

WHAT OUR READERS SAY . . .

(The letters published in these columns are, as a rule, meant to be informative and thought-provoking in the interests of Islam. Nevertheless, the Editor does not take responsibility for their contents).

MR. GEORGE BERNARD SHAW ON THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

We recently wrote to the great philosopher and playwright to ask him whether a quotation attributed to him was correct. The quotation, which appeared in a certain journal, ran as follows :

"I have always held the religion of Mohammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capability of the changing phase of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. But the Europe of the present century is far advanced. It is beginning to be enamoured of the creed of Mohammed.

"The Medieval ecclesiastics either through ignorance or bigotry painted Mohammad in the darkest colours. They were in fact trained both to hate the man Mohammad and his religion. To them Mohammad was Anti-Christ. I have studied him—the wonderful man in my opinion far from being an Anti-Christ must be called the Saviour of Humanity."

George Bernard Shaw.

We reproduce below our letter to Mr. Shaw together with the text of his reply :

George Bernard Shaw, Esq.,
Ayot St. Lawrence, Herts.

6th September, 1948.

Dear Sir,

I enclose herewith a copy of a quotation headed "WONDERFUL", which has appeared in the pages of a journal circulating in the East and elsewhere. The quotation appears, you will notice, above your own name, and is of much interest to us.

I am approaching you now to ask you :

1. Whether the quotation is indeed genuinely yours and whether it is verbally exact ?
2. Whether you would kindly state the source from which the quotation has been taken, together with the date.

The reason for my troubling you in this matter is that we are greatly desirous of reprinting the enclosed quotation, if genuine and with your kind permission, in the first number of the new series of *The Islamic Review*, which, enlarged and modernised and illustrated, we are planning to produce, starting from January, 1949. As the celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday falls on this occasion in January next, the inclusion of this quotation from your writings would be exceptionally appropriate.

Yours, etc.

Mr. Shaw's reply runs :

These quotations are not authentic.

I have always ranked Mahomet as one of the greatest of the Prophets, making a huge success where Jesus made a complete failure. But I have also insisted that whereas Christianity in its corruption was saved by the Reformation, only a reformed Islam can conquer the world today.

I said : "The conversion of savages to Christianity is the conversion of Christianity to savagery." All the great Eastern religions, noble as they are in their original inspiration and doctrine, are deeply corrupted by the idolatry and miracle mongering by which they govern the peasantry.

7th September, 1948.

G. B. S.

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THE UNITY OF ISLAM

The Editor,
The Islamic Review.

Sabzevar,
Iran.

Dear Brother in Islam,

24th September, 1948.

Assalamo alaikum !

I thank you for your kind letter of the 17th August, 1948.

When I was last in Teheran I met two Qadiani preachers, and I quite fail to understand why this sect is so persistent in sending its preachers to Muslim countries. I do not think they can enlist any followers to this creed.

A Qadiani missionary has published a book in Persian in Teheran called *Shamsbir-i-Burran*, directed against Baha'ism. He has also challenged the Baha'is to a debate and has offered a reward to be given to the winners by his leader in Qadian. I have sent a copy of this book to your Lahore office and a copy to the Ahmadiyya Anjuman-i-Isha'at-i-Islam of Lahore. If you wish I can also send you a copy.

I regret to inform you that I have received information from a friend of mine in Istanbul to the effect that the editor of a magazine in that city has started to publish a series of articles against the Shi'as, their Imams and 'Ulama. He does this, I am told, in spite of having been requested by the Shi'as of Turkey to cease publishing matter so detrimental to the unity of Islam.

No one, in these critical times, should venture to publish articles which might cause disunion in the Muslim world. On the contrary, it is the duty of every Muslim, whether Sunni or Shi'a, to lift on high, and to grasp tightly, the banner of Islam, and to strive for the unity of Islam, not for discord and disunity. Such articles might have earned applause in the old Turkey of the Sultans, but not in the new Turkey under the leadership of Ismet Inonu. Articles such as these can only bring about the strong disapproval of the Muslim world towards their authors and publishers. Yours fraternally, I. NIKAN.

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OUR NEW SERIES

The Editor,
The Islamic Review.

Islamic Propaganda Centre,
Tehran,
(Iran).

Dear Brother in Islam,

October 10, 1948.

Assalamo aleykum !

We are in receipt of your letters of the 27th and 29th September, 1948. Your decision to introduce new features in your Review is very praiseworthy and we congratulate you on this. Now is the time to change the old method of preaching Islam. The world now needs a new system of work and what you propose to do is just the thing . . .

We wish you, dear brother, every success in the service of the just and true way—the way of *Allah jalla jalalohu*.

Yours brotherly.