

# Islamic Review

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## THE HOLY QUR-ÁN

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ  
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّیْ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِہِ الْکَرِیْمِ

# THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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RAJAB, 1342 A.H.                      FEBRUARY 1924.                      No. 2.

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## NOTES

### **Sir Abdullah Archibald Hamilton, Bart.**

We welcome by Allah's providence, and with sincere thankfulness, a new adherent in Great Britain to the Faith of Islam, in Sir Abdullah Archibald Hamilton, Bart., who embraced our Faith on December 20, 1923, in the presence of Khwaja Nazir Ahmad, Imam of the Mosque, Woking. Sir Archibald is a well-known figure in English Society, and his conversion is significant as showing that the hold of Islam, rightly understood, on what are sometimes called the aristocratic or "leisured" classes, is every bit as real as its appeal to the busy professional man or the more humble wage-earner.

Sir Charles Edward Archibald Watkins Hamilton, fifth baronet of the first (1776) and third baronet of the second creation (1819) was born on December 10, 1876, succeeding to the baronetcies on the death, in 1915, of his father, the late Sir Charles Edward Hamilton. He was a Lieutenant in the Royal Defence Corps, Recruiting Officer, August 1914; Honorary Recruiting Officer, Selsey and District; Military Representative 35th Regimental District; late Lieutenant 4th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment; late M.S.H., and President of the Selsey Conservative Association. He married (first) in 1897, Olga, only daughter of Rear-Admiral Sir Adolphus FitzGeorge, K.C.V.O., and grand-daughter of Field-Marshal H.R.H. the late Duke of Cambridge, first cousin to Queen Victoria; and (second) in 1906, Algorta Marjorie Blanche, only daughter of George Child, of Wid-

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ford, Hertfordshire ; having issue by his first marriage one son, George Edward Archibald Augustus FitzGeorge, born in 1898, at whose baptism their present Majesties King George and Queen Mary attended in person as sponsors. His son became a Lieutenant in the Grenadier Guards in 1917, and fell in action in Flanders in 1918, aged nineteen years.

Sir Archibald traces his descent through Sir William Hamilton, well known in English history as one of the six Kentish petitioners, brother of Sir James Hamilton of Donalan, direct ancestor of the Duke of Abercorn ; and through Baron Hamilton of Paisley, who married Mary, daughter of King James II of Scotland.

Sir Archibald sent the following letter to the Imam, which we feel certain will interest our readers :—

SELSEY, SUSSEX,  
December 20, 1923.

MY DEAR KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD,

Firstly I thank you, my dear Brother, for so kindly and promptly coming down to Selsey to see and cheer me. To-day is the happiest of my life, as I have adopted Islam, the one true Faith, as mine. I personally could never really believe in Christianity, its ministers or its followers.

I have been a Muslim at heart, and had great leanings towards the Faith, for over seven years.

May the blessings of Allah rest on all of us.

Ever your sincere friend in motto,

(Sd.) C. E. ARCHIBALD W. HAMILTON.

*Sola Nobilitas Virtus*—Virtue is the only nobility—is the motto of the house of Hamilton.

### The Plight of Europe.

Since the Treaty of Versailles the Christian world has attempted to establish peace and prosperity on earth by secret compacts, national treaties and many international conferences. It is admitted by all that these efforts have borne little, if any, fruit. The world, where peace and plenty reigned till yesterday, is to-day seething with discontent. Its peace and tranquillity are shattered. Disorders and disturbances are evident on all sides ; not because the nations desire to be at daggers drawn, but because each is seeking its own selfish individual object. They snarl and leer at each other. The Continent of Europe, and, through her, the whole world, is on the edge of a precipice. The Church, unfortunately, though ostensibly at the wheel, is too paralysed by fear to dare to prevent it from slipping to disaster.

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It may be true that the men who betrayed the human race at Versailles did their best. Too true, indeed, for it was not an easy task to satisfy all the honest and secret claims and the "natural aspirations" of the "Big Four" and their protégés; but the fact remains that the burden of this terrible break-up of the world, the suffering that lies so heavily on all mankind, is not yet lifted from the earth. The League of Nations is already bloodless—withered at the heart. The curse of the whole human race is the feud in Europe. It made the war and kept alive the spirit of hate which shackled man, yearning, as is his natural wont, to build up weapons of destruction. When the time came, the question was not whose cause was just, but whose steel could last longest, cut deepest. The mentality has not yet changed. It was a War to end War, and a Peace to end Peace.

History, as ever, repeats itself. Whenever the conditions of organized human life—social, industrial or political—have got out of hand, so that the mental or moral equilibrium is hard to maintain, the Church has always come forward to ask "for another trial." It does so to-day. "A warning to all Christians" is sent out and resolution after resolution is passed. "The world-war," proclaims the International Bible Student Association, "came according to the prediction of the Bible," and that "the Lord's Kingdom, for which Christians have been praying for nineteen hundred years, is at hand, and that the Lord Jesus, invisible to man, is now present and beginning His reign. . . ."

The Messiah, we were always given to understand, was to bring "peace on earth, goodwill to men," life, liberty and happiness. His reign, according to the Proclamation, began in 1919, and in the succeeding five years, it would seem, he has made a terrible muddle of the job. Perhaps the Church is following his example in doing nothing but passing resolutions.

### **Evangelism.**

It is urged that "at the present time there are probably more people who feel that in Christ is the only hope of the world than ever before in the lifetime of men now living." Can the Church, with its usual temerity, take the challenge? If it cannot—we know it dare not—the alternative would seem to be its own supersession by some other body not yet in organized being in the West, more competent and more suitable to the requirement of world-service. The Church

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is quite alive to the situation. Whereas on the one hand it thinks best to malign Islam, on the other it is striving hard to be the evangel of reconciliation.

The *Baptist Times* of January 4th, writing on the latter theme, deplors the amazing apathy of business men to questions of local evangelization, who, on the other hand, are "surprisingly inventive when it comes to the development and extension of their business." It continues:—

Only here and there do we find laymen using their brains in the work of attracting "outsiders" and of winning souls. They appear to accept failure in the Church when it would be anathema to them in business. The Church of England relies on a bell, and the Free Churches rely on a poster. Can no consecrated layman devise some more effective methods of gathering in the lost? When the four men who bore the palsied sufferer found that the door of the house was blocked, they stripped up the roof and lowered the needy man into the very presence of Jesus. If we cannot get sinners in through the door, what about the roof? If one remedy fails, why not try another? Desperate maladies demand desperate remedies, and our laymen might take a lead in the matter.

In the zeal of this soul-saving business the writer's rashness would seem to exceed his discretion. He asks:—

Suppose that soul-winning work were their business; suppose that for every man they won for Christ they received a commission of ten pounds; suppose that all half-empty churches would have to pay a fine; and suppose that all full churches received a generous donation? Would not something happen?

Indeed, many "men and women who are so out of touch with Gospel realities that they are almost heathen" would rush to join the flock of Mammon; and what is more, this method would certainly provide work for the unemployed.

### The Bait for Evangelism.

The same journal prints "Messages from Leaders" on their task in the New Year. The Rev. W. T. Fullerton points out that "the chief thing is to *dare to preach the Gospel to the people when they come.*" Candidly, though under apparent protest, he admits that "we shall have to believe it ourselves first. . . ." A reasonable though remarkable statement; for the Christian beliefs would seem to change continually according to the needs of the day.

The Rev. J. W. Britton points out that

there is no form of utterance more difficult to prepare or to deliver than what is known as a *simple Gospel address*. For one thing, it requires considerable courage to face an audience with a message,

## NOTES

conscious that in all probability 80 per cent. of those present know as much about your subject as you can tell them, and that the other 20 per cent. are naturally indifferent, if not antagonistic, to it.

Then we have the Rev. F. J. H. Humphrey, D.S.O., touching the right note. To get the "outsiders," he remarks :—

The experiment is being tried of transferring an ordinary Church evening service to a picture-house ; the Church deacons and members have agreed to sacrifice the custom and comfort of an ordinary service in a familiar place, to go into some place less familiar into which new Church-going folk are ready to come.

It is found, we are told, that people who shrink from entering a church will come to a picture-house or theatre. In consequence, not only films are shown in the churches, but many an altar has, so to say, been transformed into a stage. Recently, "bare-legged women dancers, soft psychic lights, stringed music, heavy incense and cinema pictures" were used by the Rev. W. H. Guthrie of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, to illustrate the birth and progress of the human soul. Naturally there was a great rush, and several who fainted had to be carried out. Mr. Guthrie called his sermon a "rhythmic sculptural oratorio." He declaimed the libretto written by himself in blank verse, telling the stories of God and Satan, Adam and Eve, and the angel with the flaming sword, while "at intervals women appeared on the platform and danced 'interpretatively' in flowing garments on which coloured lights played." Then pictures of famous sculptures were thrown on the screen, the purpose being to show first Adam's conflict with the animal kingdom and its gradual conquest by means of the growth of the human mind.

Mr. Guthrie's reply to the criticisms of the scanty clothes of his women dancers at St. Mark's was that they were due to the impure minds of the critics. He pointed out that before he came to St. Mark's "it was a depleted parish ; now the church is crowded every Sunday."

Another remarkable play, *The Great World Theatre*, is reported to have been produced in St. Edward's Church, Leeds, with the approval of the Bishops of Ripon and Whitby. It is described as a symbolical judgment of life. A short prologue in heaven introduces the play. It is in this scene that God appears

as a majestic, golden-gowned, purple-cloaked woman, flaunting high, proud, green-feathered. He asks the world to arrange a play for Him. The world, not knowing the purpose, obeys the command. An angel allocates the parts, the world lends the costumes, and the wondering

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souls disappear to prepare themselves to play in God's drama on the stage, which is the World. One soul protests before the spectacle of life and death begins. He has been allotted the part of the Beggar. He complains that his rôle is too bitter and too terrible for anyone to play, that the words are too tragic for anyone to utter. He attempts in vain to destroy his part. The Angel rebukes him, and it is round this part of the Beggar that the play moves. It is the Beggar who learns the meaning of Life. It is the Beggar who finally, white-haired and bent with toil, joyfully kisses the garment of Death and enters into the presence of God, triumphing over the King with his power, the Rich Man with his wealth, Beauty with her pride, and the Peasant with his small possessions.

A truly Christian passion-play. The beggars and fishermen always have been supposed to obey without understanding and yet to triumph in the long run.

### Denial of the Virgin Birth of Jesus.

Dr. Leighton Parks, rector of St. Bartholomew's, New York, created a "religious storm" by challenging the bishops to try him for heresy for denying the virgin birth. He declared that

The best scholars tell us that the word used by Isaiah in his prophecy means "a young married woman," and that that was wrongly translated into Greek as meaning a virgin. St. Paul said that Jesus was born of the seed of David after the flesh.

In Matthew and Luke the ancestry of Jesus is traced through Joseph, and those two Gospels say that it was Joseph who was descended from David. We have no idea about Mary's ancestry. There is no word in Mark about the virgin birth, while the Fourth Gospel says that the father of Jesus was Joseph. There is justification in the Scriptures for those who deny that the virgin birth is an historic fact.

A similar controversy, it would be remembered, was raised in 1921 by Dr. Rashdall, Dean of Carlisle, who told the Modern Churchmen's Congress at Cambridge that "the divinity of Christ does not necessarily imply virgin birth or any other miracle. The virgin birth, if it could be historically proved, would be no demonstration of Christ's divinity, nor would the disproof of it throw any doubt on that doctrine."

### The Object of Miracles.

It has been rightly said that miracles are not the end but the means to an ultimate goal—the physical and spiritual regeneration of the world. Supernatural phenomena and miracles, if they can be wrought at all, are the means to convince the people of the birth of the miraculous. The best criterion of the miracles, therefore, is the effect they

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produce. *By their fruits ye shall know them.* Jesus, according to the Gospels, did nothing but perform miracles. In fact, the pivot of Christianity is a miracle—the Resurrection. Multitudes, the Gospels tell us, followed Jesus; he healed hundreds, raised many from the dead; fed thousands—with what results?

From among the five hundred that followed him he selects twelve, who were to sit on twelve thrones “judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” One denies him thrice before the cock crows, and even curses him when that is the only way out. Another betrays him for thirty pieces of silver. Again and again he has to rebuke them for lack of faith. He asks them to pray, and finds them asleep.

If Mary was indeed a virgin at the birth of Jesus, this alone ought to have been a sufficient proof of his Divine Mission if not Origin; yet she did not believe in him to the very last, and he had to disclaim her.

Man-made miracles, laws or gods, are bound to fall.

### The Miracle of Muhammad.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad never claimed to have performed any miracles—*he was a man like other men.* On the day when his little son Ibrahim died there happened to be an eclipse of the sun. The people were saying, “It is because of the death of Ibrahim.” He rebuked them for their foolishness, and said: “The sun and the moon are two signs of the signs of God; they are not eclipsed on account of the life or death of anyone.”

As often as not he was challenged to show them a sign.

And they say: We will by no means believe in *you* until *you* cause a fountain to gush forth from the earth for us:

Or *you should* have a garden of palms and grapes in the midst of which *you should* cause rivers to flow forth, gushing out;

Or *you should* cause the heavens to come down upon us in pieces as *you think*, or bring Allah and the angels face to face (with us);

Or *you should* have a house of gold, or *you should* ascend into heaven, and we will not believe in *your* ascending until *you* bring down to us a book which we may read. Say: Glory be to my Lord; am I aught but a mortal apostle? (The Holy Qur-án, xvii. 90-93).

The only miracle claimed by him—and the Holy Qur-án—is the Book itself:—

And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it and call on your *helpers* besides Allah if you are truthful.

But if you do (it) not—and never shall you do (it)—then be on

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your guard against the fire of which men and stones are the fuel ; it is prepared for the unbelievers (ii. 23-24).

Or, do they say : He has forged it. Say : Then bring ten forged chapters like it and call upon whom you can besides Allah, if you are truthful (xi. 13).

Say : If men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of this Qur-án, they could not bring the like of it, though some of them were aiders of others (xvii. 88).

The Holy Qur-án of yesterday, to-day and to-morrow is the same, word by word, syllable by syllable. All the world over it is identical and no copy differs on even a trifling point. The Book is guarded against all corruptions :—

Surely We have revealed the Reminder and We will most surely be its guardian (xv. 9).

Most surely it is an honoured Qur-án,

In a book that is protected (lvi. 77-78).

Nay ! it is a glorious Qur-án,

In a guarded tablet (lxxxv. 21-22).

Even Muir has to admit that “ there is probably in the world no other work which has remained twelve centuries with so pure a text.” Then there is the unchallenged verdict of Von Hammer. He says :—

We hold the Coran to be as surely the word of Mohamet as the Mohametans hold it to be the word of God.

The Holy Qur-án claims another miracle, to wit, the wonderful change brought about by the Holy Prophet—a transformation unique in the history of the world—so complete, and effected in so short a time. The teachings of Muhammad wrought a marvellous and a mighty work. Never had man seen the like arousing of spiritual life, the like faith that suffered sacrifices. From time beyond memory Arabia had been steeped in spiritual torpor. Both Judaism and Christianity failed to move the Arab mind. The people were sunk in superstition, cruelty and vice. Pride and poverty had introduced among them the crime of female infanticide. Their religion was gross idolatry. Thus Mecca and the whole peninsula lay lifeless in this state.

What a change had Muhammad produced ! His magnanimous forbearance, his patient and tolerant spirit, his marvellous charm, had prepared a brotherhood ready to defend him and their Faith with their blood. A commonwealth, the members of which had rejected idolatry, adopted the worship of One God and surrendered themselves implicitly to His guidance, praying to the Almighty with frequency and fervour, looking for pardon to His mercy,

## WHY I BECAME A MUSLIM

and striving hard to follow after good works, almsgiving, chastity and justice.

Muhammad never lost courage, even when he was persecuted, attacked and exiled, when his followers were defeated, when he was laughed at as a madman, when in the cave with a solitary companion, in imminent danger of his life. God, he believed, was with him. He saw the Greek, Roman and Persian empires in their might, and told his handful of adherents that ere long they would belong to the Muslims. The latter events proved him to be right.

That is the miracle which a thousand Biblical Christs cannot surpass.

In case some of our readers may be thinking of the "inseparable sword," we may remind them that the works of violence are never permanent.

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## WHY I BECAME A MUSLIM

By SIR ARCHIBALD HAMILTON, BART.

"Sir Archibald Hamilton, the well-known Sussex baronet, has embraced the faith of Islam and thus becomes the second titled Englishman to renounce Christianity for the banner of the Prophet.

"In the following article, written specially for *The People*, Sir Archibald states quite frankly the reasons for his change of creed."<sup>1</sup>

SINCE arriving at an age of discretion, the beauty and the simple purity of Islam have always appealed to me. I could never, though born and brought up as a Christian, believe in the dogmatic aspect of the Church; and have always placed reason and common-sense before blind faith.

As time progressed, I wished to be at peace with my Creator, and I found that both the Church of Rome and the Church of England were of no real use to me.

In becoming a Muslim I have merely obeyed the dictates of my conscience, and have since felt a better and a truer man.

There is no religion that is so maligned by the

<sup>1</sup> *The People*, January 18, 1924.

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ignorant and biased as is Islam ; yet if people only knew, it is the only true solution for the problem of socialism, inasmuch as it is the religion of the Strong for the Weak, the Rich for the Poor. Humanity is divided into three classes. First, those on whom God has, out of His bounty, bestowed possessions and wealth ; secondly, those who have to work to earn their living ; and, lastly, the great army of the unemployed, or those who have fallen by the wayside through no fault of their own.

In these evil days of stress and keen competition, when almost everyone lives and works at a tremendously high pressure, we have to find a solution in keeping with these three classes. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, under Divine inspiration, tells us, in the Holy Qur-án, the last of the revealed Books (we Muslims believe that God sent His messengers to all races and climes in the person of Buddha, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc., and that all the revealed Books, in their pristine purity, had Divine origin), that those who are fortunately placed must give *at least* 2½ per cent. of their annual income to those in need.

We are, at the same time, enjoined to refrain from creating professional beggars ; but to help only those who are in just need, and require a helping hand to be placed on a footing to make a fresh start. *It is chiefly due to this institution that unemployment is practically unknown in Muslim countries.*

When I say that Islam is a socialistic creed, I do not mean that it is akin to modern socialistic ideas, as known to us in the West ; seeing that we Muslims are enjoined, in every Friday congregational prayer, to be loyal to the ruler, whoever he may be ; for rebellion is a sin. If we cannot remain peacefully under a tyrant, we must go elsewhere.

Again, Islam recognizes genius and individuality. It is constructive and not destructive. For example, if a landowner who is rich and is not in the need of cultivating his land, refrains from so doing for some

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time, his property *ipso facto* becomes public property, and, according to Islamic law, passes into the hands of the first person who cultivates it.

Islam strictly forbids its adherents to gamble or to indulge in any games of chance. It prohibits all alcoholic drinks and interdicts usury, which alone has caused enough sorrow and suffering to mankind. Thus, in Islam, none can take a mean advantage of another who is less fortunate.

### EQUALITY OF WOMEN.

We neither believe in Fatalism nor in Predestination, but only in Premeasurement; that is to say, the fixity of the laws and the intelligence to follow them.

To us, Faith without Action is a dead letter; for in itself it is insufficient unless we live up to it. We believe in our own personal accountability for our actions in this life and the hereafter. We must carry our own cross and none can atone for another's sin.

Islam teaches the inherent sinlessness of man. It teaches that man and woman come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and have been equipped with equal capabilities for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainment.

I do not think I need say much about the Universal Brotherhood of man in Islam. It is a recognized fact. Lord and vassal, rich and poor, are all alike. I have always found that my brother Muslims have been the soul of honour and that I could believe their word. They have always treated me justly, as a man and a brother, and have extended to me the greatest hospitality, and I have always felt at home with them.

In conclusion, I would like to say that whereas Islam guides humanity in the daily workaday life, the present day so-called Christianity, indirectly in theory and invariably in practice, teaches its followers, it would seem, to pray to God on Sundays and to prey on His creatures for the rest of the week.

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## NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

BY RUDOLF PICKTHALL

“Vision comprehendeth Him not, but He comprehendeth (all) vision; and He is the Knower of subtilities, the Aware.

“Verily there have come to you clear proofs from your Lord; whoever therefore will see, it is for his own soul; and whoever will be blind, it shall be against himself; and I am not a keeper over you.”—THE HOLY QUR-ÁN, vi. 104-105.

It has long been the custom to signalize the first of January by the making of good resolutions. So long has it been the custom, indeed, that it has become rather a matter for jest than otherwise, and, for many of us, the thought that the year, as we know it, is a mere arbitrary division of time, of man's contrivance, and that there is no particular reason why it should begin on the first of January rather than on the first of June, or of May, or even of April, tends to give an air of unreality to the process of making New Year's resolutions. We are apt to think, with a smile of indulgence not unmingled with mild contempt, of the Watch-Night Services, dear to the heart of Protestant England, where congregations of young men and maidens—seizing with zest on so godly a pretext for being out late—are directed to engage in silent prayer during the few minutes which mark the passing of the Old Year and the birth of the New.

The reflection that the clock may perhaps be five minutes out one way or the other suggests an erratically-timed devotion, amounting almost to burlesque, rendering the whole business in the last degree unconvincing.

To the emotional and the hysterical, and, perhaps, the sentimental, such occasions may have a passing value; but good resolutions, to be of any avail, must have some surer inspiration than can be associated with a season which is absolutely devoid of significance, religious or otherwise. There is more sense in taking

## NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

our birthdays as our New Year's days, or indeed any other day whatsoever, whereon earnest thought and a sincere penitence have urged us to make a real and genuine effort to start afresh.

Be that as it may, the mind of man does instinctively grasp at some definite standpoint—some halting-place in his life's journey, where he may stand, as on a hill and look back; from which he may survey the past—the snares and the sins and the meannesses he has *not* avoided, the high purposes he has *not* succeeded in reaching, or even realizing, the good he has never done or tried to do, or even thought of doing—not with feelings of discouragement or despair or any hint of utter hopelessness, but rather with the determination to succeed in spite of it all, to profit by the lessons of the past, not to be crushed by them.

Napoleon is said to have called the English fools, because they did not know when they were beaten. That is the kind of folly which God requires of men of every race, not English only, in the battle of life: the folly that holds that men may indeed

rise on stepping-stones  
Of their dead selves to higher things;

that we do, in truth,

fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake.

The idea is well summed up in the following lines, the authorship of which I am unable to trace:—

On, on he toiled in desperation grim,  
With Tyrant Failure busy every hour,  
Till once, his mirrored face looked out on him  
Unrecognized—so had it grown in power.

That is the secret hope, the innermost conviction of all: the great poets, who are the seers of modern civilization, are full of it; and we know that it is true—we cannot tell how or why.

“Vision comprehendeth Him not, but He comprehendeth all vision;” and by vision, in this second

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use of the word, the Holy Qur-án implies any and every mental striving which gropes out beyond the hedgerow boundaries of every day—any and every impulse which urges us to make rightly that ever-difficult choice between right and wrong—any and every dream which lifts us heavenward—towards any conception of heaven, however childish, however crude; towards every thought and act which has its root and origin in the Love of God.

And though our vision comprehendeth Him not, we are not to be discouraged, for “He is the Knower of all subtilities”—He understands. And though our vision be faulty, nevertheless possessing it, as we do, we must use it; for “where there is no vision, the people perish.”

Therefore in forming our good resolutions, not for this coming year only but for all the coming years that God in His wisdom may vouchsafe to us, we must bear in mind that every effort is understood and its motive given full value, however futile and ineffectual the result; and that, furthermore, God has given us a guide by whose aid we may ultimately attain to fullness of vision, and that guide is Religion.

Therefore again, in forming our New Year's resolutions Religion must be the source and inspiration; and here we are apt to split against the great rock which is alike rock and whirlpool—the Scylla and Charybdis of the soul's spiritual navigation, and that rock is Insincerity. Religion is nowadays so much of a name—so little of a thing. It is a kind of garment for the soul—as is the fashionably cut suit, or the latest frock from Paris, for the body—something that effects an outward change, that conceals, adorns, disguises, but does not alter. Outward symbols of devotion—verbal piety and ostentatious acts of charity—are considered enough.

“God,” said the Pharisee in the parable, “I thank Thee that I am not as other men are. . . .

## NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess."

And there are millions who do not do even so much or so little as the Pharisee, and yet consider themselves religious men and women. And yet they, in common with the rest of us, know perfectly well that such religion is a sham.

"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." This truth is laid down, insisted on, hammered in again and again, in the Bible, in the Holy Qur-án, in every message that God has sent to His creatures. We accept it; we think it obviously reasonable and right; but it makes no difference to us whatsoever in what we are pleased to call our religious life.

We, on the contrary, flatly refuse to import into it one hundredth portion even of that sincerity—that practical and highly necessary sincerity—without which commercial or social relations would be impossible. You enter into a contract or other obligation, and carry it out because the law—man's law—compels you to carry it out; because man's law is very near to you, and—to put it bluntly—you are afraid of it.

You give your word to your friend, and that word is, if you are what the world esteems a gentleman, more binding upon you than any legal obligation could be.

You make a vow to Almighty God—some even go so far as to put it in the form of a contract or bargain, as did the Patriarch Jacob, in the visionary presence of the Angels of God ascending and descending the celestial ladder; and you feel yourself excused from attempting to carry it out because you do not in your heart believe that God's law will compel you to do anything of the sort—because God's law is very far off, because you are *not* afraid of it.

You give your word to Almighty God, and it is forgotten as soon as the prayer is done. You do not

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think it matters, as it did in the case of your friend. You fear God—naturally, it is seemly and proper to do so—but you are *not* afraid of Him.

In a mystical religion like that of Christ, there may be some excuse for such an attitude of mind ; for in that religion God's dealings with man are difficult of comprehension, because they are based on a hypothesis which is in itself, to the human mind, admittedly incomprehensible. That being the case, it follows that a God so worshipped may well be aloof from the common ways and needs of men.

But for Muslims there is no such excuse. The Holy Qur-án speaks continually of a practical God—if the term may be used without offence—whose attitude towards man is one of direct beneficence, uncomplicated by such doctrines as those of Original Sin and Atonement ; of a God Who has foreseen and provided for all possible needs, both temporal and spiritual, of His people wheresoever dwelling ; and each discovery in the progress of science does but confirm the revelation divinely inspired thirteen hundred years ago. You believe that the Book is the very Word of God, revealed to His Prophet (on whom be peace), and you see, or profess to see, the truth of its teaching revealed every day. Your God is very near to you, therefore His influence should be felt in every act and thought of your daily life, and the grossest human frailties at least—meanness, lying, deception, ingratitude—should disappear. Such things cannot exist where God is near.

But Religion has become rather an unfortunate word in many ways. It is synonymous with controversy ; it implies a question to which there are always two answers, whereof one is, in effect, as good as another—a dilemma which is not really a dilemma, because either course is a right one. The very word itself suggests an absolute chaos of ideals. But if for practical purposes we define Religion as the test which God has given us for distinguishing between

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Right and Wrong, we have something to work on ; and the measure of our sincerity, each in his own religion—be we Muslim, or Christian, or Jew—will be the measure of the value of that test to each one.

This question of Right and Wrong, being at the foundation of all Religion, arises, in one form or another, in every branch of human activity, in every step that humanity is called upon to make. Sometimes the choice is obvious ; sometimes the two are not easily distinguishable—and whichever case it is, we generally find the same difficulty in choosing the Right—the same host of plausible and too easily convincing arguments why we should choose the Wrong.

The statesman shrinks from introducing a measure which must prove to the ultimate, though not perhaps immediate, benefit of his fellow-countrymen, because such a proceeding will be unpopular ; because though in the long run it may save his country, it will, in the near future, almost certainly wreck his party.

This is called expediency, and there is no greater snare for the seeker after the course which is Right, than a conclusive and convincing argument that, for the time being, the Wrong is in effect the Right. Such is the statesman's chief snare, and the man who can resist it is a strong man. There is, I fancy, only one such recorded in English history—the great Duke of Wellington ; and he is held up to the rising generation, in history text-books, as one of the failures of English statesmanship.

The novelist, to attract an unthinking and salacious public, writes a novel of artfully disguised lewdness, and thinly veiled suggestion, on the pretext that he is handling frankly and fearlessly a great and terrible problem which the Puritan mind is afraid to tackle ; but which must be settled once and for all, in the interests of public decency. He prostitutes his art to the delineation of scenes and habits of vice, all attractively portrayed, and though he may conclude

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with a moral stern and rigid and comprehensive enough to satisfy all the Mrs. Grundys in Christendom, he has yet wrought incalculable harm. He has suggested scenes and habits—to minds which might otherwise have never dreamt of them—or if at all, not as things worth proving by practical experience. He has sown a seed of vice, with never a thought of the harvest to come—that must come. He knows the humbug of it all. He knows that he is not really out to solve any problem at all, but the problem of Bread and Butter. But he has his living to earn, his wife and children to support and educate. Is he to be blamed for making money as he can? We ought not to judge, but I fancy that if God's test of Religion were applied we should find the answer.

And in everyday life. You have, let us say, a friend who is dear to you, but who, through faults of youth, developing without parental check or correction, has acquired the habit of self-esteem and self-will to an extent which will render them, if still unchecked, a danger to his own career, and a nuisance to others. To attempt the task of correction oneself will most likely be extremely unpleasant; it will lay one open to little persecutions and annoyances and all the petty vindictiveness of a little nature. Yet the littleness is a crust—of that you are firmly convinced; and if your remonstrance can pierce the crust and touch the bigness beneath, all will be well. Still, the risk is considerable. You cannot tell how thick the crust has become. It is a gamble. Is it worth while? Is it my duty? "Am I my brother's keeper?" God is the knower of all subtleties. He will understand your difficulty; but the test of Religion can be applied again, and the true answer will be forthcoming.

Such problems are arising every day, but we seldom call Religion to our aid in solving them; because, as I have ventured to suggest, Religion is a word—not a thing—a shadow from which the

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substance has, by some devil's miracle, been spirited away.

Thus it is, O Muslims, that God, speaking to His Prophet (on whom be peace) in the Holy Qur-án, ordained that his people, not dulling the mind and lulling the senses by costly and elaborate ceremonials, but in all simplicity and in humbleness of heart, should approach Him in prayer five times daily—each one, wherever he may be, whatever he may be doing—five times every day, so that they should realize that God is not far off, that He is with them always, that He is the knower of subtleties.

“Verily there have come to you clear proofs from your Lord; whosoever will therefore see, it is for his own soul; and whosoever will be blind, it will be against himself.”

Let this be, then, our good resolution for the year 1924—to apply God's test of Religion to the things of every day; so that we may do His will, and serve Him the more faithfully—for that will bring a man peace at the last.

“Whosoever will therefore see, it is for his own soul.” It will be no easy resolution; it is perhaps as difficult a thing as can well be imagined; nay, it may even be impossible of fulfilment. But that is not our concern. We must try. It is the effort that counts, the lack of effort that condemns. “Whosoever will be blind, it will be against himself.” “Surely your Lord—He best knoweth who goeth astray from His Way, and He best knoweth those that follow the right course”; and in the strength of that assurance we can face our New Year unafraid.

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If envy were proper, two persons would be the most proper objects of it: one, a man whom God hath given riches and given him the heart, too, to bestow it in charity; the other, to whom God hath granted wisdom and he acts thereon himself and instructs others.—MUHAMMAD.

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### THE CRY OF THE BREAKING HEART

THE following is a translation (by Mr. J. B. Munro) of the Arabic lines written by Haji Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din on the lamented death of his brother :—

Thou hidest, Brother, and the thrill  
And beauty of the world are fled ;  
Thou art in Heaven—thou art not dead,  
And in my heart thou livest still.

So slow thy walk, so leisurely,  
Here on this earth—I had not thought  
My dove, on passionate wings, had sought  
His new nest in Eternity.

We touched the marge, and to the shore  
I pressed, aglow to see thy face—  
A message from another Place  
Had summoned thee, for evermore.

I bore the blows that bruise and stun  
When my Basheer was lost to me—  
I bore them then because of thee  
Who wert to me as wife and son.

Dry were mine eyes—now they are wet  
As with a fountain's ceaseless flow.  
Within my House of Darkness thou  
Wert my Full Moon—and thou hast set.

And while my parched soul moans " I thirst,"  
Thy happy lips quaff endless bliss ;  
And a relentless chasm is,  
Where was no cleaving at the first.

Older than I, thy brother's heart,  
Thy loving care, persuaded still  
Thy wishes to become my will,  
Nor aught to dread, save that we part.

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Far from my Motherland was I,  
Yet ever did the thought of thee  
Still worldly cares that troubled me,  
Forgetting thou wouldst ever die.

Thou wert my pillar of great might—  
Next to God's Self I trusted thee;  
But now the world is dark for me  
Save where, from God, thou sendest light.

Vain is our love for one most dear;  
God's Love alone knows no decay.  
I humbly bow to Him, and pray  
That, in His Mercy, He may hear.

O! grant him peace and sweet reward,  
O! Rab! Creator, Nourisher,  
Sustainer of the Earth and Air,  
Receive my humble prayer, O Lord!

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## THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

By REV. F. WOODLOCK, S.J.

[We reproduce *verbatim* Father Woodlock's article which was specially written for and appeared in *The Challenge*, December 14, 1923. The italics are ours.—Ed.]

THE Roman Catholic Church is a world-wide organization, including between 294 and 300 millions of members. It comprises 48 per cent. of Christendom, while the Eastern Orthodox Churches total 22 per cent., and the Anglican Church about 5 per cent.

The members of the Church are visibly linked in unity by their profession of identically the same doctrines of the faith and by their acceptance of and submission to the same central authority of their spiritual head, the Pope. The Pope rules this vast

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supernational society through some 1,350 archbishops and bishops.

Besides western Catholics following the Roman rite in worship, a number of eastern "uniate" churches, with vernacular liturgies and local rites, are real and recognized parts of the Roman Catholic Church. Though differing in their ritual, these "uniates" believe the same doctrines as the rest and live under the universal jurisdiction of the Pope.

Through this "universality" the Roman Catholic Church has obviously a stronger *primâ facie* claim to the title "Catholic" than any other Christian organization; nor has its claim to organic continuity with the Church of the first centuries ever been contested.

The remarkable unity of belief among its scattered and diverse millions of members is secured through the principles on which their faith is held. *The Roman Catholic Church is essentially a dogmatic Church, believing that she alone to-day has the mission given by Christ when He said: "Go and teach . . . He that heareth you heareth Me, he that despiseth you despiseth Me."* These millions are members of the Church because and so long as they believe their Church to be God's messenger to men.

This dogmatic method, Roman Catholics contend, was the apostolic and primitive method, and God never intended it to be superseded. *It was in existence before the New Testament*<sup>1</sup> *was written and functioned for hundreds of years before the invention of printing made it possible for each Christian to possess his own Bible and build up his individual belief by his "private interpretation" of the Word of God. The Church's authority and the living voice of tradition was necessarily prior to the New Testament, for it was that authority which alone could pick out genuine from spurious scripture, and it alone could guarantee*

<sup>1</sup> We acknowledge the truth of the statement; but what about the infallibility of the Word of God?—Ed.]

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the collection of the New Testament writings to be the inspired Word of God. *The Church is likewise the sole authoritative interpreter of scripture. Roman Catholics are only permitted to keep and read such translations of the Bible as have been approved by the Church,* and these versions usually contain explanatory footnotes to the doctrinal texts.

We now turn to consider the position of the Pope. Undoubtedly the growth of the Church, the increased means of communication between the peoples of the world and other natural causes have wrought a great development in the machinery of Church government ; just as the exercise of the greatest intellects throughout the centuries upon the deposit of faith has unfolded by explicit definition much of truth that lay implicit in that deposit. Roman Catholics believe that this evolution and development was foreseen by Christ and intended by Him. These changes are but as the growth of the acorn into the oak or the child into the man, and testify to the vigour of life within the Church to which the Holy Ghost was given.

We believe that the promises made to Peter gave that Apostle a special and universal jurisdiction over the whole Church, and that this jurisdiction was to pass to his successors the Popes. Hence we hold them to be by Divine appointment Christ's Vicars on earth, the visible heads of His visible Body the Church.

The change of Simon's name to Kepha, Peter—the "rock-man," was not without significance, and it was followed immediately by the solemn promise "upon this rock I shall build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and to thee will I give the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." These words certainly must seem to associate Peter in some way with the guaranteed firmness of Christ's building and with the perpetuity of the Church and its security against the powers of evil and falsehood that

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would be arrayed against it. Roman Catholics believe that these words of promise, and others addressed to Peter individually, endowed him with a position and prerogatives which were not given to the other Apostles and which were to pass to his successors for the good of the Church and to be the bond of union between its scattered members. To Peter the whole flock, "lambs and sheep," were committed; he was prayed for individually and commissioned to "confirm his brethren." We believe that communion with Peter's successor is necessary for the continuance of that unity which Christ so desired and which is so visibly lacking in the many sects that reject his successors.

It would be wrong to imagine that this universal jurisdiction of the Popes absorbs all jurisdiction. The bishops of the Catholic Church possess a very genuine jurisdiction and authority over their dioceses and are true successors to the apostolic office, but they exercise their jurisdiction with subordination to their Chief Pastor, and if any prove unworthy or become unorthodox in faith, the Pope can—and does—deprive them of their right to rule their dioceses. This universality of the Pope's jurisdiction over the Church obviously secures unity of organization and discipline. The doctrine of Papal Infallibility supplements this jurisdiction of ruling, by supreme authority to teach. The Pope makes no claim to omniscience or impeccability. *The Church has defined in its Council that God, by His assistance, protects from error those definitions of the faith which the Pope makes in his official capacity as Supreme Pastor, when he declares some doctrine concerning faith or morals to be part of the Christian faith, and to be held as such by all members of the Church.* In the words of the catechism: "The Pope is infallible when as shepherd and teacher of all Christians he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the whole Church."

*Knowingly and persistently to reject any one of the*

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*defined doctrines of the Church is to become a "heretic" and put oneself outside the fold. In this sense all Catholic doctrines may be said to stand on the same footing, inasmuch as to reject one defined truth is to reject the authority of the teacher and to deny his claims to speak in the name of Christ. The Church believes in herself as a divine messenger and rejects from her membership any and all who cannot accept her claim. She speaks with a living voice and has definite and authoritative teaching about such twentieth-century questions as modernism, divorce, birth-control, a living wage, suicide and other present-day moral problems, just as, in the first ages, she had definite teaching about the Godhead of Christ which she expressed in the Nicene Creed. She believes herself to be guided as surely by the Spirit of Truth to-day as in the days of the early councils. Part of her faith is the uncompromising dogma that she is the whole Catholic Church, and that no one can be a real Catholic outside her membership. She rejects as a heresy the idea that the Body of Christ can exist, alive, on earth in a condition of dismemberment. She teaches that as the Church of Christ was founded on Peter, those who reject Peter's successors and are out of communion with the Apostolic See, are outside the visible household of Christ's Church. They are but the "other sheep" outside the fold, and not yet members of the flock committed to Peter's care by the Good Shepherd.*

The Eastern Church makes a similar claim to be the whole Catholic Church, and both Rome and the East are in agreement as to the visibility and indivisibility of the Church. Both reject the Protestant theory of an "invisible" Church and both repudiate the Anglican "branch theory" of a divided Church.

While Roman Catholics admit that those who are outside their communion can save their souls by their *bona fides* in their ignorance of this truth, by faith in Christ's atonement along with true repentance of their

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sins, they believe that it is Christ's will and command that all men should be united in His one visible Church, and should accept that central authority to govern and teach which He established.

\* \* \* \* \*

Some 10,000 converts from other Christian denominations, chiefly from the "Anglo-Catholic" section of the Established Church, are received into our Church annually in England. Since the Oxford movement close on 800 clergymen have "come over," making, in most cases, heroic sacrifices to follow their convictions to their practical conclusions. These men came because they examined the claims of the Church, stated above, and satisfied themselves that they are well founded.

The Roman Catholic Church as presented in Protestant controversial works we know to be a caricature. Hence our constant appeal to all who are dissatisfied with their own denomination or belong to none, to "come and see." Those who seek in Catholic catechisms and handbooks to find out for themselves what the Catholic Church really teaches, follow the scientific method and are more likely to attain true knowledge of the subject they are studying. Only such as seek their information about the Church from the "Protestant," instead of the "Catholic Truth Society," can cling to their belief that the Pope is anti-Christ, and the Church the "Scarlet Woman" of Revelation.

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Yet you it is who slay your people and turn a party from among you out of their homes, backing each other up against them unlawfully and exceeding the limits; . . . Do you then believe in a part of the Book and disbelieve in the other? What then is the reward of such among you as do this but disgrace in the life of this world, and on the day of resurrection they shall be sent back to the most grievous chastisement, and Allah is not at all heedless of what to do. (The Holy Qur-án, ii. 85.)

# WOMAN

## WOMAN : HER SUBJECTION, EXPLOITATION AND EMANCIPATION

By KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD

(Continued from p. 25, Vol. XII. No. 1.)

### WOMAN IN ANCIENT ROME.

To gauge the effects of Christianity in the West, we must consider the Roman Empire. It was under that Empire that Christianity came into power; and there it could, had it been so minded, have effected any improvement in the position of woman.

Christian writers often represent woman under the Romans as a toy at the mercy of man's passion; a slave when married, without any legal or social status.<sup>1</sup> Then we are presented with a glaring picture of Christianity rescuing her from the utmost degradation and dishonour, and lifting her to an equality with man, making marriage a sacrament and creating, as one writer puts it, "that best of God's blessing on earth, the Christian home."

It is important to look more closely into this picture than a religiously-minded ecclesiastical historian is wont to do. It is not difficult to depict a civilization in such a manner as to make it harmonize with an existing prejudice. The Christian apologist, in the zeal of his piety, adds a further blackness to the darker shades of Pagan civilization; and notes in historical Christianity none but

<sup>1</sup> Shaikh M. H. Kidwai and a few other Muslim writers have been misled by this very influence. He wrongly maintains that to the very end of the Pagan Roman Empire "woman was completely dependent. As an unmarried girl she was under the perpetual tutelage of her father during his life, and after his death, of her agnates by blood or adoption. When married she and her whole property passed into the power and possession of her husband. In fact, she herself was treated as a property by her husband, and had no more right than a purchased slave." (*Woman: Under Different Social and Religious Laws*, p. 3.)

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the brightest spots. All unwelcome facts are suppressed, and thus the dark horizon of Christianity is made to appear, by contrast, like an early dawn. Nothing is easier, but nothing could be more misleading. To compare the present state of Christian society—if it can be called such—with that society as it existed over two thousand years ago, is equally misleading. Length of time is the obvious retort; for the change could have occurred without any miracle on the part of Christianity.

How far the change was due to Christian teachings and influences, is a question which resolves itself into a study of comparisons and tendencies. To conduct to a triumphant issue the comparison between Paganism and Christianity, we must contrast the worst practices or superstitions of the Pagans, not with the highest and unapproached ideals of the foremost Christian teachers, but with the practices or superstitions of the Christian; for the claims of justice and truth to be paramount, we must compare ideals with ideals, the best teachings of one with the best teachings of the other. In order to arrive at a result which may correspond with real truth, and not merely with foregone conclusions, we must compare the Pagan Philosophers with the Christian Fathers.

In ancient Rome, City was the unit. This city-State consisted of citizens who had all equal rights. Aliens had none, except such as could be claimed by a collusive *actio* through a citizen. Thus there were three classes of the population—citizens with full rights, aliens with none, and slaves who were regarded as mere chattels, though with a *persona*. Gradually the privileges of citizenship were extended till the unit was no longer a city, but a country, and finally it became the whole Roman Empire. In course of time, the slave became a freedman and his descendants became *ingenuus*, freeborn citizens with the full rights and privileges of Roman citizenship.

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In Roman society there were these same three classes of woman—the full citizen, the alien, and the slave. The Roman citizen could marry only a woman who was the daughter of a Roman citizen. Marriage with any other was impossible. The very object of marriage was to produce a race of citizens, and therefore both father and mother must be themselves citizens. It was for this reason that the purity of a Roman woman was insisted upon, and a distinction made between the conduct of the man and the woman. There must be no suspicion of spuriousness in regard to the Roman citizen. In most cases the status of the child was determined according to that of the mother.

The alien women had fewer rights even than the alien men, and we know very little of them. The female slaves also do not demand our serious attention. They were treated with more or less consideration; and through various influences, the lot of the slave-woman was ameliorated, and we very often find laws made to protect them and freedom frequently conferred upon them.

In Roman history only married citizen-girls—matrons—are conspicuous, and it is that class alone which I shall discuss.

The marriage system expanded at Rome in the same manner as citizenship. On the establishment of the Republic the right of intermarriage existed only between patricians of the city. A patrician could not marry a plebeian woman, nor a plebeian man a patrician woman. It was only after a hard struggle that this barrier was removed; for Roman citizenship was not only honourable but valuable, e.g. the Roman citizens paid no taxes, and enjoyed peculiar advantages in the eyes of the law. In 442 B.C. the *lex Canuleia* conferred the *connubium*, or right of intermarriage, on the plebeians. In 89 B.C. the Italians received the *connubium* by the *lex Julia* and *Plautia*. In 212 B.C. Caracalla, in order to compel

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all inhabitants of the Roman Empire to pay taxes, conferred the citizenship on them.

This brief sketch of the expansion of the right of marriage is substantially correct; but in tracing the moral progress of women and their legal position, great difficulties meet us, which attach to all early Roman history. No doubt the position of woman underwent important changes. There is, however, a very definite tradition, which presents itself everywhere in the works of Roman poets and historians and pervades the ideas even of the late jurists. The tradition is to the effect that

The Roman matron was mistress in her own household. As the husband took charge of all external transactions, so the wife was supreme in household arrangements. The marriage was a common unity in all affairs, and within the home the utmost diligence, reverence, and harmony prevailed. The wife sat in the atrium, or principal hall, dispensing the work to the maidservants, and herself making the garments of her husband and family. She did not cook or do what was regarded as menial work. She dined with her husband, sitting while he reclined, when they were alone. She received the friends of her husband, and dined with them also. She walked in and out with great freedom, and she nursed and brought up her own children.<sup>1</sup>

This is a bright and beautiful picture, and some of the traits remained true to the end of Roman history. But there is quite another side to this picture as well. In the early stages of Roman history, the Patriarchial theory obtained.<sup>2</sup> The *familia* consisted of *agnates*—those persons who were regarded as related to each other, either because they were in the *potestas* (power) of some common ancestor, or because they would have been in such *potestas* were the ancestor still alive. *Cognatio*, the natural tie of blood was of little importance. Thus the oldest male parent was absolutely supreme in the household.

<sup>1</sup> Donaldson: *Woman*, p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> Letourneau finds a number of indications (e.g. the children took the name of, and inheritance through, the mother; or that their legal status was determined by that of the mother); and wrongly infers that the earlier Roman family was maternal in form.



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Thus from the absolute control of a father a young woman passed to the almost absolute control of her husband or tutor. Indeed, a curious marriage-rite that long survived at Rome, in which the husband parted the bride's hair with the point of a spear, and the story of the Rape of the Sabines, suggests an early practice of capturing wives—a practice which leads naturally to subordination.

It is not surprising that in such a period of Roman history<sup>1</sup> the inferiority of woman to man should have been regarded as undoubted, and their position extremely degraded. Woman was looked upon as the slave of man and the minister of his passions. Whereas, in one capacity, her life was continual, abject and unrequited toil, in the other she was exposed to all the violent revulsion of feeling that follows the gratification of the carnal passion.

But even in this early stage we can trace some of those moral sentiments which were bound to appear. A husband, for example, could not sell his wife, as he might the slave or the child; nor could he pass judgment on her except in the presence of her male relatives. Mommsen rightly points out that a public opinion had already grown that controlled this theoretic autocracy of the husband and father.

From the earliest period known to history the marriage contract was arranged between the bridegroom and the bride's father on the payment of a sum of money called *mundium*. This sum was, in fact, a payment to the father for the surrender of his daughter. At an early period, however, this purchase money was replaced by a dowry, *dos*, paid by the father to his daughter.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps the cause which altered the position of women most of all, next to their own goodness, was the change in the circumstances of the Romans, brought about by the extension of their empire and

<sup>1</sup> Rome, according to the usual account, was founded in 753 B.C.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Kames, in *Sketches of the History of Man*.

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the increase of wealth. After the end of the Punic Wars the despotic authority of the father and husband began to decline. The more solemn forms of marriage—*conferratio*, *coemptio* and *usus*—gradually became wholly obsolete and a different form of marriage, resting upon a simple mutual agreement, without any religious or civil ceremony, became general; and it had this very important consequence, that women, so married, became independent. Thus marriage in essence became a civil contract which must be made in presence of competent witnesses and could be dissolved in the presence of such witnesses. Religious ceremonies accompanied the marriage, but had nothing to do with the contract, and therefore were not essential to the marriage. It was necessary in this contract that husband and wife should give their consent, and—when they were under *potestas*—that their parents and guardians also should consent; but means were provided by which the latter could be forced to give consent, if it were unreasonably withheld. Apart from *dos*, the husband had to make a gift to the bride, known as *donatio propter nuptias*.

The personal estate of a wife remained her own, and she could dispose of it as if she was a *feme sole*. The estate of a wife could not be alienated or mortgaged by the husband, so that it was not necessary to provide for a *restraint in anticipation*, as had to be done in the case of the English Law of Real Property. With a few exceptions, the legal status of the child was determined by that of the mother; legal means were provided by which she could adopt or arrogate an heir. On the death of her husband she could in most cases be appointed the guardian of her children. The laws of divorce were the same for both. In the matter of inheritance male and female children were upon an equal footing. Even mothers could inherit deceased children's property—a thing unheard of in England until recent times. It was an *injuria*—a crime—to follow a woman of honest character

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or a young girl so as to suggest that she was a frail character ;<sup>1</sup> this might serve as a lesson to moralists of this country. If a father tried to sell or even ill-treated his daughter, he suffered *infamia*—complete loss of legal status. In short, it is difficult to

avoid the conclusion that the position of the married woman must have been of substantial dignity, calling for and calling out a corresponding type of character.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, the old ideal of the family, the very source of woman's subjection, was falling into decay. The *potestas* of the *paterfamilias* existed but in name. Thus women existed, as it were, in their own right, and their wealth grew. This seemed such an anomaly to some of the Romans, that an effort was made to check it. The *lex Voconia* was passed in 169 B.C., whereby it was illegal to make her heir to a fortune above 100,000 asses in value, and she was never to get more than the heir appointed in the will ; but public opinion never fully acquiesced in it, and by several legal subterfuges its operation was partially evaded,<sup>3</sup> and the lawyers, who were called in to advise them, showed them how to evade the inconveniences of the law. Collusive trusts and sales became daily occurrences, together with mock marriages, and the *coemptio fiduciæ causa*, which withdrew them from a father's *potestas* without substituting that of a husband.

From an early time Roman women began to assert themselves, and the history of Rome throws a lurid light on this aspect of their character ; for occasionally they took stern and wild vengeance. I will only refer to a few instances of this.

In the year 331 B.C. many of the Roman citizens and nobles fell victims to an unknown disease, which showed the same symptoms in all ; and nearly all

<sup>1</sup> Leage: *Roman Private Law*, p. 335.

<sup>2</sup> Professor W. W. Fowler : *Social Life at Rome in the Age of Cicero*, p. 143.

<sup>3</sup> Legouv , *Hist. Morale des Femmes*, pp. 23-26.

## WOMAN

perished. The historian Livy, to whom we owe the most vivid account,<sup>1</sup> mentions that they all had been poisoned, for the women were not prepared to be subjected to tyranny without making an effort in one way or another to put an end to it. Occurrences of a similar type took place in 180 B.C.<sup>2</sup>

And, in the year 218 B.C. (during the Punic Wars) a law had been passed by Oppius, a tribune of the people, to the effect that no woman should be allowed to possess more than half an ounce of gold, or parti-coloured robes, and restricting the use by them of chariots within the city of Rome. At the close of the war (195 B.C.) the women demanded the repeal of this Oppian law. Cato, however, who was then consul, and others resolved to retain it. The new spirit of the woman broke out in a fiery eruption. Livy describes how not only crowds of men of opposing sides invaded the Capital, but the matrons, themselves "restrained neither by authority, nor modesty, nor the control of their husbands," beset all the ways that led to the Forum, and importunately demanded the votes of the legislators.<sup>3</sup> They forced their way into the houses of the tribunes and won them to the cause. Men like Cato were alarmed at the *androgynæ* (Man-Women) and had to be content, some years later, to impose a heavy tax on their property.

It has often been said that "in the history of civilization, religion often acts as a liberator of woman; and that sometimes, indeed, it acts in an opposite direction; when, by a false conception of humanity, it restricts the duties and privileges of woman." We find this to be the case in the Roman Empire; more especially when we consider the Eastern cults that were flowing into Italian life, and a little later Christianity itself.

From Egypt came the sober cult of Isis. In the

<sup>1</sup> Livy, viii. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Livy, *Ab urbe Condita*, I. xxxiv.

<sup>3</sup> Livy, xl. 37.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

year 204 B.C. the mysterious "mother of Gods," Cybele, was imported. The worship of Bacchus was introduced in 186 B.C. The Persian cults of Mithra and the religion of Manicheism were spreading even more quickly. Apart from these regenerating influences, the Greek Philosophy, reaching Rome from Alexandria, was gaining favour. On the other hand, the Stoic philosophy, which even shook the grim foundations of Roman Law, was even more effective in intensifying the general moral temper of the Empire. Thus, two philosophies and four religions, besides Christianity, were working to restore the moral dignity of the Roman people.

Christianity had not converted 2 per cent. of the Empire by the reign of Constantine. It was not in a position to affect the general character until near the close of the fourth century. But long before that—at least two hundred years before Christ—woman had acquired legal and social rights. It should be remembered that the Republic was still a comparatively small power. It is sheer nonsense to represent that power as beginning to decay when the women began to assert themselves; for it was not until three centuries later that Rome reached the height of her glory.

From the close of the Republic, the women of Rome continued to extend their liberty and power. By the beginning of the Christian era, when the Empire had displaced the Republic, the position of women had materially altered. The despotism of the husband was a mere barbaric memory. The Voconian law, which forbade them to receive legacies beyond a certain amount, was repealed. From Augustus they obtained full control of their dowry, and protection from avaricious husbands. Hadrian granted them the right to make a will without consulting their husbands or guardians. They exercised a good deal of indirect influence; but, on the whole, they acted with great good sense. They accom-

## CORRESPONDENCE

panied their husbands to their provinces, and often took part in the administration of them. Some of the old stern moralists proposed to stop their activities by law; but after a spirited debate in the Senate, the measure was rejected by a large majority, who thereby affirmed that their help was beneficial.<sup>1</sup> No doubt it was their good sense, their kindness and their willingness to co-operate with men, that led to their freedom and power in political matters. And many of them certainly made a good use of their opportunities and wealth. Some of them were charitable. They bestowed public buildings and monuments on the communities among which they lived. They erected baths, gymnasia, arches and hospitals, adorned temples, put up statues and often patronized municipalities and other public institutions. They often presided at the public games, or over the great religious ceremonies, having been regularly appointed to the position. They received public honours, and one woman, indeed, was elected as a magistrate. They formed a *conventus matronorum*, a club of their own, on the Quirinal, to meet and discuss public affairs. They figured as writers, physicians and traders, and appeared in the law-courts.<sup>2</sup>

(To be continued.)

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## CORRESPONDENCE

SIR,—I feel that I must write and express my heartfelt thanks to all my Muslim Brothers who on my embracing Islam have so kindly written or sent telegrams to me. I appreciate their good wishes more than my words can convey.

After the last war, when the world waded through streams of blood, I thought that all peace and goodwill was at an end. But the fact that my brethren across the seven seas are so willing to extend a hand of friendship brings a message of hope

<sup>1</sup> Tac., *Ann.* 3-34.

<sup>2</sup> Dill, *Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire*. See also *Society and Politics in Ancient Rome*, by F. F. Abbott.

# ISLAMIC REVIEW

and good cheer to me. This has proved to me, more than anything else, that Islam alone can bring peace to this world.

Yours in Islam,

C. E. ABDULLAH ARCHIBALD W. HAMILTON.

SELSEY (Sussex),

January 8, 1924.

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SIR,—Will you kindly publish the following in the next issue of your esteemed paper?—

The mission of the "Ahmadia Movement" at Putney have issued a card under the signature of Mr. A. Nayyar, in which they state that a branch of the "Ahmadia Movement" has been established in Afghanistan too. I desire to repudiate the assertion, as it is contrary to the real facts.

Yours faithfully,

GHULAM GHANUS,

Secretary.

AFGHAN LEGATION,

42, GROSVENOR PLACE, S.W. 1,

December 24, 1923.

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SIR,—A search after Truth in matters spiritual has shown me that Islam is a Light which dispels the gloom of doubt and mis-giving, a Faith which, through its appeal to an acknowledgment of a simple and eternal Truth, and its revelation of the Love of God, and His Wisdom and Justice, brings comfort and strength to the soul.

May the Pure Light of Islam, by the Grace of God, spread far and wide, and its Peace prevail.

All honour to the Noble Messenger of God (may peace and blessing be upon him) through whom this Guidance came.

C. G. H. (Abdur Rahman).

MANCHESTER.

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## WHAT IS ISLAM ?

### WHAT IS ISLAM ?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its teaching. For further details please write to the Imam of the Mosque, Woking.]

**ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF PEACE.**—The word Islam literally means: (1) Peace; (2) the way to achieve peace; (3) submission; as submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

**OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.**—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus to maintain peace between man and man.

**THE PROPHETS OF ISLAM.**—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, i.e. the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

**THE QUR-ÁN.**—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, but, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-án, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

**ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.**—These are seven in number: belief in (1) Allah; (2) angels; (3) books from God; (4) messengers from God; (5) the hereafter; (6) the measurement of good and evil; (7) resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in heaven. State after death is an image of the spiritual state, in this life.

The sixth article of faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination; he believes in Premeasurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

**PILLARS OF ISLAM.**—These are five in number: (1) declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; (2) prayer; (3) fasting; (4) almsgiving; (5) pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine of Mecca.

**ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.**—The Muslims worship one God—the Almighty, the All-knowing, the All-just, the Cherisher of all the

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is Indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the heaven and the earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

**FAITH AND ACTION.**—Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith is of itself insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and in the hereafter. Each must bear his own burden, and none can expiate for another's sin.

**ETHICS IN ISLAM.**—“Imbue yourself with Divine attributes,” says the noble Prophet. God is the prototype of man, and His attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. Righteousness in Islam consists in leading a life in complete harmony with the Divine attributes. To act otherwise is sin.

**CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM.**—The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature which, made of the goodliest fibre, is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the angels and leading him to the border of Divinity.

**THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM.**—Men and women come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainment. Islam places man and woman under like obligations, the one to the other.

**EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM.**—Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things; virtue and the service of humanity are the matters of real merit. Distinctions of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family, and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and the white into one fraternal whole.

**PERSONAL JUDGMENT.**—Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion, which, according to the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, is a blessing of God.

**KNOWLEDGE.**—The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior to angels.

**SANCTITY OF LABOUR.**—Every labour which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

**CHARITY.**—All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from God, for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to God. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.