

with complacency. It is perhaps time English scholars mislaid for a time their copies of Streeter. . . .’ He goes on to show reason for thinking that the synoptic problem has not yet been solved because the right method of dealing with it has yet to be applied. If this attitude to present assumptions were to become widely prevalent a major revolution in New Testament criticism would be on the way.

HENRY ST JOHN, O.P.

ISLAM. By Alfred Guillaume. (Penguin Books; 2s.)

This is a valuable addition to Penguin Books devoted to religious matters. Indeed, no better person could have been chosen to write an up-to-date book on Islam than Professor Guillaume, who has already laid us under a debt by, among other things, his editorship of the excellent *Legacy of Islam*.

Particularly valuable, in this new book, are the chapters ‘Apostolic Tradition’ and ‘Islam today’, the former because it is rare, in a manual of this size, to find any mention or discussion of the sayings traditionally ascribed to the Prophet Mahomet, let alone such a full and critical account as is given by the author. As to the chapter ‘Islam today’, it deals mainly with recent developments in social and matrimonial legislation in various Islamic countries. It is a pity that significant changes of this kind in modern Persia are not referred to. This may be due to the author’s preoccupation with Arab countries. Persian influences in the lands now constituting Pakistan, and further afield, have often, within the framework of Islam, outweighed Semitic influences. Islam is far from having obliterated the sharp contrasts between Arab and Persian. And yet we find Persian art, both in the British Museum and in the Victoria and Albert, summarily classified as ‘Islamic Art’! It is as if, in a gallery of European art, mention of England, France, Spain, etc., was passed over in favour of ‘Christian Art’.

Considering the attention bestowed by Professor Guillaume on Egyptian affairs, it is surprising that no reference is made to the debate which has raged in Cairo since 1947 around the thesis of Khalafallah on the subject of the ‘stories’ (*qisas*) found in the Qoran, a thesis which adumbrated a new form of Qoranic exegesis and which was roundly condemned by the divines of al Azhar.

A contemptuous reference, on page 124, to ‘Umar Khayyam is unhappy and largely unmerited, apart from the dubious statement as to the poet’s adhesion to the ‘Ismaili sect. On page 125 the following reference to the Druzes of the Lebanon seems rather baffling: ‘They are a friendly . . . people, whom it is always a pleasure to meet. . . . They were responsible for three separate massacres of Christians.’

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