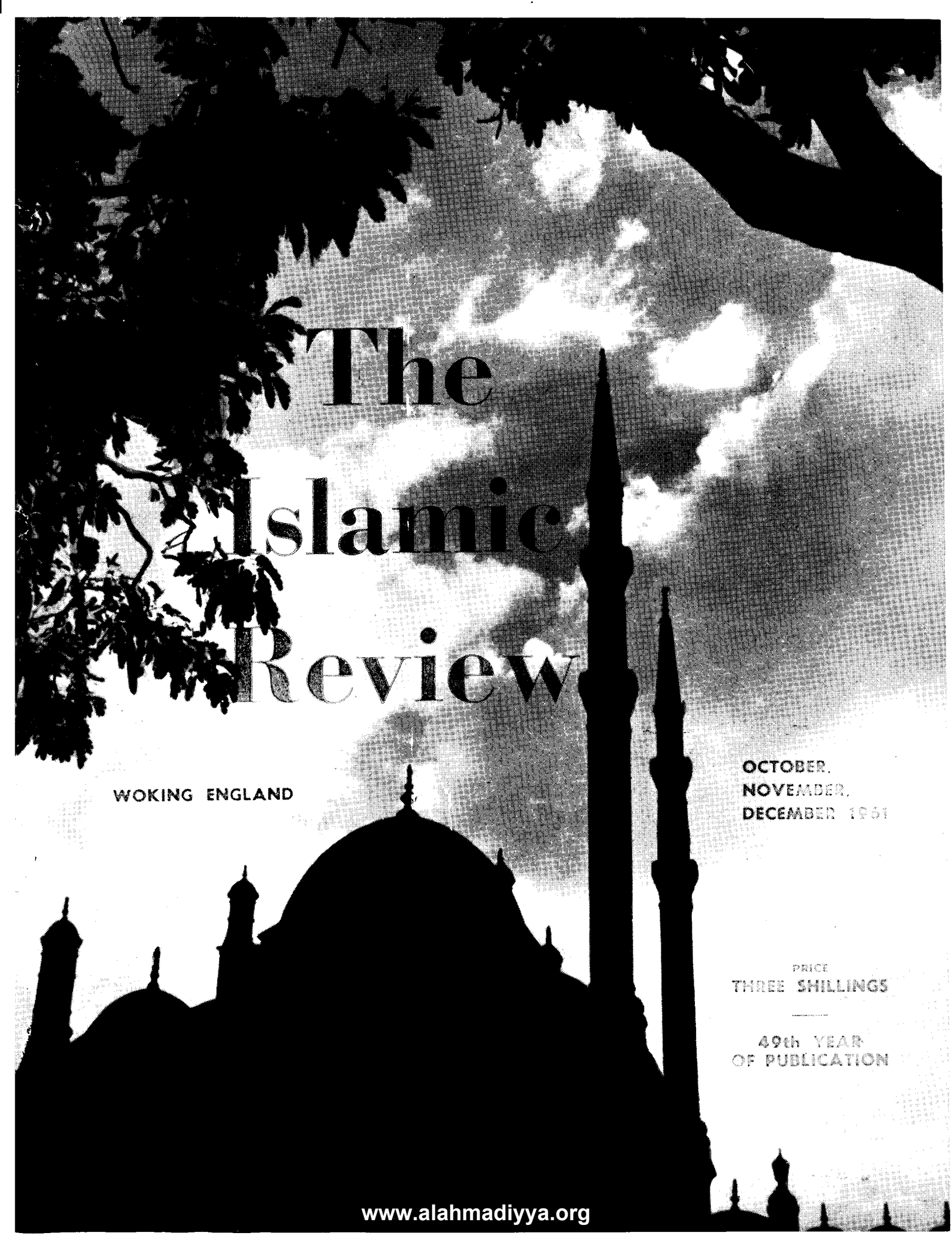




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The Islamic Review

October—November—December 1961

49th YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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Between Ourselves

THE COVER

The picture on the Cover is that of one of the most famous landmarks of Cairo, Egypt — the Muhammad 'Ally Mosque at the Citadel.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

The Maulana Sadrud Din, sometime the Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, is a Pakistani Muslim. He published a German translation of the Qur'an in 1939. He is also the founder of Berlin Mosque and Mission.

W. David Beg Barlos is a Pakistani Muslim.

Muhammad Yakub Khan is the Director of the Woking Muslim Mission.

The late A. H. M. Muhiuddin was a Pakistani Muslim and Imam of the Mosque at Manchester.

Maryam Jameelah (Margaret Marcus is an American Muslimah.

Muhammad M. Kellou is the representative of the F.L.N. (Algerian Front of National Liberation) in London.

William Bashyr Pickard is an English Muslim.

Muhammad Rafeeq, sometime President of the Trinidad Muslim League, St. Joseph, Trinidad, and also has officiated as Imam of the Jinnah Memorial Mosque for a long time at St. Joseph.

Abul Hashim is a Pakistani Muslim.

A. S. Bazmee Ansari is a Pakistani Muslim.

The Islamic Review

Founded by THE LATE AL-HAJJ
KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

**The Shah Jehan Mosque,
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Telephone: Woking 679
Telegrams & Cables: MOSQUE, WOKING

London Office:
18 Eccleston Square, Victoria, London
S.W.1. Telephone: VIC. 2591

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ

"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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Jumada 'l-ula—Jumada 'l-thaaniyah—Rajab 1381 A.H.

THE CLAY FEET OF COMMUNISM

Stalin's Posthumous Witness to the Vanity of a Godless System

The Pharaoh Rameses II, in the flush of his worldly might, scoffed at all talk of God by Moses. Under the very eyes of Moses and his people, he was swallowed by the surging sea waves along with all his pomp and glory. "His body was, however, saved," declared the Qur'an, "to serve as an object lesson to the coming generations of mankind." That body, after lying in obscurity for 5,000 years, was unearthed only in our times, to bear its mute witness that all power and might and true rulership belongs to God, that worldly prowess the modern man puts so much store by is but the greatest self-deception, and the surest way to the undoing of all the civilization he has built up on similar false foundations.

Today we find another similar case, the dead body of Stalin, the man who, in his day, ruthlessly trampled God-ordained values, bearing mute witness to the fact that no one who flouts the authority of God, however mighty, can escape Nemesis. Stalin's Nemesis has chased him even to his tomb, and years after his death has caused his body to be thrown out on the street by the very people who in his day adored him as the greatest national hero after Lenin.

There have been two other similar witnesses to the vanity of the power that rests on the sandy foundations of worldly might to the neglect of the laws of God. Hitler, who rode roughshod on all moral values and fondly hugged the illusion of world domination by the force of arms, found at last nothing but blank despair staring him in the face, and had to end his life with his own hands. Mussolini, who dreamt of reviving the glories of the Roman Empire, and ravaged whole populations in North Africa, bore a similar witness with his bullet-riddled body at the hands of his

own people. It is the turn now of the third member of that unholy trinity, Joseph Stalin, to stand at the bar of history, render account for his floutings of the laws of God, and pay the penalty for those misdeeds with the ignominy visited upon his dead body.

Long and black was the charge-sheet brought against him by his own former lieutenant, Mr. Nikita Khrushchev, at the 22nd Communist Party Congress in the Kremlin. The disclosures make a shuddering reading. The story of his purges, the cold-blooded killings of Russia's topmost men, army generals, leading scientists and statesmen, including his own closest friends, so as to put every possible rival out of his way, and make himself the undisputed force in the country — all this constitutes a record which for blackness, butchery and perfidy, has shocked the conscience even of his own people. The full story has yet to be told, and God knows what lower depths of inhumanity it may yet reveal. No wonder that a wave of rage has swept the whole country at these barbarities, leading to demonstrations by students and factory workers in Moscow, demanding the removal of Stalin's embalmed body from sharing the same mausoleum with Lenin. As a result of public demand the first thing that was done was to close the mausoleum, which usually attracted thousands of visitors daily, followed soon by a resolution in the full session of the Communist Congress that the body was unworthy to lie beside that of Lenin, and be removed as a mark of dishonour. The latest reports say it has been removed. Judging from the temper of the people this may not be the end of the story, and the poor earthly remains of the man who once strutted on this earth of God with airs of almightiness may yet have something worse in store for it.

While the reaction of the youthful mind to the outrages committed by their once-adored leader on the elementary principles of moral decency will be welcomed as a happy symptom and an indication that the people of Russia, after all, do put some value on the necessity for some sort of moral basis for a stable society, despite propaganda stories to the contrary, the occasion calls for a deeper probe into the whole episode and the lurid light it throws on the foundations of the Communist concept of society.

After all, what are these black deeds of the topmost man of the Communist society, which newspapers are splashing today the world over, but the fruit of the tree of Communism? And if a tree is known by the fruit it bears it should not be difficult to judge what kind of tree Communism is.

Communism as an economic theory is one thing, but Communism as a materialistic interpretation of history, and a philosophy of life rooted in the denial of God is quite another. The outside world need have no quarrel with the first. The Soviet Union has every right to shape its economy as best it may deem fit. Perhaps there may even be some elements of good in that economic theory which other countries may profitably adopt. But when Communism encroaches upon the citadel of the sanctity of human personality, and seeks to cut adrift its moorings from the Spiritual Source of life, it treads upon a path which is fraught with the gravest danger to its own social structure as well as to the world at large.

If the Stalin stories now divulged have any lesson for the modern man, especially the Communist world, it is just this, that to weaken the foundations of faith is to strike at the very roots of a stable society, and pave the way to the kind of moral anarchy that was so poignantly demonstrated under Stalin.

All morality, in the last analysis, derives from the substratum of faith in God's dispensation. There can be no morality in a faith-vacuum. To eradicate the concept of a higher purpose from human life, and to reduce man to a mere producing and consuming machine, is to cut the very ground from underneath moral life, and for that matter, from under a stable society. Stalin's fate is a finger-post to point to the moral anarchy and consequent destruction which a Godless philosophy of life inevitably leads to.

Stalin was the product of a system — a system which has no use for moral values, and a society which throws the canons of equity and good conscience to the winds, can only be sustained by the cut-throat methods of the jungle. That is what Stalin did when he got his closest friends, after using them as stepping-stones to power, assassinated. "Purges," a euphemism for cold-blooded murders, became the order of the day, and swept all strata of society from top to bottom. The much-vaunted Soviet might and prosperity was built up on the corpses of millions of human beings.

We do wish and pray that the man who now sits in Stalin's seat is really a changed man, and his present drive of anti-Stalinism is prompted by a genuine abhorrence of those methods, and a real determination to reorientate life in the Soviet society by truly humane standards.

If there is one man for whom Stalin's fate should be an object lesson and a reminder of God's unerring law to overtake even after death the mightiest of the mighty who arrogate to themselves authority that really belongs to God, and tramples common humanity as mere worms of the dust, that man certainly is the Soviet Prime Minister and strong man, Mr. Nikita Khrushchev.

Be it said to his credit, Mr. Khrushchev has done much to thaw the cold war between the East and the West. He seems not to have lost the common touch despite the absolute power that he wields. Wherever his tours have taken him he has created the impression of being a poor man's friend. These are his greatest assets, if only he knew, greater than the most powerful bomb his scientists may make for him. The world, just now trembling under the lengthening shadows of the nuclear demon, will be watching how he acquits himself in the position of power in which history has placed him.

Co-existence or co-extinction

In connection with Lord Russell's campaigning in favour of unilateral discarding of bomb-testing by Britain, a correspondent in a London daily recalls an extract from one of his TV speeches in 1955 in which he said there were only two possibilities, co-existence or co-extinction, and that powerful armament was the only way to make Russia realize that. He said :

"I am perfectly aware that we shan't get the Russians to realize it unless we have very powerful armaments. We must have sufficiently powerful armaments to make the Russians think a war is not worthwhile. That, I think, is obvious. I am not at all inclined to urge disarmament at the present time — not at all."

Here again we are up against an issue on which it is difficult to make a categorical pronouncement. And that is why the world's topmost philosopher fails to see light, and vacillates between two mutually conflicting positions within the space of a few years.

The teaching of Christianity on the point is, of course, clear-cut — no resistance to evil! But that means a ban on all armaments — conventional as well as nuclear. Christendom has already been treating that teaching as a dead letter, so far as warfare with conventional weapons is concerned.

Then there is the Islamic teaching, as laid down in the Qur'anic verse enjoining the full-blooded fortifications of the frontiers as a deterrent against the enemy's possible aggressive designs (8 : 60).

Lord Russell, in 1955, preached the Islamic way when he emphasized bomb-preparedness. In 1961, he feels inclined towards the Christian position of non-violence so far as the bomb is concerned. Whether, however, he is still not mistaken, whether discarding the bomb by the Democracies would really lead to saving the world from the dreaded catastrophe of co-extinction, or whether it may land it in the worse disaster of its domination by Communism — all this the future alone will tell. But in the meantime what Christendom has decided to follow is the course of practical common sense, to be well-prepared for self-defence, as laid down by the Qur'an, rather than the impracticable idealism of the Sermon on the Mount. This recalls the Qur'an's claim that Islam is a religion of nature, and willy-nilly everything in nature follows that religion. That is what the Western nations are doing in the matter of building up their defences against possible aggression. They *profess* Christianity, but they *live* Islam.

Islam no enemy of Christianity

A letter published in two local newspapers, the *Surrey Advertiser* and the *Woking News and Mail*, protested against the selection of the Shah Jehan Mosque picture for the cancellation postal stamp for one day (28th October) as a

special feature of the Exhibition held by the Surrey Philatelic Society in the Co-operative Hall, Woking, on the grounds that the Mosque was a symbol of Islam, which was the enemy of Christianity. The letter appeared under the pseudonym of "Surrey Churchman".

The correspondence it provoked in the said papers carried elsewhere in this issue will be read with interest. It seems the protest was not shared either by the public or any large body of Churchmen. The Vicar of Christ Church, when interviewed, said he had nothing to say against the Mosque being selected as a postmark. The Council Chairman said the Mosque was nationally and internationally known and as such it was but fitting that an Exhibition held in Woking should have chosen this distinctive feature for a postmark.

The "Surrey Churchman's" charge was officially rebutted on behalf of the Woking Mosque and Mission as reproduced in this issue. We have nothing to add to that except to note one very striking irony in our Christian friends' misconception as to Islam's attitude towards Christianity. Of all the world religions, Islam is the one and *only one*, besides Christianity, which recognizes the Divine Mission of Jesus Christ. It is the one and *only* religion which makes acceptance of the Divine Mission of Jesus Christ incumbent on its followers. It is the one and *only* religion which allows inter-marriages with Christians. To call such a religion as Christianity's enemy is a glaring travesty of truth.

Islam is no doubt opposed to the dogmas of the Church. Islam looks upon Jesus Christ as a chosen Messenger of God, not His son. Islam does not subscribe to the Church theory of Original Sin. Islam makes man the architect of his own destiny, his salvation or damnation depending upon his *own* faith in God, and his *own* deeds in life. Islam considers vicarious atonement of sins a contradiction in terms — something like Paul taking a dose of medicine to relieve the pain of Peter. Islam, no doubt, differs from the Church creed on these doctrinal points. But its position is that these were never the teachings of Jesus Christ himself, but were latter-day man-made innovations. This can surely be no valid cause for turning a blind eye to the very strong binding link between the two faiths — the link of devotion to the person of Jesus Christ, which is the only thing really vital to Christianity, and in which respect Islam is the only religion in the world at one with Christianity. Could there be anything more preposterous than to describe the only religion so close to Christianity as its "enemy"? It will certainly be nearer the truth, from the Muslim point of view, to say that Islam is but another version of Christianity — the correct, unadulterated version as really taught by Jesus Christ.

Algeria for Algerians

Algeria remains a festering sore in the body of the free world. It makes nonsense of all tall talk of the Democracies about human rights and human freedom. For a leading member of the Democratic *bloc* to perpetuate colonialism and let loose a reign of terror against the Algerian freedom fighters cannot but shake confidence in democratic professions. In Paris itself the methods used by the police against Algerian demonstrators were so inhuman that it evoked a protest even from the lawyers of that French metropolis, who, at a special meeting, described the treatment of the demonstrators arrested as "violating the elementary notions of humanity". Algerians are a brave people. They have

won the admiration of the freedom-loving people throughout the world for the reckless daring with which they are shedding their blood for the freedom of their Fatherland. It is a tragic anachronism that whereas country after country in Asia and Africa has of late been throwing off the yoke of colonialism, this brave people, with centuries-old culture, traditions and civilization behind them, should be denied the right to be masters in their own homeland and solve its problems as best they could. The settlers' problem is one such domestic problem of that country, and none of the French Government's business. The only decent course for France is to declare a deadline for withdrawal and to hand over Algeria to the Algerians, to whom it belongs. That is what Britain, with far greater stakes, did in the case of her colonies. Why cannot France take a leaf out of Britain's book?

A grave social threat

Alcohol and sex are the two greatest curses of the Western civilization. And the curve of these indulgences is rising higher and higher, despite the hue and cry in the Press and Parliament. The Western civilization will need no Khrushchevian bomb to blow it to pieces if things continue to go on at the pace they do. Even school-agers, as a Headmistress the other day warned, were not immune.

The latest craze in this direction that has exceeded all bounds of decency is what is known as the cult of nudism. According to a recent Press report its membership in this country runs into quite a few thousands. In any decent society nudity would come under the purview of the legislation for the penalization of obscene conduct. But here in this country, with high traditions of public decency and decorum, the apostles of this most vulgar and obscene cult had the temerity to meet in a regular session in a London hall to defend their movement against "misunderstandings". Sex was only a secondary thing with them, they protested. The main objective was to do some active exercises in the open air and sunshine, and stripping the body of the last shred of cloth was just incidental, the idea being its free movement. It was decided that the name "nudism" should be changed to "naturism" to remove the common "misunderstanding", as if just a change of name would bar the door to temptation when these modern Eves mingle with the opposite sex in stark nude conditions.

One can hardly associate such self-abandon in the matter of sex in a Christian society whose founder condemned even looking with lustful eyes.

Islam, however, was not content with merely denouncing sex-corruption. As a teaching rooted in the working of normal human nature it laid down rules of inter-sex behaviour calculated to prevent the very conditions which breed the germs of temptation. It is sheer nonsense to suggest that when men and women meet together stripped of all clothing, it will be just exercise in open air and sunshine.

Militant monks

A front-page picture in the *Guardian* of Rangoon (13th October 1961) presents a revolting scene of the desecration of a mosque building. It shows Buddhist monks squatting, some sleeping, in the building which is under construction at a place called North Okkalapa. A greater travesty of the Buddha's teachings is hardly conceivable. It was an outrage on the religious sentiments of the Muslim citizens

of Burma one would hardly associate with any decent people, much less with those wearing the monk's robes in the name of that great apostle of non-violence, Gautama Buddha. Buddhist friends cannot be unaware that Muslims attach great sanctity to the mosques, and would not enter the sacred precincts without taking their shoes off. As an act of deliberate mischief, however, to flout Muslim sentiments, these monks thronged about in the mosque with their shoes on. And what was all this about? It was a protest demonstration against the building of the mosque. This is how the *Guardian* story about this unfortunate incident runs :

"The Buddhist monks who had staged a demonstration in front of the Prime Minister's private residence in Goodliffe Road on Sunday evening, in protest against permission having been given for the construction of mosques in North Okkalapa, have installed themselves in a partly-constructed mosque since Sunday night. When Home Minister Dr. E. Maung met the demonstrators in the absence of the Prime Minister, who had left for Mount Popa, he made it clear to the monk leaders that the permission would not be withdrawn by the Government and advised the monks to return to their monastery. The monks eventually did so but later decided to occupy the partly-constructed mosque. They installed a loudspeaker and spent the whole night hurling insulting epithets against U. Raschid, Dr. E. Maung and the Prime Minister. At 2 a.m. a burial service in effigy of Dr. E. Maung, who was held to be responsible for the permission being granted, was conducted."

The embers of the monks' anti-mosque agitation have since been smouldering for a whole month, and the latest

reports (London *Daily Telegraph*, 19th November 1961) are that the situation has deteriorated so much as to call for firing by the police :

"Police and armoured cars moved into Rangoon today after demonstrations, led by 200 Buddhist monks, in which five people were killed and twenty were injured. The military and police are ready for any further demonstrations, which are in protest against the number of Moslem mosques in the country. The disturbances broke out last night when a mob of 2,000 clashed with police while trying to burn down two mosques in a Rangoon suburb. A senior Burmese police official said the situation was 'very grave'. Dr. E. Maung, Home Minister, said 92 monks and 279 other people had been arrested."

The loss of life in this incident will be widely regretted. It is all the more regrettable that it should have happened over the question of the number of mosques in Burma. Mosques are places of God's worship, and certainly no harm would be done if their number in Burma should multiply. It should have been up to the high priests of Buddhism to set their faces against this kind of fanaticism. The Government of Burma has done its duty to its Muslim citizens, which will be greatly appreciated throughout the Muslim world. Burma, unlike India, has so far been free from communal bitterness. The Muslim world put it down to the non-violent spirit of the Buddha's message. The present disturbance, we hope, will be a passing phase, and Buddhists and Muslims in Burma would once more settle down to good-neighbourly relations.

ISLAM AN INTERNATIONAL RELIGION

by THE MAULANA SADR-UD-DIN

The Qur'an has laid down, in the following verse, the basis of a world-wide religious system :

"Say, O Prophet, to the People of the Scriptures (followers of all revealed religions) that they should come to an agreement with the Muslims not to serve any but God, not to associate aught with Him, and not to take others for lords besides God" (3 : 63).

In this sacred verse, the followers of all the religious systems of the world have been addressed, and a factor common to them all has been made the basis for their unity. That common factor is the doctrine of Divine Unity. Almost all the religious systems of the world believe in the existence of God. The Prophet Muhammad, therefore, in order to bring humanity on one platform, made the belief



The Maulana Sadr-ud-Din

in the oneness of God the fundamental basis for the unification of mankind. Apart from the belief in one God no other issue has been raised, so that there may be no hindrance in the way of concord and peace between Muslims and non-Muslims. From this declaration an appraisal can easily be made of the divinely-inspired urge in the Prophet's mind to bring together all peoples and to lay the unshakable foundation for world peace and amity.

Religious prejudice

Of all kinds of bias, religious prejudice is the most dangerous. It sets one nation against the other. Atrocities and outrages without number that destroyed life and property to an immeasurable extent have been perpetrated in the name of religion by fanatics. Religious prejudice sows in human minds the seeds of malice and acrimony, breeding wranglings and disputes of all kinds. The Prophet has said in this connection that religion has come into the world to make man God-fearing and God-minded, and that it is also one of the chief purposes of religion to create in the human mind feelings of love and sympathy for others, and an ardent desire to spend out of one's possessions for the welfare of others. With this great end in view the Prophet taught that God was the Lord of all the nations, the Creator, Sustainer and Benefactor of all peoples of the world, that the entire human race is God's great family, and that, therefore, he who renders the greatest service to the members of His family is the dearest and nearest to God.

Side by side with the promulgation of these great truths, a condemnation has also been made of the religious prejudice, so that its harmful nature may be understood, and man may be able to refrain from it. On this point the Qur'an says :

"The Jews say that none shall enter Paradise except the Jews, and the Christians say that none shall enter Paradise except the Christians. Nay, but whosoever surrendereth his purpose to God while doing good, his reward is with his Lord : and there shall no fear come upon him, neither shall they grieve" (2 : 111-112).

It is an important article of faith with the Jews that excepting themselves no other people would be allowed to enter the Garden of Paradise, for they believe themselves to be the chosen people of God and think that salvation is for the children of Israel alone. In the same way, the Christians cling fast to the belief that no religious system of the world can achieve salvation for a person unless he believes in the atonement of mankind's sins through the blood of Christ shed on the cross, and that no human being, however good he may be, can achieve nearness to the Divine without believing in the vicarious expiation for the sins of mankind by Jesus Christ. The Christians believe that they alone are the sons of God and that this distinction has not been bestowed on any other people. It has been stated in the Qur'an with reference to this Christian belief :

"And the Christians say : We alone are the beloved sons of God" (v. 18).

These beloved children of the Most High God do not consider the other peoples of the world to be on an equal footing with them. On the other hand, the present-day followers of Christ in the West look upon other peoples as their serfs whose lands and labour these children of God feel they have the right to exploit for their own benefit. Similarly, the Hindus believe that they are the beloved people of Brahma, and that the land where they live is the

beloved land of Brahma, and that all the nations living outside their preferred land are untouchable and unclean with whom it is a heinous sin for them to have any dealings whatsoever. This doctrine, which is on the face of it false and fallacious, has proved to be harmful not only to other people but also to the Hindus themselves. Such narrowness of outlook creates feelings of ill-will between man and man. Is it not obvious that there are in nations other than the Hindus as well as righteous individuals who render selfless service to their fellow-beings ? The inhuman effect which this narrow doctrine of the Hindus has had on the six or seven crores of untouchables living in India is a fact which cannot be denied. Just as the Christian white man of some countries cannot even think that a dark-skinned Negro, despite his having embraced the white man's religion, can take his tea in the white man's restaurant, or receive education in the white man's school, or listen to the Word of God in the white man's church, in the same manner a Hindu will not allow the untouchable to enter the sacred precincts of his temple, or to draw water from his well, or to cross the door of his house, or even to walk on his road. If an untouchable is found guilty of a crime, he, according to the religious law of the Hindus, should suffer double the penalty prescribed for the superior castes for the same crime. Thus religion based on narrow concepts has done incalculable harm to the dignity and welfare of mankind.

Salvation : no monopoly of one people

In accordance with the principle that all prophets preached religion which was essentially the same, the Qur'an declares that the followers of all the prophets, if they believe in God and do good works, will enter Paradise :

"Lo ! those who believe (in that which is revealed unto thee, Muhammad), and those who are Jews, and Christians, and Sabeans — whoever believes in God and the Last Day and does right — surely their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them, neither shall they grieve" (2 : 62).

The Qur'an declares that there was not a people to whom a prophet had not been sent, and then goes on to name some of the prophets :

"Lo ! God chose above all His creatures Adam and Noah and the family of Abraham and the family of 'Imran (for revealing His messages). They were descendants one of another. God is Hearer, Knower" (3 : 32-33).

For the betterment of the human race, the All-Loving God has been raising prophets from time to time, for it is only He Who can point out the way of rectitude. The Qur'an says :

"God Almighty has taken it upon Himself to guide man, kind on to the Right Path" (16 : 9).

It is further proclaimed :

"It is of course Our concern to send Books unto Our messengers for the good and guidance of the human race" (62 : 12).

Such has been the practice of God, and it was by virtue of this Divine practice that He conferred His guidance upon Adam, and treated Noah in the same way, and showered His blessings upon Abraham, and similarly on the family of 'Imran, the father of Moses. To these Houses, from time to time, God entrusted responsibility to preserve and propagate His message, so that the people, by obeying the Word of God, should be able to walk in the way of God's will. God Almighty, therefore says in the Qur'an

(3:33), "These prophets were descendants one of another" — that is to say, all of them belonged to the same spiritual lineage. From this, the greatest of all basic principles becomes clear that the All-Merciful God deals with all the nations of the world with the same kind of love and compassion.

It is not, therefore, meet that one nation should swagger of its superiority over the others, or that one nation should hold another nation in hatred and abomination. Says the word of God :

"Let not people laugh at people, perchance they may be better than they themselves are" (49:11).

No nation should presume that it alone has been chosen by the Almighty God to be the recipient of His blessings, and that all the other nations are, as compared to them, inferior. Such an idea would be contrary to God's will as revealed in His Books. God is the Lord and Cherisher of all the nations, and not only of a particular people. He has not deprived any nation of His blessings and grace. Besides being Merciful and Kind, He is also Just :

"God is not in the least unjust to His servants" (3:181).

In the verse (3:32) quoted earlier, the word *astafá* makes it crystal clear that the spiritual guides of all the nations were clean of all kinds of evils to which the majority of human beings are prone. By establishing the honour and sinlessness of the spiritual teachers of all the nations of the world the Qur'an makes inter-religious and inter-national amity an absolute certainty.

There is yet another sublime purpose for which the term has been used : that all those stories imputing moral laxity to some of the prophets that have found their way into some sacred scriptures are baseless and false. For instance, it has been alleged that the Prophet Ishmael was a boorish savage, that the Prophet Moses was accused by his own sister of moral dereliction, that Solomon, when he became old, was prevailed upon by his wives to take to the worship of idols, and in the same way a highly immoral and wicked act has been imputed to the Prophet Lot in the Bible. But in the Qur'an God has exonerated each of these prophets of all these false accusations and proclaimed through the term *astafá* that the prophets were absolutely beyond all moral ills. This absolvment by the Qur'an of the prophets of all religions from false allegations aimed at discrediting them and the Divine message they all represent is a great step in the direction of universal understanding and fraternity of mankind.

We quote another verse dealing with the same subject. That the Most High God has treated all the nations of the world equally with His love and compassion has been reiterated in this sacred verse. It has been stated that all the prophets are of the seed of Adam. And, then, a mention has also been made of the seed of particular prophets of the nations ; for example, of the seed of Abraham and the seed of Israel. In the course of time the seed of Abraham and Israel has spread over a large part of the world and has become divided into groups and nations different from one another in many respects. In order to give these different groups the message of peace and love and to unite them into one brotherhood, God says in verse 19:58, to the effect :

"We adorned and enriched the spiritual guides of all the nations with Our blessings, and deprived no nation of this grace. It is, therefore, essential that a nation should not claim

pride and superiority over other nations, nor look upon them with scornful eyes, but all the nations of the world should live in concord with one another."

The following verse further adds to the above theme :

"God ordained for you the religion which He enjoined upon Noah and which He has revealed to thee (Muhammad), and which He enjoined on Abraham and Moses and Jesus, saying : Establish the religion, and be not divided therein" (43:13).

In this verse it has been intimated that not only did God shower His blessings on the prophets of each nation and favoured them with His communion, but that the same religion that He communicated to Noah, Moses and Jesus has also been revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. In short, the religion of all the prophets and messengers of God is one and the same. Moreover, it has been stressed upon the followers of all prophets that they should abstain from dissension among themselves. Hence the prophets cannot be held responsible for the disharmony that prevails among their followers today. It is their followers who have created this disunion and discord, and it is really to be regretted that they should have done so after having received revelations of truth from God on this point.

National prejudice

An Israelite and a Hindu cherish feelings of pride and superiority in respect of their nations, and this pride, on their part, has also an admixture of a very bitter kind of prejudice, which has created feelings of malice and acrimony among the nations. How can these people, whose own hearts have been warped to that degree, create conditions of peace and unity among the nations of the world ? Neither an Israelite nor a Hindu can impart to the world the sublime lesson of universal brotherhood and unity. The Hindu, as stated above, holds in abomination even those who live on his own land. There are seventy or eighty million people on their soil whom the Hindus contemptuously call "the untouchables". And this attitude of the Hindu is so obdurate that even their greatest man, Mahatma Gandhi, could not persuade his countrymen to allow elementary human rights to "the untouchables". The privileged classes of the Hindu community could not absorb even such an enlightened "untouchable" as Dr. Ambedkar. For many years Dr. Ambedkar struggled very hard to have the status of the "untouchables" raised to the level of the privileged castes, but his efforts were absolutely fruitless. Dr. Ambedkar, at last, in utter despair of the Hindu world, embraced Buddhism as his faith.

There are four castes among the Hindus : the Brahmins, the Kashatriyas, the Vaishas and the Sudras, or untouchables. The Brahmin commands power and respect of the highest degree. Without him no religious function can be performed. The Kashatriya, too, is a high and honourable caste among the Hindus. The people of this caste believe that they have been created to govern and rule ; so they consider others to be beneath them in all respects.

From what has been stated above one conclusion emerges with convincing force : that national and class prejudices breed arrogance in relation to others and become the cause of other people's debasement.

In the twentieth century, national prejudices have been the cause of a great deal of bitterness and violence. The Western nations believe that they have been created to rule over the Eastern peoples and it is also their firm conviction

that the people of the East cannot rise to the levels of culture attained in the West. In South Africa the white people have for long been depriving the coloured people of their basic human rights. America, too, fares no better in this respect. Americans may call their land vaingloriously as "God's Land", but it is a matter of fact that the condition of the Negro in that land of God is such that he can in no sphere of social or national life move on terms of equality with the white man. The Negro receives this treatment despite the fact that he too professes the Christian religion like other Americans and is expected to work and fight for the welfare of his country whenever the need arises. France, even today, dares to disregard all principles of humanity and civilization and is engaged in the systematic extermination of the Algerians fighting for the liberty and honour of their nation.

In fine, whichever nation of the Western world you may turn your eyes to, you will see the same spectacle. The teaching of Jesus, it is but obvious, has been cast to the winds by the Western people. Every Christian country of the West sends out legions of preachers to convert the people of the East to Christianity; but to enslave Eastern nations, to grab all that they have earned by the sweat of their brow, is quite legitimate in the eyes of the Westerners. This is in utter defiance of the teachings of Jesus.

There is yet another dangerous doctrine created by the West which goes under the name of nationalism, and has been the cause of keeping one nation at daggers drawn with the other. This disease has also penetrated into the East, so that both the worlds, the Western as well as the Eastern, have fallen into its clutches, with the inevitable result that international peace and harmony has been smashed into a thousand pieces. In a word, Europe, with all its vaunted culture, has done a great disservice to the world. Making a wrong use of science, Europe is at present holding the world in terror of dread and destruction. Peace has unfortunately been dealt a deadly blow and destroyed.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be upon him) gave his attention to the finding of a solution to the problem of national and class hatreds and achieved marvellous success with regard to it. Whereas, on the one hand, God apprised the Prophet of the dangers of national prejudice, which sets man against man, on the other hand, He also revealed unto the Prophet the Divine treatment for the eradication of this widespread epidemic. The remedy is contained in the following verse :

"O mankind! Lo! We have created you from a male and a female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of God, is the best in conduct. Lo! God is Knower, Aware" (49 : 13).

The whole human race has been addressed in this proclamation, which says : Ye people of the world, just ponder over the fact that having been born of the same parents you are all but members of one and the same community. Gradually you spread over different parts of the world receiving different impressions and imprints from different tracts of land. For example, the climatic effects of warm plains and cold hills created in you dissimilarity of features and physiognomy, and for the same reason your colours and your speeches also became different. Moreover, geographical causes produced in you different habits and peculiarities. It was on the basis of these facts that you chose different names for the identification of your groups. But the essentials of your humanity did not change despite your

living in different places. You are so many sections of one and the same human family, and it should be clearly understood that by the adoption of different tribal names the real fact of human nature does not change. The people of the hills naturally become accustomed to the life of labour and hard work. They have to go out for hunting to procure their food, and the distinctive qualities of bravery and hardihood are, in this way, evolved in them. Sometimes they make oppressive use of their strength and strike terror into the people of the plains by plundering and pillaging them. Similar traits are also developed in the people of islands. Very much like the hillmen, the islands, too, make wrong use of their prowess and start committing piracy on the high seas, and become, in this way, a permanent danger to the weaker section of the human race. In like manner, people who have taken up their abode in colder countries begin to take pride over the white colour of their skins, and look with contempt upon those people who, on account of the different climate in which they live, have coloured skins. God Almighty, therefore, says to people living everywhere : Your tribes, races and nations are convenient labels by which you may know certain differing characteristics. It is wrong to make these differentiating characteristics the ground for considering yourselves superior. Your species and your humanity is one and the same ; your nature as human beings is also the same. Superiority cannot be claimed merely for belonging to a particular tribe or clan nor for having a particular skin. It can be achieved only through righteousness and fear of God. Greatness can be attained only by that nation which possesses lofty character and has the welfare of humanity at heart. But the nation lacking in these qualities will not be able to acquire exalted stature. This is the universal law of life, in accordance with which nations as well as individuals will be tried and judged. It matters not whether a man is a Hindu or a Sikh, a Jew or a Christian ; whether he is a man of the West or of the East — all will be adjudged in the light of this Great Law. A man may have his residence anywhere on the surface of this earth : if he is honest and true he will surely deserve respect and regard in the eyes of God. And to every individual who leads a life of rectitude this law holds out a guarantee of honour and glory.

The last pilgrimage

The Prophet Muhammad, on the occasion of his last pilgrimage to Mecca, delivered a sermon on this very principle of human equality to the large concourse of people, which, in substance, ran as follows :

"Ye people, your God is one, and one also is your father (Adam) ; that is to say, you are all members of the Great Family of the All-Loving God. Therefore, there should be amongst you goodwill and affection, sincerity and harmony, and it should be clearly understood that no Arab as such has any kind of superiority over the non-Arab, nor a coloured man over the white, and likewise no non-Arab as such has any kind of preference over the Arab, nor any white man over the coloured man. There are many different nations among you, and true unity can be established and maintained among you only if you agree to believe that real superiority, in the sight of God, lies not in the fact that you are members of a particular nation or that you have a particular person of eminence as your progenitor, but that the true and real superiority, in the eyes of God, belongs only to that nation or individual who is the most God-fearing and who does the noblest deeds !"

This is the one criterion of superiority and excellence for mankind. Indulgence in national pride cannot, in any way, be regarded as an argument of superiority and great-

ness. Such a pride, on the other hand, is positively harmful and breeds hatred and contempt for the other nations, and often becomes the cause of a great disaster. It disunites and scatters the members of God's great family, sowing in the minds feelings of ill-will and animosity. This is displeasing to God. It is in order to eradicate this disease and bring peace to the world that the Qur'án enjoins upon us the observance of right conduct and fear of God as the only true criterion of superiority before God.

This sermon reflects the Prophet's mind. Unlike some of the leaders of European countries, the Prophet of Islam did not tell his people, the Arabs, that they were the best people in the world, and that they had, therefore, the right of imposing themselves over other nations. He made, instead, an announcement of quite the opposite kind, declaring that the Arabs had no superiority over any other nation, and that if the other nations were more imbued with the fear of God and rendered great service to His creatures, they would occupy a higher place in the estimation of God. For the attainment of superiority, he observed, there is only one means, viz., to have firm faith in God and to cleanse the self by abstaining from all kinds of ugly thoughts and behaviour, and, besides that, to be inspired to the degree of intoxication with the zeal for utmost service to the human race. This principle about which the Prophet spoke on the occasion of his last pilgrimage to Mecca before a huge gathering of his devoted disciples is, obviously, beautiful, beneficial and of universal nature. This sublime teaching went deep into the hearts of the people. This emphasis on the oneness of humanity and the practice of virtue as being the criterion of superiority among individuals as well as nations is a great service which the Prophet has rendered to the cause of mankind.

This excellent teaching of the Prophet Muhammad raised the moral level of the nation to a high degree. It was quite a new kind of teaching, addressed to the conflict-ridden tribes of Arabia. The tribal chiefs, like the wealthy members of European aristocracy, did not like to mix freely with the poorer people, nor did they like to attend the meetings in which the Prophet mixed with the poor people on a footing of equality. Such an action was repugnant to their customs. So they complained to the Prophet's uncle, Abu Talib, that his nephew in permitting the poor people to attend his meetings had violated the traditions of Arabia and that if he continued mixing with the poor and down-trodden they would not suffer themselves to be present in those gatherings, nor accept his teachings of this type. But how could the Prophet who had God-given, unflinching resolution in all such matters, and who believed his teaching to be beneficial for the human race, exclude from his company the poorer people for the rich and the proud?

Uplifted the underdog

The Prophet, while he established true fraternity and equality among the nations, also bestowed his benign attention on those poor people who had been in the position of servants and slaves in private households. He said in respect of them :

"Your servants are your brethren."

And again :

"The man, under whom God has placed his fellow-brother, should look upon and regard his servant or slave as his own brother, and give him the same food to eat which he eats himself, and the same clothes to wear which he wears himself."

The result of this teaching and training was that the entire nation was blessed with a new outlook. A spiritual and moral revolution came over every heart and mind. It was indeed a marvellous achievement, a wonderful phenomenon that the Prophet brought about.

Respect for human personality

When authority to rule came to be vested in the Prophet, deputations of different nations began coming to him. This year is called, in Islamic history, the Year of Deputations. These deputations were from Christians, Jews and idolatrous tribes. Each deputation was received and treated with honour and respect, for the Prophet's heart was infinitely large and free from every prejudice or bias. He regarded the whole human race as God's one great family, ever keeping in view that Divine Commandment contained in the Qur'án : "We have made the human race worthy of respect and honour" (17 : 70). Every deputation was lodged in the Mosque of the Prophet to show that because the All-Loving God was the Creator and Sustainer of all the nations of the world, the doors of the house of His worship were open to the entire human race. Moreover, the lodging of the peoples of other religions in the Mosque was a mark of high regard shown to every deputation that waited upon the Prophet.

Honourable treatment of Jews

The province of the Yemen was populated by Jews. The Prophet appointed Mu'adh Ibn Jabal and Musa Ashari respectively as the Governor and Chief Justice of the Yemen. When the Prophet came out to see them off after their appointment, he made them mount their horses, while he himself walked besides them on foot for some distance to give them last-minute instructions. This is what he told them :

"You should always remember that the people of the Yemen whom you are going to govern are people of the Scripture (followers of a Revealed religion). They are, moreover, people of faith and of knowledge and wisdom. Treat them with kindness and do not be hard upon them. Your administration and actions should not become the cause of hatred and contempt in their minds, but whatever you do as rulers should, on the other hand, create happiness and hope among them. Oppress not, nor tyrannize over any of the Jews, and always be afraid of the cry of an oppressed soul. The cry of an oppressed man, whether he is a Muslim or non-Muslim, goes straight to God Almighty and no obstacle stands in the way. The cry of distress of a non-Muslim can draw the wrath of God Almighty on a Muslim ruler. When you assume the reins of government you should abstain from disobeying the commandments of God. And remember above all that a life of iniquity and sin draws the chastisement of God Almighty. The grabbing of wealth and property should not be the object of the Islamic administration."

These words of wisdom and guidance spoken by the Prophet throw light on many different issues. These instructions show a way of ending all national and religious prejudices. They prescribe so succinctly and beautifully the manner in which a Muslim ruler should behave in relation to his subjects. They prove that the Prophet had come as a mercy to all the nations of the world, and that real brotherhood and equality, goodwill and peace can be established among the nations by adopting the Prophet's principles and practices.

Solicitude for Christians

Just as the Prophet gave directions for just and kind treatment of the Jews of the Yemen, in the same way he

left instructions for a sympathetic treatment of the Christians of Egypt. He observed :

"You will soon be conquering the land of Egypt. Whenever that happens remember to treat the people of Egypt with kindness and benevolence for, once they have become the citizens of the Islamic State, they will be the Muslims' *Dhimmi*s or covenantees. (*Dhimmi* or covenantee is the non-Muslim citizen living in an Islamic State.) The *Dhimmi*s have the covenant of God and His Prophet for the protection of their life, honour and property. Thus it will be your binding duty as rulers to protect the life, honour and property of the Egyptian Christians."

There were the same laws for the Yemenite Jews, the Egyptian Christians, as well as the Muslims. According to the laws of Islam no discrimination is permitted between Muslims and non-Muslims. The Muslim ruler *vis-à-vis* his subjects does not have any exceptional privileges exempting him from the consequences of his misdeeds. The non-Muslims had an opportunity in the Yemen, Egypt and many other places of witnessing this principle in action. The son of 'Amr Ibn al-'As, the conqueror and Governor of Egypt, maltreated and manhandled an Egyptian Christian. When the report of this incident reached Hadrat 'Umar, the Caliph of the Muslim State, he summoned the Governor and his son to his court at Medina. The son was publicly flogged for his misbehaviour and the Governor was reprimanded in the following words :

"Since when have you begun to make people your slaves, although their mothers brought them forth free?"

Such a display of justice and equity was a thing unheard of by the people of Egypt. The aggrieved person was a poor Christian, and the Governor of the country a Muslim. The public punishment of the Governor's son was in their eyes a startling proof of the equality before law of everyone enjoined by Islam. This incident created an unforgettable impression on the Egyptians and became established as an example of what true justice and equity should be. Because of experiences such as these the people of Egypt became the loyal subjects of the Islamic State.

All religions are true

All the religions of the world contain truth and guidance. As stated in the foregoing pages, God is the Lord of all the nations. His grace is not limited to any particular people, nor has He deprived any nation of His blessings and boons. His prophets appeared among all the nations of the world and His kindness rained upon all in the form of Heavenly Books. The Qur'an endorses the teachings of all these Books as true and beneficial, saying :

"We sent down and revealed the Torah. . . . There is light and guidance in its teachings" (v. 44).

In the same way it is said of the Christian Gospel :

"We conferred the Gospel upon Jesus" (v. 46).

"Therein, too, We have revealed light and guidance for the illumination of mankind" (v. 46).

And furthermore it is stated in this connection :

"God Almighty, Who is the fountainhead of all life, its Sustainer, Supporter, who raises it to the point of perfection, is one and only one, without a partner or an associate. The Great Creator of the universe has revealed unto mankind the Qur'an which is full of wisdom and truth. It confirms the eternal truths that had been in existence previously. It testifies that the Torah and the Christian Gospel had been revealed by the Almighty God" (3 : 2).

Moreover, it is also the function of the Qur'an to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and for this reason it has been given the title *al-Furqân* (the criterion between the true and the false). It points out the spurious insertions which the people have made in the earlier Holy Books of God. Besides being *al-Furqân*, the Qur'an is also the *al-Muhaimin*, i.e. it protects and preserves the teachings of all Heavenly Books.

Good people in all nations

God raised His prophets in every age, and revealed His laws through them for the human race to pursue the right path, and therefore good and righteous people came to be in every nation. The Qur'an has mentioned this fact so that largeness may be created in the hearts of men, and the darkness of prejudice may be removed from among human beings. The Holy Book says (v. 54) :

"Unto Moses We revealed the Torah in which We gave light and guidance, to enable the children of Israel to walk on the right path."

But whereas a section of them derived benefit from God's guidance, others paid no heed to it, and rather than carry out and obey the Divine commandments they began to break and violate them. To those who followed the guidance of Moses, God has given the honourable name of *Salihin*, i.e. the righteous, and to the heedless, the disgraceful name of *Fasiqin*, i.e. the transgressors. This point is further stressed in the following verse :

"It is not fair to condemn all of them, when among them are to be found also such people as follow closely the commandments of their Creator and recite His word at night time, and who worship and adore Him. They are good and righteous themselves, and enjoin good upon others also, and forbid evil. Such persons are among the righteous" (3 : 113).

The sacred verse goes on to say :

"In the performance of good deeds they vie with one another."

And again :

"God knows those who are God-fearing and doers of good" (3 : 114).

In the verses quoted above the Jews have been praised. Likewise a mention has been made of the teaching of Jesus and of those people who derived benefit from it :

"We revealed unto Jesus the Gospel in which was provided light and guidance : and those people who conformed their life to the teaching of Jesus became worthy of honour in the sight of God" (v. 44).

Further tribute is paid to the virtues of tender-heartedness and fellow-feeling among the Christians in the verse :

"And We gave him (Jesus) the Gospel and We put compassion and mercy in the hearts of those who followed him" (56 : 27).

In this verse the Christians have been commended. They have, it is said, utmost mercy and compassion in their hearts, so there is good reward for the faithful among them too.

Virtuous among Jews

A few more facts may be mentioned in this connection. We read in the Qur'an :

“And there are among the followers of Moses those who lead with truth and establish justice therewith” (7: 159).

This verse, like many others, inculcates that good deeds of followers of other religions should be acknowledged and respected. It creates love among the people of different religions and purifies their minds of prejudice against others. The following verse from the Book of God goes further and declares in unequivocal terms that righteous people are found not only among Jews and Christians, but also among all other nations of the world, and that every people and

every country has its own noble-natured, truth-loving, honest and just persons :

“Among Our creation there are everywhere such people who guide with truth and do justice” (7: 181).

It is clear from the verses quoted above that the Qur’ān bears the teachings of cosmopolitan character. And it is this precious principle which alone can cure narrow-mindedness and obliquity of the mind, and serves to create instead mutual goodwill and love among all nations.

Jalal-ud-Din Rumi:

A GLIMPSE OF THE MASTER FROM HIS OWN WRITINGS

by DR. DAUD BEG BARLAS

داند دل ہر پاک دل آواز دل ز آواز گل غزین شیر است این در صورت آہوئے او

“Every pure of heart can distinguish between the voice of the soul and the voice of the soil. Know then this is the roar of the Lion Himself, though it emanates through the mouth of His Deer.”

To understand and appreciate the works of the Maulana Jalal-ud-Din Rumi one needs an intuitive and inner understanding. Mere words are insufficient to convey the deep meaning and the beauty of his expressions. And he has himself elucidated this very point in his own incomparable way when he says :

بد گوشہا برسد حسرت ہائے ظاہر من بد بیچ کس ز رسد نفسہ ہائے جانی من

“The outward form and meaning of my words do reach the ears, but no one is conscious of the roarings of my soul.”

Understanding his works is like understanding love, and he himself has said that to understand love you must be a lover. You must experience the joys and pangs before you can appreciate it. One who has never experienced love can never have a clear idea of what love is. To write about love and lovers is an impossible task. The Maulana himself has said :

“I am neither that, nor this, sometimes I am like that and sometimes like this. Sometimes I am like him and sometimes myself — I am in fact beyond description.”

“The possessions of a pauper are immediately apparent. I have spread my threadbare garment at your feet.”

Maulana Jalal-ud-Din was undoubtedly one of the greatest of men that ever lived. He was born great, greatness was thrust upon him and he became greater by his



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own efforts. He was one of those blessed and rare personages who received his knowledge and wisdom direct from the source of all wisdom at first hand. He is certain of what he says. Hearsay is no part of his writings. He has stated what he has experienced. So, when small men question his wisdom, we can forgive them. Hafiz has hit the nail on the head when he says :

هزار نکته باریک تر ز موایں جاست نه هر که سر نه تراشد تندی داند

Followers of a certain mystic order in Turkistan were distinguished for not attaching much importance to outward appearance, and often let their hair grow very long. Hafiz says there is more in this than meets the eye. Don't be led away by outward appearances. There are finer points in this than mere hair. Just because a person has long hair does not mean that he belongs to the *élite* of that exalted order. Therefore we should think twice before sitting in judgment upon, or expressing opinions on, subjects we know nothing about.

I have met several superficial persons who claim to have read the *Mathnavi* and who say that there is nothing in it but the stories of foxes, rabbits and lions. That reminds me of a story narrated by Sa'adi. A person once went to sit at the feet of a savant, but he was so full of his own wisdom that he learned nothing from the great man. Whenever the master wanted to say something, the man would take the words from his mouth and put in his own version of whatever they were. When this man was about to leave the savant, the master said :

"You are so full of yourself that you are going away, empty, from here."

You can put something into an empty cup but not into one that is already full.

So to learn you must have a genuine desire for it and not just have a desire to criticize for the sake of criticizing or hearing your own voice. To learn, you must be prepared to *listen* and assimilate. That is the reason our master begins the *Mathnavi* with the word *Bishnou* ("Listen").

To come back to the master. The Maulana was born in Balkh, the capital of Khwarazm, in 604 A.H., of a long line of learned aristocratic and highly respected ancestors. Because of his learning his father received the title of "Sultan-ul-Ulema" from the leaders of Muslim thought all over the Muslim world. The title means "The Prince of Scholars". On his father's side the Maulana was a direct descendant of no less a personage than Abu Bakr, the first Caliph of Islam and the dearest friend of the Prophet himself. He was also a near relation of the ruling Turkish monarch of the time, Sultan Jelaluddin Muhammad Shah of Khawarazm. In fact it was due to the nearness of this relationship that the Maulana's father decided to migrate from the land of his birth. Because of Sultan-ul-Ulema's piety and learning he was held in very high esteem by the public. Some jealous men of learning made the king believe that Sultan-ul-Ulema wanted to dispossess him of his throne. In fact, nothing was farther from his mind, but his popularity was so great that he truly ruled the people's hearts and could well have become a king, if he had so wished. But such a thought never crossed his mind. He was after a greater kingdom — the Kingdom of the Soul.

So, to allay the king's suspicions, and on the basis of some spiritual revelations, the Maulana's father decided to leave his homeland. The entire town of Balkh went to see Sultan-ul-Ulema and his family off, and went for miles with

the caravan, and actually a retinue of 300 persons migrated with him.

Such was the esteem in which Sultan-ul-Ulema was held that, wherever he went, he was received with royal honours. Before settling down in Konya, the capital of Turkey, or Rum of those days, he travelled all over the Muslim world and performed the pilgrimage to Mecca. Wherever he went, he made a point of visiting men of piety and learning. Among these the names of Fariduddin 'Attâr of Nishapur and Sheikhul Akbar Muhiyuddin-ibn-i-Arabi are especially worthy of note. By these extensive travels the Maulana developed a breadth of vision that is given only to a few. He received a liberal education in every sense of the word. In the Maulana's retinue there were quite a few men of learning, so that book knowledge was by no means neglected.

The Maulana held Fariduddin 'Attâr in very high esteem, as is clear from these verses of his :

"'Attâr was the Soul and Sanai his two eyes. We follow both."

Again he says :

"'Attâr was a lover, Sanai was an Emperor of Soul. But I am neither one nor the other, I have passed from self."

Before the *Mathnavi* became the textbook of the acolytes of the Moulavi order, the writings of both 'Attâr and Sanai were read as texts.

The Maulana's father was received with high honours in Baghdad and his theological discourses were highly appreciated. It is said that he lectured on the first chapter of the Qur'an alone for over one month. Among the hearers were some courtiers of Sultan Alaaddin-Keykobad, the Emperor of Rum. They were so highly impressed by these lectures that on their return they conveyed some of their enthusiasm to their master. Whereupon the Emperor at once despatched messengers to Baghdad, inviting Sultan-ul-Ulema and his retinue to Konya. But the great divine did not accept his invitation at once, nor did he reject it. He gave a promise that, God willing, he would come. This promise, however, was not fulfilled till several years later. On his return from Hijaz and Syria he travelled for several years in Anatolia. Among the notable places are Erzincan, Aksehir, Larend, etc. He lived for seven years in the last-named place. As soon as the Sultan Alaaddin-Keykobad heard of Sultan-ul-Ulema's arrival in his domain, he once more began to send invitations, but the Maulana's father would always say "When God wills it, not yet".

While in Larend, Maulana Jalal-ud-Din's marriage took place. He was married to the daughter of Lala Sharafuddin of Samarkand, who, like the Maulana, was a Turkestani. The Maulana was 18 years of age at the time, and a year later his eldest and most famous son, Sultan Valid, was born.

It was after this that Sultan-ul-Ulema decided to proceed to Konya. When the Emperor received the news of his coming, he went miles out of Konya to welcome him, and received him with honours befitting an emperor.

When Sultan-ul-Ulema reached Konya he said meaningly, "This is the end of our journey, this is our last resting-place on earth". And so it was.

The Maulana's father was created the Shaikh-ul-Islam of the domain and the Principal of the College of Learning. He fulfilled both these positions with excellence and honour, as long as he lived. After him the Maulana carried on the family tradition with equal efficiency. At the time of Sultan-ul-Ulema's death, the Maulana was thirty years of age and an acknowledged scholar and leader of thought. People from all over the Muslim world came to sit at his feet.

The Maulana, if he had wanted, could have attained to the highest worldly and political positions in life. He had the family connections, personality, knowledge and everything. But he spurned all these for a simple life of Godliness and piety. As he says in one place in the *Divan* :

"Since my acquaintance with the world of love, I am the leader of the paupers and a trader without merchandise."

At the time of Sultan-ul-Ulema's passing the Maulana was well versed in theology and all learning, but some aspects of mysticism were still deficient. The task of imparting this knowledge was allotted to one of Sultan-ul-Ulema's favourite pupils, Sayyad Burhanuddin of Tirmiz, who was well versed in this esoteric aspect of theology. But before these studies were completed Sayyad Burhanuddin had to go home to Tirmiz. While there he fell ill and thus could not return for a period of two years. In the meantime the Maulana's father passed away, and when this sad news reached him he concluded that now there was no point in going to Konya. But one night, while in this frame of mind, Sultan-ul-Ulema appeared to him in a dream and commanded him to return to Konya and redeem his spiritual debt. For that knowledge was originally imparted to him by the Maulana's father.

In the spiritual evolution of the Master, four personages are especially worthy of mention. The first of these, of course, was this gentleman, Sayyad Burhanuddin of Tirmiz, the second was Shaikh Shamsuddin of Tabriz, the third was Shaikh Salahuddin Zarkob, and the fourth was his great scribe Husamuddin Chelibi.

Of these the second undoubtedly left the strongest impressions. We will have much to say about him later.

To come back to Sayyed Burhanuddin. After the aforementioned spiritual message, the Sayyad immediately returned to Konya and in due course redeemed his spiritual debt. One day the Sayyed suddenly announced his intention of returning home, but the Maulana would not listen to it. He would not entertain the very idea at all. Finding himself in a difficult situation he was forced to disclose the real reason for his departure. Addressing the Maulana he said, "Before long a dervish will come to you. He will be a perfect man, the divine attributes will be mirrored in him with such perfection that you will forget everybody else, including myself. And before that time comes I would like to be out of the way. His company will completely transform you and you will ascend to a degree of divine love that has seldom, if ever, been attained."

So the Maulana had no choice left but to agree to the departure of his venerable teacher.

The predictions of the Sayyed came literally true, for a complete transformation took place in him as a result of his meeting with Shamsuddin. The renowned orthodox theologian all of a sudden became a lover, writing flaming poetry — a poetry the equal of which does not exist in any language.

That even the Maulana did not anticipate such a change is clear from this couplet :

"That this passion would convert me into a demented lover like Majnun, make my heart a flaming hell and my two eyes like the river Ceyhun — it was inconceivable."

The first meeting between the Maulana and Shamsuddin has been variously described. This is one version. Ever since the glad tidings had been given by the great mystic of Tirmiz the Maulana was in constant anticipation. He did not have long to wait. It was the habit of Maulana

Jalal-ud-Din to ride to and from his school of theology accompanied by a host of followers and students. They constantly asked questions of all kinds and received answers from him. It was in this fashion that one day, when he was returning home, a personage suddenly emerged from the street crowd, halted the procession and addressed the Maulana thus : "Peace be upon you, O Maulai Rumi. Please solve my conundrum." When thus confronted the Maulana instinctively knew that this was the gentleman he had been waiting for. However, without any emotion and in his mild way, the Maulana replied, "Dervish, kindly state your difficulty". Whereupon, without any ceremony, the dervish asked this question : "Who was the greater, the Prophet Muhammad or Bayazid-i-Bestami?"

Against the sudden impact of such a question, the whole personality of the Maulana shook, but he controlled himself and replied, "What kind of a question is this? How can you doubt the grandeur and the greatness of the Prophet's personality who was the crown of creation. Bayazid was only one of his followers. To this Shamsuddin the Dervish's response was :

"What you say is true enough, but the Prophet himself, while meditating on the majesty of God, has stated, 'O Lord, Thou art beyond the limits of our understanding and knowledge. We have not really comprehended Thy majesty'. On the other hand Bayazid states, 'How great is my state, inside the cloak I am wearing, there is only one God'. What do you make of that?"

The Maulana replied :

"The Prophet was an ocean of spirituality, whereas Bayazid was only a drop from that ocean. There can be no comparison between the capacity of the sea and the capacity of a drop. The Prophet was the centre of divine illumination many many times a day, but his head never turned, he was able to maintain his outward composure and balance always. He was a gourmand for divine illumination and always wanted more and more of it, without turning a hair. Whereas Bayazid's capacity was limited. He was no doubt a great saint and a man of great spiritual attainments, but where is he and where is the Prophet? A little went a long way with him and turned his head, so that he made statements of the kind you refer to. He was not himself at these moments. The Prophet on the other hand always maintained his outward composure. There can be no comparison between the two of them."

Getting such a satisfactory answer to his test questions, Shamsuddin the divine came into ecstasy and simply shouted "Allah" with such force that a state came upon all those present. The Maulana and the divine dervish embraced each other with fervour. This meeting is aptly described in the Maulavi literature as the intermingling of oceans. But the Maulana himself speaks of this meeting in his own way thus in the *Divan*, and this is a little different :

"Leaving my house I came face to face with a divine drunk, whose every glance betrayed his grandeur. I said to him,

"You are devoted to the divine wine shop and constantly imbibe the wine, don't give a drop of it to those intoxicated with their own wisdom."

"His movements reminded one of a ship without a rudder. He was such a personage that a hundred talented lovers would gladly lay down their lives for him."

"Where are you from?" I asked. He replied, "I am half from Turkistan and half from Ferghana. One half of me is composed of water and dust and the other half is soul and heart. A half is the shore of the Ocean and a half is a Pearl."

"Be my comrade. I am your kin," I implored him. He replied, "I cannot distinguish self from stranger. I am a vagabond drunk. I will pull your hair. My bosom is full of talk which I may explain or may not."

"A lover of such a beauty is surely not inferior to Jacob. Did not love make even the inanimate Pillar of Hanna wail and weep?"

"Why do you wish to avoid commotions, O Shamsul Haq of Tabriz, since you have already launched the Turmoil of Turmoils!"

This description seems to be in accord with the one given by Sipah Salar, who was a constant companion of the Maulana's for forty years. So it would not be out of place to describe this version of the first meeting of the two ghosts.

Shamsuddin of Tabriz was undoubtedly one of the most spiritually exalted personages of his day. One day in the course of his spiritual communion it occurred to him: "O Lord, I wonder if there is another human being who can withstand my company?" Immediately he heard a voice saying, "If you seek a companion travel to Rum". Shamsuddin got up and at once took the road to Rum. After travelling all over Anatolia he came to Konya and found accommodation in a "han" (a sort of combination of hotel and market place, which still abounds in Anatolia). He sat down in a comfortable chair outside the "han" and began to survey the passers-by. At the same time, while at home, the Maulana had a premonition that the personage, the arrival of whom Shaikh Burhanuddin of Tirmizi had predicted, was in Konya. He immediately leaves his house and, while passing in front of the "han", he notices Shamsuddin and intuitively realizes that this must be the personage. He goes and sits down in a chair just opposite to the one in which Shamsuddin is sitting. For a time the two personages gaze at each other without uttering a word, until they are convinced that they both have found the one they are seeking. At long last Shamsuddin breaks the silence and asks this odd question: "Maulana! Who was the greater of the two, Hazrat Muhammad or Bayazid-i-Bestami?" To which the Maulana replied, "Hazrat Muhammad is the Crown of Creation and the leader of all prophets and saints, there can be no doubt as to who is the greater".

Shamsuddin replied:

"That is true enough, but the Prophet Muhammad, while meditating on the glory of the grandeur of Almighty God, has said, 'O Lord, thou art beyond our cognizance and knowledge, we have not comprehended Thy majesty in its fullness,' whereas Bayazid-i-Bestami clearly and definitely says, 'How great is my state, there is no one but God in the cloak I have on my back. I am the king of kings.' What do you say to that?"

The Maulana did not feel called upon to reply to this, but a spiritual state comes over him and he merely says "Allah", and keeps quiet for some time, and then they both get up and embrace each other with fervour, and the Maulana takes him to his school of theology and puts him up in his own room as a guest.

The esteem in which the Maulana held Shamsuddin is clear from the fact that he gave the name of Divan-i-Shamsuddin Tabriz to his own biggest collection of poems. In fact, the whole of this work is full of expressions of his esteem. Of his dedication he says:

"I have penned these poems from the slate of love, I his slave present these to the honoured Sun of Tabriz."

And again:

"Your words are beautiful, O Shamsuddin-i-Tabrizi, I will give your name to a collection of your mystic sayings."

That he is the true exponent of the cult of Shamsuddin he says:

"I am the cotton whip of the cotton beater Shams-i-Tabrizi. His flame has fallen into the shop of this cotton beater."

At the time of this meeting the Maulana was 40 years of age and Shams-i-Tabrizi was 62 years old. The attraction between the two was of the most magnetic and extreme kind. After their first meeting they did not separate from one another for a full nine months. The Maulana neglected both his College and his duties as the Primate of the Turkish Empire. The result was a hue and cry against the wandering dervish who had taken possession of the great savant and had thus cut off the fountainhead of knowledge from the public. Gradually this movement against Shamsuddin gained ground and there was even talk of disposing of the great mystic whose merits were of course unknown to the public.

At long last Shamsuddin learned about this, and not wishing to make matters worse, asked the Maulana's permission to leave, but of course the Maulana would not hear of this, so Shamsuddin one night suddenly disappeared. The shock of Shamsuddin's disappearance was such that it is impossible to describe it. Only those who have themselves suffered such a loss can get an inkling of the Maulana's state at this time. And this no doubt was an important event in the spiritual evolution of the great mystic. He spent all his time in prayer, fasting, dictating poetry or listening to divine music.

He sent messengers everywhere in search of Shamsuddin and himself went to several likely places, including Habriz.

In his sorrow he cut himself off still more from the outside world, so that the creators of this situation felt ashamed of themselves and wanted to make amends and actually helped in the search for Shamsuddin, but to no purpose. Eventually, Shamsuddin himself sent a letter from Damascus. On receiving this, the Maulana immediately sent a delegation with his eldest son, Bahauddin Valed, at its head, to bring back Shamsuddin. It is stated that the Maulana's son walked all the way from Damascus to Konya holding the stirrup of the horse Shamsuddin was riding. Such was the esteem and respect in which he held his father's teacher. Once the two great men were reunited, they returned to seclusion and their spiritual communion once more. This companionship lasted for eighteen months, at the end of which Shamsuddin was martyred. Whether he again disappeared or was really martyred has never been fully established. There is a grave in Konya that is most probably his, but there is a grave of Shamsuddin-i-Tabrizi in Multan, Pakistan, as well. There is, as a matter of fact, a family still living in Konya that claims descent from Shamsuddin, a member of which is known to me personally.

Of course, the spiritual benefits that the Maulana received from the company of Shamsuddin of Tabrizi were very great indeed. As he himself says:

"The personality of Shamsuddin-i-Tabrizi has saturated my soul, my heart and my body with divine spiritual illumination."

And again, he says in another place:

"Shamsuddin-i-Tabrizi, you are the soul of divine knowledge. Your talk and expression is a proof of this."

Now a word or two about the other two great personalities who were associated with the Master would not be out of place.

Shaikh Salahuddin Zarkob was an elderly disciple of the Maulana and came on the scene after the martyrdom of Shamsuddin. He was by profession a gold-beater. After the

disappearance of Shamsuddin, one day the Maulana was passing through the gold-beater's street. The rhythmic hammering suddenly brought the Maulana into a state of ecstasy and he began to go round and round with his hands raised as in prayer. It so happened that he was at that time in front of Salahuddin's shop. Seeing the Maulana in that state a similar condition came upon him. He immediately distributed whatever he had in his goldsmith's shop to the passers-by, and followed the Maulana and did not separate from the Maulana till the day of his own death.

The other gentleman was Husamuddin Chelibi. He was a most devoted disciple of the Maulana and his constant companion. He was also the scribe of his great works. The Maulana seldom wrote himself. When the state came over him he simply dictated. With the exception of the first 18 verses of the *Mathnavi*, Husamuddin Chelibi took down every word of that great work. This is accepted by all, and I have no reason to believe that at least the major part, if not all, of the *Divan-i-Shams* was also dictated to him. During the Maulana's lifetime he attended to the training of acolytes of the Maulavi order as well. In fact, it was at his request that Rumi wrote the text-book (the *Mathnavi*) for them. After the Maulana's passing away he became the first "Postnashin", that is, he simply carried on the duties that he had been carrying on as the Maulana's representative. The Maulana's eldest son, who also held him in the highest esteem, insisted that he should continue. It was only after his death, that the Maulana's eldest son, Sultan Valed, was unanimously elected to his father's seat of honour, because of his great learning and piety to carry on the great family tradition. There are numerous passages in the *Mathnavi* where the Maulana speaks of Husamuddin in such high terms of laudation and with such self-abnegation that persons not well acquainted with the work would imagine that he was speaking of his own preceptor and not his own disciple and pupil.

Another expression of his esteem was the fact that the Maulana was asked on three separate occasions, while lying on his deathbed, as to who should sit on his seat. Without hesitation, on all three occasions, he named Husamuddin Chelibi. People were expecting him to name his own son, Sultan Valed, and that was the reason they repeated the question on three separate occasions. At last they decided to mention Sultan Valed's name, hoping that then he would forget Husamuddin. But he still said it would be Husamuddin, but added that Sultan Valed could look after himself, he needed no recommendation. And so it was Husamuddin Chelibi who became the first "Postnashin" and Sultan Valed the second.

THE MESSAGE

Now I will present a few quotations from the works of the Master, which, in my humble opinion, constitute his eternal message. However, it must be borne in mind that the Master didn't write the works, like authors, because he wished to do so. No. They were written on divine command, and therefore are inspired works. The *Mathnavi* has aptly been described as the Persian Qur'an. This fact has been made clear in numerous places both in the *Mathnavi* and the *Divan*. I will give only a few quotations in support. Take this, for example :

بیا بگرنگا دیں شد جهان تیغ شیریں شد کہ طبل از سهرستی کلام آورد مستان را

"Come, see, the bitter world has become sweet. The intoxicated (passed from self) nightingale has brought poetry for the inebriated souls."

نگر کاں میوه غیبی ز باغ کشف مے یسی یہ مہر و لطف بے عیبی بکام آورد مستان را

"The fruits of the unseen world in their pristine purity have become available through the Lord's unbounded love and compassion. He has utilized the intoxicated souls as a vehicle."

In another place he says :

بایفیدہ دست آمد پیدا بود پیدایود از صنعت جولایہ و صنعت ماکوئے او

"The Lord's weave is distinct and clear. It cannot be confounded with work of the weaver and that of the worldly artist."

و اند دل ہر پاک دل آواز دل ز آواز گل غنیدن شیراست این در صورت آہوئے او

"Every pure of heart can distinguish between the voice of the soul and the voice of the soil. Know then this is the roar of the Lion Himself, though it emanates from the mouth of His Deer."

The incomparable spiritual feast that the Master has laid before us in his works is available to all seekers of truth. But the rank materialist will for ever remain debarred and the reason for this has been given to us by the Master himself when he says :

دیدہ تن دایمانن بین بود دیدہ جاں جان پرمن بین بود

"The material eye will forever be a seer of matter. It is the gifted eye of the gifted soul that can see the spirit and the soul."

The Maulana advises his would-be readers :

مارا بہ چشم سہر میں مارا بہ چشم سہر میں کاسہ صدف من نیست من و در شاہوار اکرم

"No not look at me with the eye that is located in your head. Look at me with the secret eye of the soul. I am not an oyster shell, I am the incomparable princely pearl inside it."

The following quotations have been picked at random, no doubt better ones could have been selected :

یار و عوئی میکند گر عاشقی دیوانہ شو سر دبا شد عانی در حلقہ دیوانگان

"If you pretend to be a lover, the beloved challenges you to be a real mad one. It is foolish to parade wisdom in the company of those possessed with love."

ایمان مومنان ہمہ حیران شد ز عشق ز تار نیز رامب و تر سا بسوختہ

"The pious are bewildered by Love. Love makes even the devout Catholic and the Zoroastrian burn their sacred cords."

بسباد و در حروف نہ آید کلام عشق کز حرف و صوت ہست منترہ باشتوا

"Words fail in their effort to describe love. Love is above and beyond the limits of language and sound. Love can be experienced and not talked about. It is not a talking matter at all."

Someone once asked the Maulana, "What is love?" He replied : "When you become like me you will know."

ہمہ عقلمان سحر قہ دوز آند سبک جگر ہائے عشاق شد سحر قہ سوزان

"Intelligence weaves veils and camouflages reality. Love burns away all veils : it brings you face to face with reality."

ہر کس ہمارا سید شد و عاقبت زما بے گانہ شد ز خویش ہر آں کا شائے راست

تا نہ گذری ز راحت و رنج و بیا و خویش سوئے مستہ بان وصالش گذار نیست

"He who comes to us becomes of us. All our friends are strangers to themselves. Not until you become immune

to comfort and discomfort, to joy and sorrow, and cease to distinguish self from stranger, can you become of the *élite* of spirituality."

گرم و نام و ننگی از کوسے ما گذر کن مانگ خاص و عایم از ننگ ماحذر کن
سرشتگان عشقیم نہ دل، نہ دین، نہ دنیا از نیک و بد بروں، آنگاہ بمانظر کن،

"If you are a person of so-called respectability and reputation, if you are one who is impressed by worldly wealth, possessions and position, etc., pray pass us by. We personify the respectability of the common and the uncommon, beware of our respectability. We are vagabond lovers, we possess neither a heart nor a religion nor worldly possessions. If you wish to consort with us, first of all divest yourself of your standards of so-called good and bad."

There have always been two schools of thought in Islam — the Ulemai Zahir and Ulemai Batin (the followers of the law and the followers of the soul). The Maulana Jalal-ud-Din Rumi was undoubtedly one of the principal leaders of the latter school.

In this age of reason and intelligence we are apt to run away with the notion that we know everything that need be known, and that all aspects of spiritual experiences can be, so to speak, codified, accepted or discarded by our superior intelligence. Everybody seems to think that, as far as judgment is concerned, he or she is the last word. I have often seen and heard so-called eminent ladies and gentlemen even question the very word of God, and question the presence of certain passages in the Holy Book, which their small brains cannot assimilate. That just shows what a good opinion we often have of ourselves and of our wisdom and judgment.

We forget how insignificant and actually non-existent we really are. For it is even materially true that we really do not exist. Just, for instance, imagine what part of the microscopic sperm cell of Adam we are today! Millions of generations have passed since. Those who prefer a descent from the monkey can substitute him for Adam. For my part I prefer grandpa Adam. However, the fact remains that, if we were to sub-divide that original cell billions of times, nothing of the original cell will have remained today. So you see how insignificant we really are and how we labour under the fond delusion of the importance of our non-existent mighty atom.

God alone is all knowledge; no matter how erudite we may be, our knowledge will always be deficient, and very deficient at that. That is the reason we always need God's guidance and the guidance of those guided by God. That is also the reason why God sent His word and His messengers.

The object of all religion and religious devotions is to reach the divine presence. The short cut to this, recommended by the Maulana is that of love and complete submission to His will. In the very beginning of the *Mathnavi* he says:

حرم این بوش جز بوش نیست مرزبان را مشتری جز گوشت نیست

"This wisdom is granted to those who forsake wisdom. And, instead of talking, they listen and wait for inspiration."

In the *Divan-i-Shamsul Hakaik* he says:

ندانم بر این را تو که علم و عقل تو پرده است بدین عار تو شادان که خود درین آں عاری

"Your knowledge and intelligence are a bar to true spiritual secrets. You are outside the inner circle, but are under the fond delusion that you are the very centre of it."

بدد زہرہ جانت اگر ناگاہ بینی تو کہ از صاحب کھنڈیل بگونہ دور و ایناری

"You who are so proud of your wisdom, if you were one day to discover the truth that you are in fact so far, far away from (and a stranger) the circle of the *élite* of spirituality, you would be shocked out of your wits, your heart would burst."

ز یک حرفے ز دمرے دل نہ بروی بوسے اندر اگر چه حافظ و اہی و استادی تو اسے قاری

"Although you know the Qur'an by heart, are a doctor of divinity, a professor and a preacher, the fact remains that in the whole course of your life you have not learnt a single secret of the soul."

Love and intelligence belong to the opposite poles; they have nothing in common. That is the reason Hafiz has said:

دور و منزل لیل کہ خط ہاست بہ جاں شرط اول قدم آنست کہ محبوب باشی

"The first essential for the traveller on the dangerous road of love is to have the abandon of that vagabond lover Majnun. A cold calculating brain is of no use on the divine highway of love."

On the same theme Hazrat-i-Jalal says:

حیلت رہا کن عاشقا دیوانہ شو دیوانہ شو و نہ درول آتش در آپروانہ شو پروانہ شو
ہم خویش را بیگانہ کن ہم خانہ را دیوانہ کن آنگاہ بیابا عاشقاں ہم خانہ شو ہم خانہ شو
باید کہ جلد جاں شوی تا لائق جا مان شوی اگر سوئے آں متاں شوی متاں شوی متاں شوی نہ شوی

"You cannot be both a lover and a philosopher. You can only be one or the other. So stop cheating yourself and others. If you are a lover be a mad one — devoid of all intelligence. Go sit in the centre of the flames like the insect that loves the flame. Become a stranger to yourself, destroy the network of worldly ambitions, then come and consort with the lovers. To be fit to meet 'the sweetheart' you must shed all clay and become all soul. To associate with the drunken man you must be drunk yourself. Mere wishful thinking is not enough, you cannot travel on the road of love by just wishing; you must have a burning and passionate yearning. You should wish nothing else more. The field of the soul has wonderful dormant possibilities, God's beautiful clouds are full of spiritual rains for the soulful thirsty soil."

Yes, you must have a burning thirst:

تا ساقم رہم آید خطاب تشہا بش اللہ اعلم بالصواب

"Be thirsty that God may give the command for your thirst to be quenched. Be thirsty. God knows best."

Again he says:

درومندان را نہ باشند فکر عینہ خواہ در مسجد برو خواہی بدیر

"Those in pain, alone think of Him. It does not matter whether they are in a mosque or a church."

It would be interesting here to relate the story of a shepherd from the *Mathnavi* and some relevant verses which illustrate the subject under review.

Once upon a time there was a shepherd who tended his sheep in a certain valley. He was absolutely ignorant, but was given to the worship of his Creator in his own way. He possessed a burning and flaming heart, however. One day the Prophet Moses happened to pass that way and noticed this man worshipping his Creator in this way: He was saying, "O God, O God, where are you? I do wish to be your slave. I would repair your shoes, I would comb your hair. I wish I knew where you are, I would serve you humbly. I would patch up your clothes for you, I would

wash them, seek out all the lice, destroy them. I would bring you fresh milk and cheese and butter and very fine fresh loaves of bread every morning and evening. If you were to fall ill I could attend to your needs. I would massage your hands and your feet. I would sweep your house, make your bed," and so on. After listening to all this nonsense Moses asked him as to whom he was addressing. He replied, "I am speaking to Him Who created me and you and the heavens and the earth". The Prophet Moses was enraged by his reply and explained to him the folly of his ways. This is a long discourse but this couplet in this connection is worth mentioning :

دوستی بے خود و خود دشمنی ست حق تعالیٰ زیں چنین خدمت غنبت

"Friendship of fools is enmity pure and simple. God is in no need of such services as you offer."

When the man learnt that what he had been saying was a sin instead of being worship, as he imagined, he was so hurt and ashamed that he said to Moses :

گفت اے موسے وہاںم و دختی وز پیشانی تو جب نم سوختی

"O Moses, you have sealed my mouth and my regretful repentance has scorched my soul."

With grief he tore up his clothes and hair and crying madly ran away.

When Moses ascended the Mount to converse with the Lord a message came to him from God saying :

وحی آمد سوسے موسے از خدا بنده مارا ز ما کردی حبدا،

تو برائے وصل کردن آمدی نے برائے فصل کردن آمدی

ہر کسے را سیرت نہادہ ام ہر کسے را اصطلاح دادہ ام

ما بری از پاک و ناپاکی ہمہ از گراں جانی و چالاکی ہمہ

من نہ گردم پاک از تسبیح شان پاک ہم ایشان نشوند و درفشان

ما بروں را انگیم و مثال را ما بروں را انگیم و حال را

موسیا آداب داناں دیگند سوختہ جان و رواناں دیگند

ملت عشق از ہمہ دینا جداست عاشقان را مذہب و ملت خداست

"Moses, you have separated Our slave from Us. We sent you for the sake of unity and not discord. We have given everybody a temperament and a mode of expression. We are above purity and impurity and human failings. We do not look at the outward actions of people or their talk. We only observe their heart and their intentions. O Moses, knowers of formalities are others, and those with a burning heart and soul are still others. The creed of love is entirely different from all other creeds. Lovers' creed and religion is the Lord Himself."

God commanded Moses to seek out the shepherd and make amends to him. Moses immediately went in pursuit of the man but he was nowhere to be found. After days of search, he found him in a forest. He explained to him the Lord's message and begged him to continue praying the way he felt, as his every action was acceptable to his Creator :

حال من اکٹوں بروں از گفتن ست آں چرمی گویم نہ احوال من ست

"Your blasphemy is faith and your faith is the light of the soul. You are protected and the world is in your protection."

The shepherd thanked him in return and added :

"O Moses, I have now passed well beyond the limits of talk and talking : you gave my horse such a stroke that it has passed beyond all barriers. My state is now beyond words : my talk does not represent my state."

In the end the Maulana says : "Remember that the highest form of your worship is high only as far as you are concerned, but, as far as its fitness for the Creator is concerned, it is no better than the nonsense the shepherd used to utter. Instead, wish for the inner spiritual warmth of the shepherd's heart, burning with God-love."

The important thing, therefore, is not the word or the form of worship, it is the feeling and the spirit at the bottom of it all.

Another point that emerges from this story, and one that has been emphasized by the Master throughout the *Mathnawi* and the *Divan-i-Shams* is the importance of having a spiritual mentor and guide on the road to truth. The shepherd was depending on his own efforts alone, and it was not until Moses guided him that he really attained the object of his desire.

And this stands to reason. In order to acquire worldly knowledge of things, we spend the best part of our lives in schools and colleges and as apprentices, and yet, when it comes to spiritual knowledge, we talk glibly of the self-sufficiency of our own unguided efforts. Without doubt personal effort is essential, but it will not take you far unless you are put on the right road by the one who knows the way. A ship cannot go very far without the help of a captain who is acquainted with knowledge of the seas. It would not help if we had a thousand scholars on board if they had no knowledge of the seas and seamanship.

That an institution has been abused and commercialized by some unscrupulous persons is no reason for condemning that institution. There are swindlers in all trades, but that does not mean that all those trades should be condemned. It would be like throwing the baby away with the bath water.

As the Maulana has said :

بیچ چیزے خود بخود چیزے نہ شد بیچ آہن خود بخود تیغے نہ شد

مولوی ہرگز نہ شد مولائے دم تا غلام شمش تبسیریزی نہ شد

"Nothing becomes something of itself. The iron ore does not of itself become a steel sword. The theologian Jalaluddin did not of himself become Maulai Rum. He had to become a slave and a servant of his preceptor Shamsuddin before he attained to the position of the interpreter of divine secrets."

The following verses again elucidate and emphasize this point :

"Come, come, by your own efforts alone you will get nowhere, become a faithful follower of a true spiritual guide. One who has never served a real man can never become one himself. Be with a preceptor so that you may also one day be a man, in the true sense. Come to me that I may show you the road to attainment. Come, come, that I may release you from the bondage and shadows of thought. Come and become a true follower of Shamsuddin, for a single glance of his will make you a person of merit."

People love to indulge in theological and other controversies, not for the sake of learning the truth or to quench

their burning thirst for knowledge. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred they like to hear their own voice, or show their mastery of words, or simply try to win an argument. As Hafiz has truly said :

نہ حافظ را حضور و روبرو قرآن نہ دانشمند را علم الیقینہ

"Neither the Hafiz (who knows the whole of the Qur'an by heart) has the soulful understanding of the Divine Message, nor the learned theologian (in spite of his great and profound studies) has the knowledge of certainty (which comes of spiritual experiences at first hand alone)."

Both of them are followers of careers. They are, in fact, traders. To his critics the Maulana says :

تا ز خود فانی نہ گردی کہ شوی باقی بحق زندگی و مرگ می جوتایمانی جا و اس
چشم صورت کے بہ بیند عالم ارواح را گوش حواس کے پذیرد نقطہ ہائے بے نیاز

"You have to pass from self to be in Truth. Seek perpetual life in the death of the ego. The physical eye cannot perceive the world of soul and spirit. The animal ear cannot appreciate the fine spiritual discourses put forward without the agency of the tongue and voice."

But, for all that, do not run away with the idea that Rumi belittles intelligence — not at all. He says intelligence is one of the Lord's great gifts to mankind in worldly affairs. Nor is the Maulana against wealth and passions. This is clear from this verse :

یہیست دنیا از خدا غافل بدن نے قماش فقرہ و فرزند وزن

"Worldliness is forgetfulness of the Creator : fine clothes, money and family life is not worldliness."

Worldly possessions do no harm so long as they do not become your God and the principal object of your desire. They are means to an end and not the end itself.

Finally, a word to the critics.

عیب بینی از پیر خیزد و غیر این عقل فضول تشنہ ہرگز عیب داند و دید در آب رواں

Criticism is a product of the priggish egotistical short-sighted intelligence. Picture a thirsty wayfarer who suddenly

comes upon a sparkling spring of water. Do you think he would send the water to a chemical laboratory for analysis before quenching his thirst ?

A true seeker after truth in the same way does not waste time in idle argument. He puts everything to the test. The Maulana's appeal is to experience alone. That is the way of science. Scientists do not talk without experiment. It is only the satiated, complacent ones who criticize without investigation.

ور نہ باید حال پختہ بیسج حتم بس سخن کوتاہ باید و اتساع

"The state of an adept cannot be appreciated by a novice, that is it in a nutshell."

Talk won't help. Experiment and work are needed.

The only true road to salvation is complete submission to His will and to ask for guidance from Himself. This is the true Islamic spirit. The Lord has Himself taught us the right way to Himself and Truth. In the very first chapter of the Qur'an He has clearly indicated it. It is a chapter we recite at least forty times in our daily devotions, yet how many of us ponder over its profound meaning. We are taught to say addressing the Lord : "O Lord, show us the right way." We beg for guidance from Him and Him alone. It is nowhere mentioned that you need brains and intelligence to attain spiritual salvation. If we were to seek salvation through the agency of intellect, it would be like carrying coal to Newcastle. Our intelligence is most insignificant.

God is all-wisdom and the source of all wisdom and intelligence. As the Maulana has said, our physical and intellectual efforts count for nothing in themselves. Our best efforts cannot be befitting the Creator. It is only through His mercy and His grace and through complete submission to His will that we can get anywhere. But, and this is a big but, we must be honest and true. No one can cheat God. One of the reasons the road of love is the direct route is that a true lover cannot be a liar or a cheat. A genuine lover is truth itself, no sacrifice is too great for him. The world and life itself are nothing to him compared with his great and burning desire for his beloved.

THE SACRED JOURNEY by AHMAD KAMAL

PUBLISHED BY DUELL, SLOAN AND PEARCE, NEW YORK, 1961 — PRICE £2.3.0.

For the more than five hundred million who call themselves Muslims this is the official guide to *The Sacred Journey*, the Pilgrimage to Mecca, and for non-Muslims it is a gateway opening on to another world, the first full-scale picture of Islam as it appears to the followers of the Prophet Muhammad. The complete text, in English and Arabic, has an unqualified endorsement of the two great schools of Islam, Shi'ah and Sunni, a fact of unique and unprecedented importance. The world is witnessing an Islamic Renaissance and this book offers an authoritative key to understanding the emerging African, Middle Eastern and Asian nations.

Not since the early eighteenth century has any writer brought to the Western reader so profound a knowledge of Islam. A remarkable and stimulating contribution to scholarship, *The Sacred Journey* is also a work of literature that may well become a classic.

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TOWARDS CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM UNDERSTANDING

Issues raised in "City of Wrong" Examined

by MUHAMMAD YAKUB KHAN

"The Cross of Christ as seen by the Qur'án is a beacon of light and hope. As seen by the Church it amounts to a counsel of despair, marking the victory of evil over good. But for divergence on this vital issue, Christianity and Islam go a long way together."

The Christian-Muslim relationship presents one of the greatest paradoxes of history. For the last fourteen centuries, whenever a Muslim has mentioned the name of Jesus he has unfailingly done so with the words "May God's blessing be on him". But how have Christian friends repaid this gesture? Their whole history is one unrelieved hymn of hate against Islam. The Prophet of Islam, according to them, was a "false" prophet. Muslims were "infidels" who worshipped an idol of Muhammad. Islam was a religion of lustfulness and the sword. The Qur'án was the disjointed jumble of the kind of the common soothsayers' jargon.

No prophet is mentioned in the Qur'án as often as Jesus. The highest encomiums are showered on him. His holy mother is described as the most righteous of women. His disciples (*Hawari*) are held up before Muslims as an example of self-dedication to God. His good name is vindicated against the mud-slinging of contemporary Jews. It has been made an article of faith for a Muslim to accept Jesus Christ as one of the greatest prophets of God. *Isa Ruhullah* (Jesus the spirit of God) has become a part of the dictionary of Islam.

Christian friends, however, have been harping on the same tune. Even in this mid-twentieth century, the tone may have softened down, but the substance remains the same. Islam stands on a much lower level compared with Christianity. The Prophet Muhammad is dead, whereas Jesus is still alive. The Prophet's revelation was verbal. In Christianity the Word became the flesh. God in person came to earth in the form of Jesus. The Qur'anic God rules by fear; in Christianity He becomes a loving Father. The Prophet had no miracles to show. Jesus worked wondrous miracles. Islam is intolerant. Christianity is tolerance *par excellence*. This is the modern trend to show the superiority of Christianity over Islam.

The abuses heaped on Islam, the Prophet and the Qur'án in Christian literature down the centuries send a shudder even through decent men and women in Christianity. One such modern writer, who has traced all these from the beginning and collected the same in book form, *Islam and the West*, feels ashamed even of reproducing that filthy stuff, and does so with apologies to the Muslim readers in the words:

Náqil-il-Kufri laisa bi Káfirin

"The reproducer of blasphemy is not a blasphemer."¹

Political rivalries, territorial ambitions and conquests widened this gulf. The armed encounter between the two faiths during the Crusades naturally could not be a helpful climate for better understanding between the two faiths. Muslim military penetration into Europe and centuries-long domination over half of Europe could not but make the Saracens and the Turks the embodiment of barbarism to the European mind. Likewise, the recent still-lingering relationship between Christendom and the world of Islam on the level of colonialism made the *Farangi* the most hated person to an average Muslim.

Fortunately, history is now taking a new and happier turn. The dust of historical conflict between the Cross and the Crescent is subsiding. And in the clearer skies and the new horizons that are emerging, Christianity and Islam are taking stock anew of their respective bearings, and exploring a realistic view of the relationship in which they stand to each other.

Viewed in this new perspective, no two religions are found so close to each other in spiritual kinship as Christianity and Islam. The values of life that count, values but for which life ceases to be worth living, are common to both. Faith in God, doing God's will, love of neighbour, faith in life after death, reward and punishment — these are the corner-stones of Christianity as much as of Islam. Above all the deep devotion of a Muslim's heart to the person of Jesus Christ is a strong tie that can weld the two faiths into a bond of friendship at the deepest level. Last but not least, there is the threat of the dark forces of a materialistic philosophy of life, corroding the very foundations of faith, which pose a common danger to both.

There is a growing awakening to this new world context that is emerging, calling for a reorientation of Christian-Muslim relationship. It would be the endeavour of all men of goodwill to seek and underline the points of contact between the two faiths, so as to bring them closer together. This reassessment and reorientation, to be worthwhile, must be realistic, based on a factual appreciation of the points of difference as well as agreement.

The biggest gulf that yawns between the two faiths is the divergent views of the Cross taken by Christianity and Islam. And we must be very clear on this fact. The Christian position on this point is dogmatic, beyond the pale of rational interpretation. That is what takes away the very basis of a common ground. If the Christian position

on this point can be made susceptible to a rational approach — of which signs are not wanting — the main hurdle in the way of a closer spiritual comradeship between the two faiths would have been cleared. The true significance of the Cross is the crux of the question. But for divergence on this, Christianity and Islam are two sides of the same coin.

In this connection, the most notable contribution comes in the form of a remarkable book, *City of Wrong*,² an English rendering by Dr. Kenneth Cragg of an Arabic book, *Qaryah Zālimah*, by an Egyptian scholar, Dr. Kamel Hussein. The following lines are inspired by the belief that an objective quest of the truth about the Cross of Christ is the only way truly to promote better understanding between the two faiths, and, in that spirit, are devoted to a study of the points raised in the book.

City of Wrong is a most moving book, perhaps the first of its kind, which no one interested in the problems of right and wrong, good and evil, the ultimate norm of moral values, how these values may be trampled in the name of collective good, even in that of God and religion, can afford to miss.

It is a story of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, told in the form of fiction, the theme being to turn the searchlight on the various factors — religious, political and social — caught up in that grim drama on that fateful Good Friday, which culminated in the conviction of Jesus Christ on a charge of heresy, and the sentence of death against him.

Whether, however, Jesus was actually crucified or not, whether somebody else in his likeness was crucified, as the common Muslim belief goes, or whether he in person underwent crucifixion as the Christians believe, is considered by the author immaterial to the theme of his story, and is left untouched. The mere fact that a Teacher of such lofty moral stature as Jesus Christ should be sentenced to die on the cross is, according to him, enough of condemnation of the main actors, systems, standards and institutions that happened to be involved therein.

The author, Dr. Kamel Hussein, is a man of versatile genius — surgeon by profession, an educationist, a thinker, author, philosopher, and a distinguished man of letters. The translation into English under the above title is by an equally distinguished man, Dr. Kenneth Cragg, Editor of *The Muslim World* and a Professor of Arabic and Islamics in various universities in America and the Middle East. The original was adjudged a masterpiece of literary art and awarded the State Prize for Literature by the Egyptian Government.

The translation is equally deserving of public appreciation, inasmuch as it does not lose, as most translations do, the thrill and grip of the original, and is inspired by the sole motive to promote Christian-Muslim understanding. As the distinguished translator puts it in his Introduction, the idea in rendering the book into English is to provide a meeting point at the deepest level between Christianity and Islam, and make the moral challenges in *Qaryah Zālimah* available to a wider English-reading public.

The feeling behind Dr. Cragg's labour of love, we hope, will be reciprocated in the world of Islam. Too long have Christianity and Islam, paradoxically in violation of their own basic messages, frowned at each other, misunderstood and misjudged each other, and for that matter met each other in a bitter historical encounter. If there are any two faiths which are the closest to each other in a great deal

that constitutes the substance of religion, these are Christianity and Islam. In the present-day world of ideological conflict, the two once again find themselves thrown into a common destiny. There is a growing realization that by pooling their moral and spiritual resources, Christianity and Islam can play a decisive role in the making of a new and a better world — a world rooted in the concepts of a Divine dispensation and the sanctity of the human personality. That purpose, Dr. Cragg tells us, the *Qaryah Zālimah* should eminently serve.

A fateful Friday in Jerusalem

The plot of the story opens dramatically with a glimpse of the daily routine of life of the simple people of the city of Jerusalem two thousand years ago. When the day on that Good Friday dawned, it was just one more common day. The simple folk at sunrise, as usual, set about their daily avocations. The sheep boys drove their flocks to the neighbouring hillocks in search of fodder. The artisans opened their shops to ply their trades. Those who had nothing to do idled away their time in the streets. One topic of general interest which formed the gossip of the town was the preaching of this new Teacher, who taught a new gospel, and the heated discussions at the preceding night's meeting of the Rabbis as to how to deal with his dangerous new preaching. Nobody, however, dreamed what big events were going to happen on that fateful day — events that would go down into history.

This air of the dramatic runs throughout the book from page to page and chapter to chapter, strewn with the most arresting of doings, heart-searching talks and profound philosophic discussions, revolting scenes of man's inhumanity to man, and, above all, the prostitution of the sacred names of God and religion by men of high scholarship and even deep piety. Indeed the whole thing is a most devastating satire on the so-called religiosity, exemplified in the eminent Jewish rabbis who sat in judgment on Jesus Christ, and in the name of religion perpetrated the worst crime known to history. On one hand, as the story paints them, these leaders of Jewry were so punctilious in the observance of their religion that for fear of defilement they would not enter the judgment hall of the Roman Governor, Pilate, but on the other hand they saw nothing wrong in sending an innocent man to the cross — and a man of the gentleness of Jesus Christ who taught people to love even their enemies.

Terrible inhumanity in the name of religion

The irony of the whole thing is put in the mouth of Pilate, who is driven almost mad at the horror of being required to put an innocent man on the cross. He "pondered in his palace on the trials and tribulations that afflict the lives of rulers and the wrongdoing and callousness required of them". And he has a long discussion on the subject with a friend, a Greek philosopher, who just then happens to enter the palace. And when the latter starts a lengthy discourse on the rights and wrongs of the day's doings, Pilate loses all patience, and in utter disgust, bursts out:

"Give me a rest from this philosophy of yours. It has been borne in upon me that we men of action can find no value in philosophy when any really serious issue confronts us" (p. 171).

And he goes on to utter the same indictment against religion, saying:

"Nor are the men of religion any better guides for us in the life of action than you are. What they have traditionally

to say about truth and error, good and evil, is fine talk so long as it remains tradition, creed and faith. But it all becomes vague and ambiguous when the time for action arrives. Don't you realize that the Jews, most meticulous as they are in following the doctrines of their estimable faith, yet consider the lighting of a candle on the sabbath a heinous crime? Crucifying the preacher of this new gospel, however, is duty positively enjoined by loyalty to religion and nation!" (p. 177).

And in utter desperation and confusion of mind, Pilate says all he could do in the face of this failure of both philosophy and religion to give any clear guidance was to do what his Roman tradition dictated. His philosopher friend, who still goes spinning elaborate moral theories, he cuts short, saying :

"I have no wish to divert you from your search. But what I am after is guidance. I used to think I had reached it by the way of religion, or religion and reason. But what the people of Israel have done today in the name of religion has destroyed every vestige of my hope for guidance there. From now on I shall seek it no more. I will remain a simple Roman soldier doing what is enjoined on me by the principles and traditions of my nation and by the consensus to which Rome has come" (p. 175).

And that is the end of the story, so far as Pilate is concerned. He goes ahead with his duty as a Roman, brushing aside all qualms of conscience, and pronounces the grim judgment to put Jesus on the cross.

At this point the scene drops on the story, so far as Jesus is concerned. The author's purpose, to expose the bankruptcy and inhumanity of some most sacrosanct human institutions, has been sufficiently served without pursuing the story to its bitter end, and giving the reader a glimpse of the scene of the actual crucifixion. This abrupt *finis* to the story, however, leaves the translator unsatisfied. In his Introduction, he calls this a big snag in the story as a work of art in leaving a big moral issue involved in the Cross of Christ enshrouded in darkness. He puts down this suppression of the most vital link to the author's understandable hesitation to tread on this delicate ground as to what actually happened to Jesus after the pronouncement of judgment against him, the issue being the subject of much controversy in the House of Islam.

Crucifixion story as given in the Qur'an

This controversy within the House of Islam, the translator tells us, stems from the Qur'anic words *wa lākin shubbiha Lahum*, which, he says, is susceptible grammatically of two different interpretations, leading to two different views as to the fate of Jesus after conviction. This is how the author introduces the subject :

"It may be well at the outset to clarify briefly the sum of what the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, has to say on the Cross of Christ. The pivotal passage is that in Surah IV, 156, which reads: 'They (i.e. the Jews) say we killed the Messiah, 'Isa (Qur'anic name for Jesus), son of Mary, the Apostle of God. But they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him. It seemed so to them. Those who had altercations on this matter are dubious about it, and in fact in the absence of sound knowledge are following conjectures. The sure fact is they did not kill him. On the contrary, God raised him to Himself, God the strong and the wise'" (p. x).

Commenting on the Qur'anic words *wa lākin shubbiha lahum*, the Translator says :

"The Quranic text is enigmatic, since in Arabic the 'hidden' pronoun in the passive verb, translated '*made to seem so*', may refer to crucifixion ('it') or to Jesus ('He'). In the first case the meaning would be that death by crucifixion 'seemed to happen' but in fact did not. The victim was Jesus in person, and he was Himself actually and physically nailed

to the Cross. But He did not there succumb. When taken down from the instrument of death, He had not in fact expired. Subsequently in the tomb. He revived, and was 'spirited away' (quite physically if the phrase may be permitted) by the disciples" (p. 11).

Among the orthodox circles, however, the Translator goes on to say :

"The pronoun in question is taken as personal, and relating to Jesus. It means that He was not killed nor crucified, not in the sense that He did not succumb and die by crucifixion, but that he never came into the position of a victim. The 'seeming' was not a 'death' (only apparent) on His part, but a mistake in identity, seemingly ordered and arranged by God's intervention, on account of which another victim, having all the personal appearance of Jesus, was by error condemned and executed as if he had been Him" (p. 11).

Crucifixion of a double was an anti-climax

The Translator is not at all satisfied with either of the above two views of the event of the crucifixion. To take his objection to the second view, he considers it as an anti-climax, fizzling out the whole significance of the Cross and its challenge to the conscience of humanity. We cannot do better than reproduce *in extenso* how his mind reacts to this story of some double of Jesus being put on the Cross :

"Is not the entire moral significance, here so movingly argued, spiritually jeopardised, perhaps in a way evaporated, if the encounter never really happened? The question takes us not only to the heart of this history but to the heart of theology. Jesus' devotion and readiness to die arose from His fidelity to His message, and this in turn from His relationship with God. Is God then properly to be thought of as frustrating the climax of that devotion? Does Jesus, insisting as He does upon loyal obedience unto death, remain the valid spokesman of a Heaven that intervenes to save Him when He would not save himself? If God, as the Quranic hypothesis affirms, saw that climax differently, had Jesus seen it rightly? Is a love that suffers to the uttermost the truly Divine pattern of wrong's retrieval and man's peace with God? Or is the really Divine thing the attitude of self-saving which runs flatly counter to the heart of the teaching of the Sermon? Or in crude brevity: on which side is Heaven? The answer involves the triangular situation that exists both in this book and in the history that generates Christianity, between Jesus, His contemporary opponents and the Divine will. It would appear to the Christian that the whole logic of *City of Wrong* is that the mind of Jesus is the mind of God. To believe Him rescued at the last, while a sufferer, innocent of His role in the world, expires in His stead, is not only an anti-climax. It jeopardises the integrity of a single whole, the totality of the whole Christ in His import for mankind. What is this darkness in which the world is darkened during the three hours of a Friday afternoon? Is it, or is it not, a darkness in which love is redemptively at grips with sin? Or a darkness in which a mistake of identity works out its bitter way before an onlooking Heaven? Only when the shadows that remain around this question are dispelled does the darkness itself become luminous. Yet to be reverently and wistfully within those shadows, as the author and his kinship of readers are, is to be 'on holy ground'" (pp. 23, 24).

According to Dr. Cragg, this simply does not fit in either with the theme of the story or the role of Jesus on the stage of history, as the bearer of a new dispensation of God's love for mankind. Here is a great moral Teacher, he tells us, who creates a commotion by his bold revolutionary cry, denouncing all that was sham and cant in the religiosity of the day, preaching love of God and man, and cheerfully bearing sufferings and sacrifices in the cause of Truth. Here is a man who stands undaunted before the frenzied fury of the Jewry, facing all manner of indignities, persecutions, tortures with fortitude, even facing the prospect of death with the sublime resignation: "Thy will, not my will". For such a great character to think in terms of saving himself

when the supreme moment of mounting the Cross comes — it simply does not make sense. With these reflections, the Translator dismisses the version of Jesus' double having suffered crucifixion as untenable.

Shubbiha in the sense of mistaken death

As regards the other view that the doubt arose not out of mistaken identity but out of mistaken death, the Translator does not say where, according to him, the flaw lies. He contents himself with saying that it is not the orthodox view. This again is not the whole truth. Eminent scholars throughout the history of Islam have rendered *mutawaffika* as *mumituka* — i.e., "I (God) will cause you (Jesus) to die a natural death".³ That was the view commonly in vogue among the Prophet's Companions, as is borne out by Abu Bakr's public utterance on the Prophet's demise. Reciting the Qur'anic verse that "Muhammad was but a messenger of God and the messengers before him had passed away,"⁴ he consoled the Muslims who were in a distracted state of mind on hearing about the sad event. This is conclusive evidence to prove that the idea of Jesus being alive never existed in the early days of Islam, and that it is a latter-day infiltration.

The "Azhar" view of Crucifixion

In recent years, no less an authority than the Rector of the greatest seat of Islamic learning, the Azhar University of Cairo, Professor Mahmud Shaltut, has expressed the same view. In demand for an authoritative *fatwa* (verdict) as to the validity or otherwise of the common notion among Muslims that Jesus was still alive somewhere in heaven, he, after fully thrashing out the question in the light of the Qur'an and the Hadith, totally rejects the view. The following extracts should suffice to show what the authoritative contemporary orthodox view is:

"The word *tawaffaitani* in this particular verse⁵ 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 then it would have been improper and wrong to say that the Prophet Jesus was alive, and not dead. . . .

"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 Holy 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. . . .

"To sum up:

"1. There is nothing in the Holy Qur'an, nor in the sacred traditions of the Prophet, which authorizes the correctness of the belief to the contentment of heart that Jesus was taken up to 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."⁶

This should set at rest the oft-repeated plea of our Christian friends that the Qur'an itself upholds the Divinity of Jesus by teaching that he is above the reach of death and has been alive all these two thousand years up in heaven. The greatest living authority in the world of Islamic scholarship, as quoted above, describes this as an "outrage" on the plain meanings of the Qur'anic verses. He emphatically declares that according to the Qur'an, Jesus was saved from death on the Cross, that after being saved, he enjoyed the

rest of his span of life, and after completing that span, he died a natural death.

The conclusion is perfectly obvious that the hidden pronoun in the Qur'anic word *Shubbiha* (*made to seem so*) refers not to the *person* but to the *death* of Jesus on the Cross. It was a *seeming* death — not real death.

It is surprising that our Christian friends should so stubbornly refuse to see this most natural and sensible interpretation of the event of crucifixion, which is a perfectly natural sequence of events, inasmuch as Jesus, the central figure and hero of the drama, in person goes through the ordeal of suffering to its uttermost extremity, and at the last moment Divine intervention comes to his help.

The Church view of crucifixion

The Church interpretation that Jesus came to earth in human form under an express plan to suffer the tortures of crucifixion, to suffer death by crucifixion, and on the third day rise from the dead, takes the whole substance out of the whole show, reducing it to be mere stage acting. According to this story Jesus was not *in reality* human. And since he was not human, his sufferings were not really sufferings in terms of human sensitivity. The death itself was to him *not* the dreaded something which it is to common mortals, since he knew all the time that he was about to rise on the third day. The whole moral significance of the world's greatest example of supreme self-sacrifice in the cause of Truth is thus completely washed off by the suggestion that Jesus was only "playing" an assigned part on the world stage. Where is the difference, so far as the underlying moral is concerned, between this Church view and the view that some double of Jesus was put on the Cross? In this case Jesus becomes his own double, his outer human form being a mere mask for his real Divine self. The real thing which lends point to the whole theme of the Cross, viz., going through the extreme agony of suffering in the cause of Truth — is missing in both cases. Dr. Cragg rightly calls the first view an anti-climax. Why can't he see a similar situation arising by making Jesus immune to suffering, which, by virtue of his being considered Divine, he does become?

There is a yet worse implication of the Church view that Jesus died on the Cross. It marks the triumph of evil over good, which is a most dismal picture of life, a total defeat of moral values, a blot on the ultimate goodness of Divine dispensation. That actually was the immediate impression created on the minds of the disciples. They thought the end of the Master was the end of the whole story. The Resurrection story was but an afterthought, to absorb the same tremendous moral shock which the death story of Jesus on the Cross connoted.

The other big snag in the Church version is *Jesus' own unwillingness* to die on the Cross. He prays and prays most fervently, prostrating himself on the ground, to be saved from crucifixion. That hardly looks like the reaction of one who knows he has come with the express mission to die on the Cross for the sins of mankind. Those who subsequently read this meaning into the Cross must have been wiser than Jesus himself, who described the Cross as a bitter cup, which he dreaded and prayed to be saved from.

Snags in the resurrection story

The Church story of the resurrection also bristles with anomalies. The very fact that his disciples were taken

aback on finding the stone rolled away and the tomb empty shows that not one of them was anticipating such an event, which in turn shows that Jesus himself knew nothing about it, or he would not have kept everybody in the dark about this greatest miracle of his life — indeed, the greatest miracle of all history.

Upon the fact of resurrection rests, according to the Church, the whole salvation or eternal damnation of the whole of mankind. That Jesus should have kept back that greatest significance of his mission from his disciples is unthinkable. The conclusion is that he knew nothing about any such event happening.

Jesus, while in the flesh, performed so many of his most startling miracles in broad daylight for everybody to behold. There could be no point in hiding this greatest of his miracles. Immediately on rising from the dead he should have made a public appearance for everybody to behold what he had done. He should have straightaway gone to the Sanhedrin to prove to the Rabbis that he was really the Son of God. He should have sought an interview with Pilate himself, who would have been delighted to see him back from the dead.

The rolling away of the stone should have been unnecessary for a miraculous emergence.

Subsequent incidents also make it difficult for a Muslim to swallow the story of Resurrection. Where was the need for the disguising in the gardener's clothes, and taking good care to see that his identity was not known, except to a few very trusted disciples? These were understandable human precautions against betrayal and re-arrest. Once before he had been betrayed by one of his own disciples, and landed on the Cross. He did not want that story to repeat itself.

Hunger, and asking for something to eat, and eating fish — these infirmities of the flesh ill-go with one who was about to ascend to heaven with the same body with which he had emerged. Life in heaven is presumably free from these wants, and if he was to manage without food there, why not down below during his brief sojourn with a resurrected body?

All these things present difficulties to a Muslim mind. The usual explanation that all this is a mystery will not do.

Recovery rather than resurrection

As a Muslim looks at it, it was not a resurrection, but a recovery from the injury of crucifixion, that the emergence from the tomb was with his usual human body, that the rolling of the stone, the gardener's dress to serve as a disguise, the secret meeting behind closed doors, and ultimately making good his escape — all these were links in the chain of a pre-arranged plan. And as such each piece fits perfectly into the pattern.

That Jesus in person mounted the Cross, that in person he as a human went through all that torture and agony, that in that hour of dire distress God came to his rescue by so arranging things through the manipulation of human factors that he was taken down while yet alive, and placed in friendly hands who could take good care of him — all this is in perfect accord with the pattern of Divine intervention in the case of all prophets in their fight against the forces of evil. In the beginning Truth seems to be overwhelmed, so much so that the prophets had to utter the cry of distress: *mata nasr-ullah* — "When, O God, will Thy succour come?" But just at the moment when all seemed

lost God's help did come, saving His messengers, routing the forces of opposition, and visiting them with dire calamities.

That was exactly how things shaped themselves in the case of Jesus Christ. He never for one moment lost hope of God's hand coming to his rescue. He prayed and prayed that this cup might pass from him. It is unthinkable that his prayer should have gone unanswered. Even, right on the Cross, he never lost hope. Like every other prophet similarly placed, he was expecting God's help to turn up any moment. That was the significance of his words: "My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken me?" It was no cry of despair: it was an expression of unfaltering faith in God's help.

Rescue from Cross in keeping with pattern of Divine help

The fact that human factors were brought into play does not in any way detract from the rescue as a Divine intervention. That is exactly how God fulfils Himself. In the case of the Prophet Muhammad it was a mere spider which helped the execution of the Divine plan to save the Prophet from his pursuers standing at the mouth of the cave he was hiding in, by making it weave there and then its web. That a mere spider's web served as an iron curtain to prevent the pursuers' hands reaching the Prophet — that is the way Divine intervention invariably takes. That is how it worked in the case of Jesus. The Jews made designs of their own to take his life; God made a counter-design to thwart the Jews' attempt. This was something quite in accord with the general pattern of Divine help in the case of all prophets. The Qur'an describes the designing and counter-designing in the words:

"And they (the Jews) planned, and God (also) planned. And God is the best of planners."

The situation as depicted in this verse was that the Jews on one hand were plotting to have Jesus executed on the Cross, and God on the other wanted to save his life through a subtle planning of His own. The pre-crucifixion Ascension cannot be called a subtle planning. That is exactly the view the same authority, Professor Mahmud Shaltut, takes of this point. To quote again from his *fatwa*:

"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 unbelief on their part, he said: Who will be my helpers in Allah's way . . . i.e., in this verse God says that His plans were more subtle and effective than the plans of the disbelievers. . . . 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 Allah 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 Holy Qur'an. 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 neither was it 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 Allah in such matters."

The Cross as seen by Islam a beacon of light

The Qur'anic view that Jesus was just a *human*, and as such he braved the united fury of Jewry, and the might of Rome, that as a *human*, he went through all that ignominy, agony and torture for the love of God, makes the Cross of

Christ the greatest symbol of glory humanity can rise to. This, moreover, makes the only befitting climax to the story of Jesus as a hero in the struggle of right against wrong, the hero rising to the fullest heights of heroism in facing death. In clinging to faith in that supreme moment of agony, and out of the depths of his anguished heart calling to God with words full of love and hope and faith, "My God! My God!" lies his true conquest over death. As such the Cross will undoubtedly stand as a beacon of light beckoning to a sinning, doubting, stumbling, groping

humanity, sending out signals of faith, hope and cheer. That way lies its significance for mankind blazing the only true path to salvation.

Jesus, the human nailed to the Cross, yet clinging fast to the bosom of the Father in Heaven, as depicted in the Qur'án, is a pillar of light illuminating this dark and dismal life, dispelling doubt, hate and fear. Jesus the super-human, immune to suffering, as depicted by the Church, robs the Cross of all glory, resulting in the complete fizzling out of that greatest drama of heroism in the cause of Truth.

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PROHIBITION OF SWINE FLESH IN ISLAM

by A. H. M. MUHIUDDIN

It is no good to insist that "swine flesh is prohibited by God in clear and unambiguous terms and there is no room for any argument at all", for such a faith is nothing but a blind faith, and, as such, has nothing to do with the rational and dynamic faith in Islam. To be true to Islam, one must satisfy the very curiosity of one's mind by fair and reasonable application of one's inherent wisdom. It is equally silly to hold that there is no question about the validity of swine flesh, because the same is widely consumed in the West, and whatever the Western people take cannot be discarded, since they are much ahead of us in science and technology, industry and skill, culture and civilization. There is no denial of the fact that there are many unhygienic practices prevailing in the West, in spite of the higher culture and civilization. Therefore, it is absolutely absurd to suppose that swine flesh has any scientific basis to be regarded as a "good food", though it is widely taken in the West.

The attitude of great religions to swine flesh

Swine flesh is strictly prohibited and forbidden by a direct commandment in the fundamental principle of action in the Judaic law. Hinduism and Brahmanism are based on the adoration of living beings, irrespective of good and bad, and have nothing to say about this. Buddhism, though an off-shoot of Hinduism practically considers swine flesh a forbidden food, due to the fact that their lord Buddha died as a result of his taking swine flesh presented to him by one of his relatives. Ever since, this has been responsible for the treatment of swine flesh as a forbidden food to millions of Buddhists the world over.

It is strange and particularly queer that the Christian Church, in spite of its scientific movements and approach, has not treated swine flesh in a scientific manner.

Origin and scope of Islamic prohibition of swine flesh

"O, ye who believe, eat of the good things that We have provided for you, and be grateful to God, if it is Him ye worship. He hath only forbidden you dead meat, blood and swine flesh" (The Qur'án, 2 : 172-3).

A careful appreciation of the above verse will reveal that the main issue at stake is to eat good food. Carrion or dead meat, blood and swine flesh are classed together as abhorred stuff, absolutely unfit for human consumption. Now, therefore, is the time to examine the food value of the flesh of swine, which is already condemned as an edible foodstuff.

The food value of swine flesh

All fleshs consist of a number of fibres joined together, being cylindrical in shape, and enclosed in a delicate covering known as sarcolemma. The main function of the sarcolemma is to hold the muscles close and tight, and it often provides a safe abode for parasites. In the case of swine flesh, in particular, the muscle-fibres are extraordinarily closed and tight. As swine is the dirtiest animal on earth (and on that account liable to parasites and possessed of a natural tendency to decomposed stuff, carrion and excreta) it is a storehouse of all sorts of germs, bacteria and parasites. These usually penetrate via bristles (which are comparatively thick), through skin-holes (which are comparatively wide) to the epidermis, and thus deep into the sarcolemma and fibres of muscle and flesh. Therefore, it is difficult for swine flesh to retain any food value, if it were to get rid of parasites. It is similarly difficult for heat to reach the very interior of the flesh, where parasites were found living after cooking. Over-cooking of swine flesh not only renders it pulp and waste, but also causes certain acid compounds

which are very dangerous to the human digestive system, and which, in the long run, spoil the stomach. A mild cooking, to retain the food value, does not reach the various parasites and thus enables the transmission of the anti-body bacteria from swine to the human system, both physically and mentally, as we shall try to establish later in this paper.

Swine flesh as a food is divided into three kinds : bacon, ham and pork. Pork, being flesh of a young swine, contains more gelatine and less fibrin and on that account is less easily digestible. Ham and bacon are two kinds of preparation of swine flesh of mature type ; being over-cooked, they are bound to give rise to certain fatty acids, which are deadly harmful to the digestive system. Owing to the very closeness and tightness of the swine flesh's fibre and muscles, proper mastication is extremely difficult (if not impossible) and, consequently, the digestive juices cannot evenly reach every particle of the food consumed. The result is that an extra strain is put upon the tender digestive organism for which the second process of digestion is mobilized, to the detriment of the abdominal health.

It is a pity that lard is widely applied in the West to the manufacture of crisp types of biscuits, including cream crackers, etc., which is extremely harmful due to the large amount of acid compounds it contains. Similarly, swine bristle is widely used in manufacturing toothbrushes, etc., which is the root cause of fumboils and gum rashes in many cases. This is a matter of common experience, and can be the subject of simple personal experiment.

Besides, the consumption of swine flesh may also tell upon the mental and moral health, as a natural corollary to its impact upon the physical health and personal hygiene. The scavengers of India, who belong to the aboriginal tribes, are frequent eaters of swine flesh, and are said to be the most shameless people in the world in respect of their sexual behaviour. It is a matter of common observation that those scavengers are the most stupid people in that part of the world, and the English term "pig-headed" can squarely be observed in their temperament. It remains to be determined, through scientific research, what proportion of stupidity and shamelessness originate as a result of their habit of eating swine flesh.

Characteristics of swine

In our search for truth about the Islamic prohibition of swine flesh, we have visited a number of very good farms of different sizes and standards in England and Europe, and our impressions are stimulated further that no scientific

Scientific farming could neither change the natural inclination of swine to eat decomposed stuff, carrion, excreta and its own urine, nor could it prevent the animal from its living and contacting parasites, of which it is nothing but a storehouse. While visiting a piggery we knew the direction in which it was situated by the very bad smell that was emanating from the dens in which the swine were living.

The position of a swine is represented in the perennial abusive terms used in all the languages of the world ; swine for debasement of one's social status and "pig-headed" for stupidity, are only a few examples. The very name swine is nothing but a synonym for uncleanness, shamelessness and stupidity. No wonder that swine is a most dirty creature, bone and flesh, blood and bristle, and in the words of the Qur'an, "an abominable shaping of the satanic deed !"

The scope of the prohibition in Islam included rearing, trading with any part, and eating swine flesh in any form, once for all times and climes, irrespective of the East, West, hot, cold, tropical and temperate weathers, and is universal in appreciation and application.

There are some misgivings about the origin and scope of the Islamic prohibition of swine flesh. It is said "that the Prophet as a shrewd business man prohibited swine flesh at an opportune time, when swine was sold at a very high rate in the Arabian markets". This statement has no historical basis at all. Nowhere in the Arabian peninsula was there any organized swine farming and trading, especially round about the time of the advent of the Prophet. In fact, swine as a business commodity was completely forbidden as the Prophet Muhammad came to exercise his power and authority to dictate the very business morality of the Muslims. Therefore the sale proceeds of swine flesh were as prohibited as the flesh itself. It is also said "that swine flesh was actually prohibited by the Prophet Muhammad temporarily, as a precautionary measure against the outbreak of an epidemic disease in Medina".

According to these critics, it was a mere accident that led to the ultimate prohibition of swine flesh, which was unfit for the extremely hot climate of Arabia. In reality, these criticisms are based on a colossal ignorance of the Islamic laws and injunctions. Islamic laws and injunctions are always laid on a universal plain and have nothing to do with regional weather.

Judging swine flesh from the scientific angle of vision we come to the conclusion that the Islamic prohibition of swine flesh is based on a universal appreciation, appeal and application.

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ISLAMIC ACTIVITIES IN TAIWAN

by ABDULAGANI KUO FU PAO

The crescent light has been shining in the sky of Taiwan. Many Muslim brothers who have resided in Taiwan for generations and who went astray from the right path during the Japanese occupation have awakened from their past bad dreams and been initiated into a new devout life. Such an encouraging fact gives a tremendous motive to the Muslim brothers who came to Taiwan from the Chinese mainland to a more devout faith for the All-Mighty. The Chinese version of the Qur'an has been published through a long and laborious work, and the wrong notion of non-Muslim Chinese towards our religion is gradually being cleared up; the Ministry of Education, after careful consideration, takes its initiative to list the version as one of the Chinese classics. This action is more significant in their mind than ours, because only Confucious books are considered as classics in China. Two years after the publication of the Chinese version of the Qur'an, one magnificent and beautiful mosque has been built in Taipei, the capital of Taiwan. The amusing thing is that the major part of the money for building the mosque came from non-Muslim sources. Thanks to the liberal policy of the Government towards Islam and the new concept of non-Muslim Chinese, this pleasing scene has happened for the first time in Chinese Islamic history.

The Muslim population of Taiwan

Among the Muslim population of Taiwan, two groups are categorically classified: one group is coming from all parts of the Chinese mainland after Chinese Communists took over the country; the other group consists of Taiwanese who immigrated to Taiwan from the Fukien province, a Chinese coastal area just opposite to Taiwan. As for the Muslim mainlanders, they take refuge on Taiwan from every province of China on account of escaping the tyrannous control of the Chinese Communist régime, and are engaging in various occupations such as business, scholars, doctors, newspaper men, government service and the armed forces. Due to the regular Friday services (Jumu), they all recognize each other. As for the Muslim Taiwanese, they immigrated to Taiwan before the Japanese occupation and built their own mosque for long-term services. But in the six years of Japanese occupation, Buddhist expansion under the political intention was launched in a progressive manner. It resulted in the conversion of mosques into temples, and Islamic religious activities were restricted at that time. Although the pressure was heavy enough to mop up the Muslims' faith, yet one significant hint remained in that dark age. The fathers of every family instructed their children to take the true faith in a box wrapped up in silk, and that the daily service should be performed. They never knew what was in the box, but worshipped it as most Chinese did their ancestors. It was due to the curiosity of Muslim mainlanders to find out a group of Taiwanese who do not eat pork and worship a box. Through constant survey and careful exploitation, only a few pages of the Qur'an in that box of each family were found. They are now aware of their Muslim origin, and are beginning to learn the Muslim life. A persuasive measure initiated by the

mainlander Muslim makes them realize their obligation and visit often the mosques; more and more Taiwanese Muslims are met in the mosque during the Friday service; the burial services, formerly pursuant to old Chinese custom, now take place in mosques. It is understood that Buddhist influence, deeply impressed on their mind for a great many years, should be gradually removed by time. Radical action may make them feel out of their element, but their Islamization is promising, though the question takes time.

The exact census of the population indicated that 50,000 Muslims are living on Taiwan; the mainlanders and the Taiwanese Muslims are almost equal in number.

In recent years we often find some people requesting the Islamization of Taiwan; they are mainlanders. Little chance did we see of any Taiwanese without Muslim origin requesting Islamization. It is doubtless due to Buddhist influence prevailing on the island that our faith is not popularly appreciated by the people. We cannot flatter ourselves that a great expansion of Islam in the near future is positively possible, but our strenuous efforts can clear up the prejudice existing in lethargy.

The Chinese version of the Qur'an

From the point of view of a Muslim to discuss the Qur'an, the ideal way is to repeatedly read it. The beautiful rhymes fit into their deep implications so that no parallel can be found in human design. One may enjoy the smoothness of the verses while feeling grateful for the blessings of the All-Mighty; the combination of organic movement and mental appreciation often leads one to religious aspiration. This is why the Qur'an has intoxicated the Muslim everywhere in the world. As a Muslim, we are dreaming of that religious enjoyment, but actual difficulties prevented our doing so. You may have the same conception made by our Indonesian and Malayan brothers if the story were not brought out. I remember we had some Muslim brothers who paid visits to Indonesia and Malaya both on official and private missions. Warm welcomes were given by these brothers in the countries, who used to test the reading knowledge of the Qur'an shown by the Chinese visitors. It is no doubt that only those who had studied in Egypt or Persia were considered satisfactory. Those with only a limited reading capacity of the Qur'an were laughed at. The notion is quite sensible to us as a typical Muslim, but that reading capability that we dream of was beyond our reach in the past.

In the China dynasty, the régime overthrown by the present Government, Muslim Chinese suffered heavy oppression. Everyone had much to do in dealing with hardship; expediency was allowed by Imams that Arabic words, as the minimum standard, must be used in worship. The doctrine of the Qur'an may be studied from the Chinese version. Therefore Chinese Muslims only know how to worship with Arabic words, but the reading and explanation capabilities became the occupational speciality of the Imams. The liberal policy towards the toleration of religions is impressively admirable when the present Government took control of

the mainland. A series of wars both for domestic unification and resistance to Japanese and Russian aggressions closely followed. The chaotic situation made everyone move from place to place, and study was not easy.

In learning Arabic, the Chinese have greater difficulty than other Muslim people. A great difference exists between these two languages. Chinese, categorically speaking, belongs to the hieroglyphic system, every word has only one simple sound, no liaison exists between words, and grammatic construction is expressed in the idiomatic way. But Arabic has its different system. The Chinese Muslim may find trouble in learning it in the short time which is within their reach. The Imams, proficient in reading and explaining capabilities, are graduated either from the Egyptian schools and Persian institutes or are students of well-educated Imams. Before the Chinese Communist régime took over the mainland, every mosque established an Arabic class conducted in the evening for the children at elementary level. The popularization programme of Arabic received little result after many years of labour. At this moment a similar Arabic class is now conducted in the new mosque at Taipei. The students are grown-up people. This improvement may bring some progress in the field.

At the present time, other religions take aggressive measures to develop their religious expansion everywhere in Taiwan. Our imminent work is to steady the faith of our brothers and to prevent anyone who may go astray from the right path. The quick and efficient counter-measure that should be worked out is the effort of how to make them understand the meaning of the Qur'án. As long as our brother appreciates what he is, the persuasive propaganda of other religions is not so effective.

The Chinese non-Muslim's knowledge concerning the Middle East countries is from the translation of European books, which contain a wonderful distortion of Islam. They reported that our Prophet had a sword in one hand and the Qur'án in the other when he was preaching. The prohibition against eating pork is interpreted to an unacceptable degree. All those wrong concepts made by Western scholars have painted a false colour to Islam, and Chinese non-Muslims have no way to get first-hand information to improve their ill-informed situation. The piecemeal explanation given by the Muslim individual was received with little consideration; a large-scale explanation has become urgently necessary. A group of well-educated Muslims on Taiwan took the initiative to start the translation work. Two years were spent before the Chinese version was first published. The version is characterized by its Mandarin expression, which makes the man at the elementary education level easily understand it. Educated Chinese bought more volumes than Muslims when it was published. The commendation received from all sides was that the Qur'án is an excellent moral book, worthy of study. Finally, the Ministry of Education listed the version amongst the classics. In Chinese observation, only Confucian books are noteworthy to be listed as classics. Their highest admiration is indicated by their listing anything as equivalent to the Confucian books.

The construction of a magnificent mosque

Before World War II, no mosque was available in Taiwan. As Taiwan became a refuge place following the Communist expansion on the mainland, three mosques were established at Taipei, Taichung and Kaohsiung respectively by the Chinese Islam Association, which had nation-wide

branches in the major cities of every Chinese province before the Communists took over the mainland. They were not really built, but necessary conversion and repairs were made in bungalows of Japanese type to serve for worship. The accommodation capacity of each mosque is under one hundred persons. During the fast month, Muslim brothers have to worship in the yard of mosques in a crowded manner. Therefore this provisional type of mosque is not suitable for long-term service. In the year 1956, a new mosque was built by the Chinese Muslim Youth Association, which has more young members and was organized a little later than the Chinese Islam Association. Its construction is after the Chinese style. The accommodation capacity shows no significant improvement over those built by the Chinese Islam Association; the square yard is smaller; the potential development possibility is beyond consideration. As time goes by, it is the unanimous desire of Muslim people that a more serviceable mosque be built to meet present requirements. A committee has been organized to collect contributions from Muslim brothers. As time went on, the money received fell far short of expectation. During the short period our Muslim distinguished visitors on Taiwan, 4,000 U.S. dollars were raised from the kings of Iran and Jordan, the late prince of Iraq and ex-premier of Turkey. Following the publication of the Chinese version of the Qur'án, more Chinese intelligentsia understood what Islam is, and their assistance become more accessible than at any time before. The local bank is willing to loan sufficient money for construction of the projected mosque under a reliable assurance. As the Muslim mainlanders lost all their wealth, nobody is in a position to provide an assurance equivalent to 20,000 U.S. dollars. The Muslim people, who are earnest in their desire to build a serviceable mosque, were now in a dilemma. It was the Government that voluntarily provided the required assurance and extended the term of the loan to a time when the Muslim people were capable of paying it back. We are grateful for Government assistance so that the beautiful and magnificent mosque could be built in one year and three months.

The mosque is characterized by the combination of Arabic, Spanish, Persian and Indian types, and is a new style never before constructed in the whole of China. Its accommodation capacity is 800. The main building of the mosque is the worship place, where we have a dome in the upper centre; on the top of the dome a crescent sign is seen from a distance. There are two towers (Bunker) on the two front sides of the main building for calling men to worship; a bathing room is set up in the rear of the right tower, where ten shower cabins for gentlemen and three for ladies are provided. In addition, numerous taps are available for minor washing. In the rear of the left tower, an auditorium for 300 men is constructed, where wedding parties under the Muslim ceremony and various meetings take place. There are two rooms at the two sides of the main building, one reserved for foreign visitors and the other for the offices of the Chinese Islam Association. During the opening of this beautiful mosque, in addition to many Muslim brothers, we had many distinguished guests from the countries of the Middle East, South-East Asia and the Far East, also the Premier of our Government, Mr. Chen Chen, with many ranking officials, to attend the ceremony. The scene was very impressive. From that day, thanks to the blessing of the Almighty, and the financial assistance provided by the Government, our desire for a serviceable mosque was materialized.

Future hopes

I am always of the opinion that we are far from being typical Muslims who deserve to have the blessing of appreciating God's words. The cultural work on our side has indeed left much to be desired, although a *Report* from the Chinese Islam Association and *The Islamic Culture* from the Chinese Muslim Youth Association are regularly published. The explanation of the doctrines of the Qur'an is a worthwhile article; the other articles in the papers concerning the introduction of Islamic culture, Muslim people and countries are not attractive enough to raise popular

interests. The Arabic class conducted in the new mosque is not an ideal one; an efficient method of instruction is absent. The disadvantages are not within reach of our capability to overcome. We are aware of our obligations, which lie not only in steadfast faith but in an aggressive attitude to preach our faith. This is particularly important at the period marked by the vigorous expansion of other religions; we do hope that the indispensable assistance of our Muslim brothers in other countries may be expected, and we may be strengthened to develop our faith to a desirable degree. So let the Almighty help us!

CAN ISLAM BE RECONCILED WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY?

by MARYAM JAMEELAH

"Islam shall perish unless it comes to terms with the modern world." Such are the words constantly repeated by the Western-educated ruling class in Muslim countries. They never tire of reminding us that we cannot live in a bygone age. We are taught that it is unrealistic to try to turn the clock back because nothing can reverse the tread of history. Therefore we have no choice except to conform our faith to the demands of an ever-changing secular society. In order to be strong we are told that we must reject traditional interpretations of the Qur'an and read it rationally in the light of modern life. Practically all reforms advocated by the Governments of Muslim countries have this goal in mind. We shall now seek to examine the most important of these and their effect upon the Islamic community.

Because the idea of an Islamic State is an anathema to a world dominated by sheer opportunism, these Western-educated leaders tell us that we must accept the abolition of the Caliphate as permanent and dismiss any possibility of its revival in the future. Politics and government based on religion are branded as medieval. Therefore in order to take their place in the modern world, Muslims must reconcile themselves to secular rule. Towards this end, books have been written in Muslim countries blaming the Caliphate for all the evils afflicting them throughout history. They claim that the Caliphate is not really part of Islam because the Prophet's mission was limited to preaching. He never wished to rule. Only expediency forced him to do so.

Intellectual dishonesty could scarcely sink to lower depths than this. Islam cannot live without an Islamic community. And the Islamic community cannot survive without organized institutions and leadership.

The next step after the abolition of the Caliphate is the elimination of the Sharia. Since the Sharia is considered by many Western-educated leaders as outmoded and its conception of justice inferior to Western legal systems, it is believed that only secular laws can promote the social well-being of Muslims as an integral part of modern society. In other words, it is deemed essential to regard the enforcement of such Qur'anic laws as the prohibition of lending

money at interest, drinking alcoholic beverages, gambling and sex outside of marriage as no longer applicable to the present day. The punishments laid down in the Qur'an for the violation of these laws are attacked as cruel and inhuman. But does not an evil remain an evil regardless of time or place? And is the merit of a law to be judged according to its leniency? Does the criminal deserve more sympathy than society? Without the Sharia, the Islamic way of life disintegrates into a mere collection of empty platitudes.

After the elimination of Islamic leadership and Islamic law, it is no problem to destroy the solidarity of the Ummat. The concept of a universal Islamic brotherhood transcending race, language and geography is incompatible with the supremacy of national sovereignty. Therefore, in order to adapt to the spirit of the twentieth century, Muslims are told that the Ummat must be replaced by nationalism.

This has resulted in the isolation and alienation of the different Muslim peoples from each other. Instead of stressing a common Muslim heritage, their leaders glorify a mythical past as if it were a Golden Age Islam snatched away from them. For instance, the Turkish nationalists regard the Ottoman period as a time of subjection to foreign culture and foreign languages. Simultaneously, Reza Shah changed the name of his country from "Persia" to "Iran" because it was the alleged homeland of the "Aryan" race. The Government of the United Arab Republic erects giant statues of Rameses in the public squares of Cairo glorifying him as a great "Arab" king, while Umar is depicted by the nationalists not as a pious Caliph but instead the champion of Arab domination over foreign peoples.

On few subjects are the modernists so emphatic as on insisting that Pan-Islamism is dead. As one Turk put it: "We want to construct a Turkish Islam which will be as much ours as Anglicanism is part of England. Anglicanism is not Italian or German. Yet nobody accuses it of not being Christian. Why should we Turks be deprived of an Islam of our own?"

Nationalism is behind the constant clamour for official translations of the Qur'an without the Arabic text. The

adoption of the Latin alphabet by Turkey and Indonesia together with the supremacy of English and the neglect of Arabic in the educational systems of the remaining non-Arab Muslim countries have made the language of the Qur'an increasingly unintelligible. Not only will official translations of the Qur'an without the Arabic complete the destruction of the Ummat, but also inevitably corrupt the text itself.

The overwhelming ambition of governments in the Muslim world is to promote economic development and raise the standard of living through industrialization. One may ask if this is not in accord with Islam's demand for economic justice and the elimination of extreme poverty. In the sense that the Qur'an denounces asceticism and gives us the right to enjoy our legitimately earned wealth and also in the sense that God intended the riches of the universe to be used for the benefit of man, Islam cannot be hostile to technological progress as such. But it is implacably opposed to the present-day ideologies which regard no sacrifice too great for material gain or physical power.

It is not the scientific discoveries in themselves which do the harm but rather the materialistic philosophy which forces industrialization to serve destructive ends, bringing havoc to the community, wrecking family ties and religious life. Modern industry will not allow workers to take time off for prayers, and the fast of Ramadhan is discouraged as hampering productivity. This same position has also invaded the schools as purely utilitarian subjects increasingly dominate the curriculum. Thus, technical and commercial courses are most highly esteemed, while Islamic studies are scorned.

Modern industrialization promotes the philosophy that man can banish poverty, disease and ignorance without Divine aid. In other words, science has made man independent of God. This is why in the battle against poverty, and social injustice, no government is willing to enforce *Zakat*, the prohibition of interest, the Qur'anic inheritance laws, or put the Waqf foundations to effective use.

The "emancipation of Muslim women" is regarded by these leaders as indispensable for social progress. If by "emancipation" is meant the right of women to develop their minds through education and use their abilities to earn their livelihood when necessary, then they are right. But unfortunately the champions of feminism also insist that Muslim women be free to mix socially with men and wear immodest dress. Because Muslim women are required to conceal their bodies in public, there is no question that

modern fashions, which are designed for the opposite purpose, violate both the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

The adoption of Western dress is officially encouraged by nearly every government in the Muslim world. Turkey has gone to the ridiculous extreme of decreeing Western dress compulsory by law. Western clothing has become symbolic of "advancement" and "progress", while the indigenous costume, now confined largely to the very poor in the rural districts, is regarded as synonymous with "backwardness".

To strive for the elimination of all visible signs of Muslim identity by adopting the dress and living habits of a civilization so implacably hostile to Islam as that of the West is tantamount to apostasy. The Prophet made this very clear when he said: "He who imitates the unbelievers is one of them."

Thus we have demonstrated why it is impossible to reconcile Islam with the spirit of the twentieth century. The more Muslim peoples try and "reform" Islam to make it "compatible" with modern life, the weaker they will become. Muslims will gain strength and vigour not by going along with the trend of our age but only by fighting against it. All means, including the mass media, should be employed to arouse among the peoples of the Muslim world sufficient resistance to anti-Islamic laws and politics so that they refuse to co-operate. At the same time increasing support must be given to all qualified leaders willing and able to influence a government under which the Islamic way of life will be officially encouraged instead of discouraged.

[That there are evils in Western civilization no one — not even the so-called modernists — would deny. The best minds of the West itself are perfectly alive to these evils. That must not, however, blind us to what the West has achieved in so many fields of life, and Islam certainly does not stand in the way of adopting what is good in the Western world. Our zeal for Islam need not mean condemning everything Western, which the above thought-provoking article seeks to do. Islam is neither of the East nor of the West. It is for the whole of mankind and for all ages — even for the centuries yet unborn. To say that its teachings cannot be fitted into the twentieth-century life is tantamount to the negation of its dynamic, progressive role. There is nothing wrong in nationalism in the sense of loving one's own country more than others. There is nothing wrong in industrialization as such. Islam has no particular dress. A Muslim may wear any dress he finds best, within the limitations of common decency. Their abuses are of our own making. It is these that should be avoided. Islam stands for progress. It can never be a spoke in the wheel of progress.— /R.]

A MUSLIM CATECHISM

for beginners and young children

by MUHAMMAD RAFAEQ

The need for a Muslim Catechism is greatly felt in all English-speaking countries, where thousands of Muslim children attending schools have no proper text-books from which to learn about their religion. The present work fulfils this need in a simple language.

Can be obtained from — THE SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE, WOKING, SURREY, ENGLAND — Price 9d.

HOW A DURBAN MISSIONARY FOUND ISLAM

The African entered the busy shop and wondered if here at last he might be able to procure the particular article he had been looking for all morning. He approached the counter hopefully and explained his requirements to the shopkeeper. It was whilst he was perusing the articles brought out for his attention that the proprietor engaged him in conversation.

During the period of their discourse the shopkeeper discovered the fact that his customer was Dr. Gabellah, a Christian missionary and one who had the experience of twenty-five years in the field behind him. He then immediately introduced him to Mr. Vanker, the Secretary of the Islamic Propagation Centre, who happened to be in the shop at that time. They continued to talk and it was probably natural therefore that these two men with the same great common interest in religion, yet at the same time with such diametrically opposed views on the subject, should ultimately become firm friends.

Dr. Gabellah then began to be a familiar figure at No. 47 Madressa Arcade as religious debates, talks and discussions between himself and the Centre took place at more than frequent intervals.

These comparative studies in religion spread themselves over a period of two years, when finally at the end of last year Dr. Gabellah revoked his former beliefs and ideals to joyously embrace Islam and to become a Muslim attached to the Propagation Centre. The Centre itself had indeed won a major battle.

By the time he was 45 years of age, Dr. Gabellah had succeeded in obtaining a Master of Theology Degree in London and a Doctorate of Divinity in the United States of America. At the same time he has studied and assimilated the ramifications of seventeen African languages, including the local Zulu tongue, Xhosa, Sesoto and Nyanja of Central

Africa. He is also able to read, write and speak Hebrew and Greek, two great languages engraved in centuries of time and history. The fact that he has also found the time to marry and raise two young sons of four and two years of age would seem somewhat incredible, but his personal accomplishments apparently know no bounds.

Dr. Gabellah's day is almost entirely devoted to the service of those hundreds of people who find their way to his office in the Centre. They come with queries and questions, seeking advice and consolation for the many urgent and burning spiritual problems that they carry, and are contained in their hearts. He treats them all with understanding and patience, expounding the meanings of the various chapters of the Qur'an, all the while steering them resolutely and determinedly towards his one ultimate goal, their conversion to Islam and the inner peace he himself found just recently.

Every Sunday morning will find him addressing large numbers of Africans in the Pine Street Madressa Hall. These lectures are always well attended and have in fact improved in attendance since their inception in January 1961, when they were started at the Jumma Musjid. And in his own words, "They must continue to improve".

Dr. Gabellah presses on for Islam. His task is a great one and his work is the motive of existence for the Islamic Propagation Centre. Great indeed is the task of our missionaries, long and arduous indeed is the road they must walk. But God has called them to His service — and He knows they will not fail Him.

"No burden do We place
In any Soul, but that
Which it can bear" (The Qur'an, 7 : 42).

—*The Criterion* of Durban, May 1961.

THE DIVINE DIVAN

by WILLIAM BASHYR PICKARD

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Lead me in Thy Way, O Lord of Loveliness,
Thou One Belovéd, Worker of the Wonder of the Universe.
When all is Thine and Thou Supreme,
There is no cause for fear, I deem.
When Thou art with us day by day,
Nothing can daunt us, nothing us dismay.
O Lord of Loveliness, to Thee we pray :
Lead us rejoicing in Thy Way.
Where'er we move, there dwellest Thou.
Whene're we wake, there Silent Thou

Dost wait, and, when we ask Thee how
To act, Thou Ever-Present wilt reply,
Bringing us peace, as passing moments fly.
Whene'er we sleep, Thou watchest Silent by,
Thou Never-Slumbering, Thou art nigh.
So, in the beauty of Thy universe,
We praise Thy Name, O Lord of Loveliness.
O One Belovéd, help us day by day
To walk with pure hearts in Thy Perfect Way.

THE SAHARA IS ALGERIAN

by MUHAMMAD M. KELLOU

Once more the Algerian Sahara is in the news : after trying to isolate the Sahara economically and administratively from the north of Algeria, France has again been responsible for the adjournment of the negotiations on this key point. By brandishing the idea of the menace of partition for the Sahara, France is trying to achieve a sort of political co-sovereignty over the Sahara in order better to defend the interests of her big banks and her oil cartels. At the same time the French Press is weighing up the policy of the FLN on oil. Some correspondents are already guessing at secret agreements with the Soviet Union, with the U.S.A., with the international cartel or with Mattei. Briefly the problem of the Sahara is, for the French, obviously a part of the "problems attached" to the application of self-determination. For the Algerian Revolution this problem is not a new one. The policy of the FLN has been clearly defined for the past five years : it is based on the principles adopted by the whole Algerian people. The support of the masses enables us to approach this new phase of our struggle with calm and determination.

Territorial integrity

It is impossible to separate the north of Algeria from the Sahara. French sovereignty over the Algerian territory, the sovereignty which has been radically challenged since 1st November 1954 by the Revolution, must give way to the sovereignty of the Algerian people within the administrative limits of Algeria of 1954 as described by all documents, maps and books.

The principle of territorial integrity is for us fundamental. There are between the northern regions and the southern regions of Algeria human, economic and historical links which are uncontestable. The inhabitants of the Sahara towns of Laghouat, Ghardaia, Touggourt, In-Salah, Ouargia, Timimoun, El Oued, have always considered themselves as Algerians, and have acted as such. During the conquest, the Algerians of the south have participated in the national resistance. Since the Revolution these Algerians in their own regions, or in other parts of the national territory (like the Mozabites) have actively participated in the Revolution. The Sahara, whether the east, the west or the centre, has been a battlefield for the exploits of Algerian army of National Liberation. Cells of the FLN have been constituted everywhere : in the oases as well in the oil-fields : all the Algerians of the Sahara, whether they are permanently settled or nomadic, manual workers or transport drivers have lived the Algerian Revolution at the same rhythm as the whole of the Algerian people with whom they have shared the same news when listening every night to the radio or to the "Voice of Free Algeria".

Since oil has been discovered

The integrity of our territory was proclaimed by us long before the oil resources of the Sahara were discovered. It is precisely since these great discoveries occurred in the middle of 1956 that France has done her best to transform the limits and the status of the Sahara : the COSR (the Common Organization of the Sahara Regions) and the

"departmentalization" of the Algerian Sahara in 1957, the regulations of transport and of entry to the Sahara, the distinct military command since 1958, all these measures taken by the French leaders from Max Lejeune to Soustelle, from Lecourt to Guichard, have the same goal : to establish a frontier between the north and south of our country, to make the Sahara a distinct territory from Algeria reduced to her northern regions. We have denounced this manoeuvre ceaselessly, at every opportunity, since 1957, that is why



Muhammad M. Kellou.

we feel more at ease now and continue to proclaim our uncompromising opposition to the partitioning of our national territory. The Sahara will not be another Katanga. The experience of the Congolese people has shown the Algerian masses the manoeuvres of which colonialism that does not disarm is capable. There is not, there will not be, a Tshombe in Algeria.

Our fundamental political position is strengthened by this recent instance ! When the GPRA accepted the procedure of self-determination it thwarted the colonialist manoeuvre by proclaiming this procedure applicable to the

whole Algerian territory including the Sahara, and not only to the twelve departments of the north (thirteen since 1959). There should not be any doubt on this : the integrity of the Algerian territory should be respected.

Support of African countries

All the truly independent African States support our struggle and support our just demands about the territorial integrity of Algeria. For these African States it is clear that the Algerian part of the Sahara is not a vacant territory politically, that the whole Sahara belongs to Africa, that the African States cannot accept seeing part of their soil being used in preparation for the cold war or the atomic war. The African neutralism which derives from the spirit of the Afro-Asian Conference at Bandung is the common policy of all our countries. This neutralism, which is our policy and which has been reaffirmed on 19th September 1958, in the first declaration of the GPRA, demands the "denuclearization" of the Sahara and demands that the Sahara, freed at last in its entirety from colonialist trusteeship, should be the ideal place for collaboration between African States.

Today the capitalist companies which prospect, discover and exploit for their markets the resources of the uncommitted world, can no longer impose their rule, nor change the status of a territory. These imperialist companies never disarm : it has been proved in Latin America and in the Congo that they use every means of pressure to endeavour to destroy the independence of a new State. Elsewhere the end of colonialism in the world has obliged them, whether they want it or not, to compromise with the new independent State and respect its sovereignty. Foreign companies which exploit the mineral resources of Guinea, Venezuela, Iraq or the United Arab Republic, Tunisia and Morocco, have signed agreements in accordance with local interests.

That is why the exploitation of the resources of the Sahara should be undertaken primarily in the interest of

the Africans. These interests, the Africans, free and independent, can determine better than anyone else.

The Algerian part of the Sahara

(1) The abundance of the natural resources discovered in the Algerian Sahara, together with the energy that can be obtained at a low price, would allow the industrialization of our country as well as the other parts of the MAGHREB (the North African countries : Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria) and the raising of the standard of living of the rural populations. The existence of these resources allows the economic development of the MAGHREB as a necessary complement to the political links established between the three countries of North Africa.

(2) This exploitation of the resources of the Sahara of Africans for Africans could be undertaken only after the independence of the whole Algerian territory. That is what our brothers of Mali meant when they proclaimed that discussions should not start on the Sahara before the independence of Algeria had been achieved.

(3) As long as the foreign companies are prepared to respect Algerian sovereignty over the Algerian Sahara, we are prepared on our side to envisage modes of agreement, exchange and free co-operation ensuring the reciprocal interests of the parties concerned. For it is evident for the Algerian people that the prospecting and exploitation of the resources of the Sahara could not in any way be transformed into a right of property.

International co-operation

The international, fruitful co-operation that we want is a co-operation without equivocation based on reciprocal interests, on equality of countries and on the absolute respect of the national sovereignty without political counterpart. Such a co-operation could be freely decided only by a sovereign State.

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THE COMFORTER

by MUHAMMAD RAFEEQ

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth ; it is expedient for you that I go away : for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but, if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment " (John 16, vv. 7-8).

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth : for he shall not speak of himself ; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak : he will show you many things to come " (John 16, vv. 12-13).

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Now list awhile unto a voice of old,
A voice yet still preserved in letters bold.
When humble Jesus could no longer stand
The cruel persecutions of his land,
Fleeing from there, he gave the hopeful news,
Preserved by Christians, despised by Jews.

Some hundred idols of the Ka'ba fell,
All smashed to pieces by Muhammad's spell.
Lat and Manat were doomed, when Rasul Allah,
Proclaimed the cry *Lá-ilá-ha Illal-láh*.
Established was the name of God again,
This time by Muhammad, ne'er to wane.

"Because the words I say ye cannot bear,
Father will send a Comforter for thy care.
When he the Spirit of Truth is come,
He'll sing the songs I've left unsung."
But did he come? Oh yes ! what idle boast,
Christians say, 'twas the Holy Ghost.

Lasciviousness, base forms of low incest,
Obliterated were by Ahmad's zest.
Vices and crimes, great or small, of whatever kind,
Did not escape the keen eyes of Ahmad's mind.
The Holy Ghost could not such corruptions ban,
Muhammad was the man, he was the man.

Darkness had made this world perpetual night,
It groaned until a piercing shaft of light
Asunder burst the clouds and travelled on,
Illuminating Earth to Heaven's Empyrean.
What gave the comfort in that awful plight?
But God, Muhammad was that brilliant light.

With woman's low state no one did bother,
Muhammad's heav'n lay at the feet of mother.
The custom of sacrificing daughters fair,
Was banned by Ahmad, too ; who else could dare?
Reform came not by accident or fate,
'Twas love and labour of Muhammad great.

No virtues were there unadulterated,
No crimes were left unperpetrated.
Women and men debased, I loathe to tell,
Were madly rushing in the jaws of hell.
The Holy Ghost was weak to face this fight,
It needed one with Muhammad's might.

The warring clans were now one solid band,
And peace and order now controlled the land.
Demoniacs to pioneers ; what marvellous stride !
Arabia's fame in arts went far and wide.
Some hundred million souls in daily prayer,
Do bless Muhammad and his followers everywhere.

Corruptions were rampant in directions all.
Humanity could have no greater fall.
Annals of wickedness can hardly show,
That depravity had ever reached so low.
In such a scene, a man from Hira came.
History records Muhammad as his name.

Who, then, redeemed mankind from that quagmire?
'Twas not the Bible's "cloven tongues of fire".
Muhammad was the Comforter Jesus foretold,
A mercy to mankind ; God's promise of old.
Not Holy Ghost did change the world's outlook,
Muhammad was the man ; the Qur'an was the book.

ISLAMIC VALUES AS THE BASIS OF SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

by ABUL HASHIM

“Every system of law presupposes a corresponding social order. A law, a custom or a value, however sound and progressive, cannot be implemented in a social environment uncongenial to it. So it is with Islamic dispensations. For the Islamisation of a society, not a patchwork, but a complete revolution in thinking, feeling and action is necessary.”

Values

Values in relation to life and living mean concepts and ideals which have an impact on moulding individual and collective behaviour of man in his everyday business of life. Good values are such as are congenial to the nature of man and are conducive to the natural evolution of man. Bad values are ideals and concepts uncongenial to human nature ; they originate in ignorance, unbridled ego, whims and caprices of man, and are the sources of all *Zulm* or transgression. Every philosophy of life tends to create a humanity in its own image and it has some basic values which determine the character-pattern of the type of humanity it tends to create. So, it is with Islam. Islam has its own values for moulding character-pattern of man and to determine his being and becoming. Even a casual observation of things around us reveals the fact that the universe and its component elements do not drift but move in perfect harmony towards the fulfilment of some purpose. Knowledge of purpose of one's own creation is the beginning of knowledge of values.

Purpose of life

A thing is good and it justifies its existence if it fulfils the purpose of its creation. So, it is with man. According to the Qur'án the appearance of man on earth was not purposeless and accidental in the process of natural evolution. Man has been created with a purpose well-fined in the Qur'án. The angels wondered why a creature like man who would shed blood, do all kinds of mischiefs on earth, be created. We have it in the Qur'án : “Your *Rabb* said to His angels, I am sending a Caliph on earth”. The concept of *Khilafat* is the highest spiritual value of Islam and as such is the mother of all Islamic values and is the key to the character-pattern of the Islamic order of human existence.

Divine attributes

Allah is the *Ism-i-Zat*, or the personal name of the deity of the Qur'án. The universe and everything in the universe is finite, but Allah is infinite. Allah is infinite not in space-time but in the sense that He has infinite potentialities ; He can create for himself any attribute at will. The finite cannot apprehend, comprehend or conceive the infinite. So, man, in fact nothing in creation, can have a comprehensive idea of Allah, the person of the Deity. We have it in the Qur'án : “Thou shalt never see me”. Allah reveals to man not His person but some of His attributes in His creation, and these attributes are such as are necessary for the

creation, sustenance and evolution of the universe. In the creation there are signs which prove the existence of Allah. I can hardly resist the temptation of quoting from the Qur'án some wonderful and sublime poetry-in-prose which lifts a thinking mind to its highest elements :

“Behold, in the creation of the heavens and earth ; in the alteration of the Night and the Day ; in the sailing of the ships through the oceans for the profit of mankind ; in the rain which God sends down from the skies and the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead ; in the beasts of all kinds that He scatters through the earth ; in the change of the winds and the clouds which they trail like their slave between the sky and the earth — indeed are signs for a people that are wise.”

A reflective mind, when it looks around, finds the attributes of Allah or the working of the will of Allah in His creation. He finds them not only in the flowers and in the trees but also in the affairs of man — in the rise, decline and fall of nations. The Qur'án mentions ninety-nine attributes of Allah. These attributes are reflected in the creation and man in his reflected glory has these attributes, and each of these attributes is a value which makes, and negation of which mars his destiny. Allah created man in the best of moulds with boundless possibilities and he has been gifted with Divine attributes. The Prophet of Islam enjoins, “Adorn yourself with Divine attributes”. Of the ninety-nine attributes of Allah, *al-Rabb* is the basic, and the remaining ninety-eight are but necessary complements to it. In the opening verse of *al-Fatiha*, Allah introduces Himself to His creatures as the *Rabb* of the universe.

Al-Rabb

The Arabic term *Rabb* has no English equivalent. The English “Lord” is no substitute for the Arabic *Rabb*. The basic contents of the term *Rabb* are the attributes of creation, sustenance and evolution of the universe. *Al-Rabb* is, therefore, Creator, Sustainer and Evolver of the Universe. Man is not the creator of everything when creation means creation of something out of nothing, but he can determine the manner of his own sustenance and evolution. Every philosophy of life has a distinct pattern of its own for the solution of the problems of man's sustenance and evolution. The problems of life like food, shelter, clothes, education and health are common everywhere in the world. The conflict between a philosophy and a philosophy, an ideology and an ideology, and a way of life and a way of life, lies not in these problems but in the manner of solving these problems. Islam, like any other ideology, has its own pattern of solution of the problems of life. The Islamic pattern or the way of *al-Rabb* is made manifest in nature and revealed

in the Qur'án --- this in the terminology of Islam is known as *Rabubiyyat*.

Rabubiyyat

Rabubiyyat, or the Divine way of sustenance and evolution of His creatures, has five basic characteristics. First, Allah bestows on His creatures favours without expectation of any return from them. Persons who, in spite of what they profess, have sub-conscious inclinations towards anthropomorphism think that Allah is effected this way or that by gratitude or ingratitude of His creatures. We have it in the Qur'án that Allah is above all wants and that whatever He enjoins upon man is in the best interests of man himself. If man obeys Allah he benefits himself and if he does not he injures himself. Secondly, Allah gives to His creatures, as free gifts, things which are necessary for their sustenance and, in fact, without which they cannot exist for a moment and things which they cannot produce by their efforts. These in the terminology of economics are known as free gifts of nature. Revealed knowledge, like sunshine, air and water, is a gift of this category. Thirdly, Allah anticipates His creatures' needs and provides means of their satisfaction before they actually need them; He provides milk in the mother's breast before a child is born. Fourthly, free gifts of Allah are universal. Here Allah does not make any discrimination between the good and the bad, the virtuous and the vicious, and the believers and rejectors of faith. These four characteristics of *Rabubiyyat* are the contents of the Divine attribute Al-Rahman. Fifthly, as *al-Rahim*, Allah administers justice seasoned with mercy. One who makes good use of Allah's beneficence is rewarded and one who does not is punished; "reward" means benefits to one's own self and punishment is injury. According to this principle of *Rabubiyyat* every individual receives what he earns. As to creation, the creative process of *al-Rabb* is perfect and so things created have the potentiality of attaining their highest destiny. *Rabubiyyat*, or the Divine process of creation, sustenance and evolution, is the substance of *Khilafat*.

Khilafat

Some think man is *Khalifah-Ullah*, or vicegerent of Allah. This erroneous concept of *Khilafat* comes from a gross misinterpretation of the Qur'anic verse "Your *Rabb* said to His angels, I am sending a vicegerent on earth". They equate an *Ism-i-Sifat* or an attributive name of the deity with Allah, the *Ism-i-Zat*, or the personal name of the Deity. Man is not the vicegerent of Allah, he is the vicegerent of Allah's *Sifat* or attribute of *Rabubiyyat*. This is the significance of the use of Allah's attributive name *al-Rabb*, instead of His personal name Allah in the verse, "Your *Rabb* said: I am sending a vicegerent on earth". Man has, therefore, been created by Allah as the vicegerent of *Rabubiyyat* charged with the responsibility of sustaining his own self and other creatures around him faithfully according to the principles of *Rabubiyyat*, and faithful performance of this sublime duty is the true *ibadat* or worship of Allah, and this is the meaning and significance of Islam which connotes unqualified submission to the will of Allah. Greatness of man either as an individual or as a nation depends on how he behaves. One is great when one's behaviour is consistent with the principles of *Khilafat*. On the contrary, when man, who has been created in the best of moulds with boundless possibilities, worships his ego in utter disregard of his duties to others, he makes himself

asfalussafelin, or the meanest of the mean. This is the secret of the rise and fall of nations. Pointing to this inevitable principle of justice of *al-Rabb*, we have it in the Qur'án: "We have made you vicegerent on earth after them to see how you behave."

Haqqul-'ibad

Man has twofold duties and obligations as Khalif of *Rabubiyyat*. These are duties to one's own self and duties to others, and these are commonly known as *Haqqullah* or rights of Allah and *Haqqul-'ibad*, or rights of people. *Haqqullah* is in fact *Haqqunnafs* or rights of one's own self, for Allah is above all wants and needs no return from His creatures for His beneficence. When a believer falls prostrate before Allah in *Salat* or when he fasts in Ramadhan he benefits himself and not Allah. The term *Haqqullah* or the rights of Allah is another creation of anthropomorphic ideas, and as such is a perversion of the teachings of Islam. Man has no right to do anything which is harmful either to his own self or to others. It is a duty of every Muslim to care for the welfare of his own self, members of his family under his charge, his relations and his neighbours. Faithful performance of this duty is not a charity but is a mere performance of a duty, non-performance of which would be a sin and a crime. In Islam there is no such thing as charity; charity is the luxury of the rich. *Haqqul-'ibad* or duty to others has an importance in Islam which can hardly be exaggerated. Faithful performance of *Haqqul-'ibad* is the *sine qua non* of social life in Islam; so much so that a believer is not permitted to have a full meal while leaving even a dog hungry. A Muslim has no right to appropriate his possessions exclusively for his own enjoyment or for the enjoyment of the members of his family. But others around him who may be needy are in their own rights beneficiaries of his resources. We have it in the Qur'án that accursed are the prayer performers who are inimical to orphans, do not provide food to the needy and are indifferent to the welfare of their neighbours. The Qur'án tells us again that virtue lies not in turning one's face towards the East or towards the West, but among other things in giving one's wealth in love of Allah to kins, orphans, wayfarers, to those who ask for and for liberation of slaves.

Sovereignty

The theory of sovereignty of Allah and the theory of Allah's ownership of material wealth are natural corollaries to the concept of *Khilafat*. Power and wealth do not belong to man either as an individual or as a nation. We have it in the Qur'án: "To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth." To repeat it, the human implication of the sovereignty of Allah is that sovereignty or absolute power of moulding the destiny of man and adjusting human relations does not belong to man. He is not permitted to use power in a manner prejudicial to his own self, to his nation or other creatures of Allah. In Islam anti-social and anti-humanitarian use of power for satisfying individual or national ego is a revolt against Allah. When the venerable Abu Bakr entered upon the responsibility of moulding the destiny of his people as the Caliph or the vicegerent of *Rabubiyyat*, he declared in his inaugural speech that he would be entitled to the obedience of his people so long as he obeyed Allah and His prophet. In other words, obedience to men in power is mandatory only when they use power as believers in faithful performance of their duties as Caliphs of *Rabubiyyat*. We have it in the Qur'án, "O ye, who

believe, obey Allah and obey the prophet and those in power amongst you." To sanction personal kingship, the theory of Divine right of kings was manufactured at Baghdad by a deliberately perverted interpretation of this verse of the Qur'an and of a well-known Hadith, "Sultans are the shadows of Allah". In interpreting this verse of the Qur'an the words "O ye who believe" are generally omitted purposefully to interpret the words "those who are in power amongst you" to mean any person who may be in power without any reservation. Sultans are shadows of Allah in the sense that the sultans must behave as representatives of Allah's *Rabubiyyat* as faithfully as a shadow represents its substance. Ridiculously enough, even a man like Jahangir, the Mogul who had little or nothing to do with Islam, and who would seldom be found free from the influence of intoxicating liquors and opium, would be addressed as *Zilullah*, or the shadow of Allah. The theory of the sovereignty of Allah and the consequential negation of sovereignty of man is the starting point of the political philosophy of Islam. Two things naturally follow from the theory of Divine sovereignty. These are equality before law or the rule of law and limitations of man's power of legislation.

The rule of law

The Greeks and the Romans gave the world law, but Islam gave law and rule of law. The law of nature is respecter of no person. Fire burns. If the mightiest of the mighty puts his finger into a fire it will burn precisely in the same manner as would burn the finger of the humblest of the humble, if put into it. In Islam none is immune from the operation of law in the name of the dignity of the State or public interest. It is reported that the Prophet of Islam declared that he would cut off even his daughter Fatema's hand if she committed theft. Omar the Great and the venerable 'Ali had to appear before a court of justice on the complaint of some humble citizens of the Caliphate. The principle of the rule of law was so deep-rooted in Muslim societies that even during the days of personal kingship the Abbasside sultan of Baghdad, al-Mansur, the arrogant, had to appear before one of his courts to answer charges levelled against him by some camel drivers. The ideal of the rule of law is the cornerstone of Islamic justice.

Legislation

Khilafat limits and restricts man's power of legislation in so far as it affects man's biological, moral and spiritual being and becoming. Man as the vicegerent of *Rabubiyyat* has been gifted with creative genius. Man creates, but he does not create something out of nothing; he manufactures out of pre-existing stuff new forms and types. Poultry experts tell us that Indian jungle-fowls are the origin of all breeds of fowls of the world. Man, by artificial feeding, breeding and rearing has manufactured Orpington, the beautiful English fowl. However attractive this beautiful breed of fowl may appear to man, it is indeed a miserable creature; it cannot survive for a moment if left to itself. The jungle-fowl without the care and attention of poultry experts finds its own food, defends itself against its enemies and survives through ages. Man does not manufacture only fowls, dogs and horses, but in his vanity he also manufactures new types of humanity. The philosophy of Nietzsche created the Fascist humanity of Hitler and Mussolini, and the philosophy of Karl Marx has created the red humanity of Russia and China. Consequences of this type of human enterprise are

too well-known to need any comment. It does not matter much if there is a legislation directing the people to keep to the left or to the right when moving in streets; but for a legislation affecting biological, moral and spiritual entity of man, divine guidance and expert scientific knowledge are necessary. In this sphere of law reckless legislation by counting noses in a House of Parliament would be fatal. True knowledge is the knowledge of one's own ignorance. The vain glory of achievements of science is well-exposed by the great scientist Newton's famous words, "We are gathering pebbles on the sea-shore while the vast ocean of knowledge still lies unexplored". The scientists of Russia in their vanity declared that incest was a bourgeois sentiment, with the result that Russian law made marriage between a son and a mother lawful. Little knowledge is dangerous. After two decades of bitter experience they had to retreat, and now there are some eight degrees of prohibition recognized by the Russian law. In Islam, morality and law tend to coincide. Any act harmful either to the doer or to others is immoral, and this is also the first principle of legislation in Islam.

Ownership of wealth

Ownership is a legal term and it means absolute right to the enjoyment and disposal of one's material possessions. We have in the Qur'an: "To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth." This negates man's ownership of material wealth whether as an individual or as a nation. Man must possess wealth not as its owner but as a trust for his own benefit and for the benefit of others around him. A Muslim is permitted to enjoy the benefit of his material possessions but without any attachment to it. The favourite *laissez-faire* theory of the West recognizes absolute private ownership and sanctions unbridled right to earning and spending in the name of efficiency and freedom of contract. It does not require much intuition to see that anti-social and anti-humanitarian use of power and wealth is the mother of all ills. Islam does not minimize the role of an individual in the making of man, but vigilantly guards against anti-social and anti-humanitarian use of freedom and efficiency; it values freedom but not licence. Thus Islam gives impetus to individual efforts but only so far as it is consistent with the common weal.

Individualism

Individualism, in economics, means private ownership of individuals. During the great famine of Bengal in 1942, starving men and women lay dead in front of palaces and mansions of the rich while within the palaces the tables of the rich groaned under the pressure of delicious food. 'Why was this ghastly phenomenon possible? The answer is obvious. It was the inevitable consequence of the concept of private ownership. The owners of the palaces thought that they had absolute right to the enjoyment of their possessions to the exclusion of others. Socialism is the creation of this attitude towards wealth, and as such it is the historical antithesis of individualism.

Socialism

There is no such thing as socialism in Islam; Islamic socialism is a contradiction in terms. Socialism is social ownership of wealth as distinct from, and opposed to, individual ownership. A nation is but an individual in the comity of nations. Socialism, therefore, is individualism

writ large and contains within its womb all the ills of individualism in colossal proportions : individualism exploits individuals and socialism is a weapon in the hands of the powerful nations for the ruthless exploitation of the weaker nations of the world. During the great famine in Bengal men and women died of starvation in thousands, parents sold their children and women bartered their honour for a morsel of food. There was a bumper crop of wheat in America and Russia. America dumped their surplus wheat into the depths of the Atlantic in order to screw up the margin of profit of her wheat kings. Russia utilized their surplus wheat as fuel for their furnaces, depriving not only the starving millions of Bengal but also other creatures of Allah, like insects and birds, of their natural right to draw their sustenance from the fruits of the fair earth. Why was this possible? The answer is equally obvious : this was the natural consequence of socialism. America and Russia thought they had absolute right to deal with their resources in any manner they thought conducive to their national interest. Islam, like a double-edged sword, cuts both individualism and socialism and strikes a synthesis of the two opposites. Economic order of Islam is universalism.

Universalism

Economic universalism is the pragmatic value of Divine ownership of all that lies in the heavens and the earth and of the concept of universal brotherhood of man. It means that every creature of Allah has a natural right to draw its sustenance from the fruits of the mother earth. We have it in the Qur'an : " And He spread the earth for all creatures ; in it there are fruits and date-palms having spathes and also corn with stalks and sweet smell, which of the bounties of Allah will ye deny ? ". The earth was not spread only for the enjoyment of man to the exclusion of other creatures of Allah, and far less for anti-social and anti-humanitarian enjoyment of the fortunately circumstanced. Every living organism needs a specific space for its bare existence, and this may be called its space-ratio. In the case of man this space-ratio shrinks with the advancement of civilization. Possibly a cave-man or a free-man needed ten square miles for spontaneous supply of his sustenance and a civilized man in the second half of the twentieth century needs ten square yards. Nevertheless, at a given moment and in a given society man has a fixed space-ratio of his own. The soil does not tolerate a surplus population and it throws off its surplus. If the surplus thrown off finds space elsewhere it survives, but if it does not it is destroyed by war if the country of its origin is strong and advanced like Germany, and by famine and pestilence if the country is weak and backward like the Bengal of 1942. This is the inevitable law of the economy of nature. War can never cease so long as economic individualism and socialism are not replaced by economic universalism of Islam. An order of human existence of abiding peace, prosperity and progress must open the frontiers of all territories and give legal rights to every man to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow in any part of the world. Science has for everyday business of life very nearly conquered time and space, with the result that no nation in the ocean of humanity can exist today like an island and fiddle while other parts of the world burn. In this modern age of advanced science humanity as a whole must sink or swim together. Bitter experience of post-war years has taught us that the rule of law must be made as normal in international affairs as it is in domestic life, and that no nation has a right to appropriate its resources exclusively for its own benefit. This is universalism. The

crown of glory of our century goes to that nation or family of nations which shall make sincere and earnest efforts to materialize in letter and in spirit the ideal of universalism and universal brotherhood of Islam.

Equality of man

The basic social value of Islam is the concept of the equality of man. In Islam the social status of a man is not determined by his self-acquired or inherited power and wealth but by his personal qualities and by his contribution to social welfare. In Islam an efficient and honest cobbler is superior to an inefficient and dishonest sultan. We have it in the Qur'an : " Verily, the most honourable of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you " (49 : 13). Equality, however, does not mean equality of ability ; it means equality of opportunity. He who has the potentiality of a Tansen or of a Beethoven, given proper opportunity, may become immortal, but if he is forced to work in an iron and steel foundry, manufacturing hammers and sickles, he would find his place in the dustbin of time. In this sense men and women are equal. In the scheme of creation the role of the male and the female is not identical. The body, mind and intellect of the male and the female has been designed according to their respective roles in creation. If a male transgresses into the orbit of the female or if a female enters the orbit of the male, both of them shall be unsexed and shall thus ruin their destiny and make themselves the lowest of the low.

Culture

Art and literature are not culture : they are media of culture. Rabindranath Tagore, through the medium of Bengali literature, preached the philosophy of the Upanishad, and the Communists utilized the same literature for preaching historic materialism, and again, through the medium of art of dancing Uday Sanker, the famous Indian artist preaches the culture of ancient India, and Bulbul, the famous artist of East Pakistan, utilized the same art for depicting the Sufism of Persia. Culture is the development of the faculties of man and its manifestation in his behaviour and in his environment. Islamic culture must, therefore, reflect Islamic values. In the name of art and culture Islam does not encourage vulgar music and dance, and in fact anything derogatory to the elevation of man.

Social reconstruction

Every system of law presupposes a corresponding social order. A law, a custom or a value, however sound and progressive, cannot be implemented in a social environment uncongenial to it. For instance, the " British rule of law ", the best of its kind in the modern world, cannot be implemented in Soviet Russia, and likewise the property laws of Russia cannot be grafted into capitalist England. So it is with Islamic dispensations. For Islamization of a society, not a patchwork but a complete revolution in thinking, feeling and action is necessary. In achieving this end the role of the State is paramount. The State with all its component elements must march in the grim battle of life towards this goal as a disciplined army. Individuals by their behaviour, the society by its perpetual vigilance over the activities of its institutions, political, economic and cultural, and the State by its dispensations and by its dealings with other nations of the world must create " Dara-al-Islam " or an environment congenial to the spontaneous growth and development of Islamic values.

SHAH WALIULLAH: A SPIRITUAL LUMINARY OF 18th CENTURY INDIAN ISLAM

by A. S. BAZMEE ANSARI

"A glimpse of the plight of Indian Islam in the mid-eighteenth century, when the tottering Moghul empire ceased to be an effective force to maintain law and order, and bands of marauders — Sikhs, Mahrattas and Jats — made life so intolerable for Muslims that the eminent Muslim divine, Shah Waliullah, had to invoke Ahmad Shah Abdabi to come to their deliverance."

Long before Karl Marx was born, a Muslim divine of India was propounding revolutionary economic theories which were to startle the world many decades later through the medium of the German thinker's celebrated work *Das Kapital*. He was Shah Waliullah, the well-known *muhaddas* and theologian of Delhi. It is unfortunate that this revolutionary thinker has not received so far the recognition due to him.

Shah Waliullah was the second son of Shah Abdur Rahim of Delhi, the founder-patron of the famous college of theology known as *Madrassa-i-Rahimiya*, during the reign of Emperor Aurangzeb. Shah Waliullah's grandfather, Shah Wajih-ud-Din, was a soldier in the army of Aurangzeb. He sided with Alamgir in the war of succession culminating in his victory. During the Deccan campaigns of Aurangzeb, Shah Wajih-ud-Din was once on his way from Delhi to join the Imperial forces when he was attacked by freebooters and highwaymen. The troopers accompanying him gave battle to the bandits, but were overpowered and Shah Wajih-ud-Din was killed.

Shah Waliullah was born in 1693 at Phulat (District Muzaffarnagar, U.P.). He lived through the short and stormy reigns of eleven titular kings and died at the age of 62 in 1755. He was a prodigious child, having learnt the Qur'an by heart at the age of seven and finished his education at the age of fifteen — a year before he married at the express wish of his father. Three years later, when he was only seventeen, his father died, and he was unanimously voted to the vacant office of the Principal of the College, inaugurated by his father. His precocity, flair for learning, clarity of thought and keen observational powers earned for him this high office. He doubtless carried a very wise head on his young shoulders. He had studied almost every branch of knowledge that was known to the scholars of those days. According to his own statement he studied and learnt medicine, philosophy, logic, grammar, rhetoric, etymology, and mathematics, besides the purely religious sciences in which he had graduated. For twelve years after the death of his father he taught at the *Madrassa-i-Rahimiya*, thus adding much to his knowledge of men and matters. Ample opportunities were also afforded to him for cool and calculated thinking. He felt an inner urge to go to Mecca for performing the pilgrimage and meeting the Muslim divines and theologians of the Holy Land. In 1722 he left for the Hedjaz and, after performing the *Hajj* twice, returned to India in 1725.

His writings

Thereafter he devoted himself entirely to reading and writing and produced no less than fifty works of great merit.

It is no mean achievement to write such a large number of books and treatises within a short period of thirty years so full of political unrest and turmoil. All these books, which are either in Arabic or Persian, are characterised by the perfection of style, lucidity of expression, strength of appeal and maturity of thought. A striking feature of these works is that they are full of premonitions and clear hints of the coming events. Whether this was the result of his mystical experiences, his knowledge of astronomy, or his intellectual powers cannot be said with exactitude, but one thing is clear. He saw ahead of his times and warned his countrymen of the doom that was to overtake them. He was, so to say, aware of the dangers that loomed large on the political horizon of India and in his way suggested the means of averting them.

The times through which Shah Waliullah lived were full of upheavals, commotion, tottering thrones and falling kings. During a short period of half a century no less than ten kings ascended the throne of Delhi and vacated it either through deposition, execution or death. In the year 1719 five kings, Farrukhsiyar, Nekusiyar, Rafiuddarajat, Rafiudaulah and Muhammad Shah, came to the throne. With the exception of Muhammad Shah, whose reign was also marred by the rape of Delhi at the hands of Nadirshah, none of these kings could hold his crown for more than a few troubled and uncomfortable months. There was no peace in the country, no organized Government, no law and order and no security of life, honour and property. People remained in constant fear of the plundering bands of the depredatory Mahrattas and Jats who infested the country from Sirhind in the north to Agra and beyond in the east. The whole of the south was overrun by the guerrilla troops of the Mahratta confederacy who, out to avenge themselves on the unarmed and helpless Muslim population, decimated them, pulled down their houses, laid their settlements desolate, dishonoured their women and looted their property. Sikhs, Mahrattas and Jats had become bywords for plunder, arson, vandalism and rape. Mothers scared and silenced their crying babies, telling them that Sikhs and Mahrattas were round the corner.

Mahratta excesses

Shah Abdul Aziz, son of Shah Waliullah, in his letters written to his uncle Shah Ahlullah who lived at Phulat (District Muzaffarnagar), bewails:

"May God severely punish Sikhs and Mahrattas who have murdered in cold blood a multitude of innocent people. Even goat-herds and rustics were not spared. These marauders swoop down on our cities and settlements and plunder us to the last pie in broad daylight. There is no place of safety for us. Is there no God-fearing person who could avenge the oppressed

and the luckless. . . . With the arrival of winter I feel embarrassed at the thought of the Sikh brigands. They are the worst enemy and their armies are no more than wild hordes. May they be exterminated! The whole of the land has been overrun by gangs of desperadoes and outlaws. You will be aware of what the Sikhs brought about in the district of Hissar. They laid low every hamlet and village that fell in their way and decimated whole tribes and butchered a large number of people. They conquered the fortresses and citadels and took prisoners many children who had been orphaned by them. They are after amassing wealth and ruthlessly do anyone to death who attempts to obstruct them. Today every nursing mother has not only forgotten suckling, but also those whom she earlier nursed. Such is the fear of the Sikhs due to the hair-raising and blood-curdling atrocities that they have perpetrated."

Abdali implored

Naturally the target of all this oppression and cruelty became the helpless Muslims who constituted the bulk of the population in cities and centres of culture. Having been despaired of any help that the decaying Mughal Empire could render to remedy the situation, Shah Waliullah wrote a lengthy letter to Ahmad Shah Abdali, apprising him of the grave political situation in India. Like an expert, Shah Waliullah analysed the causes leading to the deplorable condition of the Government and the people and suggested remedial measures. It is really surprising that a purely religious teacher had understood the necessity of keeping in touch with local politics and in his way thought of compassing the ruin of the oppressors and restoring the fallen to their original position of influence and glory. At long last Ahmad Shah Abdali attacked India and, in the third battle of Panipat in 1761, irreparably crushed the Mahratta military power and literally broke the backbone of that ill-born confederacy. What Alamgir could not accomplish was performed by the Durrani chieftain. The Sikhs were also subdued and had it not been an act of grace on the part of the retiring Afghan king to allow Ranjit Singh to continue to rule as his vassal in the Punjab, the Sikh power would also have met the same fate as befell the Mahratta upstarts.

Najibud-Daulah and the Jats

After the defeat of the Mahrattas, Shah Waliullah wrote a number of letters to Najibud-Daulah, a very important and influential chieftain of Rohilkhund. Originally belonging to Roh, the love of adventure brought him to the Indo-Gangetic plain and here after a chequered career he won the highest office of "*Amir-ul-Umara*". Shah Waliullah prompted him to take up arms against the Jats, who were no less a pest than the Mahrattas. They infested the entire territory between Delhi and Agra and the Central Imperial Government had neither the power nor the resources to exterminate their banditry and lawlessness. Before that Aurangzeb had fully realized the danger that the rise of Jat power meant to the throne of Delhi and had despatched first his son and then his grandson, Bedarbakht, at the head of an expeditionary force to subjugate the hot-headed and unruly Jats. Unfortunately he did not succeed in completely subduing them.

Address to the rulers

Shah Waliullah, in spite of his advancing years, did not rest. He desired total annihilation of Jats because he rightly thought that pending the establishment of law and order in the country, no progressive work could be undertaken. In one of his works he thus addresses the rulers, telling them what duties devolve on them in the discharge of their functions: "Draw your swords and do not sheath them until the country is cleared of all traitors and subversive elements.

Secure the land against all hazards of potential mischief and intended rebellion. When you feel that the integrity and security of the State has been duly insured, appoint a Commissioner at a distance of every sixty or odd miles. This Commissioner must administer justice evenly and impartially so that he may be able to inspire confidence in the local population. He should also be able to uphold the prestige of the Government and rule firmly. All exploitation and oppression of the weaker sections of the population must be stopped by him. During his stewardship none should dare to revolt either against God or the lawfully established Government. Everyone is expected to do his duty. Further, a small armed force is also necessary to help maintain peace. This force should always be at the beck and call of the Commissioner but it should not be allowed to grow into a disgruntled soldiery ready to overthrow the Government and seize power itself. Having accomplished all this, the ruling sovereign should attend to the economic needs of his subjects and try to remove their difficulties. Only then will the people be in a position to lead a happy and contented life." The central idea of this address is a stable and strong government and freedom from want.

His heart bled at the degeneration of the Muslims of India. He desired not only the rulers but the entire community to purge itself of the existing vices and become a virile and living force. With this view he separately addressed the different classes of Muslim society. Extracts from some of his addresses are given below.

Address to the noblemen

"You have no fear of the Almighty. You have abandoned yourselves to a life of moral turpitude. You have proved unworthy of the trust reposed in you by allowing deliberate exploitation of the weaker and less fortunate groups. You openly drink wine and never disapprove of it. Don't you observe that the lofty buildings raised by some rich and wealthy persons are really gambling-dens, refreshment-bars and houses of ill-fame? You catch hold of the poor and punish them but the strong and influential persons you allow to go off scot-free. Your only interest in life is centred in rich and tasty foods, delicate and fine clothes, plump and soft-skinned women and lofty houses. Have you ever thought of the problems with which the country is faced? Have you ever bowed your heads in prayer? You only mention God during your table-talks and fireside chats. It appears that your belief in God relates to the vicissitudes of fortune only."

Address to the soldiery

"You were charged with the task of becoming soldiers of Islam so that the name of God may live (in the hearts of the people) and shine. It was your bounden duty to root out atheism. But you have focused all your attention on amassing wealth by whatever means. You are not fired with the zeal of a *Mujahid*. Instead you commit excesses, drink wine and use narcotics. You never pay the traders for the goods you buy from them. You have forgotten the Day of Judgment. You should adopt the dress and demeanour of God-fearing, pious and incorruptible soldiers. You should say your prayers regularly and should not grasp what lawfully belongs to others. You should stand firm as a rock while facing the enemy and never think of deserting your post of duty. If your intentions and motives remain irreproachable and above-board, then, have it from me, in every action that you fight your final victory is assured and God will be with you."

Address to the artisans and craftsmen

"Honesty and you have parted long ago. You do not care to attend mosques for prayers. Some of you have taken to the profession of fortune-telling and talisman preparing which you consider a great art and the main source of your income. You fail to discharge your duties towards your dependants and families. Some of you engage in the unholy trade of wine-selling, while others indulge in immoral trafficking and prostitution. What a pity! There are a number of clean and noble professions the pursuit of which will bring you sufficient incomes provided you cut your coat according to

your cloth. You should spend your mornings and evenings in prayers and the greater part of the day in your trades; the night in your homes with your families. Always try to live within your means. With your savings help strangers, indigents and the needy. Also do not forget to lay by for the rainy day."

Address to the mystics

"You have given up following the Prophet in word and deed. You have instead chalked out a new programme for yourself and your votaries. Every one of you calls upon the common man to join his group, because he thinks that he alone knows the truth. The fact is the other way about. I look down upon such hypocrites and religious cheats who admit a novitiate to a certain school of mysticism in order to fleece him and feather their own nests. Such people are footpads and thugs in the garb of friars. O Muslims beware! Never join hands with persons who refuse to introduce you to the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* and instead preach some diabolically debased system."

Address to corrupt divines

"You dunderheads! You think that drinking deep at the fount of Greek and Roman philosophy and acquiring a deep knowledge of rhetoric and grammar is the height that a really educated man can reach. Know that education remains incomplete without the knowledge of the Qur'an and the *Hadith*. Try to understand the Book of God and imbibe its spirit. Study the life of the Prophet minutely and then fashion your own lives after it. Also the biographies of the Companions of the Prophet and those who succeeded them. You will find much of real value in the lives of these pioneers. You were expected to go to the Muslim towns and cities after your graduation to impart the knowledge gained by you to others who were not so fortunately circumstanced. Instead you love to indulge in legal quibblings and useless discourse. By your actions you have degraded and disgraced the whole lot of the Ulama."

Address to the Muslim masses

"Your conscience is dead. Greed and corruption have seized you. You have abandoned yourselves to the Devil. The women now lord it over the men. The men are remiss in the discharge of their duties towards the women. All dishonest practices you admire and encourage but a clean simple living is anathema with you. Believe me, God never likes anyone to overwork himself. In no case is adultery or fornication allowed. Have more than one wife, only if necessary. Never live beyond your means and properly husband your incomes. Miserliness and avarice are equally condemnable. These vices ultimately lead to a life of misery and ill-fame. Avail of the facilities offered by religion in the economic field. There is no limit to one's earnings, but earn according to your needs. Do not at the same time be a burden on others as parasites are hateful. Similarly do not be a burden on the State and its revenues. It is highly desirable that you should earn your own living. If you will do so, God will open up more avenues of employment for you. He who has a roof over his head, freedom from want, provision of bare necessities of life and a true companion to partake of his joys and sorrows, need not worry for more and thus invite trouble. He is lucky to lead a peaceful, contented life.

"In short, everyone should engage himself in a productive trade and lead a moderate life. Remember, in all walks of life, golden mean is the best. At least three times a day — morning, evening and part of the night — turn yourself to God the Almighty. You shall thus be saved from the many vices and ills of the day.

"O followers of the Prophet! You have let in such rituals and ceremonies in Islam as are foreign to it. Think coolly over what you do during the first ten days of *Muharram* and on the occasion of *Shah-i-Barat*. Convince me if you are right.

"There are other reprehensible customs which find favour with you. For instance, on social gatherings and receptions you spend excessive sums of money. These banquets and at-homes are nothing short of waste of energy, time and hard-earned money.

"You always pretend lack of time for saying your prayers. Similarly you invent wonderful excuses for not paying *Zakat*, although in every family there are persons who are in need of monetary help. If the rich help their poor relations, it will add to the national wealth.

"Some of you, especially the Government servants, do not fast during Ramazan and say in defence that your avocations

prove a hindrance. What a lame excuse! You little realize that you are paid from the public exchequer and that your real masters are the tax-payers. Your refusal to observe the tenets of Islam disappoints them and they feel that their money is being wasted on people who have no love for Islam."

These extracts from the addresses of Shah Waliullah mirror the religio-social conditions obtaining in the days so close upon the death of Emperor Aurangzeb whom non-Muslim historians have painted in the blackest colours. Was he a bigot, a religious zealot, so weak as not to have been able even to leave a majority of people behind who could profess Islam so passionately as the ruling monarch himself did? These addresses also reveal the personality of their author and the depth of his feelings.

His economic theories

Shah Waliullah's economic theories are mostly contained in his *magnum opus* the *Hujjat-ullahil-Balighah*. He considers the invention of the machine a vital part of human progress. Unlike some of the modern economic thinkers, the machine is not denounced by him. To him the age of speed was a natural corollary to the desire for making quick progress and reducing physical labour.

Discussing the relations between labour and capital he says that such contracts as compel one party to accede to the exorbitant demands of the other are invalid. This leads to exploitation culminating in uprisings or the overthrow of the capitalist system. He roundly condemns social inequality because it is the root-cause of the ruination of the masses and the degeneration of the classes. In his opinion this very factor compassed the destruction of the classes. In his opinion this very factor brought about the destruction of the great Roman and Persian civilizations.

Land and taxation

On the problem of land his thoughts are even more clear. He recognizes the sovereignty of God only and considers man as His vassal. All the land, he says, is like a place of worship or a caravan-serai to which everyone can have free access. All the people can utilize it. But the first-comers have the choice. Just as there is no reservation of seats in a mosque, similarly he holds that the owner of a piece of land has got the right to utilize it, but he cannot dispose of it. He is opposed to what is known as feudalism. "Under this system the feudal lord does not himself till the soil, but by virtue of his possession gets the lion's share of the produce." On the same analogy, Shah Sahib is dead against the rich getting richer and the poor becoming poorer as this glaring disparity ends in revolution and social unrest. In a nutshell, Shah Waliullah recognizes the Islamic State as the real owner of all land in the realm. All the other persons who are landlords, peasant-proprietors, or simple tenants are the sub-vassals of the State and enjoy their proprietary rights during the pleasure of the Government. They can be expropriated under certain circumstances with or without compensation as the case may be.

On the system of taxation, he writes :

"The second main reason for the dislocation of civil activities is the imposition of heavy and crushing taxes on agriculturists, traders and producers. The ruthless collection of these taxes compasses the economic ruin of the common taxpayer; while moneyed classes evade their payments by all possible means. The balance in the political economy of a country can only be maintained through a well-graded and rational system of taxation. The staff employed on the collection of various State taxes must be cut down to the barest minimum; otherwise the very purpose of the imposition of a tax will be defeated. Inflation and the widespread use of luxuries is the

root-cause of all heavy taxation resulting in the total destruction of the economic structure. Naturally the people adopt all sorts of means for earning money in order to be able to pay Government dues and to keep the domestic pot boiling. The entire nation gradually becomes sterile and is not in a position to produce men of high mental calibre."

His scholarly achievements

The greatest achievement of Shah Waliullah is his translation of the Qur'an in Persian. No one before him had attempted a translation of the Holy Book as it was considered improper to do so. In the face of stiff opposition from the *Ulema* of his day, his sense of duty and indomitable courage prevailed. The Persian translation of the Qur'an was completed soon after his return from Mecca in 1738. Shah Waliullah thus brought the Book of God within the easy reach of every educated man and woman as Persian was the written and spoken language of those times. This singular achievement of Shah Waliullah is sufficient to find for him a permanent place in the niche of glory. From the literary viewpoint his translation is of a very high order and reveals his profound learning and erudition. It is not an easy job to render the original Arabic text into accurate idiomatic Persian with meticulous care, so necessary in the matter of scriptural translation. The credit of the first Urdu translation of the Qur'an also goes to his son, Shah Abdul Qadir.

Apart from his translation of the Qur'an, Shah Waliullah also wrote a number of books on the science of exegesis and interpretation. This was another great and noteworthy achievement as it facilitated the understanding of the meaning and the spirit of the word of God. He, however, strongly disapproved of the prevailing system of teaching the Qur'an with the aid of commentaries. These books were full of Biblical stories which shrouded the real meaning of the different verses and clouded the reason and intellect of students. In his testament also Shah Waliullah stresses the need of the teaching of a bare literal translation of the Qur'an before embarking on the elaboration of the text with the aid of books purporting to give an exposition of the recondite passages.

Hadith and mysticism

His deep knowledge of *Hadith* has earned for him the title of *Muhaddas*, and his whole family was known for its

vast and profound knowledge of this branch of Islamic theology. Shah Waliullah compiled a number of treatises on *Hadith* and in one of them he collected forty such traditions as he believed were transmitted to him in a dream. He wrote laborious commentary of the *Muwatta*, compiled by Imam Malik, which he rated even higher than the well-known book of *Hadith*, *Sahih-al-Bukhari*.

He also attempted to reconcile the philosophy of *Ibn-l-Arabi* with the system expounded by *Mujaddid Alf-i-Sani*. With this view he wrote a book styled *A Comparative and Critical Study of the Doctrines of Unity of Existence and the Unity of Perception*. In this way he was able to bring about a *rapprochement* between these two disparate schools of mystic thought among Indian Muslims. In short, his whole approach to religious problems was marked by a healthy spirit of reconciliation and adjustment. This balance of opinion also characterized his sectarian works such as the *Izalatal-Khafa* and the *Fuyuz-al-Haramain*.

Madrasa Rahimiya

The *Madrasa Rahimiya* where Shah Waliullah mostly taught was situated in the Mehndian quarters of old Delhi. Now nothing is left of this place save a small graveyard behind the Delhi Central Jail. An enclosed cemetery contains the graves of Shah Abdur Rahim (the father of Shah Waliullah), of Shah Waliullah, and his four sons, viz., Shah Abdul Aziz, the celebrated *Muhaddas*, Shah Rafiuddin and Abdul Qadir, translators of the Qur'an, and, lastly, Shah Abdul Ghani, father of the Maulana Ismail Shaheed, who fell at Balakot in 1931 along with Syed Ahmad Shaheed, fighting a religious war against Sikhs. Other members of this great family also lie buried in this graveyard. A small mosque still survives. This is the mosque where Shah Waliullah used to teach his pupils, among whom were students from far-off places like Bokhara and Tashkent.

The Emperor Muhammad Shah later dedicated a spacious building in the present city of Delhi to house the *Madrasa*. This new building was large enough to accommodate the growing number of scholars and was situated not far from the *Jamia Masjid*. During the mutiny of 1857 this seat of learning was also looted and even beams and posts were removed. The building was completely destroyed and now nothing is left of this religious University.

—By courtesy *Pakistan Review* (August 1961).

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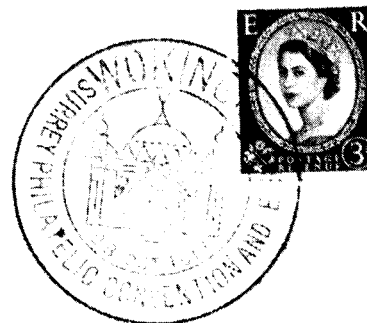
ISLAM IN ENGLAND

The Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust

Convention of Surrey Philatelic Societies.



Woking. October 28th. 1961



The Shah Jehan Mosque
Oriental Road
Woking
England

In connection with the Third Annual Convention of Surrey Philatelic Societies, which took place in Woking on 28th October 1961, Woking for the first time was accorded the use of a special pictorial postmark depicting the Shah Jehan Mosque at Woking. All mail posted on that day in the Convention Hall received this special cancellation. Above is a picture of the special envelope and cancellation mark used for this purpose. The postmark issued by the Woking Post Office caught the attention of many people from various parts of the British Isles. Requests also came from the U.S.A., South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. The Convention postmark was criticized by some people in Surrey papers who thought this choice was rather "unfortunate". But there were others who thought the choice to be a very good one (see correspondence).

The third annual convention of the Surrey Philatelic Societies was held in Woking on 28th October 1961, at the Co-operative Hall, Woking. The picture of the mosque as a cancellation mark raised criticism in some quarters. A Surrey Churchman wrote to the *Surrey Advertiser* and the *Woking News and Mail* that the picture of the mosque should not have been used as it represented a faith that was the "enemy of Christianity". Religion, in fact, did not enter the minds of the members of the Philatelic Society when they made this choice. The Vicar of Christ Church, Woking, saw no reason to complain. The chairman of the Woking Council, Mr. Tom Leam, thought it was a very good choice as the mosque was nationally and internationally known. There were others who commented in their own way.

Correspondence and other comments published in local papers in this connection are reproduced below.

SPECIAL POSTMARK FOR WOKING

On 28th October a postmark with a difference will be used in Woking. Instead of the normal town postmark with its wavy lines, a special pictorial postmark will be used for some mail posted in Woking. This pictorial postmark will depict the Shah Jehan Mosque in Woking.

The issue of this postmark is in connection with the third annual convention of Surrey Philatelic Societies which is taking

place in Woking on 28th October. All mail posted in a letterbox to be installed in the Convention Hall will receive this special cancellation.

It will be the first time that Woking has been accorded the use of a special canceller. Very few towns are allowed to have one as the Post Office only issues a limited number each year for conventions, exhibitions and similar gatherings.—*Woking News and Mail*, p. 1, 20th October 1961.

SURREY PHILATELIC SOCIETIES' POSTMARK

Sir.—What an unfortunate choice to commemorate their work on 28th October by stamping letters from Woking with a picture of the Mosque, which represents a faith that is the enemy of Christianity. Surely a picture of our newly consecrated Cathedral of the Holy Spirit would have been more appropriate, a testimony of a living faith that has changed for the better so many human lives?—Yours, etc., Surrey Churchman.—*Surrey Advertiser*, p. 15, 21st October 1961.

SHOULD BE PROUD

Sir.—It was with the greatest honour and pride that I read in your paper last week that the G.P.O. had granted Woking a special postmark, bearing a copy of the Shah Jehan Mosque. I would remind any person whose opinion it is that a church would be more appropriate that it was the Mosque that has made our town famous throughout the country.

Also, I can assure you, as a Muslim, that this fame is spread throughout the Islamic world. I should think, therefore, that any native of Woking would be proud to see this reproduction of the Mosque on the letters leaving our town.—Yours, etc., Lawrence Worsfeld.—*Woking News and Mail*, p. 9, 27th October 1961.

MORE CRITICISM OF CONVENTION POSTMARK

The postmark to be used for the Surrey Philatelic Convention at Woking on Saturday, which was reproduced in the *Surrey Advertiser*, has brought a critical letter to the organizers, the Woking Philatelic Society.

The letter, which is on the lines of the one printed in last Saturday's editions of the paper and signed "Surrey Churchman", suggests that it was an unfortunate choice to use a picture of the Shah Jehan Mosque, "which represents a faith that is the enemy of Christianity". It suggests that a picture of Guildford Cathedral would have been more appropriate.

"I see no reason to complain," comments the Rev. Eric Hague, Vicar of Christ Church, Woking.

Mr. J. Lea, one of the convention organizers, stated: "The Woking society are the hosts, and this is our brain child. Religion did not enter our minds when we made the choice. We received permission from the authorities at the mosque before the Post Office approved the symbol. The protest is an isolated one."

Mr. Lea pointed out that the cathedral, being situated in Guildford, did not enter the committee's consideration.

Mr. Tom Leam, chairman of Woking Council, commented: "The Mosque is nationally and internationally famous. I think the choice is a very good one. It is possibly Woking's most widely-known feature and is seen by thousands of people travelling by rail. Although we are proud of the cathedral at Guildford, this postmark should depict something that is essentially Woking."

ISLAM THE ALLY OF CHRISTIANITY

Sir.—Lest your readers should really run away with the impression that Islam is the enemy of Christianity, as the recent letter of "A Surrey Churchman" so audaciously put it, I hasten to seek the courtesy of your esteemed columns to dispel that misconception.

The truth lies just the other way about. Even a casual student of the Qur'an cannot miss the repeated references to Jesus Christ and His holy mother, holding them up as the highest examples of Godliness, and makes faith in his Divine Mission incumbent upon a Muslim. It is as a result of that teaching that throughout the world of Islam, whenever a Muslim mentions the name of Jesus Christ he does so with the addition of the words: "May God's peace be on Him."

It is one of the paradoxes of history that a religion so close to Christianity should somehow come to be regarded as the enemy of Christianity. If the historical encounter between Christians and Muslims was one of hostility and conflict, it was in spite of, not because of, the teachings of the two religions!

If there are any two religions that are the closest of all religions to each other in a great deal that constitutes the substance of religion they certainly are Christianity and Islam. Doctrinal differences need not stand in the way of the basic kinship at the deepest spiritual level between the two faiths.

That is what we at the Shah Jehan Mosque have been preaching for the last half-century, presenting Islam as basically the greatest friend and potentially a great ally of Christianity in combating the forces of materialistic Godlessness which pose an unprecedented threat to both. It is disheartening that our friend the "Surrey Churchman" should still talk in terms of "enmity" — a medieval legacy which the better-informed churchmen in this country are already discarding as something unfair and un-Christian. May I assure the "Surrey Churchman", and, through him, your readers, that we at this Mosque are here as friends — certainly not as enemies — of Christianity.—Yours truly, Muhammad Yakub Khan, Director, Woking Muslim Mission.—*Woking News and Mail*, p. 9, 3rd November 1961; *Surrey Advertiser*, p. 12, 6th November 1961.

UNFAIR CRITICISM

Sir.—We have read the criticism in your esteemed paper of the choice of the Surrey Philatelic Federation authorities in choosing as a symbol for their Convention the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking.

We are afraid that some people are still labouring under the misconception as to Islam's attitude to Christianity. From what we have been able to pick up at the Sunday meetings at the Mosque, it is certainly unfair to that religion to describe it as an "enemy of Christianity" as "Surrey Churchman" has done. Our impressions have been that of all religions, the nearest to Christianity is Islam, in as much as it is part and parcel of a Muslim's faith to accept Jesus as a true messenger of God.

This impression of ours was reinforced when the speaker at this Sunday's meeting cited a verse of the Qur'an (5:82) which says that Christians are closest to Muslims in affection. This struck

us as a sharp contrast to what your correspondent would have people believe.—Yours faithfully, George Fowler, Doris Fowler.—*Woking News and Mail*, p. 9, 3rd November 1961.

SHEER NONSENSE

Sir.—I read with some astonishment the letter concerning the use of a picture of the Shah Jehan Mosque as a cancellation stamp at the philatelic convention in Woking.

The suggestion to use Guildford Cathedral misses the point entirely. The congress is being held in Woking and it is Woking that wants to be stressed and the Mosque is the only unique building in the town and is also a building that is known throughout the whole world, whilst the cathedral has no connection whatever with the town and is only of interest to members of the Church of England.

To call Islam "the enemy of Christianity" is sheer nonsense and it is irresponsible and ignorant statements like this that do so much harm, and surely unity was never more badly needed than at the present time. I have worked among Muslims daily for the last 13 years and have never heard a word spoken against Christianity, whilst Jesus is held in great veneration as one of the three greatest prophets of the world. I suggest your correspondent gets some literature on Islam and studies it carefully before making such uncalled-for remarks.—Yours faithfully, H. M. Turney.—*Woking News and Mail*, p. 9, 3rd November 1961.

"ISLAM NOT ENEMY OF CHRISTIANITY"

S. Muhammad Tufail, the Imam of the Mosque, Woking, speaking at a meeting of the Theocratic Union in Old Woking on Tuesday, said: "It is not correct to think that Islam is an enemy of Christianity as mentioned in the *Surrey Advertiser*, 21st October. The difference between Muslims and Christians with regard to the person of Jesus Christ is not about the person of Jesus Christ, who is greatly respected, but about the interpretation of the term *Ebad*, which means 'servant' or 'slave' and metaphorically 'child'.

"Passages in the Gospels which attribute humanity to Christ are taken literally by Muslims and those which apparently predicate divinity to him are interpreted allegorically. There are so many similarities between Islam and Christianity that we should emphasize the points of contact and try to raise ourselves above the influence of medieval propaganda when Muslims and Christians were considered enemies."—*Surrey Advertiser*, p. 11, 28th October 1961.

ISLAMIC FAITH

"Islam," the faith of the Muslims, popularly but erroneously known as "Mohammedans", was the subject of last week's talk to the Theocratic Union. The Imam of the Woking Mosque, Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail, opened his address with Islam's fundamental declaration of faith spoken first in Arabic and then in its English translation, "There is but one God (Allah), Muhammad is His Messenger".

Taking up a current edition of a local newspaper he read an attack made on the decision of the Post Office to use a franking stamp picturing the Mosque to mark the Philatelic Convention in Woking. "Why not use a stamp showing the new Guildford Cathedral instead of something which represented the enemy of Christianity," said the criticism.

That such an attack was quite wrong and unjustified was illustrated by the teaching of the Qur'an, declared Mr. Tufail. Islam taught belief in all the messengers of God, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, as well as Muhammad. The words "Ebad Jehovah" (Arabic, Abdullah), by which name Jesus Christ was known to the Muslims, meant "child or servant

of God". The Christians had chosen the interpretation "child or son of God", whereas others, including the Muslims, translated the words as "servant of God". From this small difference there opened up a complete division of belief.

Islam was at one time regarded as a Christian heresy and was still very much akin to the Unitarian Christians of today. Muslims regarded Christ as sinless in common with all the holy messengers of God. They believed He foretold the coming of Muhammad when he said, "I go so that the spirit of truth may come to you". They venerated Jesus Christ and also His mother, Mary. Indeed, there is a book in the Qur'an named "Maryam" after her. They could not, however, accept Christ as God incarnate.

Citing the Bible, the speaker pointed out that there were no less than 83 references to Jesus as the "Son of Man", but Jesus never called Himself "The only begotten Son of God".

All followers of no matter what religion tended to judge their own faith by its "uplands", but judged another's belief by its "lowlands". We should try to avoid this error by taking as criteria the teaching and the book. What, then, was the teaching of Islam and what did the Qur'an say? Justice, Mercy, Humility and Righteousness; these were the keys. But faith without action was lifeless. Muhammad gave the Qur'an to the world as revealed to him by God and moreover he lived up to its tenets. After much temptation, persecution and fighting, he and his followers finally triumphed over the idol-worshippers, who held sway in the Arabia of his time. After victory, Muhammad forgave his enemies in what one might describe as a Christian spirit of forgiveness.

In answer to questions, the Imam dealt among other topics with the subject of Pacifism. "Was Christ superior to Muhammad in that he was a Pacifist?" was the question. Mr. Tufail replied that the Jewish law was "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". By Christ's time the Jews, following the letter rather than the spirit of the law, had unmercifully carried this to the extreme. There had been great need, therefore, for Christ's teaching of "turning the other cheek". This in turn was extreme and a good law must have balance. Islam, therefore, taught the Jewish law, but modified it with the mercy which the Jews lacked.

"After all," said Mr. Tufail, "Christians do not follow the teaching of 'turn the other cheek' in their everyday lives, and never have done."

The Imam concluded by reiterating that Islam and Christianity were not enemies, but on the contrary held most beliefs in common.—*Woking News and Mail*, 10th November 1961.

WORLD'S FIRST STAMP WAS ON VIEW

Big Day for Philatelists

A well-attended stamp exhibition organized by the Woking and District Philatelic Society in connection with the Third Annual Convention of the Surrey Philatelic Societies was held on Saturday at the Co-operative Hall.

The Mason Cup is competed for annually by many of the Philatelic Societies in Surrey and for the second year running it was won by Woking, whose team was: Mr. L. Baresch—Netherlands First Issue; Mr. H. Burkin—South Africa 1926; and Mr. D. Wighton—Early Brazil. The judges (Mr. R. A. G. Lea and Mr. W. E. Lea) spoke very highly of many of the entries and expressed their opinion that much of the material in the competition was of international standard.

An official luncheon was held in connection with the Convention and the Exhibition at the Albion Hotel. The Chairman of the Council and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. T. Leam, the Postmaster and the Assistant Postmaster, Mr. R. W. Bullingham and Mr. Mitchell, Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail, the Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Miss Barbara Couper and Mr. Howard Rose were among the guests at this luncheon.

Miss Barbara Couper, the well-known local television actress, opened the exhibition in the afternoon. She spoke about the idea of having prettier stamps for Great Britain. She felt that there were many suitable motifs available if the Post Office decided to be more venturesome, but the Queen's portrait should still appear on all the stamps. Other speakers at the opening were Mr. J. Lea, President of the Woking Philatelic Society, and Colonel F. W. Webb, President of the Federation of Surrey Philatelic Societies.



The Third Annual Convention of the Surrey Philatelic Society was held on Saturday 28th October 1961 at the Co-operative Hall at Woking. In the picture above are (from right to left) Com. G. Bridgmore Brown (Vice-President, Federation of Surrey Philatelic Societies), Col. Francis W. Webb (President, Federation of Philatelic Societies), Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail (Imam, the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking), Miss Barbara Couper (the well-known local television actress), Mr. Howard Rose, and Mr. John Lea, F.R.P.S.L. (President, the Woking and District Society).

Photo by D. Morum.

The Mason Cup was presented by Mr. Ewart Gerrish, O.B.E., F.R.P.S.L., Past President of the Royal Philatelic Society, London. Mr. Gerrish spoke highly of the competition entries and of the exhibition. The cup was received by Mr. H. Burkin, the Hon. Secretary of the Woking Philatelic Society and one of the team of three whose entries had won Woking the cup.

The exhibition held many hundreds of album sheets valued at some thousands of pounds. The Siege of Paris of 1870 frame attracted the attention of many members of the public, as did the general display of covers.

The special postmark issued by the Woking Post Office for mail posted in the exhibition hall also caught the attention of many and the quantity posted exceeded all expectations. In fact, over 250 people wrote from various parts of the British Isles to obtain specimens of this postmark; also requests came from the U.S.A., South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

One frame specially mounted contained a copy of the world's first stamp, the famed One Penny Black of Great Britain, used on the first day of issue, 6th May 1840, together with a cover received on 28th October which had been cancelled with the Mosque postmark of Woking.

A map entitled "The World of Stamps" was shown on one wall of the hall, and this aroused considerable interest, especially as it was produced in the main by two boys, both under 14 years of age.

Altogether it was a most successful day for Woking, and many visitors from other parts of the country went away with a good impression of the exhibition.

* * * *

Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail, the Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, was invited to speak and take part in the discussions held by the following societies :

Friday 22nd September to Sunday 24th September 1961. World Congress of Faiths Annual Conference held at Selwyn College, Cambridge.

Friday 29th September to Sunday 1st October 1961. World Spiritual Council's Annual Conference held at the Spa Hotel, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. The theme of the Conference was "Harmonious Adaptability". The Imam of the Mosque spoke on "Harmonious Adaptability among Religions" in the afternoon of Saturday 30th September. The Rev. A. B. Cole presided over the meeting. He pointed out that whilst Christian Churches had so far got only to the stage when it was a matter for amazed headlines when the head of one branch of Christianity after 400 years of hostility visited another, the World Spiritual Council was far in advance of the times as it brought together in goodwill the members of all approaches to the Spirit.

Mr. Tufail dealt briefly with the problem of the origin of religion, which to him was the result of revelation from God and not an evolutionary process. The world was

becoming one, continued the speaker, scientifically and mechanically, but one should not rush into finding out an immature concept of synthesis but accept the valid differences which exist among religions and seek points of contact and fellowship. In the spiritual domain such possibilities were more frequent than in the field of institutionalized religion. The speaker also compared the moral and spiritual teachings of various religions where the scope of adaptability was greater than in other domains. Mrs. Alice Gilbert, Vice-President of the W.S.C., while giving her impressions of the conference, wrote to the Imam : "Some essence of harmony came over to us all when you spoke. Mr. Cole took the chair. You two had valid differences — big ones — as you stood together at the summit, yet what emanated from you was beyond differences : a flash from *THAT* which cannot be described. In fact it is very difficult to explain what is beyond explanation" (letter dated 19th November 1961).

Tuesday 17th October 1961. Rotary Club of the Isle of Sheppey, Britannia Hotel, Sheerness. Subject : "Islam and Christianity."

Tuesday 24th October 1961. Theocratic Union, Old Woking (see details elsewhere).

Friday 10th November 1961. Islamic Society, Students' Union, University Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham 15. The lecture was arranged by R. S. Mahmud, Secretary of the Society.

Friday 24th November 1961. Netherlands Arab Circle, The Hague, Netherlands. Subject : "Bridging the Gulf between Islam and Christianity." Professor Drewes of Leiden University took the chair.

Sunday 26th November 1961. Reception at Islamitische Ahmadiyyah-Genootschap Europa, 54 Ruychrocklaan, The Hague. Some friends came from Belgium to attend this reception arranged by Mr. G. A. Bashir for Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail.

This is a combined issue for October, November and December.
All subscriptions will be extended for two months. — Manager

PEN PALS

WARISAHMED A. URAIZEE, 286 Salat Wada, Delhi Gate, Ahmedabad 1 (India). Age 21. Hobbies : Stamp collecting, reading, interested in cricket, hockey and basket-ball. Wishes to correspond with Muslims all over the globe.

QAMAR-UL HAQ SIDDIQI, c/o Khateeb Muhammad Bin Qasim Mosque, Plot 116a, Malir Naka, S.M.C.H. Society, Karachi, West Pakistan. Age 19. Science student. Hobbies : Religion, books, literature, science, speaking and writing, games, riding, travelling and general topics. Wishes to correspond with students from any of the following countries : England, Sweden, Austria, West Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, Yugoslavia, France, Canada and the U.S.A.

M. S. ABDULLA, Law Library, Kurunegale, Ceylon. Would like to correspond with Arabic-speaking people, as well as Muslims, particularly of the Middle East, Su'udi Arabia, England, Syria and Jordan.

MOEEZ A. UNWALLA, Unwalla Wadi, Nava Para, Bhavnagar (Saurashtra), India. Age 17. A student of F.Y. Commerce. Hobbies : Collecting quotations, correspondence, world commerce, reading and writing essays and poems, gardening.

M. RIZIR MOWFOOD, 230 Galle Road, Bambalapitiya, Ceylon. A student attending the Royal College. Would like to correspond with new Muslims.

ISMAEL PRICSAYNICS, Wroclaw, ul. B. Pollaka, 2m.35, Poland. Understands English, French, German, Spanish, Turkish and Portuguese well, and a little Arabic and Urdu. Hobbies : View-cards, stamps, books, and especially interested in history and linguistics.

MUHAMMAD SHEIKAPPA, 155 Bankshall Street, Colombo 11, Ceylon. Age 16. Hobbies : Stamps, corresponding, and reading Islamic books.

M. S. ABDULLA, Law Library, Kurunegale, Ceylon. Interested in Arabic language, travel, reading. Prefers correspondence from Su'udi Arabia, Jordan, Syria.



Book Reviews

OMAR: THE EMPIRE BUILDER, by Hamid Ali. Pakistan Press Syndicate, 212 Mitford Road, Dacca, East Pakistan. Pp. 391, price Rs. 7.50 (Sh. 12/-).

Empire and imperialism are words of sinister associations which ill-go with the conquests of early Islam, especially those during the ten-year reign of Omar, the second Caliph. In the first place territorial expansion was never the objective in the wars the Muslims were called upon to wage. These were simply thrust upon them in sheer self-preservation. Omar's own words wishing for a barrier of fire between the Muslims and their neighbours should leave no room for doubt on that point. And secondly, wherever Muslim forces went, they were hailed as liberators from the tyranny of the then rulers. Moreover, the conquered territories were not exploited for the enrichment of their own race or country, as was done by all empire-builders. The Roman and Persian empires toppled before the onslaughts of Islam for the very reason that they symbolized forces of tyranny and exploitation, while Islam was first and foremost a force for human liberation. The advent of Islam meant the exit of a corrupt social order where a handful of the ruling class indulged in a life of luxury and debauchery at the expense of the common man who groaned under their heels. The following extract from the book (pp. 225, 226) should give some idea of how Chosroe Parviz, the Persian emperor, lived :

"His favourite residence of Artemita or Dastagerd was situated beyond the Tigris about 60 miles to the north of the capital. The adjacent pastures were covered with flocks and herds; the paradise or park was replenished with pheasants, peacocks, ostriches, roebucks and wild boars, and the noble game of lions and tigers was sometimes turned loose for the bolder pleasure of the chase; 960 elephants were maintained for the use and splendour of the great King; his tents and baggage were carried into the field by 12,000 great camels, and 8,000 of a smaller size; and the royal stables were filled with 6,000 mules and horses . . . 6,000 guards successively mounted before the palace gates. The service of interior apartments were performed by 12,000 slaves, and in the number of 3,000 virgins, the fairest in Asia, some happy concubine might console her master for the age and indifference of Sira (or Shirin, the best beloved of his wives)" — Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. II, p. 268.

The same was the case with the Courts of Roman emperors. Says the book (p. 226) :

"Commodus had 300 beautiful women and as many boys of every rank and every province in his seraglio, and abandoned scenes of prostitution scorned every restraint of nature and modesty. . . . The pomp and ceremonies of the ostentatious greatness introduced by Constantine, and maintained by his successors, far surpassed the splendour of the Court of Persia."

The Islamic dispensation came as the death-knell of this kind of social order. Here are some snaps of the kind social pattern introduced by Islam. What kind of life did the Head of the State live? This is how the book depicts it (p. 227) :

"The abstinence of Omar was proverbial. Simplicity and duty were his guiding principles. He preached in a gown that

was mended in twelve places. The house he lived in was a small hut of mud and palm leaves, and his food consisted of barley bread or dates. He stressed incessantly the merit and policy of simple living and high morals to his generals, governors and executive officers. 'Beware of Persian luxury both in food and raiment. Keep to the simple habits of your country and God will continue you victorious; depart from them and He will reverse your fortune'."

And Omar saw to it that his Governors and Generals lived up to that standard. One of his most brilliant generals, Khalid, whose military feats won him the title of "Sword of Allah", was once accused of having indulged in the lavishness of Oriental potentates. In appreciation of his services he was appointed Governor of Qinnisrin. At the reception in his honour on his arrival there, a man recited a poem extolling his feats of bravery in quelling the revolt in North Syria. Khalid was so impressed that he gave the man 10,000 dirhams as a reward. When the report reached Medina, Omar despatched Abu Obaidah and Bilal to investigate the allegation, and call Khalid to account for it. This is how the book gives the scene of this court martial of the ace-general of the realm of Islam (pp. 268-9) :

"This was immediately reported by the intelligence service to Omar, who instructed Abu Obaidah to investigate and forgive in case Khalid admits his fault and the impropriety of being so lavish. Failing this the mild and venerable Abu Obaidah was to have him publicly accused. Khalid was too proud to repent or confess his mistake. Abu Obaidah was thus forced to undertake the unpleasant duty of arraigning his valiant colleague publicly. His gracious nature was against this, but he had to execute the order of the Caliph, and Khalid was asked before a congregation assembled in the great mosque of Hems to explain where the large amount given to the poet had come from. Bilal, the Muezzin of the Prophet, repeated the question. Khalid at length yielded. Standing in the pulpit bare-headed and with both hands tied with his own head-gear he announced before the assembly that the money was his own. Bilal at once untied the hands and replaced his helmet on his head, exclaiming, 'We honour thee still, even as we did honour thee before as our greatest Captain'."

Saad, another great general and conqueror, had to go through a similar experience. The Caliph's standing instructions were that the highest officials of the State must be readily accessible to the common people, so that they might keep in touch with their weal and woe, and look to their needs. Sa'ad, when Governor of Kufa, had a sort of castle built for his residence. On receiving the report, Omar at once ordered its demolition. The incident is thus described in the book (pp. 195-6) :

"The poorest man was freely allowed to approach the provincial governors who were repeatedly directed to make themselves accessible to each and every one desirous of meeting them."

"So strict was Omar on this point that the instant he heard of the castle of Sa'ad, a massive building with a huge gate constructed to prevent intrusion from the market place which was very close to the house, he ordered Mohammed-bin-Maslama to start immediately for Kufa and have the entire frontage demolished. The accredited envoy of the Caliph rushed with utmost haste to the new seat of government and calling Sa'ad out of his newly-erected mansion announced to him the

order of Omar: 'It hath been reported to me that thou hast built for thyself a palace and people call it the castle of Sa'ad; moreover, that thou hast reared a gateway betwixt thee and the people. It is not thy castle; rather is it the castle of perdition. Whatsoever is needful to secure the treasury, that thou mayest guard and lock; but the gateway which shutteth out the people from thee, that thou shalt break down.' The order was implicitly obeyed both in word and in spirit. The renowned conqueror of Persia did not dare argue and the edifice which was constructed to secure relief from the noise and tumult of the market was pulled down under his own supervision and the gate was no more."

As a humane ruler to his core, Omar perhaps nowhere appears more at his best than in his historic journey to Jerusalem. After the four-month long siege of that holf of holies of Christianity, the Patriarch, relying upon some old prophecies in the scriptures, offered that the town would surrender on condition that the Caliph in person should be there to take over the city. The Caliph, when apprised by the generals of the Primate's stipulation, readily agreed, and set out from his capital, Medina, for Jerusalem. Now mark this first official visit of a Head of State whose dominions by now embraced a territory greater than that of the greatest empire of the day! Says the book (6. 149):

"Mounted on a red camel, which carried, besides his person, a bag of corn, a bag of dates, a wooden dish and a goatskin full of water, the Caliph issued out of Madina with the blazing sun shining overhead and rode forth on the way to Syria over broad plains, surrounded on all sides by endless sand, over newly-reared sandhills and through valleys dug out of sand. Wherever he halted, at the appointed stages of the trade caravans, after the descending sun, having compassed the heaven, and veiled in the redness of flames, had sunk beyond the burning sand, the company, without distinction, was invited to partake of his homely fare, and the repast was consecrated by the prayer and exhortation of the Commander of the Faithful."

Thus journeying, accompanied by just one attendant, the Caliph reached Jerusalem. He found Khalid along with other leading generals awaiting his arrival at the outskirts of the town. The Caliph was furious when he saw his generals clad in costly costumes, riding on richly caparisoned horses. "What is all this?" he demanded. "Commander of the Faithful," came the reply, "underneath this are our own simple coarse clothes and armour."

Once again the Caliph had to undertake a journey to this part of his dominions. This was necessitated by the plague epidemic on the front which took a toll of 25,000 of the flower of Arab soldiery. This is how Sir William Muir describes this journey in his *Early Caliphate*, as quoted in this book (p. 281):

"The reception met with here brings out well the simplicity of Omar, and his kindly feeling toward the Christians. He journeyed on a camel with small pomp or following; and as he was minded to enter the village unrecognized, he changed places with his servant. 'Where is the Ameer?' cried the eager crowds as they streamed forth from the village to witness the Caliph's advent. 'He is before you,' replied Omar, and he drove his camel on. So they hurried forward, thinking that the great Caliph was beyond, and left Omar to alight unobserved at the house of the bishop, with whom he lodged during the heat of the day."

Omar took the reins of office at the age of 43 in the year 634 C.E., and within ten years, when an assassin's knife cut short his life in 644 C.E., he evolved a regular modern State out of the loosely-knit body-politic that Arabia presented at the death of the first Caliph, Abu Bakr. Indeed there existed none of the institutions that go to make a State — no army, no revenue system, no planned agriculture, no irrigation, no budget, no finance, no accounts department, no system of public education, no orphanages, no customs duty,

no hospitals, no public works department, no police force. It is the wonder of history how this one man, starting from scratch, not only set up the whole of this complex machinery of a State, but actually left a deep imprint of his own on the good working of each. A network of cantonments was spread at all strategic points, irrigation canals were dug, old ones that had fallen into disuse were repaired, schools and hospitals were opened, a regular census of the entire population was prepared, showing adults and children, widows, orphans and old people, and means of subsistence were provided to the destitute from the State treasury.

Once when the country was in the grip of a terrible famine, measures were adopted to import food grains from the dominions of Egypt, Iraq and Syria, and miles-long lines of corn-laden camels came pouring in from all sides. The Caliph vowed not to touch meat, butter or milk so long as there was one man in the country who went without food. This is how the book (p. 273) quotes again this scene of Omar's life from Muir's *Early Caliphate*:

"Crowds of Bedouins, driven by hunger, flocked to Madina and aggravated the distress. Omar, with characteristic self-denial, refused any indulgence which could not be shared with those around him. He took an oath that he would taste neither meat nor butter, nor even milk, until the people at large had food enough and to spare. On one occasion his servant obtained at a great price a skin filled with milk, and another with butter. Omar sent both away in alms. 'I will not eat,' he said, 'of that which costeth much; for how then should I know the trouble of my people, if I suffer not even then as they?' From coarse fare and the use of oil-olive instead of milk and butter, the Caliph's countenance, naturally fresh and bright, became sallow and haggard."

The Caliph would in person go out on a round to see the food situation for himself. The following touching incident, recorded by all historians, is worth quoting in full:

"One night while he was on his usual round in Serar, a suburb of Madina, he saw an old woman busy cooking something and a few children crying continuously in a pathetic strain. Deeply touched by the pitiable condition of the youngsters, Omar went to inquire why the children were so much distressed. The woman burst forth into a rage. She had nothing in the house to cook. The utensil she had put on the hearth contained only water. It was a pretence to console and lure the children to sleep but the sting of hunger had robbed their eyes of the only pacifier. Omar rushed back instantly to Madina accompanied by his slave, Aslam, had the Bait-ul-Mal opened and asked Aslam, who was insistent to carry the load, to put flour, butter, dates and other necessities on his own back. He who was responsible for the welfare of his people would not allow any other to share his burden. Thus laden he repaired to the old woman's tent. The children were still crying for food. The Caliph gave the provisions to the woman and kept the children engaged in play, while Aslam helped her in cooking the meals: and when everyone was fully fed, they took leave of the woman and the frolicking children. Before taking leave of the old woman, the Caliph informed her that she would be receiving the provisions and also a cash stipend regularly for her and the subsistence of the children. This was something unexpected. Flushed with joy, she blessed the Caliph for his kindness, and with tears of gratitude, peared on the tips of her eyelashes, remarked that he, and not Omar, was fit to be the Commander of the Faithful" (pp. 275-6).

Such was Islam's second Caliph, Omar, such was his rule. Never before in history, or since, has the world witnessed this kind of government — a government of the people, by the people, for the people in the truest sense. Fourteen centuries have since elapsed. Much water has flowed under the bridges of history. Man has made tremendous progress. Science and technology have placed hordes of treasures of natural resources at man's disposal. The concept of the common man's good is also emerging

larger and larger. But the pattern of a Welfare State, first of all discovered and implemented by Omar, the Great, within a bare decade, is still a distant cry. Where lies the reason? The world has produced space-men, but it has not been able to produce one Omar.

The book with all its printing defects should be in the hands of every official in Muslim countries. The addition of an index and a map would have greatly added to its utility. Even the name, in the second edition, could be more appropriately changed to *Omar: Builder of the World's First Welfare State*. For, that indeed he was — an empire-smasher rather than an empire-builder.

* * * *

EXODUS, by Leon Uris, Doubleday, Garden City, New York. Copyright 1952, 626 pages.

Probably no book has enjoyed greater popularity and commercial success in America within recent years than Leon Uris's long-winded eulogy of the Zionist State of Israel — *Exodus*. The expensive cloth-bound volume stood at the top of the best-selling books in America for well over a year. The cheap paper-back edition sold hundreds of thousands additional copies. When a prominent Israeli government official commented, "If *Exodus* is to be regarded as literature, it is vulgar; as history it is inaccurate," Leon Uris only replied jubilantly, "Look at the sales figures!" Indeed, the royalties from the sale of *Exodus* combined with the huge profits reaped by the film based upon it has made Leon Uris a millionaire several times over.

The question may well be asked how a novel of such dubious literary merit could possibly elicit nation-wide appeal. A careful study of this book clearly reveals the answer, for *Exodus* is the epitome of the materialistic philosophy which holds not only my own country, but the entire world, in its grip. By materialism I mean the glorification of nationalistic chauvinism, military prowess, and economic prosperity, to the exclusion of all higher moral and spiritual values. An examination of the plot of *Exodus* will amply bear this out.

An American newspaper correspondent assigned to report on the plight of the Jewish refugees in Cyprus takes his lady friend, an American Christian nurse, Kitty Freemont, to visit one of the refugee camps, where she meets a young, handsome and tough official of the Zionist underground army, Ari Ben Canaan, who is trying to promote illegal Jewish immigration into Palestine. No sooner does Kitty meet Ari than she instantly falls in love with him. At the refugee camp Kitty also meets a teen-age orphan, Karen Clement, who, during the Hitler régime, was adopted by a kind Danish Christian family. When the war was over, Karen discovered that the Nazis had slain every member of her family except her father. Although Karen's only wish was to search for him in Palestine, Kitty became so fond of the girl she wishes to adopt her and take her to America.

"O Karen . . . I want so much to see you in saddle shoes and pleated skirts going out to a football game in a cut-down Ford. I want to hear the phone ringing and you giggling and talking to your boy friend. I want you full of delicious nonsense as a teen-age girl should be. . . . There are so many things you are missing. . . . Please Karen . . . please . . ." (p. 425).

But Karen remains adamant, not only because of her father but also because she is in love with a 17-year-old Polish youth named Dov, whose entire family was killed by the Nazis in the Warsaw Ghetto. Dov is determined to join the terrorist underground and take revenge. Karen is

the only person in the world towards whom he shows any affection.

Ari meanwhile prepares 300 orphans to sail on a ship named "Exodus" to Palestine in defiance of British orders. After the British attempt to blockade the ship, all the children go on a hunger strike. Only when Ari announces that the children are about to commit mass suicide in full public view do the British relent.

The tale then flashes back to the background of Ari's father, Barak ben Canaan. After his brother, Akiva, had killed the chief architect of a local Jewish massacre in revenge for his father's death, the two boys decide to flee their home in Russia and walk all the way to Palestine. After some years, both Akiva and Barak become prominent Zionists — Akiva the leader of the terrorist organization and Barak a statesman.

Pages are then devoted to eulogizing the achievements of the Jewish immigrants in Palestine before the main thread of the story continues. Karen finds that her father is indeed alive, but hopelessly insane. Dov joins Akiva's terrorist gang while Kitty becomes the nurse at the orphanage where Karen has settled.

The next portion of the book deals with the Palestine war. Leon Uris glibly summarizes the reasons for Arab opposition to the Zionist State as follows:

"The establishment of Yad El (a Jewish collective settlement) had a tremendous effect upon the Arabs of (neighbouring) Abu Yesha. . . . Barak was true to his agreement and set up special schools for the Arabs to teach them sanitation, the use of heavy machinery and new farming methods. Their school was open to any Arab youngster who would attend. The Yad El doctor and nurse were always at the call of the Arabs. . . .

"The example of the Jews could be disastrous. What if the fellaheen began demanding education, sanitation and medical facilities? What if the fellaheen, God forbid, were to take a fancy to the way the Jews governed themselves by equal votes of both men — and women? It would well wreck the perfect feudal system of the effendis!

"To counter the progress of the Jews, the effendis harped on the ignorance, fears and religious fanaticism of the fellaheen. . . . They (deliberately) maintained tension so that the fellaheen would not come into too close contact with the new ideas" (pp. 272-273).

In a detailed description of the battles which took place during the Palestine war, Leon Uris takes great delight in contrasting the "courage" of the Jews with the "cowardice" of the Arabs.

"Could a half-million ill-armed (Jews) hold back a flood of fifty million hate-crazed Arabs?" (p. 485).

"Ein Gev and Negba, and the hundred other (Jewish) settlements which would not give up, the Palmachniks (Zionist army) who fought for days without food and water, the new immigrants who rushed to the battlelines, the ingenuity employed in place of guns, the raw courage which made extraordinary heroism commonplace — all these stopped the Arabs. There was more. Divine inspiration, the destiny foretold by the ancient prophets (in the Bible), the heritage of a people who had fought for the freedom (two thousand years before), the tradition of King David and Bar Kochba, strength and faith from an unseen source, these too, stopped the Arabs. . . ." (p. 549).

"The Arab people of Palestine had long ago accepted the return of the Jews and were prepared to live in peace and benefit from the progress which had been brought to them after a thousand sterile years. These (Arabs) simply did not want to fight and never had. . . . Arab leaders developed their ignorance for their own wilful purposes. . . ." (pp. 573-574).

After this sample of hackneyed Zionist clichés, the remainder of the book deals with the violence between

1949 almost to the eve of Israel's invasion of Egypt in 1956. Karen, who now intends to marry Dov, goes to a new settlement established to guard Israel's frontiers. This distresses Kitty, who cries out in anguish :

"And in a year (Karen) you will begin to grow old. You will work eighteen hours a day and spend your nights in the trenches. . . . Even the clothes on your back won't belong to you."

"You are wrong, Kitty. Dov and I will have everything."

"Including a quarter of a million kill-crazy Arabs at your throats . . ." (p. 614).

The story ends with the Passover Seder commemorating Moses leading his people from slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land. Just as the ceremony is about to begin, Ari receives word of Karen's death at the hands of Palestinian Arabs from the Gaza Strip. Ari cries out in despair :

"All my life I have watched (the Arabs) kill all I love. They are all gone now . . . all of them. . . . Why must we send children to live in these places? This precious girl, this angel, why did (the Arabs) have to kill her too? . . ."

The years of tension, the years of struggle, of heartbreak, welled up in one mighty surge. Ari lifted his pain-filled face to heaven and raised his fists over his head :

"God! God! Why don't (the Arabs) let us alone! Why don't they let us live! . . ." (p. 624).

As Kitty comforts Ari in his bereavement, he declares his love for her and they decide to marry and devote the rest of their lives to the cause of Zionism.

Throughout *Exodus* verses from the Bible are continually quoted to prove that Zionist Israel is the fulfilment of Divine prophecy. The valour of Zionist fighters is constantly likened to that of the ancient Hebrew warriors. Yet at the same time, Leon Uris shows a deep contempt for all the religious values of Judaism.

"(In the refugee camp on Cyprus, Kitty and Ari) stopped once more to look into a large tent used as a synagogue. . . . (Kitty) stared at the strange sight of old men swaying back and forth reciting weird prayers. To Kitty it seemed another world. Her gaze became fixed on one particularly dirty bearded individual who wept and cried aloud in anguish.

"(Kitty) felt David's hand leading her away. 'He's just an old man,' David said. 'He is telling God that he has lived a life of faith . . . he has kept God's laws, cherished the Holy Torah and kept the covenant in the face of unbelievable hardships. (Now) he asks God to kindly deliver him for being a good man.'

"Those old men in there,' Ari said, 'don't quite realize that the only Messiah that will deliver them is a bayonet on the end of a rifle'" (p. 58).

"Most (of the refugees) Karen thought seemed just as confused by being Jewish as she was. When she had learned enough Hebrew to handle herself, she ventured into the religious compound to observe the weird rituals, the dress and prayer of those people who were truly different. The (Jewish) religion was based on a complex set of laws (which) covered the most minute of subjects such as how to pray on a camel. . . . The vastness of the sea of Judaism can drown a girl of fifteen . . ." (pp. 87-88).

"Sabbath! Sabbath!" A call went up along the streets (of Jerusalem). David put on a small skull cap and led Kitty to the street of Mea Shearim, the Hundred Gates of the Ultra-Orthodox. . . . The men were bearded and wore side curls and fur-brimmed hats and long black satin coats. There were Yemenites in Arabic dress and Kurds, Boharans and Persians in riotous coloured silks. . . . The Mea Shearim was filled with the chanting of prayers and weeping voices of anguished Hasidim who whipped themselves into a furore. . . . What strange room, what strange people. Kitty watched near-hysterical men cluster about the Sefer Torah wailing and moaning. She saw the angelic faces of Yemenites who sat cross-legged on pillows softly praying. She saw old men weav-

ing back and forth emitting a stream of Hebrew in monotone from decrepit prayer books. How different and how far away they all were from the handsome men and women of Tel-Aviv!

"I wanted to bring you here (Kitty) because I know that Ari wouldn't. My sabras despise them. They do not . . . bear arms. They shove an ancient brand of Judaism down our throats. They are a force of reaction against what we are trying to do. Yet when one lives in Jerusalem as I have, we learn to tolerate them and even appreciate the horrible things in the past that could drive men to such fanaticism'" (pp. 242-243).

Proof of the author's utter contempt for the laws of Judaism can be found in the following passages :

"(Ari and Kitty) turned away together gazing at the beauty and proud of the achievements Yad El represented. . . . They stopped by a hog pen where a sow lay panting in the mud as a dozen gluttonous pigs fought to get at her teats. 'Zebras!' Ari said.

"If I wasn't an old zebra expert, I'd swear I was looking at pigs,' Kitty answered.

"Sh-sh . . . not so loud' (hushed Ari). 'There might be someone from the Land Fund eavesdropping. We aren't supposed to raise . . . zebras . . . on Jewish national land. Up at Gan Dafna the children call them pelicans. At the Kibbutz they are more realistic. They speak of them as comrades!" (p. 350).

Typical of the overwhelming majority of Zionists, Leon Uris equates religious orthodoxy with superstition and adherence to Divine Law with reactionary fanaticism. Piety is condemned as a cardinal sin. It is noteworthy that not a single Zionist hero in *Exodus* is portrayed as an observant Jew.

The Bible is regarded as a Jewish history book rather than a revelation of Divine Law. In the same way the Jewish holidays lose all religious significance as their meaning is distorted to suit the chauvinistic ends of secular nationalism.

Perhaps the most nauseating passage in the entire book is, after shamelessly flouting every law of Jerusalem, Karen has the nerve to say :

"Can you see it, Kitty? This little land was chosen for us because it is the crossroads of the world on the edge of man's wilderness. . . . This is where God wants His people to be, on the frontiers to stand and guard His laws which are the corner-stone of man's moral existence. . . ."

"Israel stands with its back to the wall!" Kitty cried out. "It always has stood that way and it always will . . . with savages trying to destroy you!"

"Oh no, Kitty, no. Israel is the bridge between darkness and light!" (pp. 614-615).

Hypocrisy could scarcely sink to more abysmal depths. No people could have less respect for moral and spiritual values than the characters in this book. The end justifies the means if they further the cause of Zionism.

"On the ninth day, a dozen Arabs slipped into Rosh Pinna in the middle of the night and made off with several hundred pounds of grain. Barak was standing guard and saw them coming and observed every move they made. He could easily have caught them red-handed but it was no crime to catch a bedouin stealing. Barak had a different strategy in mind.

"The next morning Barak rode off once more for Suleiman's camp. This time he was armed — with his ten-foot bull whip. He galloped into the camp at full speed and made directly for Suleiman's tent and dismounted. The Sudanese slave came out and smiled sweetly and welcomed Barak and invited him to enter. Barak hit the slave with the back of his hand as though he were flicking a fly from his arm and sent him sprawling to the ground.

"Suleiman,' his big voice boomed out for the whole camp to hear, 'step outside . . .'

"Go on,' Barak challenged softly, 'call all your nephews. Your honour is no greater than a pig's!' . . . Suleiman's very

honour was at stake. He drew one of his silver daggers and with a blood-curdling shriek, charged at the red-bearded giant. Barak's bull whip whistled out! It wrapped around the Arab's feet, picked him up and sent him smashing to the earth. Barak brought the whip down on Suleiman's back with such . . . speed and strength that the snap echoed through all the hills. . . . 'Suleiman, if you and your kinsmen ever again set foot in our fields, I will cut your body apart with this whip and feed the pieces to the jackals!'" (pp. 243-244).

Barak is thus portrayed as a valiant hero for meting out such treatment to hungry bedouins who dared take food from land which was rightfully theirs.

Here is another illustration of the "understanding" and "compassion" the Arabs receive at the hands of the Zionists:

"Ari pointed to a small village some fifteen kilometers inside Lebanon.

"Tonight we shall destroy it," Malcolm said calmly.

"That night a patrol of eight men and two women crossed over from Ha Mishmar into Lebanon with Malcolm in command. He led them singing a Psalm (of David) and lecturing them on the nobility of their mission. . . .

"The Major led a four-man squad right up to the suspected headquarters. Four grenades were lobbed into the huts and followed by rifle fire. According to Malcolm's prediction there was panic. He coolly drove the (Arab) thugs right at Ari's ambush. It was all over within ten minutes.

"Two prisoners were taken to the Major. 'Where are your guns hidden?' he asked the first one in Arabic. The Arab shrugged. Malcolm slapped the Arab's face and repeated the question. This time the Arab pleaded his innocence as Allah as his judge. Malcolm calmly took out his pistol and shot the Arab through the head. . . . The second Arab quickly revealed the location of the arms. . . .

"Ari went out with P. P. Malcolm on a dozen more (such) raids deep into Lebanon. Each raid was more successful than the last . . ." (pp. 297-299).

These two examples demonstrate the author's clumsy attempts to disguise Zionist violence behind the façade of self-defence. To enlist the reader's sympathy, everything Arab is described in the most derogatory terms.

Even more sickening is the constant reference to the Bible. Zionism is thus represented as the fulfilment of Divine destiny for the Jewish people. Nothing could be farther from the truth. According to the Torah and the Talmud, the Jews would remain God's chosen people only so long as they adhered to His sacred law. In other words, religion is the sole *raison d'être* of the Jewish people. Like every other modern nationalism, Zionism replaces the supremacy of God with the supremacy of race and the all-powerful secular State. In his detailed account of the horrors Nazism inflicted upon the Jews of Europe, Leon Uris is blind to the fact that Zionism is merely another branch of the same tree — the tree whose roots have ensnared the entire earth in their deadly grip — the tree of modern materialism.

"The Arab people need leaders who will bring them civil liberties, education, medicine, land reform, equality . . . not hate-filled religious fanatics . . . whose entire thinking is in the Dark Ages. . . . They need leaders with the courage to face the real problems of ignorance, illiteracy and disease instead of . . . promoting the evil idea that the destruction of Israel will . . . cure . . . all their problems. . . . Today . . . Israel stands as the greatest single instrument for bringing the Arab people out of the Dark Ages" (p. 577).

Like Zionists the world over, Leon Uris is convinced that sheer economic, technological and military superiority fully justify grabbing a country by force from its rightful owners.

"The most powerful weapon the Yishuv possessed (in the United Nations) was truth. It was the truth . . . seen through

the thin veil of Arab deception of Arab failure of advance culturally, economically and socially from the Dark Ages, the truth apparent in the Jewish cities that had sprung from sand and the Jewish fields that had been made to grow from desolation, the truth of industry and ingenuity, the truth implicit in the displaced persons (refugee) camps, of the humanity of the Jewish case" (p. 476).

The most powerful weapon Leon Uris possessed was his ability to convince his hundreds of thousands of uncritical readers that white is black and black is white.

MARGARET MARCUS.

* * * *

WOMEN OF ISLAM, by Assia Djebar. Translated by Jean MacGibbon. Published in 1961 by Andre Deutsch Ltd., 105 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1. Price 10/6 net.

It is refreshing that Assia Djebar, a Muslim woman of the East, should write to defend, or explain, her position. One does not need to agree with her — indeed the complexity of the problems confronting an educated Eastern woman in this century makes it difficult for two people to share entirely similar opinions on the matter, but this is at least one woman who is proud to consciously submit herself, in part, to her heritage.

The writer appears to cover most aspects of a woman's life as influenced by Islam, and by Westernized living, in a satisfactory manner. I would, however, query her interpretation of the Qur'an's reference to the veiling of women. She takes the Qur'an's reference literally, yet chooses to conceive the reference to polygamy in a different light, recommending it to be taken "in the spirit" rather than by the letter.

The photographs are excellent and, in one or two cases, poetic in nature. The text accompanying the first photograph detracts even more from the Qur'anic interpretation of its primary function, which briefly is for the preservation of chastity and modesty. The text on the other hand points out how more beguiling a woman can be to a man when veiled:

"Almost entirely shrouded, their faces hidden, the women of Islam are nuns of the desert. The Bedouin on his camel sees them in the glimmer of a mirage. They are the creatures of man's imagination, and man means to preserve their mystery and their secret: he sees them as oases, as fruit to be plucked, whose outer shell speaks the language of love.

"Hidden behind their veils, like watchers behind the battlements of a stronghold, they transmit erotic messages to men. Every fold of a robe, every flutter of a veil, is a sign, a gesture, a murmur. There is a whole code of coquetry, far more subtle than that of the women of the West who have nothing to hide behind but dark glasses."

In the transliteration of the Arabic words no uniformity has been kept. *Chahada* for *shahada* (p. 15), *ichq* for *ishq*, *quoraich* for *Quraysh* (pp. 24, 25) and many other words lack the proper transliteration familiar to the English-reading public. *Muhammad* has been spelt sometimes as Mohammed (p. 24) and sometimes as Mahomet (caption plate No. 1). Ibn Arabi has been spelt as Ibn Arabi (p. 27). Although the name of the book is *Women in Islam*, at places the word "Mohammedanism" is also used for Islam. These lapses unfortunately bring down the literary quality of the book. At places serious mistakes of lack of proper knowledge are also found. Opposite to plate 59 it has been mentioned:

"According to the ancient Koranic custom, baby girls should be buried alive as soon as they are born — and though this custom has long been repudiated, its influence lingers."

The very thing which the Qur'an condemned has been put down as "ancient Koranic custom". Is it a mistake of the

translator (the book was originally published in French) or the author herself, or perhaps she wanted to say that the "ancient custom according to the Qur'án . . ."

The West, in general, is a personification of material living, while the East leans more generally towards mystical and spiritual attainment. They can learn from each other, but wisdom is required in choosing the ingredients aimed at the most satisfactory result. The ultimate wisdom must, I feel, be shown by woman. In her lies the key to spiritual and bodily morality. In her lies the strength of the community, and hence the strength of the world.

Mrs. J. WYATT.

* * * *

ISLAM AND THE WORLD, by Abul Hassan Ali Nadawi. Translated into English by Muhammad Asaf Qidwai. Published by the Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, Lahore. Pp. 196, price Rs. 4.00.

Islam and the World was originally written in Arabic and published in Cairo in 1950 for the Academy of Research, Translation and Publications in Egypt. It was a great success immediately with the critics and the general reading public in all the Arabic-speaking countries. Its Urdu translation, from which the English version, under review, has been prepared, was produced in India in 1954 in response to persistent demand. The author of the book is the Rector of Nadwat-ul-Ulama, Lucknow, and one of the leading authorities on orthodox Islam.

Islam and the World belongs to the small class of thoughtful and thought-provoking books — Amir Arsalan's *Islam at the Crossroads* being the other notable contribution to this class — which inquires into the factors responsible for the rise and decline of Muslims, studies the impact of Islam on the world and intelligently discusses the role of Islam in the world of today and tomorrow. Maulana Nadawi's book provides a rational and historical refutation of the charge often made from several quarters that it is Islam which is responsible for the present backwardness of the Muslims. The aim of the book, as Dr. Qidwai has pointed out in the translator's note, is "to stir the Muslims to an appreciation of Islam's glorious role in the story of human progress and to promote in them thereby a desire to look into themselves with a view to finding out how far they have been true to their mission and duty towards the world".

The learned author opens his book with a scholarly account of the religious, social, moral and political state of the pre-Islamic world, particularly on the eve of the appearance of the Prophet Muhammad. The wealth of material gathered by the author about the conditions in the Roman Empire, Persia, India, North-West Europe, Egypt and Arabia in the sixth century of the Christian era is indeed impressive. An unprejudiced reader of these pages, who believes that God has been guiding and saving human beings by sending prophets, is sure to be convinced that that was the time for the appearance of the Universal Prophet. The book then goes on to describe the amazing revolution — the greatest in the history of mankind — brought about by the Prophet of Islam. The Prophet was not a political leader or an ordinary reformer. Every section of the degenerate humanity, every aspect of the vicious civilizations of those times demanded reform and rebuilding, and only a universal prophet, inspired and guided by God, could have saved the world from chaos and total annihilation towards

which it was fast heading. An ordinary reformer, acting according to his own light, might have concentrated all his energies on correcting a single social malady, and even then might not have succeeded. A political leader would have tried to weld Arabia into one country and the Arabian tribes into one nation, with himself at their head, and aimed at building a secular empire, like that of Rome and Persia, for his own personal glory and for the benefit of his countrymen at the expense of other nations. But the Prophet Muhammad, as Maulana Nadawi points out, did no such thing. He was a preacher of the Divine Word, a Warner and a Bearer of Glad Tidings. He was the "Lustrous Lamp". He had come to emancipate men from the worship of imaginary gods and of creatures like themselves by calling them to submit to the One True God, the Loving Creator of all the worlds. He had come to rescue humanity from the dungeon of petty desires by working out its evolution in the boundless spaces of the heavens and the earth; and to deliver it from the tyranny of decayed religions to the bounteousness of Islam, to check evil and promote good deeds and to prohibit what was dirty and foul in all spheres of life and to sanction what was clean and wholesome. He, therefore, did not address himself to any particular country or community. He made the whole human race his concern. He did not aim at a partial or limited reform, but gave mankind the complete message of life and hope in this world and in the next.

The Prophet began his mission of rescuing humanity by bringing about a psychological change, a transformation of consciousness and outlook of the people. Once this had been achieved, other changes were bound to follow. A living faith in God created new men and a new *ummat*. Having reorientated the outlook of the people, the Prophet had little difficulty in transforming the character and way of life of the people and in introducing his tremendous social reforms.

The book under review may be compared to Maulana Muhammad 'Ali's *The Living Thoughts of the Prophet Muhammad*, for the latter also describes the transformation of character and the unparalleled social reforms covering all fields of life brought about by the Prophet by first infusing a living faith in the One Living God in the hearts of his followers. But Maulana Muhammad Ali's book differs from the book under review in that *The Living Thoughts of the Prophet Muhammad* goes on to give details of the Islamic teachings regarding the oneness of humanity, the dignity of manhood, the equality of the sexes, the service of humanity, charity, character-building, wealth, work and labour, home life and the State. Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadawi, on the other hand, proceeds to describe the features of the civilization produced by Islam and the eras of Muslim glory and decadence. He further contrasts the spirit of the Islamic civilization with the spirit of the Western civilization. The fact is that while Maulana Muhammad Ali's book was written primarily for non-Muslims to make them see Islam as a universal and complete religion which fully satisfies the spiritual, moral and social needs of all peoples and all ages, Maulana Nadawi's book has been written mainly for Muslims who are either abandoning the Islamic social programme altogether in favour of the Western way of life or who would like to change Islam to be in accord with the transient fashions of the time. The book under review has succeeded in showing that because of its ability to strike a harmonious balance between the world of faith and the world of action, Islam has never proved to be a barrier to progress and science. History cannot cite the

instance of any other religion that has given such encouragement to scientific progress as Islam did. But Islam never encouraged the use of scientific knowledge for destructive purposes, as the modern West is doing. As pointed out by the learned author, the Islamic view is that "the real purpose of science is to remove hindrances in the way of true development of man's personality, by harnessing the forces latent in nature in such a way as to broaden life and make it rich in all its aspects".

In his analysis of the Western civilization, Maulana Nadawi follows closely Muhammad Asad Leopold Weiss's discussion of the subject in his justly famous book, *Islam at the Cross-roads*. The Maulana traces the springs of the Western civilization to ancient Greece and Rome and enumerates materialism, utilitarian ethics, search for sensual pleasure and narrow and exaggerated nationalism as the chief characteristics of the Western civilization. He rightly points out that even Christianity got paganized when it reached Europe. The religious life in the West presented the two opposite spectacles of futile monasticism and cruel indulgence in sensual pleasures and lust for power, perhaps as a result of the separation of the things of God and the things of Caesar and the opposition between science and religion as conceived by the Church.

One of the brightest features of the book is the author's discussion of what he calls the principles of dynamism in Islam, viz., *ijtihad* and *jihad*. *Ijtihad* had been defined as the ability to cope with the ever-changing pattern of life's requirements, while this is how the learned author explains *jihad* :

"*Jihad*, in Islamic terminology, means to strive to one's utmost for what to one is the noblest object on earth. There can be nothing nobler for a Muslim than the earning of God's pleasure through making a complete submission to His will. For this a long and sustained inner struggle is required against all those false deities that may lay claim to his spiritual allegiance, as well as against all those whims and desires that may try to lure him away from the fold of goodness and piety. When this has been attained, it becomes his moral responsibility to exert himself for the betterment of his fellow-beings and the establishment of Divine Sovereignty over the world around him."

Muslims remained great and at the forefront of progress as long as they exercised *ijtihad* and carried on *jihad* against the evils within them and the forces of injustice, cruelty and corruption outside them. But as soon as they abandoned these twin principles of progress they began to decline and were eclipsed by the Western nations.

It must be pointed out that, in spite of his learning and sincere devotion to Islam, the author of *Islam and the World* has shown poor appreciation of the moral and spiritual strength of the religion of the Prophet by referring to it, on page 90, as a religion dependent on the State and, on several occasions, by equating the glory of Islam with military triumphs. In chapter 4 of *Islam and the World* the learned author throws the whole blame for the decadence of Muslims on the rulers that seized power after the four righteous Caliphs. The fact is that the '*Ulema*, the class to which the author himself belongs, were as much responsible for the decline of the Muslims as the rulers. With a few worthy exceptions, the '*Ulema* abandoned the two principles of dynamism in Islam. They lacked the faith and courage to carry on what the Prophet had described as the most excellent *jihad*, i.e., to criticize and oppose an unjust ruler, and further declared the 'doors of *ijtihad* to be closed, which resulted in the stagnation and decline of Muslim thought and institutions. It is now encouraging to

find a leading *Alim* of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent advocating the twin principles of *ijtihad* and *jihad* of forms other than an armed struggle against non-Muslims.

The faults of the book are few and far between. On the whole it is a valuable contribution to the efforts now being made to bring about a renaissance of Islam. Its value lies in its ability to convince the readers as to their failure to live up to it. *Islam and the World* should help kindle in the hearts of the Muslim readers that flame of faith which had once enabled the followers of Islam to contribute such a glorious chapter to the book of man's social and cultural advancement.

* * * *

CHRISTOMATHIA BAIDAWIANA: THE LIGHT OF INSPIRATION AND SECRET OF INTERPRETATION, by Rev. Eric F. F. Bishop, M.A.; Jackson, Son & Co., Glasgow. Pp. 60.

This is an English translation of the chapter "Yusuf" with its commentary as given in *al-Baidawi*. The object of this painstaking work has been stated in these words :

"Surah Yusuf has probably always been one of the more interesting Quranic chapters both because in itself it is a connected whole, and equally because one of the more famous characters of the Old Testament who naturally figures in the New, as in the speech of Stephen and the Epistle to the Hebrews. That is to say, as Stephen and Paul have imagined that Jesus Christ's character is in likeness of Joseph, therefore in the chapter Yusuf of the Qur'an Jesus's life has been drafted in the guise of Joseph."

We are quite unable to understand this "Christomathia Baidawia"! It is as strange to us as the myth of the Magis who came far from the East to prostrate before the baby Jesus lying in the manger, while Mary the mother of God and Joseph both just kept standing, finger in their mouth, and did not bow before the newly-born god, nor in their life did they believe in him in spite of angels coming to them. Jesus, in the whole space of his life, never claimed that he was in the likeness of Joseph. What is more, there is no point in God or the Son of God claiming to be in the likeness of a man. It would rather be derogatory to God to say that He is in the likeness of a certain man. The first interpreter of the Qur'an is the Prophet Muhammad. He never said that in this chapter of the Qur'an the character of Jesus has been revealed. Instead of this, it is clearly said : "Verily in Joseph and his brethren are signs for the inquirers". By inquirers are meant people who inquired about the Prophet Muhammad, who was at the time being persecuted most severely by the people of Makkah. They are told in plain words that the story of the Prophet and his opponents was a repetition of that of Joseph and his brothers. According to the Christian dogma the Jews were not brothers of Jesus, nor did they ever show repentance before Jesus as did the brethren of Joseph before him, saying : "By God! God has indeed chosen thee over us, and we were certainly sinners." And they further said : "O our father, ask forgiveness of our sins for us, surely we are sinners." Such things never happened in the case of Jesus and the Jews. Nor did Jesus ever say to the Jews : "No reproof be against you this day. Allah may forgive you, and He is the most merciful of those who show mercy" (The Qur'an, 12 : 91, 92, 97). It was the Prophet of Islam of whom it is related :

"The Prophet took hold of the two sides of the gate of the Ka'bah on the day of the conquest of Makkah and said to the Quraish, How do you think I should treat you? They said :

We hope for good, a noble brother and the son of a noble brother. Then he said: I say as my brother Joseph said: No reproof be against you this day."

There is just one saying that is attributed to Jesus, viz., "Father! Forgive them; for they know not what they do." But this is a saying which none of the three gospels — Matthew, Mark and John — has recorded. It is not found even in the old authentic manuscripts of Luke. Moreover it is quite contrary to Jesus' other sayings:

"But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me" (Luke 19:27).

The second point of the author of "Christomathia" worth noting is:

"The variants as between the account of Joseph in the Qur'an and that in Genesis have often been examined, as will be evident from the article on 'Joseph' in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. But not only this, for there are evidences that the story of Joseph captured the imaginative folklore of the Near East, with the result that some details which figure in Islamic sources are not always in the Hebrew canonical writings, but can be traced to extra canonical sources."

These lines mean that in the author's opinion the source of the Qur'an is not divine, but that it has been taken from the Old Testament and some extra hidden canonical writings. This is a baseless allegation. This kind of criticism has been applied to the Gospels by some scholars. They think the Gospel writers borrowed almost all the sermons, parables and similes from the Buddhist canons.

The Qur'an has unshakable proof of its divine origin, as well as of its purity. Here are some of them which are provided by this very chapter, "Yusuf".

This chapter was revealed at Mecca in the second year before the Hijrah. Every chapter of the Qur'an is marked as Makkiyah or Madniyyah chapter, i.e., it was revealed in the Prophet's Meccan life or Medina period. These words are of great importance to the student of the Qur'an. The chapter "Yusuf" is a Makkan one. It was revealed when the wonderful success which crowned the Prophet's latter years must have seemed, to every human understanding, quite impossible. At that time he was as one who, for the love of God, had cut himself off from the comforts of old friendships and was looked upon as a kind of madman by the great majority of those who once respected him. His humble followers were being persecuted, tortured, murdered, and his own life was in constant danger. It was in such darkest hour of his life that this chapter was revealed to him. The first three verses of this chapter as well as its concluding section point out the purpose which underlies the narration of the story of Joseph. It is not a mere story-telling. It is a prophecy foretelling the ultimate triumph of the Prophet, who, like Joseph, was to be turned out of his native city, and also the final submission of those who were planning against his very life.

The Rev. Bishop is an Arabic scholar, but strangely he renders the Qur'anic word *qasas* as stories: "We recount to thee the best of the stories" (page 11). He has confused the word *qassa* with another Arabic word *qissa*. The plural of *qissa* is *qisas*, while the plural of *qassa* is *qasas*. *Qissa* means "a story", but *qassa* means "he followed, followed after his track or footsteps, in pursuit, endeavoured to trace him, or track him". It is absolutely wrong to translate it as story.

The Qur'an itself in so many places contradicts this objection of disbelievers in the words:

"Those who disbelieve say: This is naught but stories of the ancients" (6:25; 8:31; 16:24; 23:83).

"And they say: Stories of the ancients, which he has got written, so they are read out to him morning and evening" (25:5; 27:68).

"When our messages are recited to him, he says: Stories of those of yore. We shall brand him on the nose" (68:15-16).

"When our messages are recited unto him, he says: Nay, but that which they have earned is rust upon their hearts" (85:13).

The object of this series of publications has been stated by the author in the words:

"A further and heartfelt word of gratitude is due to the Trustees of the Cargenie and Spalding Trusts for very generous help towards the publication of this work. In these days when Islam and Christendom of the West are closer than they have been probably since the Crusades, co-operation of this nature is both appreciated for its own sake and valuable as an example needed in this particular field of study" (p. 8).

Any attempt at promoting better understanding between Christians and Muslims is indeed very commendable. But this must not be at the cost of truth, which the present bid to fit in the Qur'anic chapter "Joseph" (Yusuf) with Jesus Christ so palpably involves. This kind of far-fetched interpretation of the scriptures by Christian apologists are the subject of another chapter of the Qur'an entitled "The Spider". The subject matter of this chapter is that man-made false beliefs will not stand the test of time, and will be swept away before the strong current of truth. Trust in man-made gods is here compared with a spider's web to express the nature of its extreme frailty. It may prosper for a time, but no sooner the light of criticism and research is brought to bear upon it than it vanishes and leaves no trace behind. This parable is applied to the oft-shifting basis of the Church creed.

The spider's web has always been regarded as a fit description of the type of man given to self-made fancies and illusions, in spite of all the pains the spider takes with construction, and all the delicate beauty of the finished structure. The explanation lies in the Arabic name of this particular insect. In Hebrew the spider's name is *akkabish*, in Greek it is *arneia* and in Sanskrit its name is *urna nabhi*. All these classical names contain no clue to the genesis of the names. They have no semantic philosophy. They only designate that the spider is a spinner who spins her web. The Arabic name *ankabut* is a contraction of *ank al-buyut* — meaning one who constructs its house out of itself. The spider takes no material from outside to construct its house as other birds and animals generally do. It builds its home from a material within itself. That is why people who make their gods with their own hands are likened to a spider. That is what present-day Christianity has been doing. Cobwebs are among frailest and most evanescent things in nature. They are always being torn and brushed or blown away, and the spiders are for ever reconstructing them; and so are some religions for ever seeing their imaginings proved false; they are constantly reconstructing them on other supports, thinking now it is on a stronger framework. That is what the attempt to read a reference to Jesus in chapter "Yusuf" amounts to.

As a matter of fact the tracing of Jesus' genealogy to Joseph is itself purely fanciful, spun around prophecies in Genesis (49:10, 22; 48:15; Deut. 33:13-17; Chron. I, 5:1-2) as to the advent of "Shiloh" or "Shilom", whom the Jews expected to appear from the line of Joseph. Unfortunately both the tribes of the house of Joseph

(Ephraim and Manssah) abandoned the religion of Israel and joined the polytheists. After their apostasy the Israelites despaired of the fulfilment of the prophecy regarding "Shilom" to be a descendant of Joseph. But the Christian priests seized upon it, and spun out a suitable genealogy for Jesus so as to make the prophecies fit him. On the one hand, Jesus was shown to have descended from Judah, the elder son of Jacob, and on the other, his father was named

Joseph, thereby proving to their own satisfaction that the Biblical prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus.

This is every whit what the Qur'an describes as a spider's web-weaving, out of pure self-imagination, without any substance in reality. The Joseph of the Qur'an is a complete prototype of the life story of the Prophet Muhammad, which can be proved on the basis of no less than twenty points of analogies between the two. But this is outside the scope of a book review.



RESERVED SEATS IN CHURCH

21 King's Road,
Mexborough,
Yorkshire.

Sir,

Mr. Andrews writes of the prevalence of family pews and of certain practices in some churches.

The late Sir Francis Younghusband, explorer and mystic, told me that when a former Prince and Princess of Wales visited India, gilded chairs were reserved for their attendance at divine service. A Muslim leader protested and said to Sir Francis that there should be no special seats and places at a religious service: all are equal in the sight of God. Islam means surrender to the One without second. As Christians we may learn the lesson of humility.

Yours faithfully,

GEORGE HARRISON.

The Guardian, 11th September 1961.

* * * *

A MISUNDERSTANDING REMOVED

Rev. R. J. Flowers, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Dear Brother-in-Islam,

Thanks for your letter of the 20th. It was interesting to read about your visit to Glasgow.

As regards your query as to a new prophet, you will find the answer on the very first page of every issue of *The Islamic Review*. If you open any copy with you and have a look at page 3, where the reading matter begins you will find up at the top in Arabic this very declaration. At the top is "Bismillah" in Arabic, the second line is that the Prophet Muhammad is "Khatam-an-Nabiyyeen" — i.e., the last of the prophets. Underneath these Arabic lines you find the translation into English, which reads thus:

"Muhammad is the messenger of God and the last of the Prophets."

So you will see the critics of Woking on this point are not telling the truth. They are swayed by their own prejudices.

Woking represents the most enlightened interpretation of Islam. One of its basic principles is to set its face against all sectarian tendencies among Muslims. And since most Muslims, unfortunately, put more values on their sectarian loyalties, they fail to appreciate the liberal outlook of Woking, which is really the true Islamic outlook. I hope this explains the position, so far as this mission is concerned. Its doors are open to Muslims of all schools and sects, without discrimination.

It is really a shame that there should still be slavery in some Muslim countries to which you have called attention. If you could send me an issue of *The People* carrying this particular article, I will write a reply for publication to put the true teaching of Islam on the question of slavery. The difficulty is that some Muslim theologians do think that way. That is another typical instance where Woking does not see eye to eye with so many other schools of thought in Islam. In a way Woking is different to the common hide-bound outlook of Islam in vogue among some Muslim theologians. But the divergence is the direction of a return to the true spirit of the teachings of Islam. The role of Woking, so far as the West is concerned, is to dispel misunderstandings about Islam and present a true picture of the Faith. But some of these misunderstandings are the creation of such practices of Muslims themselves as you have referred to, and, as such, Woking does not shirk the duty of playing the reformist role, disabusing the minds of Muslims themselves on so many wrong attitudes which cut across the very basic things in the message of Islam.

One God, one Prophet, one Qur'an — these are the so many cornerstones of the universal brotherhood of Islam and Woking upholds these, setting its face against any trends that militate against these.

24th November 1961. Yours sincerely,

MUHAMMAD YAKUB KHAN,
Director, Woking Muslim Mission.

NO PHYSICAL ASCENSION

41 Brownrigg Street,
Kandy, Ceylon.

28th November 1961.

The *fatawah* of the Rector of al-Azhar University, Cairo, denying the bodily ascension of Jesus (on whom be peace!), in *The Islamic Review* for September 1961, has the support of contemporary historical evidence.

Emil Ludwig, in his book *The Son of Man*, gives the following explanations for the disappearance of Jesus's body that were on the people's tongues immediately after the event:

"Next day, all Jerusalem has heard the news. A hundred rumours fly through the city. What to believe? Some say that Pilate has regretted giving Jesus' body to his friends, and has had it hidden. A second story is that the priests have stolen the corpse, lest the multitude should idolise it. A third notion is that the gardener must be at the bottom of what has happened, being afraid that a great multitude at the tomb would trample his flowers. According to a fourth version some of the rascals who plunder tombs of anything they can get money for must have been at work. A fifth theory is that of those who say that no one has died after only three hours on the cross; that the Nazarene's disciples have revived Jesus from apparent death, and have got him away into safe hiding. The priests go to Pilate, berate him for being so pliable, and foretell endless troubles now that the prophet's followers have been allowed to steal the body in order to tell the people that their master has risen from the dead."

That is conclusive evidence that even contemporary public opinion in Jerusalem believed in the disappearance of Jesus' body from the tomb as the work of his own disciples.

Yours truly,

M. M. ANSARI.

* * * *

JESUS CHRIST AND MUHAMMAD

Berwyn,
The Park,
Gt. Barton,
Bury St. Edmunds.

23rd October 1961.

Dear Sir,

In the August 1961 issue of *The Islamic Review* your correspondent Mr. K. H. Mumtaz makes some very pertinent and not ill-timed remarks as to the presentation of the name of the Prophet Muhammad, in its correct lingual garb, when presented to the world in Western, and principally English, alphabetic characters.

This is by no means a "new thing", nor is it to be ascribed only to such rendering of the name as current in Arabia over the full lifetime of the last and greatest of all prophets (Peace be upon him!). Even the spelling and pronunciation of the word *Jehovah* has not been consistent.

Moreover, it is safe to say that not one of the prophets sent as a Messenger of God to Israel ever held such nomenclature as bestowed upon them in these Anglicised so-called "translations" of either the Old or New Testaments!

For roughly the 1,400 years covering the time from Moses to Jesus Christ, we are presented in the Old

Testament with a whole string of "names" purporting to be the original "names" of Israelitish prophethood. For the most part they passed through the hands of "translators" who gave them a rendering quite foreign in spirit either to the original or classical Hebrew, or the Aramic vernacular dialect held by the inhabitants of Aram, the territory extending from the west bank of the Euphrates to the Great Sea and Mediterranean.

But perhaps the very greatest of all anomalies, in that way, is the grotesque nomenclature bestowed upon the last great Israelitish prophet by the writers who produced the "New Testament" in Greek and named the Great Prophet of Nazareth as "Jesus Christ", an absurd rendering in would-be English of the Greek nomenclature Jesus Kristus.

And so it has stood for nigh on 500 years in English New Testaments!

In true or classical Hebrew he would have been known as Joshua, or Yesua ben Yusuf, Yusuf, misnamed "Joseph" in English New Testaments.

The Qur'an allies or unites the Great Nazarene to his mother, and so he appears in the Qur'an, and rightly, as "Yesu Ibn Miriam".

The holy wisdom portrayed in the Qur'an and inspired by the Almighty to fall from the lips of Muhammad (a poor unlettered "ummi" of the Arabian desert) proved to be years ago of sufficient value to direct the present writer's steps unto the fold of Islam.

Yours sincerely,

AHMAD P. ROBINSON,

Lt.-Com. (E) R.N., Retd.

* * * *

GIFT OF GOD

368 Merton Road,
Southfields,
London, S.W.18.

22nd October 1961.

Dear Sir,

The Archbishop of Wales, Dr. Edwin Morris, said in a newspaper last September that alcohol was a gift of God, but, in fact, it is a man-made *gift* (German: poison) given to man. There is no mention in the Scriptures that it was given as a gift by God. On the contrary, God says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ
رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

"O you who believe, intoxicants . . . are only an uncleanness, the devil's work: shun it that you may succeed" (The Qur'an, 5:90).

To the one who still persists in calling it God's gift I may say: "Oh! pilgrim, I'm afraid you won't reach Jerusalem, for the road you've taken leads to Central Asia."

Yours sincerely,

M. S. DURRANI.

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