

A RARE WRITING OF IQBAL

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The magazine the orient was launched from Lahore in 1925. It was a monthly review containing articles of political, social, economic, educational and general interest. Syed Nur Ahmad B.A. (Alig.) was its editor and publisher. The office of the journal was situated in the Australia Buildings (near the Lahore Railway Station). In its issue number 6—8 (June-August 1925) of Volume I, the magazine announced a scheme of establishing a printing press on co-operative basis. A joint stock company was thus set up to undertake this work and it was declared as follows:

"The New orient has had to wait in the meanwhile, and will have to wait for some time more after the publication of this issue—the next issue will be printed at its printing machines".

Nothing is known of the fate of the press after the above-mentioned combined issue. However, we come to know through the Statement of Newspapers and Periodicals published in the Punjab and Native States that the magazine continued its printing during 1926 at the same press i.e. Punjab Co-operative Printing Press and ceased to exist during 1927. The new orient contains, in this issue, among other material, an article of Iqbal entitled Stray Thoughts, which is not included in any of the following collections of his writings.

1. Abdul Wahid, Syed. Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal. Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf. 1964.
2. Dar, B.A. Letters and Writings of Iqbal. Karachi; Iqbal Academy, 1967.
3. Razzaqi, Shahid Hussain. Discourses of Iqbal. Lahore: Sh. Ghulam

Ali, 1979.

4. Shaheen, Rahim Bakhsh. Mementos of Iqbal. Lahore ; All-Pakistan Islamic Education Congress [n.d.]
5. Sherwani, Latif Ahmed. Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal. Lahore: Iqbal Academy, 1977.
6. Iqbal's Stray Thoughts edited by Dr. Javed Iqbal under the title Stray Reflections and published from Lahore in 1961, does not contain these stray thoughts. These are being produced here for scholars in the field of Iqbal Studies.(A.H Q.)
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I

The weak lose themselves in God ; the strong discover him in themselves.

II

For centuries Eastern heart and intellect have been absorbed the question —Does God Exist ? I propose to raise a new question—new, that is to say, for the East—Does man exist?

III

Islam is not a religion in the ancient sense of the word. It is an attitude—an attitude, that is to say—of Freedom, and even of defiance to the Universe. It is really a protest against the entire outlook of the ancient world. Briefly, it is the discovery of Man.

IV

Nietzsche thinks that belief in God makes man feeble. The wisdom of Islam consists in exploiting the idea of God in the interest of Man, and transforming it into a source of power. For the Tauhid (-taji) of Islam means absolute freedom from fear and superstition in actual life. A mere intellectual belief in God does not count for much in Islam.

V

Before you talk of self-sacrifice you must see whether you have got a self to sacrifice. The egoist alone is capable of self, sacrifice.

VI

One of the most interesting phenomena of modern history is the birth, or rather the rebirth of humanism in the world of Islam. This will no doubt sharpen our sense for matter which centuries of speculative Sufism have dulled ; but we must not forget the distinction which the mediaeval thinkers of Europe made between "use" and "enjoyment". We "use" all that is a means to the acquisition of the ultimate good; and "enjoy" what we regard as the ultimate good. The Eternal alone is enjoyable; all else is useable only. Europe forgot this distinction long ago and there is no knowing where her unrestrained Humanism will carry her.

VII

Knowledge partly contributes to the structure of what we call objective reality; but the character of events that drop 'out of the womb of fate is wholly determined by the heart of man. It is the weak man who endows Fate with its sting. The strong man exploits his misfortunes, in as much as he enhances the force of his soul by maintaining an attitude of total indifference to them.

VIII

The idea of Mi'raj in Islam is face to face vision of Reality without the slightest displacement of your own ego. It is impossible to forget the words of the Muslim poet who said of the prophet this much.

IX

Most of our theologians thought the doctrine of human freedom could not be reconciled with the fore-knowledge of God. They looked upon belief in freedom as veiled atheism. So thought Mahmud Shabistri.

But the author of Gulshan-i-Raa made the tacit assumption of an absolute and independent time like Newton. He did not see if his view of time were true, then the freedom of God would also disappear. Shabistri's argument will not hold to-day; for God can be conceived as creating time from moment to moment. If the Universe is an open one there is no pre-existing future, and God does not know the future because there is nothing know.

X

People extol the past and deprecate the present, not understanding that the present is the whole of the past concentrated in one point.