PREFACE

IN the following pages I have attempted to give the history of the evolution of Islâm as a world-religion; of its rapid spread and the remarkable hold it obtained over the conscience and minds of millions of people within a short space of time. The impulse it gave to the intellectual development of the human race is generally recognised. But its great work in the uplifting of humanity is either ignored or not appreciated; nor are its rationale, its ideals and its aspirations properly understood. It has been my endeavour in the survey of Islâm to elucidate its true place in the history of religions. The review of its rationale and ideals, however feeble, may be of help to wanderers in quest of a constructive faith to steady the human mind after the strain of the recent cataclysm; it is also hoped that to those who follow the Faith of Islâm it may be of assistance in the understanding and exposition of the foundations of their convictions.

My outline of the life and ministry of the Prophet is based on the Strat-ur-Rasûl of Ibn Hishâm, who died in 213 A.H. (828-9 A.C.), barely two hundred years after the death of the Prophet, supplemented by, among other works, Ibn ul-Āthîr's monumental history, the Chronicles of Tabari, the Insân ul-‘Uyûn of al-Halabi (commonly known as Strat-ul-Halabia). Two new chapters have been added in this edition: one on the Imâmûte ("The Apostolical Succession"), the other on "The Idealistic and Mystical Spirit in Islâm." Considerable new matter has also been included in the Introduction and
Chapter X., Part II. I take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to my esteemed friend, Professor E. G. Browne of Cambridge, one of our foremost Orientalists, for his most valuable criticisms on the last chapter, and to Mr. Mohammed Iqbal, Government of India Research Scholar at Cambridge, for his careful revision of the proofs and the compilation of the Index. I also desire to express my acknowledgments to Mr. Abdul Qayum Malik for transcribing for the Printers the Arabic quotations for the new chapters and verifying the Koranic references, and to the Publishers for their unvarying courtesy and patience over a difficult publication. The work has been carried through the Press under heavy pressure of public duties, and I claim, on that ground, the indulgence of my readers for any mistake that may have passed uncorrected.

N.B.—A few words are necessary to explain the system of transliteration adopted in this work. I have tried to adhere with small modification to the system I have pursued in my previous publications. The letter (pronounced by the Arab with a lisp like th in thin) to a non-Arab conveys a sound almost identical with s in sin, and he accordingly pronounces it as such. Nor, unless an Arabic scholar, does he perceive any difference between and or (sād). He pronounces them all alike Similarly (zay), (Zād—pronounced by the Arab something like dḥad), and (zai), convey to the non-Arab almost identical sounds; certainly he cannot help pronouncing them identically. He also perceives no difference between (soft t) and (tis), or between the hard aspirate (in Ahmed, Mohammed, Mahmūd, etc.) and the softer used in Hārūn. I have therefore not attempted to differentiate these letters by dots or commas, which, however useful for purposes of translation into Arabic, Persian, Turkish or Urdu, is only bewildering to the general reader unacquainted with the Arabic alphabet and pronunciation. I have given the words as commonly pronounced by non-Arabs In the case of words spelt with a in common use in India and Persia such as hadīs, masnavī, Isna-ashārā, etc., I have not considered it necessary to denote the Arabic pronunciation with a th.
The ordinary fatḥa I have represented by a (pronounced as u in 'cut' or 'but'), excepting in such words as are now commonly written in English with an e, as Seljuk (pronounced Saljūk), Merwan (pronounced Marwān), etc.; the ordinary zāamma by u pronounced like u in 'pull' or in Buldān; the ordinary kāsra with the letter i, as in Misr. Aliph with the fatḥa is represented by a, as in 'had'; Aliph with the zāamma, by u as in Abdul-Muttalib; with a kāsra by i as in Ibn Abīl Jawāri. Waw (with a zāamma) by o and sometimes by ð. Although like Kūfa and several other words, the last syllables in Mahmud, Hārūn and Māmūn are spelt with a waw, to have represented them by an o or ð would have conveyed a wholly wrong notion of the pronunciation, which is like oo; I have, therefore, used u to represent waw in such words. Waw with a fatḥa I have represented by au, as in Maudūd. Ya with a kāsra, when used in the middle of a word, I have represented by i, as in Arish. But in Ameer I have kept the classical and time honoured ee. Ya with a fatḥa, similarly situated by ai as in Zaid. Ya with a fatḥa at the beginning of a word is represented by ye, as in Yezid; with a zāamma by yu, as in Yusuf. Excepting such names as are commonly known to be spelt with an ‘ain (א), as Abū in Abdul Malik, Abdur Rahman, Arab, Abbas, Aziz, Irāk, etc., I have used the inverted comma to denote that letter.

With regard to names which have become familiar in certain garbs I have made no alteration, such as Kaaba, Omar, Abdullah, Basra, spelt with a sād, etc. Ghain (ג) is represented by gh; but I have not attempted to differentiate between ג and ג, and made no alteration in the time honoured spelling of the Koran. The common g (the Persian gdaf) and p have no place in the Arabic alphabet, and therefore the Persian g and p are transformed in Arabic into j or k and b or ph (f), as in Atabek and Isfahan. ג is represented by hh.

The l of al when occurring before certain letters (technically called shamsīd) is assimilated with them in sound, as ash-Shams, ad-din, ar-Riza, as-Salāt, etc. I have used the word "Moslem" in preference to "Muslim," as most Europeans unacquainted with Arabic pronounce the "u" in "Muslim" as in public.