

## The Islamic Review

Founded by THE LATE AL-HAJJ  
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ

"Muhammad is...the Messenger of God and the Last of the Prophets..." —THE HOLY QUR'AN 33:40  
"There will be no Prophet after me" —THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

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# To the Memory of KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

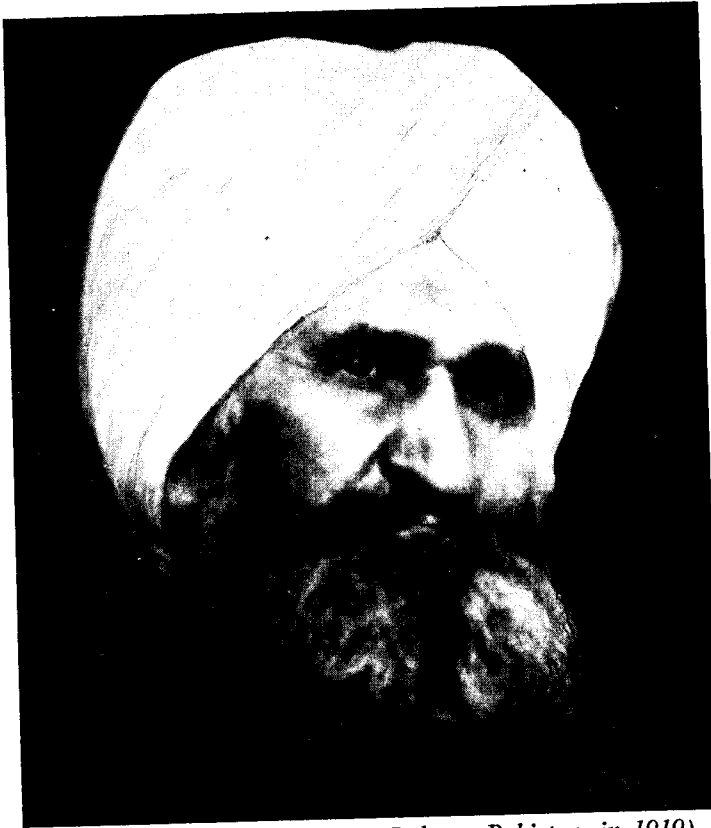
With this issue, *The Islamic Review* enters its fiftieth year of publication. The first number was published in February 1913, a dark period in the history of Islam which ended in 1918 by the loss of independence by the last Muslim State which remained truly sovereign at that moment — Turkey. As a result of political defeats, Muslim youth had almost lost all hope in the future of Islam. It was at this time that Al-Hajj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din started his pioneer work of the rebirth of Islam in the West. By publishing *The Islamic Review* his object was to spread more correct ideas as to the essential features of Islam and the characteristics of those who profess that religion, and to dispel the many gross errors — sometimes due to malice, more often to mere ignorance — which were current in Europe as to its doctrines, ethics and practices.

Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din was born in 1870 in the Punjab, descended from an honoured Kashmir family which had already distinguished itself in the service of Islam. His grandfather, 'Abdur Rashid, a famous poet, was at one time chief Muslim Judge of Lahore during the Sikh period. He was educated at the Forman Christian College at Lahore, which explains his deep knowledge of the Bible, a knowledge which had been so useful in his missionary work in the West. As it sometimes happens with students studying at colleges run by Christian missionaries, he thought of converting himself to Christianity. But as luck would have it he was destined to play another role, of introducing Islam to the Christian West.

During 1912, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din lost his wife. To forget this loss he started on a tour of India, giving lectures on Islam, and when he reached Bombay a certain gentle-

man persuaded him to go to England in connection with a legal case. This was the beginning of a new vision which resulted in the foundation of the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust and *The Islamic Review*. Although he had some private business of that gentleman to attend to, the great ambition which was carrying him to England was to plead the cause of Islam in the West. Some of the people laughed at this though, and outward circumstances were not favourable to him, still, he was full of hope. Europe was not only politically dominant but Muslim countries had also come under the sway of its intellectual domination. If Islam was to be saved, the banner of Islam must be raised in the heart of Christendom. On his arrival in London he settled in Richmond. The Hyde Park Speakers' Corner provided him with the platform for his first lecture on Islam. He also started taking part in meetings of British theological societies. The first person to accept Islam at his hands was a European lady, the wife of an Indian Muslim. The work continued to progress slowly. And then came a providential opportunity. He discovered the existence of the Mosque at Woking. He and his friend Shaikh Nur Ahmad visited this place, which was almost deserted and gradually falling into ruins.

This Mosque was built in 1889 by Doctor W. G. Leitner, an Orientalist and ex-Registrar of the University of the Punjab, with donations from Indian Muslims, particularly Her late Highness the Begum Shah Jehan, ruler of Bhopal State, after whom the Mosque is named. After Doctor Leitner had retired from the Punjab he conceived the idea of establishing an institution for the study of Oriental



*Shaikh Nur Ahmad (died at Lahore, Pakistan, in 1919)  
To Shaikh Nur Ahmad goes the credit of being the first to  
share the early toils and privations of the late Khwaja  
Kamal-ud-Din in a task that was regarded by many as a wild  
goose-chase. He was not familiar with English.  
One could appreciate the nature of the privations and single-  
mindedness of the late Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, when it is  
recalled that at Woking his table was his writing-desk by day  
and bed by night. The late Shaikh Nur Ahmad was a very  
devout Muslim. The experiences of his dream-life were of  
an extraordinary robust nature.*

languages, cultures and religions. Unfortunately, before he could bring his scheme to fruition, he died. The Mosque remained closed and deserted for many years till it attracted the attention of this Muslim sage from the Punjab.

Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din and Nur Ahmad stayed at the Mosque for a few hours, and then the Khwajah asked his friend to return to London, but he refused, and told him that he could not leave this house of God in such a desolate condition. He was so persistent in his decision that the Khwaja also agreed to stay there. When the heirs of Dr. Leitner found two coloured persons living at the house adjacent to the Mosque they wanted to evict them. At this stage the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din approached Sir Mirza 'Abbas 'Ali Beg, at that time the Muslim advisory member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India. Together they found the means for the satisfaction of the heirs of Dr. Leitner. A Trust was formed to hold the title deeds of the Mosque, of which, in 1913, the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din became the first Imam. Now the Mosque at Woking became the centre of his activities in England. This was the humble beginning of the work started by this great pioneer of Islam in the West. In fact God never destroys the reward of the doers of good.

The Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din was entirely devoted to his work. And there lies the cause of his success. He became ill and exhausted during the last five years of his life, but he never stopped working. It was on 28th December 1932 that he died at Lahore while dictating a commentary of the Qur'an for the next number of *The Islamic Review*. But those who die in the cause of Allah are never dead. His memory will ever remain green in the hearts of those who have been led to the light of Islam by reading his works, *The Islamic Review* being one of these which is still carrying on the mission which was near and dear to him. May his soul rest in peace. Amen!

## IT MATTERS MUCH

It matters little where I am born,  
Or if my parents were rich or poor ;  
Whether they shrank at the cold world's scorn,  
Or walked in the pride of wealth secure.  
But whether I live an honest man,  
And hold my integrity firm in my clutch,  
I tell you, brother, plain as I am,  
It matters much.

It matters little how long I stay  
In the world of sorrow, sin and care ;  
Whether in youth I am called away,  
Or live till my bones and pate are bare.  
But whether I do the best I can  
To soften the weight of adversity's touch,

On the faded cheek of my fellow-man,  
It matters much.

It matters little where be my grave,  
Or on the land or on the sea ;  
By purling brook or 'neath stormy wave,  
It matters little or naught to me.  
But whether the Angel Death comes down  
And marks my brow with his loving touch,  
As one that shall wear the victor's crown,  
It matters much.

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