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49th Year of Publication

**THE
ISLAMIC
REVIEW**

WOKING

ENGLAND

SEPTEMBER 1961

THREE SHILLINGS

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Between Ourselves

THE COVER

The design of the cover is conceived around the well-known Arabic sentence *'Allah jalla Jalala-hu* (God whose Glory be manifest !), and is the work of an Egyptian Muslim artist.

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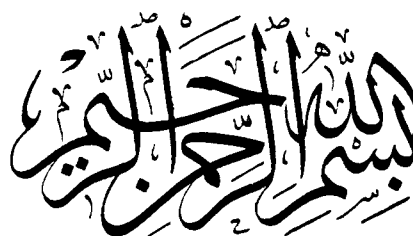
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"Muhammad is...the Messenger of God and the Last of the Prophets..." — THE HOLY QUR'AN 33:40
"There will be no Prophet after me" — THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

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Rabi' al-awwal—Rabi' al-thaani 1381 A.H.

FREEDOM TO CHANGE RELIGION A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT

*Proselytization through material temptations tantamount
to exploitation of poverty*

"NO COMPULSION IN RELIGION" — The Qur'an

The above declaration of the Qur'an gave mankind the Magna Carta of religious freedom at a time when people in Europe burnt heretics alive.

This complete freedom in the matter of religion includes freedom to keep or change religion or belief, inherited or adopted, or to have no religion at all.

This basic human right, however, ceases to be so when prompted by or directed to ulterior ends.

One of the United Nations Covenants on Human Rights, which is still the subject of discussion and is to come up for finalization before the General Assembly, guarantees the individual the freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the right to maintain or change his religion or belief. It prohibits coercion, which in any way impairs the exercise of this freedom.

On principle both these provisions are unexceptionable. So far as Islam is concerned, the Qur'an declared this to be an inalienable right of man at a time when the medieval forebears of our Christian brethren in the West were burning one another for the love of the Lord and His Church. It proclaimed:

"And say (O Prophet): The Truth (of Islam) is from your Lord. So let him who will, believe, and let him who will, disbelieve."¹

The non-coercion clause was also explicitly laid down in the most emphatic and clear-cut language:

Lá ikráha fiddín

"There shall be no coercion in the matter of religion."²

This freedom applies equally to changing one's religion. It is a complete misconception to think that Islam punishes apostasy with death. The misconception arose out of confusing desertion to the enemy camp with change of religion.

Apostasy as such was never penalized. Indeed, the Qur'an is full of references to apostasy where the only punishment for it is one in life-after-death.³ The Jews even made apostasy into a technique to sabotage Islam, the Qur'an tells us.⁴ Accept Islam in the first part of the day, they would say, and renounce it in the latter part, so as to cause demoralization in the ranks of Islam. This would have been too costly a game to play, had death been the penalty for apostasy.

Religion is a matter entirely between man and his Creator, and on the face of it, the individual must have complete freedom to have or adopt whatever religion or belief appeals to him. The complication arises, however, when it comes to the implementation of these otherwise unexceptionable propositions.

To take a concrete instance, during the last two centuries or so of Western colonial domination over the East, the Christian missionaries — barring noble exceptions — went to those lands to promote the interests more of their respective governments than of Jesus Christ's Kingdom of Heaven. By and large, they were the spearheads of colonialism, and the converts they made constituted something like a fifth column in the midst of the alien subject people.

What about this new age, it may be asked, when colonialism has ceased to exist? Is the Christian missionary movement in the East no longer under that cloud? Frankly, it is difficult to say. The struggle for power has perhaps only shifted to a different level, with the backward undeveloped countries of the East still being just pawns in the game. That is what makes proselytization by the Christian missionaries a factor more in this game of power politics than a genuine solicitude for the saving of souls.

All such cases of conversions made with an ulterior motive can hardly be covered by the principle of freedom of religion. When a Christian missionary goes to a starving family with a bag of rice in one hand and the Cross in the other it is hardly a case of *bona-fide* conversion. It is a case of exploiting their poverty.

Discrimination in dispensing educational and medical facilities in favour of converts — such as scholarships, free treatment, etc. — to the exclusion of others is but another form of coercion brought to bear upon them.

In most parts of Africa where proselytization is in full swing, the doors of mission schools are open only to those who adopt Christianity. The same discrimination is at work in services in the Christian-controlled concerns. All these are but various forms of coercion.

This is by no means to belittle the good humanitarian work the Christian missions are doing in the undeveloped countries of the East in fighting poverty, ignorance and disease. Among them are some truly devout and devoted men and women who at considerable personal hardships and risks penetrate into the remotest regions to serve and uplift humanity. All honour to them! The fact remains, however, that in the vast majority of cases, the primary motive is to make a convert, and that is what makes all the difference. It does amount to a subtle form of coercion.

Perhaps it was such abuses of a good principle — the freedom to adopt a religion of one's own choice — that the Su'udi Government representative had in mind when during the discussion at a United Nations Committee level he opposed the proposed provision about freedom to change religion in the Covenant on Human Rights.

It should be in the interest of religion itself to do something to discourage conversions in exchange for material benefits. Crudely put, this kind of conversion at the lowest level amounts to the selling of souls on the part of the converts and the buying of souls on the part of the missionary.

It should be for the Christian missionary societies themselves, even more than the United Nations, to reorientate their proselytization policy. A truly Christian spirit should find expression in selfless service, free even from that last taint of selfishness to add to the number of Christians. To thrust the Sermon on the Mount down the throats of patients in Mission hospitals along with a dose of medicine is to adulterate both religion and the good humanitarian work.

A TRIUMPH FOR AN ISLAMIC PRINCIPLE

"ARABS MUST NOT SHED ARAB BLOOD!"

This prompt forthright reaction of President Gamal 'Abd al-Nasser's mind to the military *coup* in Syria blazes once more a long-forgotten path in their mutual relationship between Muslims and Muslims as laid down by Islam.

Students of Islamic history will recall the Prophet's historical proclamation on the occasion of the *Hajj* (pilgrimage) before a huge concourse of pilgrims on the sacred plain of 'Arafat :

"The blood, property and honour of one Muslim shall be sacrosanct unto another Muslim — as sacrosanct as this sacred day, this sacred month, this sacred place."

This was the Prophet's last public declaration of nation-building importance, and as such his last will and testament, as it were, to his *ummah*. As such he took it to be, and as such he wanted it to be understood. That is why he reinforced it with likening it to the three universally accepted sanctities put together, and enjoined on all listening to this message of his to convey it to all Muslims who were not present there. Indeed it was a message meant for all the succeeding generations of Islam.

In actual practice, however, be it said to the shame of our history, Muslims honoured this last testament of the Prophet more in the breach than observance. But for a brief spell during the régimes of the first two Caliphs, the Muslims' hands are seen at the throats of fellow Muslims. The clannish outlook of the *Jahiliyyah* (pre-Islam) re-appeared, only on the bigger empire level, each dynasty making a bid to capture the Caliphate for itself and oust the other.

The worst offenders in this respect, our Arab friends would pardon us for saying, have been the Arabs to whom fell the leadership of Islam. To them goes the credit of making Islam a most liberalizing and civilizing force of the then known world — the torch-bearer of the Islamic message of human equality, freedom, arts and sciences. But to them also goes most of the responsibility for having undone all that good work through mutual scrambles for power and warfare, resulting in the decline and collapse of the once mighty Caliphate.

It is a happy sign of the times that the Arab world is once more astir with new life-impulses. The outside Muslim world is happy to see these new aspirations pulsating the entire Arab belt from the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic. It is the wish and prayer of all Muslims that this new wave

will be the dawn of a new renaissance of Islam. The path towards that consummation lies along rising above petty domestic rivalries, and thinking in the larger terms of the ties of common brotherhood which Islam has forged between Muslim and Muslim.

President Nasser has certainly risen to the full height of that vision in calling a halt to bloodshed between Arabs and Arabs. In recapturing this lost spirit of the message of Islam will be found the only key to a united and greater Arab world.

BAN THE BOMB DEMONSTRATIONS

London recently was the scene of civil disobedience on the issue of the atom bomb testing. In defiance of the police, demonstrators marched in their thousands to Trafalgar Square to record their protest against this dangerous testing. The renowned philosopher, Lord Bertrand Russell, was the moving spirit of the show.

All honour to the philosopher-humanist for undertaking at an advanced age this crusade against the demon of nuclear weapons which, if unleashed, would spell the end of the present civilization. But may we remind him that the answer lies not in marches to Trafalgar Square, but in marching towards God.

Western civilization is in the grip of the wrath of God. Our ears have ceased to be attuned to such talk. But there are more things in heaven and earth than our little philosophies dream of. When humanity turns away from God, social life loses its centre of gravity, and the result is social storms and upheavals. That is what is wrong with the Western civilization.

The Qur'an contains pointed references to this epoch in human civilization. It will be the handiwork of nations, it says, who ascribe a son to God.⁵ These nations will scale the greatest heights of scientific knowledge and will be intoxicated with pride in their technological achievements.⁶ They will fill the earth with all kinds of amenities and fineries of life.⁷ They will form themselves into *blocs* and will rise against one another like high waves.⁸ And the result? The result will be that what they think to be their wonders of achievement would bring about their destruction, reducing all they have built up to "dust, without herbage".⁹ Is the "dust" a reference to the deadly fall-out? Is the extinction of all vegetation a reference to the scorching of the earth's surface by atomic bombing? *Perhaps!*

The prospects are too grim to be lightly dismissed. Lord Russell is a man of great wisdom. Great social evils

have their roots deep down in the basic values of life. At that level alone can they be tackled. Instead of wasting his time on fruitless marches he would do well to look at it through the glasses of the Qur'an, chapter *The Cave* which gives a vivid picture of the rise of the Western civilization, the doom it is drifting to, and how to avert that doom.

THE CHURCH AND CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

A Convocation of the Church dignitaries in this country urged upon the Government the abolition of capital punishment for murder. One speaker described hanging as "official killing". The mere fact that it is not done in public view does not make it any the less "horrible and degrading". Another reverend gentleman urged that the death sentence was the negation of the "Christian faith which says that there is no man in a situation that is irredeemable". There were voices of opposition to it. Society had to be protected. The fact that we saw the man in the dock and the victim was not before our eyes made us take a sentimental view. A third voice said it was not such a frightful thing, after all, to end someone's life. "Intellectually is it so frightful to know that you're going to meet your Maker in a certain definite time?" From the Christian point of view it was not, he urged.

This is one of the cases where for sure guidance man must turn to Divine revelation. Left to superficial human thinking, much can be said on both sides. The same uncertainty is reflected in the above arguments. If the Christian code of non-resistance to evil is taken to its logical conclusion, there should be no police, no army, no courts, no prisons, no convicts. Perhaps the highway robber who robs you of your coat would merit the award of your robe too? All that is visionary talk. Legislation, Divine or temporal, must take stock of the realities of life. The Church prohibits divorce. But the realities of life forced on Christian societies the wisdom of the Qur'anic provision of divorce in extreme cases. In the matter of capital punishment, this Christian country will do well to take inspiration from the revealed legislation in the Qur'an, which, as a principle, emphatically not only lays down capital punishment for murder, but goes on to say that in this lies "life for you",¹⁰ that is to say, the security of social life. Of course, each case of murder has to be judged on its own merits, and in some circumstances, this extreme penalty will not be necessary. The Qur'an makes due provision for such cases as well, laying down substitutes for it. But to remove capital punishment altogether from the Statute Book would be tantamount to the murder of society as a whole to save one man.

1 The Qur'an, 18 : 38.

2 *Ibid.*, 2 : 256.

3 *Ibid.*, 2 : 117; 3 : 85, 86, 88, 89; 5 : 54; 10 : 106.

4 *Ibid.*, 3 : 71.

5 *Ibid.*, 18 : 4.

6 *Ibid.*, 18 : 104.

7 *Ibid.*, 18 : 7.

8 *Ibid.*, 18 : 99.

9 *Ibid.*, 18 : 8.

10 *Ibid.*, 2 : 178-179.

ISLAM ANSWERS MOST POWERFUL DEMAND OF THIS AGE

by Dr. ARNOLD TOYNBEE

The present prospects of the world's chief traditional religions depend on what these can do for mankind in the age through which we are now living.

The two most widespread and most insistent present-day demands are, perhaps, those for equality of status and for a rise in the standard of living (spiritual as well as material). The two outstanding new features in mankind's material situation are, perhaps, "the annihilation of distance" and the exodus from the countryside into the cities. Let us see what the religions and their rivals, the modern ideologies, say and do about these great and urgent present-day issues.

The demand for equality seems to be the most powerful demand of this age, in the sense that it over-rides other demands when these conflict with it. When people are faced with a choice between furthering social and cultural interests and gaining their political objectives, they almost always give their political objectives the priority.

The present political demand for equality meets one everywhere. Inside each country there is a demand for equality as between classes; on the world-wide scale there is a demand for equality as between races and civilizations — above all, for equality between the great non-Western majority of mankind and a Western minority that has been dominant in the world for the last few hundred years.

This issue is evidently a touchstone for the respective prospects of Hinduism and Islam. Hinduism, which is so liberal-minded intellectually by comparison with Judaic religions, compares badly with Islam in its attitude on the social question that the present generation of mankind has most at heart. The institution of caste is the very core of Hinduism's social structure; and caste is the evil against which the under-dog is up in arms today in South Africa, Kenya, Algeria and "the Old South" of the United States of America.

Caste is, of course, being fought today — and fought courageously, in India too. Gandhi declared war on it, and the present régime at New Delhi is faithfully following the lead that he gave. But in India this is an uphill fight, just because the inspiration behind it does not come from India's own traditions. It comes from the West and its origin is Christian, though it has been conveyed to Indian hearts and minds through a secular liberal Western channel.

On the other hand, equality and fraternity were the practice of Islam at least a thousand years before they

became slogans of the French Revolution. The word "Islam" means "submission" (to God, not to man); and a common submission to God, as Muslims conceive of Him, makes all Muslims feel like brothers.

Islam has learnt from Judaism to believe not only that God is One but also that He is merciful and compassionate. This belief about God requires brotherhood among His worshippers; and the Islamic sense of brotherhood overcomes race-feeling. Unlike a Brahman or a white South African or a white Southerner in the United States of America, a white Muslim will accept a black Muslim as his son-in-law, and will not resent his black colleague's rising above him to the highest positions in society if he has the necessary ability.

How does Christianity stand on this issue? If the inspiration behind the Indian liberals' current war against caste is Christian in its ultimate origin, as has been suggested above, this would be a natural consequence of Christian belief. If Muslims are united in a common submission to One God, Christians ought to be united in a common gratitude to One Saviour.

In theory, this is indisputable. But what about practice? If you want to see examples of Christian practice on this issue that come up to the Islamic standard, visit some of the American Roman Catholic Christian countries into which Christianity was introduced by Spanish and Portuguese conquerors and colonists.

Legacy from Muslim age of Spanish history

The Mexican shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe can be cited as an example to illustrate the survival of primitive rites embedded in a higher religion. But the same shrine also illustrates the power of a higher religion to overcome the antipathy between different races, even when one of the races has recently imposed itself on the other by a brutal conquest.

The Virgin of Guadalupe is the patroness of the present united Mexican nation, in which the descendants of the Spanish conquerors have fused with the descendants of their native Mexican victims. Their common cult of her has drawn them together, and no wonder, for according to the story she made her miraculous appearance to a native Mexican convert in the first generation after the conquest, and she made it as a native Mexican, with copper-coloured skin and pre-Columbian dress.

When the Spanish ecclesiastical authorities recognized the authenticity of the miracle, the first step towards reconciliation and union had been taken.

This Hispanic-American sense of Catholic Christian fraternity is veritably Islamic. Is it an actual legacy to Hispanic Christianity from the Muslim age of Spanish history? Or is it something inherent in Catholic Christianity itself?

In any case the Vatican today is being very liberal in its treatment of non-Western Catholic Christians. It is taking every opportunity of promoting Asians and Africans to positions of honour and responsibility in the Catholic hierarchy, both in their own dioceses and in Rome itself.

Unhappily, the record of the Protestant Churches on this issue is not so good, and it seems to be at its worst among Calvinist Protestants of Teutonic speech and Nordic race. Fanatical race-feeling is perhaps a logical application to current politics of the Augustinian doctrine of predestination. This doctrine combines the Jewish notion of a "chosen people" with the Hindu institution of caste, and it stamps the individual soul with a caste-mark for all eternity.

It is less easy to see why one should succumb to race-feeling because one happens to have been born with fair hair and blue eyes, and to have learnt to speak Dutch or English as one's mother-tongue. But the fact is there, and it is as awkward as it is ugly.

The recent dominance of the West has been largely a dominance of the English-speaking and Dutch-speaking peoples. Now that this Western dominance is being challenged, the violence of those people's race-feeling is an explosive element in a situation that is, at best, very dangerous. So we may be thankful that Islam and Hispanic Catholicism are at work in the world. They are doing an invaluable public service, and if they have their reward it will indeed have been well earned.

The demand for equality of status has also given an opportunity to the modern ideology of nationalism. This reactionary Western political idea has been seized upon as an anti-Western weapon by Asian and African peoples in their present struggle to shake off Western domination. But nationalism, unlike Islam and Christianity, makes for the division, not for the unity, of mankind; and because of this, nationalism has to contend with the unification of the world on the material plane through "the annihilation of distance" that has been achieved by modern Western technology.

Nationalism and technology

Nationalism and technology are, in fact, in head-on collision with each other; and it seems safe to predict that, in this conflict, technology, not nationalism, is going to be the winner. If so, nationalism's prospects are unpromising on a long view, in spite of all its present sound and fury. Its expectation of life can hardly be much longer than that of its arch-enemy "colonialism", and this dragon is now obviously in its death agonies. If this spells the doom of nationalism too, we need not lament.

On the other hand, non-Communists would be deluding themselves if they were to let themselves imagine that the prospects of Communism are equally poor. Unlike nationalism, but like Islam and Christianity, Communism has a message for the whole of mankind, not just for this or that self-designated "chosen people". Communism swims with,

not against, the tide, making for world-unity, which has been set going by "the annihilation of distance".

Promise to give equality

Communism promises to give the underdog the tools both for winning equality and for raising his standard of living by his own efforts. Communism, therefore, has an emotional attraction for peoples with memories — or legends — of a great past who have recently been humiliated by sensational defeats in their encounters with the formidable West.

The Russians were humiliated by their utter failure to hold their own against Germany in the First World War. The Chinese were humiliated by being pushed about for a century by upstart barbarians. The first shock to their self-esteem was their defeat by the British in the "Opium War"; the last straw was their experience in the present generation of being bullied by the Japanese. These humiliations throw some light on the Russian and the Chinese people's present acquiescence in a Communist régime.

Moreover, Communism attracts the underdog, not only by promising to help him to get even with the West, but also by offering him a short cut to this goal. An authoritarian régime can produce immediate effective results with a smaller staff of efficient and public-spirited men and women than a democratic régime can.

A scarcity of people with the needful abilities, experience and ideals is one of the worst handicaps of backward countries. Under a Communist régime this handicap is not quite so paralyzing as it is under a democratic one. Hence backward peoples are tempted to try Communism if they have previously tried democracy and have failed to make this work. Since most peoples in the world today are relatively backward, this is yet another opportunity for Communism.

Inadequacy of Communism

But what about Communism's inadequacy on the personal side of life? The traditional religions still hold the field here. They alone offer the individual "a very present help" in his personal troubles. In face of the troubles of personal life, equality is abstract and material prosperity is irrelevant.

So will not the religions have the last word as against Communism? And does not this mean that they can serve as powerful anti-Communist forces in the present cold war?

This sounds plausible, but it is surely an illusion. The religions' appeal to the individual certainly does give them a staying power that Communism lacks. It indicates that they are likely still to be on the map when Communism has vanished.

But it does not mean that they can be mobilized effectively for anti-Communist political warfare. At any rate, in the past the religions have always lost their power when they have gone into politics. Their stronghold is in the inner life of the individual soul. When they desert this for the political arena, they become impotent shorn Samsons.

The religions will probably outlive Communism, but in the short run they cannot be employed to arrest its political advance. If Communism were to win a temporary political

triumph, the religions would, no doubt, survive; but they would survive underground, in the catacombs.

Urban melting-pot

In our age the majority of the human race are becoming townspeople instead of peasants, and at the same time the face of the planet is being reduced to the dime of a single city by the continuing improvements in the material means of communication. The whole world, in fact, has now become an urban melting-pot in which the former local tribes are being fused into one family.

How is the social revolution going to offset social organization and the ideologies with which this is bound up? This issue can be put dramatically in terms of present-day Jewry. For the Jews — and, by implication, for the rest of us — which is the “wave of the future”? The Jewish Dispersion that has maintained itself in the wide world since the sixth century B.C.? Or the Jewish State re-established in Palestine in 1948?

It is no accident that the Jewish Dispersion was created by a political upheaval in the Fertile Crescent. This region was the original cradle of man's now world-wide civilization, and events that have finally occurred on a world-wide scale have often occurred locally in the precocious Fertile Crescent many hundreds or even thousands of years in advance.

The Jewish Dispersion is the oldest one now extant, but it has long since ceased to be unique. As the twin processes of urbanization and fusion have gone further and have spread wider, communities living as scattered minorities have become more and more frequent.

The Parsee (Zoroastrian) Dispersion is the next oldest to the Jewish and the most like it. But today there are many more: for instance, a Nestorian one (with its centre now in Chicago instead of Kurdistan), an Armenian one, a Lebanese one, a Scottish one, an Irish one, and so on.

Is not the mobile, urban Dispersion likely to replace the peasant community, tied to one patch of soil, as the standard pattern of social organization? In a society that has become mobile and urban, a dispersion is in its element, whereas a local peasant community is here an anachronism.

In the ancient cradle of civilization, the Ottoman Empire organized itself as a set of communities intermingled in dispersion as long as the fifteenth century. May not this Ottoman structure of society perhaps give us a preview of its future structure throughout the world?

While it seems probable that the traditional religions will succeed in maintaining their separate identities, it does not seem probable that they will also retain their separate geographical domains. Judaism and Zoroastrianism have lost theirs already. The other four religions may be expected to go the same way.

Choosing own religion

If this happens, a human being's religion will no longer be settled for him automatically in infancy, as it usually has been so far, by the accident of his birthplace and parentage. He will choose his religion for himself when he is grown up. In the Western world, more and more people are already making their own personal choice between the various Western Christian sects and non-Christian ideologies. As the process of dispersion and fusion advances the field of choice seems likely to widen. We seem to be on the verge of a competition between religions, ideologies and philosophies that will repeat, on a world-wide scale, the competition in the Roman Empire during the first three centuries of the Christian Era.

We know how the competition ended in that case. In our own case, we are still too near the beginning of the play to be able to guess what its denouement is going to be. We can, however, feel fairly sure that during the next act at least, the traditional religions will continue to play leading parts. Man will cling to them, since man is born to trouble.

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THROUGH THE AGES

by MUHAMMAD RAFEEQ

"And certainly We sent to every nation a messenger, saying: Serve God and shun the devil. Then of them was he whom God guided, and of them was he whose remaining in error was justly due. So travel in the land and see what was the end of the rejectors" (The Qur'an, 16:36).

"And certainly, We sent messengers before thee — of them are those We have mentioned to thee and of them are those We have not mentioned to thee" (*Ibid*, 40:78).

.

O man, reflect upon the ages past,
Ere since the time your Grandpa fell
From Eden's life of Paradise
To thorns and thistles, and fiery hell.¹

The mercy of your Lord was great,
He turned to you His Gracious glance.
Forgave and mended your evil state
And gave you yet another chance.²

The world He gave you still to rule,
Free-will and senses, eyes and tongue.
His prophets came at different times
With guidance showing right and wrong.³

For you He made all things on Earth
For ease and pleasure; He created all.
Veiled or visible, all forces around
Are made subservient to your call.⁴

Mountains and trees and plants and stones,
In obeisance to God they all do fall.
O man, beware what thanks you've shown
To your Lord Who made you king of all.⁵

With Noah you dealt unjustly proud,
And promulgated a rebellious race.
You mocked and scoffed the warner's words
And preferred to be drowned in utter disgrace.⁶

Then yet another chance to you He gave,
That you may amend in what you strayed.
How much you've done can best be known
By epitaphs you left engraved.

Abraham, the father of Israel's clan,
You strove to burn in blazing fire.
God saved him from your horrid plan,
Frustrating your vile infernal desire.⁷

In the rod of Moses God's power you saw,
As it swallowed up the enchanter's lie.⁸
When the sea separated, you witnessed with awe
How Pharaoh's host did drown and die.⁹

From slaves He made you nations great,
And freed you from Pharaoh's iron hand.
You took the covenant; He gave the Law,
And led you safe to the Promised Land.

Shall I recall the Dwellers of the Cave¹⁰
How they fled from the king's wrath in horror.
Or the people of Lot — their immoral craze
And the destruction of Sodom and Gommorah.¹²

Can one recall without bitter tears
What befell the tribes of 'Ad and Samood?¹³
How they exceeded the bounds without any fears,
How they dealt with brothers Salih and Hud.¹⁴

As the years rolled on, depraved you became,
Aiding all manners of evil and strife.
When Jesus the meek arose to fame,
You sought to take his very life.¹⁵

Ah! had you but known the plans of God,
In saving Mary's humble son.
You will hang your heads for wicked deeds
Disgraceful to yourselves alone.¹⁶

The Hindus had their Avatars;
Confucius came as China's grace;
Gautama filled the Buddhist's heart,
The Divine light struck every place.¹⁷

But alas! when warners had reached every clime,
And heavenly bliss on earth should reign.
The records show 'twas not yet time,
For the flesh could not its desires chain.

The world again took a backward trail,
All forms of virtues had dwindled and waned.
With the vices of all the ages combined,
In wild pandemonium disorder reigned.¹⁸

Europe was groaning under her ages dark,
Asia was passing a long and awful night.
Humanity had become one corrupted mass,
The world was wrecked in hopeless plight.

Who could break the idols and the gods?
Who could dare to change the corrupted scene?
Who alone could face such lawless odds?
Amina's son they say was al-Amin.¹⁹

Like a meteor on a dreary night,
Muhammad came as Rasul Allah.
From Hira's cave, like a thunderbolt,
He rocked the Arabian peninsula.

He was the *Namus* of Moses of old ;
 He was the Promise of Ishmael's seed.
 Comforter he was whom Jesus foretold,
 A Mercy from God — the age's need.

He laid his life for humanity's cause,
 Humanity's cause was the warp of his soul.
 He pledged to regain humanity's fall,
 Humanity's rise was the woof of his soul.

So said, so done, through thick and thin,
 Through perils and persecutions unknown before.
 Through torment and oppression and torture and pains,
 He onward strove and reached his score.

Woman he raised from chattel to queen ;
 The slave was released from the owner's claw.
 Man had reclaimed his Angelic being.
 Humanity started its uphill tour.

A universal prophet Muhammad was,
 He taught about a Universal God.
 He preached the Religion of universal peace,
 His legacy left is a Universal code.

Such is the story related of old,
 How man evolved in his primitive days ;
 Though yet it cannot be safely told
 He's free from apish ancestral ways.

- 1 Fall of Adam. The Qur'an, 7:22.
- 2 Allah forgives Adam. *Ibid.*, 2:37.
- 3 Adam created to rule. *Ibid.*, 2:30.
- 4 Uniformity in nature. *Ibid.*, 13:3, 4.
- 5 Obeisance to Allah. *Ibid.*, 13:15.
- 6 History of Noah. *Ibid.*, ch. 71.
- 7 Abraham saved from fire. *Ibid.*, 21:68.
- 8 Moses and the enchanters. *Ibid.*, 7:109.
- 9 Pharoah and host are drowned. *Ibid.*, 10:90.
- 10 Moses given the Law. *Ibid.*, 7:154.

- 11 Dwellers in the Cave. *Ibid.*, 18:9.
- 12 Story of Lot. *Ibid.*, 11:77.
- 13 History of Ad. *Ibid.*, 11:50.
- 14 History of Salih. *Ibid.*, 11:61.
- 15 Jesus saved from death. *Ibid.*, 4:157.
- 16 Jesus promised deliverance. *Ibid.*, 4:54.
- 17 Messenger to every nation. *Ibid.*, 10:47.
- 18 Corruption rampant. *Ibid.*
- 19 Prophecy of Ahmad. *Ibid.*, 61:6.

THE POWER OF UNITY

by NORMAN LEWIS

Materialism has found the power of unity in the U.S.S.R. And, in spite of outward religious show, the same can be said for the U.S.A. The true motive of the people of the United States is not to serve God but to increase luxury and multiply wealth. "The Good Life" to the average American does not mean a life lived close to God but plenty to eat supplemented by television and water-skiing.

What would it mean to the world if suddenly upon the earth's surface should appear an empire of comparable size and population devoted completely not to wealth and happiness but to God?

There is only one religion which is purely the religion of God. In this world of contending giants, what would be the repercussion upon mankind if there would come into being a unified earthly power whose fundamental declaration is "There is no deity worthy of worship except God, and Muhammad is the messenger of God"?

The U.S.S.R. is outwardly atheistic. The U.S.A. is outwardly "God's Country". "In God we trust" is engraved upon its coins but not upon the hearts of its people. There is much more church attendance than the honest facing of one's soul and one's God.

Is it not necessary, for the sake of God Himself and His kingdom, that some band of people should prove loyal to His cause?

The one thing most lacking and most needed on earth today is that flame in the hearts of men which will establish His kingdom in a reality as striking as the U.S.S.R. but on a different basis.

Why cannot the future political maps of the world show an unbroken domain from Morocco to West Pakistan with the word "Islam" written across it, startling all men with

the realization that the Kingdom of God is not a vague dream but a present reality? Then those who believe in God throughout the world would see for the first time God's kingdom come in actuality, a potent force, a promise for the future, a challenge to the forces of materialism and greed.

This Kingdom of God is no farther from us than the idea within our own minds and the firm belief that it is possible.

In the face of atheism, materialism, the love of luxury and ease and passive entertainment, the citizens of such an empire should show mankind that the striving for an ideal alone gives life its meaning, that there is no joy but the joy of effort in a Divine cause.

Too long have we slumbered. Let us begin the task of unification until *Islam* is as much a reality as the U.S.S.R.

"And the angel of God spake unto Hagar in the desert: 'Arise; take up the child and hold him in thy hand, for I will make of him a great nation'."

Why hesitate? Political unification has moved rapidly in other parts of the world, sustained by other ideologies. Why does not the political integration of Islam take place now?

The capital of this empire would probably be at the confluence of the Tigris and the Euphrates, and it would be named the City of God.

Liquor, which has taken Western civilization down into the gutter in drunkenness and degradation, would not be known. Neither would the mockery of religious ceremonial, nor the falsehood of the worship of a man. Only God would be worshipped, and not in pomp and hypocrisy but in clean deeds and honest government. It is the only hope of the world. Are we going to fail mankind?

EXALTATION OF JESUS¹

by SHAIKH MAHMUD SHALTUT, Rector of Al-Azhar, Cairo

There is nothing in the Qur'án, nor in the sacred Traditions of the Prophet, which authorizes the correctness of the belief that Jesus was taken up to heaven with his body and is alive there even now and would descend therefrom in the latter days.

The Qur'anic verses about Jesus show that God had promised to cause him to die a natural death, then to exalt him and save him from the mischief of the disbelievers, and this promise had certainly been fulfilled. His enemies could neither kill him nor crucify him, but God completed the span of his life and then caused him to die.

A letter was received by the Professors of the great Azhar from Abdul Karim Khan working under the command of the Allies in the Middle East containing an enquiry :

“Is Jesus dead or alive according to the Qur'án and the Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad? What do you think of a Muslim who does not believe that he is still alive and what about one who disbelieves in him, in case he comes to the world for a second time?”

This question was referred to the Senior Professor Shaikh Mahmud Shaltut, a member of the Senate of the learned Professors, who replied as follows :

* * * *

Now, the Qur'án mentions the Prophet Jesus in reference to his fate at the hands of his people in three chapters :

1. In the chapter *The Family of Amran*, where it is stated :

“But when Jesus perceived disbelief on their part, he said : Who will be my helpers in God's way? The disciples said : We are God's helpers ; we believe in God, and bear thou witness that we are submitting ones. Our Lord, we believe in that which Thou hast revealed and we follow the messenger, so write us down with those who bear witness. And (the Jews) planned and God (also) planned. And God is the best of planners. When God said : O Jesus, I will cause thee to die and exalt thee in My presence and clear thee of those who disbelieve and make those who follow thee above those who disbelieve to the day of Resurrection. Then to Me is your return, so I shall decide between you concerning that wherein you differ ” (3 : 51-55).

2. In the chapter *The Women*, God says :

“And for their saying : We have killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the Messenger of God, and they killed him not, nor did they cause his death on the cross, but he was made to appear to them as such. And certainly those who differ therein are in doubt about it. They have no knowledge about it, but only follow a conjecture, and they killed him not for certain ; nay, God exalted him in His presence. And God is ever Mighty, Wise ” (4 : 157-158).

3. And in the chapter *The Food*, God says :

“And when God will say : O Jesus, son of Mary, didst thou say to men, Take me and my mother for two gods besides God? He will say : Glory be to Thee! it was not for me to say what I had no right to (say). If I had said it, Thou wouldst indeed have known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy mind. Surely Thou art the great Knower of the unseen. I said to them naught save as Thou didst command me : Serve God, My Lord and your Lord ; and I was a witness of them so long as I was among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die Thou wast the Watcher over them. And Thou art Witness of all things ” (5 : 116-118).

* * * *

These are the verses of the Qur'án wherein all that Jesus experienced at the hands of his people is related.

In the last verse (verse from *The Food*) there is a mention of an incident of the hereafter where God will ask Jesus concerning himself and his mother being worshipped in the world. And Jesus in reply would say that he did not say aught to them except what God commanded him, viz., “Serve God, my Lord and your Lord” ; and he kept a watch over them, during the period of his stay among them and that he did not know what they did after “God caused him to die”.

The word *tawaffa* is used in so many places of the Qur'án in the sense of death that it has become its foremost meaning. This word is used in a different sense only when there is a clear indication as to this other meaning : “Say : The angel of death, who is given charge of you, will *cause you to die* ” (32 : 11). “(As for) those whom the angels *cause to die* while they are unjust to themselves ” (4 : 97) ; “And if thou couldst see when the angels *cause to die* those who disbelieve ” (8 : 50) ; “Our messengers *cause him to die* ” (6 : 61) ; “And of you is he who is *caused to die* ” (22 : 5) ; “Until death takes them away ” (4 : 15) ; “*Make me die* a Muslim and join me with the righteous ” (12 : 101).

¹ Translated by S. Muhammad Tufail. The original *Fatwa* appeared in *Al-Risalah* weekly, Cairo, on 11th May 1942, Vol. 10, No. 462, p. 515. This has now also been included in a collection of Mahmud Shaltut's *Fatáwa*, published recently from Cairo.

The word *tawaffaitani* in this particular verse primarily means natural death which is known to everybody. The Arabic-speaking people understand this and only this meaning of the word with reference to the context. Therefore, had there been nothing else to indicate the end of Jesus in this verse even, it would have been improper and wrong to say that the Prophet Jesus was alive, and not dead.

There is no room for the view that the word *Wafát* here means the death of Jesus after his descent from the heavens — a view held by some who think that Jesus is still alive in the heavens and would come down from there in the latter days. For, this verse clearly denotes the relation of Jesus with his own people and not with any other people of the latter days. The people of the latter age would be admittedly the followers of Muhammad and not of Jesus.

However, in the chapter *The Women* the words: "*Nay: God exalted him in His presence*" have been interpreted by some, nay most of the commentators, as "*raising him up to the heavens*". They observe that the likeness of Jesus was cast on somebody else and Jesus himself was lifted up to the heavens. He is alive there and would descend therefrom in the latter ages. Thereafter he would kill the swine and break the cross. And they base their theory:

Firstly, on those reports in which the descent of Jesus is mentioned after the (appearance of) Anti-Christ. But these reports are at variance with and contradictory to one another in their words and meanings. The difference is so great that there is no room for any reconciliation among them. The scholars of Hadith have plainly stated this fact. Moreover, they are reported by Wahhab Ibn Munnabbih and Ka'b al-Ahbār, who were converts from the people of the Book. And their status is well-known to the critics of Traditions.

Secondly, on a report by Abu Huraira that mentions the descent of Jesus. If this report is proved to be true, even then it is only an isolated report. And there is a consensus of opinion of the scholars of Hadith that such isolated reports can neither be made the basis of a doctrinal belief, nor can they be trusted with regard to the things unseen.

Thirdly, on the report about *Mī'rāj* (i.e., the Ascension of the Prophet to the heavens), which narrates that when the Prophet went up and began to have the gates of the heavens opened one after another and entered them as they were opened, he saw Jesus and his cousin John in the second heaven. For us, it is enough to prove the weakness of this evidence, that many interpreters of the traditions have taken this contact of the Prophet with other prophets to be a spiritual phenomenon and not a physical one (*vide Fath-ul-Bāri, Zād-ul-Ma'ād*, etc.).

Strangely enough they interpret the word *rafa'* occurring in this verse in the light of the report concerning the *Mī'rāj*, and deduce therefrom that Jesus was also bodily raised up. And there are others who regard the meeting of the Prophet with Jesus to be a physical one on the basis of this verse (i.e., *Nay! God exalted him in His presence*). Thus, when these people interpret the Hadith, they quote this verse to support their imaginary meaning of the Hadith; and, while interpreting the verse, they cite this Hadith to support their imaginary explanation of the verse.

When we turn to the revealed words of God "*I will cause thee to die and exalt thee in My presence*," in the chapter *The Family of Amran*, and "*Nay, God exalted him*

in His presence," in the chapter *The Women*, we find that the latter verse fulfils the promise that was made in the former one. This promise was about the death and exaltation of Jesus Christ, and his purification from the false charges of the disbelievers. Thus, even if the latter verse had mentioned just his *rafa'* towards God and had no reference to his death and purification from the false charges, even then it should have been our duty to take note of those matters that are referred to in the former verse; so that both verses might be reconciled.

The actual meaning of the verses, therefore, is that God caused Jesus to die and exalted him and sanctified him from the charges of his enemies. Alwasi has interpreted this verse (*inni mutawaffi-ka*) in many ways. The clearest of these interpretations is that "I will complete the lease of your life and will cause you to die and will not let those people dominate over you who try to kill you". For, completing the period of his life and causing him to die a natural death indicates that Jesus was saved from being slain and from the mischief of his enemies. Obviously *rafa'*, after death, cannot mean any physical ascension, but only exaltation in rank, especially when the words "*I will clear thee of those who disbelieve*" are present along with it. This shows that it is a question of spiritual honour and exaltation. The word *rafa'* has occurred many times in the Qur'an conveying this sense, i.e., "In houses where God has permitted to be exalted (*turf'a'a*)" (24:36); "We exalt in degree (*narfa'u*) whom We please" (6:84; 12:76); "And exalted (*rafa'nā*) for thee thy mention" (94:4); "And We raised him (*rafa'nāhu*) to an elevated state" (19:57); "God will exalt those of you who believe . . ." (58:11), etc. Thus the expressions "*I will exalt you in My presence*" and "*Nay! God exalted him in His presence*" would yield a sense similar to the one when we say "So and so met the companion on High", or "God is with us", or "With the Powerful King". All these expressions signify only shelter, protection and coming under His holy care. So one fails to understand how the word *heaven* is deduced from the word *towards Him (ilaih)*. By God! it is an outrage on the plain exposition of the Qur'an. And such an offence is committed simply on account of belief in such stories and narratives which are devoid of accuracy, not to speak of their established authenticity.

Moreover, Jesus was merely an apostle, and apostles before him had passed away. When the people of Jesus became hostile to him, he, like other prophets, turned towards God and He saved him by His power and wisdom, and frustrated the plans of his enemies. The same point has been elaborated in the following verse: "When Jesus perceived disbelief on their part, he said: Who will be my helpers in God's way . . .", i.e., in this verse God says that His plans were more subtle and effective than the plans of the disbelievers. As against the measures of protection and security from God, the attempts of these people against the life of Jesus were frustrated. In the verse: "When God said, O Jesus, I will cause thee to die and exalt thee in My presence and clear thee of those who disbelieve," God gives the glad tidings that He will save Jesus from the machinations of his enemies and that ultimately their plottings will end in futility and that He will complete the period of his life till he dies a natural death, neither being slain nor yet crucified, and then He will exalt him in His presence.

These verses which relate to the fate of Jesus at the hands of his people will invariably yield this meaning to

their reader, provided he knows the practice of God to which He resorts for the protection of His prophets at the time of the aggression of enemies, and provided his mind is free from all those fictitious reports that can in no case be placed as an authority over the Qur'án. Now, I cannot understand how the snatching of Jesus from the hands of his enemies and lifting him up to the heavens can be called a subtle plan and a better one when it was neither in their power nor in the power of anybody else to counter it. In fact, there can be one "plan" (*makr*) as against another plan when it is contrived in a parallel manner not deviating from the natural course of God in such matters. We have a parallel instance in what is said by the Qur'án with respect to the Prophet Muhammad: "And when those who disbelieved devised plans against thee that they might confine thee or slay thee or drive thee away — and they devised plans and God, too, had arranged a plan; and God is the best of planners" (8 : 30).

To sum up :

1. There is nothing in the Qur'án, nor in the sacred traditions of the Prophet, which authorizes the correctness of the belief to the contentment of the heart that Jesus was

taken up to the heaven with his body and is alive there even now, and would descend therefrom in the latter days.

2. The Qur'anic verses about Jesus show that God had promised to cause him to die a natural death, then to exalt him and save him from the mischief of the disbelievers, and this promise had certainly been fulfilled. His enemies could neither kill him nor crucify him, but God completed the span of his life and then caused him to die.

3. Any person who denies his bodily ascent and his continuance in physical existence in the heavens and his descent in the latter ages, does not deny a fact that can be established by clear conclusive arguments. Thus he is not outside the faith of Islam and it is absolutely wrong to consider him an apostate. He is perfectly a Muslim. If he dies, he dies the death of a believer, and, like believers, his funeral prayer must be said and he must be buried in the Muslim cemetery. His faith is decidedly faultless in the eyes of God. And God knows the conditions of His servants.

And as to the other part of the question that supposing Jesus returns to the world, then how should a disbeliever in him be regarded — after the above statement of ours, this question does not arise at all. "And God is the best Knower."



HOW I BECAME A MUSLIM

by BASHIR AHMAD

"I am convinced that the simplest human mind is ultimately bound to grasp the truth of Islam and that, in a world divinely created by Allah, only those who will allow their innermost urge to draw themselves to Allah and to submit to His Will can find that happiness and peace which is a prerequisite for the survival of present-day society."

From the age of a young boy I grew up with a sense of unbelief in religion, due mainly to a rebellion against the social deportment forced upon me by parents, relatives and teachers. The moment I was able to think for myself I clearly saw that the precepts of Christianity, which purported to be messages of love and charity, in reality had no claim to such at all, as the social gulf between black and white and Christian and non-Christian was so immense that it belied the very foundation of Christianity. To try and break this gulf would have meant to become an outcast.

Soon after my degree I left Holland, my birthplace, and found myself in Palestine in the service of the British Government. There I had the first contact with Islam, but at that time my mind was not yet matured enough to grasp

the significance of a religious background. As I went on to Baghdad and Cairo I spent another two years in the company of Muslims, and it is during this period that I began to feel that something was amiss with me. I felt uncommonly attracted to Muslims and often listened to the *Adhán* (Call for Prayer) being called out, soon learning the words by heart. And, not knowing the meaning, got interested in Arabic and through friends acquired a sufficient knowledge of Arabic for my daily use within a short time. Thus I began to understand the text of the *Adhán* and was much impressed by that simple and beautiful exclamation of *Lá iláha Ill Allah Muhammadur Rasul Ullah* (There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah).

The first pangs of consciousness of God and religion now began to assert themselves and I became restless and unhappy, and for the first time felt dissatisfied with life in spite of doing well according to worldly measures. In this state of mind, I left Egypt in 1936 on transfer to India, and in 1938 reached Colombo, Ceylon, which was to be my home for the next 18 years. It is my sojourn in Ceylon that brings back to me vivid memories of the serious mental conflicts raging through my brain and the pangs of pain that rocked my whole nervous system. I began to feel lonely and forsaken and realized that, without a hold in life, without an object in view, the physical body was like a ship without a rudder, drifting on helplessly driven by the wind and tide, without any destination at all and being rudely shaken up all the while.

This conflict reached such serious proportions that I was forced to seek a remedy, and I consulted a Roman Catholic priest, who by sheer persuasion, call it moral persuasion, convinced me of the truth of their views of God, Jesus and Mary. I was in such a state of mind that I would have accepted anything at that time. However, after a while I woke up to the realization that, where I had expected peace of mind and happiness, I found that for every sin I was doomed to hell and in constant doubt of the ultimate end. The God of Love and Mercy, of which I was in need, I could not find. And so the conflict raged on, and then I tried the Protestant Church, but with the same result. It was so far a total failure. Yet, not having given up hope, I became a Buddhist, but soon found that God is not a dogma in Buddhism, and I could not degrade myself to worship a stone image. Next, I studied the Jewish religion and found myself in sympathy with it until I ran up against the fact that Jehovah in the Jewish religion is to appear as the God of Wrath, whilst at the same time the revelation was meant only for the Israelites and not for others.

I then gave up the search temporarily, and my nervous condition, being at a low ebb together with serious overstrain of work during the war years, led to a severe attack of coronary thrombosis, which ended my career and placed me on the pension list. After idling about for two years, I accepted an appointment as supervisor of the Ceylon Social Services League Workmen's Resort at Slave Island, Colombo, which happened to be situated next to the Muslim Library, of which, in 1949, Muhammad Meera Mohideen was then in charge.

I soon became an intimate friend of his and he learned about my travels, contacts and mental conflicts and offered to help me. He used to recite to me verses from the Qur'an, and then explain these to me in detail with the commentary of the *Maulana* Muhammad 'Ali. It was not long before I realized the inherent beauty and truth of the Divine Revelation in the Qur'an and at last found Allah, God of Mercy and the Beneficent : the God I had hankered after all my life, though for a long number of years only sub-consciously. God and nothing but God, who is there for all the world and without the embellishments of earthly intermediaries. A direct approach between the Maker and His created ones. Only then, after I had embraced Islam, did I find the peace and contentment which my hungry soul had been starved of for years, and realized the stark truth that no human being can ever hope to find peace in this world unless he submits himself completely to Allah ; until he realizes that no amount of material welfare, social position, etc., can suffice to weave a man's life into a pattern fitting the society created by God ; that no amount of scientific discovery can bring any hope of survival or progress to this materialistic world until man realizes that he must allow his innermost feelings to draw himself towards God, the Creator of all nature, without which, as I said before, he is like a ship without a rudder.

I am convinced that the simplest human mind is ultimately bound to grasp the truth of Islam and that, in a world divinely created by Allah, only those who will allow their innermost urge to draw themselves to Allah and to submit to His Will can find that happiness and peace which is a prerequisite for the survival of present-day society. After all, men must, whether they like it or not, accept the fact that Allah, who has created us, has done so by filling the physical body with a soul, a spirit of divine creation, in which the very first seed of the truth of Our Creator, Allah, is present. That spark is there always and it is within one's own power to allow that spark to grow into a light till it reaches full maturity, and then to accept it as a guide that will lead us in the right path towards absolute peace, Islam.

If scientists of today, as well as the great thinkers, only realize this simple truth, science and the like can be a great instrument for peaceful progress and not, as it is today, one of destruction. *Allahu Akbar.*

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AL-FARABI

by M. SAEED SHEIKH

"Differing with Plato, al-Farabi regards a philosopher qua philosopher to be incompetent to guide the destinies of the citizens of a State until and unless he is also a man with perfect moral character, i.e., is a prophet or very much like a prophet."

The full name of al-Farabi (Alpharabius of the Latin scholastics) was Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Tarkhan Ibn Uzlagh Abu Nasr Farabi. He was born at Wasij, a village near Farah, in about 870 C.E., studied mainly in Baghdad, flourished as a Sufi chiefly at Aleppo in the brilliant court of Saif al-Dawlah al-Hamdani (944-967 C.E.). He died in Damascus in 950 C.E. Al-Farabi was the first Turkish philosopher to make a name; being a great expositor of Aristotle's logic. He was called *al-mu'allim al-thani* ("The Second Teacher"), i.e., the second Aristotle. He is regarded by D. B. MacDonald as the very base of the pyramid of Muslim philosophy. According to Ibn Khallikan, no Muslim thinker ever reached in philosophical knowledge the same position as al-Farabi. His system was a creative synthesis of Platonism, Aristoteleanism and Sufism.

Al-Farabi, the Turk, continued the harmonization of Greek philosophy with Islam, begun by al-Kindi, the Arab, preparing the way for Ibn Sina (980-1037 C.E.), the Persian. It was by the study of al-Farabi's writings and the imitation of his philosophical systematization that Ibn Sina attained to such eminence in philosophy as he did. It may, however, be said that Ibn Sina clarified and simplified what was pithy and abstruse in al-Farabi. Ibn Sina's contemporary, Ibn Miskawayh (945-1030 C.E.), a historian and philosopher of no mean repute, in his small work *al-Fauz al-Asghar* ("The Smaller Salvation"), merely repeated the arguments of al-Farabi, particularly those pertaining to the existence and the attributes of God. Later the great Christian scholastics Albert the Great and St. Thomas Aquinas, acknowledged their indebtedness to al-Farabi in the development of their own systems. Sometimes they even quoted him *ad verbum*. In al-Farabi's political theory we find some indications of the views of Spencer and Rousseau. Al-Farabi's method, like that of Spinoza's, is deductive, and like him his system is a form of idealism.

Al-Farabi laid down several rules for teachers honestly striving to train the youth in philosophy. No young man should start the study of philosophy until he gets very well acquainted with natural sciences. Human nature acquires only a gradual rise from the sensuous to the abstract, from the imperfect to the perfect. Mathematics, in particular, is very important in training the mind of a young philosopher: it helps him pass from the sensuous to the intelligible, and further it informs his mind with exact demonstrations. Similarly, the study of logic as an instrument to distinguish the true from the false should come before the study of philosophy proper.

Above all, proper discipline of one's own character must come before entering into philosophy. Without ethical self-culture the chances are that the student would fail to grasp fully the higher truths as his mind would remain clouded by sensibilities.

Al-Farabi's main philosophical views may be summed up under the following five heads:

- (1) Ontology;
- (2) Metaphysical Theology;
- (3) Cosmology;
- (4) Rational Psychology; and,
- (5) Political Philosophy.

(1) Ontology

(a) *Being*. The most ultimate and universal concept is being. Being cannot be defined, for it precedes all other concepts and is the simplest of them all. To define a concept is to analyse its content, and being having the last content resists all efforts to resolve it into simpler thought-elements. To try to define it by words serves only to make our mind attentive and directed to it but does not explain the concept of being which is clearer than the words by which it may be defined. At times al-Farabi so identifies being with reality that he reminds us of Parmenides.

(b) *Division of being into necessary and contingent*. Necessary being is that which exists in itself or that which cannot but exist; non-existence of it is unthinkable, e.g., God. Contingent being is that which receives its existence from another and the non-existence of which is thinkable or possible, e.g., this world of ours.

(c) *Potentiality and actuality*. Potentiality is the capability to exist. Every created being before it actually comes to exist has only a possibility to exist, i.e., is in a state of potentiality. Actuality is that which exists in fact. According to al-Farabi, that which is in actuality is perfect and that which is in potentiality is imperfect. Nature as such is both in a state of actuality and that of potentiality and thus is being in becoming. God alone is pure actuality or act.

(d) *Substance and accident*. Substance is that which exists in itself and not in another. Accident is that which needs a substance in which it may exist.

(e) *Essence and existence*. Essence is the reason why a thing is and what it is; existence is the actuality of essence. Thus existence is one thing and essence quite another. If essence and existence were one thing, we should be unable to conceive the one without the other. In the case of a created being we find that essence does not necessarily imply the existence of a thing, for it is possible to understand its essence without knowing whether it exists or not. There is one thing alone whose essence is his very existence and that is God.

The logical separation between essence and existence with regard to all created beings was insisted by al-Farabi in order to distinguish them from God Who is self-existent and necessary and is pure actuality and thus perfect. There

being no dualism of essence and existence in God, it was proved that He is an absolute unity.

(f) *Matter and form.* The created things are composed of two other principles, viz., matter and form. Matter or *hayula* is nothing but reality, which is indeterminate. Because of its indetermination, it has only the aptitude to become by virtue of form this or that body. Form is the principle that determines the matter to be actually such a body. Neither matter can exist without form nor form without matter. If either were taken away, there would be no concrete thing at all.

(g) *The first principles.* Closely related with the concept of being are the laws of thought called the first principles. If the concept of being is true, likewise the first principles are true. If the concept of being is based on reality, so are the first principles which are not only the laws of thought but also of reality. In fact, every first principle implies the fundamental idea of being. These first principles according to al-Farabi are as follows :

- (1) The principle of contradiction ;
- (2) The principle of excluded middle ; and,
- (3) The principle of casuality.

With Aristotle, logic was merely a method to arrive at truth, but with al-Farabi it is method as well as truth itself. Al-Farabi presupposes an inseparability between logic and ontology. What is true of thought is true of reality. Thus, unlike Aristotle, al-Farabi was a thorough-going idealist.

(2) Metaphysical theology

(a) *The knowability of God.* One of the preliminary questions in metaphysical theology, which confronts al-Farabi, is whether or not God is knowable.

On this question he could not make up his mind and hesitated to give a definite answer. "God is knowable and unknowable, evident and hidden, and the best knowledge of Him is to know that He is something that human mind cannot thoroughly know" (Risala, *Fusus al-Hikm*).

It is difficult to know what God is because of the limitations of our intellect. Light is the principle by which colours become visible ; it seems logical to conclude that perfect light produces perfect vision ; instead the very opposite is the case : a perfect light dazzles the vision. The same is true of God. God is infinitely perfect, and His infinite perfection bewilders our mind. How can the infinitely perfect be comprehended by one who is finite and imperfect?

In spite of his hesitancy with regard to the knowability of God, al-Farabi insists that the knowledge of God is the goal of all philosophy and further that it is the duty of man to rise so far as it is humanly possible to the likeness of God.

(b) *Proofs for the existence of God.* The arguments brought forth by al-Farabi to prove that there is God are of various forms. Three of them are briefly as follows :

(i) *The proof from motion.* In this world there are things which move. Now, every object which is moved receives its motion from a mover. As motion is to be presupposed in the mover itself before it comes to move others, there must be another mover to move it and beyond that still another and so on and so forth. It is impossible to recede back infinitely in the series of movers and the things moved. Therefore there must be an immovable mover, and this is God.

(ii) *The proof from efficient causation.* In the series of efficient causes it is impossible to conceive an infinite

regress of causes. What is not conceivable is not possible ; therefore outside the series of efficient causes there must be an uncaused efficient cause, and this is God.

(iii) *The proof from contingency.* The argument is based on a distinction drawn earlier between necessary things and contingent beings. A necessary being is that which exists in itself or that which cannot but exist ; non-existence of it is unthinkable. Contingent being is that which receives its being from another and whose non-existence is possible. It is for instance possible that this world may not have existed or may come not to exist. But, as a matter of actuality, the world does exist ; its existence therefore must be due to another being and not due to itself. That other being which may be the cause of the existence of this world either is or is not itself contingent. If it is contingent, then it presupposes another being as the cause of its existence. This other cause again may in turn be contingent or not. Now, a series of contingent beings which would produce one another cannot go on to infinity. Therefore the series of causes and effects must end in a cause that holds the existence by itself. Thus finally we have to come to a necessary being the non-existence of which is unthinkable and the existence of which is necessarily implied in its very idea. This is God, the self-existent.

The different arguments as outlined above are more or less so many statements of the same argument, i.e., the cosmological argument. (The last of al-Farabi's argument, however, is suggestive of being also an ontological one). In each of his three proofs he starts from a fact, applies a principle, and arrives at a conclusion. The fact is respectively motion, caused being, and contingency. The principle accordingly is : that which is moved is moved by another ; the effect implies a cause ; the contingent being implies a necessary being. The conclusion in each case is that God does exist.

(c) *Attributes of God.* As to the attributes of God, al-Farabi suggests, like some of the most modern theistic philosophers, that we can have whatever knowledge possible with regard to the nature of God by means of a twofold process. First, the process of "exclusion", by which we remove from the idea of God whatever implies defect or limitation. Secondly, the process of "pre-eminence", by which we attribute to God in an infinite degree all such perfections as we can possibly think of. With these considerations in view, al-Farabi proceeds in a purely logical way to prove that God is one, simple, infinite, immutable, intelligent, living, etc.

Based on this twofold method, al-Farabi offers arguments for the simplicity, unity, infinity, immutability, etc., of God as given below.

Some of his arguments were later reproduced *mutatis mutandis* by the Christian scholastics, such, for example, as Albert the Great and St. Thomas Aquinas.

(i) *Simplicity of God.* God is simple because He is free from every kind of composition, physical or metaphysical. Physical composition may be either substantial or accidental. It is substantial if the composite substance consists of two bodies. Now, an infinite being cannot be substantial composite because this would mean that God, the infinite, results from the union of finite parts ; further, that these parts would exist before Him in time and thus be the cause of His being. Nor can an accidental composition be attributed to the infinite because this would imply a capacity for an increase in perfection which the very notion of the infinite excludes. Therefore there is not, and cannot be, any physical composition in God.

Metaphysical composition results from the union of two different concepts so referred to the same real being that none of them by itself signifies the whole reality as meant by their union. Thus every contingent being is a metaphysical composite of essence and existence. But the composition of essence and existence cannot be applied to the self-existent or infinite being in whom essence and existence are one. Therefore there is no composition of essence and existence in God. Nor can the composition of genus and differentia be attributed to Him. There is no genus under which it should be possible to subsume Him. God is above all such distinctions and the ultimate source and ground of all things.

(ii) *Unity of God.* God is only one. If there were two gods, they would have to be partly alike and partly different, in which case the simplicity of each would be obviously impossible.

If there were anything equal to God, then He would cease to possess the fullness of being, for fullness of being implies impossibility of there being anything besides itself. If God possesses the fullness of being, i.e., is infinite and absolute, then it is impossible to conceive of anything besides Him as other than He. Therefore there is only one infinite being, only one God.

God is one because He is free from all quantitative divisions. One, in the case of God, means indivisible; that which is indivisible in substance is one in essence. Hence there is only one God.

(iii) *Infinity of God.* The uncaused being is infinite, for if it were not so, it would be limited and therefore caused, since the cause of a thing is its limit. But God is uncaused; hence it follows that God is infinite.

(iv) *Immutability of God.* God is the first cause and, as such, is a pure actuality, i.e., without the admixture of potentiality. Everything which is in any way changed is in some way in potentiality. But in God there is no potentiality, for He is pure actuality. Hence there is no change in God. So God is immutable.

(3) Metaphysical cosmology

That God exists is an established truth; that the world was made, is another truth. The most difficult question which man tries to solve is: What relation is there between God and the world, between the One and the many? In order to explain the relation of the one with the many, of the unity with the multiplicity, keeping the unity of the one securely intact, al-Farabi, like al-Kindi, resorts to the principle of emanation of the neo-Platonists. The world emanates from God not directly but through a number of intermediary agencies. Between God and the world al-Farabi places the intellects and the souls of the heavenly spheres of the various planets as enunciated in the Plotinian system.

The theory of the intellects and the souls of the spheres such as taught by al-Farabi and some other Muslim philosophers seems much like a myth to a modern student of philosophy. But the Muslim philosophers, one should not forget, were inspired to elaborate this cosmological scheme, mainly because of Aristotle's belief that the heavenly spheres possessed souls and that they were perfect.

(4) Rational psychology

Man is composed of two principles: body and soul. The body is composed of parts, is limited by space, and is measurable and divisible, while the soul is beyond such bodily qualities. The former is a product of the created

world, while the latter belongs to the last separate intellect of the super-sensible world.

The spirituality of the soul is demonstrated by its specific operations which are intellection and volition (moral). The operation of a being is according to the nature of that being. As intellect and will at the higher levels fell at home only in the abstract and the spiritual, the soul itself must also be spiritual and independent of matter.

Immortality of the soul. Al-Farabi's views with regard to immortality of the human soul like those of Aristotle's are rather doubtful. In his works we find passages both for and against immortality. At one place he says, "The only thing that survives the dissolution of the body is the active intellect". Now, active intellect with al-Farabi is something altogether different from human soul; it is merely an impersonal principle. Hence at best this statement vouchsafes only the possibility of corporate immortality and leaves no scope for personal immortality. This standpoint is confirmed by another passage which reads as follows: "Man's supreme good in this life is to attain knowledge. But to say that man after death becomes a separate form is an old wife's tale. . . . Whatever is born and dies is incapable of becoming immortal." Yet there is a curious passage in which al-Farabi speaks of bliss in the next world. This passage occurs in his famous work *al-Madinat al-Fadilah* (Ideal City), where he explains that the final aim of the state on earth is to make souls happy in the other world. The souls of the citizens belonging to the ideal city would assemble generation after generation in the next world and their happiness would increase according to increase in their number. This passage assumes that each soul would be endowed with individual feelings in the life hereafter. The assumption is reiterated in other similar passages such as: "After death the human soul will be happy or unhappy according to its merits or demerits."

(5) Political philosophy

In political philosophy al-Farabi wrote two very important books entitled *A Treatise on the Opinions of the People of the Ideal City* and *Political Economy*. The first book opens with the Hobbesian description of the law of nature as one of perpetual struggle of each organism against all the rest: "Every living thing in the last analysis sees in all the other living things a means to its own ends" is the principle of the law of nature, rather the law of the jungle, as enunciated by Hobbes. In order to explain the emergence of human society from this law of the jungle, al-Farabi considers two views: one more or less like Rousseau's theory of social contract and the other resembling Nietzsche's principle of "will to power". He opposes the Nietzschean view with an appeal to his fellow-men to build a society not upon envy, power and strife but upon reason, devotion and love. With such a society alone there is a hope to create the ideal city of which al-Farabi gives an elaborate account. Describing the various aspects with regard to the governance of the ideal city he compares it, like Herbert Spencer, with a "hierarchical" organism analogous to the human body. The sovereign, who corresponds to the heart, is served by functionaries who in their turn are served by others of lower ranks. In this ideal city the object of association is the happiness of its citizens and the sovereign is to be perfect morally and intellectually. Differing with Plato, al-Farabi regards a philosopher *qua* philosopher to be incompetent to guide the destinies of the citizens of a State until and unless he is also a man with perfect moral character, i.e., is a prophet or very much like a prophet.

AN INTRODUCTORY ANALYSIS OF PERSIAN CULTURE

by A. REZA ARASTEH

Persian culture derives its characteristic pattern from the inter-relatedness of two major historical currents — one integrative, the other disintegrative. The former force has shown itself well in the family's protective mechanism, the creative talent of artists and artisans, the communicative power of poetry, the speculative bent of Persian thinkers, as well as the thoroughness with which the invaders were acculturated. The disintegrative factor has manifested itself chiefly in terms of strong regional loyalties, which have often been accompanied by an indifferent central administration — a common occurrence throughout much of Persian history. Under the invader's rule disintegrative elements frequently became destructive forces.

When viewed in this way, Persian culture has, at its best, been the product of an independent group. Their continued expression of creativity, in answer to the existential problems, did not succumb even to historically disintegrative forces. The continuity in Persian culture for more than twenty-five centuries is directly attributable to this independent group, which in every generation strove to make life meaningful, in contrast to those who sought security through the mechanisms of dominance and servitude. In traditional Persian society the independent group included the creative urban element of craftsmen, artisans, artists and some writers, poets and intellectuals. They carried on their work in a spirit of fellowship, which, in turn, led to the establishment of various cultural and social institutions.

Any interpretation of their cultural contributions presupposes a thorough understanding of their motives. In general, motives spring from the nature of man and the diversity of his environment. Each of these sources is, itself, complex and diverse, and capable of producing opposing motives. The intricate patterning of motives further complicates the analysis of culture. Most cultural specialists assert that a theory of culture must be based on biological facts, for they consider culture a response to basic needs. Thus culture, as they interpret it, fulfils man's continual demands for sustenance and protection. Moreover, every culture must produce the necessary implements and develop techniques for regulating values and the total social system. Although these concepts undoubtedly explain much of culture they do not give a complete picture. A more significant source of motives arises from man's psychic situation which, in turn, has resulted from man's separation from nature, or more metaphorically, from "man's banishment from paradise". Having lost this relationship, man has since been seeking a substitute, that is, another object of love or orientation: a new process which may reunite him with nature and end his discontent.

The interpretation of Persian culture in these terms brings to light some of the basic motives which stimulated the independent group to create, namely, the eternalization of a complex idea; the expression of deep emotions, both happy and unhappy, national and personal; the re-creation of past experiences, especially those of childhood; the

recapturing of past national glories, particularly at those times when the past has proved more inspiring than the present or when events have threatened to obliterate the past; an awareness of one's destiny; a relatedness to the rest of the world; and an enduring self-identity. Basic psychological drives were undoubtedly also present.

An analysis of Persian art objects offers ample evidence of the first motive — the eternalization of complex ideas. In the physical sense the craftsmen and artists, whether they worked with hammer, brush, pen, or just with their hands, displayed sincerity in whatever they did. By continual endeavour they identified themselves with the object at hand, and in such a way as to ultimately achieve their goal and eternalize their design.

It did not matter to the craftsman whether this design was reproduced on pottery, glass, metal, wood or the like, for in his work he put aside all other matters. The degree to which he could subordinate other goals, whatever their source, contributed to the artistic perfection of the final product. No matter what media he worked in, the artist painstakingly strove to achieve the aim he had set himself. In his desire to express his deepest feelings he transformed simple materials into works of art. His mind, heart and hands worked harmoniously. Ultimately the ideal became fused with the object at hand to form one lasting design. This unified motive explains the presence of such symbols of nature as the sun, moon, stars and heavens which are so majestically recreated in carpet designs and other art media. In the process of giving permanence to his idea, the Persian artist internalized it: this, in turn, gave him a sense of security, which helped ward off the anxiety resulting from man's alienation from nature.

As in other cultures, the creative Persian group was moved by their past experiences to express their feelings of supreme sorrow and happiness in artistic form. Moreover, when some of them sought to recapture the glories of past epochs they succeeded in immortalizing both history and themselves. In those periods when the past was impressive and the present insignificant, the artist who was familiar with the greatness of the past was often able to identify himself with it and then produce a monumental work. Persian history offers two notable examples, one from the medieval era, another from the twentieth century. The glories of pre-Islamic Iran so attracted Firdowsi that he devoted thirty years of his life in familiarizing himself with every aspect of life in that period. In his efforts to unite with the past he re-created and immortalized the legendary pre-Islamic period. More recently the modern poet, A'shqi, drew upon the same period for his dream, *Zardusht*. The period after the Mongol invasion might also have motivated the Persians to create great works, but they had experienced such intense suffering that no artist wished to identify himself with it. In the same light the passion plays (*ta'zieh*s) have given them an opportunity to identify with religious martyrs.

Even more significant in the production of Persian culture has been the spiritual motive arising out of an enduring self-identity, as seen in the identification with religious values, in speculative thinking, and above all in relation to Persian mysticism. By their religious conduct the true believers sought to enter Paradise or satisfy Ahura-Mazda. Intellectual endeavour helped others find their relationship to the universe so that they might make a name for themselves in history.

At a deeper level, Sufism revealed the persistence of the self and was interpreted by three major groups, who differed only in terms of the object of identification, not in their method. One group took as their goal Islamic values or the personal qualities of their saints; through a succession of behavioral and mental states they tried to attain a permanent self-identity, identical with that of their saint. The early Sufis belonged to this group. Other Sufis sought self-realization by taking God as their object of identification. They spent years applying the method of presence (that is, the assumption that only God is present in every act) so that they might ultimately identify themselves with God. Instead of believing that God made man in His image, they created God in their image and paid tribute to Him. This thought is delicately expressed in a passage of the *Mantiq al-Tay'r-e-A'Tar* where a flock of birds, resembling

a group of travellers, passes through seven purifying stages of self-realization before finally becoming one with the object of their search — God. Similarly Bayazid (d. 261 A.H.) has expressed this process of identification with God in the line: "For thirty years God was my mirror; now I am my own mirror."¹

In the *Mathnawi*, Rumi voices still a third stage of self-realization in the process of identification. He gives permanence to the self by being identified with the process of life itself. Thus he could perhaps have claimed, "I live, therefore I am," in place of Descartes' "I think, therefore I am". Through this approach Rumi was able to attain a unique state of existence characterized by the absence of anxiety, complete spontaneity, relatedness to all periods of existence — past, present and future, and positiveness in action and feeling. Rumi reached this state of being only because he profoundly understood the original separation of man from nature, the formation of culture, and the importance of love to the continuity of life. More than any one individual, Rumi expressed the unique and enduring characteristics of the independent group in traditional Persian society.

¹ Gani, G., *Tarikh Tasavof* (History of Mysticism), Vol. 1, Teheran (Translated by the present author).

THE DIVINE DIVAN

by WILLIAM BASHYR PICKARD

92

The One Supreme! He is thy Lord, the One!
Praise to His Name while endless ages run!
Art thou distress'd? Forget not praise.
Dost thou rejoice? Forget not praise.
God, ever with thee, give Him praise.
Walk in the way of guarding all thy days.
He shall direct thee in thy ways.
Thou knowest surely in thine heart
What the One Lord directeth — to depart
From evil and do good and, wheresoe'er thou art,
To pray and praise and love Him with thine heart.
Dost doubt what are the precepts of thy Lord,
What good, what bad, what right, what wrong? The One
Adored
Hath sent His Scriptures and His messengers. Ah, read!
Thou shalt find rich reward —
A path to lead
Thee on thy way rejoicing. Ah! what need
Of more in life or death than this:
To love thy Lord, do good and — enter into bliss!

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Thy Lord, the Ever-Present! who but He
Can bring thee bliss unbreakable?
Thy Lord, Who knoweth all things? who but He
Can show thee guidance in the Way unshakeable?
Ah! turn thy thought to Him. He is thy life!
Let not thy vision be confused with worldly strife.
Then, let thy love turn Godwards as a crystal whispering
stream
And let thine eyes be fill'd with happiness agleam,
Shining upon humanity from that deep peace within
Thy heart,
Where'er thou art.
This is no idle dream! so rise! begin,
And cease not whilst thou livest,
To praise the Lord of Mercy! Ah! dear God, Who givest
Grace to the seeker,
Wise words to the speaker,
Ease to the weeper
And tranquil night's repose to the weary sleeper,
Who, the long day fill'd with hurrying action in the Way,
Shall sink to sleep and wake to a yet brighter Day.
Love God, do good, what brighter crown can be?
What peace transcendent from all fetters free!

A new Mosque planned in



Members of the Management Committee of the South Shields New Mosque Islamic Trust Fund gathered in the temporary Mosque premises.

Back row (left to right): Sha Namaz (Pakistani), Abdur Rashid (Pakistani), Luckman Ali (Pakistani—Trustee), Sayyad Ghulam Hasson Shah (Pakistani—Chairman of Trust Fund and Trustee), Hasson Ali (Arab), Mohamed Sa'id (Arab—Treasurer and Trustee), Al-Hajj Awad (Arab)

Front row (left to right): Sultan Ali (Arab), Mohamed Rajah (Secretary and Trustee), Sultan Mayube (Arab), Ide Jama (Somali—Trustee).

The Muslim Community in South Shields

Its past history—present activities—future plans

Over fifty years ago Muslims from Arabia began to settle in the busy shipping port of South Shields on the River Tyne, on the north-east coast of England. They were almost entirely employed on the many types of ships which visit this port.

After the First World War the community began to expand and was joined by Muslims from Somaliland, India, Pakistan, Egypt and Malaya.

Many have taken unto themselves English wives, who have, in turn, embraced the Muslim Faith. The third and fourth generation of children now numbers over 150.

The local resident strength of the community is, approximately, 700, increased at times to around 1,000 by the addition of visiting seamen.

The Community has always been law-abiding and enjoys excellent relations with the civic authorities, and is recognized as a permanent and growing section of the local population.

The adults are almost entirely sea-faring, almost entirely illiterate and with only moderate earning capacity. The children, however, now receive the normal school education alongside the English children. The adults who are too old to go to sea or to do other work are dependant on public assistance.

Through the years the community has always retained its Muslim identity and faith, and regular worship has always continued in spite of many difficulties, such as having to use rooms in various boarding houses.

in South Shields, England



A Group of some of the Muslim children, taken on the site on which the new Mosque and School will be built. The background objects indicate the nearness of the site to the river and the shipyards. Nearby are four modern housing blocks occupied by Muslim families, and there are also Muslim boarding houses and cafés. Other Muslim families live on new Housing Estates on the outskirts of the town.

Since 1943 a room in a former public house was used as a mosque, but, under Town Planning developments, this has now been demolished; but, by the courtesy of the Town Council, permission has been obtained to use an old Municipal Reading Room as a mosque, and the move into these premises has already been made.

There is no doubt that this community is not only settled but likely to still further expand, and with bold faith, a committee under the Chairmanship of Sayyid Ghulam Hassan Shah (who has himself lived in the town for a quarter of a century) have launched an ambitious plan to build an Eastern-style mosque in a central position in the town, such building to incorporate a school (with qualified teaching staff), to train the children of the community in the faith of their fathers, and to set up a library for study purposes.

Again, with the co-operation of the local authorities, a site for the proposed building has been obtained on the same

terms as granted to other denominations, provided building operations are completed within five years.

This scheme represents indeed a herculean task, but a letter of appeal has been published and requests for help have been sent to the rulers of all Muslim States and to their Ambassadors in Great Britain. Likewise all national and international cultural and religious Muslim organizations have been contacted. Help and support and good influence of all kinds, from Muslims all over the world, will be necessary to make this dream into a reality for the glory of Islam. A splendid example has already been set by the local Muslims, and giving to the point of sacrifice, the first £1,000 has been collected towards the estimated total cost of £20,000. For the sake of the children — the hope of the future — these plans must be brought to a successful conclusion within the stipulated time. It cannot, it must not, be allowed to fail.

THE PROBLEM OF STAGNATION IN THE MUSLIM WORLD OF TODAY

The need of World Reform Organization

by EBRAHIM KHAN

“How is it that in the world today wherever there are Muslims there is poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, weakness and bloodshed? There is not the slightest doubt that Islam is an excellent religion. There is not the slightest doubt, also, of the fact that many a region in the past grew in culture and civilization, wealth and power, by walking in the footsteps of Islam. Then there must be a wrong application of Islam in the Muslim world of today. There are undoubtedly many such beliefs, principles and rituals as are essentially un-Islamic in spirit and practice, and yet they have made their cosy room in the guise of Islam among the people and are sapping their vitality. It is also conceivable that in certain matters Islam, with its existing interpretation, is being found unequal to cope with modernity.

“It is for this reason that, though for the time being it may not be practicable to form the World Muslim Reform Committee, it has become imperatively necessary for individual States to form their own Reform Committees.”

Religion has been made for man not man for religion

Man is essentially different from other beings of Creation. He has a distinct role to play. Though small, he is yet a creator, even in the path of the great Creator Himself. In a moment of ecstatic intimacy the poet Iqbal addresses God, saying :

“Thou hast created night, I have created a lamp,
Thou hast created clay, I have created cups.

In support of man's creative genius, Iqbal has made even a bolder claim elsewhere. The Bible says that God created man in His own image. But Iqbal says that he has created the picture of his great Beloved in his own shape.

Some will say, “Oh! it is a poet's utterance!” Others will say, “Oh! it is the outpouring of a devotee's heart!” That is all correct. But the question still remains : Where is the foundation for this claim, even in its humblest form?

We believe the Qur'an provides the clue. We are told in that Book that, on the eve of the creation of Adam, God told the angels : “I will create a vicegerent on earth.”¹ The idea did not appeal to the angels. Then God put Adam and the angels to a test of knowledge, in which Adam triumphed and the angels had to bow to the superior intellectual calibre of man.

The angels were perpetually engaged in carrying out the wishes of God and in offering prayer to Him. They did not possess either the intellect or the initiative of serving as the Vicegerent of God. So at that stage of the evolution of the world, it became necessary for God to create a fresh

class of being who would be able to carry on the work of God on earth as His Vicegerent.

Now this admits of two conclusions : (1) The value of knowledge is greater than unintelligent prayer. That is why the prayerful angels had to bow to the knowledge of man ; (2) God did not create man only for prayer. Says the savant Iqbal in this connection :

“If man had been created only for praying to God, why, for that, the angels were sufficient.”

Now religion enjoins prayer to God. We may, therefore, say that man did not come into existence for religion. Religion came into existence at a later stage and for the service of man.

This is no new myth. But it has got to be repeated and re-repeated now and then. For there are still men in our society who say, and they sincerely say, that man has been created for religion and, for the purpose of fitting him into the frame of religion, the pruning knife must be mercilessly applied on him, even though he may be maimed thereby or may even ultimately perish.

This reminds one of the tale of Proustes of Ancient Greece. The gentleman forcibly brought passers-by to his home, fed them sumptuously and then proceeded to make them lie on his luxurious bedstead. If they proved longer than the bedstead, their feet were promptly chopped off ; if they were shorter, the body would be forcibly stretched out to fit them to the bedstead, even though the victims perished in the process.

One wonders if the descendants of Procrustes have left Greece and settled in disguise in different parts of the Muslim world of today.

Yes, we were speaking of the superiority of man. God did not stop short by exalting man by the gift of knowledge and power of judgment. He breathed into him of His spirit.²

Now God, above all, is a Creator and a Being of all-pervading knowledge. So, as Vicegerent of God, man has got to devote himself above all to creation and to the promotion and spread of knowledge.

Man will seek more and yet more knowledge and with the assistance of that knowledge will go on and on creating new things : this is the highest of his life work.

The era of decay started in the Muslim world when Muslims started despising the pursuit of knowledge

The more a man falls away from the caravan of knowledge seekers, the more will he be stricken by the frustration of life. No sleepless meditation, no breathless sighs, no counting of the rosary, even of millions of beads, will succeed in arresting the progress of the downward march.

The Arabs of the new régime started their career with an insatiable thirst for knowledge. But how could they get so much knowledge all of a sudden in arid Arabia? So they issued out from their home with a frenzied enthusiasm. They went to Egypt, to India, to Syria, to Iran, to Greece and Rome, to any place where they might possibly pick up some knowledge.

They collected a tremendous mass of materials and sat to research work therewith. From the ashes of these ruined civilizations arose at the call of the explorers the phoenix of a new knowledge. A magnificent civilization gradually grew up, emitting its light to all the corners of the then-known world.

The climax was reached and then a decline started. A host of cowardly scripturalists came. Little was their mind, little was their faith and little was their achievement. They got unnerved at the sight of the limitless expanse of knowledge. They started saying : "What is the necessity for so much knowledge extraneous to our immediate faith?" All the knowledge necessary for man is treasured in the Qur'an and the Hadith. The entire region outside the orbit of the Qur'an and Hadith is beset with the fear of *Bid'at* (innovation). So observe piety and abstinence and shun the area of doubtful knowledge.

Cowardice, which is never to be encouraged in any sphere of life, was deliberately invited and enthroned in the palace of faith.

A shamelessly significant equivalent for *Muttaqi* (God-fearing) was given in the Bengali language — namely, *Dharma Bhiru* — a religious coward. Formerly, Muslims were heroes of faith, now they degenerated into cowards of faith.

So gradually they became small in outlook, small in mind and small in devotion and achievement. The stream of their creation gradually dried up.

The Muslims of the golden age most certainly offered their daily prayer, did fast and perform sacrifice. But over and above this, they did something more. This additional something was the real criterion ; it is for this that they became great. This additional something included the cultivation of knowledge, the effort at creation and other

similar virtues. It is to some of these virtues that Iqbal refers when he says :

"Again take lessons in truthfulness, justice and courage,
You will be accorded the leadership of the world."

In later ages, we completely forgot about these virtues : these sterling qualities of character were utterly concentrated on prayer and fasting alone.

Every seventh man in the world is a Muslim. According to mathematical calculation, one seventh of the wealth of the world should belong to the Muslims. A Muslim has got to be found among every seven Nobel Prize Winners. In one word, one seventh of human creations should be found to their credit. In spite of all knowledge having been concentrated in the Qur'an, within the last three hundred years how many Newtons, Edisons and Einsteins have sprung up in the Muslim world? Is it a pure accident that not a single Muslim State is found in the magnificent struggle that is being made by so many non-Muslim nations for conquering space and placing man on the moon?

Even now in our villages some preachers pompously proclaim to the simple-minded pious Muslims : "Our Allah is greater than the Gods of others ; our Qur'an is greater than the sacred books of others, our Prophet is greater than the prophets of others ; hence we followers of such a faith must be greater than all other peoples ; hence we have nothing to fear."

Those who faithfully listen become naturally puffed up. Their indifference to active life is encouraged and they sink into deeper slumber.

In short, Muslims first neglected cultivation of knowledge. This arrested their creative activities, and stagnation in creative activities led to their downfall ; and they will never be able to rise from this fall unless and until they re-start in their career with the same zeal and right for the free cultivation of knowledge so that they may be enabled to seek fresh fields of conquest.

But who will today re-open the door to this free cultivation of knowledge ?

In Turkey, we know, the son-in-law of a Caliph had to give his life within the very compound of the palace of the sovereign for the crime of introducing the printing press into that land, where manuscript literature had so long been in vogue and printing was accordingly considered as an innovation. It is reported that Shah Waliullah was driven out of Delhi with his eyes sewn up and his right hand crippled for the crime of his free-thinking in his *Hujjatullah al-Baligha*. In our own time we have seen some writers of our own region branded with the verdict of infidelity. They might well have been awarded the precious prize of martyrdom had they not assumed discreet silence in time.

There are many gifted young men in our society who are eager to enter into a free discussion of our religious problems but who abstain out of fearful disgust. For want of a free climate, the intellectual life of these young men is being frustrated and the community is being deprived of the fruit of their research.

And yet our noble Prophet openly declared, "Difference of views among my followers is a blessing". It reminds one of the view of Voltair, who is reputed to have said once to a rival, "I am absolutely against your view ; but, for defending the right of your expressing that view, I am prepared to lay down my life."

The need of a Reforms Committee

The number of rationalist Muslims in our society is undoubtedly increasing, but increasing at a fearfully slow pace. There appears no wide way whatsoever to escape from this, except through a revolutionary change. This revolutionary change can be effected only by a powerful Reforms Committee.

An outline of the institution I am thinking of may be given as below.

The custodian of the cities of Mecca and Medina will act as Convener. He will call the first conference for consultation among the representatives of a limited number of States for the purpose of devising ways and means for the proposed Reforms Committee.

Then a Reforms Committee should be formed, composed of the representatives of the different States of the Muslim world.

The Committee will have its session once in every two years at a place to be selected by the Committee.

The burning problems of the day relating to our society, our religion, our culture, our economic structure, will be discussed and conclusions arrived at. These conclusions will be circulated to the Muslim world with necessary recommendations to the relevant States.

Reactions to the proposed Reforms in different regions will be reported to the next session of the Committee and necessary measures will be adopted.

The Reforms Committee will be kept completely free from politics.

Now some of our wise men may smile at my proposal. They may gravely observe that the League of Nations has gone to limbo. The fate of the United Nations Organization is yet trembling in the balance. To talk of a World Muslim Reforms Organization in the existing climate is to indulge in a fantastic extravagance of imagination.

We are not wise men. We are men of faith. We try to shun that type of wisdom that offers to serve primarily as a brake. We believe that a thing that has never been attempted, or attempted with failure in the past, can yet be done at present and in the future. We are prepared to proceed contentedly with the conviction in our bosom that the One World Government is in the offing. The proposed Muslim World Reforms Organization is much easier than that.

If it be found impracticable for any reason to immediately undertake the work of organizing the proposed World Muslim Reform Committee, then each individual Muslim State should start by organizing Reforms Committees of their own. They may be amalgamated suitably later on.

Among our educated friends there are some who say : "The age of religion has started to go. Let it smoothly depart. By taking up the question of reform, do not pick up an unnecessary quarrel with our theological leaders. That may only lead to your being blessed with a sound beating."

They do not say such things in lighter vein. They speak seriously. So let us try to judge dispassionately their statements.

They say in support of their contention that religion is practically nil in Communist countries. Regarding the rest of the world, in some Christian lands the Churches are growing more and more thin in their attendance. So is the condition of the mosque in some Muslim lands. In

Pakistan the devotion of educated Muslims to Islam is hardly encouraging.

When religion fails to fulfil its purpose it goes into oblivion

So there seems to be no doubt that in all Communist countries, as well as in some non-Communist countries, religion is on the wane. This state of things leads some men to believe that the age of religion is approaching the verge of expiration.

Our conviction is different. We believe religion will not go. It came to serve a purpose, the purpose of promoting human welfare. That purpose has not yet been fulfilled. It will indeed be a day of supreme felicity when men will realize their life by performing of their own accord those noble deeds which are now enjoined by their religion. If ever that auspicious day comes, we shall bless it from the other side of existence.

But the insignificant difference that has developed in the men of today and those of the days of the *Ramayana* and of the *Iliad* does not encourage us to believe that an age of complete innocence will ever come. Even if we accept chimpanzees as our ancestors, it must still be conceded that, though there have developed remarkable differences in the shape and size of the body including those of the brain, proneness to quarrel and to break the law has hardly undergone any notable modification.

"Why then," it may be justly questioned, "has religion receded from Russia?" The reply is : "Because religion failed to fulfil its purpose there. For centuries together, millions and millions of men groaned helplessly there under the iron heel of the pitiless rulers and their vampiric satellites : religion brought them no relief. On the contrary, religion solemnly said to them, 'Have patience ; fealty to the King will ultimately earn salvation both here and there.' Like opium, religion only made the oppressed sleep deeper and deeper. Then came revolution — not in response to the call of religion, but against the mandates of the priestly bandits. So the saviours of the sufferers said to the Emperor, 'O thou tyrant, thou must go and with thee also must go thy panderous lieutenants : the aristocrats and the priests with their religion put away into their pocket'."

Islam knocked at the door of Persia when the people thereof were groaning under the iron heel of the Shah. Islam offered them equality and justice. The people sorely wanted these very things and naturally they welcomed the faith with alacrity.

In Syria and Egypt, too, the people were suffering terribly from the oppression of the Roman masters. And it was primarily as a measure of escape from that festering misery that the people embraced Islam with great enthusiasm.

Islam must face and solve the modern problems if it wants to survive as a living religion

But, for some time past, Islam has been proving ineffective in solving the modern problems of its votaries in Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Indonesia and Egypt, and hence it is gradually and most naturally losing its hold on them.

Some of those who really love Islam are angry at such statements. They say : "What is the meaning of the modern problems? The problem of drinking and dancing?"

Not at all. The U.S.A. has not become great by excelling in drinking and dancing, Russia has not succeeded in sending up the Sputnik, the U.K. has not succeeded in building up her wonderful literature, Germany has not succeeded in

winning so many Nobel Prizes, simply by their mastery over drinking and dancing.

We have now got to ask mercilessly: "How is it that in the world of today wherever there are Muslims there is poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, weakness and bloodshed?" There is not the slightest doubt that Islam is an excellent religion. There is not the slightest doubt, also, of the fact that many a region in the past grew in culture and civilization, wealth and power, by walking in the footsteps of Islam. Then there must be a wrong application of Islam in the Muslim world of today. There are undoubtedly many such beliefs, principles and rituals as are essentially un-Islamic in spirit and practice, and yet they have made their cosy room in the guise of Islam among the people and are sapping their vitality. It is also conceivable that in certain matters Islam, with its existing interpretation, is being found unequal to cope with modernity.

It is for this reason that, though for the time being it may not be practicable to form the World Muslim Reform Committee, it has become imperatively necessary for individual States to form their own Reform Committees.

Pakistan is a land of 90 million souls. Deduct from them the Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, the children and the insane, and there still remain approximately 50 million Muslim men and women. Not that all of these 50 million men and women regularly offer their prayers. But the life and thought of all these persons are most certainly influenced this way or that by the tenets of Islam.

Now the religion that exercises unquestioned influence on the life of 50 million men and women is bound to do immense harm to these teeming millions if it be adulterated in its principles by things extraneous to and inconsistent with its fundamentals.

The 'Ulama and the non-'Ulama should consult one another

This is exactly what is happening.

I am not one of those who, right and left, lay the blame at the door of our *Munshis* and *Maulavis*. It is really an unholy attempt on the part of the English-educated class at escaping responsibility by thrusting it on to the shoulders of others. Those who sincerely endeavour to follow Islam will be found proportionately more numerous among these *Munshis* and *Maulavis* than among the Messrs. There are undoubtedly among them men of learning, vision and zeal for reform. It is mainly they who have been trying to introduce some reform into our religion and society. But their hands are empty of power. The power of the State is now in the hands of the non-*Maulavis*. So these latter should undertake the responsibility of initiating measures of reform — in consultation with the 'Ulama, of course.

We may take it for granted that there will be some opposition to reform proposals, both from 'Ulama as well as from non-'Ulama. This is natural, and has been witnessed everywhere in the past. Those who are convinced that such opposition is justly due have got the right to oppose. If, however, the problems are explained to them with courtesy and kindness, in most cases the opposition melts away and is often substituted by co-operation.

Let us not become afraid of the word "reform". Our Prophet himself was a great Reformer. The previous prophets were all men of undoubted integrity. The religion they preached was divine in origin and character. What was, then, the necessity for our Prophet to come? The reason, and the only reason adduced, was that the previous religions had been corrupted by interpolation, and hence the

need for a new Messenger who would preach a faith that would be free from the blemishes of corruption. Hence is the presence in Islam of so many anecdotes and traditions from earlier faiths.

Our Prophet had an additional and powerful reason for coming. Certain provisions of the then-existing religions had been found inadequate to satisfy the demands of the age. The Prophet, therefore, effected necessary modifications. For example:

- (1) Religion was formerly a fearfully stiff affair. To be pious, a man was sometimes required to beg all his life from door to door, or regularly to whip his own body or to remain perpetually unmarried and to hate women and wealth. But our Prophet humanized the faith by softening down its rigour. He openly declared that Islam was consistent with nature and hence there was no celibacy in his faith. He said: "Work and earn in an honest way, eat and drink within reasonable limits and then pray to God with a contented mind."
- (2) Previously no prophet gave the right of inheritance to women. Our prophet gave that right.
- (3) By no other prophet before was education made compulsory. Our Prophet made education compulsory for both men and women.
- (4) The people of Mecca demanded a miracle from the Prophet. He replied that the unvarnished truth of the Qur'an was his miracle. In other words, he ended the age of magic and ushered in the age of logic.

A study of the above reforms justifies the conclusion that, keeping the fundamentals of the faith intact, the great Prophet introduced modifications in other spheres in order to make it capable of meeting the needs of the advancing age. The Reforms Committee will have to think carefully how far it can walk in the footprints of the Prophet for the purpose of introducing similar modifications.

In this connection, I would invite the attention of our 'Ulama brethren to an alarming development. In East Pakistan, the number of *Madrasa-going*¹ students is small. By the expression "educated youths", therefore, we mainly mean those who are educated in schools and colleges. Now a substantial proportion of these educated youths is gradually growing indifferent, if not positively averse, to Islam, and their number is on the increase.

In religious functions the presence of our educated youth is becoming thinner and thinner every year. Of the many reasons for this, some are clear: (1) those who arrange such functions are not always sincere. In practical life some of them honour the Prophet more by breaking his injunctions than by honouring them; (2) the discourse given in these meetings is usually couched in Arabic or Urdu, and it falls flat on Bengali ears; (3) on rare occasions the discourse is given in Bengali, but the Bengali discourse is mainly an old bundle of unbelievable legends that grew up round the life of the Prophet.

This raises the all-important question of vernacularization of our scriptural literature.

The Reforms Committee proposed above will have to tackle all such problems.⁴

1 The Qur'an, 2: 33.

2 *Ibid.*, 15: 29.

3 School for elementary religious studies.

4 Read at a meeting of the Council of Youth, Dacca.

PAKISTAN'S ECONOMY

The great stride forward made by Pakistan's economy in the brief thirty-three months since President Ayub Khan's Government assumed office in October 1958 has been highly commended at home and abroad by knowledgeable people. A stable government and wise financial policies based on the thesis of living within means, have laid a firm foundation for future development.

The reality of this improvement is witnessed by the increasing interest of the private foreign investor in the opportunities in Pakistan. Such investment rose from \$13.6 million only in the twelve months April 1959-March 1960 to \$53.6 million in the eleven months for which figures are available — April 1960-February 1961.

Since October 1958, the previously deficit "Balance of Payments" position has become favourable: Gold, Dollar and Sterling Reserves have more than doubled; taxation has increased, revenue budgets have shown a surplus and capital budget balanced with little deficit financing, the Index of Industrial Production had risen by 34% by the end of 1960 and continues to rise: the danger of run-away inflation has been removed, and inflation itself curbed. The value of exports rose by 30% between the 1958 and 1960 calendar years, although they are still insufficient to provide for essential maintenance imports. Development, therefore, is still heavily dependent on foreign aid, loans and private foreign investment. Land reforms in West Pakistan; the settlement of the serious Indus Waters dispute with India in September 1960; the vast programme of replacement works to insure better controlled irrigation provided for under that settlement: the recognition and the tackling of the very serious implications of spread of waterlogging and salinity, the development of an adequate programme of reclamation, already under way; and most of all, the creation of a direct channel of communication between the people and their government, through the institution of Basic Democracies: all point the way to the sustained progress of the country.

However, during these three years, developments have not been made possible by an extensive windfall. Quite the reverse is true. Steadily rising costs of imported capital goods, among other things, have already made it necessary to increase by 21% the estimated cost of the Second Five-Year Plan. The provisional figures of the new census show a population of 93.8 million as on 1st February 1961 — nearly 5,000,000 more than had been estimated. East Pakistan suffered severe damage from cyclones, and there have been floods and drought in both wings of the country. Drought in West Pakistan has resulted in an estimated 25% decrease in wheat production — 1960-61. Drought in East Pakistan severely damaged the tea estates, and there will be reduced production for several years as a result. The same drought in East Pakistan resulted in at least a 25% reduction in the 1960-61 jute crop — down to an estimated 4.5 million bales from the normal 6 million bales. Pakistan is the world's largest producer and principal exporter of jute, so this loss created a world-wide shortage and prices shot up, very much to Pakistan's disadvantage. Export earnings from jute are not affected, but the high prices may well affect the market available in the future. An estimated 7.4 million bale crop this year, it is hoped, will right that situation.

Certainly the advantages gained have been gained in the face of many difficulties.

Removal of controls

Pakistan is removing the various controls formerly imposed on the economy as rapidly as may safely be done. A free economy is the goal. Import restrictions will have to remain for some time, until exports can be sufficiently increased. But even this restriction has been eased through the Export Bonus scheme, which enables the exporter of manufactured goods to use part of the exchange earned for importing machinery, spare parts, raw materials, etc., without obtaining the usual import licence.

A good beginning was made with the removal of all price and distribution restrictions on food grains. The result has been excellent. Prices rose a little to a more true supply and demand level — and then levelled off.

A serious maldistribution problem developed with cotton yarn, for which a large export market had developed, with resultant shortage of supplies for the hand loom industry, which supplies nearly half of the country's textiles and employs nearly three times as many people as the mill industry does. Instead of imposing further restrictions, it was decided to remove all restrictions, including the incentive of the Export Bonus scheme. Normal economic forces were counted on to bring about a satisfactory distribution. The application of such sound economics could, however, be overthrown on account of the U.S.A. cotton policy of subsidised exports of raw cotton and restricted imports of textiles from such countries as Pakistan.

Second Five-Year Plan

Work under the Second Five-Year Development Plan started on 1st July 1960. It is a very sound plan looking to the attainment of certain physical targets designed to attain a steady acceleration of development. Based on 1959 prices it had originally been estimated to cost the equivalent of \$3,992 million, for which foreign exchange in the form of loans, aid and private foreign investment would be needed to the extent of \$1,366 million (36.7%) plus a further \$315 million for maintenance imports. These figures were exclusive of U.S.P.L. 400 surplus agricultural transactions, and Indus Basin Replacement costs. In the light of rising prices and various "tied" credits such as D.L.F. loans which must be spent in higher priced U.S.A., costs were recalculated in early 1961 to show £\$4.832 billion, for which \$1.775 billion in foreign exchange would be needed plus \$525 million for maintenance imports. This \$2.3 billion can only come from aid, loans and private foreign investment. Somehow the required money must be found if Pakistan's development is to keep accelerating, as it must.

Pakistan's extreme concern may therefore be readily understood when the recent meeting of the Consortium of Aid, providing countries brought together by the World Bank, provided only \$320 million towards the 1961-62 need of \$450 million and did not consider at all the need for \$495 million for 1962-63. Fortunately the Consortium agreed to meet again later this year to consider further needs. It is

hoped that the Consortium will commit further aid to Pakistan to meet her pressing needs.

Waterlogging and soil salinity

Hard on the heels of the Indus Settlement has come an acute realization that West Pakistan is suffering from salinity in the soil and waterlogging. The cause is irrigation and flooding without adequate draining from the subsoil aquifer. The result is that possibly half of the irrigated area is already affected to varying degrees: 1.3 million acres have already gone out of production and from 70,000 to 100,000 acres a year are added to that total. This is probably the main cause for the failure to increase agricultural production in the country.

Thanks to detailed investigations and modern knowledge, an adequate plan has been developed to reclaim these

lands and prevent future losses through deep well pumping to lower the water level, and the provision of other surface and underground drains. It will take ten years and cost the equivalent of \$714 million plus an estimated \$525 million for additional electricity generation and distribution. This is very much of a "must" if the country is to survive.

Inflation

With the heavy expenditure of development (\$4.8 billion in the second Plan and much more in the third) plus the presently estimated \$1.3 billion on the Indus Replacement Works, and now this nearly \$1.3 billion to overcome salinity and waterlogging, the danger of inflation which may arise as many of these projects are not immediately productive is being guarded against in every possible way.

PROFILE OF AN ALLY:

MUHAMMAD AYUB KHAN

On 7th October 1958 Pakistan was the setting of a peaceful revolution — the most significant in contemporary South Asian affairs.

The logic of history swept Muhammad Ayub Khan into office as the President of Pakistan. An era of massive economic and social reform was initiated in Pakistan. Last year, by means of a secret ballot, the new administration won an overwhelming vote of confidence.

Who is Ayub Khan? What is his background?

President Ayub is Pakistan's first Head of State to be born in this century. He was born at Abbotabad, near Rawalpindi, the present temporary capital of Pakistan, on 14th May 1907.

He received his initial schooling at the Muslim University at Aligarh, a famous seat of learning which has produced distinguished Asian soldiers, scholars and statesmen. At the age of 19 he received his first military training at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, England. He won a commission in 1928 and was assigned to the Royal Fusiliers.

During World War II he served with distinction on the Burma front as a battalion commander. He then held several regimental appointments. In 1951 he became the first Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army and thoroughly reorganized the armed forces. Maximum austerity and maximum efficiency became guiding principles. Under his command, a revolutionary change in the technical standards and the social and economic outlook of the armed forces transpired.

Two years later, now a General, he returned to England to attend the Imperial General Staff Conference of the Commonwealth. In 1954 he was appointed to the cabinet as the Minister of Defence, from which he resigned in 1956.



Muhammad Ayub Khan

On 7th October 1958, General Ayub was named the Supreme Commander and Chief Martial Law Administrator of Pakistan. On 27th October he assumed the office of the Presidency.

The President has sparkling grey eyes, a clipped moustache and an impeccable command of the English language. He stands 6 ft. 2 in. and weighs 195 lb. He is an early riser, usually 6.30 a.m., and a driving worker, retiring at about 10 p.m. His chief luxury is a two-hour break after lunch. The President is a light eater. He prides himself as a trout fisherman, horseman and hunter. He is an avid reader of military history, international affairs and philosophy. He has a great interest in comparative religion.

President Ayub has a reputation for the statesman's quick grasp of basic problems. He is diligent and methodical. He dislikes pomposity and, to the dismay of the Ministry of External Affairs, prefers off-the-cuff speeches. He is known to throw away carefully prepared texts.

His administration has been dynamic. The President has set the pace in Pakistan with a series of sweeping reforms designed to reshape Pakistan's political, economic and social structure to enable the country to meet the challenges of the present era. He has said :

"The next 15 to 20 years are going to be most crucial for Pakistan. Either we 'make the grade' in this period or we do not. If we fail to make the grade, we are bound to be submerged under the tidal wave of Communism which is constantly lashing its fury all around us. Since we do not seek this fate we must move forward, and do so quickly."

President Ayub has said :

"As a student of war and strategy, I can see quite clearly the inexorable push of the north in the direction of the warm waters of the Indian Ocean. This push is bound to increase if India and Pakistan go on squabbling with each other. If, on the other hand, we resolve our problems and disengage our armed forces from facing inwards as they do today, and face them outwards, I feel we shall have a good chance of preventing a recurrence of the history of the past, which was that whenever this sub-continent was divided — and often it was divided — someone or other invited an outsider to step in."

The President is an affectionate family man. He has four sons and three daughters. He prefers to keep his family in the background.

THE CROSS AND THE CRESCENT

by ATAWOOLLAH A. S. K. JOOMMAL AL-QUADIREE

"The threat of Communism and Islam," "Islam is a danger in Africa," "The menace of Islam to Christianity," are some of the headlines one frequently comes across in newspapers these days. Many Christian Churches have bracketed Islam with Communism, thus ascribing to it, by implication, the pernicious aspects of the Communistic ideology. The Editor of one newspaper expressed his concern thus : "In our time, out of ten natives who abandon their primitive religion, seven go over to Islam and three to Christianity, and this is a fact which means more to the future of this sub-continent than all the efforts of politicians and economists to keep it in the Western orbit". Why is Islam looked upon as a "danger" to Christianity? Is there any basis for this assumption? A closer examination of the cardinal tenets of this faith will, perhaps, help to allay the fears that are presently being entertained by those not conversant with this religion that has almost five hundred million adherents as against Christianity's eight hundred million.

Islam not a new religion

The word "Islam" means "peace" and "submission to the will of God". Islam is not a new religion. The religion of God has always been one. The manifestation of God's religion in different ages was designated by different names by its followers, e.g., Judaism, Christianity, Islam, etc.

The Jehovah of Judaism, therefore, is the same Being as the God of Christianity, Allah of Islam or Brahma of Hinduism. Many people think that the Allah of Islam is some special tribal deity of the Muslims only. A rose by any other name would smell as sweet, and God, addressed in any tongue, will remain the same God for all mankind.

Islam was the religion of Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus and, finally, Muhammad (peace be on them all!). God revealed His religion in the different periods of the history of the world, taking into account the *zeitgeist* of a particular age, and keeping it in proportion to the mental progress of mankind. These revelations, as pointed out by the Qur'án, were grossly tampered with and interpolated by self-seekers from time to time, thus creating the need for a renewal and also an expansion of God's message. Religion, then, has been in an evolutionary process since the time of Abraham, down the corridors of history, through the various prophets, until finally it was revealed to Muhammad in a comprehensive form.

Some fundamental beliefs of Islam

Belief in the indivisibility of God, in other words the absolute Oneness of the Creator and the Finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad, are the cardinal pillars of this religion. "God neither begets, nor is He begotten," declares the Qur'án. God is Omnipotent, Omnipresent and

Omniscient. He is One, and has no need for partners in the administration of the Universe. Islam's monotheism, therefore, is pure, unadulterated, unqualified and uncompromising.

The institution of the five daily prayers is to keep the thought and remembrance of the Maker constant and uppermost in the Muslim mind, as well as to cleanse and purify his soul. Just as a man (or woman) taking a bath five times a day cannot be unclean physically, likewise the man or woman praying five times a day to the Lord Almighty cannot be spiritually unclean. Of course, the attitude and approach to prayer must be correct. Mere adherence to the outward form of prayer cannot reap any benefit for the devotee. If the form is observed and the spirit is neglected, prayer is useless. The Almighty has clarified this when He said: "Woe unto worshippers who are heedless of (the spirit) of their prayer!" (The Qur'án, 107 : 4-5).

Unlike the form of prayer in the sister religion, Christianity, Islam enjoins its devotees to pray with the soul *and* the body, since man possesses both. Hence the genuflections and prostrations, signifying *total* submission and humility to the Creator.

Zakat is the payment of 2½ per cent "poor tax" on total wealth. This is for distribution among indigents and destitutes so that poverty and want may be eliminated. If only the affluent Muslims of a country conscientiously and religiously carried out this far-reaching injunction of the Almighty, there would be no poor person left in any Muslim country. The back of Communism would most certainly be broken since this ideology can only thrive where poverty and indigence has rendered people susceptible to any doctrine that promises deliverance from destitution. Islam is the only religion that offers a potent economic challenge to Communism.

The thirty days' fast in the month of Ramadhan is designed to give the Muslim greater control over his animal self. The benefits derived from fasting are multifarious. Apart from the fact that physicians acknowledge the salutary qualities of fasting and also recommend it as an aid to good health, fasting exercises a moral and spiritual discipline on the Muslim. It prepares him for the rigours and privations of life. It also makes him realize and appreciate the hunger-pangs experienced by those who are without any means to satisfy their hunger. It is a lesson for the wealthy to be bountiful to the needy and to distribute largesse to them out of the God-given wealth they possess.

Though Islam does not encourage asceticism, the idea of fasting comes very near it, and allows a latitude to those with ascetic propensities.

Pilgrimage to the Holy City of Mecca once in a lifetime is enjoined upon those who can afford to make the journey. The idea behind this pillar is to bring together peoples of diverse colours and countries in a universal assemblage of true fraternity, proclaiming the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Year after year Mecca becomes the cynosure where the Muslims' spiritual aspiration finds fulfilment. Shoulder to shoulder the Muslim Negro, the Muslim Chinese, Muslim European, Muslim Indian, pauper and prince, perform the circumambulation of the Ka'bah in the love of the Divine Beloved. Colour consciousness and race superiority has no place in the thoughts of the Muslim — whether he is at Mecca or at home. This is Islam's greatest contribution to world civilization: namely, the total extirpation of colour and class dis-

crimination. Islam teaches that all mankind is one large family.

Apart from the five above-mentioned principal, obligatory pillars on which Islam rests, there are other tenets in which a Muslim must declare his belief. These are: belief in Resurrection and the Day of Judgment; belief in the angels of God who are appointed to perform various celestial tasks; belief in all the revealed books of God (i.e., the Torah of Moses, Bible of Jesus, Psalms of David, etc.) and belief in *all* the prophets of God. If a Muslim does not believe in any one of these, his faith remains incomplete. Islam, unlike other faiths, does not call the prophets of other religions false, but enjoins their acceptance and reverence upon its followers. The prevalent belief among Christians is that Muslims renounce the teachings of Christ. Nothing can be farther from the truth. Muslims deeply revere Jesus Christ as one of the greatest prophets of God, and they accept *all* his teachings contained in the *original* Bible.

Plural marriage in Islam

Plural marriage in Islam is made the principal butt of attack by those who are hostile to this creed. It is misrepresented as licence for voluptuousness. This accusation is both injudicious and short-sighted. History proves conclusively that until very recent times polygamy was not considered so reprehensible as it is now. St. Augustine himself seems to have observed in it no intrinsic immorality or sinfulness and declared that polygamy was not a crime where it was the legal institution of a country. The German reformers, as Hallam points out, even as late as the sixteenth century, admitted the validity of a second or a third marriage contemporaneously with the first in default of issue and other similar causes. In Islam, plurality of wives is allowed only to meet the exigencies of a particular situation such as childlessness, a diseased wife, or the preponderance of women over men as during a war. Primarily, polygamy was a social corrective for the many moral wrongs resulting from the number of women exceeding that of men. The inherent idea of Islamic polygamy, therefore, is to safeguard society from moral corruption and decay. But the conditions attached to a man taking a second wife are so stringent that they render this step impracticable. Except for Arabia, then, where the lecherous sheikhs have flagrantly abused this law of Islam, in all Muslim countries monogamy is the rule and polygamy the exception. Polygamy is resorted to *only* as an outlet for a social necessity, and it is *not* recommended by Islam.

A word from Dr. Anne Besant would not be out of place here: "When we see thousands of miserable women who crowd the streets of Western towns during the night, we must surely feel that it does not lie in Western mouths to reproach Islam for its polygamy. It is better for a woman, happier for a woman, more respectable for a woman, to live in Islamic polygamy, united to one man only, with the legitimate child in her arms surrounded with respect than to be seduced, cast out on the streets perhaps with an illegitimate child outside the pale of law — unsheltered and uncared for, to become a victim of any passer-by, night after night, rendered incapable of motherhood, despised by all".

The status of women in Islam

It has been said that in Islam woman does not possess a soul. The Qur'án refutes this idea by saying that women

are the apparels of men, and men are the apparels of women. The Qur'an further states that men have rights over women just as women have rights over men. The Prophet of Islam gave further dignity to woman and raised her to the pedestal of respect and reverence by declaring to his followers that "Paradise lies at the feet of thy mother". In Islam, woman is a co-sharer in the inheritance left by her parents. A widow inherits part of her husband's capital. A woman, therefore, is entitled to have her own property and her husband is forbidden to interfere, or use its income by coercion or by the use of any direct or indirect threat. Women are also entitled to dowry at the time of marriage. A woman could hardly ask for more.

Mr. Pierre Crabites, who was appointed Judge by President Taft in 1911, to represent the U.S.A. on the Mixed Tribunals of Cairo, Egypt, expressed his views on the rights of women in an article entitled: "Things Mahomed did for Women". He says: "When all is said and done, however, nothing astonished me more than to have the proof driven home to me that before 632 of the Christian Era, the Prophet of Islam accomplished more to safeguard the property rights of the wives of his land than the legislature of Louisiana has yet done for her who bears my name. . . . Mahomed's outstanding contribution to the cause of woman resides in the property right that he conferred on the wives of his people. The juridical status of a wife, if so technical a term may be pardoned, is exactly the same as that of a husband. The Moslem spouse, in so far as her property is concerned, is as free as a bird. The law permits her to do with her financial assets whatever she pleases without consulting her consort. . . . It is therefore useless to tell me that the Moslem woman is nothing but a human lacteal machine, that her soul is not her own, and that man is her lord and master. It was Mahomed who fixed with unerring discernment the property rights of the married woman of his land. It was he who gave them a legal personality of their own. He thus put the *sceptre within their grasp*."

Liquor forbidden

One of the cancerous evils to which society is a helpless victim is alcohol. Many temperance societies are in existence all over the world to fight this social cancer. Islam, happily, is free from this evil because the Qur'an has expressly forbidden its consumption. The Rev. Canon Isaac Taylor says: "Islam, above all, is the most powerful total abstinence association in the world".

Reconciliation of temporal and spiritual life

Islam successfully combines the temporal as well as the spiritual life of man. It enjoins the love of a home, wife and children, the conduct of business for one's subsistence, as well as the love of God. The one should not be neglected at the expense of the other. Christianity, in contradistinction to Islam, caters only for the spiritual welfare of man, since Jesus said that his kingdom was of heaven, and not of this world.

Divorce in Islam

The popular notion among Christians is that a Muslim can put away his wife by merely pronouncing "I divorce thee" thrice. This is a latter-day sacerdotal invention and has no basis whatsoever in either the Qur'an or the Traditions of the Prophet. Divorce, as a measure, is only taken after all attempts at reconciliation have failed. "Of

all the lawful things, divorce is the most hated in the sight of God," said Muhammad. Divorce, in order to be legally valid and binding, must *strictly* conform to the law of God, namely, three pronouncements spread over three months. The idea of a month intervening each pronouncement of divorce is to leave the door of reconciliation between husband and wife open.

Jihad or "Holy War"

The belief that Islam was spread at the point of the sword is totally erroneous. De Lacy O'Leary says: "History makes it clear, however, that the legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of the sword upon conquered races is one of the most fantastically absurd myths that historians have ever repeated" (*Islam at the Crossroads*, p. 8). The Qur'an says that "there is no compulsion in religion". Islam permits war only in self-defence, and in the cause of justice. The phenomenal growth of Islam, not only in Africa, but also in England and other countries, confutes the assertion that Islam was spread by the sword, *for today Islam has no sword and no "H" bombs with which to force people into submission*.

Islamic tolerance

The tolerance that Islam practices towards other faiths can best be illustrated by the Charter that the Prophet Muhammad granted to all Christians and particularly to the monks of the St. Catherine monastery near Mount Sinai. The Charter has been justly designated as one of the noblest monuments of enlightened tolerance that the history of the world can produce. In the Charter the Prophet secured for the Christians privileges and immunities which they did not possess even under sovereigns of their own creed, and declared that any Muslim violating and abusing what was therein ordered, should be regarded as a violator of God's testament. He undertook himself, and enjoined his followers, to protect the Christians, to defend their churches, the residences of their priests, and to guard them from all injuries. They were not to be unfairly taxed; no bishop was to be driven out of his bishopric; no Christian was to be forced to reject his religion; no monk was to be expelled from his monastery; no pilgrim was to be detained from his pilgrimage. Nor were the Christian churches to be pulled down for the sake of building mosques or houses for the Muslims. Christian women married to Muslims were to enjoy their own religion, and not be subjected to compulsion or annoyance of any kind on that account. If Christians should stand in need of assistance for the repair of their churches or monasteries, or any other matter pertaining to their religion, the Muslims were to assist them. This was not to be considered as taking part in their religion, but as merely rendering them assistance in their need, and complying with the ordinances of the Prophet, which were made in their favour by the authority of God and of His Messenger. Should the Muslims be engaged in hostilities with outside Christians, no Christian resident among the Muslims should be treated with contempt on account of his creed. Any Muslim so treating a Christian should be accounted recalcitrant to the Prophet.

Islam and slavery

Islam has been accused of maintaining and perpetuating the ignoble institution of slavery. This accusation is not in

accordance with facts. Islam was the first religion that dealt a death-blow to the very roots of slavery, and would have completely abolished it but for its being so deeply rooted in all the nations of the world. Since it is not immediately possible to eradicate a centuries-old custom with one stroke of the pen, Islam laid down principles which cannot fail to approximate toward a vastly improved state of affairs. The Qur'an lays down that a part of the public funds should be spent in purchasing the freedom of the slaves. The Prophet Muhammad repeatedly exhorted his followers to enfranchise slaves "... than which there was not an act more acceptable to God". He ruled that for certain sins of omission the penalty should be the manumission of slaves. He also ordered that slaves should be allowed to purchase their liberty by the wages of their services. Islam, therefore, came as a friend of the slaves, and aimed at the gradual abolition of this inhuman institution. As a wise man once said: "It is always easy to imagine perfection, but it is only possible to achieve improvement."

The idea of hell and heaven in Islam

Western critics have presented the Qur'anic Heaven as an abode of sensual voluptuousness and physical pleasures. This presentation is most unjust and unkind. To a race of illiterate and pleasure-loving people such as the Arabs were, the concept of Eternal Bliss could not be conveyed in abstract language or philosophical terms. They needed a description and an imagery well within the confines of their limited understanding. Material language needs the help of metaphors and similes for the accurate conveyance of the significance of spiritual problems, and these figures of speech, at best, can only serve to frame analogies. The fact must therefore be kept in mind and due allowance should be made for the manner of description of Hell and Heaven in the Qur'an. According to the Prophet Muhammad, the reality of Heaven has been "neither witnessed by any human eyes nor have the ears ever listened to words capable of expressing it". It is beyond the pale of human imagination. Since, as a result of obedience to natural or physical laws, material progress and comfort follow as a matter of course, so in proportion to the amount of good or bad done in this world, the utmost spiritual happiness or spiritual suffering will follow in the other world. Now, if according to the law of progress everything is heading for advance, there must naturally be a zenith beyond which there is no point of further progress. Comfort and happiness, and grief or suffer-

ing, are two states which a person encounters in this life; hence there must be an extreme point of both these states. In Islam, therefore, this very extreme point of pleasure or bliss is called Heaven, and the extreme point of pain or sorrow is called Hell.

Common grounds

Both Islam and Christianity recognize the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Both religions stress the duty towards one's neighbour. The "love thy neighbour as thyself" of Christ is as important to the social welfare of mankind as "he is not a Muslim who does not desires for his neighbour what he desires for himself" of Muhammad. The dissemination of spiritual ideas and the propagation of the Word of God is basic to both Islam and Christianity. It therefore seems incongruous to regard Islam as a threat or challenge to Christianity, since both religions are engaged in delivering the barbarous heathen from darkness and showing him divine light. Islam, further, treats the adherents of Christianity as its friends, for in the words of the Qur'an: "... And thou wilt certainly find the nearest in friendship to the believers to be those who say, 'We are Christians'. This is because there are priests and monks among them and because they are not proud." The Word of God, then, can be spread by both faiths in a spirit of mutual tolerance and friendship. Islam, furthermore, is an implacable foe of Communism. So is Christianity. To my mind, this is the most powerful common platform from which both religions can work, side by side, for the spiritual reclamation and salvation of mankind.

Conclusion

I will conclude this article with the words of the Revd. Canon Isaac Taylor: "We ought to begin by recognizing the fact that Islam is not an anti-Christian faith, but a half-Christian faith. . . . Islam is cosmopolitan — not like Judaism, confined to one race, but extends to the whole world. There is nothing in the teaching of Mahomet antagonistic to Christianity. It was a revolt against empty theological polemics; it was a masculine protest against the exaltation of celibacy as a crown of piety. It replaced monkliness by manliness. It gave hope to the slave, brotherhood to mankind and recognition of the fundamental facts of human nature" (Lecture on "Mahomedanism" at the Church Congress at Wolverhampton, reported in *The Times* of London, 8th October 1887).

A MUSLIM CATECHISM

for beginners and young children

by MUHAMMAD RAFAEQ

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MALAYA ON THE PATH OF PROGRESS

by TUN HAJI ABDUL RAZZAK

The economic progress made by the Federation of Malaya in the past four years of its independence as a sovereign nation is remarkable and it is certainly one of the brightest spots of Asia today.

The face of Malaya is changing all around us. Other countries have now confidence in the integrity and stability of the Government and the administration, and Malaya has earned high prestige for her independent views on world affairs, particularly on human rights and problems of progress.

From the very moment of the historic declaration of Malaya's Independence on 31st August 1957, the nation and the people, sharing a release of spirit and energy, working in unity and co-operation, have swept forward together in a surge of progress and achievement such as Malaya has never known before.

Landmarks of progress

In the past year the Federation has sent its own Armed Forces overseas for the first time to join the United Nations Command in working for peace in the Congo; passed its first \$1,000 million Budget; initiated an immense \$5,050 million economic development plan, conducted nation-wide local elections at all levels from village to city councils, announced a programme of free primary education to commence next year; expanded the national University, which, opened after Merdeka, now has 1,010 students, and is spending \$7,000,000 this year alone; opened a magnificent new Military College; taken a major role on apartheid in the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in London; is engaged on 25 new major schemes to clear land for the landless; established Malaya as the world's leading producer of both rubber and tin; concluded trade agreements with Japan and New Zealand and an Investment Guarantee Agreement with West Germany; attracted more millions of dollars of new industry, and launched in co-operation with the Philippines and Thailand a practical organization for an "Association of South-East Asia" to work in mutual concert in the economic, social and cultural fields.

These examples are typical of the tempo and sweep of forward progress in the Federation of Malaya. Hardly a day passes without the opening of some new factory, school, bank, public works project or office building. These are the outward signs of a rapidly-expanding economy, as the people of Malaya respond to the challenge of the Second Five-Year Development Plan.

Second Five-Year Plan

This Plan for 1961-1965 was presented to Parliament by me as Deputy Prime Minister on 7th February 1961. It is an ambitious but realistic Plan aimed at solving the economic problems of the country associated primarily with our population growth (at the rate of 3.3 per cent per annum, one of the highest in the world), our dependence on two major export commodities, rubber and tin, and third, the economic imbalance between the rural and urban areas.

The Federation Government has made provisions for the investment of \$5,050 million. Of this sum, \$2,150 million

will be invested in the public sector and \$2,900 million in the private sector. The average percentage in the distribution of this amount is as follows: Economic Sector, about 71 per cent; Social Sector, 24.5 per cent; Government Sector, 4.5 per cent.

With this rate of investment, it is hoped to increase the output of the economy by 4 per cent a year, provide employment to more than 340,000 in the next five years, and accommodate 200,000 more children in primary schools. Incidentally, one of the finest achievements of the new Malaya is the provision for the first time of school places for all primary age children, more than 1,250,000 today.

Rural programme

The most significant factor in the Five-Year Plan is the implementation of the rural programme which was launched on 1st January 1961, and is now operating in top-gear throughout the country.

The establishment of a special Ministry of Rural Development was the most important announcement made by the Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, on assuming office again after the 1959 General Elections.



Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, Prime Minister of Malaya.

During the first year of top-priority emphasis on rural progress, a great programme of collation of basic data was carried out in every district throughout the country. Following up this, Malaya began in 1960 the active implementation of the Plan, now in its second year. Up to date, the following projects have been completed: 651 bridges, costing \$1,116 million; 886 water supplies, including wells, at a cost of \$659,500; 138 community halls, costing \$494,500; 286 irrigation projects, costing \$448,000; 47 jetties, costing \$105,600; and 25 playing fields, costing \$69,700.

The Rural Development Programme got another big boost this year when Parliament adopted the Development Estimates amounting to \$450,000,000. The Plan for this year is to provide more educational and health facilities, particularly in the hinterlands of Malaya.

Land for landless

In addition, the Federal Land Development Authority has initiated a comprehensive scheme to give land to the landless. Already twenty-five separate projects are under way. Plots of 10½ acres are provided to each family of settlers on jungle-cleared land planted with eight acres of high-yielding rubber, the remaining acres being intended for

ra'ayat is being carried out by the co-operative movement, which has bounded ahead since Merdeka, with the result that there are now 2,730 various types of co-operatives with a membership of 300,000 and a working capital of \$130,000,000.

One unique co-operative, only fifteen months old, is the National Land Finance Co-operative Society, which aims at a membership of 80,000 rubber workers to buy large estates to offset the dangers of fragmentation. There are 15,000 members at present and they have paid down \$1,000,000 to acquire a 3,000-acre estate in Kedah at a cost of \$3,000,000. Co-operative ownership of this estate began this month.

A final note on agriculture. The average annual rate of growth of agricultural production during the past ten years was about 1 per cent a year, but since Merdeka it has averaged more than 3 per cent a year.

Fishing

Fishermen have benefited from co-operative sources, and these societies, together with the introduction of modern methods of fishing, mechanized boats and sampans with up-to-date gear, are enabling fishermen to increase their catches and produce more income.

In 1956 the number of motor-powered fishing boats was 5,641; by the end of 1960 there were 8,987. In the same period the number of fishermen's co-operative societies grew from 9 to 71, and membership from 714 to 5,064. By the end of 1960 the total Government loans to the East Coast co-operatives amounted to \$1,250,000. In addition, the Federation Government has contributed \$700,000 to the Colombo Aid project sponsored by Canada to provide refrigerated fish storages on the East Coast.

Production

The volume of production for the whole Malayan economy in 1960 was the highest in the history of the country. The volume of production of rubber, rice, palm oil, timber and iron ore was also the highest. Some agricultural statistics will illustrate the upsurge in production. Take the years 1959 and 1960. The figures in thousands of tons, with the 1959 figures in brackets, are: rice (410,600), 560,200; rubber (637,100), 707,600; copra (144,000), 172,180; palm oil (56,500), 90,300. In 1958 the total production of iron ore was 2,800,000 tons, but in 1960 the figure was 5,700,000. In 1957 the timber production figures were 57,000,316 cubic feet; in 1960 the figures were 79,451,700 cubic feet.

In the period from 1956 to the present, as compared with 1955, the output of goods and services increased by more than 20 per cent, a higher rate than the population increase. The growth rates in construction, utilities, manufacturing and public services were more rapid. Manufacturing, for instance, increased up to 25 per cent.

The gross National Product (at factor cost) increased from an estimated \$4,710,000,000 in 1956 to an estimated \$5,900,000,000 in 1960. The total gross investment in the same period was more than 30 per cent above the average for the period 1950-55. In the period from 1956 to the present, this amounted to about 12 per cent of the total income, which is about 4 per cent lower than the rate operating in the economically more advanced countries of the world. These facts alone tell their own story of great progress.



fruits, vegetables and quick-growing cash crops. A quarter acre is set aside for the house, and tools, equipment and materials are provided to build it.

Of further benefit to the rural areas is the heightened interest evident everywhere in improved techniques of agriculture. Since Merdeka this all-round effort has resulted in Malaya becoming 70 per cent self-sufficient in rice production. A major role in raising the living levels of the rural

On the commercial side, trade in the Federation of Malaya has shown continuous improvement since Merdeka. Between 1958 and 1960 the total trade rose from 3,539 million dollars (imports 1,656.1 million dollars plus exports 1,882.9 million dollars) to 5,078 million dollars (imports 2,150.6 million dollars plus exports 2,927.4 million dollars).

Steps have also been taken to maintain the existing markets and open up new ones for exports. Towards this end, the Federation has acceded to the GATT and has concluded trade agreements with Australia, Japan and New Zealand, which are some of the important trading partners of the Federation.

Rubber and tin

Government efforts are mainly directed towards strengthening the competitive position of primary industries, secure for major export commodities a fair price and a fair share of world trade. The policy of replacing old uneconomic holdings of rubber with modern high-yielding strains has been stepped up, with the result that up to the end of last year no less than 1,250,000 acres (46 per cent of the total acreage) had been replanted with high-yielding rubber. The Federation has now emerged on the world scene not only as the world's leading tin producer, but also as the world's largest producer of natural rubber.

In the tin mining sector there was a share drop in production by about 20 per cent between 1955 and 1959 as a result of the tin recession. However, production is now picking up with the lifting of restrictions on the export of tin imposed under the International Tin Agreement, and more mines are being opened up.

The development of iron ore production in the Federation since Merdeka is phenomenal. In 1953 the total production was 2,800,000 tons, but it almost doubled by last

year, 1960, to rise to 5,700,000 tons, and is expected to increase to 6,000,000 tons by the end of this year.

Just over two weeks ago the new Rompin Mining Company Ltd. announced that it expected to go into production at Bukit Ibam, Pahang, at the end of a 60-mile new rail-line from the hinterland to the sea. The total cost of getting this mine into operation, including marine craft for lightering off Rompin itself, will be more than \$90,000,000. Only recently, also, a plan was announced to establish a \$50,000,000 joint Malayan-Japanese steel mill to process iron ore.

Economic progress

New industrial areas have grown up at Petaling Jaya near Kuala Lumpur and are under way at Johore Bahru, Ipoh and Butterworth. It is intended to establish more special industrial estates.

The record of Malaya's economic progress since Merdeka would not be complete without reference to the work and research of the Economic Planning Unit in the Prime Minister's Department and the current establishment of an Economic Division in the treasury, and the co-ordination of the Central Working Committee on the Five-Year Plan operating on the policy laid down by the Special Economic Committee of the Cabinet.

The inter-action of these three organizations in producing policy and planning I might well describe as the "brains" of economic progress in the Federation of Malaya. Their tasks are to ensure the success of the Second Five-Year Development Plan, which ends in 1965, and to work ahead on the organization of a Third Five-Year Development Plan to make the future of Malaya even better and brighter than it is today.

As our Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, has rightly observed, "Free Malaya is a New Malaya".



RELIGION AND POLITICS IN PAKISTAN, by Leonard Binder. University of California Press, Los Angeles. Pp. 440, price 60/-.

Pakistan emerged as a new country on the world map and an independent State in 1947 as a result of the demand and struggle of the 80 million Muslims in India for a homeland of their own, where they could fashion their lives in the light and glow of the Islamic ideals. The very first task, therefore, it was called upon to grapple with was to translate that dream into a viable constitution and system of Government. It turned out to be no plain sailing, however. The slogan that Pakistan was to be a laboratory to experiment with the socio-economic principles as laid down in the Qur'an, so as to show the world at large that Islam alone was capable of showing the way to a better world, worked as magic to rally the Indian Muslims behind the struggle for Pakistan. But when it came to the actual working, it

was found that it was easier said than done. The search for a practical constitutional shape for the Islamic State of Pakistan turned out to be more arduous than the attainment of Pakistan. There was a whole crop of conflicting views and interests to be reconciled. The present book is a detailed story of that search and struggle, the various phases it went through, and the various forces and figures that pulled against one another.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I sets out the three major attitudes towards Islam and the State: the traditionalist one of the 'Ulama, the consensus theory of the modernists and the fundamentalist approach of the Jama'at-i-Islami. Part II describes how these attitudes manifested themselves in the early stages of constitution-making, and the upsurge of the first trends towards secularism. Part III discusses the changes in these ideological positions as a result of the impact of political events.

As a complete record of the various stages and events the implementation of the Islamic ideology into the form of a State went through, it should be of interest and profit to the general reader as much as to the political scientist, orientalist, statesman and historian.

Of special interest will be found the emergence within the House of Islam of what may be called the Church v. State controversy, something on the lines of the conflict Christendom went through. The *'Ulama*, by virtue of their theological knowledge, claimed to be the sole competent interpreters and custodians of an Islamic State. The modernists swore by the slogans of change and progress. Underneath these worked the age-long human passion to capture power. To all intents and purposes, the cry of religion became a handmaid to capturing political power. The Ahmadiyya controversy, to which the book devotes one whole chapter, has been shown as being at bottom a pawn in that same game of party-politics.

The arguments against an Islamic State have been thus summed up on the authority of the findings of the two judges of the Panjab High Court, as incorporated in their report on the Panjab Disturbances :

"The report suggested that Muslim political leaders were confusing the Islamic State idea with the Islamic dogma, personal law and ethics. . . . The consequences of making Pakistan an Islamic State were described with the gravest foreboding. Non-Muslims would not be given equal rights. The penalty for apostasy would be death, and, since the Sunnis and Shi'is sometimes call each other unbelievers, a Muslim who changed his sect might be killed. The propagation of other religions would be banned. Because of the law of Jihad the Islamic State would have to be perpetually at war with India. If prisoners of war should be taken they could only be ransomed or exchanged or sold into slavery — in contravention of international law. All sculpture, card playing, portrait painting, photography of human beings, music, dancing, motion pictures and dramas would have to be prohibited. The dissection of the bodies of dead Muslims would be banned. Moreover, the military and the police might disobey their officers if so advised by an *alim* (theologian) on an issue of Islamic conscience. The learned judges concluded their digression with the comment: 'The sublime faith called Islam will live even if our leaders are not there to enforce it. It lives in the individual, in his soul and outlook, in all his relations with God and men . . . and our politicians should understand that if Divine commands cannot make or keep a man a Musalman, their statues will not'" (pp. 343-344).

The author, who is a member of the Political Science Department of the University of California and a specialist in Eastern and Middle Eastern Affairs, devoted a whole year to studying this struggle of the people of Pakistan in quest of an Islamic State, in the manner of a research student, collecting all the relevant data, and formulating and allocating the same. In the course of his study he had the benefit of personal contact with the leading figures among the public men, the political leaders and leading *'Ulama*, thereby gaining a first-hand knowledge of their viewpoints. He was also given facilities to draw upon official records and those of the various committees and political parties. As such the book may aptly be called an encyclopaedia of the political events in the first decade of Pakistan's life.

In Britain, the agents for the publishers are: The Cambridge University Press, Bentley House, 200 Euston Road, London, N.W.1.

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BETWEEN OXUS AND JUMNA, by Arnold J. Toynbee. Oxford University Press, Amen House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4. Pp. 211, price 21/-.

A travel book always makes light, interesting reading, combining glimpses of quite a variegated panorama of life and nature with mental relaxation. The one under review, coming as it does from the pen of an historian of Professor Toynbee's insight, is much more than that: it takes you back into the corridors of history connected with the places visited. Central Asia has been one of the most ancient cradles of civilization, and the region covered by the author has been one of the richest in historical associations, dating back to remote antiquity. Places like Kabul, Qandahar, Herat, Balkh and Ghazni, mere specks on the map in a backward part of the world, suddenly become alive when you see them through Professor Toynbee's eyes. You see mighty figures of history from Alexander down to Baber, Tamerlane, Chingez, Mahmud Ghaznawi, Ahmad Shah Abdali, and quite a host of others, passing before your mind's eye with all their might and main, and rolling down the plains of the Peshawar Valley and the Panjab. The whole region lying between the rivers Oxus on the one end and the Jumna on the other is strewn with relics of these giants of men who in their day held the stage of history. The author, as he finds himself bumped into one of these during his well-planned dash from place to place, has historical reminiscences awakened in him and treats the reader to flashes into these.

At the battlefield of Maiwand in Afghanistan in which the Afghan army defeated the British expeditionary force in 1880, the author founded memorials raised by the Afghan Government not only to their own dead but also to the fallen British soldiers, whose valour they admired. This sends him into a moralizing mood, saying :

"When I was standing in front of this Afghan monument to the fallen British soldiers, I felt what I have felt in the presence of German war-graves in countries invaded by Germans in one or other of the two world wars. These men had given the most that human beings can give: their lives. But what were they doing in a country that was not theirs? Their opponents, who fell on their own soil, in the act of defending it, need no justification. Indisputably they died in a good cause. It is a tragedy that any young man's life should be cut short by a violent death at the hands of his fellow men. It is doubly tragic when he loses his life in serving his country in an aggressive war. At least half of the uncounted millions of war dead who have given their lives since the institution of war came into existence must have died fighting for a bad cause. How much longer is this evil institution going to be treated as if it were not the public crime that it is?" (pp. 65, 66).

The sight of a girl in a Powindah caravan on one of its usual treks back from the plains of Pakistan and India reminds the author of the identical features of one of his own grand-daughters, and this is how he gives vent to his true historian's feelings within him :

"Suddenly, in a group of children, I became aware of one of my grand-daughters. She was looking at me intently as if she were surprised that I had been so slow in recognizing her. Stature, features, eyes, expression: all were the same. Bleach this Pakistan girl a little or tan that English one, and they would be identical twins. Their identity was a living demonstration of the unity of the human race in spite of its artificial self-disruption into so distant separate peoples. The labels 'Pashtun', 'English' and the rest that we affix to ourselves and to our neighbours are merely conventional signs" (p. 57).

One part of Afghanistan, the basin of the Helmand River, where the Helmand Valley Authority is busy with its various projects, gives the author a rude shock of finding something of America in Asia. During the past centuries in Afghanistan, "Man's way of getting nature to meet his needs," he tells us, "has been to humour her." Now with

the American-minded *jinn* at his disposal, it looked like "hitting her over the head". He has only to order this *jinn* to throw a bridge across a river or dig another canal, and in a trice the exacting orders are carried out. The Afghan technicians and administrators on the multiple development projects in the Helmand Valley are more American than Afghan in their ways of life, most of them having lived and worked and studied in the U.S., some even having married and brought American wives with them.

"The emancipation of woman" the author found to be "still a controversial and indeed explosive issue in the tribal areas". The tribal Maliks told him with regret that under pressure by "Russian Communist infidels", this anti-Islamic way of discarding the purdah was being "forced upon the unhappy pious women of Afghanistan" by a "misguided and unrepresentative Royal Afghan Government". At Fort Sandeman, a group of Maliks, when asked by the author as to what their womenfolk's own views were on this question, told him: "Their women's future was not the women's business; it was for the men to decide."

Afghanistan, like India, receives aid from both America and Russia, while Pakistan from one side only. While welcoming that political rivalry between the two *blocs* should set some of the world's wealth flowing from the richer to the poorer hands, the author deplores that this benefit should be "bought too dear at the price of the risk of extermination that now hangs over the heads of the whole human race", and strikes the warning note:

"Peshawar now has a red ring drawn round it on Mr. Khrushchev's bombing map, and Afghanistan may discover that a bear's hug can maul his victim as badly as a jab from his claws" (p. 186).

The book carries colour pictures of some most fascinating beauty spots, and architectural achievements. The beautiful marble mosque at Herat reminds one of the tomb of Jehangir in Lahore.

* * * *

ERITREA, by G. K. N. Trevaskis. Published by Amen House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4. Pp. 137, price 21/-.

The little-known triangular strip of territory known as Eritrea, stretching along the west coast of the Red Sea, wedged in between Ethiopia, the Sudan and the French Somaliland, emerged into the limelight of history with its occupation by the Italians towards the end of the nineteenth century, to whom it owes its creation as well as its name. Nevertheless, its roots go down into remote antiquity, when it witnessed a criss-cross of racial mixtures which gave birth to the name Habash (literally, "mixed"), from which subsequently was derived the name Abyssinia. It even boasted a measure of civilization and a kingdom under the Sabaeans which centred around Axum. With the invasion of Egypt by the Arabs, Eritrea could not but feel the impact of this new wave of culture. The people bear the stamp of their long history of immigrations, invasions and partition between alien rules. They are a conglomeration of different communities, akin to their neighbours in Ethiopia, the Sudan and the French Somaliland. The total population is 1,031,000, of which 510,000 are Christians, 514,000 Muslims and 7,000 pagans. The Christians are made up of 459,000 Coptics, 35,000 Catholics and 16,000 Protestants of the Swedish Church. In one part, Tigrinya, which is a stronghold of the Coptic Church, Muslims, who form a minority

of 37,000 as against 487,000 Christians, are the victims of great intolerance. They cannot own land and are treated as social outcasts. The population is thus a mixture of different communities which was bound together by a common subjection to Italian rule, until 1941, when, during World War II, Mussolini's East African Empire fell to British forces.

The theme of the present book is concerned mostly with the period under British occupation from 1941 to 1952 — the impact of the British democratic institutions which replaced the Fascist régime, the growth of political consciousness among the people, and, finally, the transition to autonomy within the Ethiopian Federation. As happened in the rest of the British colonies, the prospects of autonomy divided the population into warring camps. The Muslims formed a Muslim League to safeguard their rights, with Sayed Bubakr Ibn Othman Mirghani as President and Ibrahim Sultan as Secretary-General. This was just the period when India was going through the throes of communal riots culminating in partition — 1947. Muslims opposed union with Ethiopia. Nevertheless, they were by no means of one mind as to an alternative. Some favoured the continuance of British administration in some form, some were against it; some even openly recalled the "good old days" of the Italian régime under which they enjoyed privileges. As usual there were communal clashes between Christians and Muslims. A five-member United Nations Commission was appointed to ascertain the wishes of the people as to the future form of government, Mian Ziauddin of Pakistan being one. The Commission's report was not unanimous. Three members' report was against independence; the Pakistani and Guatemalan delegates reported in favour of independence, accusing the Coptic Church of abuse of power in tampering with free expression of opinion. The U.N. General Assembly adopted a resolution in December 1950 constituting Eritrea an autonomous unit, federated with Ethiopia under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian crown. The federation is, however, precariously balanced. Ethiopia is still manoeuvring for complete merger of Eritrea. Its interference in Eritrean affairs is a cause of constant confusion in the political stability within Eritrea. The author, who is in a position to speak with authority, having been connected with Eritrea's administration ever since British occupation up to 1950, concludes with the note of warning:

"It is for Ethiopia to make her choice. The temptation to subject Eritrea firmly under her own control will always be very great. Should she try to do so, she will risk Eritrean discontent and eventual revolt, which, with foreign sympathy and support, might well disrupt both Eritrea and Ethiopia. . . . It is to her own interest as well as Eritrea's that she should ensure that the Federation survives in the form its authors intended" (p. 131).

* * * *

THE PRINCIPLES OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT IN ISLAM, by Muhammad Asad. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, California. Pp. 107, price \$3.

Ever since the emergence of independent Muslim countries, the question of the applicability of the law of Islam to modern conditions has been mooted by scholars and thinkers. The result has been a great deal of confusion of thought and a tremendous amount of waste of national energy. In Pakistan, whereas the neighbouring country, India, immediately on the attainment of freedom plunged into an ambitious programme of all-round development and recon-

struction, the people's sole preoccupation has been an interminable discussion as to what shape an Islamic State, in terms of modern socio-economic conditions, could take. And 14 years after independence the issue is still being debated, with the end nowhere yet clearly in sight.

The present book from the pen of a man who combines Islamic learning with Western scholarship is an illuminating addition to literature on this controversy that has been raging within the House of Islam.

The thesis starts with emphasizing that Muslims must take up the challenge of the modern age and set up a State on the basis of Islamic values. That is the only path open to them in keeping with their belief that Islam is a perfect, all-comprehensive code, covering every aspect of life. It discusses why we must eschew the path of secularism. Secularism is based on expediency, and a society founded on the daily shifting norms of expediency can know no unity, and without proper unity there can be no national solidarity, prosperity or happiness. Religion alone gives the permanent, absolute moral values, and for that matter offers the only possibility of a social structure unified within itself, and hence well-set on the path to progress and prosperity.

Theoretically, the conclusion is unexceptionable. But when we come to the hard realities of life, which is the primary concern of a State, religion has a different story to tell. Instead of being a force for producing a compact society, religion, more often than not, has proved but one more cause — and perhaps a more potent one — of creating divisions and dissensions. Can we honestly claim an exception in the case of Islam? To take a glaring instance, we find from the earliest times the house of Islam divided into two camps, Sunnis and Shi'ahs, on a religious issue, the Shi'ahs insisting conscientiously on the basis of the Qur'an and the Hadith that the Prophet's spiritual heritage must continue only in the line of his descendants, whereas the Sunnis equally conscientiously reject that contention on the same twin bases.

The author's own conclusion in his summing-up of his thesis is not very encouraging. This is how he winds up :

"The theology of Islam is as practicable or as impracticable as we Muslims choose to make it. It will remain impracticable if we continue to confine our concept of Islamic law to the *Fiqhi* concepts of our past. Obviously such a reorientation of thought will be a painful process to many of us. It will imply a radical break with many habits of thought to which the Muslims have been accustomed in the course of their history; the abandonment or modification of many social customs which have been sanctified by the usage of centuries, the renunciation of the complacent conviction that all the ways and byways of Muslim life have been finally and authoritatively laid down in this or that book of *Fiqh* and all this will mean our moving forward to horizons as yet uncharted. And because such a prospect is frightening to the more conservative among us, any endeavour directed towards this end will undoubtedly provoke a most lively resistance. . . . But this opposition must not be allowed to deter us if we are conscious of desiring the triumph of Islam and nothing but Islam" (p. 107).

The case for secularism could hardly be put more forcefully. That is exactly what the secularists say. Since religion as commonly understood is tied up to a dead past, it cannot be made the basis of a progressive State. Since religion deals with issues mostly controversial, it must not be imported into the realm of practical politics, which a State has to deal with. The chances of national unity, on the basis of common good, love of country, its development and prosperity and the passion to secure for it a place in the sun, are much brighter than on the basis of religious sentiments. Besides, in a system of government based on

popular vote, the various contesting parties to legislatures in an Islamic State are bound to stir up the baser religious sentiments of the electorate, which in turn is bound to shatter national solidarity. The Hindu-Muslim riots in pre-partition India were the direct outcome of the exploitation of religious passions for political ends. It is in the interest of religion itself to keep the contaminating touch of the politician at arm's length. The dissensions between religion and religion, and within the same religion, in the last analysis, will be found traceable to political exploitation.

This is how the secularists would argue their case, and there is much force in it. When recently a prominent theologian of Karachi threatened to plunge the whole country into civil strife over a trifling issue of 'Id moon-sighting he was only exploiting the *Shariah* for personal prestige. Religion is a double-edged sword. Whereas in the hands of truly enlightened scholars it can be an instrument for much social good, in the hands of fanatics and self-seekers it is bound to be a force for disruption and disintegration. The author's zeal to show that Islam is capable of giving mankind an ideal social pattern is commendable. But he himself realizes that it is a reformed Islam alone that can do it — not a kind of Islam in vogue among us.

Where do we stand then? Even Mr. Asad's brilliant exposition leaves the dilemma where it was. The Islamic ideology can be both practicable and impracticable as we choose it to be, he tells us. But the final say lies not with him or men of his way of thinking, but with the masses led by narrow-visioned *mullas* who, to all intents and purposes, put *Fiqh* above the Qur'an and the Hadith.

This is not to say, however, that the book does not serve any useful purpose. It contains a great deal that can be of much guidance to the builders and statesmen of Muslim countries. The author is perfectly right in saying that the Islamic concept of the Head of the State (Amir) comes closer to that of the President of America than the Queen of England. The Head of the State in Islam is not to be a mere figurehead, having no say in the working of the State. He is to be the pivot around whom revolves the whole machinery of the State. In its socio-economic implications as well, the author rightly concludes, an Islamic State must be a Welfare State. Now this is where true religion and true secularism meet. Britain is a secular State, but in its socio-economic aspect it comes closer to the régime of Umar, the Great, some of the highlights of whose social welfare planning have been outlined in the book. The United States is another secular State, yet in its concept of constitution and the head of the State, it has adopted a position somewhat analogous to the early Caliphs of Islam, who were the repositories both of legislative and executive authority.

The best course for the Muslim countries would be to follow the Constitutional and socio-economic pattern as laid down in the Qur'an and the Hadith, as indicated in the book, but steer clear of involvement in religious controversies, which are not the proper domain of a State. If a State, instead of addressing itself to the country's development, raising the people's standard of living, which is its main concern, entangles itself in settling the niceties of *Fiqhi* points, it is bound to wander in the wilderness. That was exactly the rock on which Pakistan's first Constitutional experiment foundered.

There is no denying the fact that an Islamic State must enable the people to mould their lives on the Islamic pattern, but that can best be done by providing the necessary social

climate. That again is a matter not so much of legislation as of sound education, cultivation of high public morals and the creation of socio-economic conditions conducive to the realisation of these objectives. All this means a practical programme rather than academic discussions, which have been the bane of Muslim society throughout the centuries.

It is true that Islam is co-extensive with the whole range of human life, covering every aspect of it, including Statecraft. This only means that a State run for the good of the people automatically becomes something Islamic, just as earning a livelihood for one's family, according to a Hadith, is an Islamic activity. It is the motive behind it that makes an activity Islamic or otherwise. The *modus operandi* of that activity is none of religion's business. Religion teaches us that we must earn honest daily bread for our children, but *how* to do it it leaves entirely to our

own initiative. That is equally true of running a State. The objective must be the common man's good, but the *how* of it must be of our own finding according to our specific social conditions. That is the significance of *amruhum shura baynahum* — i.e., the running of the State is to be the concern of the people themselves, which they must do for themselves by mutual consultation.

Secularism in the sense of banishing religion from human affairs, as understood in the West, is no doubt a dangerous path. But Islam wants every detail of mundane human life to be steeped in the spirit of religious values. The controversy between the religious and the secular, therefore, should have no occasion to arise in an Islamic social pattern. A secular State functioning for the good of the common man is at the same time a truly Islamic State, without being labelled as such.

ISLAM IN ENGLAND

The Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust

The following is a brief report of the engagements of Mr. Muhammad Tufail, Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking.

Tuesday 11th July 1961. Mr. H. Ismail, Secretary of the Islamic Society, Bournemouth Municipal College, 662a Christchurch Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, invited the Imam to address the members of the Society on "The Role of Islam in the Modern World".

Wednesday 12th July 1961. The Imam addressed a small gathering at Kingsley Hall, Community Church, Dagenham, Essex. The meeting was arranged by Mr. Brian Dawes.

Saturday 15th July 1961. Marriage ceremony performed between Mr. Abdul Qayum Shaikh and Miss Angela Caroline Rodgers (279 St. Faiths Road, Old Catton, Norwich).

Wednesday 19th July. Another marriage ceremony was performed between Mr. Yasar Yahya Qassim and Miss Ingrid Hagerars (21 Malcolm Street, Cambridge).

Thursday 20th July 1961. A lunch-time lecture was given to the members of the Rotary Club of Crayford, Kent. Subject: "Islam and Christianity."

Monday 14th August 1961. Funeral service was held for Dr. Rafat Mirza at Old Welwyn Cemetery, Hertfordshire, England (Grave No. 235).

Wednesday 23rd August 1961. Another funeral service was held for Muhammad Hussain Isma'il at Brookwood Cemetery (Grave No. 220146).

The following marriages were solemnized during the month of August between the parties mentioned below:

Sunday 20th August 1961. Mr. Rafat 'Ali and Miss Jean Rosalie Young (185 Woodlands Park Road, Birmingham 30, England).

Saturday 26th August 1961. Dr. Ghazi Abdur Razzaq and Miss Rashida Hamid (75 Kelmscotte Road, London, S.W.11).

Thursday 7th September 1961. Two parties consisting of about 30 persons each of Friends of Salisbury Cathedral visited the Mosque. The visit was arranged by Lt.-Col. P. V. V. Guy. The following letter was sent to the Imam in this connection:

230 Sandbanks Road,
Parkstone,
Poole, Dorset.
7th September 1961.

Dear Sir,

Exactly one week ago I was privileged to visit your mosque. This is a personal "Thank you" from a member of the first party from Salisbury Cathedral to visit you that day. I am very grateful to have had the tenets of the religion of Islam explained to me so clearly. We were sad, all of us, not to have been free to accept your invitation to tea. On these trips our meals are arranged some weeks ahead and we have to "follow our leader" — I was pining to be a "deviationist"!

Yours sincerely,

BEATRICE A. HARRIS.

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

Thursday 21st September 1961. The Imam addressed a gathering at Woodford N.S. Church, 4 Washington Road, Grove Road, S. Woodford, London, E.18.

Wednesday 27th September 1961. The Imam was invited to speak by Hinchley Wood Women's Fellowship of St. Christopher's Parish Hall on the subject of "Spiritual Life in Islam". Mr. George Fowler accompanied the speaker on this occasion. The meeting was organized by Mrs. G. H. Degg.

NETHERLANDS-ARAB CIRCLE. THE HAGUE, HOLLAND

Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail, the Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, England, will address the members of the Netherlands-Arab Circle, The Hague, Holland, on Friday 24th November at 8 p.m. Further information could be obtained from Dr. C. Hillen, Secretary, Netherlands-Arab Circle, Vijverlaan 5, Rotterdam-16, Holland.



41 Brownrigg Street,
Kandy, Ceylon,
15th September 1961.

Dear Sir,

May I record here a few words about the successful All-Ceylon Students', Parents' and Teachers' Tabligh Conference held in Zahira College, Gampola.

This is a landmark in the history of Ceylon Muslims. Before Independence the religious education of the Muslim youth was neglected, so it is imperative that the Muslim youth utilize this opportunity to their best advantage. It was with this in mind that the veterans in the Tabligh Movement, headed by the able Maulana 'Abdul Wajeed, on a visit from South India, felt the need of a conference that would bring together all the sections of the community in a common cause. Hence, the All-Ceylon Students', Teachers' and Parents' Tabligh Conference, the first of its kind in eight years of activity in Ceylon, was convened on 9th and 10th September 1961.

One decision taken was that every Muslim school (there are over 400) should have its own mosque for regular prayers. An Action Committee was set up under the chairmanship of the Principal of Zahira College, Gampola, and it was decided to hold regular meetings for future planning.

This is a stepping-stone in the annals of Islam in the island, for in the past Muslims have hardly accomplished any great feat in the advancement of their religion, and this will account for their low number of about 500,000. Lack of proper education has been the sole cause of retarded progress of the Muslims, and, once this has been remedied, it is

ardently hoped that by God's grace we Muslims are bound to go ahead in tune with the times.

Yours in Islam,
M. M. ANSARI.

* * * *

Thabor,

Redhill, Surrey.

23rd October, 1961.

Dear Mr. Mumtaz,

How very right you are over the (mis)spelling of the name "Muhammad". It was a little unfortunate that just below your letter in *The Islamic Review* it appeared as "Mohammad". I think, however, that although in the case of the original bearer of the name, it is more than necessary to be accurate since the reference is to the Prophet as an historical character of importance, there should be care among the thousands who have his name. A very good Egyptian friend of mine told me that he could not alter officially his name of "Mohamed", much as he would like to, even for my sake! *It seems to me it might be worth your letter being copied, wherever it could be of service.* While I would think that spelling here is the requisite, it is both spelling and pronunciation in the case of "Muslim", where English is concerned, and if only enough people helped to correct the mispronunciation here! How many people are made aware in broadcast reports that, for instance, the "Moslems" of Algeria and the "Mizlims" or "Muzlims" of elsewhere belong to the same faith.

Yours sincerely,
(Rev.) ERIC F. F. BISHOP.

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) submission. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.—Islam provides its followers with a 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 of the Prophets. Muslims, i.e., the followers of Islam, accept all such prophets of the world, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed by the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

THE QUR'AN.—The Gospel of the Muslims is the Qur'an. 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'an, 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) God; (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 the Heaven.

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 Premeasurement. 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 Messenger-ship of Muhammad; (2) Prayer; (3) Fasting; (4) Alms-giving; (5) Pilgrimage of 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 the worlds, the Friend, 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 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 WOMEN 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 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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