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LETTER TO THE EDITORS

In the 1987 Review an article was published entitled TOPRAY OR NOT TO PRAY. It was an answer from the Fellowship to those who criticised us for indulging in religious practice from time to time - something they regard as being unacceptable to George Eliot. In response to the article, a letter was received from The Venerable Michael Mansbridge, Chaplain and Archdeacon to The Gulf. Michael was a one-time President of the Fellowship during the years when he was Vicar of Chilvers Coton ('Shepperton') and Astley ('Knebley') Churches. Writing from Baghdad, and sending good wishes to the Fellowship, he recalled past times in England and compared them with his present circumstances. As he wrote, he was surrounded by the horrors of wasteful conflict and the young lives being thrown away, but also by the shades of the great visitors and travellers of the past - Gertrude Bell and Agatha Christie et al. 'The ancient grey Iraqi dust,' he wrote, 'historic, no doubt, but dirty - blows about bringing ancient places and people onto one's very lap!'

Michael goes on to comment on the article:

Religion and faith are always so much wider and less easily confined within definitions than religious people allow. The inspiring thing about George Eliot was that she transcended the petty and particular in one religion in order to be free to respond as a human being to the wider significance of religious belief and its universal application - the 'religion of humanity'.