



# THE MISSIONARY REVIEW OF THE WORLD.

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## I.—LITERATURE OF MISSIONS.

### ISLAM AND CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.\*

HUMAN religions are compared in the Bible to “broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” God is Himself the source of all true religion, and in contrast with “broken cisterns,” in this same verse (Jer. ii: 13), is compared to a “Fountain of living waters.” All human systems of religion are not only incapable of producing living water, but, like “broken cisterns,” they will hold no water. They are not simply on a lower level of wisdom and power than the divine religion, but as religions they are failures, incapable of holding in any helpful and saving way even the modicum of truth which they may have in solution, and wholly unable to provide the soul of man with the living water which will quench his thirst.

Our subject invites our attention to a religious faith which, although it may be classed as a “broken cistern,” has had a marvelous history, and to-day dominates the minds and hearts of millions of our fellow-men in the Orient. We mean Islam, or the religion of Mohammed. Here the thought will perhaps occur to many, Is it not taking too much for granted to rank Mohammedanism among merely human religions? It has been the faith of a vast number of our fellow-men, who have been singularly loyal and intense in their devotion to it, and has held its own with extraordinary tenacity, while its central truth has ever been the acknowledgement of God’s existence and supremacy. This is all true, and Islam must have the credit of it. There is probably no religion, not confessedly based upon the facts recorded in the Bible, which has such a satisfying element of truth in its creed and presents such a conception of a personal and supreme God as Islam. As compared with idolatry it is an immeasurably nobler form of worship. As contrasted with the metaphysical vagaries of other Oriental religions it is doctrinally helpful. It is, however, simply the old monotheism of the ancient Jewish religion projected into the Christian ages with the divine environment of Judaism left out and a human environment substituted. “There is no God but God,” was the creed

\*We are requested to withhold the name of the writer of this able and timely article. We regret the necessity, as the name would be sure to command a wide and considerate reading of it. Let it suffice to say, that the writer has long enjoyed the very best opportunities of studying the system discussed in the light of its historical development and results.—Ede.