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DEFINITION AND DEFENCE OF CRUSADE*

This is a sermon without a text. It is intended to explain something that it is most important for us to appreciate today as we draw near the climax of the greatest of all wars. Although I do not choose to make Holy Scriptures responsible for anything I say today, yet I believe that all of it will be found, so far as principles are concerned, Biblical enough. This is a word in defence of the old-fashioned notions about the Crusades and crusading generally.

Begin then with the modern habit of disparagement whenever the Crusades are mentioned. They are spoken of frequently as a peculiarly effective illustration of Christianity gone wrong by being at once sentimentalized and brutalized; this is an epitome of what was wrong with the Christianity of the Middle Ages. The misunderstanding of the Middle Ages began with Protestantism. And this was natural enough, for early Protestants had real reason for their attitude. Their descendants summarily underestimated all Mediaeval Religion, its art, literature and life. We are just beginning to recover from that wholesale disparagement; and the misunderstanding that has spoiled for a long time a proper appreciation of the Middle Ages was especially effective when dealing with the Crusades. Especially because their aim was never attained, they did not succeed; and their achievements were actually blackened by grievous faults and crimes, including e.g., the persecution of the Jews. Let us take those faults for granted and admit the badness as part of the record with its tales of vice and greed and wholesale cruelty and loot.

But the Crusades are still there in the record! How can we explain this great movement on the part of European Christendom? The constant harping on the black misdeeds leave the whole movement unexplained. You do not explain the French Revolution by condemning it. Now the Mediaeval man, with all his faults, was not without intelligence—nor without ideals. He was often coarse and cruel; he was almost incredibly superstitious. And Chaucer bears witness that the Mediaeval man knew all that concerning himself. But he did take seriously the Christian doctrine concerning Jesus Christ our Lord and His commandments. Charity and self-sacrifice were his ideals of char-

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acter and he had in this matter both devoutness and devotion. He did naturally and enthusiastically feel a deep love for the Saviour. That is what Christianity was to him specifically. Christ was the World's Redeemer who had suffered all manner of bitter pain, and the Death on the Cross, for us men and for our salvation. Everything in mediaeval worship was woven about that central figure and His deeds, His suffering and His death. The recent biography of Margery Kempe and her writings, are eloquent proof.

They loved to express their love for Him who died on the Cross, by pilgrimages to the Holy Land, the scene of the Crucifixion. We may note this in the opening stanzas of the Canterbury Tales. Here in the person of Thomas à Becket, was a saint who in a noteworthy manner had suffered for standing for Christ's authority in the teeth of the very powerful authority of the world. The Crusades were to regain the Holy Place par excellence, Palestine, and in that land, Bethlehem and Jerusalem, from the hand of the Saracens. They thought of a land, so holy for its associations with the blessed life and death of the Son of God. Shakespeare's Henry IV is drama with an absolute fidelity; and it is deeply interesting that (about 1600) Shakespeare should have apprehended so vividly the Mediaeval devotion:

"Therefore friends
As far as to the sepulchre of Christ
Whose soldier now, under whose blessed cross
We are impressed and engaged to fight—
To chase these pagans in those holy fields
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nailed
For our advantage on the bitter cross—"

Mediaeval Christians also felt deeply any contempt of Christ—and any hostility to Him. So when we remember what had happened to that holy land and the holy places, especially Jerusalem, in the hands of the Saracens, we can better understand the Crusades. Even the ill-treatment of pilgrims was insignificant except as it stood for the Mohammedan contempt for Christianity! Every returning pilgrim who had any sort of a story to tell, fanned the flame of a resentment, already fiery, with religious devoutness and enthusiasm.

So only can we account for the roar of acclaim that followed the Pope's preaching of the Crusade and that of Peter the Hermit: "*It is the will of God.*" The Crusades were popular and Christian in a sense as no other war had ever been before. The masses and the leaders too were convinced. Unless we admit their sincerity we understand nothing! Here was a complete enthusiasm of faith and of action, both rooted in the essential Christian doctrine of Christ's deity as Redeemer; with love and reverence for all that expressed this truth; and vigorous hostility to His enemies and to everything that showed

Him disrespect. They may have been rather simple-minded in their diagnosis as to who and what were for Christ and who and what, against Him. But they knew He had friends and foes and they meant to stand fast as His friends.

The Crusades were at once the most serious and the most spectacular expression of the Mediaeval consciousness of this basic opposition between Christianity and Islam. And on the basis of fact the movement was amply justified. The terrible fact was that in the occupation of Palestine by the Saracens they saw an insult to Christ. It was a threat to Christendom. I can find nothing more admirable in the martial side of Christian history than the story of a pure Crusader. Please do not be both offensive and ridiculous by saying there was no such Crusader. There were thousands of them, brave and fearless for their cause. Such was Jakeline de Maillé, a Templar who died through mere refusal to surrender, when he stood alone ringed round by some five hundred Saracens.

They were not only, I say, heroic; they were right. And if only the war could have been waged with united Christendom behind it, they would have wiped out the Moslem peril; they might even have so mauled the Moslem power that its aggressiveness would have been lost for good. This is the root of the matter. They knew the enemy of the Faith for what he was! And they took up arms against him! And by so doing they gave a shining and honorable name to all causes which for their essential goodness inflame men's hearts and make them risk their lives for the Cause and against its enemy. That is the meaning of Crusade. And the fact that the word has been at times unworthily used does not change the case in the slightest degree, any more than a man swearing to a lie subtracts from the holiness of the Name of God!

And this, my brethren, brings me to the end of my discourse with a plain declaration of my conviction—that those who fight where our men are fighting now in this present war are verily enlisted in a crusade, in the strictest sense of the word. The lists are set. Those who oppose us are by their own words and deeds hostile to Christ and his church; hostile to all Christian ideals! They are enemies of that mankind for which Christ died.

More and more men of right mind and good will have come to see how the aims and acts of both sides justify, yes, compel this tremendous characterization—Crusade. In this mood, and in this mood only can we carry through to victory and beyond. We, too, must cry "God wills it." So crying and so intending we are for rescue! *We are for rebuilding homes and bridges and public buildings and churches not only in desolated Europe but in the Near East and North Africa where our missionaries too are spiritual Crusaders in this age.*

THE WHITE FATHERS AND THE MOSLEMS OF NORTH AFRICA

French North Africa, and more particularly Algeria, which witnessed the first missionary activities of the White Fathers at the birth of their Society, has never been forsaken in order to foster their work among the Negroes of Central Africa. The first missionary centres have not only been maintained, but new ones have been opened in Kabylia, Tunisia and the Sahara Desert.

Today, in Kabylia and the Sahara, missionary stations number twenty-five, with eighty priests and twelve lay brothers. The White Sisters are at work in almost all these stations, attending to the sick in hospitals and dispensaries, giving education to the children in schools, and assisting native families with work either in their work-rooms or at home.

In Tunisia, the White Fathers have several important houses, among which must be mentioned the two Senior Seminaries of Carthage and Thibar for their many clerical students, and the model farm of Saint-Joseph, at Thibar, with its many workshops where the lay Brothers are trained in the most usual crafts such as carpentry, masonry, etc. Once in the mission fields, the Brothers will thus be able to render invaluable services and give the natives a sound technical formation.

In 1927, at Tunis, there was founded the "Institut des Belles-Lettres Arabes," I.B.L.A., where our young missionaries, who wish to devote their life to the relief of the native population of North Africa, study the language and institutions of the Moslems.

In each missionary station, schools are opened, and the willingness of parents to send their children to our schools has never flagged. There are now forty schools in Kabylia and the Sahara, giving elementary education to 1,300 boys. Two Higher Schools, one at Aïn-Sefra in the Sahara, the other at Ait-Larba in Kabylia, prepare their most promising pupils for competitive examinations giving admission to Technical Schools or entrance to the State Colleges. The earnest and repeated requests of parents impel the White Fathers to multiply these centres of education which provide for the future of the male population. As soon as the war is over, it will be impossible for us to ignore these requests completely.

Everywhere in these schools, education goes along with instruction, and the former has given splendid results. One of the most interesting has been the creation of a very active Scout movement. Enrolled in the Federation of the "Scouts de France," they form fifteen

troops and several clans in full strength, with Rovers, Cubs, etc., who stir up the youth everywhere, while they thrill the parents, villages and the whole country.

For a long time, Arabs and Kabyles were opposed to the very idea of their girls being given any instruction whatever; but little by little their mind is changing. They are being conquered by the excellent results obtained by the White Sisters in their workrooms and handicraft schools. Today two thousand young girls regularly attend these educational centres, and already some groups of *Jeannettes* (Association for Young Girls) and Girl Scouts have been formed and even appear in public, at least in those towns where the parents can afford to buy the kit.

In those towns where the missionaries are operating their centres of education and social assistance, they are considered by the native populations as their best and most trustworthy friends to whom they can, without any fear or regard of man, commit their intimate affairs, their personal troubles and the interests of their family. The house of the missionaries, with all its activities devoted to the welfare of everyone, becomes part of the life of the tribe and of the whole neighborhood.

The solicitude of the missionaries for the people in the midst of whom they dwell is not confined to alms and relief for the poor, nor to dispensaries and hospitals for the sick, nor to schools for the children. This, of course, is necessary and is found in each station; but the missionaries have at heart something much more important, namely

—to improve the economic life of these people, by a better organization and a better return of the work from which they live;

—to obtain more sanitary conditions by inducing the natives to adopt certain methods to keep the food clean and certain prophylactic measures appropriate to their needs and means;

—to favor sound morality and good traditions which are the guarantee of social peace, public health and ethical progress.

Along these lines whatever good is achieved for the welfare of the natives proves to be most beneficial and of far-reaching importance. The efficacy of our work depends on time and requires long patience with great obstinacy in the pursuit of the end. It rests also on the more or less importance of the funds which the missionaries dispose of and on the readiness of the social authorities to cooperate with them. The missionaries will surely never run short of patience and perseverance, but we cannot say the same of the resources put at their disposal nor of the cooperation spoken of, without which their work becomes more difficult. This explains how such or such an enterprise, though the results obtained might be remarkable, has not

the demonstrative value it would have, for lack of the aid absolutely necessary to its greater radiating power. In that respect, we note with much satisfaction the effective help received by the White Sisters and the White Fathers with regard to the founding and development of two important institutions, one in Algiers, the other in Tunis.

In Algiers, it is the *Assistance Morale aux Indigènes Nord Africains*, popularly called AMINA. According to the words of its statutes, the nature and aim of that Institution are:

—to offer to all the natives of North Africa the good services of a sincere, loyal and generous friendship;

—to bring about closer relations between the French and the native population;

—to work for the moral education of the natives;

—to create, through the activity and generosity of the members of the Association, organizations which might win for the Europeans the affection of the natives;

—to give the natives help and assistance in their progressive evolution towards the principles and methods of social, intellectual and moral activity which rule modern life. (*Statutes of the Association*)

This Association, founded in 1930, is the realization of an ideal held in common by the White Fathers and a group of prominent laymen deeply devoted to the natives. This group is composed of doctors, lawyers, University professors and students, old and young ladies belonging to the French higher classes, leading business-men and industrialists. The report of the last general assembly of the Association speaks of the charitable activities of its members, who gave material assistance to the war-stricken native families of Algiers. With the help of the City Council, the AMINA operated a popular soup kitchen, which, during a full year, provided one daily meal for over two thousand natives in great economic distress. Besides this material relief given them, these families were visited, encouraged and usefully advised. The same report mentions also its Social Office to which is attached "the family letter to native prisoners of war," the evening classes for adults, and the summer camps organized for the Moslem boys of the Casbah, which so far have totalled about three thousand days of camping, either in the mountains or on the sea-shore. The same advantage was granted to numerous little girls by the White Sisters, to the entire satisfaction of their parents.

The AMINA has also started to extend its action into the interior of the country, by making friendly contacts with the most cooperative European colonists who are really anxious to work hand in hand with the Association in its effort to promote the social and moral welfare of the surrounding rural classes among whom they hire laborers for their farms.

In Tunis, the Institut des Belles-Lettres Arabes, IBLA (of which we already have said a few words), is the centre of studies where our young missionaries study the Arabic language and literature. The IBLA is however much more than an ordinary school. It is a friendly house where French and native people belonging to the intellectual class associate to study and discuss matters of mutual interest. Every fortnight the "Amitiés Tunisiennes" (Society of Tunisian Friends) holds a debating session during which a native and a French member, each one in his turn, gives a lecture on matters that may help to foster closer relations between the European and Moslem elements of the population, and develop among them a greater mutual understanding and more sincere friendship.

The Institute publishes a quarterly review, *IBLA*. The articles are written by the White Fathers or by their Tunisian friends, Moslem or French, farmers or other prominent men, who wish to collaborate with them in their splendid work.

Besides the review, the Institute has undertaken the publication, in vulgar Arabic as well as in French, of monographs about the agricultural, pastoral and family life of the rural populations of Southern Tunisia. These publications are most welcome, especially to the European colonists, because they find in them the best methods that should be employed to render the relations between the natives and themselves as friendly as possible.

In their every-day dealings with the Mohammedan population, the White Fathers act only as men of prayer, religious and God-fearing men, men familiar with things divine. And, no doubt, this is the reason why the natives respect and trust them so much. This is also the consequence, (indeed to their credit), of that religious spirit of which the Moslems are deeply imbued and which inclines them to venerate and honor, in men consecrated to God's service, the privilege of a closer knowledge and experience of their Creator and only Lord.

When addressing the thoroughly religious-minded mass of the "believers," without hurting their feelings, without giving the least offense to their attachment to Islam, the White Fathers are agreeably surprised to witness that their words not only give rise to expressions of really beautiful sentiments of genuine piety among the mass of the hearers, but also increase the sympathy and friendly feelings of the listeners-in for the preachers.

Among the Moslems, our missionary program does not include the preaching of the Gospel. The Mohammedan people refuse to hear it, and indeed remain fiercely hostile to it. It is not therefore the Gospel "in words," but the Gospel "in action," that the missionaries and the zealous Christians who collaborate with them for the spreading of Christ's divine doctrine, offer to these native populations of North

Africa.* Their ambition is to try to gain their esteem and affection for the Gospel, and thus bring them to practise it in their daily life and in their mutual relations.

The White Fathers are absolutely convinced that God's grace always corresponds to the degree of good will and sincerity with which these souls endeavor to love God and their neighbor. They feel that this is the best and most effective way to free the Moslems of their haughty and deep-rooted prejudices against Christian faith. Divine grace, in whose power they patiently trust, will eventually "*enlighten the hearts*" of these men of good will who sincerely respond to its inspirations and practise the first and greatest of God's Commands.

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* [This is an astonishing statement, when we recall the life and preaching of Francis of Assisi and the martyrdom of Raymund Lull.—Ed.]

A SPANISH MUSLIM SAINT: ABŪ'L-'ABBĀS AL-MURSI

In the sixth and seventh centuries of Islam, that is to say round A.D. 1200, we meet with a group of Muslim saints whose names indicate that they were Spaniards, or at least of Spanish origin. Of these one of the best known is Abū'l-'Abbās al-Mursī. He is mentioned by Burton as Abū'l-'Abbās al-Andalusī in the first chapter of his Pilgrimage, and is one of the most venerated shaikhs of the Shādhiliyah order of dervishes. In Burton's time, six hundred years after the death of the saint in 686/1287, his memory was still fresh and his grave a place of resort for the devout and curious, as it had been for centuries past. Maqqarī visited it several times¹ in the first half of our seventeenth century. The biographer Ṣafadī had been there² as early as A.D. 1336 or 1337. Burton remarks that "The readers of Ibn Batutah may think it strange that the learned and pious traveller in his account of Alexandria . . . makes no allusion to the present holy deceased that distinguished the city." The tomb of Abū'l-'Abbās in Alexandria is not indeed mentioned by Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, perhaps because at the time of his visit, some forty years after the death of the saint, it was not so celebrated as later. Certainly Ibn Baṭṭūṭah knew who Abū'l-'Abbās was, and, *pace* Burton, alludes to him by name more than once³ in this part of his Riḥlah.

The interesting history of the Shādhiliyah order down to recent times may be followed in Margoliouth's article in the Encyclopaedia of Islam. Biographies of the founder Abū'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī⁴ and his successor Abū'l-'Abbās al-Mursī were written by another prominent member of the order Ibn 'Aṭā'u'llah, himself a pupil of Abū'l-'Abbās. This work is the primary source of the later accounts, but is difficult to obtain. Meantime the following pages from Sha 'rānī⁵ dealing with Abū'l-'Abbās throw light on the life and character of a remarkable man. They may be compared with the biography of the saint given by Maqqarī,⁶ writing about eighty years later. Sha 'rānī's account is translated from the Ṭabaqātu'l-Kubrā, a work well enough known, which was written in Egypt and completed A.H. 952. Its original title was Lawāqīḥu'l-Anwār fī Ṭabaqāti'l-Akhyār, but the other name is now in use. It is readily available in a number of printed editions. The following is from Sha'rānī:

And among them (*sc.* the Muslim saints whom Sha 'rānī enumer-

¹ Maqqarī, Leyden ed. I: 587.

² *Ibid.*

³ Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, ed. Defremery and Sanguinetti, I: 39.

⁴ *I.e.*, from the village of ash-Shādhilāh in Ifriqiyyah. Ibn Taimiyah was his opponent, Ṭabaqātu'l-Kubrā, II: 4. For another Shādhilī, *ibid.*, II: 62.

⁵ Ṭabaqātu'l-Kubrā, Cairo edition, undated, II: 12 seq.

⁶ Maqqarī, *op. cit.* I: 586.

ates in his book) was the Shaikh my master the Imām Aḥmad Abū'l-'Abbās al-Mursī, may God be pleased with him. He was among the greatest of those who know. It was said that none but he inherited the science of the Shaikh Abū'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī, may God be pleased with him, and he was the most distinguished of his followers in the Way. Abū'l-'Abbās composed no books. He used to say, The sciences of this Order (*sc.* the Shādhiliyah) are the sciences of assurance, and the minds of the generality of creatures do not comprehend the sciences of assurance. Similarly his Shaikh Abū'l-Ḥasan ash-Shādhilī composed nothing and used to say, My companions are my books. He died in the year 686 (*sc.* of the Hijrah).

Among his sayings was, All the Prophets, upon whom be blessing and peace, were created of mercy; but our Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) is mercy itself. He used to say, The doctor of the law is he who has had the veil rent from the eyes of his heart. And he used to say, The men of the night⁷ are the men, and whenever the night grows dark, the light of the walī⁸ is strong, of necessity. He used also to say, The walī of God is with God as the cub in the bosom of the lioness. Do you see her leaving her cub to one who would destroy it? No, by God!

He used to say, God Who is exalted has servants whose actions and attributes and nature He determines by His own actions, attributes and nature, and He embellishes them with secrets which the ordinary walīs cannot hear. He used to explain the tradition "He who knows himself knows his Lord" by saying, He who knows himself in his weakness and impotence knows his Lord in His greatness and power. I think (adds Sha 'rānī) that this is the soundest answer, but God knows best.

He used to say, I have heard the Shaikh Abū'l-Ḥasan saying "If the light of the rebellious believer were revealed, it would cover all heaven and earth." What then do you think of the light of the obedient believer? And he used to say, If the truth about a walī were revealed, he would be worshipped (*la-'ubida*), because his attributes are of God's attributes and his characteristics are of God's characteristics. I think (says Sha 'rānī) that the meaning of "*la-'ubida*" is "he would be served." He Who is exalted says (in the Qur'ān,⁹ using the same word) "Do not serve Satan" in what he commands you. But God knows best.

A certain person said, I prayed behind the Shaikh Abū'l-'Abbās, and I saw lights fill his body and disseminate from his person, so that I was unable to look at him.

He used to say, A certain king said to one of those who know, Ask

⁷ With reference to night-prayers, study, etc. Cf. the saying "He who would attain his desire, all of it, must make use of his hours of darkness like a camel to overtake it."

⁸ i.e., the friend *sc.* of God.

⁹ Qur'ān 36, 60.

me a boon. And that gnostic said to him, Do you say that to me, when I have two slaves whom I possess but who have possession of you, over whom I have power but who have power over you? Their names are desire and greed. You are the slave of my slave. Being so, how should I ask you a boon? And he used to say, I have heard the Shaikh Abū'l-Ḥasan ash-Shadhilī saying, "When one has been confirmed as a walī by God, one does not shrink from death." This is a test by which novices may weigh their souls, when they claim the state of a walī of God. For it is natural that souls should claim high prerogatives without following the road which leads to them. God has said,¹⁰ Wish for death if ye are sincere.

He used to say, Sometimes the walī is laden with the sciences, and the several kinds of knowledge and truth are manifest in him, until he is given the interpretation, which is as it were the title to speak from God. You must understand that if one has been given permission to interpret, his indications have great importance in the ears of mankind. And he used to say, The words of him who has received permission go forth covered with a garment of beauty, but the words of him who has not received permission go forth with their light eclipsed. He used to say, He who loves manifestation¹¹ is the servant of manifestation, and he who loves concealment¹² is the servant of concealment. But for the servant of God it is all one whether He manifests him or conceals him. And he used to say, The enfolding is twofold, a lesser and a greater enfolding. The lesser enfolding for ordinary members of this Order is that the earth from east to west is enfolded for them in one soul. The greater enfolding is the enfolding of the attributes of the souls.

He used to say, A man once entered the presence of 'Uthmān having looked at the charms of a woman on the way. And he said, "One of you enters with the marks of whoredom clear in his face."

And he used to say, Sometimes God acquaints the walī with His hidden purpose, when He is pleased with him on account of his following the Apostles. Hence they utter hidden things and are right concerning them. And he used to say, This Way of ours does not go back to the men of east or west, but by continuous ascent to Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abū Ṭālib, since he was the first of the Poles. And he used to say, It is incumbent on a man to specify the Shaikhs whom he takes as his authorities only when his way consists in the wearing of the gown,¹³ because it is tradition and tradition specifies the men in its chain of authorities. But this Way of ours is guidance. God sometimes draws the servant to Himself, and does not confer grace upon him in

¹⁰ Ibid. 62,6. Cf. also 2,88/94 Amiri.

¹¹ Arabic "zuhūr."

¹² Ar. "khafā'."

¹³ Ar. "khirqah," a coarse cloak.

virtue of a master. He sometimes unites him with the Apostle of God, and he takes from him, and this is sufficient grace. He often said, The Shaikh said "The Shaikh said," whenever he was relating a saying, and a man once said to him "We never find you attributing sayings to yourself." He replied "If I wished to count the number of breaths I take to say 'God said,' I should say it, and if I wished to count the breaths in order to say 'The Apostle of God said, may God bless him and give him peace,' I should say it. If I wanted to tell the number of breaths in 'Said I,' I should say it. But I say 'The Shaikh said,' and omit mention of myself from politeness."

And he used to say, Constantly in every age most people pay no attention to the walī, until after his death they say "There was so-and-so." He used to say, By God! the walīs and the Substitutes¹⁴ have not travelled from Qāf to Qāf¹⁵ but to meet with one like us. His Shaikh Abū'l-Ḥasan used to tell the people, Give heed to the Shaikh Abū'l-'Abbās. By God! let the boorish¹⁶ bedouin come to him, and he will not depart till he has brought him to God, and by God! there is no walī of God past or present, but over him, his name, descent,¹⁷ merit and portion from God Who is great and glorious, God has given him the supremacy.

And he used to say, I heard the Shaikh Abū'l-Ḥasan saying "No order will perish if it has four things: an Imām, a walī, a man of insight¹⁸ and a Shaikh." And Abū'l-Ḥasan said in that lecture, And the Imām is Abū'l-'Abbās. He used to say, When the walī wishes he specifies. He used also to say, The Shaikh Abū'l-Ḥasan said to me once "Abū'l-'Abbās, I have been your companion only that you should become myself, and I you." And he used to say to me "For forty years I have not been prevented access to the Apostle of God. If I had been for a moment, my soul would not be numbered among the Muslims." He spoke similarly with regard to Paradise and the yearly station at 'Arafah.¹⁹

And he used to say, If the Truth, who is sublime and exalted, wished it, contrary to custom, the direction in prayer would be to the Pole, the Aid,²⁰ sooner than to the Ka'bah. And he used to say, By God! there have never been two masters of this science at one time, but one after another back to Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abū Ṭālib. He used also to say, I know none today who speaks on this science except myself in all the world.

Someone presented him with doubtful food in order to test him.

¹⁴ Ar. "abdāl." The form "budalā'" also occurs. See Ency. of Islam, I: 67.

¹⁵ Qāf is the fabulous mountain which encircles the earth.

¹⁶ Arabic "yabūlu 'alā sāqaihi."

¹⁷ i.e., spiritual descent.

¹⁸ Ar. "ṣiddiq," from "ṣidq," true intuition cf. Affā: Muhyid Din-Ibnū'l 'Arabī, Cambridge, 1939, p. 133. n. 2.

¹⁹ An important part of the Pilgrimage.

²⁰ Arabic "ghauth."

The Shaikh refrained from eating it and said, The Shaikh Muḥāsibī²¹ had a vein in his finger which throbbed when he stretched out his hand to what was doubtful, and I have in my hand sixty such. The man was astonished, and repented by means of him.

He used to say, From the time that I entered the presence of the Shaikh Abū'l-Ḥasan in Cairo—under him he read the Kitābu'l-Mawāqif of Niffarī²²—and he said to me “Speak, my son, may God Who is exalted bless you,” from that time I have been granted a tongue. And he used to say, By God! if the learned of Iraq and Syria knew what was beneath these hairs—and he grasped his beard—they would come to them, even if they crept on their faces. And he used to say, By God! we do not examine the words of the people of the Way except to see the grave of God towards us. And he used to say, When a man is perfect he speaks all languages and knows all tongues by inspiration from God. He used also to say, When one has faithfully associated with the Shaikhs and knows the external, one's knowledge increases outwardly. And he used to say, Do not ask the Shaikh that you should be in his thoughts. Rather ask yourselves that the Shaikh should be in your thoughts, for in the measure that he is in you, you are in him.

He lived in the Muqassam²³ quarter in Cairo—every night he came to Alexandria and attended the meeting-place of the Shaikh Abū'l-Ḥasan, then returned to Cairo.²⁴ He studied under him the book called Khatmu'l-Auliya' by al-Ḥakīm at-Tirmidhī,²⁵ and he and his Shaikh Abū'l-Ḥasan respected and honoured him. There was a man who found fault with him and said, These are only the people of the external science. These others claim monstrous things, which the manifest meaning of the law rejects. They were present one day at the Shaikh's lecture, and the man's mind was dazzled. He ceased his faultfinding and said, This man can only know from the overflowing of a divine sea and by assistance from the Lord. He then became one of his most intimate companions. He used also to say, We share with the doctors of the law in what they are concerned with, but they do not share with us in what we are concerned with.

One hot day he made a paste of flour and butter called 'aṣīdah', and they said to him, Such a paste is made only in winter. He replied, This is the paste of our son Yāqūt, born today in the country of the Abyssinians. And Yāqūt was sold from one master to another till he

²¹ An account of him *Ṭabaqātu'l-Kubrā* I: 64, where his name is given as Ḥārith b. Usaid, not Ḥārith b. Asad as Brockelmann, *GAL* I: 198; but this is a mistake. See below.

²² For this work see especially Arberry's edition, also Brockelmann *GAL* I: 200.

²³ Probably so. Mr. M. T. Ramzi tells me that there is no quarter of the name in Cairo today. For a *jāmi'* of the same name in mediaeval Cairo, *Tab. Kub.* I: 176.

²⁴ By supernatural means, *sc.*

²⁵ Not of course the traditionist Abū'Isā.—See Brockelmann *GAL Sup.* I: 355. Al-Ḥakīm at-Tirmidhī was also, apparently, studied by Ibnu'l-'Arabi, *cf.* Brock. I: 448 No. 150 = No. 110.

came to my master Abū'l-'Abbās, and they reckoned his years, and they found his years exactly as he had said.²⁶

He used to speak at his lectures mostly about the highest intelligence, the greatest name and its four derivatives, the names and the letters, the circles of the walīs, the stations of those who are certain, the angels who are set near the throne, the secret sciences, the supernatural effects of the prayers,²⁷ the day of destinies, the question of divine government, the science of creation, the science of the divine will, the question of ecstasy and the ecstasies, the knowledge of the Saints, and of what will take place on the day of the Resurrection in respect of the works of God with His servants, such as His clemency and favours and the forms of His vengeance. He used to say, If the intelligences were not weak, I should tell of the mercy which God will show. Ibn 'Aṭā'u'llah said, The Shaikh Abū'l-'Abbās did not condescend to the sciences of practice except on a few days, when someone needed it. Consequently, he went on, the followers of one whose sciences were the primary sciences were few. Those who buy coral are many, while it rarely happens that two people come together for the sale of rubies. Inevitably the followers of the people of truth are few, as God says (in the Qur'ān)²⁸ with regard to the sleepers in the cave, There know them only a few. The people of God are a cave for the affairs of the people, but there are few who know them. My master Abū'l-'Abbās used to say, To know the walī is more difficult than to know God, for God is known by His perfection and beauty. How long will it be before you recognise a creature like yourself, eating as you eat and drinking as you drink?

The governor of Alexandria requested that he should meet him and take his hand and be his Shaikh. He said to the messenger, I am not a man to be played with. And he never met him till his death. When he slept in a town in the course of a journey and learned that the great man of the place wanted to meet him, he would set off from it by night before the dawn. He used to say, The mark of love of the world is fear of blame and love of praise. If one were ascetic one would not fear the one nor love the other. He used to say, The godly man is he whom God has made godly. And also, He who is not suited to the present world nor the world to come is suited to God. He used to say, The godliness of those who are cut off arises from their wrong thinking and the preponderance of natural judgement. The godliness of the Substitutes and the men of true intuition²⁹ depends on clear evidence and superior insight. And he used to say, By God! I see no glory save in withdrawing the thoughts from creatures. I noticed a dog one day,

²⁶ Yāqūt the Abyssinian was still living in Cairo at the time of Ibn Baṭṭūṭah's visit and gave him an account of the death of Abū'l-'Ḥasan. See Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, 1. c.

²⁷ Dozy, Supplement s.v. dh-k-r.

²⁸ Qur'ān 18,21/22 Amiri.

²⁹ Plural of "ṣiddīq."

and having some bread with me, I set it before him, and he did not heed it. And I heard a voice saying "Shame on him than whom a dog is more abstinent."

He used to say, The people have means of livelihood. Our means of livelihood are faith and piety. God says (in the Qur'ān),³⁰ And had the people of the towns believed and shown piety, We should have opened up to them blessings from the heaven and the earth. He used to say, What you have heard from me and understood, entrust to God, to restore it to you in time of need. And what you have not understood, commit to God: God will attend to its explication. See to it that the mirror of your hearts is bright, so that everything may be plain to you. And also, When the wali is limited, everyone who injures him is destroyed immediately. When his knowledge is enlarged, he endures the injury of men and jinn, and no harm comes to any on his account. He used to say, The flesh of the walis is poisoned. Even if they do not requite you, beware! and again beware!

On one occasion, he was afflicted with twelve enlarged veins³¹ and the stone and a chill on the kidneys and in spite of that he offered audience to the people. He did not groan while he sat, and he who sat by him did not know how much he suffered. He used to say, Do not look at the redness of my face. It comes from the redness of my heart. He used also to say, I did not sit with the people until I was threatened with deprivation and was told, If you do not sit, I will deprive you of what We have given you.

He never corresponded with the governors about anything, but used to say to him who made petition, I shall ask that for you from God. He objected to the Shaikhs, when a novice came to him, saying to him, Wait a time. He used to say that the novice comes to the Shaikh with his interest aroused, and when he is told, Wait a time, his first zeal is extinguished. He used to say, quoting his Shaikh, Be my companions and I shall not hinder you from being companions of others. If you find a watering-place sweeter than this watering place, go down and drink. And when he saw a novice entering upon devotions passionately, he brought him away from them. When he was praised in an ode he rewarded the panegyrist by welcoming him and giving him gifts. He used to say to his companions, When a leader of the people comes to us, tell me, that I may go out to meet him. When he parted from him he walked a few steps with him, then came back. He used to say, These people have troubled themselves to visit us without our having visited them. He did not eat food specially intended for him, nor food which he was told about beforehand. He did not pray for a benefactor till he had left his company, and then prayed for him in secret. When any small thing was presented to him, he had

³⁰ Qur'ān 7,94/96 Amiri.

³¹ i.e. hemorrhoids.

a habit of receiving it with cheerfulness and good grace, and when he was given a large present he accepted it with dignity and the appearance of unconcern. He did not praise a novice among his fellows for fear of jealousy. His prayer was a short performance, and he used to say, That is the prayer of the Substitutes. He used to say, When I read the Qur'an, it is as if I were reading it to God's dictation. When he heard anyone articulating the name of God or the name of the Prophet he brought near his mouth to him, in order to gather up that name, out of respect for the fact that it was issuing in the air. When he heard anyone say, This is the night of the Decree,³² he used to say, As for us, thank God all our times are a night of decree. And he used to honour people according to their status with God, so that often a religious man entered his presence and he paid no attention to him, because he saw his spiritual state; and there would enter a disobedient man and he would rise for him, because he came with submission of soul and brokenhearted. They praised in his hearing on the score of his knowledge a certain person who was always muttering in the ablution and the prayer. The Shaikh said, Where is your knowledge on account of which you praise this man? Knowledge is what is stamped on the heart like whiteness in the white man, and blackness in the black man.

He said to a pilgrim, What kind of pilgrimage had you? It was very comfortable, he replied, with plenty of water, and the cost was so-and-so. And the Shaikh turned from him and said, I ask them about their pilgrimage and what they have experienced in it from God in the way of knowledge and success and triumph, and they reply by speaking of the reasonable prices and the abundance of water. He used to say, It is desirable for the Shaikhs to enquire into the state of the novices, and it is permitted to the novices to inform the teacher of what is in their breasts, since the teacher is like a doctor and the state of the novice like certain parts of the body, which are sometimes shown to the doctor in an emergency of medical treatment. And indeed every novice who conceals a thought from his Shaikh is a stranger to him, and is not united to him. He used to say, The Shaikh should call the novice to account as long as he comes short of the reality of his claim; when he has reached the position of the men he should make no demands on him about his claim, as a proof of his having left the station of pretence. He used to say to anyone who thought he was living abstemiously in the present world, The power of the world is great, my brother, when you consider that it has existence, until you are abstemious in regard to it. Its power cannot resist that.

³² One of the last ten nights of Ramaḍān, on which the revelation came down to Muhammad. A rhyme for computing the exact night, depending on the day of the week on which Ramaḍān begins is doubtfully ascribed to Ibnu'l-'Arabi by Maqqari, I: 572.

He used frequently to explain the difficult sayings of the Ṣūfīs. He said in regard to the words of Sahl b. 'Abdu'llah³³ "Be not of the sons of time, but be of the sons of eternity," It means, Consider what has preceded in the knowledge of God, and do not trust in your knowledge and your practice, during all your life.

He said in regard to the saying of Bishr al-Ḥāfī³⁴ "I have had no longing for roast meat for forty years, not having money to buy it," That is, The Truth did not permit me to eat it. If He had permitted me, I should have had the money. Otherwise from what source did he eat during the forty years?

It was said by Junaid³⁵ "I have known seventy gnostics, all serving God according to fallible thought and natural judgement, including my brother Abū Yazīd. If he had known one of our boys he would have been converted to Islam by him." He explained this by saying, They said "There is no station beyond that which we have reached." This is natural judgement and fallible thought, for every station has a station above it, to infinity. It does not mean that fallible thought and natural judgement were in their knowledge of God. The meaning of, He would have been converted to Islam by him, is, He would have submitted to him, because Islam is submission.

With regard to the saying of Abū Yazīd³⁶ "I plunged into a sea, on the shore of which stood the Prophets," he explained it that Abū Yazīd was complaining of his weakness and inability to come up to the Prophets. This was so because the Prophets have plunged into the sea of the Unity and stand on its further bank on the shore of Separation, calling on the creatures to enter boldly. That is, "If I were perfect, I should stand where they stand." Said Ibn 'Aṭā'u'llah, The explanation which the Shaikh has given of the words of Abū Yazīd is that which is fitting to the station of Abū Yazīd. He sometimes said, All that the walīs have taken, compared with what the Prophets have taken, is like a bag full of honey with a leak in it. What is in the interior of the bag belongs to the Prophets; the leakage belongs to the walīs. It was well-known of Abū Yazīd that he exalted the less supported³⁷ traditions of the law, and that he was very learned. The correct procedure is to interpret the states of the leaders of those who are in the right way, and not to hasten to reject them.

He said in regard to the story of Ḥārith b. Asad³⁸ that when he stretched out his hand to food which was doubtful his finger moved. How could this be? They once brought curded milk to Abū Bakr the

³³ A friend of Dhū'n-Nūn al-Misrī, died Basrah c. 280. A.H., cf. Yāqūt, Mu'jam I: 850. See Encyc. of Islam (article by Massignon). Ibn Khallikān (tr. de Slane I: 590) describes his remarkable behaviour when paying a visit to Abū Dā'ūd (author of the Sunan). See also *ibid.*: 602.

³⁴ A theologian and mystic. See Encyc. of Islam, also Brock. Sup. I: 351.

³⁵ Brock. I: 199; Ibn Khallikān, *ibid.*, I: 338 and III: 12.

³⁶ Also called Bayazīd, al-Bisṭāmī, cf. Brock. Sup. I: 353.

³⁷ Cf. Lane, s.v. r-8-1.

³⁸ i.e., Muḥāsibī. The story has been mentioned above, p. 185.

Sincere,³⁹ and he ate of it. He then felt its unwholesomeness in his stomach and said, "Where did you get this curded milk?" And a slave said to him, "I practised magic for the people in the days before Islam, and they gave me the price of my magic." So Abū Bakr vomited the food. He had no vein which moved when he ate doubtful food, yet by general consent he was more excellent than Ḥārith. The answer (says Sha 'rānī) is that Abū Bakr was Caliph, legislating for the Muslims, so that whoever ate doubtful food without knowing might imitate him, and take it upon himself to cast forth the food after eating it, and God will reward him for that. Ḥārith, however, was not at that time legislating, nor was he a Pattern, and was only acting for his own benefit. Further, it is well-known that it is characteristic of a Pattern to descend in order to instruct.

And he used to say, Qushairī⁴⁰ began his Epistle with Fuḍail b. 'Iyād⁴¹ and Ibrahīm b. Adham,⁴² because first they experienced a time of separation, then when they drew near, God drew near to them. He began by mentioning them to cheer the hope of the novices who formerly lived in error and disobedience, and to teach that the grace of God is not founded on works. If he had begun with Junaid and Sahl b. 'Abdu'llah and 'Utbaḥ al-Ghulām⁴³ and the like, who grew up in the way of God, perhaps someone would say, Who can catch up on these men, who never formerly committed any errors or acts of disobedience?

With reference to the verse of Samnūnu'l-Muḥibb:⁴⁴

"I have no part in aught but Thee, so do Thou test me as Thou wilt," who was afterwards afflicted with a stricture, and cried out, saying, Pray for your uncle, the liar, he said, If Samnūn had said instead of "Do Thou afflict me as Thou wilt," "Forgive me," it would have been better than to ask for the testing. I think (says Sha 'rānī) that the trial came upon Samnūn simply because he neglected to secure a loop-hole in the prayer. If he had said "Give me strength, then test me as Thou wilt," he would not have been tried. Our Shaikh (sc. Sha 'rānī) used to say, When you are asked if you fear God say, "Yes, but in the measure in which He has created fear in me"; and similarly when you are asked, "Do you love God?" Whoever carries out this plan is not tried, because of his reliance on God, not on his own strength. They say also, Whoever claims is tried, and this is his test. But God knows best.

With respect to the saying of Sarī⁴⁵ in definition of repentance,

³⁹ Strictly perhaps "the man of insight," who recognized the claims of Muḥammad, cf. notes 18, 29.

⁴⁰ For him and the well-known Epistle, see Brock. I: 432 and Sup.

⁴¹ Cf. Massignon, *Essai sur les origines etc.* p. 151. He is mentioned several times in the 'Iqd.

⁴² Massignon, *ibid.* p. 150.

⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 145, etc.

⁴⁴ He discoursed eloquently on the love of God. Ibn Khallikān, *ib.* III: 12.

⁴⁵ For as-Sarī as-Saqāṭī see Massignon, *Essai* p. 207. He was the uncle of Junaid and taught him, as well as Samnūnu'l-Muḥibb. All three were buried in the Shūnūziyyah cemetery in Baghdād. See Yāqūt 3: 338 and Ibn Khallikān, *ibid.* I: 555.

"Repentance is that you should not forget your sin," he said, It is better than the saying of Junaid and others, "Repentance is that you should forget your sin," because the words of Sarī suggest the beginnings of the stations. Now Sarī took upon himself to speak about the stations of the worshippers by reason of his perfection, while Junaid and the others were not at that time a Pattern to the people. So understand aright.

He said with reference to someone's remark "A Ṣūfī is no Ṣūfī unless the Angel of the left hand has written down no sin against him for twenty years," The meaning is not that he commits no sin for twenty years. It merely refers to lack of persistence. Each time he sins he repents and asks pardon immediately. He used to say, When God has raised you to the position of being present and of seeing free from defects, that is the station of being informed and of true faith, and an arena for the appearance of the secret of eternal ages past. And when He has brought you down to a position of hardship and struggle, that is the station of responsibility limited by defects, and the true Islam (sc. resignation), and an arena for the revelation of truths of eternal ages to come. The true believer cares not in which condition he is.

On the saying of Him who is exalted⁴⁶ "Say: This is my way. I and those who follow me summon to God upon the basis of a demonstration" he said, That is, with actual evidence. Their way is seen by all parties, and he urges them to it and to repentance. He used to say, The gnostic possesses not the present life, for his present life belongs to his after life, and his after life belongs to his Lord. And he used to say, The ascetic is a stranger in the present life, for the after life is his home; while the gnostic is a stranger in the after life, for he is with God. The meaning of his being a stranger in the present life is the small number of those who help him to perform what is right, and the small number of those who imitate him in performing it. As for the gnostic being a stranger in the world to come, his life with God has no location. The pivot is at the spot where the heart is, not where the body is, just as the home of the ascetic's heart in this life is nothing else than the world to come, and it is the nest of his spirit. If it were not so, his asceticism in this world would not be suited to him.

He used to say, The majority when they are threatened are afraid, and when they are heartened are glad. The elect when threatened are glad, and when heartened are afraid. He used to say, Man is after he was not, and shall perish after he has been. On both sides of him is non-existence, and he is non-existence. Ibn 'Aṭā'u'llah explained this by saying that existing things do not possess the rank of absolute existence, because true existence belongs to God alone, and He possesses

⁴⁶ Qur'ān 12 : 108.

oneness. As for the world, its existence is from its non-existence, and whoever is so, nonexistence is his description essentially.

His way and the way of his Shaikh Abū'l-Ḥasan was to abstain from wearing the zīy or dervish dress and patched garments,⁴⁷ for this style of dress proclaims with regard to its owner "I am a poor man, so give me something," and publicly divulges the secret of the poor man. Anyone who wears the zīy has made pretensions. I find (comments Sha 'rānī) that the intention of the Shaikh was not to blame the poor for wearing the zīy, but merely to ensure that it should not be necessary for everyone who had a share with the Ṣūfīs to wear the garments of the poor. There is no restriction on the wearing of coarse or of soft clothing if the wearer is one who does rightly, since actions are according to intentions.

He used to say, The people differ as to the derivation of the word Ṣūfī. The best that is said concerning him is that he is related to the action of God in him. That is, God has a pure affection towards him, and being held in pure affection (ṣūfiya) he is termed a Ṣūfī. He used to say with reference to the saying of Jesus, on whom be peace, "O children of Israel, verily I say to you, he who is not twice born does not enter the kingdom of heaven," By God! I am one who is twice born, first by natural birth, then by the birth of the spirit in the heaven of mystical knowledge. And he used to say, The walī will not reach God until he is weaned from the desire to reach God, weaned that is by discipline, not by lack of concern, because the divine influence dominates his heart. He used to say, God has made man of three parts, the tongue, the hands and feet, and the heart. He claims a duty from each. The heart must not become preoccupied with care for a livelihood, nor with guile and craftiness, nor with envy. The tongue must not slander nor lie nor talk about what does not concern it. The hands and feet must never be swift to rebellion, and must not injure any of the Muslims. When the heart goes wrong, the man is a hypocrite. When the tongue goes wrong, he is an unbeliever. When the hands and feet go wrong, he is a rebel.

He used to say, When a man purchases oil from a chandler and the latter has increased the measure by a thread, his religion is weaker than that thread. And when a man purchases charcoal from a dealer, and when the sale is complete says, "Increase it for me by a single coal," his heart is blacker than that coal. He used to say, No man enters the presence of God except by two gates: by the gate of the greater adequacy which is death, and by the gate of the adequacy which is the special concern of this Order. He used to say, Existing things have four parts: an insensitive body which is strictly a solid object, a sensi-

⁴⁷ Cf. Lane s.v. r-q'.

tive body which is strictly a life,⁴⁸ an immaterial spirit which is strictly an angel, and a secret which is far from being intelligible. This last is the significance to which reverence is accorded. Man may thus be represented by his outward appearance as a solid object; by the existence of his soul, its separateness and its form as a life; by the existence of his spirit as an angel; and by his having been given the unintelligible secret he deserves to be a Vicegerent.

He used to say, It is no wonder that a man should go astray half a mile in forty years, but it is a wonder that a man should go astray so much as a span in sixty and seventy and eighty years. It is the flesh which causes this. He used to say, The walīs contemplate the stations of the Prophets but do not comprehend their stations. The Prophets comprehend the stations of the walīs. He used to say, All the names of God have come through invention except the name Allah, which comes through application only, for its content is divinity, and divinity is in no case invented. He used to say, In our opinion the heavens are a kind of roof and the earth a kind of house, and in our opinion he whom this house contains is no man. He used to say, In the present life we have our bodies, and our souls exist subordinately; in the after life we shall have our bodies subordinately. I think (remarks Sha 'rānī) that in this he opposes those who say, The people in Paradise have souls and not bodies—the view of all of imperfect mystical revelation. The cause of their error is their testifying that the people of Paradise change into whatever form they wish, and this is characteristic of souls, not bodies. They do not realise that their bodies yonder are enclosed in souls, not nonexistent, just as souls in this Mansion are enclosed in bodies. But God knows best.

He used to say, The difference between the disobedience of the believer and the disobedience of the wicked is threefold. The believer does not intend the act before its commission. He takes no pleasure in it during the action. And he does not persist in it. It is quite otherwise with the wicked. He used to urge his companions to make mention of God's name, and used to say, This name is the Sulṭān of the names and possesses extension and a core. The extension is science, and the core is light. And when light appears there is revelation and sight. He used to say, Membership of the band of heroes⁴⁹ does not depend on water and salt, but is essentially faith and guidance. And he said, Abraham the Friend was called a hero only because he had broken the material idols which he found. You, my lad, know of five metaphorical idols, which if you break you will be a hero: self, passion, Satan, lust and the present world. Understand here, "There is no sword but Dhū'l-Faqār, and no hero but 'Alī."⁵⁰

⁴⁸ The word used "jān" is Persian.

⁴⁹ For the Futūwah, less correctly Futuwwah, see the article by F. Taeschner in ZDMG 1933-4, p. 6. The "water and salt" is obviously a reference to the entrance ceremony.

⁵⁰ The sentence is perhaps a gloss.

He used to say, The perfect man is he who controls his emotional state, and he has the full range in science. One of them (sc. the saints) was asked, What is the matter with you? You were not moved in the audition yesterday. And he replied, There was a great man in the company, and I was disturbed by him. Had I been alone, I would have given way to my feelings and shown that I was disturbed. Consider then how he controlled his emotion. He could restrain it or give it expression at will. When the heart is enlarged with the knowledge of God, the divine influences are submerged in it. For this reason the masters of the mystical stations are ignorant of the emotional states of the great men, and emotional men become famous through the manifestation of the marks of divine favours, being unable to conceal them and incapable of containing them. And often it happens that the emotional man is more fortunate in his acceptance by God and the creatures than the master of a station, in spite of the difference between them being like the difference between earth and heaven. For this reason, says Ibn 'Aṭā'u'llah, whenever a man possesses extensive theological knowledge and the divine sciences, he becomes a stranger in this world. Few know him, and he is deprived of any who might comprehend him and describe him.

Every defect of conduct, he used to say, brings you discipline and so is discipline. He used also to say, Junaid was a pole in science; Sahl at-Tustarī⁵¹ was a pole in station; and Abū Yazīd was a pole in emotion. And he used to say, Kindness is a veil upon the face of the Kind, when the Muslim rests there. The Truth likes not that His servant should feel affection for any but Himself. God revealed to Moses, A fine servant is Balkh,⁵² if it did not trust to the zephyr of the dawns. If it knew Me, it would trust to none but Me.

He used to say with reference to the saying of Abū 'Abdu'r-Raḥmān as-Sulamī⁵³ "The intelligence of the intelligent ends in perplexity," It means that there is no perplexity except among the believers. As for the truly convinced, there is no perplexity among them on the subjects which cause perplexity to the believers. He used to say, A little amount of works with testimony of God's favour is better than many works with testimony of personal shortcoming. And he used to say, quoting his Shaikh, The ascetics and the devoted have gone out from this Mansion with their hearts locked away from God. He used to say (it was on the authority of his Shaikh), He who has not penetrated these sciences dies persisting in his great sins, though he knows it not. He used to say, quoting his Shaikh, Everything which God forbids us represents the tree of Adam. But we go different ways. For

⁵¹ i.e. Sahl b. 'Abdu'llah already mentioned.

⁵² Apparently the town in Oxiana. A supposed connection with Moses is no more surprising than some other legends about the town. See Schefer's *Chrestomathie Persane*, I.

⁵³ Author of the *Ḥaqqā'iqu't-Tafsir*. See Brock, I: 200.

when Adam ate of the tree he descended to the world of opposition. When you eat of the forbidden fruit you descend to the world of separation. So beware! and again beware!

He used to say, There was a certain walī in the Maghrib who spoke to the people. Now he was obese (*badīn*), and there entered a person with a large part of his head uncovered and said within himself, "This man acts as an ascetic in the present world, but he is a liar." And it was revealed to the Shaikh, and he said from the pulpit, "You with the little head! it is only God's love that has made me fat." And he used to say to his companions, When you eat a man's food, drink with him. He will obtain a perfect reward. For the Prophet used to say, "He who gives a believer a drink of water when there is water, is as if he had set free seventy of the children of Ishmael." He used to say, The poor man should not take anything from anyone with his own profit in view, but should take only that the giver should be repaid and compensated. He who is pure and sanctified of soul may receive, but not otherwise. To one of his companions he said, Why have you withdrawn from our lecture? And he replied, My master, I can now do without you. And the Shaikh said, None can do without another as could Abū Bakr, and in spite of that he did not withdraw from the Apostle of God for a single day. He used to say, When God created the earth, it was shaken, and He steadied it with the mountains. Similarly, when God created the soul, it was shaken, and He steadied it with the mountains of intelligence. He used to say, All creation are servants doing forced labour. You are the servant of His presence. He used to say to his companions, When you go to Mecca, let your care be the Lord of the House,⁵⁴ not the House. Be not one who serves idols and images. He used to say, He who knows God does not rest in Him, because in rest in God there is a kind of security. And none feels secure against the wiles of God except the misguided. He used to say, In his mystical state of passing away, the walī is bound to retain something of his delight in knowledge, on which is based the effort. He is like a man *īn* a dark house, who knows of its existence although he does not see it. He used to say, By God, I do not sit until I have put all my spiritual gifts under my prayer-carpet. Ibn 'Aṭā'u'llah said, I studied the *Kitābu'r-Ri'āyah*⁵⁵ of Muḥāsibī with the Shaikh Abū'l-'Abbās, and he said, "Two phrases serve instead of all that is in this book. One is, 'Serve God under the condition of knowledge,' and 'Never be pleased with yourself' is the other." Thereafter he refused to allow me to read it. He used to say, He who desires to meet an evildoer is an evildoer. He used to say, The ecstasy whose cause is unknown only comes to special persons. He used to say, If Satan, saying "Then, etc."⁵⁶ knew

⁵⁴ The Ka'bah, called sometimes the Ancient House (*al-Baitu'l-'Atīq*).

⁵⁵ This has been called "the finest handbook of the inner life produced by Islam." Cf. Brock, I: 198. Cf. the new edition of Dr. Margaret Smith.

⁵⁶ Qur'ān 7,16/17 Amiri.

a way which led to God better than gratitude he would have taken note of it. Do you not see how he said "Then I shall come upon them from before and behind, from right and from left, and you will not find most of them grateful?" He did not say "steadfast," or "fearing" or "returning." He used also to say, Abū Bakr and 'Umar were the Caliphs of the Apostolate, 'Uthmān and 'Alī the Caliphs of the Prophecy.

He used to say, Most people when they see a man said to be a walī who comes from the deserts and wastes, welcome him with respect and honour. How many a Substitute and walī lives among them, but they take no heed of him, though it is he who bears their burdens and removes their differences! It is like a wild ass coming to a village. The people crowd round him, marvelling at his beautiful stripes and handsome appearance. But as for the donkeys in their midst who carry their burdens to the places they wish, and transport their earth and materials for building, they pay no attention to them.

He used to say, Those who have been destroyed by this Order are more numerous than those who have been saved. May God who is exalted be pleased with him.

D. M. DUNLOP

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THE BIBLE IN MOSLEM HANDS

A SYMPOSIUM

I

INDIA

In January, 1945, the Rev. John A. Subhan was elected as a Bishop in the Methodist Church of Southern Asia, with his headquarters in Bombay. A paragraph of routine ecclesiastical news? Perhaps so, but much more than that: a dramatic and unmistakable illustration of the working of the Spirit of God in our own time, bringing a devout Moslem to the feet of Jesus Christ.

Subhan was born in Calcutta in 1897, the child of a skilled worker in gold embroidery. He was called Fazl ur Rahman, "the Grace of the Merciful," but his parents gave him an additional name by which they always called him—Abd us Subhan, "the servant of the Holy One." He was brought up along simple and puritanical lines "under the tender care of a very affectionate mother, . . . a loving father and a good elder brother," and Islamic principles moulded his life; as a child he was indeed fanatically devoted to his own religion.

He has himself described the change that came in his life in *How a Sufi Found His Lord*, published by the Lucknow Publishing House. He tells that the aspiration for a higher knowledge of God was rooted in something deeper than any outward circumstance. "It was, in fact, God's search for His lost child which found a response in the depth of my soul and took the form of a quest for something unknown." He traces its origin to the study of the Quran itself, in its testimony to the books of Moses, David and Jesus, and the desire to know what their teachings could be. This desire was but one among other vague but eager longings which led the lad to an intensive study of Mysticism. But "one of the most memorable landmarks in the outstanding events of my life" came when "a copy of the Gospel was given to me by a Muslim friend who himself had received it from a preacher or a colporteur. On a previous occasion I had torn it into pieces, for when, attracted by its title 'Injil,' a term with which I was familiarized by the study of the Quran, I had taken it to my teacher, I was warned in all seriousness not to read it, because it was not a true Injil of which the Quran testifies, but a corrupted form of it, and consequently containing blasphemous teachings; the very acts of pronouncing its words pollute the mind and soul of a believer." However, on this occasion Subhan read it, and, though alert to detect anything wrong, "I did not find a single sentence or a clause which in any sense could be inter-

preted as blasphemous or satanic," nor anything that could be regarded as an interpolation or corruption of the original revelation. He was impressed with the high ethical teachings of the Gospel, and in the story of the crucifixion found a narrative which "completely contradicted the idea of the Gospel being corrupted; it is no matter of pride to be a follower of one who was shamefully put to death. How plainly the story of the crucifixion refuted the Christians' claim for Jesus to be the Son of God!"

He read the Gospel through again; "it spoke to me in my own mother tongue, whispering to me the secrets of God. Its reading was comforting to my soul, every sentence touched it to its very depth and it roused the slumbering faculties of my soul to a new state of consciousness. . . . It was something like an object finding its missing complement. . . . It can be illustrated by a piece from a jig-saw puzzle, which will not fit in any other part of it but in the particular corner for which it was intended. . . . The words of the Gospel were the words of God, for they conveyed to me the message of Him who was my maker; it was soul speaking unto soul, and deep calling unto deep."

From that day he determined that he must become a Christian. He knew nothing beyond a single Gospel, but he knew that this was for him the only true religion. "It could not be otherwise; God had discovered His erring and wandering child." Looking back across the years he is himself amazed that as a boy he could have accepted the Gospel against the firm Islamic belief and teaching he had received; he finds in it an illustration of the working of the Divine Grace which chooses the weak things of the world, and which is revealed not to the wise and prudent but unto babes.

Space does not permit the following of his story in its further details—of his diligent search in the Old Testament for the prophecies which found their fulfillment in the New, and of how, without the aid of any human teacher, he was guided by the spirit of God into knowledge of the truth. And then there are the further stages in which God used human friendship and experience to lead him along the way that he has travelled—to become a minister of the Gospel in the Methodist Church, and then a member of the staff of the Henry Martyn School of Islamic Studies, and now a bishop, trusted with great responsibility in the Church of Christ. "The Bible in Muslim Hands!" Subhan would surely say rather, "the Bible in God's hands," speaking God's unmistakable words, "a fire and a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces."

J. S. M. HOOPER

Nagpur, India

II

SYRIA

Some twenty years ago I was much impressed by the testimony of Rev. Markus 'Abd-ul-Masih of Cairo that the first step in his conversion from Islam was hearing some Bible verses read at a Christian funeral. I found that others had had like experiences. I was led more and more to the conviction that literature, and primarily and supremely the printed Word of God itself, was our most effective instrument in evangelism, especially among Moslems. In my position as Managing Editor of the American Mission Press in Beirut, Syria, this conviction was made a living reality, largely vicariously through the work of our Colporteur-Evangelist, a converted Moslem, not trained in the schools, but wonderfully taught of the Holy Spirit, and utterly consecrated to the service of his Saviour.

Through him in these fifteen years or more, thousands of Gospels and many Bibles and thousands of tracts have been sold and distributed, many in Government Centers where his earlier life as an officer in the gendarmerie made him at home, to many officials and people coming on business, and in many of the Syrian prisons where the Light has entered as never before. I like to think of this worker as an evangelist-at-large going about the country visiting and encouraging a widely-scattered group of non-Christians who are—some, interested Bible readers; some, lovers of the Gospel and lovers of Jesus; and some, true secret believers in Him as their divine Saviour.

I have before me the snapshot of a tall, straight, virile figure beside the wall of his mud-brick house in a Moslem village in north Syria, standing alone, as he is alone spiritually, the Sheikh of his village and the leading land-owner, a very striking illustration of the pregnant declaration of Hebrews 4:12—"The word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing to the dividing of soul and spirit." A few years ago he was given a Bible by a passing colporteur which led him in quiet meditation and prayer, taught by the Spirit of God, without even seeing a Christian, to a rich faith in Christ. When he was visited by Jalal several years later, each rejoiced greatly in the other—two Moslem brothers now brothers in Jesus Christ! I have a letter from him thanking me for some books, in which he writes:—"I thank God for the grace of Christ which has saved us by His blood . . . I am giving the Gospel to my brother Moslems . . . Give my salaams to all the brethren, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. How blessed is every one who has in him the confidence, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

Several Imams (Mosque leaders) are secret believers, readers and lovers of the Bible—one in Beirut, another in north Syria, and another

in a large border town northeast of Damascus. The latter has for some years been a student of the Bible. A few years ago I sent him several volumes of Bible Commentary. In his letter of thanks he spoke of the Bible as "the most valuable gift in the world," and said: "I accept Jesus Christ as my Saviour from sin—the only Saviour."

There have been a number of cases of men in prison learning to read in order to be able to read the Scriptures for themselves. One of these, who several years later, after serving his time, was baptized, was persecuted and severely beaten because of his evangelistic zeal among the prisoners. He wrote from prison—"My purpose in writing you this greeting of the glorious Easter time is my desire to give you fresh evidence of my unflinching attachment to the 'way,' and my readiness to give up life, which is precious, for it."

In 1943 there died in Beirut in a Home for the old and incapacitated a dear friend, Sheikh 'Aisa A—— whom I knew intimately for years and visited often. He was of the descendants of the Prophet and of a prominent family in Jerusalem where he was the hereditary Head of the *Awkaf* (Religious Foundation) of one of the Mosques. He had given up absolutely everything one would hold dear for the sake of following the Lord Jesus Christ—his comfortable home and income, his family, his position of influence and honor and respect, for he knew it would mean certain death for him to remain in his own city and country and become an open follower of Christ, and he was not satisfied to do otherwise. He attained this strong and fearless faith solely through his study of the Bible, taught of the Holy Spirit, without even any converse with a Christian. An American missionary lady living in a house belonging to the *Awkaf* one day gave him a copy of the Gospels. Listen to his own account, which he wrote down for me a few years ago, a few sentences of which follow: "Though feeling the greatest abhorrence for the book, 'Aisa was moved by curiosity to keep it and to look into the strange book which some six hundred millions of the most advanced peoples looked upon as their Holy Book. . . . He placed it in his pocket and went each day for a walk outside the city walls, lest the attention of others be drawn to him, and he would read. . . . He continued this custom for about eight months. He would take time to read carefully in order to understand as fully as possible the meaning, and to meditate deeply on the sayings of Christ. . . . Thus his mind became fascinated by the meaning of them—so exalted and beautiful and guiding in the right way, and exhibiting the whole philosophy of our life in this valley of tears, explaining all its enigmas and making clear all its heavenly and eternal purposes. These are some of the verses in which was embodied to him the truth of the Christian religion and its holiness and its entrancing beauty: 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross

daily, and follow me.' . . . 'He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. . . . He that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.' . . . 'I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.' . . . 'I am the light of the world.' . . . 'Aisa continued eight months in deep meditation upon these exalted sayings. As a result it became clear to him with all certainty that the Christian religion was the truth, and that it was the only way to the salvation of souls. . . . And so he determined to give up all in the way of following the Lord Christ, for he had come to love the Lord with full devotion."

PAUL ERDMAN

Princeton, New Jersey

III

ALGERIA

No religion is more consistently antagonistic to the Bible than Mohammedanism and therefore the work of Bible distribution amongst the Moslems meets with no greater encouragement in French and Spanish North Africa than in other Moslem lands. Yet the British and Foreign Bible Society has carried on its work indomitably since the year 1832 and though little fruit can be acclaimed in many outstanding conversions to Christianity, nevertheless it is undeniable that the crass ignorance and bigotry of the Moslem is being changed little by little by the Truth which is so persistently being sown amongst them by the sale of the Holy Scriptures in all parts of the wilds of North Africa. This work began, as the date shows, in the Barbary States only two years after the conquest of Algiers by the French; and even before that the Society effected some distribution in these parts.

The task is not an easy one. To begin with, the work of translation of the Scriptures into the various tongues presents many problems. Philologically the Mohammedans are divided into two great divisions marked by racial differences. The more cultured is the Arabic-speaking population and although the Arabic spoken in North Africa differs considerably from the purer forms found in Arabia, Syria and Egypt, still the classical Arabic can be read by the better educated. Nevertheless the vernacular is needed for the majority of Arabs in Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria. In Moroccan Arabic we have published the complete New Testament and parts of the Old; and in Algerian and Tunisian Arabic we have published the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and Romans.

The second great division consists of the various Berber dialects—

some probably of different origin—the name given to cover the many tongues found in isolated groups spreading from the Atlantic ocean to the borders of Egypt. These people are descendants of the ancient races who inhabited North Africa even before Diḡo founded Carthage. Geographically North Africa is divided into sections as completely distinct as islands in an archipelago. The wide, hot plains and deserts are the home of Arabs proper—those of the desert being the Bedouin. Then the great mountain ranges harbour the various Berber tribes, the largest and most important being the Kabyle of the mountains of Kabylia, and the Chouias of the Aurès mountains. For the former we have the complete New Testament and several books of the Old Testament and for twenty-five years a qualified missionary has made colportage in the markets of Kabylia his principal form of Mission work. With this long experience of missionary colportage he remains an ardent advocate of it.

The Hoggar mountains of the Sahara have given refuge to a little-known tribe called Tuaregs, with customs and language differing entirely from other Berbers. Unfortunately, owing to the inaccessible fastnesses in which they live, intercourse with them is almost completely restricted. One noted Roman Catholic missionary—Père de Foucauld, a White Father, lived for years amongst them, finally being murdered by them. He is supposed to have translated the Four Gospels into their language, but all efforts to obtain a copy have so far failed.¹ Again there are large oases, here and there in the ocean of desert, largely inhabited by peoples distinct from any of their neighbours, and who still need to have the Scriptures translated into their tongues. The lingua-Franca of this mixture of races is a vulgar and limited form of Arabic. But as French influence is being increasingly felt, the French language is spreading. In the coast towns French is becoming largely the language of the younger generation. These people like to read the Scriptures in French, and it is not uncommon to see young Arabs standing before our depot window, spelling out verses from the open page of some Gospel exposed to view.

Our great centres of distribution to the natives of the plains are the weekly markets. Here gather thousands of men from near and far, coming afoot, or a-donkey, to barter or buy and sell their goods and animals. Shut away from the world for the rest of the week they come to the markets all agog for news. The colporteur's books rouse their curiosity, and the printed page their interest. They examine, read and often buy. Sometimes one reads a chapter, and the others may murmur their appreciation of the "good words." But often, too, one encounters the fanatic who spits at the name of Jesus, and enters into a long harangue, trying to persuade his co-religionists not to buy such

¹ Sonia Howe's "Life of Père du Foucauld."

heretical books. But the leaven of a hundred and twenty odd years of colportage is beginning to work. Men are less afraid of the new message and often buy and read eagerly.

Our greatest difficulty is still illiteracy and ignorance with the prejudice they breed. Much has been done by the French government in establishing good schools for their Moslem subjects, even in the oases of the Sahara; but the education is largely in French and rarely in the vernacular, and the Moslem population remains largely illiterate. It may well be, however, that the next generation will evidence a great growth in literacy, and then the work of the Societies distributing the Scriptures will be even more vitally important than now, and we need to be prepared for such an event.

Another drawback to colportage is the fact that up to the present natives do not offer for this work, so that we are dependent on Europeans who, though excellent men, can never make the same appeal to natives as one of themselves. In some parts of this field Governmental fears have rendered (temporarily we hope) colportage difficult, it being feared that the selling of the Holy Scriptures would stir up the fanaticism of the people and consequently a policy of suppression of colportage amongst natives is adopted; and the war has caused many temporary difficulties and a diminution in circulation through the entire field. Our annual circulation has dropped during the war to an average of 5000 copies, mostly Gospels, against some 15000 in pre-war times.

But the work still goes on, and we can take some encouragement from the fact that the Moslems will now readily pay five times the price they paid for a Gospel in pre-war days. The present price is still less than cost and is cheap compared with other literature.

It is possible to give illustrations from this field showing that the reading of the Scriptures alone has led to conversion. Perhaps they are not as numerous as we should like but sufficient to show that our methods are right and that it should be—in our opinion—the aim of every able-bodied missionary to Moslems to engage systematically in circulating the Scriptures. Sometimes results are not seen until “after many days.” Such was the case when a Bible Society’s agent in Morocco years ago left a classical Arabic New Testament in a village where he was not allowed to work, but was courteously entertained by the Moslem official to whom he carried letters of recommendation, and who saw that he was hospitably entertained but nevertheless kept under close observation during his stay. Our agent probably left feeling he had not accomplished very much. Some twenty years later another missionary was preaching to Moslems in a missionary shelter opened in Tangier for refugees in a time of famine; there he met an old man from that same place who somehow had come into possession

of that book and still had it. Before all gathered there, he claimed to be a Christian. In proof of this it was found that he had memorized whole passages of the New Testament, which he repeated. The best native colporteur we have had in these parts was himself converted after reading St. John's Gospel in Arabic, received from a lady missionary. The first copy given him was burnt as an unclean thing: a troubled conscience caused him to beg another copy which he read and therein found light. His conversion was real and he suffered much persecution for his faith.

Reviewing the work in the whole field we see yet perhaps no great outstanding triumph. The re-creation of another North African Church which we so much desire has not yet come to pass, and except for a few scattered groups of Christians amongst the natives, they are still practically 100% Mohammedan. Yet there is no need of pessimism because of this. The harder the stone, the more lasting is the statue when once it is shaped. The Moslems have clung with tenacity to their faith; when at last through the reading of the Truth as revealed in Holy Script a greater light enters the darkened soul of Islam, they will one day turn towards it with a greater zeal perhaps than many so-called Christian nations do today.

Already we see signs of dawn. There is decidedly less fanaticism and an acquaintance with the Scriptures is seen (according to the above-mentioned colporteur) in the frequent use of Bible words and illustrations in ordinary conversations. Surely these things foreshadow changes still to come, with literacy increasing and the word of God being received into the hearts and homes of the people and the life of the people leavened by the power of the Truth.

H. W. CUMMIN

Algiers, North Africa

IV

IRAN

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." The assurance of this promise undergirds and strengthens those engaged in the production and distribution of Christian literature during periods when obvious results are negligible. The fulfillment of this promise in lives changed and faith aroused, is their highest and sweetest reward.

Christian literature provides a most vital portion of the missionary's ammunition, from the beginning of the campaign in an entirely non-Christian environment surrounded by an indifferent and hostile public, till the campaign's end, when it is found assisting the enlight-

enment and growth of an indigenous Christian church. At every stage it has its unique and indispensable function. It is accurate as well as alliterative to point out that Christian literature advertises, attracts, arouses, and assists the readers, Christian or non-Christian.

First of all it advertises. When Judson reached Burma, almost his first step after mastering the language, was the publication of a tract announcing the arrival of a Christian missionary, and inviting people to come to discuss with him the religion of the West. And today, when our evangelists enter a strange city, their first step is to go through the bazaars, handing out flyers and brief pamphlets suitable for free distribution, and selling to any who desire the more elaborate publications. For many years the work in Iran has made widespread use of the Scripture Gift Mission tracts, small, attractively printed selections of the actual words of Scripture. Hundreds of thousands of these have gone into tea-houses, shops and homes all over Iran. It was amusing that when we first started distributing in Kermanshah the tract containing the Sermon on the Mount, a local magazine issued for the defence of Islam, gave some space to commenting on it. The substance of the article was that while the teachings contained in it were indisputably excellent and inspiring, it was evident that the Christians at this late date, had simply copied out some of the teachings of the Holy Koran and were trying to pass them off as a sample of Christianity!

Mansur Sang, the Christian dervish, carried these and other tracts with him everywhere, and always referred to them as "seed." His methods of distribution were novel and often unorthodox. On one occasion, being forced by the hostility of the clerics to leave a fanatical city, he rose up early on the morning of his departure, and went from end to end of the main street of the city slipping a tract under every single doorway, and with this parting shot hastened out of town before the repercussions could reach him. On another occasion he decorated a sacred tree, a local pilgrimage centre, by girdling it with a complete belt of gaily colored tracts for the pilgrims to read and digest. The fact that each special effort at distribution is liable to be followed by articles or references in the Moslem press, proves their effectiveness as an advertisement, on the one hand, and incidentally gives us a lot of free advertising on the other. During recent years the distribution has fluctuated between 500,000 and 800,000 pages yearly, many of which pages have been read or listened to by a score or more of people. Nearly every one in Iran by now knows that the Missions are here and working.

Secondly it admonishes. Quite aside from the influence of literature in winning Christians, is its effect on public opinion and morals. Frequently we hear of the effect of some tract on a Moslem reader, and the steady shift of public opinion in such matters as polygamy, di-

voiced, religious freedom, war, and so on, must be attributed in a measure at least, to the message of Christian literature. Mr. Browning of Resht gives an interesting example of this influence. "We were holding evangelistic meetings every night," he writes. "One night the tract 'The True Meaning of Love' was handed out to all non-Christians as they left the meeting. The next day the evangelist was calling on some Jewish friends who operate a cleaning and pressing establishment. They have an assistant who has lost them customers with her sharp tongue, so when they read their copy of the tract they gave it to her saying: 'We went to a meeting last night where they told us about love. That is something you do not have. Here is a tract that tells about it. Read it and let it help you.' The woman took it home and read it aloud to her family. The next day she confessed that it showed her many faults and weaknesses in her character which she intended to correct. Her husband also appeared, to express his admiration for the tract. The shopkeeper says that her conduct already shows improvement. And she attended all the rest of the meetings."

In another case a Moslem Mullah, whose wife had grown old, had taken the first step in marrying a second and younger wife, the *'aqd* as it is called, which is a preliminary to the actual consummation of a marriage. A friend gave him a tract *The Perfect Law*, which, among other things, discusses the evils of polygamy. So impressed was he by this tract that he divorced his new wife and resolved to content himself with the first. A local Moslem radio preacher published an article on Faith, which, from the arguments and illustrations advanced, was evidently plagiarized from a Christian book called *Faith in God in the XXth Century*. An evangelist tells of hearing of a sermon by a Moslem mullah preached on the necessity of the second birth, an idea which he admitted to have taken from the Gospel of John. An army officer when pressed as to what his faith really was, replied that he believed in the teachings of Prof. Levonian, whose evangelistic tracts have had a very wide circulation in Iran. Another interesting testimony to the impression made by these tracts came out of a discussion regarding the recent Parliamentary elections. A Moslem, conversing with one of our Christians, was speaking of how much the country needs good, honest members of Parliament, and suggested to the Christian that they should get some outstanding Christian to run for Parliament, assuring him that the Moslems as well as the Christians would support such a man. When asked whom he would recommend as a candidate, he said: "Why not get Prof. Levonian to run? From his writings it is evident he would be a very good man." He was much disappointed to learn that Prof. Levonian is a citizen of Lebanon, and so not eligible to the Iranian Parliament! Incidents such as these assure us that many who have never officially become Christian, and

who may never do so, are yet helped and admonished by our Christian literature, brought closer to God and made more considerate and loving toward men.

More satisfying, however, is the result when it arouses. There is many a Christian in Iran today who will trace his conversion back to some book or leaflet that led him to Christ, or attracted him to the degree that he resolved to investigate more fully. Our Iranian literature secretary who has carried on for upwards of twenty years as assistant to the various secretaries for literature in Iran, and who has shown unflagging devotion to the literature work, traces his conversion to the reading of a tract by the late Dr. Saeed Kurdistan, a tract called *The Warning Notice*. A villager from a place never visited by a missionary came in to ask for baptism. When asked why he wished to become a Christian, he showed a much worn copy of the pamphlet mentioned above, *The True Meaning of Love*, saying that he had come across it ten years before and it had persuaded him of the truth of Christianity and had been his only spiritual food during that time. A recent letter from Mr. Irwin in Meshed brings this story: "The outstanding conversion of last year was a young man S——, son of an old time clerk at the ——— consulate. The father is a Turkoman, a martinet type, very stern and strict and hard. The mother is Iranian Shiah, the father was Sunni. Two years ago his father came to me much concerned about his son, who was not doing well in school and who was not of good behaviour. He wanted to put him in our Alborz college with a view to his reformation. But it happened that Alborz College was no longer ours. Even so I helped him and he sent S—— there. The year was not a success. He got into more trouble and miserably failed, so that his father did not send him back again. Incidentally he became seriously ill and spent some time in our Teheran hospital while Dr. Hoffman was there.

"Last Fall, one day, I was having a lesson with some boys at our Book and Literature Room. A young man came in, sat down, and rose to go. (I had not met S—— during the above conversation with his father.) I saw this young man was restless, profligate-looking and ill at ease. I did not know who he was. But as he left I gave him a little pamphlet Mr. Miller had prepared, *Nejat va Restegari*, suggesting that he might like to read it. He stuck it in his pocket and went out. Afterwards we learned he read it that night, and it did something to him, for next day he returned and began to read everything we had. As he read and studied and talked with us, we began to see a change in him. By Easter time he was converted, and eagerly became a Christian, and was our most zealous convert in the ten years I have been out here. He never missed a service. He prayed fervently; he gave his witness everywhere, especially to his classmates. In Spring he took an itinerat-

ing journey with us and was a great help and inspiration to us all. This summer he went to India to continue his studies, and we are hoping to hear from him soon. His place is very empty here in our church circles. He was doing good work with our boys. He took active part in the Daily Vacation Bible School this summer before he left, and had charge of all our boys' hand-work, and gave talks on Stewardship."

One of our most stimulating contacts of recent years has been with a wealthy landowner, newspaper editor, and government official of high rank. He claims that for nearly twenty years he has been a secret believer. It seems that he was in the British Hospital at Isfahan for some weeks, and just the day before he was due to be discharged, some one gave him a Persian Bible. So interested in it did he become that he asked, and secured, permission to remain for a time in the Hospital so that he might read it. It took him two weeks of steady reading, and he left the Hospital a different man. He followed this up by the reading of other Christian literature, being especially impressed and convinced by the story "Sweet First Fruits." From then on, he says, he has been a believer, has led his family to Christ, and is quietly guiding his villagers in the right way. He is now working on plans to spread the message by Christian journalism. He is a man who especially needs our prayers. Such incidents have occurred in every station in Iran and in many of the other towns and villages. They give a deep satisfaction that carries one along through the many drudging hours of proof-reading and translation work.

And finally, Christian literature assists in the development of the Christian life and the building up of the Church. The new babe in Christ is in constant need of nourishment, else he will fall prey to the cold winds of opposition or die of undernourishment. Much of our emphasis in recent years has been on the production of literature suitable for new believers, literature that is almost equally attractive and valuable to those as yet non-Christian. Christian biographies have an unfailing appeal, so we have published stories of the lives of Sadhu Sundar Singh, Kagawa, the Apostle Paul, Ten Noble Women, of Apollo of Africa, Benjamin Badal of Iran, and several books with stories of great men and women, such as Sweet Stories, The Goodly Heritage, and the Splendid Quest. Through the generosity of the American Christian Literature Society it has been possible to print among others, translations of the great classics, The Imitation of Christ, and Pilgrim's Progress; and many more of this type are needed.

For more specific instruction we have been printing books and pamphlets dealing with various vital phases of the Christian life. Pamphlets on prayer, giving, temperance, Bible study and Christian family life have been printed; while *books* on Stewardship, Christian

Family Life, and Evangelism have given more detailed treatment. All these have their share in developing the perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

The fact that during the earlier years we had no strictly denominational publications, and that new believers are introduced to men and women of every creed and clime, may account for the situation that with them oecumenicity is a fact rather than a theory, or a distant ideal, as is so often the case in the west. Even our limited literature production draws on the stories of men of nearly every century from the first to the twentieth, and brings inspiration from fellow-believers of India, Korea, Japan, Africa, Europe, America and the islands of the Sea. The list includes Catholics, Gregorians, orthodox, and many varieties of Protestants. To a small group of Christians, or an isolated believer, such spiritual contacts with the great sweep of Christianity are really essential, making him feel, not a lonely, peculiar, and perhaps mistaken dissenter, but one of a mighty movement of redemption and service that has gripped the imagination of millions of men of every race and clime, and is destined to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. It is no wonder that he is inclined to be impatient with the Church that allows matters so peripheral that Christ never mentioned them, to divide and split the Mystical Body of Christ, and that he is usually in advance of the home church in the longing for church re-union. Christian literature has made him an oecumenical Christian.

JOHN ELDER

Teheran, Iran

V

IRAN

In the evangelistic room it was our constant effort to avoid polemic argument with Moslems. The method we used was to answer their questions in the words of Scripture, and, if possible, the words of Christ Himself. We found that followers of Islam were not nearly so ready to controvert the word of the Book as a statement which we might have made. In addition the answer from God's Word might easily be turned into a Bible lesson, which would be far more profitable than controversy.

Some years ago a poll of converts from Islam asked of them what had first attracted their attention to Christ and what had brought about their conversion. It was a surprising fact that in many instances, reading the Bible or hearing it read, was mentioned in a majority of cases. Some even gave specific chapters or verses which had been used by the Spirit as a means to their conversion and dedication to Christ and His Church.

In our congregation we had several blind boys who had learned to read and write Persian Braille through a German orphanage and home for the blind. In our office in the church yard they copied whole books of the Bible and finally we had almost all of the New Testament and certain portions of the Old Testament available. What an object lesson it was when in Bible study these blind boys would read the chapter! They were all converts, and as young Moslems saw their fingers move over the page and their lips speak the Word, they realized that though their eyes were blind, Christ had illumined their hearts.

Many times the Bible itself in Moslem hands is sharper than any two-edged sword and pierces right through to the heart. Some time ago Dr. William M. Miller was down in the far south-eastern corner of Iran, near the Indian and Afghan border. He heard of a prominent man in a certain village who was known everywhere as a Christian. The evangelist arranged to visit him and found that many years before he had purchased a Bible and had become a Christian purely from his study of the book. A missionary from India, who was passing through, was convinced of the man's Christian life and sincerity and so baptized him. Then Dr. Miller asked where he had obtained the book. It turned out that he himself had sold the man the Bible some twenty years before!

Throughout the Mohammedan lands there are many thousands of Bibles, Testaments and Scripture portions which are the seed that will in God's time give its increase. The Bible in Moslem hands is the most effective of all instruments in leading men to Christ. It should also be the right hand of all missionary effort. The Scripture in the vernacular is the foundation of the Church.

J. CHRISTY WILSON

Princeton, N. J.

THE TESTIMONY OF PASTOR MARCUS ABD-EL-MASIH*

I was born in a village about 150 miles South of Cairo. Both my parents were uneducated. My own mother is from the south of Upper Egypt, whose people are nearly black and resemble the Nubians, and though my father had five wives he lived mostly with her. He had no children by his other wives, and for this reason he kept my mother and divorced all the others but one, who was younger than the rest. I was the eldest child, and when I was five years old my father sent me to the village school. The program at this Moslem school consisted simply in memorizing the Koran, the sacred book of the Moslems, and I learnt about three-quarters of it by heart. I was always a lover of religion. When I was only seven years old I began to perform my Moslem prayers five times a day, and when I was about nine I fasted some days during the Fast month of Ramadan.

One day, on my way to school, I found a copy of the Gospel of St. Matthew lying in the street, so I picked it up and took it with me. My school-fellows, on seeing it, enquired about the strange book I had in my hand and, nothing loth, I opened it and began to read aloud from it. I had not gone far in my reading when our blind schoolmaster, hearing my voice, asked what I was doing. I told him, and he demanded that I should give him the book. He took it and tore it into pieces, ordering one of his two sons who were our teachers to burn it! Then he asked for water, washed his hands, and commanded all who had touched this vile book to do the same, as the handling of it had brought such defilement.

For some reason my father took me away from this school and sent me to a Christian one. I was given a list of books I should require for my studies, and to my horror I discovered that one of them was St. Matthew's Gospel—the book I had been told defiled those who touched it. I told my father of my difficulty, and said I refused to go to that school. My father's threatenings and coaxings alike failed to convince me that St. Matthew's Gospel held no danger for me, and at last he and some of his friends interviewed the Headmaster, who was quite willing for me to enter school without a copy of St. Matthew's Gospel. This school had morning and evening prayers, and I tried to get my father to get exemption for me from these, but he refused to do so. I then went to the teacher and begged him to allow me to absent myself during prayers, but he would not hear of it. So I had to content myself with sitting on the last bench of the little church and stuffing my fingers into my ears lest I should hear any word of the singing

* This article comes to us through the courtesy of the Egypt General Mission, London.

or prayers. There were two other Moslems at the school, and we agreed together against all the other boys. We made a fight, which we called "a religious war," in which some of the nominally Christian boys joined us because of fear, and also other Moslem boys from the village whom we called in for this purpose. This state of affairs continued for about a year and a half.

Then from this school I passed on to one in a town. This was connected with the Evangelical Church of Egypt, and I lived with a Christian chemist, Hindy Effendi Butros, who was a friend of my father and a member of the church. He conducted family prayers each day, and during prayer time I always used to escape from the house. Later on I was attracted by the singing, and was gripped by the words of the 23rd, 41st, 73rd and 91st Psalms. I learned the words and began to hum them—and this was my first step toward Christianity.

After I had been in this family a year, the father of Hindy Effendi died, and after his burial many came to sit with and comfort the family, as is our custom in Egypt. The pastor of the Evangelical Church came, and during his visit he opened his little New Testament, announcing his intention of reading a portion from the Gospel according to St. Matthew. I was horrified, in fact, all my body trembled. I anxiously glanced around the room for some way of escape, but I could neither leave the room nor close my ears, and in spite of my desire not to hear, I listened to the pastor's reading. The words were wonderful, but I did not believe this could come from St. Matthew or from any other Christian literature. Had I not been told that this book defiled hearers and readers?

One Saturday when I was alone, I started searching for St. Matthew's Gospel in the big family Bible in this home. I did not know where to find it, and started at the beginning—at Genesis, and searched through the books till I found St. Matthew. I began reading from the first chapter and continued until I found the portion I had heard read in chapter 5. I could not help comparing it with the teaching of the Koran. I contrasted verse 39, "Resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn unto him the other also," with the injunction, "Whosoever offereth violence, offer ye like violence to him." Also verse 44, "Love your enemies," etc., with "Kill them wherever you find them," "Kill all the unbelievers." The teaching was so striking that I decided to read the whole Bible. Seeing my eagerness, my host bought me a Bible and gave it to me, and during the next two years I read it through three times, but in secret.

The result of this was that I became much concerned about my own soul. I felt my guilt before God and conviction of sin. I could neither sleep nor work at school. I could not ask anybody lest my father should hear. What happened after that? I threw my Bible from

my hand and uttered these words: "There is no god but God, and Mohammed is the Apostle of God. O God, make me to live a Moslem and die a Moslem. Thou art the Omnipotent."

I began to read the Koran and pray the Moslem prayers that I might find relief, but I grew worse. I dared then to ask a Moslem friend, "How could I be saved from my sins?" He replied, "Have you become a Christian? Take care lest these infidels lead you astray from the right way." On hearing this I kept quiet for a long time.

Again I asked another who did not know my father the same question. He gave me the same answer, and added, "What sins do you commit?" I told him. He said, "These are nothing." Then he brought a book of traditions which Moslems esteem very highly, and showed me a passage from it which says, "It is related of Abu Zarr that he said, 'I came to the Prophet Mohammed, who had on a white garment and was sleeping. When he felt me he awoke and said, 'Whoever says, there is no god but God, and dies, will enter Paradise.' Then I (Abu Zarr) said, 'Even if he commit adultery and murder?' The Prophet answered, 'Even if he commit adultery and murder.' Abu Zarr said again, 'Even if he commit adultery and murder, in spite of you, Abu Zarr.' This was repeated a third time." Then my friend added, "Don't bother yourself, only say, 'There is no god but God, and Mohammed is the Apostle of God,' and you will be safe." This I did for two weeks.

Then I went and told him that I was still unsatisfied and could not rest, as no change had taken place in my life. He inquired what I meant by that. I told him I was still living in sin and did not get rid of it. He was very astonished, and said, "Nobody can stop sinning, save the Prophets. Only say what I told you about before, and God will forgive you your sins." But I said, "I want to get rid of my habits, which cause me weariness and trouble. I want to have rest, and I know there is a connection between sin and weariness of soul." He became very angry, and asked me to leave, and said, "You are a Christian, you are an infidel, leave me at once, lest you convert me to become an infidel like yourself." I explained to him that I was a Moslem like himself and I wanted only to know the doctrines of my religion.

After he was quieted I asked him whether he was sure of life eternal or not. At that moment his wrath kindled, and he said, "How often have I told you to leave me and never come to me again!" After a long discussion, his reply was that nobody could be sure of eternal life, as the Tradition says, "When God created man, He took some grains of dust in His right hand, threw them behind His back, and said, 'You are appointed for Paradise, and I do not care.' Then He took some in His left hand, threw them behind His back, and said, 'You are appointed for Hell fire, and I do not care.' Then God looked

into Hell and said, 'Are you full?' Hell answered, 'I can hold some more.'

What a great difference between this and John iii. 16—"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." I thanked my friend and left him. I said to myself, "What is the use of a religion which will neither save me from my sins in this world nor give me the assurance of eternal life in the world to come?"

I began to read the Bible again and asked God to lead me to the true religion. One Saturday morning in January, 1905, I took my Bible and went away into a solitary place. I made up my mind that I would find rest for my troubled soul or die in that lonely place. At length I opened my Bible at Matt. xi. 28, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I prayed saying, "Jesus, if Thou wilt give me this promised rest, I will follow Thee at any cost."

It was about midnight when the burden of sin on my heart suddenly rolled away. I felt that Heaven had come down to earth, and my heart was filled with His rest and peace. Speaking to the Lord I said, "Jesus, Thou hast now proved to me that Thou art the Son of God, very God Himself, for no one can forgive sins but God only. Thou has granted forgiveness of sin, and given me this wonderful rest. I can now say with Thomas, 'My Lord and my God.'" Continuing, I said, "Thou Lord knowest that I have never attended any Christian service. I promise to go to church tomorrow, and confess that Jesus is my personal Saviour." Then I begged the Lord to make me an evangelist, that I might tell others of the love He had given to me.

When I began to attend meetings after my conversion, my father heard and my family persecuted me. They immediately removed me from school, and some of them declared they would not pray the Friday prayer unless they should first kill and bury me. I was saved from that. I was, however, put in a dark store room for several weeks, and given a daily portion of bread and water. Often I was beaten, and sometimes fainted from pain. After some time, when I was again given my freedom, the children in the streets used to clap their hands on seeing me and chant, "Here come the infidel!" Often they threw stones and dust at me, whilst men in the streets spat in my face or struck me on the head with their fists. At intervals I was allowed to return to the school, and during those times I approached a Coptic Priest and the Presbyterian pastor in my district and asked them to baptize me. They both refused, telling me it would be better for me to go to a missionary, as he would have power to protect both himself and me. These persecutions continued for about eighteen months.

In the summer of 1906 I chanced to meet a native Christian teacher, who was at home on holiday in my village. He was employed

by the Egypt General Mission, and worked at Tel-el-Kebeer. He told me that, if I could get to him, he would put me in touch with the missionaries—but alas, how could I reach Cairo, let alone Tel-el-Kebeer? However, the Lord worked, and the impossible happened.

One night my parents told me I must pack up my belongings, as I was to travel to Cairo next day, in order to enter a school there. I was so excited—here was the first step towards Tel-el-Kebeer and the missionaries! My mother and brother accompanied me to Cairo and left me. Five days after my arrival I went to the Cairo railway station, purchased my ticket and traveled to Tel-el-Kebeer. There I met my friend the schoolmaster again, and he took me to Bilbeis to see Mr. Logan, the Missionary in charge. He welcomed me as a father would his son, and I stayed with him in Bilbeis for some months.

Whilst I was there Mr. Logan called me one night and said, "I do not know why, but the Lord has told me to take you away from Bilbeis as soon as possible. We will travel to Alexandria on the train leaving here at 10.30 to-morrow morning. There you will be baptized." I was delighted to hear that my desire for baptism was to be granted, and we set off for Alexandria. After a few days we received an explanation of the Lord's guidance to Mr. Logan. Exactly an hour and a half after we had left Bilbeis my father, with others, arrived searching for me. They had been to Tel-el-Kebeer, tracked me to Bilbeis, and finally followed me to Alexandria. But the Lord hid me, and they were not able to find where I was.

On Sunday, January 13th, 1907, exactly two years after my conversion, I was baptised, taking the name of Marcus Abd-el-Masih (Mark, the bondslave of Christ), to be known henceforth by all as a Christian. The Egypt General Mission provided for my education at College and at the Theological Seminary in Cairo, and in 1919 I became an Evangelist—the Lord had answered my boyish prayer. In 1922 I became an ordained Pastor of the Evangelical Church of Egypt, and enjoyed a happy time of ministry until 1928. It was then I heard the Lord's Call to a wider sphere of service, not only in my Church in Zeitoun, but all over Egypt, Palestine, Syria and the Sudan.

MARCUS ABD-EL-MASIH

Zeitoun, Egypt

ARAB NATIONALISM AND POLITICAL ZIONISM

The extraordinary pressure with which the question of Palestine is being urged on Congress would be disturbing under any circumstances. Are we being hurried into action before we see clearly what the issues are? In my judgment, the motives for the agitation are not fully realized by the public, nor some of the main facts which must govern our judgment.

It is natural that this agitation should put forward as its chief burden the humanitarian concern we all feel for the plight of Jewish refugees from Europe. The immediate political objective, of inducing the British Government to review the policy of its White Paper, is presented as subsidiary to the problem of refuge. Senator Taft, speaking on March 9 at the annual meeting of the American Palestine Commission announced it as the primary purpose of his Bill "to find a place of refuge for the four million surviving Jews of Europe." In my judgment, Senator Taft and the American public as well, ought to weigh very carefully both the humanitarian and the political objectives, and consider to what extent the proposed means will serve the humanitarian end; and to what extent it will serve other ends.

On the humanitarian objective: a place or places of refuge for Jews driven from Europe must be provided: this is an imperative international responsibility. It is easy to run from this axiom to the conclusion that Palestine ought to be thrown open at once to immigration, and without the terminus proposed in the White Paper. This conclusion would follow if Palestine were the only place, or the best place, or even a possible place for more than a limited number of refugees; and if there were no opposing considerations. None of these things can be taken for granted.

It is certainly not the only place now open. Nor purely from the standpoint of living possibilities is it the best place. And as for the four million refugees of Senator Taft's speech, the suggestion that this number can find livelihood in Palestine *in any near time* is fantastic. The "absorptive capacity of Palestine" has been a matter of heated debate, into which there is no need here to enter. Let me mention only what will be generally agreed upon. On the agricultural possibilities of that New Hampshire-sized country (about 10,000 square miles) about half the area is cultivable: of the 6,579,750 acres, estimates of the cultivable area vary from three million to four million acres (W. C. Lowdermilk, *Palestine Land of Promise*, pp. 222 f). Since as a matter of course, the best of this is already occupied, the question is how much of the remainder can be brought to fairly good condition,

even with a wholly disproportionate investment: a third of this half would seem a fair estimate. No one doubts that if the Zionist-held area can be extended, processes of reclamation costly and slow can bring more acres under cultivation. For the refugees, however, the issue is not what can be done in twenty years, but what can be done soon. The answer has to be, nothing remotely adequate.

One hope now being urged for large increase in the capacity of Palestine is in a program of intensive industrialization. Each one must judge for himself the lasting value of a forced industrial development of a land so little favored by nature; and whether a Palestine with none but imported fuel, a rainfall too meager for even its present human uses, and an extremely limited water power is an appropriate center for an industry based on the resources of the wider Near East. But again, no one will doubt that such industrial building must grow *pari passu* with lines of supply and market outlets which can not be improvised on any considerable scale prior to or apart from a general world settlement. In such a settlement, the interests of the Arab lands for developing their own industries will require to be heard. In any case, the rate of Palestinian development could not be sufficient to meet the early needs of any important fraction of Europe's refugee Jews.

And since the ground upon which Palestine is chiefly claimed as a uniquely necessary place for a National Home for the Jewish people is not its economic advantage, but its religious association, it may be worth while to mention that a Palestine heavily industrialized is a Palestine defaced from this point of view for Jew, Moslem, and Christian alike.

Americans easily confuse the meaning of Palestine as a place of refuge with its meaning as a cultural or national home for the Jewish people. Not only are the two meanings distinct; they are in some measure at cross purposes. For the Jews in Palestine who are animated by a burning historical piety are not at ease with the more recent influx from Europe of Jews whose religion is rather that of a social goal than that of the Religious Law or of the Holy Land. If the emphasis is placed on the rights of religious association, we have to remember that for the Moslems also Jerusalem is a sacred city. And the very site of the ancient Jewish Temple is now occupied by the Great El Aksa Mosque (begun 690 A. D.); and so rooted in Moslem tradition as the scene of a miraculous event in the life of Mohammed that any attempt on the part of Zionism to return to its ancient spot of worship would—relations between Jews and Moslems being what they are now—have to be made by force. This is certainly not contemplated by anybody at this time; and the inference is that the importance of Palestine as a place of Jewish settlement cannot be based either on the needs of

refugees or on the grounds of pious necessity, but rather precisely where the Balfour Declaration has put it, on the desirability of a national home for the Jewish people. What that declaration means is so much misunderstood, and unfortunately also so much misrepresented, that it must again be restated.

The Balfour Declaration, issued November 2, 1917, used these words:

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish People, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of non-Jewish communities in Palestine. . . ."

What this Declaration *did not promise was the reconstitution of Palestine as the National Home of the Jews.*

This latter formula, which is now being urged by certain pressure groups as the substance of the Declaration was in fact asked for by the British Zionists in 1917, and expressly rejected by the British Government. This rejection has been renewed at various subsequent times, as in the White Paper of June, 1922. There is a world of difference between a Home *within* Palestine, and *reconstituting* Palestine (making the whole place over) as *the* Home, or as a Jewish community.

It was precisely this "within" feature which made it possible for Zionists at Paris to win the apparent acceptance of the idea by the Arab Delegation there headed by Emir Feisal. The circumstances of the interchange between Mr. Frankfurter and Emir Feisal have been discussed at length since that time. One thing that has become clear, in my opinion, is that Feisal at that time had hopes of an Arab Kingdom—hopes abetted by Great Britain—with himself as ruler of Syria in Damascus; and for the Arabs, Syria traditionally includes Palestine.¹ Thus Feisal's approval of a Zionist community in Palestine was dependent on its enclosure within a dominant Arab state. It must also be said that Feisal's signature to the famous and much questioned letter has never carried weight with the Arab world. Any representation that the Arab people of Palestine or elsewhere, either then or at any subsequent time, agreed to the reconstitution of Palestine as a Jewish community is false.

When therefore one of the groups now pressing for the abrogation of the White Paper announces that the Jews of Palestine "did not come to form a new minority," they are in effect not appealing for

¹The articles of agreement which Feisal signed with Dr. Chaim Weizmann carried the following rider:

"Provided the Arabs obtain their independence as demanded in my Memorandum dated the 4th of January, 1919, to the Foreign Office of the Government of Great Britain, I shall concur in the above articles. But if the slightest modification or departure were to be made, I shall not then be bound by a single word of the present Agreement, which shall be deemed void and of no account or validity, and I shall not be answerable in any way whatsoever." George Antonius. *The Arab Awakening*, Supplement.

the enforcement of the Balfour Declaration but for its replacement. Why do they wish to become a majority unless it is in order that (as the Shaw Report of 1930 put it) "under a democratic rule the Jewish view should always prevail?"

At present they are not too far from that goal as an effective working proposition. In 1919 (to use the figures of the Palestine Partition Commission of 1938) there were in Palestine 58,000 Jews and 642,000 Arabs (Moslem and Christian). Jews were then roughly ten per cent of the total. In 1937, there were about 402,000 Jews and 990,000 Arabs. Today we may estimate about 600,000 Jews and 1,000,000 Arabs. Allow some weight to the concentration of Jews in towns (only about 23% are on the soil) and their superior skill and practice in political action, and it would seem that a Jewish-controlled Palestine is within reach. It is this which the Arabs fear.

Putting these various items together, does it not appear that the animus of the present drive is not primarily humanitarian but political?

But why not? Why should not Palestine be made over into a new Jewish community? The case is not to be judged solely by existing documents and the rights thereby created. It has to be judged *de novo*, in the light of present world conditions.

The cultural progress of the Zionist colonies in Palestine has been remarkable in many ways. The great Hebrew University on Mount Scopus and its Library are monuments to the breadth and wisdom of its founders and builders. The large influx of Jewish capital into Palestine has furnished a basis for taxation (levied on the Arabs as well) which the British Government has used in part for public improvements,—roads, public health, etc.,—in which the Arabs have a natural share. At the same time, the Arab feels his total economic position less secure than before. Why this is the case, a single item relating to farm labor, will sufficiently illustrate:

It is especially the position of the Arab agricultural laborer that has to be considered, for most Arabs (and this is part of the traditional charm of the land) have gained their livelihood from the soil. What has been happening to him may best appear by quoting from a lease of the Jewish National Fund as to Jewish settlers on Palestinian land:

"The lessee undertakes to execute all works connected with the cultivation of the holding only with Jewish labour. Failure to comply with this duty by the employment of non-Jewish labour shall render the lessee liable to the payment of a compensation of ten Palestinian pounds for each default. . . . Where the lessee has contravened the provisions of this Article three times the Fund may apply the right of restitution of the holding, without paying any compensation whatever."²

The Jewish Agency provides in its Constitution that

² All quotations from Simpson Report, Cmd 3686, 1930.

"Land is to be acquired as Jewish property . . . title to be taken in the name of the Jewish National Fund, to the end that the same shall be held as the inalienable property of the Jewish people."²

On this arrangement, land bought by the Jewish Agency, let us say from an Arab landlord employing Arab labor, ceases automatically to be a place of possible residence or work to those laborers. As Sir John Simpson put the matter in his Report:

"It ceases to be land from which the Arab can gain any advantage either now or at any time in the future. . . . He is deprived forever from employment on that land. . . . Nor can anyone help him by purchasing the land and restoring it to common use. The land is in mortmain and inalienable."²

There have been good reasons, from the standpoint of providing occupation for more Jewish immigrants, for such policies as these; but it is at least understandable that despite improvements in other ways, despite the fact that every step of the advance of Zionist ownership is legitimate, and paid for at high prices, the Arab masses as a whole have felt their relative position deteriorating. It is not a question of the number of persons dispossessed, and undisposed to accept compensation. It is a question of the attitude of the slowly advancing power. Its strength, intelligence, cash backing, splendid equipment, render it in Arab eyes the more formidable because of this attitude. Hence they have come to face the future with concern.

But why not override these feelings, which after all affect only a relatively few people on a very small piece of land? Why cannot the Arabs give up an insignificant fraction of their "immense domain," and even accept the idea of an exchange of population with, let us say, Iraq, if it will make for the realization of the Jewish dream? This proposal is now being vigorously urged in some quarters and many Americans are impressed by its apparent reasonableness.

Those who are promoting this view do not explain what they propose to do with the extensive religious establishments of Islam in Palestine, including the great mosques and various schools. These establishments are not, like those of the Christians, primarily of a memorial nature: they are important educational and devotional centers for a living religion, within the region of its central activity. To maintain such establishments a considerable local population is required and assumed: to deport the million Arabs to Iraq would be another way of strangling these institutions. They require also a flow of worshippers and pilgrims, both physically and morally free to come and go. The entire Moslem world is concerned in this. If we think the matter unimportant, they do not.

As for the "immense domain" of the Arab peoples, that is largely desert. The cultivable portions are chiefly strewn around the rim, whose northern arch is known as the Fertile Crescent. The value of

Palestine to either Arab or Zionist does not derive from its size but from its situation, and the functions which that situation enables it to carry out.

The material and present-day advantages of Palestine come largely from its position on the Mediterranean coast. Commercially it belongs to the European Area. Palestine stands in an important strategic position between Europe and the budding industrial development, not so much of Palestine itself as of the lands behind Palestine, Arab lands which are entering on a new economic era. One Zionist proponent estimates the immediate background which Palestine might serve as forty million in number, with a remoter region of four hundred million people. All this region will need is outside financing; whose finance is it to be? And what control will go with the financing? If the future economic importance of Palestine is to be, as I surmise, commercial rather than agricultural or industrial, its prosperity will depend to a large extent on its relations to this growingly important hinterland. And vice versa, the prosperity of that hinterland might depend to a considerable extent on its relations with the financial powers, the warehouses, and the commercial lanes centering in Palestine and vicinity.

The significance of these facts is not obscure to the Zionist. It is also not obscure to the Arab, desirous of being master of his own industrial future; desirous therefore of keeping his direct front on the Mediterranean, and access on equal terms to the facilities of Palestinian harbors, roads and air stations. Cultural relations with Europe will also be important for the new life of the Arabian provinces. Surrender of Palestine to exclusive Zionist control would thus amount to acceptance of a barrier between them and Europe at the outset of their newer national career.

And when Zionists' plans are extended, as they are by some, to bring Transjordan into the Jewish commonwealth, it must not be forgotten that the Zionist land-bloc would then cut clear through the thin Fertile Crescent to the desert. It would lie directly across the north-and-south lines of land travel and pilgrimage, including the railroad built chiefly for the convenience of pilgrims between the northern Moslem lands and Mecca. This would revive, within Arabian territory, that nightmare of European politics, the Corridor. To ask for Palestine and Transjordan as a minute percentage of the total Arab territory is thus like asking for a microscopic section across one wrist.

The disconcerting thing about these proposals, to which the United States is asked to become a party, is not so much the rivalry of interests, which is a usual thing in the world, as the silence of Zionist spokesmen about the existence of any such Arab interests. They do

not mention the Arab political aspirations, which like their own, have the sanction and documentary support of Great Britain. They tend to blackwash the cultural achievements and interests of the Arab peoples, whom they prefer to represent as typified by the Bedouin rather than by members of the Arab Academy at Damascus or the scholars of Beirut, and whom they describe even in literature now being circulated among us as "nomadic," "backward," "half-civilized." Do they not know the new Arab university life, the new literature, the new history, the new economic prowess? Do they forget that it was the Arabs who for six hundred years preserved the classical culture of Greece for a dark Europe?

And do they not know that just as they themselves are making beginnings in Palestine, so the Arab peoples in far greater numbers are making *their* new beginnings, after four centuries of oppression by the old Turkish regime? Mr. Lowdermilk, who will not be accused of over-enthusiasm for the Arab future, testifies to the rapid progress of an *unsubsidized* Arab agriculture (Palestine, Land of Promise, pp. 158 f.) and industry, about 2000 industrial plants having been started by them in recent years (*op. cit.*, p. 109) in Palestine alone. The young Arab world of today is living, as human beings should live, largely in the future. Its Nationalism has to win its own steadiness, self-control, and world-responsibility; but its substance is a justified faith in what is to be, rather than fixing its eyes on what is.

If the Zionists do not know of these things, it is high time they learned of them. And if they do know of them, why do they so constantly speak and act as if they were not true? This failure on their part to appreciate what it is that they would push aside gives, I think, the clue to the emotional aspect of the Palestinian problem.

For given this temper of disparagement, can anyone explain to the American public why the Arabs should welcome the prospect of becoming dependent for their own progress in any degree on Zionist understanding and good-will?

It is not the *bad effendis*—who serve the Zionist spokesmen as the sufficient explanation of all opposition to their plans—it is not the landowners and the moneyed *muftis* alone, it is the entire Arab population of Palestine and the neighboring territories that cannot accommodate its mind to that prospect.

And we are asked to make a national commitment to the cause of political Zionism,—I fear with our eyes half shut,—a commitment whose consequences would be not alone an added tension in a situation already strained by the demands of war, but a revulsion against everything Anglo-American on the part of the Moslem world, already half inclined to seek the guarantors of its destiny elsewhere.

I speak with all consideration when I say that I believe the politi-

cal Zionists at this moment as distinct from the cultural Zionists who have built the noble Hebrew University and who know what a National Home must be,—I believe the political Zionists to be the chief enemies of the cause of Zionism as well as of the Jewish interests in the world of tomorrow. What can they hope to gain by extricating their brethren from the prejudices of Europe only to build a community in Palestine which has to be protected by Western force (and if we intervene, then by American force also) because it is cradled in an environment of distrust and fear cultivated by their own methods of realizing a misplaced nationalistic ambition?

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Cambridge, Mass.*

Islam in the New Era (By Abdullah St. John Philby)

Of all the problems of the future that confront a world at strife, there is, perhaps, none more difficult to assess at the present moment than the position and prospects of Islam in the new era which will follow this war. Except possibly in India, Islam has nothing to fear from the competition or hostility of other faiths, for the missionary zeal of mankind has long since been exercised by a more insidious enemy or diverted into relatively harmless channels. It is safe to predict that religion will never again provide an incentive to empire. And it is reasonable to suppose that, so far as the rival religions are concerned, the peoples of the world have long since grouped themselves with a finality which is unlikely to be disturbed by serious landslides in favour of any one faith at the expense of another.

But the more insidious enemy to which I have referred has appeared on the scene as the common foe of all. It is the old Mammon of unrighteousness again but clad in the gorgeous robes of modern man-made civilization and equipped with the paraphernalia of its mechanized triumphs. His success has been stupendous. In less than a century he has achieved more progress than any religion has been able to do in a millennium. Octopus-like, he has spread his tentacles over the whole world, and daily he is probing further and further into the defences of humanity. There is not a country that has not in greater or less degree felt his influence, whose principal effect has been the numbing of the religious sense in mankind.

Yet it so happens that the lands and peoples of Islam—perhaps because they are relatively poor and backward—have been less affected by the development than most other countries. And that is why it is so difficult to see how their way of life, still based as it is on their religion, is going to fit into and maintain itself in an increasingly secularized world.

—*The Light* (Lahore)

THE PHILOSOPHY OF AL-MA'ARRI

The Arab world has been celebrating this year the Millenary of the great Syrian poet and thinker of the tenth century, Abu'l-Ala bin Abdalla al-Ma'arri.¹ I am not concerned here so much with the life and the works as with the mind of Al-Ma'arri. And the mind of Al-Ma'arri is a bit of a puzzle. He comes to us as one of the most obscure characters of this period. A figure of contradictory lines that escape elucidation. Al-Ma'arri himself does not quite understand his own spirit. He now proclaims himself to be a *Rasul* and then turns to say that he is but a pebble along the path of men. A blind man who at the same time is a seer. A critic of all religion, but a believer deep in his heart. A sceptic who is also an insatiable student and searcher. A man irreconciled with society, but cherishing a sincere love for man. A "seeker of death" who, however, nurses his frail body to the age of eighty-five.

Who may this confusing figure be, and how may we solve his puzzle? By one way only: by loving him; by sympathizing with his spirit; by entering his unlighted hut and sitting with him on the bare mat, sharing his grief and his vision.

A rather one-sided representation of Al-Ma'arri has been popular among students of Islam. Much stress was laid on his negative attitude towards life and religion and every other established institution and ceremony. But the fact is, that this humble servant of thought is one of those whom God sent to shed more light on the ways of man. I once asked a religious teacher of Islam, and he answered: "Well, Al-Ma'arri! He is, of course, the Voltaire of Islam." Yes, that is one more reason why we should try to understand him correctly. Al-Ma'arri has been denounced by those whom he himself had criticised. Our task, therefore, is to look at Ma'arri's figure as a whole. He was called "The Father of Heights" (Abu al 'Ala). Certainly his contemporaries called him so, not for his stumblings, but for his climbing.

There is a vast literature about Abu'l-Ala. But the best way to understand him is to push aside all that has been written about him and reach out directly to what he himself has said and written—to silence those talking about him, and listen to the poet himself.

The first European scholar to pay serious attention to Al-Ma'arri was Von Kremer, in the second volume of his *Kulturgeschichte*, 1877: *Abhandlung über die Philosophischen Geschichte des Abou'l-Ala*. But Von Kremer has rather limited his view to the *Luzoumiyet*, where

¹ Ma'arra is a town still existent, midway between Aleppo and Hama. It was an important pivot at the time of the Crusaders. Here a few years ago the tomb of Abu'l-Ala al Ma'arri was rebuilt.

is found the technique of Ma'arri's poetry, and where he appears a non-orthodox critic of established institutions. And I think this study of Von Kremer is responsible for that one-sided representation of Ma'arri. He has laid his finger mostly on such passages as were the most severe.

A broader-minded representation will be found in the work of the illustrious scholar Prof. Margoliouth: *Letters of Abou'l Ala Ma'arri Nouman*, 1898. In these Letters Abu'l-Ala speaks as a man of deep interest in all social and human affairs.

More recently, one of the best works of Ma'arri has been translated into French: his *Resalet el Ghoufran* (Le Message du Pardon), by M. S. Meissa, 1935. This is his only work translated into French. It is an imaginary voyage of three wise men to the other world. It has been suggested that this work of Abu'l-Ala served as prototype to the Divine Comedy of Dante.

There are many other works of Abu'l-Ala. Dahabi, his biographer, speaks of a learned man of his times who, seeing the one hundred and one works of Ma'arri, called "The Trunk and its Branches," exclaimed: "All other poetry is superfluous for man." Just as Omar thought of the Koran, and threw into the fire—if he ever did so—the great library of Alexandria when he conquered that city.

Reading these works of Abu'l-Ala, we see that his distorted figure grows clearer and more human than usually represented. And as it grows clearer, we begin to understand him, and, understanding, to love him. We shall take up a few of the problems pointed out as the outstanding offences of Al-Ma'arri. He is said to have laughed at the wisdom of man. And so, indeed, he does. But his sarcasm is not directed against knowledge as such, but against men who profess they have attained perfect knowledge. He refuses the possibility of attaining absolute knowledge, though he himself is a thirsty accumulator. His rejection does not involve knowledge itself, but the vanity of men of knowledge, that kind of knowledge which is void of experience. He refuses fame: "Judge me not by my fame." He once received the visit of a notable Vizir, Al-Manassa. The visitor began by expressing his admiration: "I hear nice stories about you," said he with a lordly smile. "Men are jealous of me", came the reply, "and therefore they spread such lies about me."

The honorable visitor was quick to respond: "Why should they be jealous of you," (he tried to be humorous) "since you have left to them both this and the other world?" Abu'l-Ala lowered his head and ironically repeated the words of his guest: "So!" said he, "So! . . . and the other world too?" And he never more broke his silence until the embarrassed guest went away.

Here, then, is the man. He considers all fame as a lie. He leaves the

pleasures and the measures of this world to men of this world. But in the domain of moral values, he considers himself the true heir. In one of his letters he dictates to his secretary:

"The people, seeing my love for ancient lore, called me a learned man. What a mistake! Others, seeing my practice of solitude, called me an ascetic; whereas I am but a seeker of things of value."

Love for true knowledge is deep in Al-Ma'arri:

"I confess my ignorance,
And people call me wise;
But the truth is
That neither I myself am wise
Nor those who call me wise."

What Al-Ma'arri seeks is not ignorance, but knowledge and more knowledge. He is like Socrates in the apperception of the limitations of his cognitions. But this never lets him think of himself as worthless. To the contrary, he is very self-conscious. Once a friend came to him to report that a poet had published a severe criticism against him. Al-Ma'arri replied, "When an inferior person criticises me, that only proves that I am superior to him."

Al-Ma'arri is not a man of the levels; he is a man of the heights. "We must not," says he, "look for the prints of the camel's feet in the nest of the eagle." His soul has, like the eagle, inhaled the fresh and free airs:

"Now, a resolute man on foot
Is faster than one on a poor horse;
But faster than either is the man
Whose resolution has raised him
On the wings of the wind."

A widespread accusation against Ma'arri is that he abhorred society and lived in solitude; that he did not marry; that he always spoke against customs and conventions. True, so far as we take facts at their face value. But if we looked into the life and the soul of Al-Ma'arri, we should see that his withdrawal from social intercourse never meant hate. On his way back from Baghdad, at the age of thirty-six, he sent forth a letter to his compatriots at Ma'arra, explaining his resolutions:

"After having spent the springtime of my youth, and after having sucked all the udders of knowledge and tasted the good and the bad of life, I have found that the best course for me to pursue is to go into retreat; so that my relation to men may be as that of the chamois to the ostriches on the plains. For, as the poet Maidani has said, 'A chamois is rare to be seen on a plain, while ostriches are common.'"

"I have taken this decision after having consulted God's will. It is not the outcome of one day, nor an offsprung of some months. It is the product of lifelong

reflection and an order of my destiny. And only a fool will quarrel with destiny. You therefore will find me neither fond of praise nor eager for charity from others."

It is too long a letter to cite even a third of it here. When Ma'arri came home, he entered his hut and refused to appear in public. His compatriots were truly offended at this. Is this the son of our Ma'arra, for whom we have been waiting so long? And these patriots began to see in the love of Ma'arri for retreat a hatred for society. This ill-fame of resolution echoed back to Baghdad. In a letter Abu'l-Ala explained his position to friends there: "People in Baghdad accuse me of qualities that I have not. To every man must be allowed his choice. And I myself have chosen to live in solitude." That much only. His choice was only a personal affair. The only reason for such a choice was himself, not others. It was not because of society that he lived away from society. It was only because of himself.

"To live happily,
One must live concealed."

We shall later attempt a psychology of the abstinence of Al-Ma'arri. Here we wish only to make it clear, that Abu'l-Ala avoids society, but does not detest men. He has no evil thought or will towards his neighbor. To the contrary, we have all evidence to believe that he loved man, even though he shunned humanity. To the end, he is faithful to his friendships. He continually writes letters to friends, and answers anyone who may apply to him for help. We may read one such letter today: thirty full printed pages, addressed to a friend, full of human sympathy and understanding—to bring him consolation!

Al-Ma'arri corresponds with men of all ranks. For instance, he writes to a young poet who has sent him a collection of his poems for consideration:

"May God keep your good example to the poets, and your poems to the Kings. Were Poetry to have a child, surely you would be that one. Methinks on the Judgment Day you will appear with a beautiful bunch of poems, to win the favor of the Keeper of Paradise."

Ma'arri has also many letters on practical problems. He entreats a high official to receive back a renegade clerk, as St. Paul did to his friend Philemon about the runaway Onesimus. To a relative he writes about an incorrigible youth: "I gave him much advice, but I might as well try to cover a hilltop with a goatskin."

He has unswerving love towards friends. In a letter to one such he gives the assurance: "My home is a wreck and my life forlorn; but whether happy or desolate, I shall always pray for thee." To another friend his letter ends: "But the thing that most interests me is your

kind health. If you have any service to ask, honor me by mentioning it, and quench my thirst by letting me serve you."

Is it permissible to say that a man with such a loving heart towards men might bear within his soul any scorn for man?

It has been stated that Al-Ma'arri considered raising a family the greatest sin. Commentators have too often cited Ma'arri to have said:

"My father sinned against me by begetting me,
But I have sinned against none."

It is a fact that Ma'arri never married, to become the father of a child and to be called "Abu so and so", but this sentiment quoted above is only the outcry of a soul to whom fate has denied the grace and the possibility of having a family. Otherwise it is impossible to explain his tender feelings for life and every living thing on earth. How, for example, could we reconcile that couplet with the spirit of this one letter among many others? He writes to a friend—and on what occasion? On the occasion of the birth of a child:

"I was delighted to hear the news of the happy birth. May God give him his share of the fame and the virtues of his namesake. I meditated on the good signs of fortune connected with his birth. Being born on Friday, the day of abundance, may God make him generous. Being likewise a day of religious piety, may God advance him to where the saints have attained. His coming coincides also with the gay season of Spring, when thirsts are quenched and pastures are abundant; may therefore God make his life bright as the Spring. Truly, I had no need to write such congratulations to you, but the joy of my heart overflowed, and so I wrote."

It is impossible that such heartfelt words of joy could come from a man with a "hate for life". If that heart has any true feeling, that feeling is only a love for life. Here, on the occasion of the birth of a child, he does not write: "What a big sin! You have added one more misery to the world. Quick, take him away, and while yet unconscious of himself, leave him alone in a lonely desert!" His pen never suggests such a malign thought. On the contrary, it expresses the overflowing joy of his heart.

The explanation of his own case of unmarried life is altogether another matter. He was a blind man, without means and possibilities to form and support a family, and was condemned to live by himself. But his meditations on life and death show that he had a deep belief in life. Life was a mission for him; its purpose and end was not annihilation, but a soaring to the heights of heaven beyond the skies. In the *Goufran* he speaks of a wise man who has reached Paradise:

"We have attained the heavens
By elevations and by grandeur,
And we are bound to mount
To higher plains still."

Ma'arri feels true fear of death, and prays that it may be delayed to reap the flowers of life. Once the Kadi, Abu El Fatih, visited him. "I found him," reports the visitor, "stooped in a corner of his room, lamenting the death of a youth:

'O how often a daughter has been buried,
While her grandmother was alive!
Death may be delayed,
But impossible it is to live forever.'

"When he finished his prayer," continues the visitor, "he fell on his face and began to weep and weep, until he lifted up his head and exclaimed, 'Glory to Him that disclosed truth to me!'"

Is it conceivable, let us ask once again, that a poet with these thoughts should have a hate for life and only love for death?

Al-Ma'arri is positive on social justice. He nourishes very lively feelings towards the misjudged and the down-trodden. He takes justice not to be a mechanical execution of judicial laws, but a wise handling of problems with a view to anticipate evil. On that point it is very interesting to note his letter to a Kadi:

"Yesterday I exhausted a sheet of paper, urging you to release a young man. I did not ask you to pardon him, or minimize his faults . . . but simply to release him, because that would be the more convenient thing to do.

"This morning his mother has come in furious grief, that at night thieves have broken into her house and stolen her hen.

"Certainly a hen that lays eggs is of more value to a poor widow than a camel to the rich.

"Now, if the release of her son be yet more delayed, tomorrow this poor mother will find her flour also stolen. . . ."

Al-Ma'arri is as broad-minded on matters of wealth and ownership. He professes that private ownership is not an absolute right, but merely a practical convenience. Socialists may find a great support in his following utterance:

"Eat not their meat,
for they were born for their own race,
Drink not their milk,
for it is destined only for its own offsprings;
Do not take away the honey from the bee,
for that is his winter food."

The most perplexing views on religion have been expressed by Abu'l-Ala, the Moslem. He appears not a reformer, but an iconoclast. The apologists of Islam were right in calling him an unbeliever. Here is an example of what he thought:

"Religion has disseminated hate among men.
 Man lived in peace and understanding;
 But the Apostles brought to them the impossible,
 And so disturbed their soul. . . .
 Moses came and laid laws,
 Jesus came and put them aside,
 Mohammed came and promulgated them again;
 And they say, others and others will come. . . ."

In his journey to Paradise, he is met by a wise man who lived on earth ages and ages ago, when there was neither Moses nor any law. This happy Methuselah of antiquity speaks of the ancient golden days of Man's freedom. It was exquisite, relates he; the Kings used to sit with their subjects at the table, and men everywhere were equal. Men knew neither letters nor poetry, no more than what the oxen know of astronomy. But, he adds, they lived poetry within their own souls; and if I were to recite portions of them, what I might reproduce would be only chips from a forest! "I pray thee, recite some", beseech the pilgrims. "I could recite so much that no book would be enough to contain," says the wise old man of the forgotten world, and recites this one portion:

"The Sunday and the Sabbath were just alike to Monday,
 And the Friday was just the same as Thursday;
 We were neither Magi nor Jews,
 Nor Christian fidèles of the church. . . ."

Now, pious people reading such Voltairian lines of Al-Ma'arri, have denounced him as an infidel. But the crux of the matter is that Al-Ma'arri is not against religion as the inner light of the soul, but against religion as the organized machinery of man's desire to rule over the free souls of other men. He is against religious organization and ritual; for, he says, each and every religious organization has claimed truth and infallibility for itself and only for itself:

"Each one speaks in the name of Truth,
 But I would fain know where Truth itself resides."

He is a seeker after Truth, but is abashed to see men who claim to have got hold of truth once for all, and to have moulded it in unbreakable formulae. He is not against truth, but against the rigid formulations of truth.

Al-Ma'arri is one of the foremost free-thinkers in Islam; but that attitude of his is never equal to unbelief. He ever holds some fundamental beliefs of religious life. He believes in the unity of God and in the goodness of man's spirit and in immortality. By the mouth of one of his pilgrims he says: "I believe in God, in resurrection and the Judgment of life, and teach men a God-pleasing and noble life." The practical expression of a religious life, for Al-Ma'arri, is doing good

to men. In one passage he says: "The fear of our Lord is the supreme good." He often returns to the idea of goodness:

"The way of goodness is the best religion;
And when man follows that,
Little does it import
Whether he turns to the East
Or to the South, when he prays."

We might sum up the teachings of his "Message of Pardon" thus: A kind word may work miracles even in the other world, by the overflowing of holy thoughts and of noble feelings.

No one has any right to condemn others; for God alone is able to search into the hearts of men.

What is demanded of man, is only high intentions and pure conduct, and doing good to others.

And such things cannot be obtained by established law and ritual and by recited formulae.

Al-Ma'arri finds the solution of the problem of morals, in doing good to one another. He does not go into the philosophy of Good; he ever falls back to the practice of good. "A kind word", he says, "is like a good tree. Its roots go deep in the soil, and its branches rise high to the heaven, bearing its fruit in its season."

Certainly, mere good conduct cannot solve the problem of religion and morals. Religion is always more than morals. Faith and spiritual life must become manifest in action, moral truth must be made palpable reality among man, and daily worship must keep the spirit aflame. But man is so often inclined to lose the living springs of faith and spirit under the bulk of form and ritual, that from time to time prophetic voices will rise up to call man back to the living fountains of life and religion.

We have thus far outlined the mentality of Al-Ma'arri. We might proceed further and bring to light his thoughts on deeper theological and metaphysical problems, such as his idea of the universe, his attitude towards the problem of evil, his conception of God. But that would mean to treat him as a theologian and a philosopher, which Ma'arri is not. His absence from social intercourse, and his severe criticism of customs and traditions and established institutions, I will explain by the following facts:

The tenth century was the era of the fall of the Khalifate. The sword of the Prophet, which within a period of only fifty years, in the seventh century, had brought under its sway all the countries of the Mediterranean, east and south and west; and which within a century had crossed the Straits and stepped into Europe by Spain; that huge machinery which had held under its domination all the known world from the Indies to the Atlantic for more than three centuries, pres-

ently consumed its own power and collapsed in the times of Al-Ma'arri. The Seljuks took possession of the Khalifate.

That political wreckage was accompanied by decay and destruction in the cultural and moral realms also. Law and order and conduct went with the floods. This situation created, on the one hand, a desire in the human soul to resign from responsibilities, and even a yearning for solitude and peace of the individual soul; and on the other hand, a justifiable attitude of criticism of the civilization that the Khalifate had sustained. The cry was, that the collapse took place because men relied too much on formalities and forgot the true foundations of civilization.

His life also was a protest against the scholasticism of the Mediaeval Ages. As in Christianity, so in Islam, during the ninth and the tenth centuries, theology and philosophy had been changed into a system of unintelligible rhetorical eloquence. Man's mind had begun to roam in a metaphysical paradise. We know too well those useless teachings of schools of Christianity—vain discussions on the nature of God and the Son and the Holy Spirit. The same scholastic mind was at work within Islam. When the religion of Islam, which had sprung from the desert as a simple philosophy of life and an everyday ceremony, reached through Mesopotamia to Iran, there the mystic and the thought-loving spirit of Persia transformed religion into theology. The Persian mind is more of a speculative and metaphysical nature than the Arab mind. Islam, which had been at first only a system of ceremony and promised life, gradually grew to be a system of dogma, and during the tenth century finished by becoming an intricate system of dogma.

It was against this dogmatism that the lucid Arab mind rose in protest. And the criticisms of Al-Ma'arri must be taken as a strong voice along that line. He claims a return to the simple-minded conception of religion, to the religion of spirit. That is why he is against all formalism, and favors a new trust in inner values.

We cannot, however, explain Al-Ma'arri's faith without looking into his own heart. It was not through caprice that he avoided society. As a result of a terrible disease, the complete loss of sight in his childhood was a very heavy blow that affected deeply the composition of his character. As the disease had disfigured his face, so it had upset the lines of his character. As he grew older and became conscious of the gravity of his condition, he began to hide away.

We have the record of the description of a youth sent to study at the feet of Al-Ma'arri. The boy, in a letter sent to his parents, gives his first impression of his teacher's figure. Dahabi, his biographer, has preserved for us that bit of a document: "We found him", writes the intelligent boy, "seated on a mat. He laid his hand on my head and

uttered a prayer. Then I looked at him. He was very old, and when I saw his face I was scared. Because his face was covered with innumerable scars. One eye was lost in a deep hollow, and the other bulged out altogether."

Now, this repulsive figure of Ma'arri, of which he himself was certainly conscious, would naturally affect his psychology, as it affected the observer. He would be cautious and suspicious of men, and conscious of inferiority. We often meet in his writings lines that reflect this sensitiveness. To Prince Aziz al Dowla he writes: "I am kept away from serving your Highness by a disease that prevents me even from the performance of my religious duties. . . . How could it be possible to me—a blind person—a calamity which to mention suffices . . . ?"

On another occasion he writes: "If I were only free of this disqualification . . . for what is being said of me is not true . . . imagine a girl renowned for her beauty, when on the day of her wedding it be found that she is only too ugly. . . . And so I repeat the saying, that it is better to listen to the voice of the Muezzin than to see his figure!"

I must beg for indulgence for the fact that I am trying to explain the mental hygiene of Al-Ma'arri by such a trifling cause as his infirmity. But I would hold this for a strong point. Physical infirmities may act on man's psychology in two ways: sometimes weakness will turn into aggressive strength. Nietzsche was such a man, whose weakness made him a worshipper of power. Lang-Timur was a crippled man, who turned to avenge himself by crippling nations. Or St. Paul, who says he found strength in his weakness—the thorn in the flesh! Sometimes, on the contrary, the infirmities may cause a man to resign and become shy and extremely recessive. The suicide of the diseased or defeated person is only too common. But Al-Ma'arri is both of these types at once, now aggressive and then a quiet man in seclusion. That explains his character.

Al-Ma'arri had a mind which accumulated an inexhaustible wealth of knowledge. It is astonishing to see how much this blind man knew. Every ten lines of his writings contain three lines of citations from his predecessors or contemporaries. His head is full of poems, proverbs, lore, legends and prophecies and scriptures; and all these come out to help him weave his arguments as he pauses to dictate his thoughts to his secretary. The sources of his learning are extensive. He is acquainted with Pagan and Christian and Moslem literature. His style has much resemblance to the Hebrew writings. He often suggests the thoughts and the style of the Proverbs. Often he cites them freely.

We might even say that the philosophy of Al-Ma'arri is like that of

the Ecclesiast. This Hebrew also was a bit of a sceptic; but from a nearer point we see that he has a very realistic attitude toward life.

Another characteristic of Ma'arri's mind is that he is an unscrupulous searcher and an unreserved thinker. He has observed life widely and has drawn his own conclusions. His judgments are based on his own experience rather than on what he has learned from others. He has freed himself from the conventional. He stands before problems as an experimenter. It is this independence of thinking that makes him brave to fight every idea that seems misleading, though long established. Even in the matter of the Koran or the holiest conceptions of Islam, he has no consideration. He boldly says, for example, that it is most probable that there lived an Adam before Adam himself; or that Mecca was once a place of heathen worship.

Al-Ma'arri is not lost in local and national problems. He looks at problems as problems of humanity. His contemporaries are caught within the rush of the torrents of his times. He himself looked at things from a height. His writings are neither national history nor political views nor the study of a particular subject for a treatise. His literature has rather a general than a specific character, more of a human than a national nature. His outlook is not limited to land or race. Beyond all particularities, he has reached out to the one great subject: Life! He is the first Arab thinker to make the phenomenon of life as a whole the object of his thoughts. And it is from this point of view that he is universal. He is not an Arab poet and thinker only. He is fearlessly sincere, ruthlessly sincere. Nothing can bribe his mind to turn aside. He has weighed life and evaluated it, and is sincere to speak out the truth as he sees it.

In conclusion, we answer the question: What is the place of Al-Ma'arri in the ranks of Arab thinkers? It is hard to call him a philosopher. He is a thinker, but not a philosopher in the proper sense of the word. He may be called a philosopher only in this sense, that every thinker is a philosopher. But to occupy a place in the ranks of the philosophers, the thinker must have formed his thoughts into a comprehensive system. Now, Ma'arri does not possess that system. He proposes no edifice of thought. He is rather in its search.

It is not possible to place him in the rank of Al-Kindy, his predecessor, nor with Abu-Sina his contemporary, nor with Al-Ghazali of the next century, the great thinker in whom theology and philosophy found reconciliation. Ma'arri is not a philosopher of that rank. Rather, in my opinion, Al-Ma'arri comes forth as a prophetic type of poet. He approaches life rather with a searching than with a classifying mind. He is more of a prophet than a political thinker.

Great leaders may be divided into three classifications. The middle class is that of the Apostles: those who teach and establish. Next to

them comes the Reformer: the man who organizes and carries on. But preceding both comes the Prophet: the man who can see situations as a whole, can trace calamities to their causes, and with a clear voice call for repentance.

Ma'arri is of this prophetic type. He depicts clearly the moral diseases of social life, the misleading of dogma, and calls for a reconsideration of both. He calls false things false and invites men to better things. He is not the Apostle, nor the Reformer, but a forerunner of both. His stand is like that of John the Baptist, or the forerunners of the French Revolution. He is the man to give the first shock to the mind:

"In vain people call me the Father of Heights;
I am but the father of destructions."

Once more, to be more precise, it seems to me right that we place Al-Ma'arri at the head of the rationalistic thinkers who emerged from the Middle Ages. He is the first Arab rationalist. It is with him that the Arab mind begins to reason:

"Reason alone is worthy, above all else,
To be acknowledged and trusted."

I call Al-Ma'arri a rationalist, not because he has said it often; but because he is a rationalist in his whole way of thinking. He approaches truth by no other way than that of the human reason. It is in this rationalism that his true identity is revealed. He votes against the all-ruling system of mediaeval scholasticism. And this is greatly to his credit. He came before the forerunners of rationalism in Europe, before Erasmus and Rabelais and Montaigne.

And this is why Al-Ma'arri is a singular figure in the history of Arab thought. Alas, that his voice should remain but a voice in the wilderness throughout the Islamic world! He was not to be followed by an Apostle, nor by any reformer. And it was not possible that the path he traced could widen—because the Moslem mind recognizes only two paths leading to Truth. First, the path of Revelation: Wahi or Ilhām. All truth is a gift from on high. The Koran is wholly descended Sura by Sura from heaven. That delimitation is typical of the revelation-mentality of Islam. Human experience has nothing to do with it. Islam's second path to truth is Tradition, the Hadith which Mohammed gave as bequest.

Outside and beyond these two paths to truth, all is heresy in Islam. And here comes this resolute man of Ma'arra, who defies all conventional paths and traces a new one of personal experience and reason! How could he carry on?

However, it was not in Arabia alone; the whole world was *for* revelation and tradition, and *against* human experience and reason. Had Ma'arri lived in Christian Europe, the jealous inquisitors of His Holiness the Pope would never have allowed his life to be prolonged to the age of eighty-five. What would they have done to him? As they did to Copernicus and to Savonarola and to Jeordano Bruno and John Huss. . . . They would have burned his writings in public, and his body at the stake.

But in free Arabia Abu'l ala Al-Ma'arri lived unto long maturity, loved by the people, and visited by rulers and venerated by poets; and when he died, one of the seventy poets who lamented his loss sang:

"He is taken from this world
after having filled it with admirables,
as the heaven is full of stars.

"He lived resigned to the world,
and buried himself alive;
so he paid the most precious of all sacrifices.

"His eyes always gazed at holiness,
and his heart was humbled before God.

"May the soil where he rests
be ever refreshed by dew from the clouds!"

May the spirit which once moved this seer of Ma'arra be kept alive, not from Missions without, but from Islam itself within!

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RABBINIC LEGENDS IN HADITH

One of the great services rendered by Professor Louis Ginzberg of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America to those uninitiated into the mysteries of rabbinic lore has been to unfold to them the world of Jewish legend that lives within the folios of the Talmud and the Midrash. Until the publication of his monumental "Legends of the Jews"¹ the folktales surrounding the personalities of the heroes of the Bible, which had been passed on from generation to generation by word of mouth before being recorded in various collections of Jewish tradition, were, particularly to non-Jews, *terra incognita*. The remark made in the Pesikta² and repeated elsewhere³ that, however well acquainted the gentile world might have become through translation with the text of the Written Law, the Oral Law, i.e., the unwritten instructions, interpretations and amplifications of this Written Law which had been current among Jews and were believed to have been issued simultaneously with the Written Law, remained a secret between God and Israel—this remark was almost literally true. I say "almost" because it was not always so. As Professor Ginzberg himself had occasion to point out in his inaugural dissertation,⁴ the fathers of the Christian Church, who lived at a time when the texts of the Mishnah and the Talmud had not yet attained their completed form, when the Tannaim of Palestine and the Amoraim of Babylonia were still debating many points of Jewish theory and practice, were, to judge from their writings, well versed in the aggadic, or homiletic, as well as the halakic, or legal, Bible exegesis of the rabbis. In fact many an aggada or an explanation of scriptural work or passage, that has been preserved in only comparatively late *Jewish* sources, is found in the works of these pioneers of Christian literature.

Now this employment of Jewish legend, which, as Max Gruenbaum notes, was particularly prevalent among those early Christian authors who used as their medium of expression a language that was practically identical with the Aramaic of the Talmud and the Midrashim in which most of these legends have been transmitted,⁵ was even more general and widespread among the annalists and interpreters of Islam during the first few centuries of the existence of this second offshoot from Judaism. In the various compilations of the Hadith, which is a sort of Mohammedan Midrash, in the chronicles of Moslem historians like Tabari, Masudi, Ibn Kutaiba, Ibn al Athir,

¹ vols. 1-7, Philadelphia 1913-1938, Jewish Publication Society of America.

² ed. M. Friedmann, Vienna 1880, p. 14b.

³ E.g., Tanchuma *Ki Tissa* and Yalkut Shimeoni.

⁴ *Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern*, Amsterdam, 1899.

⁵ *Neue Beiträge zur semitischen Sagenkunde*, Leyden, 1893, p. 54.

Abulfeda and Ibn Khaldun, in such recognized commentaries on the Koran as those of Tabari, Zamakhshari and Baidawi, aye in the Bible of the Mohammedans itself, one stumbles repeatedly upon tales about biblical characters of indubitably extra-biblical Jewish origin. We shall not attempt to present in this paper an exhaustive survey of the Mohammedan parallels to the aggada in rabbinic literature and other early Jewish sources. Those interested in a more detailed study of the subject might consult Max Gruenbaum's *Neue Beiträge zur semitischen Sagenkunde*, in which a considerable amount of material has been assembled. Here we shall cite only a few outstanding examples that might serve as illustrations of the intimate cultural bonds that existed between the adherents of the Law of Moses and the followers of the religion of Mohammed, at least in the springtide of Islam, when Moslem civilization was in its glory and Jew and Arab worked side by side, together contributing to the spiritual elevation and enrichment of humankind.

And the first character that attracts our attention in this investigation is that of Adam, the father of the human race. According to a view quoted in the tractate of Sanhedrin⁶ of the Babylonian Talmud and attributed to the Tannaite Rabbi Meir, who flourished in the middle of the second century of the common era,⁷ the dust out of which, in the words of Scripture, the first man was created had been collected from the entire earth. He was, indeed, of gigantic proportions, his body extending, as one third-century authority put it, from one end of the world to the other, or, as another would have it, but what was really the same thing, from earth to heaven.⁸ As for his beauty, it is reputed to have been such that he eclipsed with its splendor the disk of the sun.⁹ When Adam sinned, say Israel's sages, he was deprived of this brilliance¹⁰ and his size was reduced until he measured no more than a hundred cubits.¹¹

Mohammedan tradition has similar things to relate. Ibn al Athir, a twelfth-century historian from Iraq,¹² for example, quotes a statement, said to have been made by the prophet of Islam himself, to the effect that the first man was formed out of particles taken from all the earth, and that the differences in the color of the skin of the various races of man, namely red, black and white, as well as the variations of temperament and character among human beings were due to this universal provenance of Adam's bodily frame.¹³ The selfsame remark

⁶ 38a.

⁷ H. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, Leipzig 1908, IV p. 171 ff.

⁸ Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 38b.

⁹ *Ibid.* Baba Batra 58a.

¹⁰ Genesis Rabba 12, 6.

¹¹ B. T. Sanhedrin *ibid.* Cf. also Pesikta derab Kahana ed. Buber *ibid.* and notes.

¹² Cf. C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur*, Weimar 1898, I p. 345.

¹³ Chronicon, ed. Tornberg, Leyden 1867, I p. 20.

is found in a late Midrash,¹⁴ but it may have been based on this Mohammedan tradition rather than have served as a basis for it.¹⁵ There are also references in Mohammedan tradition to Adam's beauty. According to Ibn Sa'd,¹⁶ a biographer of the ninth century,¹⁷ Adam was the most beautiful of all men, only Joseph, the son of the Hebrew patriarch Jacob, comparing with him in pulchritude. As for the size of the father of all men, the measurement ascribed to his height in the different editions of the Hadith was sixty ells.¹⁸ Since Adam's departure from paradise, however, says Bukhari, the foremost collector of the table-talk of Mohammed,¹⁹ the stature of human beings has steadily decreased until it reached the present dimensions.²⁰

Mohammedan tradition is at one with the opinion of the majority of Jewish aggadists²¹ that Adam's sojourn in paradise lasted only a few hours, his departure from it taking place on the same day as his entrance into it.²² There was no compulsion from the standpoint of Islam, which did not regard the Sabbath as being holy, to have him spend the seventh day in paradise as some Jewish authorities believe he did.²³ On the contrary, according to this tradition, Friday, the day on which Adam was created, deserved to be honored as "the choicest of days."²⁴

The threat made to Adam that he would die on the day on which he would eat of the tree of knowledge²⁵ was literally carried out, except that the day that God had had reference to was one of God's days, which, according to the Psalmist,²⁶ lasted a thousand years. The life-span of Adam should, accordingly, have been a full millennium. Herein the Aggada²⁷ and the Hadith,²⁸ as recorded by the Moslem historians and biographers are fully agreed. Only the latter do not seem to have known the biblical source of this theory.²⁹ Now the reason why Adam did not live the entire thousand years is because he allotted a portion of his life to Israel's king David, who had been shown to him by God among all the rest of his offspring at the time of his creation. This is asserted by both Jewish³⁰ and Mohammedan

¹⁴ Pirke Rabbi Eliezer chap. 11. For the date of this midrash cf. Jewish Encyclopedia, London and New York 1906, VIII p. 567.

¹⁵ Viz. Gruenbaum *op. cit.* p. 125.

¹⁶ *Tabakat*, ed. Sachau, Leyden 1904-1908, II 13.

¹⁷ Cf. Brockelmann, *Geschichte* I p. 136.

¹⁸ Bukhari, *Sahih* 60, 1. For other references cf. A. J. Wensinck, *A Handbook of Early Mohammedan Tradition*, Leyden 1927 p. 11 ff.

¹⁹ Brockelmann, *op. cit.* p. 157 ff.

²⁰ *Sahih* 79, 1.

²¹ Thus B. T. Sanhedrin 38b and one view quoted in Genesis Rabba 12, 6.

²² Viz. Achmad ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, Cairo 1313 A. H., II p. 329; Masudi, *Les Prairies d'Or*, ed. Meynard III p. 60; Ibn al Athir, *op. cit.* p. 26.

²³ Cf. Genesis Rabba 12, 6. Viz. also Koran 50, 37 and I. Goldziher, *Die Sabbathinstitution im Islam*, in Kaufmann Gedenkbuch, p. 86-101.

²⁴ Cf. Ibn Sa'd II 12 and Achmad ibn Hanbal I p. 311.

²⁵ Genesis 2, 17.

²⁶ Psalms 90, 4.

²⁷ Genesis Rabba 19, 8.

²⁸ Ibn Sa'd II 12; Masudi III p. 60; Ibn al Athir p. 26.

²⁹ Viz. Ginzberg, *Legends*, V p. 82 note 28.

³⁰ B. T. Sanhedrin 38b, 'Abodah Zarah 5a, Pirke Rabbi Eliezer chap. 19. Cf. also Ginzberg, *Legends* I p. 61 and notes.

sources.³¹ According to the Jewish tradition, however, David lived altogether seventy years.³² Deducted from the original one thousand to which Adam was entitled this left nine hundred and thirty, which tallies exactly with the total assigned to him in the Hebrew Scriptures.³³ Mohammedan sources, on the other hand, give to David a life-span of one hundred years, forty of which had been presented to him by Adam who lived to be nine hundred and sixty years old. Adam was, then, a prophet in the full sense of the word. That Mohammed regarded him as such is explicitly stated by Ibn Sa'd.³⁴ But the Jewish Aggada, too, makes it abundantly clear that this was its view also.³⁵

The question asked in the eighth chapter of the book of Psalms: "What is man that Thou rememberest him and the son of Adam that Thou takest account of him?"³⁶ gave rise to the legend about the angels' objection to the creation of the human race on the ground of its sinfulness.³⁷ This aggada was already known to Mohammed, for it is mentioned several times in the Koran.³⁸ He must also have been acquainted with the theory that Adam was superior in wisdom to the celestial ministers of God,³⁹ a superiority which was evidenced by his ability to bestow the appropriate names upon all of God's creatures, as it is related in the Bible.⁴⁰ The Midrash narrates furthermore that the angels mistook Adam, on account of his resemblance to his master—for man is said to have been created in "God's image"⁴¹—for God and prostrated themselves before him.⁴² In the Koran this adoration on their part is described as the result of a divine command,⁴³ which indicates, as Geiger noted over a century ago,⁴⁴ that Mohammed must have gotten the idea from Christian rather than from Jewish sources.⁴⁵

The soul by virtue of which man resembles his Maker was not created simultaneously with his body. According to Masudi⁴⁶—and he reflects the theory prevalent among Mohammedan historiographers—his physical portion existed for eighty years as a formless mass. This accords with the view expressed in the Babylonian Talmud where it is stated that Adam remained in this amorphous state

³¹ Tabari, *Annales*, ed. De Goeje I p. 154; Ibn Sa'd II 7; Ibn al Athir p. 35.

³² Thus B. T. Yebamot 64b basing itself on Psalms 90, 10.

³³ Cf. Genesis 5, 5.

³⁴ II 12.

³⁵ Viz. Ginzberg, *Legends* I p. 62 note 30.

³⁶ Verse 5.

³⁷ B. T. Sanhedrin 38b and Genesis Rabba 8, 3-6.

³⁸ 2, 32; 7, 10; 15, 16; 17, 63; 18, 48; 20, 115; 38, 71.

³⁹ Genesis 17, 4.

⁴⁰ Genesis 2, 19, 20. Cf. Koran 2, 31.

⁴¹ Genesis 1, 26-27.

⁴² Genesis Rabba 8, 9.

⁴³ 2, 31.

⁴⁴ Abraham Geiger, *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen?* Leipzig 1902, p. 98.

⁴⁵ Viz. also Gruenbaum p. 60.

⁴⁶ III p. 60.

for one hour,⁴⁷ or approximately eighty ordinary years if, as Masudi⁴⁸ and Ibn al Athir⁴⁹ compute it, a day of twelve hours in Paradise was equivalent to one thousand earth years. As for the fruit of the tree of knowledge that brought curse upon man, the opinions of Jewish agadists varied in regard to its nature. The view of Rabbi Meir was that the tree in question was the vine,⁵⁰ and Ibn Sa'd among the Mohammedans agrees with him.⁵¹ However, as the commentaries on Surah 2 verse 33 of the Koran reveal, there were as many divergent interpretations among Moslem exegetes as there were among the rabbinic commentators and parallels can be adduced for each.

By far the most important place among the heroes of the Bible is accorded in Mohammedan legend to the patriarch Abraham, and that of course for a very good reason, because Abraham was the father of the reputed ancestor of the Mohammedan Arabs, Ishmael.⁵² In the Jewish tradition Abraham, of whom the prophet of Islam considered himself to be a direct counterpart⁵³ and whom he adopted as his Wali (patron saint),⁵⁴ is pictured as a forerunner of the religion that was to be initiated by Moses. He is reported in the Mishnah already⁵⁵ to have fulfilled the entire Torah that was given at Sinai centuries after his death. The Koran, on the other hand, makes him a Moslem. "Ibrahim," it declares defiantly, "was not a Jew, nor yet a Christian, but a Hanif resigned (muslim), and not one of the idolators."⁵⁶ He, Mohammed, was merely following the faith of Abraham.⁵⁷

The manner in which Abraham became a believer in the one and only God of the world who remains Himself unseen and is yet the prime mover of every phenomenon in nature was already indicated in early Jewish sources.⁵⁸ According to an opinion quoted by the Babylonian Talmud⁵⁹ the ancestor of Israel was only three years old when he recognized his Maker. The story of his breaking his father's idols, although first found related in detail in the Midrash Genesis Rabba,⁶⁰ the redaction of which is believed to have taken place in the fifth or sixth century of the common era,⁶¹ must go back to a much earlier source, for it is amply supported by Joshua 24:2, where it is stated that Israel's ancestors—and Terach, the father of Abraham, is singled out among them—served gods other than the God of Israel. Also the patriarch's punishment for his deed by being thrown by King Nimrod into a fiery furnace and his miraculous escape therefrom, as the basis of which is given the statement in Genesis 15:7: "I am the Lord who brought you out from Ur (i.e., the fire) of the

⁴⁷ Sanhedrin 38b.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ I p. 26.

⁵⁰ B. T. Berakot 40a.

⁵¹ II, 11.

⁵² Ibid. 25 and all Moslem histories.

⁵³ Bukhari 60, 8.

⁵⁴ Achmad ibn Hanbal I p. 429 ff.

⁵⁵ End of Kiddushin.

⁵⁶ 3, 60.

⁵⁷ 16, 124.

⁵⁸ Ginzberg, *Legends* V p. 210 note 16.

⁵⁹ Nedarim 32a.

⁶⁰ 38, 13

⁶¹ Cf. Jewish Encyclopedia VIII p. 557.

Chaldeans",⁶² is an old legend. It is quoted in the tractate of Pesachim of the Babylonian Talmud⁶³ in connection with the parallel experience of Chaniah, Mishael and Azariah, the three youthful friends of Daniel, who were likewise cast into the fire by the Chaldeans.⁶⁴ These legends were eagerly seized upon by Mohammed and his followers. The Koran narrates in considerable detail how Abraham arrived at the conclusion that God could not be any one of the heavenly bodies, that rise and set.⁶⁵ A goodly portion of Surahs 21⁶⁶ and 37⁶⁷ is devoted to the account of his breaking of his father's idols, and there is a constant recurrence to his attempt to convince his fellow-countrymen,⁶⁸ and particularly his father,⁶⁹ of the error of their ways and to his being thrown into a pyre,⁷⁰ which was fortunately cooled by God so that it did not harm him.

These motifs were further elaborated by the commentators of the Koran and the historians of Islam. They relate how the birth of Abraham, who was destined to undermine the religion of his contemporaries, was predicted by the astrologers to Nimrod, whereupon the latter ordered all the children born in his realm in that year to be killed, precisely as Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, did in the year that Moses was born. They report, furthermore—and here again the analogy with the story of the birth of Moses is very striking—that Abraham's mother had concealed her pregnancy and gave birth to the future iconoclast in a cave where the babe was miraculously fed by God, after he had been abandoned by his mother, until he was old enough to shift for himself, and that at the age of fifteen months he was already fully grown. Finally they describe the furnace built by Nimrod for burning Abraham in punishment for his blasphemies, and tell how the king, upon noting Abraham's miraculous escape, acknowledges the latter's God and is ready to offer a sacrifice to Him, which is, however, not accepted.⁷¹

In the passages of the Koran to which we have referred previously Abraham appears in the figure of a missionary. That is also the role he assumes in the rabbinic Aggada. Commenting on the verse: "the souls which they acquired (literally 'made') in Haran", the Midrash states that that referred to the souls that had been won over by the patriarchal couple to the belief in God.⁷² Abraham would convert the men and Sarah the women. And what was the method employed

⁶² Viz. Genesis Rabba 44, 13.

⁶³ 118a.

⁶⁴ Daniel 3, 15 Cf. also the above-mentioned passage in Genesis Rabba.

⁶⁵ 6, 74-80.

⁶⁶ Verses 52-69.

⁶⁷ Verses 81-95.

⁶⁸ 26, 69-95; 37, 81-95.

⁶⁹ 19, 42-45.

⁷⁰ 21, 69.

⁷¹ Cf. Tabari I p. 254 ff.

⁷² Genesis Rabba ad loc. and B. T. Sanhedrin 97b.

by Abraham in his proselytizing efforts? He would, said the Jewish sages, invite wayfarers into his tent, and after they had eaten and drunk and refreshed themselves and wished to express their appreciation to him for his hospitality, he would advise them rather to thank Him who is the ultimate provider of all of their necessities.⁷³ An almost identical observation is found in the annals of Tabari in connection with the account of the visit paid to Abraham by the three angels.⁷⁴ According to the Koran the celestial guests did not touch the food offered them by the patriarch⁷⁵—which again accords fully with the Jewish Aggada which states that the angels did not really partake of the food placed before them but merely acted as though they were eating.⁷⁶ But why did they refuse Abraham's hospitality? Tabari's answer is that they accepted nothing without paying for it. Thereupon Abraham is said to have replied that it had been his intention to charge them for their meal, and, when they inquired what the price might be, his answer was: "That you mention God's name at the beginning and praise Him at the end of the repast." This evoked from the angel Gabriel, who was one of the pretended travellers, the remark to his companion Michael—the Jewish Aggada by the way also includes these two among the three visitors of Abraham⁷⁷—"Such a one is worthy of being called 'the friend of God'".⁷⁸

Abraham's proverbial hospitality is a favorite theme in rabbinic legend which takes the word "Eshel" mentioned in Genesis 21:33 to stand for "an inn for wayfarers".⁷⁹ Although this phase of the patriarch's character is not enlarged upon in the Koran, it figures quite prominently in early Mohammedan historical literature. Ibn Kutaiba, who flourished in the ninth century,⁸⁰ speaks of him as "the first to practice hospitality."⁸¹ The same remark is found in the annals of Tabari⁸² written a century later. The biographer Ibn Sa'd calls him "father of guests",⁸³ as does also Al Hariri in his *Makamat*.

The Hebrew patriarch's activity as a builder of altars, which is frequently referred to in the Bible,⁸⁴ caused Mohammedans to ascribe to him the founding of the Kaaba, the Moslem sanctuary in Mecca that had been revered as a place of worship by the Arabs during the pagan period.⁸⁵ The "house" mentioned in Surah 2:118 ff., that Abraham and Ishmael had been ordered to cleanse, was, according

⁷³ B. T. Sotah 10a and Genesis Rabba on Genesis 21, 33.

⁷⁴ I p. 274 ff.

⁷⁵ 11, 72 ff.

⁷⁶ B. T. Baba Mezi'a 86b.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Cf. Isaiah 41, 8.

⁷⁹ B. T. Sotah 10a and Baba Mezi'a 86b.

⁸⁰ Viz. Brockelmann I p. 120.

⁸¹ *Handbuch der Geschichte*, ed. Wuestenfeld p. 16.

⁸² I p. 347.

⁸³ II 21.

⁸⁴ Genesis 12, 7, 8; 13, 4, 18.

⁸⁵ Cf. J. E. I p. 87 ff.

to the commentators, this national shrine.⁸⁶ The desert adjoining the "sacred place",⁸⁷ which Abraham had assigned to some of his seed, was the barren, stony region around Mecca which had been bequeathed unto Ishmael⁸⁸ of whom the Hebrew Scriptures relate that he had been sent with his mother to the wilderness.⁸⁹ As for the fountain that is said to have been discovered by Hagar, it is identified by the Moslem exegetes as that of Zemzem near Mecca.⁹⁰

It was only natural, considering his supposed relationship to them, that Ishmael, the son of Hagar, Abraham's oldest offspring, should in the literature of the Mohammedans take precedence over his younger brother Isaac. In the Koran the identity of "the virtuous son" for whom Abraham prayed and whom he was bidden to sacrifice is not revealed.⁹¹ This circumstance presented an excellent opportunity for differences of opinion and especially for divergence from the biblical tradition that Isaac was the son whom Abraham had been asked to offer up on the altar.⁹² In fact, the historian Tabari quotes the statement of a Palestinian Jewish scholar, who had become converted to Islam, to the effect that Ishmael was really the son whose sacrifice had been requested by God, and that the Jews knew it, but out of jealousy of the Arabs they had suppressed the truth.⁹³ Accordingly, then, the legend about Satan's attempt, after he had failed to move Abraham, to dissuade Isaac from allowing himself to be immolated and to prevail upon Sarah to raise objections,⁹⁴ which is reported also by Tabari⁹⁵ and Ibn al Athir,⁹⁶ is transferred by those who claimed that Ishmael was the intended victim, to Ishmael and Hagar.⁹⁷ In both cases those who were to be offered up showed themselves willing victims.

Rabbinic tradition credits Abraham with the institution of the morning prayer,⁹⁸ the basis of this theory being the implication of the verse: "And Abraham arose early in the morning at the place where he had stood" (i.e., when he was pleading with God).⁹⁹ A similar innovation is attributed to him in the Hadith collection of Ahmad ibn Hanbal according to which he had earned the title of "the friend of God" because he used to say, whenever it was morning and evening: "Praised be God when you get up in the morning and when you go

⁸⁶ Cf. Zamachshari and Baidawi *ad loc.*

⁸⁷ Koran 14, 40.

⁸⁸ Viz. Baidawi *ad loc.*

⁸⁹ Genesis 21, 10.

⁹⁰ Tabari I pp. 279 and 282; Ibn al Athir I p. 73.

⁹¹ 37, 100.

⁹² Cf. Tabari I p. 289 ff.; Ibn Kutaiba p. 17 ff. and the commentaries on the Koran 37, 100.

⁹³ I p. 299

⁹⁴ B. T. Sanhedrin 89b and Genesis Rabba 56, 3. Viz. also Ginzberg, *Legends* I p. 277.

⁹⁵ I p. 293 ff.

⁹⁶ I p. 78.

⁹⁷ Tabari I p. 304; Ibn al Athir I p. 80.

⁹⁸ B. T. Berakot 26b.

⁹⁹ Genesis 19, 27.

to sleep at night.”¹⁰⁰ However Mohammedan tradition goes much further than this, ascribing to him the institution of many old Moslem practices aside from that of circumcision, which is mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures,¹⁰¹ such as clipping the mustache, cutting the finger-nails, removing the hair of the armpits, etc.¹⁰²

According to rabbinic legend Abraham is also supposed to have been the first human being to have grey hair.¹⁰³ The basis of this aggada was the statement in Genesis 24:1: “And Abraham was old, advanced in years”, in which the word “old” seems to be superfluous. The reason why, according to the aggadists, Abraham’s hair was permitted to turn grey was that otherwise he would have been indistinguishable from his son Isaac who was his exact counterpart. And the consideration that caused God to endow Isaac with the very same features as his father Abraham, so that whoever saw the two together had to admit that “Abraham had begotten Isaac”,¹⁰⁴ was that the wisecracks of the generation were casting suspicion on the patriarchal couple’s parenthood, alleging that Abraham and Sarah had picked up a foundling in the street whom they tried to palm off as their own offspring. A story corresponding to this one in every detail is related by Ibn Kutaiba,¹⁰⁵ who is known to have been quite a student of ancient traditions.

So far as his attitude, as expressed in his own book of revelations, was concerned, the “seal of the prophets”¹⁰⁶ seems to have given no precedence over one another to either of the two monotheistic religions from which Islam was sprung, and with which he claimed that it was identical. “We believe in God,” so he declares in Surah 3:78, “and what has been revealed to thee, and what was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes and what was given to Moses and Jesus and the prophets from the Lord—we will make no distinction between any of them.” The Torah of Moses and the gospel of Jesus are mentioned by him several times in one breath.¹⁰⁷ The Koran purports to be nothing more than a corroboration of these, as it is explicitly stated in Surah 46:11 with reference to the former: “But before it was the Book of Moses, a model and a mercy and this is a book confirming it in the Arabic language.” Nevertheless the name of the prophet of Israel occurs far more frequently in the Bible of the Mohammedans than that of the founder of Christianity. From the Hadith also it appears that Mohammed had a special fondness for the son of Amram, concerning whom he is reported to have said:

¹⁰⁰ III p. 439.

¹⁰¹ Genesis 17, 1 ff.

¹⁰² Cf. Bukhari 79, 51 and Ibn Kutaiba p. 16 ff.

¹⁰³ B. T. Baba Mezi'a 87a.

¹⁰⁴ Genesis 25, 19.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. p. 16.

¹⁰⁶ For this title given to Mohammed see J. E. VI p. 652.

¹⁰⁷ 3, 57; 42, 11.

"Give me no superiority over Moses",¹⁰⁸ and to have declared furthermore that on the day of resurrection, when he would be the first to leave his tomb, he would find Moses clinging to the throne of God.¹⁰⁹ It is no wonder, then, that the personality of Moses should have received considerable prominence in Mohammedan legend.

According to the Aggada the birth of the man who was to lead the children of Israel out of the Egyptian house of bondage had been foreseen by the counsellors of Egypt's ruler Pharaoh.¹¹⁰ They knew even the hour in which he would be born although they were not certain as to whether he would be an Egyptian or a Hebrew. It was this uncertainty on their part that prompted Pharaoh to issue the decree ordering the murder by drowning of all male children that would be born in Egypt.¹¹¹ The same story, of which the Talmud contains only a few hints, is told in elaborate detail by Masudi,¹¹² Tabari,¹¹³ Ibn Khaldun¹¹⁴ and Ibn al Athir.¹¹⁵ According to the last-named, Pharaoh dreamed a dream about a fire that issued from the Temple of Jerusalem and enveloped the whole of Egypt. This was interpreted by the astrologers as presaging the birth of a child among the Israelites that would deprive Pharaoh of his kingdom. It was on this account that the king commanded all male children that would be born that year in Egypt to be put to death. So far as Moses was concerned, of course, the tyrant's plan was foiled. For, as the Hebrew Scriptures relate, when after his birth his mother was no longer able to conceal him, she put him into a box among the reeds of the Nile where he was picked up by the daughter of Pharaoh, who adopted him as her son, his own mother being engaged as his nurse,¹¹⁶ for according to the aggada,¹¹⁷ which was also known to Mohammed,¹¹⁸ he refused to drink the milk of anyone else.

Now Moses was by his own confession, as reported in the Bible, "heavy of tongue".¹¹⁹ How did this condition come about? The answer given in Jewish legend¹²⁰ is that once, when as a young child he was sitting at the table near Pharaoh, Moses took the king's crown off the latter's head and placed it on his own. This act terrified Pharaoh as well as all his officers who were present. They suspected that Moses might be the very child whose birth they had predicted and there were some among them who were in favor of putting him to death immediately. Jethro, Moses' future father-in-law, who was one

¹⁰⁸ Bukhari 60, 31.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. 44, 1; 60, 25.

¹¹⁰ B. T. Sotah 11a and 12b and Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* II, 9, 2.

¹¹¹ Exodus 1, 22.

¹¹² IV p. 92.

¹¹³ I p. 445.

¹¹⁴ Universal History, Bulaq II p. 81.

¹¹⁵ I p. 120.

¹¹⁶ Exodus 2, 1-10.

¹¹⁷ Cf. B. T. Sotah 12b.

¹¹⁸ Koran 28, 11.

¹¹⁹ Exodus 4, 10 ff.

¹²⁰ Shemot Rabba 1, 26 and Sefer Hayashar.

of those in attendance, however, counselled patience. "After all," he argued, "he is only a child without sense. What he did may have no significance. Before we decide upon slaying him, let us subject him to a test. Let us place before him two bowls, one filled with gold and the other with glowing coals, and see to which of the two he will be attracted. If he reaches out for the gold, then let him be slain, for then it will have been proven that he is aware of what he is doing. If, however, he goes after the coals, it will be clear that he acts without intent." Jethro's plan was accepted and Moses was about to seize the gold when the angel Gabriel pushed his hand toward the glowing coals, one of which he put into his mouth and thus burnt his tongue. The account is found in full detail only in rather late rabbinic sources dating from a period after the foundation of Islam.¹²¹ However, the Jewish historian Josephus, who wrote in the first century of the common era,¹²² was already acquainted with the legend of Moses' seizing Pharaoh's crown and the demand for his life.¹²³ Now the same story, with but slight variations, appears also in Mohammedan literature.¹²⁴ There it is the wife of Pharaoh, probably on account of the remark in the Koran Surah 28:8: "He is a cheering of the eye to me and to thee. Kill him not", who is featured as the protectress of Moses. It is she who declares that Moses is only a child without sense, and Moses does not take off Pharaoh's crown, but he pulls his beard. Also, instead of the gold¹²⁵ mentioned in the Jewish source, it is precious stones that are said in the Mohammedan versions to have been employed in the ordeal.

One of the wonderful possessions of Moses was the rod with which he performed many of his miracles.¹²⁶ According to the Mishnah this rod, as the Jewish commentators identify it, was one of the ten things created on the Sabbath eve of the week of creation during the twilight hour.¹²⁷ It is reported to have been made of sapphire.¹²⁸ The later Aggada relates that originally this staff was in the possession of Adam and that it was passed down from generation to generation until it came into the hands of Moses.¹²⁹ The Mohammedan biographer Ibn Sa'd narrates in a similar vein that Moses' staff was taken from the myrtles that grew in the Garden of Eden, and that it was ten cubits long.¹³⁰ The assertion that Moses made use of a club ten cubits in length when he fought with Og, the king of Bashan, is made in the Talmud.¹³¹ And this brings us to the question of Moses' own size. According to the passage of the Talmud just referred to, as well as Tabari¹³² and Ibn al Athir,¹³³ Moses was ten cubits in height. He

¹²¹ Cf. J. E. VIII p. 562 and XII p. 588.

¹²² Cf. J. E. VII p. 274.

¹²³ *Antiquities* II, 9, 7.

¹²⁷ Abot 5, 6. See also the commentary of

¹²⁸ E. g., Tanchuma on Exodus 17, 4.

¹²⁹ Pirke Rabbi Eliezer, chap. 40.

¹³⁰ II 12.

¹²⁴ Tabari I p. 445 ff. and Ibn al Athir, I p. 120 ff.

¹²⁶ Shemot Rabba 1, 31.

¹²⁸ Exodus 4, 2; 7, 15 etc.

Obadiah di Bertinoro ad loc.

¹³¹ B. T. Berakot 54b.

¹³² I, p. 500.

¹³³ I, p. 138.

jumped up ten cubits and with his club, or his rod, which was also ten cubits long, he struck the giant in his ankles, which brought the big man down. In both the Jewish and the Mohammedan sources a mountain, that Og had plucked out and placed upon his head for the purpose of hurling it upon the Israelites, became hollow in the center so that it fell down upon his neck like a collar, to his extreme discomfiture and embarrassment. It was this handicap that enabled Moses to fell him.

Speaking now of mountains that were held suspended over Israel, the statement of Exodus 19:17: "And the Israelites stood at the bottom of the mountain" gave rise to the aggada¹³⁴ that God lifted up Mount Sinai over the heads of the Israelites like a tub and said: "If ye accept the Torah, good and well. But if not, here shall be your burial." In the same sense do the commentators Zamakhshari and Baidawi interpret the remark in the Koran, Surah 2:60: "And when we took a covenant with you and held the mountain over you; 'Accept what we have brought you with a strong will and bear in mind what is therein, haply ye yet may fear.'" It is also related in the Talmud that, when the Israelites heard the first of the Ten Commandments from the mouth of God, their souls left their bodies but afterwards returned again,¹³⁵ confirming the belief in the resurrection of the dead. This was, according to the commentators Zamakhshari and Baidawi, also the meaning of Surah 2, 53 of the Koran, where it is stated: "And when ye said to Moses: 'O Moses! We will not believe in thee until we see God manifestly' and the thunderbolt caught you while ye yet looked on. Then we raised you up after your death."

There is furthermore a parallel in Mohammedan literature to the aggada cited in the Mekilta on Exodus 14:16 about the transparency of the walls of the water of the Red Sea through which the Israelites passed when the sea was divided. The Koran describes each part as a "big mountain",¹³⁶ paraphrasing Exodus 15:8 which reports that "the floods stood upright as a heap." Hereon the commentators Zamachshari and Baidawi, as well as the historians Tabari¹³⁷ and Ibn al Athir,¹³⁸ observe that the water of the Red sea was divided into twelve parts corresponding to the number of the tribes of Israel so that they were able to see each other. This remark agrees literally with the statement of the early Tannaitic Mekilta of Rabbi Ishmael.¹³⁹

The last of the heroes of the Bible to whose depiction in Moham-

¹³⁴ B. T. Shabbat, 88a and 'Abodah Zarah 2b.

¹³⁵ B. T. Shabbat 88b.

¹³⁶ 26, 63.

¹³⁷ I, p. 460.

¹³⁸ I, p. 132.

¹³⁹ Ed. Horowitz and Rabin p. 100. For the probable date of this midrash cf. J. E. VIII p. 571.

medan legend we would like to call attention here is David, Israel's ideal king. In the literature of Islam the figure of David is overshadowed by that of his son Solomon, of whose wisdom Moslem historians and chroniclers have a great deal to say.¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless David occupied a position of high esteem in Mohammedan tradition. As he appears in the Aggada of the rabbis, the warrior-king of Israel, who on account of the blood of battle that stained his hands was not considered qualified for building the house of God,¹⁴¹ is stripped of the warlike attributes of a soldier and pictured as a pious judge, the head of a Sanhedrin composed of scholars, who spends most of his waking time in study and prayer. Thus it is related by one of the Babylonian Amoraim,¹⁴² on the basis of the statements in the book of Psalms "At midnight I rise to praise Thee",¹⁴³ and "Awake, O harp and psaltery! I awaken the dawn",¹⁴⁴ that a harp hung suspended over David's couch, and, when the northwind blew on its strings at midnight, the harp would begin to play of its own accord and thus arouse him from his slumber. Thereupon the pious king would get up in order to engage in the study of the Law. Another view, supported by the verse: "I arose early in eventime and cried",¹⁴⁵ was that until midnight David would study, and from then on occupy himself with song and praise of God. Then in the morning, the scholars of Israel would appear before him asking sustenance for the people, and the deliberations of the council of war would take place. This must also have been the picture in the mind of Mohammed when he spoke of David, to whom the psalms (Zubur) had been revealed,¹⁴⁶ as exercising the office of judge in a dispute over a field into which some sheep had strayed.¹⁴⁷ At all events in the Sahih of Bukhari¹⁴⁸ it is stated on the authority of the prophet of Islam that "the prayer most agreeable to God was that of David, and the fast most agreeable to God was that practiced by David. David would sleep during the first half of the night, devote the next third to prayer and then go back to sleep until the morning." "He would fast every other day".¹⁴⁹ Ahmad ibn Hanbal reports that David used to recite the Koran before harnessing his beast, and that he lived only by the work of his hands.¹⁵⁰ Ibn al Athir adds that David wept a great deal as he recited his prayers.¹⁵¹

According to the Hebrew Scriptures, David's cardinal sin was his adultery with Bath Sheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite,¹⁵² whom, after his connubium with Bath Sheba, the king had ordered to be sent to the thick of battle.¹⁵³ The Aggada tries very hard to wash away

¹⁴⁰ Viz. Gruenbaum p. 189 ff.

¹⁴¹ I Chronicles 22, 8.

¹⁴² B. T. Berakot 3b.

¹⁴³ 119, 62.

¹⁴⁴ 57, 9.

¹⁴⁵ 119, 147.

¹⁴⁶ Koran 4, 161; 17, 57.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid. 21, 78.79; 38, 23.

¹⁴⁸ 60, 38.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid. 30, 54; 78, 84.

¹⁵⁰ II p. 314. Cf. with the last remark Psalms 128, 2.

¹⁵¹ I, p. 156. Cf. herewith Psalms 6, 7.

¹⁵² Cf., e.g., I Kings 15, 5.

¹⁵³ II Samuel 11, 15.

this stain on David's character, one of the Amoraim going so far as to declare that "whoever thinks David sinned is in error."¹⁵⁴ Bath Sheba, so it is asserted in exoneration of David's sin, was really no longer bound to Uriah by ties of matrimony because, whoever went to war under David's command, was compelled to grant his wife a divorce.¹⁵⁵ Secondly, Uriah the Hittite had been guilty of the crime of rebellion against the government and had thus incurred the penalty of death. His being sent to be killed in battle cannot, therefore, be construed as deliberate murder.¹⁵⁶ Furthermore, Bath Sheba had been destined for David since creation.¹⁵⁷ And if it could be said that David really sinned, his sin was a boon in disguise, because through his remorse that followed, others were taught a lesson in repentance.¹⁵⁸ Finally it is explained that the entire episode was the result of David's desire to be tested by God through temptation. Did he not express such a wish in his psalms? Did he not say: "Examine me, O Lord, and try me?"¹⁵⁹ So God complied with his request by sending Satan to him in the form of a bird. When he shot an arrow after him, he pierced a honeycomb which was screening Bath Sheba who was then washing her head. And when David saw her, his passion was aroused for her.¹⁶⁰ Almost identical with this Jewish version of David's temptation and sin is that of the commentator Zamakhshari apropos the statement in the Koran concerning the birds that returned repeatedly to David.¹⁶¹ David, says Zamakhshari, had asked God to prove him as he had proved his ancestors and the Almighty answered his prayer. So one day whilst David was worshipping in his chapel behind closed doors, Satan flew in in the guise of a golden dove. David stretched out his hand after her, but she eluded him several times, until finally she sat down near a window through which the king could see a beautiful woman arranging her hair. Upon inquiring, he learnt that she was the wife of Uriah the Hittite. He, therefore, forthwith ordered that her husband be sent away to the battle-front and, when he had been reported killed, David took Bath Sheba to wife.¹⁶²

The rabbinic Aggada tells us that the Angel of Death had a difficult task in getting hold of David when the latter's time to leave the world had come because the king was always engaged in study on the Sabbath day on which it had been foretold that he would die.¹⁶³ He was compelled to employ special cunning, to trick his intended victim into interrupting his lesson by making a noise in the palace garden. Thus, and thus only, was he able to bring about David's decease. In Mohammedan tradition, as it is recorded by Ahmad ibn Han-

¹⁵⁴ B. T. Shabbat 56a.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid. Ketubot 9b.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. Kiddushin 43a.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. Sanhedrin 107a.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. 'Abodah Zarah 4b and 5a.

¹⁵⁹ Psalms 26, 2.

¹⁶⁰ B. T. Sanhedrin 107a.

¹⁶¹ 38, 19.

¹⁶² Thus also Ibn al Athir I p. 156.

¹⁶³ B. T. Shabbat 30a and b.

bal,¹⁶⁴ for example, the Angel of Death was obliged to force his way into David's palace, but for a different reason than that given by Jewish legend. David, so it avers, was a very jealous husband. He, therefore, always kept his wives behind locked doors allowing no male to enter his home. One day a man appeared within the palace precincts, which caused the king no little surprise. "How did you contrive to get in," he asked, "when all the doors are shut tight and strict orders have been given to admit no one into the interior of the building?" The stranger replied: "I am one who is not afraid of kings and from whom nothing can be withheld." Then David knew that it was the Angel of Death that was addressing him and he gave himself up.

We have had a chance in what preceded to sample several outstanding specimens of Mohammedan legends on biblical subjects and observe their resemblances to as well as their differences from the corresponding Jewish versions. We should be in a position now, as a result of our investigation, to draw certain conclusions, particularly as regards the relationship between Jews and Mohammedans during the first few centuries of Islam. It has long been known how mightily the development of Hebrew philology was stimulated among Jews in the Middle Ages by the example of Arab grammarians,¹⁶⁵ and how deeply Moslem theology and philosophy influenced Jewish thinking in that period.¹⁶⁶ That the process, far from being one-sided was a reciprocal one, that Mohammedanism gained from Judaism at least as much as it gave—and we are not speaking here of biblical Judaism but primarily of its rabbinic amplification, of that vast superstructure of law and legend based upon the Hebrew Scriptures that is embraced in the literature of the Talmud and the Midrash—that becomes more and more evident as one studies critically the traditions of Islam as recorded in the Koran and the works of Mohammedan historians, theologians and exegetes. To be sure, not all of the legends that we have considered in this survey need necessarily have come directly from Jewish sources. Some, at least, have a definite Christian coloring and must have been brought to the ken of Moslems through the writings of the clergy of the Syrian Church, who in turn took them from the Jews. There are enough left, however, that can be accounted for only as the result of personal contact with Jews, of whom there was, during the ninth and tenth centuries of the common era, the golden era of Arab culture, a large, firmly established and well-informed Arabic-speaking community in the center of Mohammedan civiliza-

¹⁶⁴ II p. 419.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Introduction of Derenbourg's edition of Ibn Janach's smaller treatises, Paris 1880 and Malter's *Life and Works of Saadia Gaon*, Philadelphia 1921.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. S. Munk's *Melange de Philosophie Juive et Arabe* and Husik's *A History of Medieval Jewish Philosophy*.

tion, namely Iraq, and especially in its capital, the seat of the caliphate Baghdad,¹⁶⁷ where it was easy to obtain from the authoritative representatives and interpreters of Judaism the necessary information about its traditions.

The form in which Mohammedan legends on biblical characters have come down indicates that the Moslem rapporteurs were often totally unaware of the biblical basis of the legends. This was due no doubt to the fact that they were for the most part unacquainted with the original of the Hebrew Scriptures which they did not feel the same need to consult as the adherents of the New Testaments did to refer to the Old, for the simple reason that the Arabic Koran was supposed to have supplanted the previous revelations of which Mohammed believed that he had the more correct version.¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, while the New Testament frequently quotes its predecessor verbatim, there is not a single direct quotation from the Hebrew Scriptures to be found in the Koran. The Mohammedan legends about biblical characters cannot, therefore, have arisen as a result of an independent study on the part of Moslems of the Old Testament, but they must have been taken over bodily from rabbinic lore. That the authority of Jews with respect to these traditions was entirely acceptable to Moslems is explicitly stated in nearly all the works of the Mohammedan Hadith,¹⁶⁹ and that Jewish scholars were consulted for the purpose is attested to by Tabari¹⁷⁰ and others. Of course the Jewish traditions were adjusted or "doctored", as we have noted in the matter of the date of Adam's banishment from Paradise and the priority of Ishmael or Isaac, to suit Mohammedan belief. About the popularity of these Israiliyat among Mohammedans, however, there can be no doubt.¹⁷¹

It appears certain, then, from the foregoing that a lively intercourse existed during the first few hundred years of the history of Islam between Jews and Mohammedans. There took place a regular give and take which redounded to the mutual advantage of the two sides concerned. And one cannot escape the conclusion that, with such a background of collaboration and friendship in the past as a basis, a *modus vivendi* between the heirs of Judaism and Mohammedanism in modern times could be worked out that would be of benefit to both.

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¹⁶⁷ Cf. Graetz *ibid.* Leipzig 1909, V p. 221 ff.

¹⁶⁸ Viz. Ignaz Goldziher, *Vorlesungen ueber den Islam*, Leipzig 1913, p. 9 ff.

¹⁶⁹ Bukhari 60, 50; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, II p. 159, 202, 474, 502 and III p. 13, 46 and IV p. 437, 444. For further references see Wensinck p. 231.

¹⁷⁰ See above.

¹⁷¹ Cf. J. E., VI p. 656.

BOOK REVIEWS

Melanchthon und der Islam; ein Beitrag zur Klärung des Verhältnisses zwischen Christentum und Fremdreligionen in der Reformationszeit, von Manfred Köhler. Leipzig, 1938: Leopold Klotz Verlag. 8vo. pp. 164.

This well-written and abundantly documented study is really of more interest to students of the religious problems of the period of the Reformation than it is to students of Islam. Most students are aware that Luther himself took no little interest in the problem that Islam, particularly in the person of the Turks, presented to the Christendom of that day, and some will remember that he was the translator of Riccoldus' *Confutatio Alcorani*; but probably few will remember that it was Melanchthon who wrote the Foreword to the 1550 edition of Bibliander's publication of the first Latin translation of the Qur'an, and the Preface to Bartholomaeus Georgievitz' *De origine Imperii Turcorum*, which appeared in 1560.

Manfred Köhler in this little book, after a brief description of what kind of material about Muhammad and Islam was being published in the pre-Reformation period, gives us three sections: 1. Melanchthon's account of Islam, i.e., what he has to say scattered through his numerous works, about the person of Muhammad, about the Qur'an, about the Islamic system, and about the Turks in particular; 2. His criticism of Islam; 3. His position in the general history of the development of the Science of Religion. With nothing but Latin translations and a few Greek works to provide him source material on Islam, and the accounts of many folk who had been in contact with the Turks to tell him how they found Islam working as a system among these most redoubtable enemies of Christendom, it is not to be wondered at that the Islam known to Melanchthon is at times hardly recognizable by us. Also in view of his theological position and strongly polemic interest it is not surprising to find his judgments so sharp. Yet that he took the trouble he obviously had done to acquaint himself with the religion of the Turks, and strove so earnestly to awaken his generation to the religious problem of Islam as well as the political problem of the Turks, is worthy of record. The author of this book has done us good service in quoting in his notes so copiously from the original sources he used, so that his work can be used as a useful work of reference.

ARTHUR JEFFERY

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Huellas del Islam. Por Miguel Asin Palacios. Madrid, 1941. Espasa-Calpe. 8vo. pp. 307.

In the brief space here available one can only call attention to this feast of good things Asin has provided us in collecting a number of his papers which were published in sources not easily available to a majority of students, and providing them with Introduction and notes. The Spanish word *huella* means the footprint left by a human

or animal who passes by, and here his *Huellas del Islam* refers to a series of traces he has found left by Islam in the literature of Europe, sometimes in unexpected places. Students will remember the stir caused by the publication in 1919 of his *La Escatologia musulmana en la Divina Comoedia*, where he showed how heavily Dante was indebted, either mediately or immediately, to certain works of Muslim eschatology. The collection before us is more of the same.

There are five papers. The first is on Averroism in the theology of Thomas Aquinas, pointing out the curious similarities in the doctrine of reason and faith in both, and raising the question whether this is coincidence or imitation, with some remarks on other theological imitations and on the theory of "certain existence" in Ibn 'Arabi of Murcia. The second is on the thesis of the necessity of revelation in Islam and in Scholasticism. Here he shows how the theory has its root in Greek philosophy but became acute in Christianity. Then he discusses how it appears in the teaching of Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Jahiz, Raghīb al-Isfahani, Ghazzali, Ibn Hazm, Ibn Rushd and also in Maimonides and the scholastics William of Auvergne and Thomas Aquinas. The third is on the Arabic original of the famous Dispute between the Ass and Friar Anselm, of which Spanish, French and German texts are known, and which he takes back to an Arabic tale and compares with the disputes between men and animals in the Encyclopaedia of the Brothers of Purity. The fourth is a long discussion of the Muslim predecessors of the *Pari* of Pascal, particularly the parallels in al-Ghazzali. The fifth is on a Hispano-Muslim precursor of Juan della Cruz, namely Ibn 'Abbad of Ronda, whose life he gives, along with translations of long extracts from his *Sharh Hikam*, the study including a number of illustrations of the close correspondence with the technical vocabulary of Islamic mysticism to be observed in the works of Juan de la Cruz.

Asin's competence is well enough known, and in these particular studies he is less open to the charge of bias sometimes levelled at his *La espiritualidad de Algazel y su sentido cristiano*, or his earlier *El Islam cristianizado*. We have here, however, the same sure handling of the texts, and the same clarity of exposition that make those works a delight to read. Some of his conclusions are sure to cause consternation in certain quarters, but there can be no question that he has come across the footprints of Islam, and has made clear even to the uninitiated what traces he has seen. There is no index to the book, but an elaborate table of contents makes up for this.

One hears tales of the straits to which scholarship is reduced in present-day Spain, but the printing, paper and general appearance of this book are better than in many books appearing from supposedly better supplied lands.

ARTHUR JEFFERY

Columbia University

✓ Palestine—Land of Promise. By Walter Clay Lowdermilk. Harper & Bros., New York and London, 1944, pp. 236 + 16 pp. of illustrations. \$2.50.

The author of this book is president of the American Geophysical Union. He is a soil conservationist, forestry engineer, and hydrologist of wide experience; in 1938-9 he spent fifteen months in making an

extensive survey of soil and water conservation in Europe, North Africa, and the Near East. With this background he should be able to speak with authority when it comes to developing Palestine in agriculture, horticulture, and electric power. He travelled over 2,300 miles in Palestine and 1,000 miles in Trans-Jordan by automobile, and so he knows the country very well.

Among other topics, Dr. Lowdermilk discusses the geography of Palestine, that country in ancient times, reclamation of land, agriculture, industrial development, Arab economy, Jewish settlements, and Palestine's absorptive capacity. On pp. 57-9 he considers the population of Palestine in ancient times, while in the first chapter he informs us that the Jewish population of the land has grown from about 50,000 in 1918 to over 550,000 in 1943. Accepting about 1,600,000 as the total population, the Jews comprise over one third, while 900,000 are Moslems and 125,000 are Christians. He believes that with full utilization of the Jordan Valley for reclamation and power 4,000,000 Jewish refugees could be absorbed in addition to the 1,800,000 Arabs and Jews already in Palestine and Trans-Jordan.

The writer contrasts the Old Testament description of Palestine (Deut. 8:7-9) with present conditions which were produced not by a change of climate, but through neglect. He highly praises the work of the Jews who have proved themselves capable of the herculean task of reclaiming the Holy Land. On p. 80 he quotes with approval the words of Major Jarvis, who spent many years in Sinai and southern Palestine: "As for the Arab, he is so thoroughly satisfied with the system employed by his ancestors a thousand years ago that it is absolutely hopeless to try to get him interested in a new vegetable or seed or any change that savors of modernity." He concludes Chapter V, saying: "If men in Palestine will treat their land with the full care it deserves, and if a far-sighted government will assist them in their efforts toward reclamation and conservation, the country will again become a 'land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarcity.'" He is very enthusiastic about Jewish developments in Palestine, closing Chapter VI with the words: "Rural Palestine is becoming less and less like Trans-Jordan, Syria, and Iraq, and more and more like Denmark, Holland, and parts of the United States. Continued Jewish initiative and a progressive policy on the part of the government will further accelerate this remarkable evolution."

As examples of Jewish ability in reclamation he mentions the settlements of Petach Tikvah, Hadera, Nahalal, Kiriath Anavim, Hanita, and Dagania. He cites statistics to show that the Arabs have benefited by the Jewish immigration. He maintains that the Arab villages near Jewish settlements are much less backward than those in all-Arab sections, that Arab health has improved, and that the economic status of the Arabs has been raised. According to Lowdermilk, the Arab-Jewish differences are not insoluble, and they can be settled by the cooperation of the victorious United Nations.

Of special interest is Chapter XI, The Jordan Valley Authority—a Counterpart of TVA in Palestine. If that engineering scheme were carried out, Palestine would indeed become a prosperous land. The next two chapters, dealing with the Possibilities of the Negeb and Trans-Jordan—Past, Present, and Future, are also very illuminating.

Lowdermilk concludes with the belief that, if the forces of reclamation introduced by the Jews be permitted to continue, Palestine may well be the leaven that will transform the other lands of the Near East. The book can be read with profit by Biblical students, by those who are interested in ancient and modern Palestine and by missionaries to the Near East.

HENRY S. GEHMAN

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Humanisme Musulman d'hier et d'aujourd'hui; Elements culturels de base. Par Louis Gardet. Tunis, 1941. Extrait de la Revue IBLA. pp. 40.

This essay, which appears as one of the *Publications de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes*, the Institute of the White Fathers in North Africa, opens up a little-thought-of subject, which, however, is of some interest at this time when we hear much of a cultural revival in Arab countries. Humanism is not, after all, a purely Greco-Roman heritage, though it tends to have that sense in the West. In a quite legitimate way we can speak of a Muslim humanism, which, though in some respects it will differ very much from what goes by the name, and has gone by the name, of Humanism in our Western world, has yet many of the same elements in its composition. It is the question of what, in the past of the Islamic world, has constituted this humanism within the Muslim body, and what the characteristics of a Muslim humanism may be in the post-War world of reconstruction which we are so soon to enter, that Louis Gardet, with his usual clarity and sympathetic approach discusses here. He rightly insists on the peculiar religious cast any such humanism must have in Islam, and indeed always has had, even among groups which seem to have sat very loosely to orthodox Islam in the past. He also emphasises how exclusively Muslim culture has always been an urban culture, and how much it has suffered in not having been able to nourish itself from the ever fresh and vigorous life of the rural populations. That there are elements of real humanistic value in the non-classical culture and in the rural life, as we can glimpse it through the ages, he rightly insists, and suggests that the future humanism to be expected in the Muslim world will, on the one hand, make more of this rural element, and on the other will be a less exclusive culture in that it seeks to integrate itself into the fuller humanistic culture of the larger world of our day.

ARTHUR JEFFERY

Columbia University

The Christian Mission in Our Day. By Luman J. Shafer. The Friendship Press, New York. pp. 167. \$1.00, cloth; 60 cents, paper.

One welcomes so compact and informing a volume as this by the author of *The Christian Alternative to World Chaos*. It is a statesman-like and sober presentation of the present world situation describing the nature of the racial and economic crisis and the secularism that bred revolutions across the world. The author's viewpoint is from Eastern Asia, especially Japan and China. Africa is scarcely on his horizon, and the world of Islam is referred to only in a single line that speaks of Iraq. The third chapter discusses Christianity and the

Postwar world, and emphasizes that a world-faith is required. "Christianity is the truth about God and man and must therefore be universally true." Yet Dr. Shafer defines the elements of the Christian faith in the same chapter as "the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man." And he also asserts that there is a common ground for world-order among other religions—"a kind of universal 'Overall' under which men meet as men—the Allah of Islam, the Karma of Buddhism, the Heaven of Confucianism." Sometimes his theology seems to oscillate between Hocking and Kremer but it comes to rest with the latter, at the evangelical center of supernatural Revelation, Christ as the world's Redeemer. "The missionary movement is not a humanitarian movement and the humanitarian aspects of the program of missions cease to be of significance for the future of mankind unless they are unmistakably linked with the Christian faith."

As regards mission aims, policies and the qualifications of the future missionary, his words have wisdom and weight. Altogether an excellent tonic against flabby thinking in post-war days and an inspiration to faith in ecumenic Christianity.

Z.

Wanless of India: Lancet of the Lord. By Lillian Emery Wanless. W. A. Wilde Company, Boston. pp. 366. \$3.00.

"The name of Wanless," said Dr. Robert E. Speer, "will go down in the annals of history as one of the greatest missionaries of his generation." He was great in youthful ambition, great in versatility of talent, great in medical missionary achievement and great in devotion to his Saviour. This biography by his widow is based on fact but the form is that of a dramatized story with the purpose of inspiring youth. The result is, that against a vivid background of Indian life and scenery we have a popular, fascinating and inspiring picture of medical missions. The internationally known surgeon, his family and the Maharajah of Kolhapur are pictured according to life but the other characters are fictitious.

Born in Canada in 1865, he went to the Western India Mission of the Presbyterian Church in 1889. Before his death in 1933, he had founded a general hospital at Miraj, six branch hospitals, a convalescent home, a medical college, a school for nurses, a leprosarium and a sanatorium. He gave sight to 13,000 blind and performed some 75,000 operations. His devotion and surgical skill brought him high honors from the British Government and the love of the people of India—Moslems, Hindus, Parsees and out-castes. Sir William James Wanless deserved all the honors he received, but his older friends remember him most of all because of his sterling character and simple Christian faith.

Z.

New York City

Written in Sand. By Josephine Young Case. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. pp. 160. \$2.00.

When Thomas Jefferson became President for the second time in March, 1805, General William Eaton led an expedition from Alexandria, Egypt, to suppress the Barbary pirates and rescue some three

hundred Americans held prisoners in Tripoli. He recruited a mixed multitude of a few hundred Arabs, Turks and malcontents, marched across five hundred miles of desert by Matruh, Sallum and El Alamein to plant the American flag on the fort at Derne.

This is a novel by one who knows neither Arabic nor the Arabs, depicting the heroism, success and final disappointment and disillusionment of its hero, lonely, "red-headed Eaton." There are better sources for knowledge of our Wars with the Barbary pirates. But Eaton's letter to the people of Derne is revealing: "He took pen and paper and set himself to write. 'Proclamation to the Inhabitants of Derne.' It had better be in French. That was generally known, there was always someone who could translate it into Arabic. Religion, that would be the best approach to these wild people. Our religion is the same as yours—the pen began to scratch:

"Allons donc, Mores, Arabes, Americains, frères, venez-vous de tout quartier du barbarie ou la verité du prophète a été reçu; soyez vous bien assurés que le Dieu des Americains et de Mehometans est la même, unique et tout puissant." The immediate goal was attained but the bizarre expedition had no permanent results.

Z.

New York City

Al Andalus: Revista de las escuelas de estudios Arabes de Madrid y Granada. Vol. IX Fasc. 1, 1944. pp. 266. \$2.00 per annum.

The most interesting article in this issue is by one of its leading editors, Miguel Asin Palacios, on the Spanish vocabulary derived from Arabic and consisting of a bilingual list of no less than 1,300 words. It was prepared for the Real Academia Española. Other articles deal with the historic geography of Spain, El "Liber de Causis," an ancient Astrolabe from Barcelona (illustrated), new archaeological finds in Granada and other cities, etc.

Z.

CURRENT TOPICS

Peasant Life in Afghanistan

Sprawled across the huge Asiatic mountain ranges, the kingdom of Afghanistan occupies an area of over a quarter of a million square miles; wedged between India and Russia, with Iran to the west, we twelve million Afghans live on the roof of the world, for the average height of the country is over four thousand feet. For all our mountains, we have many fertile valleys, and Afghanistan is preponderantly an agricultural and pastoral region. For the same reason, the peasant farmers nearly all practise mixed farming, rearing horses and fat-tailed sheep as well as sowing their crops of wheat, barley, cotton and sugar-cane; silk-worms are also kept.

In order, however, to understand life in rural Afghanistan, it is necessary to realize a fundamental difference between the Afghan farmer and, for instance, his Indian neighbours: we had no landless peasantry. Each farm is run by the peasant and his sons and women-folk. No outsiders are employed, for the reason that there are no "farm hands" needing work; they either have their own homesteads or they labour for their own families. A farmhouse is usually somewhat larger than that of a European peasant, having from five to fifteen rooms. The building has a courtyard and an orchard, and this whole area is surrounded by a stone wall. Taxes are levied according to the profits of each season, there being no equivalent to the permanent settlement system of India, where the levy is fixed for a fifteen to twenty-five year period.

Under the Government Five-Year Plans for agriculture and industry, tractors and other machines are hired to the peasants, and their produce may be bought by the *sharkats* or joint-stock companies, which arrange for their marketing at home or abroad, or for their conversion into manufactured goods in the factories under their control. There are several of these companies, including the tobacco company, a textile company, and silk, fruit and skins companies.

Irrigation, as in many other Asiatic countries, is of great importance to us. Dams have been built, to conserve the water of the rushing mountain streams and to provide hydro-electric power, but in many parts, notably in the east and west, the ancient system called *kariz* is used. Wells are dug in a straight line down a gentle slope, and then connected by underground tunnels; the result is a steady stream of water through the channels feeding the fields. This method is often used in terrace cultivation of the hillsides.

—*The Moslem Sunrise* (Chicago)

The Blessings of Ramazan

Under the caption that the Fast month is a great boon *The Light* (Lahore) observes that:

When the dim crescent, heralding the month of Ramazan, is discerned by straining eyes on the distant horizon it is hailed with a blare of drums and the boom of gunpowder. This is as it ought to be

—a fitting reception to a month with which is so closely bound up the spiritual purification and elevation of man. When however we are in for it, with so many of us, its charm wears away day by day. Instead of the joy that it should be to our hearts it is looked upon as more of a burden. When ten days of fasting are over, there is a sigh of relief. One leg of Ramazan is broken, they say. With 15 the other leg also gets broken. With 20, it is the back that breaks and so forth till at last it is considered, like a war or some other calamity, to be on its last legs. All this popular attitude smacks as if Ramazan is a positive burden, imposed upon us by an exterior authority which we have, willy-nilly, to bear. This is an erroneous attitude altogether and the sooner it is dispelled the better.

Ramazan is the greatest joy of life. It is the greatest boon that God has vouchsafed to man. There is no joy greater than the joy of self-assertion in a righteous cause. Ramazan brings us that great opportunity. The greatest obstacle that stands between us and a glimpse of Truth and Reality is our own self—the cravings of the flesh in us. Ramazan tramples upon that obstacle. Our intellectual and mental senses shed their coarseness. They get dematerialized or astralized, we might say. We find the rays of Reality, of Truth, of God, call it whatever you will, gently play upon our being. The more astralized this state of mind, the fuller and warmer and brighter this glow of Reality. And what could be a greater joy than to fathom the depths of existence and through the baffling and confusing mysteries of life, land upon the bed-rock of Reality where there are no doubts and no worries and no fears, where all is clear dawn and calm and serenity.

Ramazan is the narrow pathway to that light for which the poet's soul yearns. It is a soul-pathway. The Head of man is good enough to enable him to go about the world, to look to the requirements of his animal nature. But the finer paths that lead to those inner recesses of existence where man stands face to face with Reality, where all doubts are resolved, where man finds a safe anchorage in the midst of the bewildering storms that rage around him in this world of phenomena—those finer paths can be treaded only by the soul of man. Joad is right when he has hit upon the discovery that like the arguments of the Head, there are the arguments of the Heart. One might go a step further and say that the argument of the Heart is the only sure argument, leading us to light and peace and harmony.

The Near East or Middle East

In his address at the Annual Meeting of the Royal Geographical Society, the President, Sir George Clerk, alluded to a confusion in the use of these terms and proposed a solution. We quote with approval:

“In the lecture which he gave to the Society a year ago Sir Percy Loraine called attention to the confusion which now exists in the use of the terms Near and Middle East, and deliberately used the words Near East in his title to insist that the Balkan States, Egypt, and the coastal areas on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea are by customary use the Near East, whereas the Middle East he would describe as including Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Arabian Peninsula. In a note written for the *Geographical Review*, Colonel Lawrence Martin, Chief of the Division of Maps in the

Library of Congress, has expressed his 'enthusiastic' agreement with Sir Percy Loraine. He would consider that the Near East comprises the Balkans, Turkey, Rhodes and the Dodecanese, Cyprus, Syria and the Lebanon, Palestine, and sometimes Egypt, and limits the Middle East to 'Iraq, Persia, Afghanistan, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia, and the other countries of the Arabian Peninsula. Africa west of Egypt has never, he thinks, been called either Middle East or Near East by informed Americans, who for Mediterranean Africa usually revert to the old designation of Barbary States.

"The confusion of the last few years has of course arisen from the fact that when at the beginning of the war a British Command-in-Chief was established in Cairo, its interests were at first eastward and southward rather than along the Mediterranean coast to Libya and Tunisia, and it was the eventual triumphant conclusion of the North African campaign that brought British armies from the Middle East Command to the Pillars of Hercules. Thus arose a very natural but regrettable misuse of the term Middle East that it may be difficult to avoid in the official histories of the war. But I think that we, who are not tied down to an official nomenclature, would do well to agree with our American friends and among ourselves that we should use always the classification upon which Sir Percy Loraine and Colonel Lawrence Martin are agreed, and come to a working arrangement upon any points of difference. We might well agree that no part of Africa excepting Egypt belongs either to the Near or the Middle East. This has been for many years the view and practice of the Society, and I hope that we shall make a point of maintaining the practice with especial care in anything that we publish."

Islam and Buddhism in London

In Islam a sheikh is not a bronzed warrior who steals blond young women from caravans in the dead of night, but a learned scholar and teacher of the Mohammedan faith. Typical example of the true sheikh is 40-year old, erudite Ali Hassan Abdel Kader, who arrived recently in London to take up his duties as Secretary of the newly formed Islamic Culture Center in Regent's Park.

Mohammedanism is not so old in Britain as Buddhism, for London's Buddhist Society held its twentieth anniversary services only last month. Back in 1881 a Buddhist mission was opened in England by a converted-to-Buddhism Roman Catholic, who returned from the East in that year. It apparently disintegrated; then in 1925, Lawyer Christmas Humphreys organized the Buddhist Society of Britain. But only sixty people attended the widely advertised anniversary service.

Mohammedanism claims 250,000,000 adherents all told, and the job of the new Secretary, Sheikh Ali, is "to contradict wrong impressions about Islam, and to show that the Arabs have a profound and ancient culture." The Islamic Culture Center was formed in 1940. The following, not yet very large, numbers in the thousands perhaps—but the importance that Britain attaches to the good will of Islam was clearly demonstrated when King George VI visited the Mosque at the close of the year, with India Secretary Amery. The site for the Mosque, by the way, was presented by the British Government.

—*Our Hope* (New York)

Moslems and the Soviet Union

C. L. Sulzberger writes in *The New York Times* of the interesting developments in Soviet-Moslem relations because of the new attitude in Moscow to religion:

"It is often forgotten that the Soviet Union, in addition to being the seat and heart of Christian Orthodoxy, is also one of the great Moslem powers in the world, with large Islamic communities in the Caucasus and Turkestan, which includes some of the most famous and most historic mosques in Samarkand and Bokhara.

"These repercussions are commencing to be felt now. This year, for the first time in Soviet history, Moslem citizens are participating in the annual pilgrimages to Mecca, facilitated by special transport arrangements made in Moscow. This indicates an increasingly important status of Islam in the Soviet Union.

"The Mufti, Abdul Rahman Ibn Sheikh Zainulla Rassuli, spiritual leader of the Soviet Moslems, has said, according to the Arab News Agency, that new centers of the Islamic faith have been created in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics during the last few years. He added:

"Moslems gave more than 10,000,000 rubles to build columns of tanks and sent several trainloads of gifts to the Red Army at the front. Moslems have lost several of their spiritual leaders in the War—killed by the Nazis.

"During their occupation of the Caucasus, for example, the Germans shot Mullah Hamid Debaleff for refusing to obey an order not to wear his national costume. Wherever the Germans were they forbade Moslems to hold divine service, destroyed holy books and ordered all new-born children to be given German names."

"Such statements have great importance in the predominantly Islamic Middle East, where German propaganda was strongly concentrated and where such odd ideas were propounded by Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels and his Moslem aides, such as Jerusalem's Grand Mufti, that Adolph Hitler was a direct descendant of the prophet.

"The views of the Soviet Union's Moslem citizens are spreading fairly rapidly throughout the Middle East and coincide with the apparent growth in Moscow's interest in this area, accentuated by the unconfirmed reports that the Kremlin intends to appoint a Vice Commissar for Foreign Affairs as Resident Minister in Teheran to deal with Middle Eastern affairs."

Anti-Locust Campaign in Arabia

The Arabian expeditions for 1943-4 were divided in three. The Egyptian Government equipped and sent out a complete expedition led by Egyptian entomologists to the Hejaz. This expedition has carried out magnificent work. The full report of its doings is not yet available. The second expedition, divided into Eastern and Western parties, was mainly British.

Two R.A.S.C. transport companies and two platoons of a tank transporter company from the British Army with the addition of Arab drivers from Palestine, Trans-Jordan, Syria and the Lebanon,

formed the bulk of the personnel, with British and American entomologists directing operations under the Chief Locust Officer, Mr. Maxwell Darling.

To reach their objective, one company had a 700 mile trek over almost trackless country of mountains, boulder-strewn desert, soft sands and treacherous salt pans, to reach its base of operations in the little port of Yenbo, on the Red Sea. Soon the expedition was spread out far over the enormous deserts of the Arabian Peninsula which is itself a sub-continent almost as large as India.

The locusts were exterminated in a simple way. The poisoned bait—bran mixed with sodium arsenite and moistened—is spread in a line before the advancing army of hoppers which may extend for more than a mile across the open waste of the desert. The locusts make for the moisture, eat greedily, and die.

Two Martyrs in Morocco

We learn with profound shock and the deepest regret, from the *North Africa Mission News Letter*, of the death under tragic circumstances of Mr. Cuthbert Nairn of Marrakech, Field Superintendent of the Southern Morocco Mission. He was for many years an earnest evangelist in a very difficult field and kept in close touch, through THE MOSLEM WORLD, with other fields and workers. It is sad to learn that at the age of eighty he was murdered by one of the nation he sought to serve.

On the 9th of November, when Mr. Nairn crossed the street from his house to the dispensary, he was stabbed in the back by a young fellow of some nineteen years. Mr. Nairn just managed to walk into the dispensary and say, "I have been struck in the back." He collapsed and died very shortly afterwards.

He was an administrator of ability. In all the common things of life one saw how practical and helpful he could be. On one occasion, for example, when several new workers were expected at Mogador, an extra room was required. The Moorish Governor, a bigoted Moslem, would not allow native workers to undertake the work. Mr. Nairn solved the difficulty by building the room himself.

His name will always be associated with the great Dispensary work which he carried on at Marrakech. For many years, between three and four hundred people received treatment daily in his Dispensary. This work, which was so far-reaching in its influence, made a marked impression on the native mind, and prepared many a heart for receiving the Word. What devotion was called for in this service can readily be imagined. In times of great heat, when the temperature rose, on occasion, to 112° in the shade, it was no easy task attending to these ailing folk and dressing long-neglected wounds. Thus he commended the Gospel by deed as well as by word.

News comes of another who met death at hostile hands, also in Morocco. Mrs. Simpson writes, in *North Africa Notes*, of the home-call of a native evangelist, Si Ali, through death by poison:

"Since his second poisoning, eighteen months ago, and by a neighboring tribe (*not his own folk*, most of whom had grown to respect and even love him, in spite of his 'infidelity'), I have felt that he could

not come through, as was the case in 1906, when Dr. Vardon said, 'the amount of mercury administered actually saved him, as it could not be retained.' But that meant years of suffering and 'nursing sympathy.'

"The poison given in April, 1943, has entailed even greater suffering, though development was slower. It matters little concerning his mortal remains. . . . For years he has been threatened with non-burial—to be thrown on the rubbish-heap and eaten by the dogs.' He has gone Home with wondrously filled hands! Would that each of us might be similarly honoured! The very last night in Guercif saw the ingathering of two whom we had coveted for our Lord. Years of teaching and prayer had preceded. That evening, whilst our train was delayed some five hours, hands were clasped and broken voices confessed faith in Christ. They were married men, and soldiers of the Great War, so knew the step they took."

The Moslems of Cyprus

In a Historical Retrospect of Cyprus, Sir Harry Luke tells how the population of this island has always been a mixture of races and faiths.

The conquest of 1571 introduced into Cyprus, the bulk of whose inhabitants had hitherto been Greek in religion and language, an important element of Ottoman Turks. The first Turkish settlers were principally drawn from Lala Mustafa's soldiers, who were given fiefs in the island by the Sultan Selim, and these were reinforced from time to time by Turkish immigration from Asia Minor and Turkey in Europe. The first Muslim invaders of Cyprus, the Arabs, although their raids continued intermittently from the seventh to the tenth centuries, had long since faded away; but the Turks were to become a solid and permanent factor in the island's population. It has sometimes been assumed erroneously that the Turks of Cyprus are Greek-speaking Greeks converted to Islam, as are the Muslims of Crete. On the contrary, the Muslims of Cyprus are pure Turks, and nowhere in the Turcophone world was the Turkish language spoken in a purer form than by the Cypriote Turks until the Atatürk and his Government purified the language of Turkey itself and freed it of those heavy layers of Arabic and Persian which had almost succeeded in stifling the original Turanian speech. The Turks of Cyprus have refrained from intermarriage with their Orthodox compatriots; the two communities meet but do not mingle. On the other hand, the relations between them, if not intimate, have generally been, on the whole, quite amicable. Under Ottoman rule the Turkish peasant of Cyprus was subject to the same trials and tribulations at the hands of the Government as was his Christian neighbour; when the power of the Archbishops was at its height, he felt the effects of their supremacy no less than the Orthodox peasant, with whom he was quite capable of combining against the common oppressor, be he Turkish Pasha or Orthodox prelate. . . . The population of Cyprus according to the census of 1931 was 347,959, of whom 283,562 were Christians, mainly members of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus, and 64,238 were Turks. The estimated total population in 1940 was 383,967.

SURVEY OF PERIODICALS

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I. GENERAL

THE HISTORICAL ELEMENT IN WESTERN AND EASTERN EPICS.

Henri Gregoire (In *Byzantion*, Boston. Vol. XVI, Fasc. 2, 1942-43, pub. 1944. pp. 526-544).

Compares Digenis, Sayyid-Battal, Dat-el-Hemma, Antar and the Chanson de Roland.

THE INFLUENCE OF IQBAL ON URDU LITERATURE. Sir Abdul Qadir. (In *The Indian Review*, Madras. December, 1944. pp. 605-608).

Extracts from the Sirdar's poems with critical comments.

II. ARABIA

III. HISTORY OF ISLAM

A GEOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF CENTRAL ASIA. K. deB. Codrington. (In *The Geographical Journal*, London. Sept.-Oct., 1944. pp. 73-91).

Includes pertinent material on the eastward extension of Islam, first through Seistan, a gateway not used as often as the Hindu Kush passes.

IV. KORAN. TRADITION. THEOLOGY

IBN KHALDOUN, PIONEER ECONOMIST. Mohammed Aly Nashat (In *L'Egypte Contemporaine*, Le Caire. Année 1944, Fasc. 5, pub. 1945. pp. 377-480).

Four centuries before the work of Adam Smith, Ibn Khaldoun, distinguished Arab thinker of Tunis, presented his ideas on the economic side of social life in the introduction to his *General History*.

MEDIEVAL IDEAS OF THE END OF THE WORLD: WEST AND EAST. A. Vasiliev. (In *Byzantion*, Boston. Vol. XVI, Fasc. 2, 1942-43, pub. 1944. pp. 462-502).

Contains Mohammedan eschatological conceptions referred to in the Koran and confidently expected by the faithful with the fall of Constantinople.

V. RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL LIFE

PAKISTAN: A PLAN FOR INDIA. Sirdar Iqbal Ali Shah (In *The Fortnightly*, London. March, 1945. pp. 174-179).

A review of the movement from its inception, closing with an appeal for a programme of rural reconstruction after the close of the war.

A TEACHER TRAINING AND RESEARCH CENTRE IN THE SUDAN. V. L. Griffiths. (In *Oversea Education*, London. October, 1944. pp. 1-6).

Surveys ten years' progress of Bakht er Ruda, at Dueim near Khartoum, and describes the aims of this Northern Sudan center for preparing male teachers.

THE VILLAGE WELFARE SERVICE IN LEBANON, SYRIA AND PALESTINE. Dr. Stuart C. Dodd. (In the *Royal Central Asian Journal*. London. January, 1945. pp. 87-90).

Outlines the activities of this organization from its beginnings in 1930 at the University of Beirut through the difficult days of the present war.

VI. POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS

BRITAIN'S WAR DEBTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. Bernard D. Weinryb. (In *Asia*, New York. February, 1945. pp. 101-103).

Increased production, higher prices, surplus purchasing power and lack of consumer goods will all contribute to make post-war financial adjustment in this area a delicate problem for Anglo-American bankers.

THE EMPIRE AND THE ARAB EAST. (In *The Round Table*, London, March, 1945. pp. 137-142).

Seeks to show "in helping to promote the peaceful evolution of the Arab peoples, Britain serves at once their interests and her own."

THE FRONTIER PROBLEM: A SUGGESTED SOLUTION. (In the *Royal Central Asian Journal*, London. January, 1945. pp. 80-84).

Recommends indirect rule for the Province and complete separation from the administration of the India Office, making the Colonial Office the responsible agent.

IRAN: 1939-1944. The Rt. Rev. Bishop W. J. Thompson. (In the *Royal Central Asian Journal*, London. January, 1945. pp. 34-43).

Discusses the "New Order" with approbation, especially in its relation to the position of women and in its effect upon education.

JEWES AND ARABS: A CASE STUDY IN POLITICAL UNDERSTANDING. Bernice Kaufman. (In *The Contemporary Jewish Record*, New York. February, 1945. pp. 53-61).

The Palestine League for Jewish-Arab Rapprochement and Coöperation points out the way for accord and unity in Palestine.

THE MIDDLE EAST IN 1939 AND IN 1944. Harold Beeley. (In the *Royal Central Asian Journal*, London. January, 1945. pp. 8-23).

Considers three problems: the social, the constitutional and that of external relations, and finds good grounds for optimism for the future.

OIL AND THE MIDDLE EAST. Sidney B. Fry. (In *Current History*, New York. April, 1945. pp. 336-340).

Explains the roles of the United States and Great Britain in the development of Arabian and Iranian oil production and ar-

gues for Senate approval of the Anglo-American oil agreement sponsored by Roosevelt.

THE PROBLEM OF PALESTINE. Albert M. Hyamson. (In *The Contemporary Review*, London. April, 1945. pp. 221-226).

A careful survey of the many plans under consideration with special emphasis on the realistic proposal of Dr. J. L. Magnes, suggesting a Bi-national Palestinian state strongly federated with neighboring lands.

RECONCILIATION IN INDIA. Chakravarti Rajagopalacharia. (In *Foreign Affairs*, New York. April, 1945. pp. 422-434).

Britain must strive to be reconciled to the idea of a free India and Hindus and Moslems must settle their differences through some such arrangement as the "C. R. formula."

RECONCILIATION IN PALESTINE. E. B. Castle. (In *The Hibbert Journal*, London. January, 1945. pp. 140-147).

America and Britain must seek to foster enlightened moderate public opinion in both Arabs and Jews to prepare Palestine for federation with her neighbors.

TRANSJORDAN AND THE WAR. Brigadier J. B. Glubb. (In the *Royal Central Asian Journal*, London. January, 1945. pp. 24-33).

Extols the country's unswerving loyalty to British interests and anticipates a bright future under an excellent Constitution.

WHO BARS PALESTINE'S DOOR? Kenneth Leslie. (In *The Protestant*, New York. April, 1945. pp. 1-5).

The author holds "Political Christendom" responsible for the support of the Palestine White Paper, with Arab agitation a secondary deterrent to Jewish progress in Palestine.

VII. TURKEY

HOW DEMOCRATIC IS TURKEY? Eleanor Bisbee. (In *Asia*, New York. February, 1945. pp. 86-89).

If the post-war world is truly democratic, Turkey's sincere beginnings toward popular government will be firmly established by the successors of Atatürk and İnönü.

THE PAN-TURANIAN MYTH IN TURKEY TO-DAY. Alexander Henderson. (In *The Asiatic Review*, London. January, 1945. pp. 88-92).

By suppressing this German-supported movement and its subversive publications, the Turkish government served its own best interests and improved its relations with Russia.

TURKEY BETWEEN TWO WORLD WARS. John Kingsley Birge. (In *Foreign Policy Reports*, New York. November 1, 1944. pp. 194-207).

A carefully documented study of Turkey's skillful management of her foreign and internal affairs,—a feat which she accomplished peacefully and in an orderly manner.

THE TURKISH CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT. (In the *International Labour Review*, Montreal. April, 1945. pp. 464-471).

Dating from the republican period, the movement has made rapid advances in all its phases.

THE TURKISH REPUBLIC COMES OF AGE. Maynard Owen Wil-

liams. (In *The National Geographic Magazine*, Washington, D. C. May, 1945, pp. 581-616).

Vivid picture of twenty-one years' social and economic progress.

A VISIT TO THE TURKISH PARLIAMENT. J. Bell. (In *The Asiatic Review*, London. January, 1945. pp. 86-87).

A brief view of the democratic workings of the young republic's National Assembly.

VIII. MISSIONS TO MOSLEMS

FORMER MOSLEM "SUFII" ELECTED METHODIST BISHOP. W. W. Reid. (In *Release of the Board of Missions and Church Extension* of the Methodist Church, New York).

An account of the life and work of the Rev. John A. Subhan, by birth a Moslem, now principal of Bareilly Theological Seminary.

ISLAM IN MALAYA. R. A. Blasdell. (In *The International Review of Missions*, London. April, 1945. pp. 165-172).

The Christian missionary is offered a tremendous challenge in this land where Islam has been entrenched for more than six hundred years and where it commands intense loyalty among the Malays because of the benefits it gives them.

THE SITUATION AND PROSPECTS IN MALAYA. Raymond L. Archer, Ph.D. (In *The International Review of Missions*, London. April, 1945. pp. 155-164).

Includes an account of the activities of the Muhammadiyah Party or Kaum Muda (Youth Movement) and declares that an almost unparalleled opportunity exists for Christian missions in this area.