

The  
*Islamic Review*

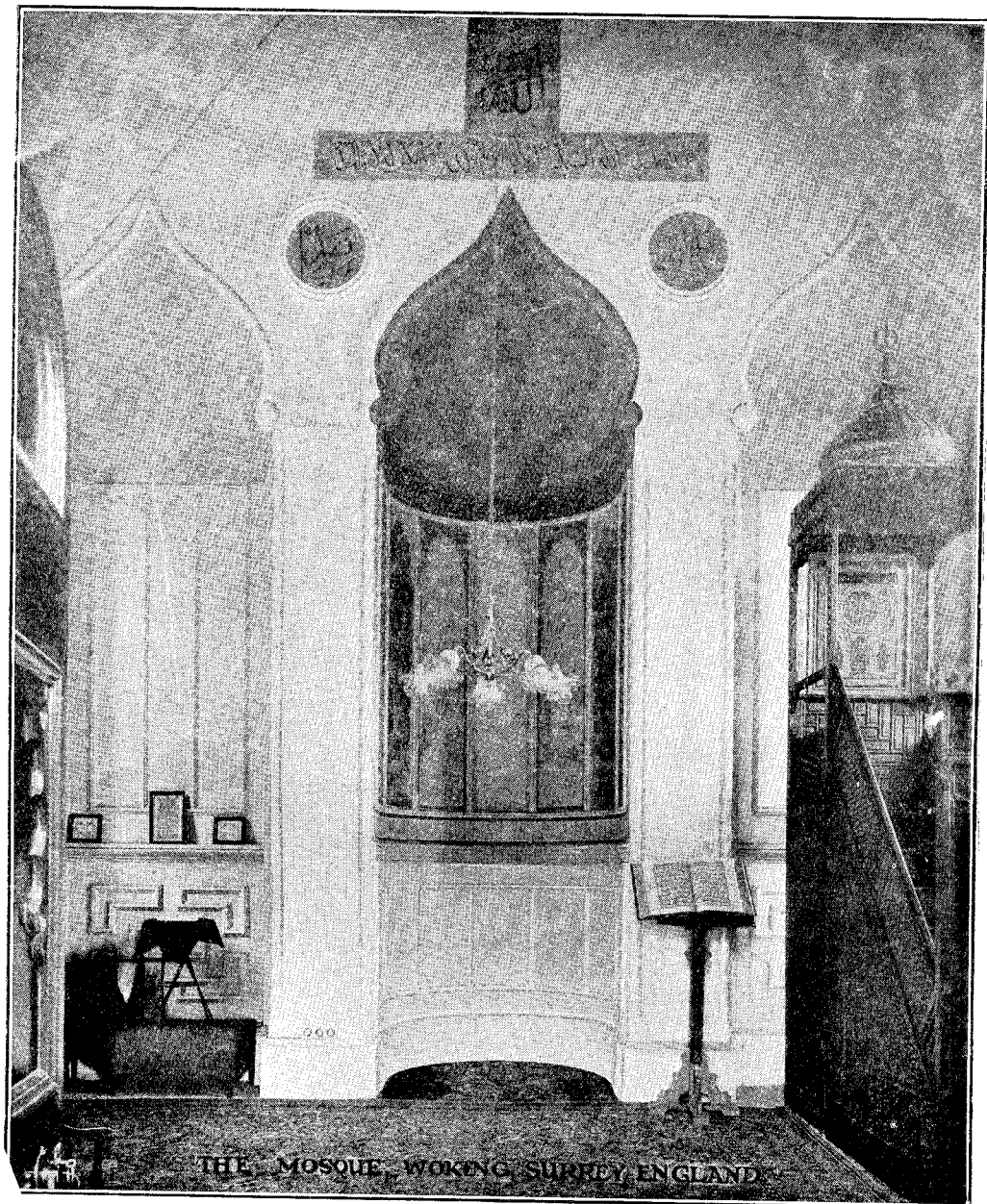
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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ  
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THE  
ISLAMIC REVIEW

VOL. IX]

MAY 1921

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## NOTES

**The Progress of Islam in Africa.**

The rapid progress which Islam is making among the pagan tribes of Africa has created a feeling of jealousy and competition in the missionary circles of the Christian Church, which are doing their best to check this undesirable advance of Islam. The *Light of Faith*, in its issue of 13th April, has urged the necessity of "more men" to push the proselytizing activities in Sudan; and at the same time tells its readers:—

"In Nigeria, the Sudan United Mission is faced with open doors, and could quickly extend its work among the pagans if only the men were forthcoming for this purpose." "In the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan the same conditions prevail; the Government have asked the mission to occupy more tribes, and the necessary missionaries are lacking. Between these two centres lies part of the great French Sudan, with its hundreds of pagan tribes as yet without the Gospel, but open to Islam. Attempts to begin missionary work in this French territory are now being made by the Sudan United Mission, but permission has not yet been received from the French Government."

This clearly shows that the Christian missionaries are seriously launching new schemes to extend their propaganda to the territories which were hitherto "without the Gospel, but open to Islam." Now, what should the Muslims do is a question of great moment; and we leave its answer to the Muslims of the world, who, as true believers, are enjoined by the Holy Qur-án to preach the religion they have themselves accepted, to the whole mankind.

**Is Islam the Enemy of Europe?**

A writer in the *New Age*, who signs himself M. M. Sosmoi, writes as follows concerning the present attitude of Islam towards civilization:—

It is important to realize Islam for what it is and to deal with it on its merits as a possible factor in the future functional organization of the world. Is it a positive or a negative force, progressive or reactionary, in the first place; and, in the second place, would the world, if it were fully conscious, as Europe has the duty of becoming for the world's sake, encourage the spread of Islam or take steps, and what steps, to circumscribe its influence in the world? It will be seen that these questions are asked in the spirit of our common humanity, in the name of man attempting consciously to fulfil the work of God; and the answers are, as far as is possible to us, given in the same spirit, without other conscious prejudice, that is to say, than the natural bias of human intelligence towards the triumph of intelligence. To the first question, then, we must reply that, on the whole, Islam is not only a static faith (or vision of the future, as every faith is)—and, we may add, to be static is to be retrogressive, since the world undoubtedly moves—but it is negative and reactionary in the sense that it exists only as a sharp reminder to Europe of something which European Christianity has failed to remember. Christianity, in the high European sense, was unmistakably intended to live by the Athanasian Creed, that Creed that commands the recognition of the several Persons of the Trinity while maintaining their unity; and exactly

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to the extent and in the degree to which Europe forgot the Unity in the Trinity, the synthesis in the analysis, the Creed of Islam with its exclusive affirmation of Unity and its consequent implied denial of the Trinity was made not only possible, but, in the world-sense, necessary. It has been said with a considerable amount of truth that Islam is a return to the Judaism from which Christianity emerged at so great a price of spirit. Islam is, indeed, a return, a throw-back to Judaism, and a retrogression, but it is something more—it is a positive and challenging reaction precisely against European Christianity. That it owes its existence to a defect in European Christianity and that, on this ground, its existence is within the psychological economy of the world, is true. But it must be remembered that the criticisms of Nature are acts, and that their secondary rôle is to destroy and supplant the thing criticized, if it fails to heed their warning. Islam must, therefore, be regarded as a salutary criticism of European Christianity only in so far as Europe has the intelligence to profit by it. In every other sense, Islam is necessarily and by its very virtue the enemy of Christianity and the enemy of Europe.

In the above passage two points deserve a close examination, viz., (1) Islam is a return, a throw back to Judaism from which Christianity emerged. (2) Islam is necessarily and by its virtue the enemy of Christianity and the enemy of Europe.

In regard to the first point, it may well be asked, what is meant by "Christianity" which emerged from Judaism. If the writer means by "Christianity" the teachings of Jesus, he should remember that Jesus was a follower of Judaism and not a founder of the Church. He does not seem to have taught in the whole of the Bible anything which may claim the title of a new Faith, and, therefore, the assertion that Christianity emerged out from Judaism lacks foundation and proof. Again, the original teachings of Jesus Christ are extinct; and the present Bible has undergone so many interpolations that it has lost its authenticity. The "Christianity" of to-day does not represent the true faith of Jesus Christ; but on the other hand it is the product of the ingenuity of St. Paul. It is, therefore, absolutely stupid to talk of Christianity, when there are no teachings of Jesus left to posterity. And if the writer gives the name of Christianity to certain dogmas which owe their existence to Paul, and therefore should well go by the name of Paulinity, he should remember that those dogmas are assuredly the curse for humanity, a retrogression and a throw-back to Roman paganism from which the world emerged. The doctrine of Trinity is a mere adaptation of the idolatrous religion of Romans. The doctrine of atonement is a relic of a belief of dark ages, when people did not realize their own responsibility.

With regard to the second point, we should like to say that Islam stands to Christianity as light stands to darkness. It is NOT the enemy of the Christians or of Europe, but on the other hand it is a harbinger of truth and light to the whole of humanity. History has shown that Europe owes a debt of gratitude to Islam, because it brought her light and learning when she was sunk in profound darkness, and we are sure that she can learn a great deal, even at present, if she cares to sit at its feet.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

### Harmonize Faiths.

In a recent issue of the *Liberal Christian* we read the following :—

We have been reading in THE ISLAMIC REVIEW a very full exposition of the philosophy of Islam, and we think many of our readers would be surprised to learn how it has absorbed modern scientific ideas and is prepared to hold its own in the religious rivalry which is beginning to manifest itself. The English notion we fear is that the Qur-án stands for a very backward and rather sensual form of religion. But they may have to change that opinion.

The lecturer was Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, a native of the Punjab. By profession a barrister, he has given up all to be a missionary of his faith, especially in England. From the report of an interview we make the following extract, as it gives an interesting impression of the religious mind of England at the present time by an impartial observer. "If the Western mind has become disgusted with the dogmatic religion of the Churches, on the other hand it finds no consolation on the tenets of dry materialism. Belief in God has become revived, minds are hankering after a religion and a faith which on one side must be consistent with the demands of rationality, and on the other may give them some spiritual food. The religion they look for must be free from ceremonials, formalities, with no sacraments and intermediaries; something which with the simplicity of its teaching will bring them face to face with God. New Churches are cropping up in every nook and corner of the country. They at present receive the inspiration mostly from America, but if a person studies their doctrines thoroughly, they only preach different aspects of Islam in different aspects and stress. I may say that these various religious movements such as Spiritualism, New Thought, Christian Science and so forth are moving under the same groove towards Islam. I have addressed them from their various platforms on Islam, dealing with their respective tenets and principles, and have found response favourable to Islam, so much so that many conversions have emanated from the various Churches."

These remarks are both suggestive and encouraging to all working for Liberal religion. Let us each, starting from the faith we know best, work on as truth seekers until we arrive at a rich synthesis.

Having thus paid our tribute of respect to the work of our Muslim brethren, may we be pardoned for venturing on one criticism. We fear that in their ardour to show the excellencies of their Prophet's teaching they may not give due credit to what is taught in older faiths and that in the end will react on themselves. For instance, in the March number of THE ISLAMIC REVIEW there is an article on the "Blessings of Misfortunes," wherein the Prophet through the Qur-án is claimed to teach the sole satisfactory explanation of this great problem, and yet we may point out it was said of one who lived not thirteen hundred but nineteen hundred years ago that he was made "perfect through suffering," while the great expositor who followed him said "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." In the book of Job too, to go back to pre-Christian times, we have the utterance "though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," and again, "when I have been tried I shall come forth as gold." From these and many other passages it can be shown that the doctrine exemplified from the Qur-án that suffering and tribulation is part of the wise discipline of God is quite familiar to the older faiths of the Jews and Christians. Is not our true work to-day rather to harmonize faiths than contrast them?

In response to this appeal we should like only to submit that the great mission of the Holy Prophet Muhammad was to harmonize the different religions of the world, and Islam comprehends the truths of all Faiths. We are enjoined to believe and revere Jesus Christ as a teacher and a messenger

## PRAYER

of God, and at this same we are forbidden from making invidious distinction from Prophet and a Prophet, because they all came from one God and brought the same fundamental truths. It is, therefore, not the original teachings of Jesus Christ nor his noble character, which showed remarkable fortitude in afflictions, that we are going to "contrast" with Islam; but the contrast is between Paulinity and Islam. Our true work is indeed to harmonize Faiths and to bring back the dogmatic Christianity to the simple Faith of Jesus Christ, who was a true Muslim and a great Prophet.

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## PRAYER

By LORD EL-FAROOQ HEADLEY

*In the name of the Most Merciful God*

O ALLAH, Thou art very near,  
We feel Thy Presence everywhere,  
In darkest night and brightest day,  
To show the path, direct the way.

The deepest love for Thee and Thine  
Refulgent in my heart shall shine;  
Thy slightest wish shall ever be  
My care throughout eternity.

Thou art my Lord, my God, my King;  
Without Thee could not anything  
I now enjoy be mine to-day,  
And I should not have lived to say—

"O Blessed God, Almighty King,  
Open Thy heart and let me in;  
I know Thy grace, Thy power, Thy love,  
Although Thou dwel'st in Heaven above  
With Moses, Christ, and Mahomet.  
O may our lives towards Thee be set;  
These glorious prophets, led by love,  
Directly sent from Heaven above,  
Did strive to show that only one  
Great God above in Heaven shone." †

Amen.

† Revealed words.

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## THE RELIGION OF JESUS

### Jesus a Rabbi.

Jesus is the Lord but not the founder of the Church which bears his name. A superficial reader of his record in the Bible will come to the same conclusion. A lively debate occurred in 1917 in Cambridge.<sup>1</sup> The subject under discussion was: "Did Christ found the Church?"

Dean Inge, of St. Paul's, London, read the paper on the subject. Some other dignitaries of the Church as well took part in the debate, and though almost all of them, including Dean Inge, were of opinion that Jesus neither created any schism in the Jewish Church nor provided a new polity for his followers, yet they had not the boldness of conviction to negative the proposition in clear terms. Jesus, however, was a Rabbi, and a teacher of Judaism. He was regarded so by the people of his time: "Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, where dwellest thou?"<sup>2</sup> "The same came to Jesus by night,<sup>3</sup> and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God."<sup>3</sup> Jesus did not make any departure from the

<sup>1</sup> For the benefit of our readers we quote the following from *The Times* of 10th August, 1917.

#### THE FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH.

##### INCIDENT AT THE CAMBRIDGE CONFERENCE.

The conference of Modern Churchmen, organized by the Churchmen's Union, was resumed at Girton College, Cambridge, yesterday, under the presidency of Professor Percy Gardner, chairman of the Conference Committee.

"Did Christ found the Church?" was the subject of a paper read by Dean Inge, who said that Jesus Christ appeared to his contemporaries as a prophet. He never tried to form a schism in the Jewish Church, or to found a rival organization. He proclaimed spiritual independence while accepting the institutions of his time and country. The break with Judaism was inevitable, but he made no provision for a Christian polity.

The Rev. J. R. Wilkinson, who opened the discussion, took the same view as the Dean, and other speakers were the Rev. C. W. Emmet, Bishop Mercer, the Rev. L. Patterson, the Rev. F. Mann, the Rev. H. Symonds, and the Rev. H. A. Major.

Archdeacon Ford answered affirmatively the Dean's question, "Did Christ found the Church?" and Mr. Pringle thereupon said that the Archdeacon was the only person who in the course of the discussion had given the question an affirmative answer.

Bishop MERCER: I said I considered that the Church naturally arose out of the teaching of our Lord.

The Rev. C. W. EMMET: I said so quite distinctly.

Dean INGE: And I may say the same.

Mr. PRINGLE: May I apologize? I regret that these gentlemen did not speak in plainer language.

<sup>2</sup> John i. 38.

<sup>3</sup> John iii. 2.

## THE RELIGION OF JESUS

established Church of the Jews after the teachings of Moses, he himself was an ardent observant and teacher of the commandments. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfil."<sup>1</sup> Such utterances could not come from the founder of a new Church, but from one who came to respect the prophets and to follow their footsteps. He did not come to take anything from the law of Moses, nor did he come to add anything to it. "Fulfil the law," he said when a young man asked him, "Master, what must I do in order to live?" This all shows an implicit obedience to Mosaic law on the part of Jesus, and not any departure from it. But the people of his time had been given more to the ceremonials of religion than to its essentials. They worshipped letters of the law, and not its spirit. They were more interested in polishing their pots and "cleaning the outsides of the cup, while within they were full of extortion and excesses!" They made long prayers, but devoured widows' houses. They would "pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin," but would omit the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith. They strained at a gnat, but swallowed a camel. They appeared "like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appeared beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness." To such "serpents and generation of vipers," as Jesus calls them, he came with reformation and to warn them of the damnation of Hell, which they could not escape. They were "fools and blind," and he came to open their eyes. The house of God had become "a den of thieves," and he came to cleanse it. The temple of God had money-changers and sellers of doves in it, and he came to make it the "house of prayer." This was the mission of his life—mission of a prophet and reformer or say a Rabbi, but not of one who came to build a new religion. He would not allow his disciples to call themselves Rabbis, as he himself was a Rabbi of the day, the real teacher of the Mosaic truths. But "be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, and all ye are brethren."<sup>2</sup> His people observed the law of retaliation to its very letter, which had hardened their heart and left no mercy in it. He came to lessen its severity and to make the mind of his nation more charitable. Therefore he would not allow tooth for tooth and eye for eye. He would teach them to submit to evil. He showed the folly of the Pharisees and the Scribes, and exposed their hypocrisy. But he would respect them all the same, regarding them as the repositories of the law. He would speak "to the multitude, and to his disciples, saying, The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore

<sup>1</sup> Matthew v. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew xxii. 8.

whatsoever they bid you, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.”<sup>1</sup> Jesus tried to reform the then church of Moses, but that in the capacity of an ardent observant of the old teachings and not as a renegade from or abrogator of the law. He wanted to see more purity of heart and righteousness in actions. “For I say unto you,” Jesus would say, “That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”<sup>2</sup>

Does this all make him a prophet and a true teacher and commentator of the old dispensation or the bringer of a new dispensation? If Pharisees and the Scribes came, or sent their followers to him, they always did so to test his knowledge in Mosaic religion, and never looked to him as one who came to found a new faith.

### Jesus a Muslim.

In short, Jesus gave his religion in his Sermon on the Mount in the following words, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”<sup>3</sup>

I fail to find anything in any of his subsequent utterances throughout his life in which Jesus departed from the faith so boldly taught by him in the above quotation. {Decidedly he did not bring any new covenant. He emphasized on the old dispensation and made the entry into the kingdom of heaven exclusively dependent on the observance of the Old Testament. He did not preach the religion of “Atonement and Blood,” but the religion of “Obedience and Commandment.” With him the law is blessing and not the curse as Paul would make it. The Sermon on the Mount teaches a creed of faith translated into actions, and not the creed of faith without actions as Luther says. In one word, Jesus taught Islam and not Christianity. He was a thorough Muslim and scrupulously zealous of Islam—implicit submission to Divine laws and complete obedience to commandments of God. No doubt Jesus could not reveal the whole truth. He had many things to say unto his disciples, but he thought they would be unable to bear them. He, however, gave them the good tidings of another great prophet coming after him; the Spirit of

<sup>1</sup> Matthew xxiii. 1-4.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew v. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew v. 17-19.

## THE RELIGION OF JESUS

truth, he says, "will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

### Paul the First Founder of the Church.

With this message Jesus leaves his disciples, who remained more or less true to the religion of the Master, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles. The corruption, however, came from another quarter. Paul, an implacable enemy of Jesus, like all other Pharisees of his time, appeared on the scene after Jesus. Before he used to persecute the followers of Jesus to please "someone" in his own tribe, but he was rejected in his suit. This prompted Paul to go to the other camp. He approached the disciples with his well-known story of vision. He was received by the fraternity, but not without suspicion. He took the place of Judas Iscariot among "the twelve." His overzeal of a new convert brought more hatred and enmity than love and appreciation for the cause. He himself became an object of hatred and enmity, and had to flee from home and find refuge in Greece; there he thought that he should do as the Romans did at Rome, he would not stand to any scruples of mind. Rejected by some, he would do anything to win others to his cause, as he himself confesses. "To them that are under the law (I became) as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law. To them that are without law, as without law (I became as without law), that I might gain them that are without law."<sup>1</sup> He would speak of the law among his own people to avoid their opposition, but he would call it a curse when he had to address the unlawful Romans. His antecedents had left him no chance of success among the Jews, and he could not win over the Greeks without allowing them neither to observe the law nor to keep themselves "from things offered to idols and from blood and from strangled."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians ix. 20-21.

<sup>2</sup> The Right Hon. Syed Amen Ali says:—

"The religion of Jesus was preached on the shores of Galilee at a period of great luxury and self-indulgence. He taught the gospel of humility and love. Unfortunately his ministry was short, and his work was mostly confined among a small following. Not until his teachings had been moulded into shape by a Jewish philosopher imbued with neo-platonism, and not until a large part of the earlier beliefs had been incorporated with the Galilean teachings, did it make any headway among the neighbouring nations. I suppose you know that five centuries before the appearance of the Galilean Teacher a great Egyptian king devised a system by which he intended to reconcile two different races and creeds, viz. the Egyptian and the Greek. But his task was rendered easy by the fact that both were built on common beliefs. Among the Greeks the worship of Zeus, Demeter, and Dionysios was prevalent; whilst the Egyptians worshipped Osiris, Isis, and Horus. They both believed in a God who had suffered for the atonement of humanity and had risen again. The task of Ptolemy, the founder of the Serapean cult, was thus made easy. The worship of Isis took hold of the imagination of the Egyptian and the Greek world, and afterwards spread throughout the

### Religion of Jesus Paganized.

The Greek and the Roman mythology was already teeming with gods and semi-gods of virgin-birth. Many a time gods in paganism became offended, and sacrifice at their altars was the only efficacious means to reconcile the angered deity to mankind. Gods from time to time used to come down from heaven to visit the earth; they mixed with men and participated in all their affairs. But for reasons unknown the pagan world had not been favoured with such celestial visits since the days of Iliad. Minds were hankering for the reappearance of some one from heaven, and the self-made apostle to Gentiles comes to satisfy the pagan longings. To them who were without law he would become as without law, "that he might gain them that are without law." He would not therefore interfere with their ways nor would demand from them the rigid observance of the religion of Jesus which was a reformed form of the religion of Moses. He went there to inform them of a new God incarnate. Jupiter had come again in the person of the son of Virgin Mary. No wonder if the new Zeus was hailed everywhere in the land of myth, and the elders at Jerusalem glorified God when Paul "declared what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry." Unfortunately the workers in the foreign mission follow the anti-Christian footsteps of this arch-innovator to the beautiful and simple religion of Jesus. In India, sometimes they try to identify Christ with Krishna, a Hindu deity. They ask the Hindus only to accept Christ for Krishna, and go in their own ways.

A disciple of Jesus was quite justified to change the customs which Moses delivered to his people. He could reform the ceremonial and insist upon the observance of the law in spirit, as Jesus came to do the same thing and showed distinction between the ritual and the essential. Jesus changed the custom, but was himself a strict observant of the law. He would say to John, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it cometh us to fulfil all righteousness." One could therefore justify Pauline interference had it affected the ceremonials only, but he had no *locus standi* to go beyond the Master. But in that case he was sure to meet complete failure in the pagan land. His secret lay, as he himself confesses, in dealing a death-blow to the whole

Roman Empire. Those who have watched the services at St. Peter's in Rome and listened to the litanies sung there are easily carried back to the gorgeous ceremonials and the moving rites which were wont to be performed at the devotion of "the Mother of the Gods"—"Sweet Isis, the haven of rest and refuge," as she was called by her worshippers. The shaven priests, the acolytes, the virgins carrying incense-burners all remind us of the worship of Isis. It was only when Rome had incorporated into the Christian cult the old rites that it began to spread into the Roman world."

## THE RELIGION OF JESUS

law and paganize the faith, so that "I might gain them that are without law." I have often pondered over these words of Paul. Do they come from the heart of an honest worker in religion, or from that of one who cares to win laurels at any cost and wants to gain people to his side? Other acts of Paul lead me to the same conclusion. By the narration of his exploits among the Gentiles he could manage to secure permission of the Elders to slacken "the law touching the Gentiles," but he again circumcised Timothy, a Greek by descent, "because of the Jews which were in those quarters." Jesus came to expose hypocrisy of the Pharisees, but Paul could manage to make hypocrites of James and all the Elders. They asked Paul to keep the Nazarite vow simply to please, or rather to hoodwink, the multitude that, as the Elders suggested, "must needs come together, for they will know that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee. . . ." A church with such Elders at its head could not give religion to the praying in its original purity. A reader of the ecclesiastical history in its early centuries, comes across many an instance of such pious frauds. "Do sins that grace may abound"—the motto of life of the coming Jesuits—was only a legacy of the said piety. If diplomacy came to pave the way and facilitate the progress of the faith, no wonder it assumed quite a contradistinct form from what it was in the days of the Master.

### Foreign Mission Disallowed by Jesus.

If Jesus is, and ought to be, the sole and exclusive authority in the religion he intended to bring to mankind, we find no justification for Paul's apostleship to the Gentiles. Jesus only came to bring the scattered sheep of Judea into the fold. He would not "throw pearls to swine," nor would he suffer "the bread of the children to be given to dogs"—the Gentiles. The religion of Moses did not allow proselytization, and Jesus, who observed scrupulously everything of the law, did stick to it up to the end of his life. Foreign mission is a downright insult to his own ways and practice. If he refrained from giving "children's bread to dogs," foreign mission is simply a heresy. In justification some one perhaps may refer to Mark, chapter 16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." But the last ten verses of St. Mark, which include this quotation as fifteenth, are decidedly a forgery. The first English translators of the Bible, under James I, were honest enough to point it out. They made a marginal note against these verses to the effect that the verses were not in the ancient scriptures: a fact known to all the Bible publishing societies, and yet we find these verses always printed without the said marginal note. For

the sake of honesty their conduct should have been otherwise.

St. Paul was the first to make departure in proselytizing others to the religion of Jesus for the reasons explained above. This heresy to the old religion went on more or less in Western countries till our days, when the Gospel of Jesus was carried to the four corners of the world, not for religion's sake only but as a pioneer of political propaganda.

### **Jesus of St. Paul and Jesus of the Synoptists.**

The Jesus of St. Paul is quite a contra-distinct entity from the Jesus of Evangelical records. The latter is a prophet, or Rabbi; not a founder of a rival organization to the old Jewish Church, but only a reformer of it whose sympathies are exclusively for his own tribe who came to gather the sheep of Judea and the children of Jerusalem together, "even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings." He would not give even a new name to his followers. It was the clergy of the Council at Antioch that adopted the name Christians for his followers. But the Jesus of Paul—and I may say of St. John as well, because the last of the four gospels was written centuries after Jesus and at a time when Pauline influence in the Church was at its height—is quite a different personality. He is the "High Priest," the "Word," the "Image of God," the "Second God," the "First-begotten Son of God," "Seated next to God on His throne," "God in the likeness of man," a "Gift from God," the "Great Saviour who took the load of sin," the "Model after which we have to fashion our lives," the "Judge," the "Intercessor," the "Bread of Life," the "Giver of Everlasting Life," a "Belief in whom carries more weight in the eye of God than virtue itself," etc. Tolstoi and many others like him could see no reconciliation between Jesus and Paul. They were compelled to cut the knot and throw the latter altogether.

I think the reader will be interested to know the origin of and the circumstances in which the modern church of Christ received its superstructure from Paul and his other fellow-workers; and in this respect I would rather quote the following from ISLAMIC REVIEW of 1917 in order to save time.

"Jesus, no doubt, could not reveal the whole truth,<sup>1</sup> and one could take St. Paul as one filled with the Holy Ghost who spoke to tell the whole truth as the Comforter had to do in the fulfilment of the prophecy of Jesus, had there been, firstly, no divergence between Jesus and St. Paul; and secondly, if the inspiration of the latter and the beliefs of the Church he founded could not be traced

<sup>1</sup> John xvi. 13.

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to human agency. The theory of the Logos mentioned in St. John was admittedly a Platonic conception which had been elaborated by the Alexandrian school of philosophy. Long before Paul preached, all that is contained in his epistles concerning Jesus was the common philosophical belief about the Logos. Paul reshaped the quibbles of the various schools of thought into what is now the popular Church conception of Jesus Christ. Rejected by his own people, the co-religionists of Jesus, Paul had to work among the Gentiles, who could hardly be reconciled to the observance of the rigid regulations of the Jewish law. St. Paul by compromise and diplomatic use of current beliefs had to facilitate their acceptance of his creed. 'To them that are under the law, I became as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law. To them that are without law, as without law, that I might gain them that are without law.'<sup>1</sup> His own race was looking for a Messiah to restore the kingdom of David, and the philosophical conception of the Logos had also appealed to many thinking minds of the Jewish nation. He combined both these ideas, and the result was the Church of Christ. However, I give here some quotations from Philo<sup>2</sup> and leave it to the judgment of the learned and reverend gentlemen who participated in the debate at Cambridge to decide who was really the founder of the Church. For these quotations I am chiefly indebted to Dr. John Denham Parsons, the author of *Our Sun God*.

“ ‘The Word by which the world was made is the Image of the Supreme Deity.’<sup>3</sup> ‘As those who are unable to gaze upon the sun look upon his reflected radiance as a sun, so likewise the Image of God, His Angel Word, is Himself considered to be God.’<sup>4</sup> ‘Who is that High Priest . . . the First-born of God.’<sup>5</sup> ‘His Word, which is His interpreter.’<sup>6</sup> ‘In the likeness of man again.’<sup>7</sup> ‘His First-begotten Son.’<sup>8</sup> ‘The Word is accordingly the Advocate for all Mortals.’<sup>9</sup> ‘Being the Image of God and the First-born of all intelligent creatures, He is seated immediately next to the One God without any interval of separation.’<sup>10</sup> ‘We maintain that by the High Priest is meant the Word who is free from all voluntary and involuntary transgressions being of Heavenly Parentage.’<sup>11</sup> ‘The Deity acts with the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 20-21.

<sup>2</sup> Philo, often called Philo-Judæus, was an eminent Jewish philosopher. He was born *circa* 10-20 B.C., probably in Alexandria, in which town he spent most of his life. He was a most prolific writer on philosophy and Judaism. Visited Rome 40 A.C. Date of death uncertain.—*Ency. Britt.*, 9th edition.

<sup>3</sup> *De Monarchia*, II. ii. 225.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* i. 653.

<sup>7</sup> *De Confu. Ling.*, i. 427.

<sup>9</sup> *Quis. Rerum. Divin. Hæres*, i. 502.

<sup>4</sup> *De Somnis*, i. 40-41.

<sup>6</sup> *De Legis. Allegor.*, iii. 73.

<sup>8</sup> *De Agric.*, i. 308.

<sup>10</sup> *De Profugis*, i. 561, 16.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* i. 562, 13.

most consummate order and rectitude, and has appointed His First-born Son the upright Word like the lieutenant of a mighty prince to take the care of a sacred flock.'<sup>1</sup> 'This is the Bread, that nourishment which God appointed to be applied to the soul of man, the Word.'<sup>2</sup> 'God is the most generic thing and the Word of God is second.'<sup>3</sup> 'The Shepherd of His holy flock.'<sup>4</sup>

"Do not all these quotations sound strangely familiar when compared with what we hear every day in Church sermons? Are not, then, the writings of St. Paul and some of the portions of St. John mere echoes and re-echoes of Philo and his associates of the Alexandrian school of philosophy? The same theory of the emanation of the Word, the Logos, who is the second person in the Godhead, made after the image of God, seated on the right hand of his Father, the sinless one, the bread of life, the intercessor between the Creator and the created. If all this, what really constitutes the tenets of the Church of Christ, can be traced to Philo and others through St. Paul and does not receive countenance from the words of Jesus himself, we cannot believe in the divine origin of the said Church, and we cannot believe that the said Church owes its inception to Jesus the prophet of the Jews. Do not the following quotations sound like what ordinarily comes from the pulpits of the Church when speaking about the 'blood' as the price for the salvation of the human soul?—

"'What man is there of true judgment who, when he sees the deeds of most men, is not ready to call out aloud to God, the great Saviour, that he would be pleased to take off this load of sin and by *appointing a price and ransom for the soul*, restore it to its original liberty.'<sup>5</sup> He therefore exhorts every person who is able to exert himself in the race which he is to run, to bend his course without remission to the divine Word above, who is the fountain of all wisdom, that, by drinking of this sacred spring, he instead of death may receive the reward of everlasting life.'<sup>6</sup>

### Constantine the Lieutenant of St. Paul.

The superstructure so laid down with a masterly hand by Paul received its further completion at the royal conversion at Rome. To secure the support of the plebeians, who mostly were Christians in the ranks of serfs and slaves, for furtherance of his political ends against Roman senators and other patricians, Hadrian the Roman Emperor had a mind "to build a temple unto the Christ, and rank him in the numbers of the Gods."<sup>7</sup> What Hadrian could not

<sup>1</sup> *De Agric.*, i. 308, 27.

<sup>3</sup> *Leg. All.*, ii. 21 (i. 82).

<sup>5</sup> *De Confus. Ling.*, i. 418.

<sup>2</sup> *De Leg. Alleg.*, i. 121, 26.

<sup>4</sup> *De Agric.*, i. 308.

<sup>6</sup> *De Profugis*, i. 560, 31.

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do was done by his successor, Constantine. Apollo was his patron deity, and he saw the Sun-God incarnated in Jesus.

His conversion was only a conversion in name. He put Jesus on the altar of Apollo, but kept everything of the sun-worship in its original form. Saturday was the Christian Sabbath. Jesus also observed it on Saturday, and the whole Christendom after him did the same. "To collar association," to use the common English phrase, Constantine changed the day of Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday: *Dies soli*, the day of the sun in the Roman calendar. This was not the only departure from the old Christian way of worship. He kept other things of Roman worship as well. The situation of the altar of the church to face the east, the rising place of the sun; the nuns and the monks; the tonsures on their heads—a sign of homage to the disk of the sun; the choir of the boys and pages with sticks and candles in hand; the crowns and robes of the ministers at the time of worship, etc., are only some of the legacies of Apollo to Christ. The only change was in the name of the object of adoration, i.e. Jesus to replace Apollo. The idolater Roman saw very little in the change to disturb his mind. He went to his place of worship as usual. He saw everything continued in the new religion after the old routine, and the change in name of the Deity seemed to him of no consequence, if Christ was another name for Apollo. The Christians, on the other hand, looked to this newly created situation from an angle of exigency. They saw their Lord installed on the throne of Apollo, and they would not care much, serfs and slaves as they were, to observe all the rites of the sun-worship. Few explanations from the lips of the monarch, accompanied with a few graceful royal smiles, were sufficient to kill the conscience if it raised any cry. The double game was played by Constantine to make his position politically strong as a king, but the original religion of Jesus was lost for good to the Church to be established after his name in the West. The interior of the Catholic Church, with all its paraphernalia, is only a reminiscence of the place of Apollo-worship in its full colour.

### Intellectual Slavery of the Occidental Religion.

It has often and often excited my wonderment, and I failed to find any explanation for the slavish subordination of Western intellect to the past. To begin with, why should they accept Paul as an authority in religion? He should be rejected wherever he comes with innovations on the religion of Jesus. The Jesus of the four Gospels is contradistinct from the Jesus of St. Paul. The theory of the fall of Adam, the reconciliation of the offended deity with the sons of Adam, the new and old Adam, the atonement,

Divine commandments, a curse to humanity as bringer of death into the world, the grace of blood to substitute the old curse, i.e. the Laws of God—almost all these things are more or less Pauline heresies absolutely unknown to Jesus himself and his disciples. Why this anti-Christian innovation should be given precedence to the teachings of Jesus himself is only a mystery. Possibly his martyrdom and his zeal in the spread of religion amongst the Gentiles may clothe him with some sanctity. But what about Constantine? Decidedly he is not a religious character, and should not be taken as an authority in matters of faith. But the whole Christendom bows down to him, and I may say he exercises more power in the Church in the West than Paul, not to say least of Jesus. Observance of Sabbath is a religious institution of Divine solemnity. God created the universe in six days and took his rest on the seventh. The day of his rest was Saturday, and not Sunday—a fact to be established by reference to the Biblical records. The practice of Jesus came to confirm it. If the Israelites were wrong in finding the day of rest, Jesus, “who was no other than God himself,” could correct them in the matter. But he kept Saturday holy. His disciples did the same after him. Even Paul, the arch-innovator in religion, kept the Sabbath on Saturday; all old Churches followed him also. If Sunday was not the day of Jesus, but *Dies soli*, i.e. the day of Apollo, why should a political adventurer in the garb of religion like Constantine be allowed to play the rôle of a prophet? It served him, no doubt, to win over Roman hearts to the new creed, but it changed the subsequent fate of religion. Since then the Church in the West lost all its independence of character and became a state craft, and a convenient instrument of the rule to formulate the mind of the monarchs with religious accents and stresses. Sermons from the pulpit began to speak more of the state policy than of religious polity. The whole ecclesiastical history bears ample testimony to it, but one has only to refer to what came from the pulpit in the days of the war. Political orations assumed the garb of religious sermons, and to take part in the battlefield became more meritorious in the eyes of God than to observe His ordinances. The Prince of Peace changed his clothes. “The cheek-morality” became forgotten and his ministers were seen in the battlefield. The branch of olive gave place to the trident of the marse. Those who criticized the Qur-ánic permission to use arms in defence, shelved to oblivion the Sermon on the Mount and sat humbly at the feet of Muhammad—may the choicest blessings of God be on him. The Fourth Commandment out of the ten, which till now had received implicit obedience from them since the days of Jesus, received a death blow from its very keepers. Before the war they used to “Re-

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member the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. Six days thou shalt labour and do thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work." But the political exigencies could not allow it, and the clergy became as usual the mouthpiece of the State. "Sons, daughters, man or maid-servants with the Master" were all seen in fields and gardens on the day of Sabbath raising and planting potatoes. Thus the only relic of the religion of Jesus was demolished at the instance of the State, and not under the teachings of the Lord of Christianity.

### Jesus disavows Godhood.

Jesus never claimed godhood himself. That Christ of the Church which received its birth from Pauline brain was strange to even Jesus himself, is borne out by the first three gospels of the Synoptic record. I have read them many a time with all the reverence that Jesus can claim from a Muslim mind for a prophet. With all the liberal interpretation which one can put to his words on record, I failed to find anything in them which may make him a deity. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only thou shalt serve."<sup>1</sup> "Why callest thou me good, none is good save one, that is God." "This is life eternal that we might know Thee. The only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. The Lord our God is one Lord."<sup>2</sup> "Eloi, Eloi, lama Sabachthani—O God, O God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Utterances like these cannot come from God's mouth. They do not befit divine lips. If we Muslims are unable to appreciate any trace of Godhead in Jesus, we have reasons to be excused. Our conception of God demands to see something quite different in a claimant of Divinity from what we find in the son of Mary. The following we read about God in the Qur-án. "Allah is He besides whom there is no God, the Ever-living, the Self-subsisting, by whom all subsist; slumber does not overtake Him nor sleep; whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His; who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission? He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot comprehend out of His knowledge except what He pleases; His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them both tires Him not, and He is the Most High, the Great." In addition to what I have already quoted from Jesus, compare his following words as well with this sublime Quranic conception of the Deity.

"Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head."

<sup>1</sup> Matt. iv. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Mark xii. 29.

"Of myself I can do nothing; of that day and that hour knoweth no man . . . neither the son."

"If any one hear my words and believe not I judge him not; for I come not to judge the world."

### Miracles of Jesus.

He has been reported to have performed certain miracles, but by the help of God. If he brought Lazarus to re-animation he had first to pray to God and then to thank Him on being heard. He would admit his inability to do anything without the help of God whenever he worked out any miracle. "I cast out devils by the finger of God."<sup>1</sup>

"I thank, O Father, that Thou hast heard me and I know that Thou hearest me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it that they may believe that Thou has sent me."<sup>2</sup>

"The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me."<sup>3</sup>

"I do nothing of myself."<sup>4</sup>

### His Sonship.

He was not the only-begotten son of God; others before him had been named so. Jacob and David were also begotten sons of God. The words "Son of God" in Judaic terminology meant only nearness of man to God. "My father and your Father"; "Our Father in heaven"; "My God and your God," are expressions to establish brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God. Jesus did admit his limit of knowledge and power and looked to God for his daily sustenance, and expressed from time to time his complete submission to Divine Will. He was only a prophet of God and a messenger from Him. He spoke to the world what he heard from above.

### His Expressions.

No doubt some of his expressions have caused some difficulty to many in appreciating the true mission of Jesus. In interpreting him we should always remember that Jesus came from the East and spoke language with Oriental expression. We Easterners think in metaphors and speak in similes when we wish to become emphatic. An intelligent study of other founders of religions in the East will show the Westerner that Jesus did not speak of something in his exclusive possession; he only spoke what other prophets did in different accents and stresses. Any person who believed that man was created after the image of God would equally use with Jesus the expression "the Father

<sup>1</sup> Luke xi. 20.

<sup>2</sup> John xi. 41, 42.

<sup>3</sup> John v. 36.

<sup>4</sup> John viii. 28.

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and me." Every man possesses divine elements in him, so the Qur-án says. All noble and good in us is of God, and so God is in us. In the same way as Father was in Jesus. "No man cometh to the Father but by me" is another expression which Jesus has used, and so have done the others.

Prophets always make their appearance at a time when humanity is at its lowest grade morally and spiritually. They come to reclaim it. They find man estranged from God and they come to bring him back to his Lord. People are groping in the dark wilderness of wickedness and they hold the torch of light to righteousness and virtue. They walk humbly with God, and one who cares to approach his Creator must follow them. Is not then the Prophet of the time justified to say, as Jesus said, "No man cometh by the Father but by me?" Every prophet in his own time can say so. He and only he has been raised in his time by God to bring others to Him. The same has been spoken of the Prophet Mohammad in the Qur-án, "Say, if you love God then follow me; God will love you and forgive you your faults."

### Atonement.

The doctrine of Atonement is another Pauline heresy to the religion of Jesus. Had he come to wash man's sin with his blood, his conduct all through his life should have been quite different from what we read of him concerning his crucifixion. We find a change in all his movements after he has heard of his arrest contemplated by the Jews. He avoids public notice, and if recognized would ask his visitors not to tell others of him. One who came to redeem the fallen man should have given himself up willingly into the hands of his enemies, and Judas Iscariot would have been saved the ignominy of betraying his master. If the scene at Calvary was a Divine Dispensation, and the Grave of Blood had been ordained to give revelation to a New Epiphany, the betrayer should have been blessed rather than cursed. If the Son came with full divine knowledge to work out a new scheme of regeneration, he must have approached the task with joyful heart, but we read something quite different. "Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with me.

"And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: *nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.*

"And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and said unto Peter, What! could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

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"He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."

The italics in the above show more a forced consent than a willing one—a heart compelled to resign to a fate, when no alternative is left, rather than a heart that welcomes "the work which the Father hath given me to finish."

His teachings as well give the lie to the theory of atonement. The cross came to absolve us, if Paul is to be accepted, from the reign of the Law which "entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded grace did much more abound."† If Jesus came to make us "free from sin," and we became the servants of righteousness, why should he enjoin upon every person to teach the law and observe the commandments? To the young man who came to him and said, "Master, how can I be saved?" Jesus speaks of ten commandments and orders him to observe them. For the same he refers his own disciples to the Scribes "as they are in the seat of Moses." In all his utterances there is not a single word which may give countenance to the theory of atonement, excepting what he said when he sat in the last Passover—for this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many, for the remission of sins. The words are simple, and do not carry any such meanings to an Eastern mind which may be construed to raise the building of new dispensation. The heir of David came like the other "begotten sons of God," to reclaim a fallen race which had once been redeemed through Moses. Like other prophets, he came to reclaim humanity at a time when it had turned aside from God. Jesus met the same opposition which awaits every reformer in his own days. He met the same persecution which comes to the fate of every martyr to truth. His tribe had gone astray from the path of righteousness; they lived upon letters and discarded the spirit, and he came for reformation. His teachings were naturally disgusting to the wicked and unpalatable to the unrighteous. The Rabbis were exposed and the hollowness of the Pharisees shown. He thus incurred hatred of his own people, who began to scheme out his death; and this brought him to the Cross. His fate is the fate of every martyr to the right cause. He taught what he thought could reconcile a sinful man to his Creator. People had become accustomed "to clean pots and polish the outside," but he exhorted them to think more of cleaning their hearts. This was something new to the people all around, and a new testament for the remission of sin. But the establishment of this—the-then-seemingly-new-teaching—did demand a very great sacrifice. He could not establish these principles of righteousness and godliness

† Romans v. 20.

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without his blood. Reformation has never been worked out without the persecution of its advocates. The plant of human regeneration has always been watered to fruition with human blood. Killing of evil and martyrdom of those who work against it go hand in hand. Those who came to eradicate unrighteousness and iniquity from the world had had to meet opposition sometimes cruel to death. They died in the struggle, but they left a new order of things behind them which worked out the deliverance of the coming generations after them. In short, mankind has been delivered from sin, from time to time, through the sufferings of the various prophets of God, and Jesus was one of them. To make his followers righteous was his whole aim, and he gave his life to the cause. He died, therefore, for sinners, but in the sense here explained, and the "remission of sins" came through his blood to those who obey his teachings, but not through belief in his blood. Great teachers die for humanity. They show light to the benighted world, but at the expense of their own life. People become redeemed and their sins washed off by acting upon the principle so dearly established and taught by them and not by the belief that the great martyr gave his life for them.

### Resurrection.

The resurrection is another myth forced upon the otherwise simple and humane life of Jesus. We read it in the New Testament, but one should not forget that the first four Evangelists relate their own impressions of the case rather than what actually occurred. "Miracles never happen," says Renan, "but in times and countries in which they are believed and before persons disposed to believe them." Excepting Matthew, the first Evangelists were not eye-witnesses of the scene. Their first authority were men whose low intellect and want of common sense often brought rebuke from their Master, who often and often was compelled to explain his meanings in parables and similes. "The sailor-like simplicity of the Apostles, their quarrels for precedence at court, their childish superstitions, their bewilderment under the flood of the Master's eloquent metaphors," their credulous nature and admittedly simple-mindedness, and last of all, but not the least, their strong faith in the establishment of a material kingdom in which they would be rewarded for their sacrifices, and consequently their readiness to clothe every event of the Master's life with miraculous garb—all go a long way to show that they were not the narrators of actualities but story-tellers of what they thought themselves of the case. The miracle of his resurrection has aroused suspicion even in the minds of many a dignitary in the Church, which from time to time found its expression

in somewhat unequivocal language. "It is quite possible that Our Lord's resurrection," says Archbishop Temple,<sup>1</sup> "may be found hereafter to be no miracle at all in the scientific sense, but the natural issue of the physical law is always at work." Canon Henson<sup>2</sup> argues that Paul clearly did not believe in a carnal and literal resurrection, but only in a spiritual one. A little more courage on the part of these two responsible custodians of the Church conscience would have enabled them to speak in equal terms with the Rev. A. J. Waldron, who raised a storm of criticism by announcing on Easter Sunday in 1914 that he did not believe in the physical resurrection of Jesus. Whatever may be the views of these teachers of the Church religion, they cannot come to a right conclusion as long as they believe in the death of Jesus or the Cross. Archbishop Temple, perhaps, was nearing the truth, but he could not explain his mind in words free from graceful coverings of the ecclesiast. This "natural" issue of physical laws always at work was resuscitation, and not the resurrection of Jesus. He did not die on the Cross. Death-like swoon overtook him, from which he recovered and went to Galilee in the guise of a gardener.

In the light of present-day learning, one should not be carried away by the illusions of the fishermen Apostles. They might be honest, but it does not prove the validity of their inferences. Did Jesus die on the Cross? or came he down alive and was nursed back to health? are the problems which every intelligent person should conclude for himself in the light of the following facts. He should not have stood in need of being shown a candle by the well-known apostolic intellect.

(1) In the Syriac version we read, "he sighed with his breath," instead of "he gave up the ghost." Had it not been for the discrepancy, "he gave up the ghost" may be taken to express the mind of a deluded eye.

(2) He remained hung on the Cross only for three hours, instead of three days, and his legs were not broken, which could have caused his death otherwise. While those of the two thieves who were crucified along with him were broken to be assured of their death.

(3) Blood and water flowed when a spear was plunged into his side, which showed that the vivifying principle which causes circulation of blood in the body did still exist.

(4) Roman centurions did as well doubt the truth.

No pains have been spared to explain away the above-mentioned facts, which read to prove swoon rather than death. But suppose Jesus did die and rose up from the dead. It was a miracle and a sign worked out for "an evil and adulterous generation," as Jesus styles the Pharisees,

<sup>1</sup> *The Clarion*, 1916.

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“ that seeketh after a sign ; and there shall be no sign given it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas.”<sup>1</sup> The unbelieving “ generation of vipers ” did also know of it. As they “ came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, ‘ After three days I will rise again. ’ ”<sup>2</sup> The sign of rising from the dead was decidedly for the “ adulterous generation,” but why strenuous efforts were made to conceal it from them is a mystery still to be explained by the believers in the Resurrection. Jesus appears in the clothes of a gardener when he comes out of the tomb, the disguise being so complete that he is not recognized even by his own intimate friends, Mary Magdalene and others. On his way to Galilee he meets the two disciples. He speaks and goes along with them the whole of the journey, and still he remains unidentified until some peculiar actions and words on the breaking of the bread disclose him. If he rose from the dead and the wonderful event was, to quote Jesus, “ to bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me,”<sup>3</sup> the world would have been at his feet and borne testimony to his divinity, had he appeared to the Romans and the Jews. I, for one, fail to appreciate the Divine polity which prompted him to conceal the sign from the very persons for whose benefit it was worked out. But the reason is not far to find out. He certainly did not come out of the sepulchre as conqueror of death, but as “ an absconder ” who chanced to escape the penalty of the law and was afraid of being brought to it. His conduct subsequent to the events at Calvary show the same.

But if Jesus came out of the tomb in compliance with the words he uttered a few days before his crucifixion, they will remain unfulfilled if the resurrection took place. “ For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly ; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” Jonas did not die before he was swallowed by the whale. He was alive when swallowed ; he remained so in the belly three days and three nights ; he came out of it alive. Jesus had to enter into the heart of the earth like Jonas. He might have become senseless like Jonas, but he should not have died on the Cross, otherwise the sign of Jonas “ is not given.” He must descend alive from the Cross to enter into the grave in a living condition and leave it alive, but if he died the prophecy remains unfulfilled.

One should not wonder at his sudden disappearance in clouds. The place of his supposed ascension was on the top of the hill, as I was shown, when I went there. To those who have been to hill stations, it is a common-day experi-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxi. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvii. 62-63.

<sup>3</sup> John v. 36.

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ence. People walk in clouds and sometimes become shrouded into them when the clouds are of sufficient density. They seem to disappear into clouds to those at a distance. Jesus could not stay any longer in Jerusalem to save himself from the further persecution of the Rabbis. He disappeared from the scene and hastened to an Essene monastery by the Brook Kareth, as the legend published by George Moore shows. The legend can be traced to the second or third century. Jesus had spent his younger days in the same monastery. It says, "Here Jesus lived peacefully to old age, when he met Paul, the preacher of the Resurrection, and revealed to him his identity. Paul, seeing that this revelation meant the destruction of the religion he had been building up, refused to believe, and Jesus realizing that he would do more harm than good by persisting, returned to the monastery and left Paul free to go on preaching his gospel."

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## ISLAMIC ASCENDANCY

By PROF. ABDUL KARIM KPAKPA-QUARTEY.

It is indeed complimentary to the great Muslim commonwealth that distinguished Western authorities should have recently stated that the question of intimate acquaintanceship with the languages, history, politics and monuments of Eastern nations should no longer continue to be an optional matter but a stern necessity, and the subject of deep study. More gratifying also that the recent visits of Oriental ministers and statesmen to Europe, together with the influence they exerted in ecclesiastical as well as political affairs, have stimulated in the Western mind a livelier curiosity as to the character, condition and influence of Muslim countries. These exigencies, therefore, simultaneously with the scientific impulse of the times, have presented the religion, policy and literature of the celebrated East to the admiration and appreciation of Western races, and the Western World generally. The Muslim religion is Islam; Islam (to give a very simple definition) means childlike faith in the Providence and Omnipotence of God and a complete and unreserved submission to His divine Will. This religion sprang from Ishmael, having its root in Abraham, the greatest pattern of the faithful, and the friend of Allah. The words of the religion are written in the Holy Qur-án in the Arabic language. The composition is a rarely poetical one of the most primitive kind, possessing a nameless beauty and music, a subtle and inexpressible charm, incom-

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prehensible to those acquainted only with European languages. Japheth introduced Isaac, subject to racial discrimination, distinction and segregation, "My people and thy people, my Church and thy Church," and Shem brought Ishmael as the unassuming universal friend and peacemaker of mankind, without limitations and barriers. Surely Allah will make him and his descendants a consolidated nation, mightier than the voice of many waters. The East, therefore, is the religious centre of the world. That Islam is an enormous advance on human education and spiritual development cannot be disputed, even by its malicious opponents. It embraces all the branches of human knowledge and research—theology, medicine, history, astronomy, grammar, economics, physics, racial philosophy and racial psychology. It is an important educator on all systems of purely human origin, and its creed adores, worships and acknowledges the great Divine Architect of the Universe, in the most sublimest, loftiest and divine expression, never to be found in the liturgy of other religions. The Islamic conception of God is that He is Allah and there is none beside Him; He only is to be worshipped. He begets not, neither is He begotten; He was before time began its race. He is Allah who hath raised different prophets of men throughout the ages. His greatness is immeasurable. Allah is He that abideth from eternity to eternity. This is only a fractional part of the Muslim creed—a creed which strictly forbids the worship of images and the artistic representation of anything resembling the human form. Certain Christians and Christian missionaries of different races have arrogated to themselves the notion of speaking disparagingly of and indulging in depreciation of the merits of Islam, or epigrammatic terseness in describing the Muslim faith. In Christian literatures, periodicals and other publications, Muslims have been alluded to, and spoken of, as pagans, idolaters, polygamists, Suki-Boondu, or sun-worshippers and what not. Our sacred edifice has been characterized as the mosque of swords, our heaven as a heaven of sensual bliss, and that after death we sink into space, soulless, and have no account to give. It is obvious that this sort of opinionated egotists are extending their activities to Africa, the blessed land of Ethiopia, particularly to depress the character of Muhammadan influence by asserting that Muhammadanism is a danger, and that wherever it prevails it erects an insurmountable barrier to the further progress of the people. But may not one ask seriously why are these seemingly hypocritical infidels in such scathing denunciation of so sacred a religion? Why is this campaign of calumny to suppress Islamism among cultivated humanity? Has it not during the thirteen hundred years of its existence,

amid scanty propagation, far surpassed Christianity, which was some five hundred years before it? Why is this deliberately biassed and ambiguous verdict returned against Islam, merely from sinister guesswork and superficial impressions without fully and fairly investigating its practical features, creed and dogma? Echo answers, it is because these assailants of Islam, who apparently are the ecclesiastical dignitaries of the Church, are afraid of the spreading of the truth, and are conscious of the fact that the terrible enormities which are being committed in the name of Christ will instantaneously determine the collapse of falsified Christianity no sooner the truth is made manifest. But truth feareth not. Truth is a stubborn reality, it grows and develops, it is mightier than sword and falsehood combined, and it is the truth and nothing but the truth that will triumph in the end. The crescent shall give illumination to the dark recesses of human thought, and there shall be light. It is interesting, however, that so far as Islam is concerned, scholars and philosophers are arising within its ranks, abundantly imbued with Western learning, who are taking the part, not only of defenders of their faith, but of interpreters between the Eastern and Western World, and challenging Christians and other religious thinkers on their own ground. Unlike other religious converts, the Muslim convert, as a learner, is a disciple—not an imitator. A disciple may naturally become a producer; an imitator never rises above a mere imperfect copyist. With the disciple progress is from within; the imitator grows by accretion from without. The learning acquired by a disciple gives him capacity and a perfect knowledge of human philosophy; that gained by an imitator terminates in itself, thereby breeding ignorance, arrogance and selfishness, with their attending vices of greed, jealousy and hatred. This explains the difference between the Muslim and other religionists, especially the Christian. It is too well known to need the statement of the shortcoming inconsistencies and radical defects of Islam's great rival, neither will it be remedial to detail them here, but I will just briefly review the effects and progress of the world's religions; of course, not taking notice of Shamanism, fetishism and other hero and nature worshipping religions. Buddhism is divided into sects and sub-sects, with different creeds and observances, and modified in some countries by the incorporation of local deities as incarnations of Buddha.

Christianity, the precious theological message of the prophet Jesus—the fundamental essence of which is to “do unto all others as ye would they should do unto you,” and an absolute submission to the will of God (identically Islam), has been grossly travestied, divided into several

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meaningless denominations and made wholly subservient to worldly interest by his mock-followers, until the whole sublime essence of the original idea of Christianity has died a natural death, and its purity buried in the bosom of corruption and bastard imperialism. But for the timely advent of Muhammad, the whole world, kindred nations and tongues might have been standing before the tribunal of the great Allah, trembling in horrified stupefaction before the all-encompassing majestic Presence, to answer the grave question of "Why they had desecrated the earth?" Judaism is a religion which seemed to be confined exclusively to one branch of the human race, and it contains the germs of which present-day Christianity is an outgrowth and development.

Brahminism, Confucianism and Zoroastrianism seem, like Judaism and Buddhism, to transcend with difficulty the limit of the human race outside the doors of the Indo-Europeans. They have not moved any great masses of men, and they have been corrupted and confused by demon-worship and obscure philosophical speculations. If the divinity of a religion may be inferred from the variety of races among whom it has been diffused, and the strength of its hold upon their national, social and political life and customs, then there is positively no other religion that can prefer greater and more substantial claims than Islam, which has found its way from Mecca and Constantinople to Persia, Turkey, China, Egypt, India, England, France and across the desert to the remotest parts of the land of Ethiopia, Sahara, Timbuctoo, East, West, North, Central and Equatorial Africa, and it is still going, without the aid of missionaries here and there.

It is clearly evident that of all the missionary religions, as many as there may be, none has anywhere furnished such practical evidences of democratic equality, cosmopolitan adaptation and power which have in a marked degree overstepped the limit of race, as Islam. One important and sometimes stubborn argument that has been continuously, but carelessly, advanced by the opponents of Islam, is that Islam consecrates slavery, that it does this in spite of its being a religion—a religious reform. I maintain that there is absolutely no foundation or justification for this statement; but even assuming for one moment that Islam in previous years did sanction slavery, it must also be promptly admitted that no sooner had the slave become a Muslim convert than he was free in the real sense of the word; the importance of knowledge was rapidly impressed upon him, and he was recognized by the whole Muslim community as the equal of any of them. As soon, therefore, as he had embraced Islam, his former condition of servitude became null and void, and he was admitted into

the administrative and ecclesiastical strongholds, irrespective of colour, nationality or race. Is there any parallel to this religious democratic and intellectual equality? No! Million times none. On the contrary, to-day, in Christian America, the God-created black man, notwithstanding his Christian affiliations, intelligence or social prominence, is still a slave and a serf, perhaps worse than in the dramatic days of world-famed *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. He or she is still liable to be brutally flogged, kicked, knocked about, imprisoned, shot dead or lynched, at the will and pleasure of the bloodthirsty and savage American Tin God. On the white man's cotton plantation in the extreme Southern States of America, when the black man is broken down in physical health from weariness and fatigue of compulsory slavish labour, he is roused from a sick bed by his Christian task-master and compelled to work, smilingly but seriously referring him to the examples of his Saviour, "the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief." And many white Christian ministers and bishops thought they saw in the Bible a clear warrant where the black man is to be the perpetual servant and slave of the white man. There, also, in America is the all-powerful Klu Klux Klan—a bastard white society, with its elected President styled the "Imperial Wizard," and sanctioned as a legal corporation by the law of an American State, the object of which is wilfully to terrorize, maltreat and occasionally murder innocent men and women of my race, in order that white supremacy might prevail in the land of the free and the boasted cradle of nationalistic aspirations. And yet the industrial and political history of America is the history of the black man. Can you imagine the striking contrast between Caucasian Christianity and Islam, the religion of humanity? So utterly preposterous and absurd, and so scientifically illogical is colour prejudice, that I will not waste time in controversy.

A note of warning to my fellow Muslims all over the world would be equally appropriate before closing my remarks. It does really seem as if some Muslims are aspiring collectively to render the theology of Islam subservient to worldly interest by degenerating into sects and amalgamating other creeds and observances with the original idea of Islam; and there are also, I must say, those Muslims who are far from being Muslims, both temporarily and spiritually. Scandalous and un-Muslim acts seem to pervade the atmosphere of their very existence; the recognition of the divinity of Allah and the genuine brotherhood of man seem to be qualities lacking in great proportion. Next to this are the religious and political dissensions among them, to such horrifying extent that they had at times to submit their grievances to non-Muslim people or Government for arbitration, who in consequence

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officially order the closing of their mosques to prevent any riot by the rival party, until their silly differences are settled, sometimes by the same non-Muslim arbitrators.

Where is the theology of Islam? The trouble is that this class of undisciplined and untutored Muslims are bent on divorcing the finer essence of Islam from politics—a practice which has caused and is still causing the downfall of greedy nations. It is difficult to presume whether these Muslims act knowingly or from sheer affectation and probable ignorance. Were Muhammad still alive I wonder what he would have thought of it all.

If they knowingly act thus then they are certainly corrupting the precious teachings of Islam, and are following a religious system which they do not perfectly understand, and consequently are unworthy of being called Muslims. If, however, they act from pretension, affectation or ignorance, then they need be reminded, before it is too late, to rehearse carefully the tenets of the religion they profess, or else they may earn the reputation throughout the Muslim world of having vamped, mutilated and sported this highest of religions, thus inviting the mockery and laughter of our religious enemies, whom we affect to convert.

Whatever may have been my own personal failings and misfortunes, and whichever member of my race I may have wronged in business and other speculative ventures while I professed European Christianity (and known with the Christian baptismal name of Samuel George to my surname, Kpakpa-Quartey), I hereby humbly offer my sincere apologies and promise faithfully to proceed to discharge my moral obligations during this period of reconstruction. Meanwhile I can only ask those of my intimate Christian friends in West Africa, America and elsewhere who have villainously betrayed my trust, and are still desirous of presenting themselves in my way, to reflect on the divinity of God and the irresistible power of the brotherhood of mankind. I have endured enough injustice, hardship, and privation, unparalleled in the history of an African scholar. I have suffered this simply because of a burning aspiration and eagerness for a higher knowledge to enlighten my people and to play my part in the service of my race; but still I shirk no responsibility, I harbour no hatred, I have been misunderstood, misrepresented, and abused in certain sections of America. I am actuated with the best of intentions at all times.

I have paid the cost of ambition, speculation and experience throughout West, North and Central Africa, Europe, America and other ungodly parts of the world, but my success I ascribe unto the glory of God, and my enemies' shame.

Now, summing up the incontestable facts of what Islam

has already accomplished, and the state of the world in the light in which they present themselves, it is not unlikely to predict—and predict strongly, without the abuse of language—that in the face of ever-increasing world unrest, bloodshed and disorder; the frequent confusion of politics; national pride and racial ostentations; nations still retaining confidence in the fundamental futility of violence and domination; the abrupt violations of international morality; the blind belief in sordid materialism, commercialism and autocratic bureaucracy; the impending disaster of economic and industrial chaos; caste and class distinction; colour prejudice and hatred in so-called civilized, free and Christian lands because a person is black, brown, green or pink; aye, the blasphemous practice of might over right, and the subjugation of weaker and defenceless peoples as against the moral principle of equality of opportunity, and the recognition of natural human rights and liberties. Sooner or later the much distressed world, having been suffocated with abominations and tormented by these corrupt wounds, bruises and putrefying sores, shall inevitably succumb to a violent revolution of civilization—unprecedented and unheard of in history—and from the atoms of such a smashed world will arise an unquenchable desire to recover the long-lost element of tolerably spiritual and godly faith, which shall regulate the order of human society, and preserve the peace of mankind. Then at the sensational spur of the thrilling scene of this reactionary-politico-religious drama, the rising hand of Allah, supreme, mystic and indefinable as of yore, shall give expression to the applied conscience of nations—by choice, by conviction, and silently commanding: “Be ye disciples of Islam, for this day have I perfected Islam for you as a universal religion, and the words of Holy Qur-án must form the basis of legal codes throughout the international arena of the family of nations.” Thus Allah at His own appointed time shall speed the Islamic gospel thither on its way to every corner of the globe, and Muhammad, “Salla Allahu Alayhi wa Salam,” shall prove the Apostle of God and the Imam of the Prophets.

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## POLYGAMY

THE war has brought some of the European nations to fight with the very difficult problem arising out of the increased number of female population. In 1918, the fourth year of the war, it was given in a paper that in England, owing to the casualties in war, the female population has risen so high as to make the ratio of men to women ten to one. More or less similar were the conditions in France and some other countries of the West. The war did not stop after that. It went on for a year or so, and in a sense it has prolonged up to this time and has made this ratio to rise still higher. We may safely presume that during this time it may have risen to the ratio of twelve to one.

This brings the Christian nations to a most trying position. Their religion as well as their law prevents them from marrying more than one female. But what should be done with the remaining eleven? In these advanced times the question of providing for them has vanished, as they have made themselves capable of earning their livelihood. But still the graver question of satisfying their natural instincts remains unanswered.

We may safely leave half of them as old women and children, but the remaining half is to be managed somehow. What do they do? The answer is they do nothing but seek help from immorality, which brings about the death of many an unborn soul before they see "the light of this world," to save the honour and chastity of their parents. Thereby the nation suffers a great loss. Who knows many of these unfortunate souls may have developed into very useful elements of the nation, or at any rate some of them would have been males who would have come forward, twenty-five years hence, to help to solve this difficulty to some extent?

It will be a gross mistake if we ignore a few of the pious women who will be able to keep their chastity and lead a virgin life, but it helps us in no way to make the question easy, as the number of such women is very small and may be safely kept out of the question, and when dealing with this problem we may think only of the ordinary woman who has got all her natural inclinations awake.

It is here, then, that the Muslim law of polygamy asserts its superiority over the law of monogamy. It proclaims why should we not marry two, three, or four women to get out of this difficulty and save the honour of many persons of both the sexes. In this way a great number of the souls who are led to the early grave through no fault of theirs, but simply to save the honour of their immoral parents, will be saved; and also these unions will bear fruit which will help in time to solve this problem. Within thirty

years this increased female terror will subside to reasonable bounds.

Some of the followers of the system of monogamy will put the question of how to support more than one wife, when it is difficult to bear the expenses of even one. The answer is simple and obvious. The girls in question were supporting themselves before their marriage by the sweat of their own brow. Now those who were living upon honest labour can do so now when they are united to somebody. To labour honestly to help one's husband is not a shameful act, and that when the honour of one's nation is at stake. As for those who were living upon the charity of their illegitimate husbands, the money was coming from the very persons who shrink to bear the expenses of more than one wife. It would have been decidedly better if this money were spent rightfully in having more than one wife, rather than being spent in making the people immoral.

Next comes a question which requires our careful consideration even in times of peace. The European nations are very particular in the observance of the hygienic laws. A wife becomes pregnant. It is not safe for her husband to go near her after the lapse of three months after it, according to the views of doctors. At the same time it is equally dangerous to be near her before the passing of a month after she had given birth to the child, which time may be further extended in some countries where the mothers have to nourish their children upon their own milk, but this further extension may be ignored when considering nations who feed their young ones on unnatural foods. Now think of the position in which the husband, especially when he is a young man in his twenties, is placed. He has to wait for nearly a year before he can avail himself of his wife. It is very difficult for a young man to suppress his natural cravings for so long a time unless he be a saint or an insane person, who being very few, may be safely kept out of the question. Our ordinary man in a hundred to one cases will be tempted to immorality. In many a case the good wife would not bear to see her husband carrying on intrigues with others of her sex, and would like to keep him safe. But to do this she will have to devise some other unnatural means of satisfying his inclinations, which will prove quite injurious to his health, and in the long run to the nation's. A friend of mine, who is a respectable man and who had been in England for three years, told me of some of the actual happenings of this nature, which I deem shall be improper to state here, as this magazine is expected to pass under the eyes of females too. I myself have seen an abominable photo of such an action. There again the Muslim law of polygamy comes to help in solving the difficulty.

A Western, I forget his name, has said that Islam is

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not a progressive religion. He is wrongly led to believe it. Instead it is Islam, and Islam only, which shall be able to cope with the advanced requirements of the coming ages. It is ignorance of it which leads men to believe that it is not a progressive religion.

MOHAMMED BAKHSH, B.A.

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## TABLE TALK

### IN SINGAPORE

By KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

#### **Arabic the Only Vehicle of Divine Mind.**

Human language springs out of articulate sounds, when specialized and collocated. Sounds become words when they receive meanings by the mutual but the silent consent of Society. Words thus become vehicles of thought conveying the speaker's mind to his hearers. Their function sometimes goes beyond the space of place and time in which they were firstly uttered. They become repositories of ideas for others. Thoughts of one generation pass sometimes to coming generations. The words of the speaker are deemed to possess some good for posterity. Language has thus brought to us treasures of past wisdom. But for language, we would have been losers of ancient philosophies.

#### **Changeability of Language.**

Almost all the languages of the world suffer from the vicissitude of time. Words sometimes change in form and meaning, and if they were used by some writer in his composition, his mind becomes unintelligible to the coming progeny of few centuries afterwards. Language used by him in his own time, though eloquent enough to express his mind to the people around him, becomes either archaic in form or assumes new meanings. Old books therefore, not being in popular language, become shelved and gradually go to the archives of oblivion, if they fail to claim the attention of the readers of the day. In that case even, it is then translation and not the original which remains in common use. But the same fate of going to oblivion awaits the translation as well. Few centuries more, and the translation needs further translation because the language of the former becomes itself unpopular under the same rule of changeability of languages. Translation, as a rule, has never been the faithful representative of the original. And one should not be surprised if the mind of the ancient writers

through these successive translations becomes absolutely lost to the readers of one thousand years afterwards.

### **Disappearance of the Sacred Books.**

This explains the disappearance of the original text of various ancient sacred scriptures on one hand, and the human adulteration creeping into their respective translations on the other. The purity of the Old Testament suffered from human hand for the same cause and the New Testament could not remain free from addition and subtraction; a fact admitted on all hands. Other revealed books met the same fate. The ancient Vedas, it is said, could, however, escape human interpolation and came to us in their original purity through the faithful memories of the Brahmins. It may be so, but its meanings and contents have decidedly become Latin and Greek to their present owners. Hindu religion, which got its inspiration from the Vedas, has become ramified into thousands of sections and sub-sections. They differ from each other on fundamental principles. One may call them religions, and not sects under one religion. But they all trace the origin of their respective beliefs, pole apart from each other, to the same Vedas. The same verse receives different interpretation from different hands, and becomes responsible for contradictory doctrines and inconsistent tenets in various branches of Hindu religion. The explanation is not fortifying. The language of the Vedas has not only become archaic, but has been classed in the category of dead languages. Its words are a sealed treasure of old wisdom, hence the whole trouble.

In these circumstances no one can claim to be in true possession of Divine mind, if ever revealed to his ancestors in former days. But if religion came to reveal the will of the Most High to His creatures below, it needs fresh revelation, otherwise the will of God will become befogged for the causes alluded to above. This explains the repetition of revelation from time to time in former days.

### **Different Religions of Different Peoples.**

History has seen such days in the world when different branches of humanity had become separated from each other by natural or artificial barriers. There were no means of mutual communication between them and no vehicles to transmit wisdom, philosophy or religion of the one race to the other; and if religion from God came to enlighten men as to His ways every nation was entitled to have a religion from God of its own. It had it, as we read in the Qur-án. All these religions did converge on basic principles; the difference being only in matters immaterial, and that also on account of local causes. But if they seem to differ at present in some of their teachings it is

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on account of the change I am speaking of in the make and shape of their respective languages.

### **Time for One Religion.**

Some two or three hundred years after the advent of Jesus, the world began to move on its way to universalization. Various facts and factors came to work out unity. This universal tendency or centralization did need unity in creed and faith as well, because religion has always proved to be the most efficacious means of bringing conflicting elements unto one harmonious whole. Religion is the lever of the machinery of fraternization; and if Divine economy wanted to send one religion for the whole human race as the last word from Him, the whole object would become lost if God had revealed His mind in a language liable to change.

### **Arabic the Last Medium for the Word of God.**

Arabic is most conservative language, and the language of Hejaz has always remained above corruption. Its words have kept the purity of form and meaning—no generalization or particularization in their connotation or denotation. Suppose for the sake of argument, the Ruler Above had condescended, at the advent of Islam, to take into His counsel all the advocates of different religions for the selection of a language for His last word, which could carry His mind to the coming generations always in its original purity. Arabic must have been recommended by all, to become the medium of the Word of God. No other language then spoken is living now. But go to Hedjaz, as I did, and you will find the language of the Qur-án on the lips of every child.

### **Jesus and Muhammad.**

This change-tendency in language has robbed us of another "light" and "guidance" in the province of religion. The lives of various prophets could have acted as beacon's light to human footsteps in darkness, had we been in possession of their genuine records. Unfortunately the lives of these great seekers after the mind of God have become enveloped in oblivion for the same cause, and the most befogged of them is the life of Jesus, of which little is known. Many have questioned his history. Some silly Christian writers—and a very commonplace example of them we find in the person of Dr. Zwimmer, of the pseudo *Muslim World*—often harp on comparison between Jesus and Muhammad. Invidious comparisons are always odious. Besides, we Muslims have been enjoined by the Qur-án to refrain from making distinction between a prophet and a prophet. To disillusionize such foolish missionaries, we may simply remind them as to the unauthentic nature of

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the synoptic records. There can be no comparison between the "man in the myth" and "the man in history." We know very little of Jesus. His first thirty years are in a cloud of mystery, and the account of the rest of his three years of life is very, very meagre. Eliminate the account of his miracles from his narrative, the remaining record of his life cannot go beyond the space of half a dozen pages. Can there be any light in such a life for the world of our days? Again, when we consider the source of this blessed record, all our hopes in Jesus become frustrated. The first story-tellers of his life were men of very, very low intellect. They were not the narrators of actualities but the reciters of their own impressions. One should not expect from them a better specimen of it if the tablet to be impressed upon was the mind of a fisherman or a washerman. No wonder if these uncultured disciples of Jesus were more interested in curiosities and miracle stories than in reading their master in things of light and guidance to the coming generations. Again what we read in the sermon on the Mount can by piecemeal be easily traced to Missina, Talmud and other Judaic writers, Philo being one of them. Even some of the parables, which have been so much made of by some Christian writers, can be traced for their origin to Buddhistic literature, which came into existence some two centuries before the birth of Jesus. With such meagre and unauthenticated records of his life there can be no comparison between Muhammad and Jesus; but to open the eyes of these propagandists of the foreign mission I will write very soon a book on Muhammad and Jesus.

I am afraid I have made a little diversion from the subject under discussion in to-day's talk. Words are conveyance of our mind to other minds. Similarly revealed words are vehicles of God's mind to humanity; and if words chosen by God to reveal His will to man some centuries ago become corrupt and lose the meanings given to them in those days they cannot reveal any longer Divine will to us; and if, for reasons known to Him, some Divine economy deemed it necessary to give one and the final word to the world after Jesus, He could not do otherwise but select the language of Hedjaz as the last medium of His will.

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## MUHAMMAD: "A TRUE MAN"

ONCE a young English lady asked a cleric what were the doctrines of the religion called Muhammadanism. The reply of the reverend gentleman is worthy of notice. He said: "Muhammad was a true man and worshipped God devoutly, but he refused the blessing of the Church, and so is numbered with the souls which are lost." Further he said: "The Muhammadans are people who follow the teachings of their Prophet more than we follow the teachings of Christ. They believe in God and in a future life, and their moral code is high." The lady then enquired: "If this is so, then why waste money on sending missionaries to these people?" The cleric answered: "To tell them to accept the Crucified One as the only means of attaining salvation."

Let us go into this matter just a little. It was admitted that "Muhammad was a true man and worshipped God devoutly." This certainly would lead one to believe that such a life was deserving of the reward of Paradise, and when anyone thinks well over these words—"a true man"—does it not sum up all that is required in one's duty to mankind? We Muslims know that from the cradle to the grave our holy Prophet was in very reality "a true man." We read of his early life as a boy with his grandfather, and know how he endeared himself to all. We know his days with Abu Talib, and the respect shown to him by old and young in his native city. We find him tending flocks beneath the starry vault of heaven, his soul in communion with the secrets of nature, and his mind striving to pierce the veil which shrouded the mystery of what we are and why we exist. We can trace his journeys and dealings as a trader. We know his beloved wife, Khadija, and how he was a model husband. Do we not remember also that on one occasion when Khadija watched at her window for the return of her husband, she espied far off riders coming towards the city. She gazed at the foremost and said it seemed as if he was guarded by the wings of an angel. We know that the mystic communion with nature led him to the heights of Hira—a barren hill which was destined to be the Mountain of Light. We see him there day after day, his loving wife bringing him food, and his soul longing for the revelation of the Unseen. This man, who could have lived a life of ease and comfort, who could have purchased anything that he chose to add to his pleasure, stole away from luxury and vanity and slept on a hard couch of rock, living frugally and given up to higher thoughts than the rest of his countrymen. But let no one misunderstand. Muhammad (on whom be peace) lived in the world as well.

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He took his place in the councils of his people, he was a good citizen and shared responsibility with the others. He was "a true man." Then the curtain is lifted, a glorious beam of Light strikes the rocks of Hira, and to this man is delivered a Message that shall ring through the world for all time. He was chosen as the mouthpiece of God. Allah selected him to give to humanity the last and complete Revelation. Here may we pause and consider well the character of Muhammad. In the sight of God he was a perfect man, fitted to be the revealer of the Will of Allah to the peoples of the world, in the sight of man "al Amin," the Faithful, the Trustworthy. Here, in the dim recesses of Arabia, the Voice of God spoke again as in times of old. Once again the world was thrilled by the utterance of its Creator, and thus came the Light which was to dispel the gloom of centuries of darkness, superstition and pernicious beliefs. Can we not realize in even a small degree, when we celebrate the "Night of Power," what such a night as this meant to the human race? Prophet after prophet has been sent, had preached and gone his way, his teaching being altered by men to suit themselves; no word remained pure and uncorrupted as it had been given by the Prophet who had brought the message. All the world looked with impatience for the coming of the Promised One. The "Light shined forth from Paran," and that moment the earth knew that Allah had spoken. Then let us think of the life of the Prophet at Mecca. He bravely gave God's message, and was subjected to insult, ridicule and persecution for thirteen long years. Oh! ye people of little patience to-day, take a lesson from the fortitude of our blessed Prophet. When you are laughed at on account of your faith, be glad that you are following in his blessed footsteps. When you meet with insult and ridicule, hold yourself well in hand; be calm, be strong, and remember that our holy Prophet turned enemies into friends by his patience and courage. Let us model our life upon his, and look out each detail of his wondrous life and resolve to strive to emulate his example. Then, again, you who fight as warriors, remember, "An excellent example had ye in the Prophet of Allah." He too was attacked by vindictive foes, he too was one of the "minority," but he triumphed in the end, and then when his enemies lay suppliant at his feet, did he think of all those long years of persecution and trouble? Was he vindictive too? Did he order them the fate they justly deserved and quite expected? No! he was Allah's apostle, and Allah is "Rahim" and "Rahman." When his enemies were subdued did he alter his life? Was he proud and arrogant? We know that he was not. So to-day the words of this Christian gentleman only state a fact that he was "a true man."

## MUHAMMAD: "A TRUE MAN"

He "worshipped God devoutly." Well we Muslims know that this is but a statement of truth. Our holy Prophet not only worshipped God through the medium of regular and sustained prayer, but he worshipped God in every possible way. He was kind and charitable to all creatures, and happiness for mankind was one of his foremost thoughts. But it seems that, according to the creed of some men, it is possible to be such a man as this and yet the mentality is so narrow that because "*he refused the blessing of the Church*" they blasphemously believe that God, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, is such a being that He would cast into Hell such a man because he refused to bow the knee to the man-made doctrines of a Church which defined its beliefs at a succession of Councils. Oh! the ignorance and folly of otherwise intelligent beings. May Allah pardon them! The soul of our blessed prophet shines to-day in the highest Heaven in the Divine Presence. Oh, Muslims! pity the clouded vision of these poor folks who have not yet entered into the Light, and try to guide them towards illumination.

Then we come to the second portion: "The Muhammadans are people who follow the teachings of their Prophet more than we follow the teachings of Christ. They believe in God and in a future life, and their moral code is high." I do not think that any word from my pen is needed with reference to the above—it speaks for itself. The answer as to the futility of missionary propaganda is worthy, however, of some comment. "To tell them to accept the Crucified One as the only means of attaining salvation." How queer! It is news to me that Muslims ever rejected Jesus (on whom be peace). We Muslims revere Jesus (as he is known in the West by this *not Hebrew* but *Greek* name), and Isa bin Miriam was a Prophet of Allah. We cannot as Muslims hold anything but the greatest reverence for his memory. "As the only means of attaining salvation." If, according to the reverend gentleman's idea, *acceptation* is the key to salvation, then all Muslims are saved. What he really means by "only means of attaining salvation," judging by his previous remark, is that *belief in the teachings of Jesus hardly seems essential*, but "*the blessing of the Church*" is the one thing which counts. Let us be quite frank. We do not accept "the blessing of the Church," with its collection of theological mysteries which supersede the teachings of Jesus, but we *do* accept the Message from God given through the lips of Jesus the Prophet of Allah. One is man-made, the other from God, and we therefore ask our non-Muslim friends to seriously ask themselves which of these two they really believe to be "the only means of attaining salvation." To come back again to our holy Prophet, we know the Message he gave to the world has remained unsullied in its original purity to this very day,

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as it was intended by Allah that it should be so. Not one word of the Holy Qur-án has been altered, not one syllable omitted. We ask our friends and enemies to examine our teachings and judge for themselves, not to rely upon the words or writings of others. All previous messages have been altered, the teachings of prophet after prophet changed and corrupted, but the Revelation of the Most High, the Holy Qur-án, the Gospel of unity and hope, is as bright a jewel as when translated from Allah Himself to the holy Prophet for promulgation as the Guide the whole world awaited. The reverend gentleman can read in his own sacred book the words of Jesus, where he promises the coming of Muhammad, and calls him "the Prince of Truth." Muhammad (on whom be peace) was indeed "a true man," and when he delivered the Word of Allah verily was fulfilled: "Truth has come and falsehood shall vanish to return no more."

KHALID SHELDRAKE.