

*Aramco and World Oil.* Roy Lebkicher. Russell F. Moore Co. Inc. New York.

ARAMCO is the Arabian American Oil Company, and this book is an account of the Company by the Company for the Company. It is in two parts, making up the first volume: another volume in three parts has now followed. They are rather inaccurately described as handbooks, being in fact a large quarto—11 x 8½". But the large size has made possible excellent illustrations, some good maps of Arabia, and some telling diagrams.

Being what it is, it inevitably smacks somewhat of propaganda. But it is a right kind of propaganda—not advertisement so much as instruction: it is, and says it is, a book "for American employees." The present edition dates from 1952, but the book was originally written in 1950—the same year as Sir Olaf Carøe's "Wells of Power." The latter is an important, almost a great, book for the general public, and though there is no evidence that the author of "Aramco and World Oil" had read it, it is clear that he has grasped some of its principles—the obligation of Oil Companies and their staffs towards the countries in which they work, and towards the nationals of those countries whom they must train, even, it may be, to replace themselves. There is much good advice to 'oil boys' as to their duty to their Arab neighbours—one wishes that other and older Companies had had the wisdom and courage to take the same line twenty and thirty years ago. The atmosphere of the Middle East might have been rather different if they had.

And yet even in this present book one feels that lines of good conduct are laid down, not because they are right but because they are expedient. The book is essentially the Company's book, and if it does sometimes look beyond the Company's objective, it does not get further than American interests, combating Communism, and preserving world peace. These are all good things: expediency itself is not a bad thing so long as it does not conflict with better things. But from a Christian point of view it is not enough.

Sir Olaf Carøe's book boldly bears a subtitle, "The Challenge to Islam." Clearly an Oil Company working in a rigidly Muslim country and in close co-operation with a rigidly Muslim sovereign, cannot say that. But after many years' experience of the Muslim one may hazard the opinion that an insistence on the right of Christian employees to freedom of worship for themselves would have won instant respect and acquiescence. The book emphasizes the "amenities" provided for workers—hospitals, schools, recreation centres, and so forth. But it is markedly silent as to facilities for worship.

Fortunately the actual facts are better than the book reveals. Slowly, patiently, and quietly, the difficulty is being overcome. There were American missionaries of the Reformed Church all down the Persian Gulf before the Oil Companies came into being: there are now four resident Episcopalian clergy in the Gulf where ten years ago there was only one. Several have been allowed, and encouraged by the Company, to pay visits: some even do so regularly.

It is one of the main themes of this book that for good or evil the oil employee is taken as a sample of America: it is no less true that for good or evil he is taken as a sample of Christianity.

WESTON, BISHOP IN JERUSALEM

*St. George's Close*

*The Arabia of Ibn Saud.* By Roy Lebkicher, George Rentz and Max Steineke. Russell F. Moore Co., New York, 1952. pp. 179.

"The business of America", ran a Presidential aphorism in the nineteen-twenties, "is business." This volume is an effective recognition that it is much more, at least when it is business having to do with the development and sale of Saudi Arabian oil. Perhaps it is a measure of the inclusiveness of Islam that commercial enterprises which otherwise and elsewhere might have been a law unto themselves have perforce to come to terms with their context in more senses than the commercial.

Not that this volume or its companion, *Arabia and World Oil*, reviewed on page 145, is grudging or perfunctory in its treatment of the local and Muslim relations of Aramco. On the contrary it is lavish, careful, painstaking and sincere. Indeed it is fascinating to turn the pages of this book and to sense, beyond the fine illustrations and the impressive maps, the effort of a great business enterprise to grapple with some of the intangibles of its operation. This book is a silent witness to the truth that has always in some form been assumed by the Christian mission, namely that relations with any part of the world, however activated, are necessarily also religious relationships, and that as such they deserve to be explicit.

Aramco, naturally enough, does not get that far. It thinks of Islam—and here expounds it for its people—as something not to be ignored but understood, as a call for intelligent respect and sensitive awareness. One has only to pass beyond this cultivation of forbearance into the ambition for communion and interpretation to be on Christian, and missionary, ground. That "only" is, of course, a large step and one that business as such could not take. But at least this exposition of what is involved in forbearance and accommodation is of no little value to those who aspire beyond those attitudes.

This second volume comprises three parts—the History of Arabia from the earliest times to the present, the Kingdom of Ibn Saud and the Religion of Islam. It is profusely illustrated, though the treatment is necessarily brief—the pun being permitted—since it is the briefing of Aramco personnel. That purpose makes for a popular summary, but one that is sober and competent. (Is there perhaps a touch of gentle anticipation in the notion of "the Prophet's secretary" on page 156? Outside Aramco, he might have been called a "scribe"—assuming there was only one.) With all the careful deference the authors are anxious to show and inculcate towards things Arabic and Islamic, it is a pity they did not get away from those obstinate mis-spellings: 'Koran' and 'Moslem'. It was a good idea to include a working Bibliography in keeping with the aim of the volume to foster an informed understanding of Islam. Altogether an efficient book and significant for its inspiration as well as for its contents.

A. K. C.

*Arabia Reborn.* By George Kheirallah. University of Mexico Press, 1952, pp. 307.

"Through the blackness of the desert midnight, forty men trudged silently towards destiny." So opens this account of the re-birth of Arabia under the leadership of King Ibn Saud. Well produced and printed, though without maps, the book gives itself up to

adventure, hyperbole and the zest of a story. It is not therefore a serious, critical study, but an indulgence of romance—"history surpassing fable set in the land of fantasy." It is a narrative of genius and oil in partnership to transform the past and exalt the present. The author spent some time in the area and regales the reader with anecdotes of his experiences. But the main theme is the rise to power of Ibn Saud, his pacification of his country, the rise and progress of the oil concession and its technicological and social impact upon Arabian life and society. There are aspects into which the author does not venture and over-simplifications to which romances are prone. George Kheirallah may have felt that Aramco told its own story too modestly and objectively in the two books reviewed above. Hence maybe the resolve to write it up more garishly. Though the temptation is understandable, the story being what it is, many readers will prefer the sober version.

A. K. C.

*The Struggle for Transcaucasia, 1917-1921.* By Firuz Kazemzadeh, Ph.D., California, 1950, pp. 356.

This work is a valuable contribution to a neglected field of study. The author, of Stanford University, is the son of an Iranian father and a Russian mother and has studied in Moscow. Prior to the treaty of Turkomanchai in 1828, a great portion of Transcaucasia, including Nakhjivan and the oil producing Baku, constituted an integral part of the old Persian province of Azerbaijan where Iranian civilization flourished and where, incidentally, Zarathrustra, the ancient prophet of Iran, was born. The Iranian inhabitants of this region, together with Georgians and Armenians, hoped for freedom from the Tsarist régime after the First World War. The Bolshevik leaders themselves encouraged these aspirations by promises at the time of the revolution in 1917. The Declaration of the Rights of Peoples signed by Lenin and by Stalin in November 1917 openly proclaimed "the equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia, the right of the people to free self-determination, including separation from Russia, and the free development of the national minorities and racial groups inhabiting the territory of Russia."

The incentive of this hope begat a general uprising on the part of the national groups of Transcaucasia, as a result of which three independent states, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, came into existence. But unhappily the Bolshevik régime proved as oppressive as the Tsarist and still more brutal. Intrigue, massacre and invasion crushed the incipient independence and before the end of 1921 Transcaucasia ceased to be a territory of free states and was firmly subjugated beneath the Soviet yoke. The gallant and bitter story of this vain struggle is told by Dr. Kazemzadeh in a sequence of 22 chapters. After tracing early history he writes of the 1917-21 struggle from immediate sources. He presents a clear and moving picture of the phases of the revolution, the hopes, frustration and despair of the peoples of Azerbaijan. Here is a mine of information on a little known but tragically revealing piece of history.

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The process of Constitution-making in Pakistan reached an important stage in December last when the Basic Principles Committee presented its Report to the Constituent Assembly after nearly four years' work. In his speech commending the Report, the Prime Minister, Al-Hajj Khwaja Nazimuddin explained that the Committee's activities had been prolonged by the difficulty of the task laid upon it by the terms of reference of the Constituent Assembly. "The principles enunciated by Islam had to be interpreted in terms of democratic constitutional practice in the 20th century. Such a course," he went on, "needed careful thinking, discussion and deliberation so that we could bring about a synthesis not only of the fundamental teachings of our faith and the requirements of progressive democracy, but also the requirements of the 20th century and the best elements of our tradition and history." The reconciliation of traditional values with modern needs has proved complex. Nor has copious advice been lacking from many quarters. Among the proposals and controversies attracting special attention in the Pakistan press are the following.

That Pakistan should be a federation of provinces has been criticised by leading conservatives and others as liable to encourage separatism. It is argued by some that the ideological unity in terms of which Pakistan was achieved should dictate a unitary rather than a federal state structure.

The issue of provincialism is particularly delicate as relates to East and West Pakistan. The former represents one unit but includes 56% of the population, while West Pakistan comprises nine units, with 44% of the population. The Committee elected for parity between the two in the two Houses of the Federal Legislature—120 members in the House of Units and 400 in the House of the People, divided equally between East and West. Advocates of parity point out that it is the only way to prevent domination of the West by the East (which the population criterion would give). Critics argue that it departs from the Islamic principle of representation by population and that in suspecting provincialism within the Muslim fellowship it serves to foster it. It is worthy of note that election to the House of the People is by universal adult suffrage and that all the real authority would be vested in the House of the People, the House of Units having only a revising function in respect of hasty legislation and no power over money bills.

The provision that the Head of the State should be a Muslim has been much criticised in the Indian press. Representatives of minority groups, while admitting that a Muslim as Head of the State is readily to be expected, protest that it is undemocratic that it should be exclusively laid down. Social justice and equality require that the highest office should be open to any citizen. The Prime Minister defended the principle as in keeping with Islamic usage.

The Report provides that no legislature should enact any law repugnant to the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The Head of State would set up a board of not more than five persons, well-versed in Islamic

laws, to advise him regarding such repugnancy of new laws. The Board would function in this way. In the event of a unanimous decision by the Board that a new law is repugnant to the Qur'an and the Sunnah, the Head of State will refer the law back to Legislature for reconsideration. The final passage of the bill will require not only a majority vote but also a majority vote of the Muslim members of the Legislature. In enlarging on this point the Prime Minister said, "The possibilities of wrong decision on account of ignorance having thus been eliminated, the only doubt that may arise in the mind can be that the majority of the Muslim members themselves may be hostile to the teachings of Islam. Such a contingency, in my opinion, cannot arise, but if, God forbid, this country can return at any stage of its history a majority of Muslims as members who, not out of ignorance, but deliberately in open revolt against Islam, legislate on Islamic laws, then no constitutional safeguards can save the country from deviation from the Islamic faith." (*Civil and Military Gazette*, 23 Dec. 1952).

To many this provision appears to be appeasement of the conservatives. Chief Minister Daultana stated that an Islamic Constitution did not necessarily mean that this type of "rule by mullahs" should be instituted. In an Editorial on 24 December the *Civil and Military Gazette* expressed the fears of the Muslim liberals. "The only provision whose wisdom will be doubted is that for the Ulema to act as advisers to the Head of the State . . . as to the Islamic character or otherwise of a legislation. This, to our mind, impinges upon the right of every Muslim to interpret the Qur'an and Sunna for himself. Besides it will lead to the creation of the obnoxious class of "Court Mullahs" who under certain Muslim rulers in the past served as tools to give religious sanction to all official whims and vagaries. The very fact that these Ulema would be in Government's pay will rob their verdict of all value." Other liberals fear that the Board will be a kind of super-legislature of a sinister character since its membership would be appointed, not elected.

There has been a suggestion in some quarters that the Supreme Court, to be set up under the Constitution, should pass upon the Islamic character of particular laws, with the 'ulemā' appearing, if necessary, as witnesses. The Shī'ah communities have expressed concern about the application of Quranic tests to legislation, demanding interpretations which they would consider authentic and authoritative. The whole issue is a highly interesting form of the age-long problem of the tests of institutional loyalty and the criteria of valid change. Is the community of Islam as a whole to be trusted or only within the veto of an élite?

Though Headship of the State is reserved for Muslims it should be noted that all other high positions, including that of Commander-in-chief of the Services and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, are open, in law, to all citizens. The franchise also admits of no disabilities by dint of religion. The Report recommends that minorities safeguard their own interests by forming separate electorates.

No mention is made in the Report of a State language. The earlier suggestion that Urdu should be so designated has been omitted. Bengalis feel that Bengali should be a second official language.

The presentation of the Committee's Report does not, of course, end the business of Constitution-writing. But it is likely to follow these broad lines. The Pakistan conception, prior to its attainment, was a banner which gathered many diverse elements into a single purpose. It is this very diversity which has made the subsequent tasks of definition and fulfilment so prolonged and delicate. But much has been accomplished. The economy is to avoid the concentration of wealth in the hands of the few, safeguard the workers from exploitation and provide for the aged, the infirm and the unemployed. Educational opportunities are to be available for every citizen. Structurally the State will have many features made familiar in Western experience and already incorporated with profit into the Indian Constitution.

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Significant, though indirect and also somewhat inconclusive, comment on the issue of Constitution making in Islam comes from the pen of a former Prime Minister of Indonesia, Mr. Muḥammad Natsir, leader of the Indonesian Masjumi Party. In *Pakistan Horizon*, the Journal of the Pakistan Institute of International Affairs, he writes:

"Pakistan is an Islamic country. So is my country, Indonesia. But though we recognise Islam to be the faith of the Indonesian people, we have not made an express mention of it in our Constitution. . . . You are resolved to make a constitution that will conform to the precepts of Islam. This will be epoch-making work. The result of your endeavours will be for the whole world a test of what we Muslims mean by Islamic government and its laws can be compatible with freedom of religion and worship for everyone and with equality before the law." He goes on to add that this does not mean "going theocratic," and dissociates himself from those zealots who teach that an Islamic state is a copy of the society of the Prophet's time. Neither is it right, however, on the other hand, simply to follow the patterns of Western political life. "To find out what is right, a profound and thorough study of the Qur'ān and of the history of the foundation of Islam and the early Islamic State is needed. This study should be of a more scientific character than has been attempted in the past." Islam is on the verge of another great chance in history—one chance more. Constitution writing is not all, writes this exponent. Faith and love cannot be legislated. "Islam is not the dust of *sajadah*, clinging to the forehead. . . . Islam is the secret covenant between God and whomsoever praises and glorifies God. Islam is good, accomplished in anonymity, for the sake of our brotherhood. . . ." He concludes: "Our land areas are a key, but whether to damnation or glory it is up to us to determine."

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Meanwhile constitutional issues of great future importance are developing in the Sudan. The Sudan Government's Draft Constitution, accepted in October last by the British Government, lays down, inter alia, that no disability shall attach to Sudanese by reason of sex and that all persons shall enjoy freedom of conscience and the

right freely to profess their religion. While expressing its hope for a liberal interpretation of the second of these points, the British Government has not insisted upon its meaning the right to change one's religion. Much concern is felt that this basic right of man shall be safeguarded in the future constitutional law of the Sudan. Egypt has not accepted Article 13 of the Draft Covenant of Human Rights of the United Nations, which provides for the liberty of the individual in respect of a new, as well as an old, religious loyalty. Freedom of movement of conscience is manifestly basic to any genuine tolerance. It must remain an urgent Christian duty to bear witness to the truth that freedom to leave a religion is part of the very dignity in which alone religious faith can properly be held, and to press by every means for the active recognition of this truth by Muslims.

Meanwhile the political agreement between Cairo and London on the Sudan opens the way for rapid advance towards self-government for the Sudanese and adds yet another to the 20th Century stages in Muslim self-responsibility. In terms of the farther future it may be the most important of them all. For the Sudan has no parallel either in the Arab States or Pakistan. It holds the trust of some two and a half million southern non-Muslims, more than a quarter of the total population, overwhelmingly illiterate and scarcely yet politically articulate. It remains to be seen whether their constitutional representation in one quarter of the seats in the Sudanese legislature will conduce to their best interests and whether the deep concern felt for their future—a concern which has protracted the recent negotiations—will be allayed. Another chapter in the recession of the West in Asia and Africa brings a new and testing day for Sudanese Christianity as well as a searching newness of responsibility to Sudanese Islam. It must be our prayer and hope that neither the one, as Christ's minority, nor the other, as the Sudan's majority, will fail to recognise the shape of its duty.

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In October last an Islamic Cultural Conference was held in Dacca, East Pakistan, under the auspices of the *Pakistan Tamaddum Majlis*. There were papers on Muslim sociology and philosophy and on the impact of Marxism, copies of which have been sent to this Quarterly. In a paper on *Islamic Movement*, Professor Muhammad Azraf, discussing the "post-Pakistan period" declared: "Our aim was said to be the creation of an Islamic State in India, but our method was un-Islamic. . . . There was no cultural program of the (Muslim) League to clarify its ideology. The only ideology that League leaders successfully put before the masses was the establishment of Pakistan or creation of an Islamic State in the sub-continent. But how it could be achieved could be clarified by very few among them. As a result, with the establishment of Pakistan the issue of Pakistan was practically over for League leaders." The Conference was clearly part of the process of self-definition still proceeding in Pakistan, and of wrestling with the "What?" lying beyond the settled "Whether?"

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The Jibraïl Rural Fellowship Center in the Lebanon was the subject of a special discussion in the Near East Committee of the N.C.C. in New York. Dr. S. Neale Alter explained its purpose of rural service in things economic, educational and spiritual and analysed some of the factors making such rural projects a Christian contribution of great urgency and promise in the Near East today. The Center promotes the study of health, hygiene, family relations, child development, occupational skills, home industry and handicraft. It is meant to present a pattern of living, to stimulate comparable schemes elsewhere and to give practical expression to the way and power of Christ.

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*Majallat al-Azhar*, the monthly journal of Al-Azhar in its issue of Rabia al-Awwal, (December 1952) describes a visit by General Naguib to the University in the previous month. In the course of his speech of reply to addresses of welcome the General congratulated al-Azhar on its role in the teaching and defence of Islam—the religion of freedom and justice. In the same issue, *Majallat al-Azhar* criticises the Ministry of Education as over pre-occupied with questions of school accommodation and other material concerns and deplores its silence on the deeper questions of moral and religious instruction. State education it complains makes of its schools factories for the production of citizens, not institutions developing persons of culture and religion. It demands that the schools under the new régime be brought into closer conformity to the spirit of the new régime, thus obliquely combining criticism of the one with deference to the other.

The article referred to is in fact a sequel to an earlier one in Safar (October) deploring the relative decay of Quranic schools and the neglect of Muslim teaching in State education. The writer foresees a day when the stream of recruits to al-Azhar, with years of Qur'an memoriter behind them in the *katatib*, will dry up—with the consequence that al-Azhar itself will be enfeebled in its task of supplying Muslim teachers well-versed in Islam. From this vicious circle the University looks to the new régime for deliverance, with some misgiving.

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Elaborate plans are in hand in Istanbul for the celebration of the capture of the city by the Turks five hundred years ago in May. We plan to take note of this occasion by an extensive article, to appear in the July issue, written by a noted Turkish architect and scholar, Ekrem Hakki Ayverdi, and translated into English by Mr. Lyman MacCallum. The article deals with the actual siege and conquest of the city, its subsequent career under the Turks and the architectural achievements of Muhammad Fatih, the conquering leader of the Turks. Another article of Turkish authorship is also promised for the anniversary.