woman, who

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was expected to marry, did not have to shoulder similar burdens. Moreover, the Prophet declared that woman was to be regarded as an entity in herself. On her marriage, she was not to lose her individuality, she was not to cease to be a separate member of society, and her existence did not merge in that of her husband. She was to retain her own complete personality, her own initiative, her own property, and her own name. She was empowered to alienate and dispose of her property herself, to enter into contracts and agreements on her own account, and to sue her debtors in the open court, without the necessity of joining a close friend or under cover of her husband's name. Contrary to such rights granted to Muslim women ages ago, it is interesting to read in Anson's Law of Contract that "in England, until the 15th January, 1883, it was true to state that, as a general rule, the contract of a married woman was void." We must bear in mind that such was the position of the women of Great Britain 54 years ago, despite the considerable improvements that had been effected in their condition by the Married Women's Property Acts of 1870 and 1874. Western civilisation was so jealous of female identity that no sooner was a maiden married than she lost not only her name but also her property. Prior to the above enactments, a woman on marriage, had absolutely no individuality apart from her husband. She was subject to the law of coverture and could not possess any property herself or be party to any action, without the husband or the nearest friend being joined along with her. Thus the Islamic conception of treating the wife as a *femme sole* was far in advance of Occidental juristic conceptions, and it is, indeed, a matter of pride to us that we, Muslim women, have been enjoying for over 1,300 years juridical rights and

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privileges which were granted to the advanced women of the West only during the last century, after the Women's Movement came into being. It is unnecessary to remind you that the rights that women now enjoy in Europe have been wrested from the men after years of toil and suffering on the part of the suffragettes and the advocates of women's rights, and were not conceded to them by their religion.

With regard to a marriage, Muslim woman has been granted the same rights as a man. The Holy Qur-án has specifically declared that women have similar rights to those of the men. According to Islamic law, marriage is deemed to be a contract, *i.e.*, a contract of equal partnership whereby both the husband and the wife have similar rights and duties towards one another. On reaching the age of majority, that is, on being *sui juris* no guardian can marry his female ward without her consent. If a girl is married by a guardian in her minority, she can repudiate the marriage on her attaining majority. Moreover, woman has been placed in a position of advantage with regard to marriage for, when she marries, she is entitled to receive a dower or *mahr* from the husband and this becomes her absolute and independent property. In Islam, there is no dowry system such as is in vogue among the Hindus which necessitates that the father of the bride should make a big present to the bridegroom and which has been the source of much hardship and misery to parents in Hindu society. On the other hand, a Muslim girl receives a present from the husband and thus starts her married life possessed of a certain economic status. With regard to *mahr* or dower, the law is so strict that, if the amount has not been specifically mentioned at the time of the marriage or in the marriage contract, the law presumes it by virtue of the contract itself and grants a sum according to the position of the parties.

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I now wish to deal with a point in regard to which Islam has been the subject of dire attacks—the rule which permits plurality of wives to the extent of four. The greatest mistake that is made by the people of the West in this connection is to suppose that the Prophet Muhammad either adopted or legalised polygamy. Nothing could be further from the truth than this, for polygamy was a recognised institution among all the ancient races. It existed among the Israelites before the time of Moses who continued it without imposing any limit on the number of marriages which a Hebrew husband might contract. It prevailed among the Thracian, Lydian and Pelasgian races to an inordinate extent. Even the Athenians, the most cultured of all the nations of antiquity, practised it and it flourished also in the Roman Empire in a more or less pronounced form. Constantine, the great Emperor, and his son both had several wives, and people were not remiss in following the example of their monarchs. History proves that, in the days of old, polygamy was not considered as reprehensible as it is now. In this connection, I wish to point out that each age has its own standard and its own institutions and that it is not fair to judge of the past by the criterion of the present. The great patriarchs of the Hebrew race, *e.g.*, David, “the man after God’s heart,” who were regarded as exemplars of moral grandeur had a plurality of wives, which was not then considered objectionable but which is revolting to modern ideas. Polygamy has not been prohibited by the Bible. Even St. Augustine seems to have declared that, where it was the legal institution of a country, plurality of wives was not a crime. It was only in the reign of the Emperor Justinian, whose great adviser was an atheist and a pagan, that polygamy came to be forbidden, as a result of the new ideas and the new standards that had been evolved.

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In Arabia, the Prophet Muhammad found polygamy practised to an inordinate extent. Conditions prevalent in that land at that epoch were such that it was impossible for him completely to eradicate that custom all at once. Thus he took steps to minimise the evil by limiting the number of contemporaneous marriages and by making obligatory on the man absolute equality towards all. If we carefully read the passage in the Qur-án which contains the permission to contract four marriages, we find that it is immediately followed by a sentence which cuts off the permission granted. The clause: "You may marry two, three or four wives but not more" is followed by the proviso: "But if you cannot deal justly and equitably with all, you shall marry only one." The word "Adl" which is used in the last sentence signified not only equality of treatment in the matter of food and clothing but complete equality also in affection and esteem. This being not possible with human nature as it is constituted, the above rule amounts in reality to a prohibition. Such a view was propounded as early as the third century of the Hegira, and the Mu'tazalite doctors pointed out that the Qur-án enjoined monogamy and that polygamy is opposed to the teachings of Muhammad. Unfortunately, the persecutions of Mutawakkal prevented them from promulgating their teachings.

It must be borne in mind that the Qur-án has prescribed monogamy as a rule, polygamy only as an exception to be contracted in certain abnormal circumstances. Moreover, it is necessary to remember what were the conditions prevalent in Arabia when such a conditional permission was granted. The passage which permits polygamy, in certain circumstances, was revealed after the Battle of Uhud, where a large number of Muslim men had been slain when trying to vindicate

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their rights of religious freedom. This meant that many women had been rendered widows, and innumerable children orphans. In an age when women were not in a position to earn their own livelihood as they are able to do in the West during the present century, the only solution to their distress and poverty was to get them married and place them under the protection of the men. Since there was a great preponderance of women over men, plurality of wives was the only solution to the acute national problem. The greatest mistake that is made in the West with regard to this matter is that the conditional permission is taken to be an injunction, and it is considered that every Muslim is bound to marry four wives. There could be no graver misconception. In South India, where I have spent over a decade, I have found that polygamy is highly disapproved of and is almost non-existent among the Muslims of culture.

(To be continued.)

CORRESPONDENCE

PLACE DE LA MADELINE,
PARIS.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING

DEAR SIR,

After reading the interesting book you kindly sent me, particularly the edition of the Qur-án, which I had only read in Sales and the Palmer edition in English, and the Savoy and Madree editions in French, I am sending in my Declaration.

If you have the kindness to accept it, would you please let me have your official acknowledgment for the authorities abroad. Also, I should like to attend services at the Mosque here.

Thanking you for the trouble.

Yours faithfully,
JOSEPHINE GLASFR.

CORRESPONDENCE

PLACE DE LA MADELINE,
PARIS.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

Thank you for your kind letter. I am enclosing a photograph, and a short article about myself.

All my life I have studied the different religions although I never had any definite religious instructions, as my family did not belong to any Church, being materialists. Despite this fact, and perhaps because of it, I became interested in the subject.

My family thought all religions were waste of time, and I myself have never been affiliated with any religious organization. As I was not permitted to go to Church, different friends took me to attend services in various denominations, which I enjoyed with the pleasure of a child doing the forbidden, but the idea never appealed to me.

We have a very good library at home, including works on all sorts of philosophy and religions, especially Buddhism and even a Qur-án with the usual unfavourable commentaries. Islam was the only faith not fairly represented. Most books on the subject seem to be written by Christian missionaries.

Two years ago I read "The Ideal Prophet," by Al-Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din. It was the first book I had read on Islam that was favourable to it, and I became very interested. Since then I have been reading in French on the subject, and I have found a number of authors very sympathetic. A few months ago I wrote you for more information, and you kindly sent me the Islamic Review and the books which have meant so much to me. Their clear logic and great simplicity make Islam seem the most suitable spiritual guide.

I intend to start studying Arabic soon. No doubt the Mosque here will recommend me a teacher.

Yours faithfully,
JOSEPHINE GLASER.

MARBLE ARCH,
LONDON, W.I.

THE IMAM,
THE SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE,
WOKING, SURREY.

DEAR SIR,

I am interested in Islam, and would be grateful for further details of its work in England, and also any leaflets, etc., which you may issue. I should like several copies of each, so that I can give them to my friends.

Please inform me how one can join the Brotherhood of Islam—and I should be pleased to have the address of any Branch or Society which holds meetings for study and prayer in London.

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As your expenses for postage must be heavy, I enclose a stamp for your reply.

Thanking you.

J. E. H.

GATERHAM, SURREY.

DEAR SIR,

I would be pleased if you would give me some information about the Mahommedan faith. I am afraid I have a very vague idea of the Tenets of Islam, having been baptised a Christian, but I find it necessary to find some faith other than that of the Church of England.

Yours faithfully,
R. TOBIN.

WANGANUL, N.Z.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

Our divinity master at the school in the course of a divinity lesson said that Islam is now dying, if not a dead religion, and that the Great War caused such a split in it that it will never recover. I do not believe this to be true, and as I believe you would be the most reliable source of information I am writing to you. If you could send me any figures or other information on the subject such as the members who have been on the Haj in pre-war and post-war years, I would be most indebted to you.

A while ago you sent our divinity master a book on Islam, which he ridicules. He also says that Islam has few or no morals, and only involves saying prayers at certain times. This I also know to be not true, but I can give no examples. If you could send me information on that subject also, I would be deeply indebted to you.

Thanking you in advance.

Yours truly,
N. R. C.

TO

MR. N. R. C.
WANGANUL, N. Z.

DEAR SIR,

Very many thanks for your courteous letter.

With regard to the assertion as to the weakness of Islam in these days, I need only quote statements by non-Muslim writers who have recently been writing to the British Press. The statements I refer to are:

(1) Mr. N. P. Macdonald, writing to the *Yorkshire Post*, says: "For every Christian convert in Africa ten turn to Islam. In 1901 there were less than 2,000,000 Muslims in Europe, to-day there are 8,500,000."

CORRESPONDENCE

(2) Christine I. Tingling, in the *Christian* for May 6th, writes: "Islam has spread, and is spreading, among the pagan tribes. A large Mosque at Lagos calls attention to the progress of that religion."

(3) In the *Evening Chronicle* for 5th May 1937, Mr. N.P. Macdonald again writes: "It is calculated that seven or eight persons are converted to the Muslim Faith each week in Great Britain."

As regards the allegation that Islam disregards the question of moral conduct, it is really too preposterous. The whole spirit of the teachings of the Al Qur-án is against an evil or even a loose life.

Thanking you once again for your courtesy.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD,
Imam.

GLASGOW, O.S.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING, SURREY.

DEAR IMAM,

I have read with pleasure many of the interesting articles that appear in the monthly issues of the *Islamic Review* which I appreciate, not only as a casual reader of your paper, but as one who has spent some considerable time in the East, and who has quite a practical knowledge of Islam and its effects on the faithful. I have travelled from Indo-China to Singapore—and so you see I know something about Muslims.

I occasionally read the *Islamic Review* in our Libraries here, but the monthly issues do not come to date, and that spoils one's interest. In my spare time I do quite a lot of writing in verse and prose and have the pleasure of having been recognized by the King on the occasion of the recent Coronation. I see beauty in everything which I portray in verse—praise be to Allah—and I am enclosing for you a small poem that I trust meets with your approval, and would be glad if you would kindly publish the same in the *Islamic Review*. Kindly forward to me some pamphlets on various Islamic subjects. Could you also enlighten me on the percentage of Muslims in Palestine? I also suggest that it is a great pity your paper is not published weekly and kept in the market with other papers. This would be a venture worth trying. I hope to continue correspondence regularly, trusting to have the pleasure of your interest in it.

I remain,
Yours truly,
LESLIE ORD PINDER.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Shameful Ignorance

We become more and more astonished at the appalling ignorance of matters Islamic, not only among the masses of the British people, but also among those who are otherwise quite well informed.

For example, a well-meaning gentleman, Mr. Joseph F. Broadhurst, writing in the *Sunday Mercury* of October 3rd, makes the following statement: "We each have our mediums for approaching the Deity—the Protestants through Jesus Christ, the Latins by way of the Virgin Mary, the Muslims *via* Muhammad, the Jews by a direct course. They take no third-party risk."

It is very disappointing to note that whereas the writer has correct information about Judaism, he apparently knows nothing about Islam.

The principle of direct approach to God is so marked in Islam that far from needing an intercessor it has done away even with priestcraft, the curse of every other religion, not excepting Judaism. It was Muhammad alone, to use the words of Bosworth Smith, who "founded a religion without a Church." Yet we are told that we approach God through the Prophet! No greater travesty of facts can be imagined. We wish the British intelligentsia realised that such ignorance of facts by the members of a Commonwealth which comprises eleven hundred million Muslims, is simply shameful.

A Simple Confession

Further on, however, the same gentleman, in the same article, speaks a simple truth that would do a lot of good to Christendom, if taken to heart. It runs as follows:

"We preach Christianity to the heathen but, in practice, he is treated as our inferior, and cut socially.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

To meet him in the wilds of Africa is one thing, to walk with him in Bond Street or dine with him in Piccadilly is quite a different matter."

Islamic Revival

Writing in the September 30th issue of the *New Chronicle of Christian Education*, Dr. James Kelly makes the following observations on the new religious urge which has seized the Islamic world:

"Then there is the restlessness in the Muslim world. Mohammedanism (Islam) is conscious of a solidarity and unity that does not exist in any other religion. They have their sects and their divisions, but they are conscious of a brotherhood wherever they are. There are at least three centres to-day that keep up the pan-Islamic idea, and are active as never before in defending and propagating the Muslim faith—Mecca, Cairo and Lahore. A violent wave of religious feeling is passing over Egypt and, indeed, the whole Islamic world—so violent that no one knows what the outcome will be."

A Muslim is tempted to add that to a true Christian, anxious for the spiritual safety of humanity, there is nothing to be afraid of in this. Christianity has proved itself unworthy of its self-imposed task of giving a spiritual lead to humanity. It has involved a whole world in spiritual floundering. It is high time for it to retire in favour of the justly indignant and determined action of Islam.

Zionist Religiosity and Jewish Claims on Palestine

In view of the religious claims of the Zionists on Palestine, it is interesting to read the following account of the situation by Estelle Blyth as published in the *Guardian* of October 1st:

"Jerusalem, the capital of Christendom, is also the third Holy City of Islam. Mohammedanism (Islam—

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ED.) is not anti-Christian in Palestine, and all the Christian and Jewish holy places have been safe under its rule. Many of the younger Muslims have read the Gospels, and the Muslims call our Lord "Sidna-Isa" (our Lord Jesus), and the Blessed Virgin, "Sittna Mariam" (our Lady Mary), as the Christians do.

A danger point in Palestine is the lack of religious motive among the Zionist immigrants. Zionism is a political creed; it aims at restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time, and we look in vain for the expression of any religious ideal in the utterances of Zionist leaders: as one of these said to the writer in 1918, "We do not want religion—we want the lamb!" The pre-War British population in Palestine was composed chiefly of religious Jews, often very zealous for their faith, often very anti-Christian. I have seen Polish Jews enter a mission shop, buy or beg a copy of the Gospels, and tear it to pieces in the road, stamping on the name of Jesus Christ that they may defile it. Zionism, as seen in Palestine, is either non-religious or anti-religious; many Zionists are Communists, and these colonists ignore both the Jewish religion and its dietary laws, and have neither synagogues nor Sabbath; the children belong to the community, and parentage is uncertain. All this is an abomination to the Arab, Christian and Muslim, whose lives are governed by the patriarchal habit, no less than to the religious Jew. Memory recalls a lecture on Zionism given before the War by an American Jew of outstanding intellect and goodness, the friend and colleague of Herzl. Questions were allowed afterwards. I remember only two, with their answers:

Q.—"What will be the position of the Arabs in an all-Jewish Palestine?"

WHAT THEY THINK OF US

A.—“We shall always want hewers of wood and drawers of water.”

Q.—“What about the religious side of the Return, the Jewish faith and ritual?”

A.—“That is our weakness; we see no further than the Return.”

* * * *

WHAT THEY THINK OF US

MUSLIM ACTIVITY IN ENGLAND

The Rev. J. W. Sweetman writes in *Methodist Recorder*, dated the 30th August 1937:

“While the Christian world is concerned with the evangelisation of all lands and more and more concerned with the necessity of the evangelisation of Muslims, Islam, as a missionary religion, is intent on the development of its own propaganda in the West. It is not so long ago that there was a widespread appeal in India for the creation of a fund to reconquer Spain for Islam. Claims are made that in Berlin, the United States and England there are many people who are becoming Muslims, and now in the *Islamic Review* for September we find an article by W. B. Bashyr-Pickard, presumably a Muslim convert to Islam, embodying proposals for advance in missionary enterprise in Great Britain.”

The article argues that Islam is a universal religion. “The Holy Qur-án must be the living guide alike for the West as the East.” There are certain obstacles to the acceptance of Islam, and to give it victory certain things are required. Firstly, propaganda—this is partly met by the activities of the Woking Mosque, but these need supplementing. Secondly, the consolidation

ISLAMIC REVIEW

and stabilising of Islam in England. This is being done to some extent by the Muslim Society in Great Britain, but in addition it is suggested that a "Council of Islam in England," be formed, which would fulfil functions to some extent similar to a League of Nations. A third necessity is the creation of a Muslim community in England, dwelling together, living and working together. "Let as many Muslims as can live in or near Woking, or in the vicinity of the New London Mosque" is the fourth necessity in this programme. (The Mosque referred to is the Nizamiyyah Mosque, the foundation of which has recently been laid in South Kensington.) The writer then goes on to point out the desirability of issuing a sort of Manual of the Qur-án for English readers. A further suggestion is a biennial Muslim Conference in London: and finally, "The whole question of Islam is judged, not by a calm unbiased consideration of its intrinsic merits and truth, but upon the actual standard of conduct maintained by those who profess Islam. The attitude I find prevalent is, "If we find the Muslims unreliable, we will not trust Islam. We judge Islam by the conduct of Muslims."

This document is remarkable for the light it throws on Islam as a religio-political organisation. Friends of Christian missions should note that it is the avowed object of certain Muslim propagandists to paralyse Christian enterprise at its base.

WHAT IS ISLAM?

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.

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