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Contributions of Muslims

To

Indian Subcontinents

Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Translated from Arabic

By

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INTRODUCTION

For the different nations and communities of the world to live together in peace and co-operation and with affection and goodwill, or, in a word, in a state of peaceful co-existence, it is imperative not only that they obtained an adequate understanding of one another's character, temperamental characteristics, ideology and traditions, cultural heritage and the great things they have done in the past, their creative genius and ability, and so forth, but also learnt to appreciate them and to hold them as precious and worthy of encouragement and preservation.

For this reason it is considered necessary every where to acquire a proper knowledge of the language and literature, culture and civilization, history and even fine arts of other peoples. One country sends its missions comprised of men of culture and learning to another to study the psychological, literary and cultural pattern of things obtaining there and to interpret to it something of its own. Bodies and institutions are set up universally with the object of promoting cultural ties and understanding with the rest of the world and funds are made available to them with commendable generosity. In pursuance of the same objective, the Government of India has established a big organization called the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, and there are also in operation here in our country several other private and semi-official bodies, like the Indo-Arab and the Indo Iranian Societies, which strive through various means to foster and strengthen cultural ties with the people of other lands.

Thus, when there is found a general desire all over the world, and in our own country, to forge intimate contacts with far-flung lands on personal, intellectual and cultural levels-national self-interest calls for it and so also the issue of world peace-, does it not seem necessary that within a country itself one section of the population did not remain ignorant or ill-informed about the past intellectual and cultural attainments, natural propensities and urges and aspirations of another section that had been living side by side with it in its millions for several centuries and had played a decisive role in the shaping of the country's destiny ? It is, indeed, one of the curious contradictions of Indian national existence that one important part of the population here is almost totally in the dark about the ancient heritage and background of the other important part. It has no appreciation of the basic facts with respect to it. It does not know what part it has played in the progress and

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development of the motherland and in the recent struggle for its freedom-what contribution has it made in the country's many-sided evolution up to the present day what are its desires and ambitions, and what are its needs and difficulties in the existing national set-up. This Strangeness and this ignorance in spite of the fact that the two communities have been living with each-other for hundreds of years and participating untidily in the various tasks of life is a drawback and a handicap which should be felt strongly and removed without further de, lay. Unity, trust and harmony among the diverse elements that go to make the Indian people, which are a pre-requisite to national integration and progress, cannot be produced till we remained so ignorant of each· other's spiritual and emotional make-up, history and social background and the possibilities we hold for the future.

The tragedy, however, is not confined only to ignorance. What is worse and more disconcerting is that - there has got created in our country a powerful tendency to black-out and to reject the history and the cultural stock of a whole community, its past achievements and the glorious contribution it has made to the national fight for independence. There is afoot a campaign to present the history of our land in a manner as if the Muslim era in India was an era of foreign, imperialistic domination ; it was devoid of all virtue and greatness, and failed miserably to produce a single noteworthy personality, a single remarkable achievement in the domains of thought and culture, a single act of unpolluted, selfless service to the country's welfare and development of which the country could be proud; and that in the long drawn battle for freedom against the British the role of the Muslims was nothing more than that of a disinterested spectator, and if they did accidentally take a part, it was not worthy of attention. By acting in this manner we are thoughtlessly depriving the lofty, ever-green tree of India of a rich, fruit-bearing branch and proving to the world that for about a thousand years this mighty tree remained barren and utterly unproductive, with the season of autumn reigning supreme all over the country, though it is entirely in opposition to what history tells us, apart from casting a sad reflection on the innate human richness and fertility of our land. We, in this way, not only perpetrate a cruel injustice on a community which dwells in our midst in millions, but also cease to be fair and honest to our motherland-to its past and to its coming generations that are going to need badly that lives of the illustrious figures belonging to that period of their history are presented before them as models for their conduct. Further, we can introduce India advantageously and in a more effective

manner to the Islamic countries, whose friendship we wish to cultivate, by spotlighting the memorable achievements of the Muslim period, and win recognition for it of its glory from their educated and enlightened circles.

The people of those lands being already familiar, more or less, with the main personalities and land-marks of that span of Indian history, such an endeavor is, again, no likely The realization of this very truth and this very need is responsible for the writing of these pages. Due to one reason or another, it is not possible these days both for Muslims and non-Muslim friends to read voluminous works in Persian and even in Urdu of the old style to enquire into the manifold cultural, literary, material and political achievements of that period of our history ; what are needed, therefore; are brief, easy-to-read books which may present in glimpses the story of those days and the picture of that way of life, and, thus, serve, so to speak, as mediums of introduction. In 1951, on my return from an extensive tour of the Middle East, I was invited by the All India Radio to broadcast a series of talks in Arabic on Indian Muslims. These talks, luckily, were received favorably by some of the Indian missions lodged in that part of the world, and they suggested their publication in the form of a booklet. The All India Radio also broadcast them subsequently in some other languages and an international Arabic Journal, Muslims, of Damascus was good enough to bring them out in its columns in a number of installments.

Encouraged By this response, I felt that if the talks were recast into essays and a few more papers on suitable topics were added to them, the volume thus got ready could usefully serve the purpose I have just indicated. The volume, accordingly, was soon produced in Arabic. I am glad to say that the book was later rendered into easy, fluent Urdu by my friend and colleague, Syed Mahmoud Hassan Nadwi The manuscript was revised by me and several improvements were made. The chapter, 'Role of Muslims in the Struggle for Freedom ', has been translated by my nephew, Mohammad el-Hasani.

In the present compilation five new essays have, in all, been included which were not broadcast over the radio. These are:

- Influence of Muslims on Indian Civilization
- Role of Muslims in the Struggle for Freedom
- Indo-Islamic Culture
- Sufi-Saints of India and their Impact on Society

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- Current Difficulties and Problems

It is hoped that the book, with these additions, will be read with interest among the educated circles of the various communities that go to make our people and prove of some value in reducing the ignorance and the attitude of indifference which exist in the sister-communities to wards the Muslims. It may, further, be helpful in promoting the growth of a broad, realistic, national perspective in the country it so badly needs today.

It will also, perhaps, not be too much to expect that, apart from non-Muslim friends, many educated Muslims, too, will find in the.se pages something which will be new to them and will add to their knowledge about themselves and go some way, however little, towards ridding them of the inferior1ty complex they have developed lately, but for which there can be no justification. The Muslim are not only citizens of an equal status with anybody in India ; they are also among its chief builders and architects, and hold position second to none among the peoples of the world for selfless service to the motherland. They gave to India and to the Indian civilization a new Jibe and a new dimension and awakened its people to a new set of moral and spiritual values. Every patch of its land and every particle of its soil bears the imprint of their greatness and is a monument to their industry, earnestness and creative genius. In every aspect of Indian life and civilizations can be seen evidences of their noble aestheticism and cultural richness.

ABUL HASAN ALI NADWI
Nadwatul Ulema,
Lucknow
November 21, 1960

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Chapter I

INFLUENCE OF MUSLIMS ON INDIAN CIVILIZATION

Muslim Saints and Preachers

Muslims came to India, sometimes, supremely unconcerned with worldly aims and ambitions and guided solely by the lofty entailment of religious service. They brought with them the Islamic message of equity and social justice in order to show to men thirsting for light and freedom in a dark, narrow world the way to break their shackles and avail themselves of the priceless bounties of nature that were lying scattered all over God's wide earth. The best instances of these dedicated, high-souled preachers are offered by the lives of the devoted servants of Islam under whose benign shadow thousands of oppressed members of the Indian society not only found shelter but also began to live with them as their own, beloved kinsmen. The names of Hazrat Ali Hujweri, Khwaja Moinuddin Ajmeri and Syed Ali bin Shahab Hamadani Kashmiri are richly representative· of this holy order of men.

Rulers and Conquerors

And, sometimes, they came as warriors and conquerors and deep-hearted rulers, such as, Mahmud Ghaznavi, Mohammad Ghori and Zahiruddin Babar. These men of courage and ambition laid the foundations of a magnificent Empire that continued to prosper for a long time and carried the country to glorious heights or progress and prosperity.

Permanent Settlement and Spirit of Service

But, whatever the capacity they came in, the Muslims always treated India as their home. Their belief was that the earth belonged to God and He gave it in the supervision and keeping of whom He pleased. The considered themselves to be the divinely appointed trustees of His land and the servants of His people." Every country is our country for it is the country of our Lord " was their motto.

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The Muslims, as such, unfailingly regarded India as their own country of permanent abode from which they could never turn their eyes away. They ungrudgingly gave of their best mental, physical and spiritual resources, their choicest natural abilities and talents, in its service, thinking that the contribution they would make to its development and prosperity would ultimately be to their own advantage, for was not their future tied up inseparably with it ? The attitude of Muslim settlers towards India, thus, was radically different from that of the British and other foreign imperialistic Powers that came to hold sway over the land, or parts of it, at a later stage of its history. The object of the Western imperialists here was simply to make hay while the sun shone. They treated India like a cow which had come into their hands for a few days, and were eager to milk it as thoroughly as they could. The devotion with which the Muslims strove for the advancement and prosperity of India can be understood only in this context.

Cultural Isolation of India

When the Muslims had set their feet on the Indian soil, there were here the ancient sciences and philosophy and an abundance of food and the raw materials, but, culturally, India had lapsed into isolation from the civilized world for a long time. The mighty mountains on the north and the sea on the other three sides of it had prevented it from having a regular intercourse with the world that lay beyond its frontiers. The last foreign invader to visit India before the Muslims was· Alexander the Great. During the period intervening between these two events India had remained severely cut off from the outside world. There had been no exchange of knowledge with the foreign countries. No new idea, no fresh cultural impetus had reached it· from abroad, nor had it been able to send out anything from its own ancient fund of wisdom.

Contact with the Outside World

It was at a time like this that the Muslims made their debut on the Indian stage. They were, in those days, the most advanced community in the East. They brought with them to India a new, practical and highly rationalistic religion, mature knowledge, a progressive culture and an evolved civilization which included with in it all that was best in the cultural

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stock of many: nations-it represented a synthesis of the natural whole sameness' of the Arab disposition, the dainty refinement of the Iranians and the rugged simplicity of the Turks. Besides, they brought many other priceless gifts and virtues.

Concept to Divine Unity

The most valuable of these gifts was the sovereign and unalloyed Islamic concept of Divinity, which, at one stroke, dispensed with all intermediaries between man and the Maker in respect of prayer and supplication. There is emphatically no place in the Islamic creed for beliefs like Polytheism, incarnation of God and 'the merging of man in the Almighty and becoming one with Him.' Islam declares, plainly and once for all, the Sovereignty and Absolute Oneness of the Divine-One and Everlasting-Who begetteth not, nor is He begotten, and nor does He take partners in the discharge of the functions of Divinity- ; the creation, the sustenance, the management and the ownership of the universe lie in His hands alone. It was but natural for a belief like this to make a powerful impact on the Indian mind, out of touch, as it had been with pure monotheistic doctrine for hundreds of years. Says K.M. Panikkar of this impact:

> "One thing is clear. Islam had a profound effect on Hinduism during this period. Medieval theism is in some ways a reply to the attack of Islam ; and the doctrines of medieval teachers by whatever names their gods are known are essentially theistic. It is the one supreme God that is the object of the devotee's adoration and it is to His grace that we are asked to look for redemption ".[1]

Equality and Brotherhood

Socially, a most epoch-making change was brought about by the Islamic notion of human equality and brother- hood. There was no division of society into permanent classes and no such community as the untouchables among the Muslims. Their belief was that no one was born unclean into the world nor predetermined ignorant and debarred by the very fact of

[1] Panicked, K. M.: "A Survey of Indian History" (1947), p. 163

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his birth in a certain class from the acquirement of knowledge. No trade or occupation was reserved for any particular section of humanity. On the other hand, they fraternized freely with each-other at all levels, the rich strove with the poor in the pursuit of learning and there was freedom of profession for all. The idea of brotherhood was for the Indian mind and the Indian society a novel experience and a call to renewed thinking which did a lot of good to the country. The bonds of the then existing class-ridden society were relaxed to a considerable extent and thus was witnessed a widespread recoil from the excessive rigidity of the caste-system. The advent of Islam acted as a challenge to social reformers in other fields also. Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru has offered the following comments on the uplifting influence exerted by Islam and Muslims on the Indian social structure:

> " The impact of the invaders from the north west and of Islam on India had been considerable. It had pointed out and shone up the Abuses that had crept into Hindu society- the petrification of caste, untouchability, and exclusiveness carried to fantastic lengths. The idea of the brotherhood of Islam and the theoretical equality of its adherent's made a powerful appeal especially to those in the Hindu fold who were denied any semblance of equal treatment ".2
>
> " Islam's democratic challenge ", to quote another writer of repute, "has perhaps never been equaled by any other religious or social system. Its advent on the Indian scene was marked by a profound stirring of consciousness.' It modified the basis of Hindu social structure throughout northern India."[3]

Rights of Women and Other Social Reform

Dignity of women and of their rights as respectable members of the family and life-partners of men. The significance of the rights bestowed by Islam on the softer sex in a country where widows of noble families used to immolate themselves on the funeral pyres of their husbands, since in the eyes of society, as well as in their own eyes, they forfeited the right to live with the death of their husbands, does not stand in need

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[2] Jawaharlal Nehru: The Discovery of India (1946), p. 225

[3] Humayun Kabir: The Indian Heritage (1955), p. 133

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of an elaboration. We may, however, reproduce the under-mentioned lines from Burnier travel accounts to show what infinite pains did the Muslims take, for instance, for the suppression of the custom of Sutti from the earliest days of their rule.

> " . . . he number of victims is less now than formerly ; the Mahometans, by whom the country is governed, doing all in their power to suppress the barbarous custom. They do not, indeed, forbid it by a positive law, because it is a part of their policy to leave the idolatrous population which is so much more numerous than their own, in the free exercise of its religion ; But the practice is checked by indirect means. No woman can sacrifice herself without permissions from the governor of the province in which she resides, and he never grants it until he shall have ascertained that she is not to be turned aside from her purpose ; to accomplish this desirable end the governor reasons with the widow and makes her enticing promises ; after which. if these methods fail, she sometimes sends her among his women, that the effect of their remonstrance's may be tried. Notwithstanding these obstacles, the number of self-immolations is still very considerable, particularly in the territories of the Rajas, where no Mahometan governors are appointed ".[4]

Writing History

The Muslims also introduced several modern branches of learning, a most important of which was history. Till then, the writing of history was almost an unknown art in India, there being hardly anything to speak of in the line save religious treatises and a few epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The Muslims produced a whole library of historical works that could compare favorably in authenticity and comprehensiveness with the endeavors made in this branch in any other country. A glance through Maulana Syed Abdul Hai's monumental book in Arabic, *Es-Saqafat-ul-Jslamia-Fil-Hind*[5] (Islamic Culture in India), will indicate what tremendous efforts were made by Muslims for the compilation of the history of India. To quote Dr. Gustave le Bon:

---

[4] Francois Burnier: Travels in the Mogul Empire (1891), pp. 306-07

[5] The book has recently been published by the Arabic Academy, Damascus, Syria

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> "There does not exist a history of ancient India. Their books contain no historical data whatever, except for a few religious books in which historical information is buried under a heap of parables and folk-lore, and their buildings and other monuments also do nothing to fill the void for the oldest among them do not go beyond the third century B.C. To discover facts about India of the ancient times is as difficult a task as the discovery of the island of Atlantis, which, according to Plato, was destroyed due to the changes of the earth."
>
> The writer, after admitting that the epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata, do shed some light on the conditions obtaining during those days, goes on to add that, "The historical phase of India began with the Muslim invasion. Muslims were India's first historians."[6]

New Techniques

Liberality of the mind, originality of thought and new techniques of poetry and literature were taught to the Indians by Muslims. A new angle of vision and a new horizon of thought could not be possible without intellectual and literary integration. To the credit of Muslims also goes the birth of a most beautiful, living, growing and expanding language which became the medium of intercourse among people of the various parts of the country and an excellent vehicle of literary expression. By it, I mean Urdu whose richness and elegance beg no description.

Cultural Revolution

The impress of Muslims is most prominent in the spheres of culture, social manners and general mode of living. The Muslims revolutionized the pattern of life in the country and gave it a new form which was entirely different from what was known here formerly, just as

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[6] Gustave le Bon: Les Civilizations de L'Inde (Urdu Translation by Syed Ali Bilgrami) Book III, p. 146

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CHAPTER 1

The design of life in modern Europe is totally dissimilar to what prevailed there in the Middle Ages. Babar's Account

In order to appreciate adequately the extent and value of Muslim influence on the Indian culture it is necessary to obtain some idea of the picture India presented before the arrival of Islam and the Muslims. Babar, fortunately, has left behind a vivid description of cultural decadence that was evident on all sides, and this makes the task of judging the worth and merit of Muslim contribution easy. It may, however, be borne in mind here that Muslims had begun their development activities in India quite a long time before the coming of the Mughals. Writes Babar in his memoirs, Tuzuk-i-Babari:

> " There are neither good horses in India, nor good flesh, nor grapes, nor melons, nor ice, nor cold water, nor baths, nor candle, nor candlestick, nor torch. In the place of the candle, they use the divat[7]- It rests on three legs: a small iron piece resembling the snout of a lamp· is fixed to the top end of one leg and a weak wick to that of another; the hollowed rind of a gourd is held in the right hand from which a thin stream of oil is poured through a narrow hole. Even in case of Rajas and Maharajas, the attendants stand holding the clumsy divan in their hands when they are in need of a light in the night.
>
> There is no arrangement for running water Inga dens and buildings. The buildings lack beauty, symmetry, ventilation and neatness. Commonly, the people walk bare footed with a narrow slip tied round the loins. Women wear a dress consisting of one piece of cloth, half of which is wrapped round the legs while the other half is thrown over the head ".

Commenting on Babar's observations on the cultural insolvency and backwardness of India, Jawaharlal Nehru has said :

> ".His account tells us of the cultural poverty that had descended on North India. Partly this was due to Timur's destruction, partly due to the exodus of many learned men and artists and noted craftsmen to the South. But this was

[7] A crude sort of a lamp made of clay, wood or iron in which mustard oil is generally burnt-Translator

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> due also to the drying up of the creative genius of the Indian people. Babar says that there was no lack of skilled workers and artisans, but there was no ingenuity or skill in mechanical invention".[8]

Development of Fruits

In spite of the fertility of its soil, few fruits were found in India and those too were of a poor quality. Most of them were grown wild. People did not take enough interest in the development of horticulture. The Mughals, on the other hand, were possessed of a refined taste and there was a great abundance of fruit in their native land. Fruit-cultivation, accordingly, made a rapid progress in India with their coming. Details of it can be found in the famous memoirs of Emperors Babar and Jehangir-Tuzuk i-Babari and 'I'uzuk-i-Jehanqiri respectively. The Mughals developed several new and delicious varieties of fruits by making extensive experiments in grafting. The mango is a well-known Indian fruit, but, before the arrival of the Mughals, only one variety of it, the seed-variety (Tukhmi) was in existence. It was the Mughals who developed the beautiful, luscious grafted mangoes. This step, in course of time, led to the introduction of numerous varieties of the fruit.

Agriculture, Trade and Industry

The same was the case with textile. Dresses in India were generally made from rough, coarse, cloth. A number of textile factories were set up in Gujerat by Sultan Mahmud Shah, better known as Mahmud Baigrah (died,1511) where cloth-weaving, dyeing, printing and design Laying were undertaken. He also established industrial centers for stone and ivory carving and paper-making. Gifted as he was with an advanced, constructive mind, the Sultan had succeeded in arousing a rare enthusiasm for progress in trade, industry and agriculture among his subjects. Maulana Syed Abdul Hai says,

> "Among the outstanding works of the Sultan for the development of the country were included the construction

[8] Nehru, Jawaharlal: The Discovery of India, p. 218

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> of mosques, schools and the planting of fruit-bearing trees and orchards. He aroused the people magnificently for these tasks. He also built wells and canals for irrigation. Skilled artisans and craftsmen came to him from Iran and Turkestan and set up their crafts and industries in his kingdom. As a result, Gujarat had become a rich, fertile stretch of greenery with flourishing gardens, dense groves and delicious fruit, as well as an important trading center which exported cloth to foreign lands. This was due entirely to the ceaseless efforts of Sultan Mahmud and the keen interest he took in the welfare of his people"[9]

Reforms of Akbar & Sher Shah

Cloth-weaving factories were established also during the reign of Akbar. That great Mughal emperor also introduced many valuable agrarian reforms appertaining to the measurement of land, and the assessment and collection of land revenue. The improvements made by Sheer Shah and Akbar in the field of finance, especially in coinage and currency, had not been heard of in India before. Sheer Shah had a unique gift for legislation and administrative organization. In fact, it was his example which Akbar followed later.

Public Utility Works

Muslim rulers also achieved great success in the training of animals and the improvement of livestock. We can obtain an elaborate idea of the good work done by them in these directions from historical records like *Tuzuk- i-Jahangir* and *Aim-i-Akbar*. They built numerous hospitals, poor-houses, public parks and gardens, and tanks And canal. Maulana Syed Abdul Hai has furnished, in his unique work, *Jannat-ul-Mashriq*[10], a long list of hospitals and other benevolent and public welfare institutions set up and development projects undertaken in India during the so-called Muslim period.

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[9] Nuehatu; Khawatir Vol. IV, p. 345

[10] This book is still unpublished.

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All the huge highways that connect the western parts of the sub-continent with its eastern parts were given to it by Muslim kings and emperors. The most important of them is the one built by Sher Shah. It is 3,000 miles (or 4,832 Kilometers) lo.ng, and runs from Nilab in Sind to Sonargaon[11] In what is now Eastern Pakistan? At every second mile of the road there was a caravanserai with separate charitable grub houses for Hindu and Muslim travelers and a mosque. The Muezzin[12], Imam[13] and Hafiz[14] for the mosque were appointed by the State. A pair of speedy horses were stationed at each caravanserai to carry the mail so that letters and messages could be sent regularly from Nilab to the distant borders of Bengal. Fruit-bearing trees were planted on either side of the road. Whose fruit and shade were a great boon to the travelers?

Cleaner and Better Mode of Living

Over and above all this, the Muslims acquainted the original inhabitants of India, with a cleaner and better mode of living. They taught them the refinements and luxuries of taste and food and drink. They taught them the principles of hygiene and sanitation, the advantage of building airy houses and the use of cups and other vessels of food. Till then the Indians used to take their meals, even at large feasts, from leaves of trees, a custom which is still prevalent at some places. The Muslims, in brief, brought about a big change in Indian social customs, living habits, domestic comforts and home-decoration. They ushered in a new style in architecture, which, in the delicacy of its design, grace, symmetry and dignity, was distinguished from what traditionally obtained here. The Taj offers a classical instance of the new Mohammaden architecture. In the words of Pandit Nehru:

> " The coming of Islam and of a considerable number of people from outside with different ways of living and thought, affected these beliefs and structure. A foreign conquest, with all its evils, has one advantage: it widens the mental horizon of the people and compels them to look out

[11] Sonargaon was the capital of East Bengal during the Muslim rule. Now it is known as Painam and forms part of the district of Dacca.

[12] Public Crier to prayers.-Translator

[13] Official priest in mosque.-Translator

[14] One who has learnt the whole Quran by heart-translator

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> of their shells. They realize that the world is a much bigger and a more variegated place than they had imagined. Even more so the Moghals, who were far more cultured and advanced in the ways of living than the Afghans, brought changes to India. In particular, they introduced the refinements for which Iran was famous"[15]

The same view was expressed by Dr. Pattabhi Sitacamayya in his Presidential Address to the Fifty-fifth Session of the Congress held at Jaipur in 1948. He said that the Muslims had, "enriched our culture, strengthened our administration, and brought near distant parts of the country. It (the Muslim Period) touched deeply the social life and the literature of the land ".

Medicine

The Muslims, moreover, brought to India a new system of medicine-the Unani system-which, before the dawn of modern medicine, was universally recognised as the most advanced and scientific system for the treatment of diseases. At their hey-day the countries of Iraq, Iran and Turkestan were the most important center of the Unani system of medicine in the world, and it was there that its greatest exponents and practitioners were born during the medieval age. After the establishment of Muslim power in India, and encouraged by the generous patronage the Muslim rulers extended to men of learning and ability, a steady stream of outstanding masters of the system poured into the country for a period stretching over five hundred years. Due to the priceless services rendered by these worthy men and their pupils-their spirit of dedication and high proficiency-the Unani system touched its peak in India. The indigenous systems faded into insignificance before the progress it made. No city or town was left without a practitioner of the Unani School. This system was cheap, simple, and in harmony with the Indian climatic and temperamental conditions. So it spread in India very quickly and did a wonderful service to the people, composed as they were mainly of the poorer classes. The Indian physicians, by their contribution, lent further glory to it. During the declining phase of Muslim rule, Delhi and Lucknow were its two major strongholds and now India remains the only country where this system is still in vogue.

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[15] Jawaharlal Nehru: The Discovery of India, p. 219

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Ten Gifts of Muslims

The noted historian, Sir Jadunath Sircar, has, in a paper entitled, ' Islam in India ', enumerated ten gifts, which, according to him, the Muslims conferred on India. Some of these we have already discussed in this chapter; the rest are as follows :

1. The establishment of contact with the outside world ;
2. Political unity and uniformity of culture and dress specially in the upper classes;
3. A common official language and an easy, simple style of prose in the evolution of which both the Hindus and Muslims have taken part ;
4. The promotion of regional languages under the aegis of the Central Government so that there may ensue general peace and contentment and equal opportunities for literary and cultural advancement may be made available to all;
5. The revival of maritime trade which was originally in the hands of the people of South but had been lying suspended for a long time ;
6. The formation of the Indian navy.

Material and Spiritual Achievements

Speaking of, the material and spiritual achievements of Muslims in India, W.W. Hunter, a noted anti-Muslim writer, has observed that:

> "The Muslims led several of these great land reclamation colonies to the southward, and have: left their names in the Eastern Bengal as the first dividers of the water from the land. The sportsman comes across their dykes, and metal roads, and mosques, and tanks, and tombs in the loneliest recesses of the jungle ; and wherever they went, they spread their faith, partly by the sword, but chiefly by a bold appeal to the two great instincts of the popular heart. The Hindus had never admitted the amphibious population of the Delta within the pale of their community. The Muhammadens offered the plenary privileges of Islam to Brahman and outcaste alike. ' Down on your knees, every

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> one of you,' preached these fierce missionaries, 'before the Almighty in whose eyes all men are equal, all created beings as the dust of earth. There is no god but the one God, and His Messenger is Muhammad '. The battle cry of the warrior became, as soon as the conquest was over, the text of the Divine".[16]

Luminous Torch

And so does N. S. Mehta, a gifted Indian civil servant, says in course of an article entitled, ' Islam and the Indian Civilization ':

> "Islam had brought to India a luminous torch which rescued humanity from darkness at a time when old civilizations were on the decline and lofty moral ideals had got reduced to empty intellectual concepts. As in other lands, so in India, too, the conquests of Islam were more widespread in the world of thought than in the world of politics. Today, also, the Islamic World is a spiritual brotherhood which is held together by community of faith in the Oneness of God and human equality. Unfortunately; the history of Islam in this country remained tied up for centuries with that of government with the result that a veil was cast over its true spirit, and its fruits and blessings were hidden from the popular eye."[17]

In sum, as it would be evident from the facts we have. stated in the foregoing pages, and the opinions we have examined, what the Muslims gave to India was much greater and far more lasting and valuable than what they took from it. The coming of Islam and Muslims marked the beginning of a new era in its history-an era of enlightenment, progress and prosperity-which it can never possibly forget.

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[16] Hunter, W. W. The Indian Musalmans (1876), p. 154-55

[17] Reproduced from Sabahuddin Abdul Rahman's "Hindustan Ke Ahd-i-Wtista Ki Ek Jhalak"

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Chapter II

MUSLLIM SCHOLARS AND THEIR ACHIVEMENTS

Dual Responsibility

The Muslims in India always gave an irrefutable proof of their deep devotion and loyalty to the motherland- they strove to their utmost for its material, cultural, intellectual and spiritual advancement and spared themselves nothing in its service-, and, yet, they also remained steadfast in their attachment to their faith and the Islamic Civilization : their contact with the Muslim World did never suffer a break-on the other hand, they were called upon, time and again, to act as its leaders and torch-bearers.

It was not easy, at all, to work out an integration between two widely different civilizations', and owe allegiance, at once, to two different homes-one spiritual and the other physical and political. No other branch of Muslims has, in the entire Islamic brotherhood, acquitted itself so well of this dual responsibility as the Indian Muslims have.

Literary Endeavors of Indian Ulemas

In this chapter we propose to deal with the profound and far-reaching contribution made by the Indian Ulema to Islamic studies. Even an off-hand and sketchy sort of work like Haji Khalifa's *Kashf-uz-Zunoon*, (which in addition, attempts the impossible task of taking the whole Islamic World in its sweep) does not fail to eulogize the achievements of the Indian Muslim scholars. Maulana Syed Abdul Hai's *Es-Saqafat-ul-Islamia-Fil—Hind*[18] will give an ample idea of the place India occupies in the development of Islamic literature.

[18] It is actually a literary and educational history of India during the Muslim period. It discusses the evolution of the syllabi, from stage to stage, and also contains an exhaustive list of books written by a Muslim scholar on any subject

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CHAPTER 2

Works of International Repute

Here, however, we will refer only to such works of outstanding merit whose fame had travelled beyond the frontiers of India and which have won the praise even of Arab scholars.

We will begin with the magnificent Traditionists and lexicographer of the Thirteenth Century, Hasan bin Mohammad el-Saghani Lahori's El-Ubab-uz-Zakhir which is still regarded as one of the most reliable and authoritative reference books in the Arabic language.Students of lexicography have drawn on it ceaselessly during all these centuries and acclaimed with one voice the profound erudition, learning and scholarship of the author. Allama Suyuti has said of him that " he was a foremost authority on the subject of lexicography "; Imam Zahabi has described him as "an embodiment of learning and an ultimate authority on lexicography "; and, in the words of El-Dumyati, "he was a master of lexicography, Islamic Jurisprudence and the science of Traditions". His other book, Mashariq-ul-Anwar, on the Traditions of the Prophet, was for a long time, prescribed as a textbook in the educational institutions of various Arab countries and is still popular in the Islamic World.

Belonging to the same class of books is, *Sheikh Ali bin Husamuddin el-Muttaqi Burhanpuri's*[19] *Kanz-ul-Ummal*[20], which was written in the Sixteenth Century. It is an edited version of Allama Suyuti's *Jam-ul-Jawame*[21] and ranks among books on the Traditions that have been of immense benefit to students by saving them the trouble of having to plod through thick volumes of source-book and bibliographies. Commenting on the book, a noted scholar of Hejaz belonging to the same century, Sheikh Abdul Hasan el-Bakri el-Shafai, has very appropriately remarked that " The entire world of learning is indebted to Allama Suyuti, and the Allama hims-elf to Sheikh Ali Muttaqi ".

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[19] He is known more commonly as Sheikh Ali Muttaqi Gujerati

[20] It was .published many years ago by Dairatul Maarif Hyderabad, and is famous all over the Islamic world

[21] Allama Suyuti's book is the most exhaustive work on the Traditions, but, in it the author has not followed any me thod in the arrangement of the material with the result that it has become exceedingly difficult to consult it. If the Tradition be a spoken one, it is necessary to know the first few words, and if appertaining to the doings of the Prophet, the name of the narrator, before it can be traced out. Sheikh Ali Muttaqi made it more useful and popular by re-arranging it into suitable chapters and sections

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Then there is Allama Tahir *Pattani's*[22] (died, 1578) Majma-i-Bihar el-Anwar Fi Gharaib-il-Tanzil wa Lataif- il-Akhbar. Of it, Maulana Abdul Hai writes in Nuzhat-ul Khawatir, " In this book the author has explained the meanings of difficult words and expressions occuring in the Traditions and has also noted down under each word or expression what the different Traditionists have said with regard to it.It has, thus, become a sort of key of *HehahSitta*[23]. It has been popular among men of letters from the very beginning and is regarded by them as the last word on the subject. The author has done a great favor to all men of learning by writing it ".

Allama Mohammad Tahir's Tazkiratul Mauzuat is also a highly successful work on the subject of apocryphal traditions.

Similarly, *El Fatawal Hindia*, which is known generally as *Fatonoa-i-Alamairi*, commands much respect as a reference book on Islamic jurisprudence. In Islamic countries where the juristic structure is based on the Hanafi School, a great reliance is placed on this book in the interpretation of laws. Maulana Syed Abdul Hai says,

"El Fatawal-Hindia, which is also known as *Fatawa- i-Alamgiri*, is a most valuable book for the wide range of legal principles it deals with as well as the simplicity of its style, and the ease wtth which it solves highly intricate issues. In the countries of Arabia, Syria and Egypt, it is famous by the name of *Faitnoa-i-Hindia.* It is contained in six thick volumes and is arranged on the lines of Hidayah[24]."

Leaving aside the exceptional reports and hypothetical questions the book has confined itself strictly to reports as are commonly known and accepted, but where a common report was not available on an issue, the relevant exceptional reports have simply been reproduced, word by word, under it, along with the names of their narrators, and no comments on them have been offered. Emperor Aurangzeb had, during the earlier years

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[22] Pattan is a town in Gujerat. It is situated at about 68miles to the north-west of Ahmedabad. In the olden days it was called Anhulwarah (and written in Arabic as Naharwalah). In the 11th Century, it was the capital of a powerful kingdom of the Gujerat when it was conquered by Mahmud Ghaznavi in 1025. Qutubuddin Aibak reconquered it in 1195

[23] The term is applied to the set of six most authoritative compilations of the Prophet's Traditions-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood, Tirmizi, Ibn-i-Maja and Nasai—Translator

[24] Accepted universally as the most standard work on Islamic Jurisprudence. Translator

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of his reign, assigned the task to Sheikh Nizamuddin Burhanpuri, who worked with a team of scholars of the Hanafi School, and over two lakhs of rupees were spent over its compilation. The Sheikh has mentioned the names of twenty-four experienced research workers who assisted him in the writing of the book. Four of them were Kazi Mohammad Husain Jaunpuri Mohtasib, Sheikh Ali Akbar Husaini Asadullah Khani, Sheikh Hamid bin Abu Hamid Jaunpuri and Mufti Mohammad Akram Hanafi Lahori who jointly supervised the compilation of the book.

Musallamus-Suboot-Fi-Usoolil Fiqh by Allama Mohibbullah Bihari (died 1707) forms an important link in - This series of writings. It earned great popularity in the educational institutions and general literary circles of India and the Islamic world. Commentaries on it were written by celebrated scholars of their day.We find a mention of ten such commentaries in Maulana Abdul Hai's *Es-Saqafat-ul-lslamia.*

Maulana Mohammad A'ala Thanwi's Kasbebat-o-Ieti- lahat-il-Fumoon is a most valuable dictionary of literary and technical terms. It was compiled in the Eighteenth Century and has been applauded universally by the educated classes as a remarkable achievement. It was the first book of its kind in the Arabic language and is still fetching demand. Soon it was followed by Maulana Abdun-Nabi Ahmednagri's Jame-ul-Uloom (also known as the Scholar's Compendium), which runs into four volumes.

We come now to a book of rare worth and quality. It is Shah Waliullah's (died, 1762) Hujjatullah-il-Baligha on the nature and philosophy of the Islamic Shariat and the fundamental principles governing legislation in Islam. It is an absolutely unique and original work on the subject, the like of which does not exist in the entire Arabic literature, all its vastness and wealth notwithstanding. It has been praised lavishly by scholars and literary and theological critics and has seen several reprints in Egypt. Apart from the great merit of its contents, the book also stands out as an eminently successful piece of writing in Arabic, taking into view the easy eloquence and lucidity of its style. The fashion in those days was to write a heavily embellished language after the manner of Hariri. Shah Waliullah broke away from that tradition and employed a language that was free, easy and fluent.

After Ibn-Khuldun's Prolegomenon, Hujjat positively offers the moot noteworthy specimen of graceful, yet effortless prose during that period of Arab intellectual degeneration and the ascendancy of the Iranian

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preference for the ostentatious and the picturesque in literary expression.

The giant lexicon, Tajul Aroos Fi Sharah-il-Qamoos by Allama Syed Murtuza Bilgrami (died, 1790) does hardly stand in need of an introduction or praise. Spread over ten volumes and not less than 5,000 pages in small type, this book commands the position of a permanent library where Arabic lexicography is concerned. It needed great courage for an Indian scholar to undertake the compilation of an Arabic lexicon of such comprehensiveness and magnitude, to speak nothing of completing, revising and enlarging upon the authoritative Arabic dictionary, El-Qamoos-ul-Muheet, by that pillar among lexicographers, Allama Majduddin Ferozabadi[25]. The lexicon had acquired such renown within the lifetime of the compiler that the Sultan of Turkey and the rulers of Darfoor[26] and Morocco had special copies of it made out for them and a copy was also acquired by that great Egyptian warlord and scholarly chieftain, Mohammad Bey Abuz Zahab, at a cost of 1,000 riyals, for the library of the mosque he had built near the University of Azhar.

Prodigiousness

In the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Centuries also, India can proudly boast of having produced Islamic schoIars who were and are the envy of the whole Muslim World: for the prodigiousness of their literary output and prolificity. For instance, Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan of Bhopal (died, 1889) had 222 books to his credit of which 56 were in Arabic including, *Fathul Bayan Fi Tafseeril* Quran (ten vols.), *Abjadul Uloom, Fl-Tajul Mukalal, El-Bulgha-Fi-Usoolil Lughah, and El-Alamul Khaffaq-Fi-llmil - Ishtiqaq.*

The writings of Maulana Abdul Hai of Firangi Mahal, Lucknow, (died, 1886) number 110. Of these, 86 are in the Arabic language, *Es-Siayah-Fi-Sharh-i-Sharah-el-Wiqauah, Misbahudduja, Et-Taliqul Mumajjad* and *Zofarul Amani* being of outstanding merit. His *El-Fawaidul Bahiyah* is considered to be the most reliable work on the lives and activities of the

[25] The Allama originally belonged to Shiraz in Iran. He was born at Kaznin (Iran) in 1328 and died at Zabeed (Yemen) in 1404 or 1413

[26] A Central African Islamic State of the medieval times. It comprised of Takrour and some parts of Sudan.-Translator

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Ulema of the Hanafi School. The general practice is to draw upon it whenever information is sought regarding the Hanafi Ulema.

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi had produced as many as 910 books, 13 being in Arabic, when he died in 1943.

Maulana Baqar bin Murtuza Madrasi and Mufti Mohammad Abbas Lucknavi are also deserving of special mention among the latter-day scholars for prolificacy. Both of them have left behind a large number of books and pamphlets in Arabic and Persian on various subjects.

Biggest Bibliography

The bibliography, Moiam-ul-Musannifin, compiled by Maulana Mahmud Hasan Khan of Tonk (died, 1946) is a breath-taking monument of industry and scholarship. It runs into 20,000 pages, is divided into 60 volumes and includes 40,000 writers in its survey. As a measure of its astonishing thoroughness it is enough to know that some 2,000 authors mentioned in it, bear the name of Ahmed alone. In fine, this amazing bibliography covers all the Muslim scholars who wrote a single book in Arabic from the beginning of Islam till 1931. Four volumes of it have so far been published in Beirut at the expense of the Government of Hyderabad (Deccan). Now defunct-while the manuscripts of the rest are, perhaps, preserved in the Asafia Library, Hyderabad.

Modern Writers

Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadwi (died, 1953) holds the place of pride among Islamic scholars of the present times for the admirable contributions he has made to literature, and to the study of the life of the holy Prophet, Islamic law and history. His works cover more than 7,000 pages, besides the numerous articles, notes and reviews he wrote for the classical Urdu literary journal, *jfa'arif*, which by themselves run into hundreds of pages. Judged by his redoubtable achievements in the literary world, the Maulana was, without dispute, a great writer and a genuinely important scholar of the East.

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For his encyclopaedic knowledge and the fluency of his pen, the name of Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani (died, 1955) cannot possibly be overlooked. En-Nabi-ul- Khatim, Ttuiuieen-i-Hadees, *Hindustan Mein Musalmanon Ka Nizam-i-Talim-o-Tarbiyat.* Are among his more important works.

Traditionists

Famous as the Indian Muslim scholars are for their services to theological learning as a whole, they are without a parallel where the study of the Traditions of the Prophet-their arrangement, analysis and elucidation-is concerned. They have consistently operated as leaders and pioneers in the field of the science of Traditions since the end of the initial phase of Islam. Allama Syed Rasheed Raza of Egypt has acknowledged the splendid work done by Indian Traditionists in these words in the Foreword contributed by him to Miftaho-Kunooz- is-Sunnah :

> "Had the Indian scholars not devoted themselves during these days to the study and development of the science of Traditions, this branch of learning would probably have disappeared altogether from the East since it had begun to be neglected and was on the decline in Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Arabia from the 10th Century A.H., (15th Century A.D.)".

The credit for the introduction, growth and popularization of the science of Tradition in India (particularly in Northern and Western Idia) rests with Sheikh Abdul Huq Mohaddis Dehlavi (died, 1642). By his learned translations and commentaries of the Traditions and' by devoting over fifty years of his life to their teaching, and through other earnest endeavors in the line he strengthened and stabilized the science as a regular branch of study in India and earned for it the attention of the intellectual and literary circles of the country. His pupils and descendants also took part in its propagation till, finally, Shah Waliullah and his family made it universally popular in the land.

In the existing times the Indian Ulema have produced highly meritorious books, including commentaries, on the Traditions which have won popular acclaim from far and near. Some of these books are Maulana Mohammad Ashraf Dayanawi's *Aon-ul-Ma'bood Fi Sharh-i-*

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Sunan-i-Abi Dawood[27], Maulana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri's *Bazl-ul-Majhood Fi-Sharh- i-Sunan-i-Abi Dawood*, Maulana Abdul Rahman Mubarkpuri's *Tohfatul Ahwazi Fi Sharh-i-Sunan-i-Tirmizi*, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Osmani's *Fathul Mulhim-Fi-Sharh-Saheeh-e-Muslim* and Sheikhul Hadees Maulana Mohammad Zakarya Kandhlawi's *Aojezul Masalik Ila Sharh-i-Mowatta-i-Imam-i-Malik.*

In addition to these, Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri's comments and annotations on Saheeh-i-Bukhari, published under the title of Foiz-ul-Bari, are still looked upon as an invaluable treasure-house of knowledge on the subject of the Traditions.

Maulana Zaheer Ahsan Shauq Neemwi's unfinished work, *Aasar-us-Sunan*, on the Traditions and the exposition of the Hanafi school also shows rare insight and understanding.It makes a profound modern contribution to the study of the Traditions. Premature death prevented the Maulana from completing the book, otherwise it would surely have been a memorable achievement in its sphere of learning.

Some Unique contributions

A number of books by the Indian Ullema have been held as unique on their subjects throughout the world of Islam. To mention only a few, we have among the commentaries of the Quran, *Tafseer-i-Mazhari* by Kazi Sanaullah Panipati (died, 1810), and the three books, *Izhar-ul-Huq*, *Izalatul Auham* and *Izalatush-Shukook* by Maulana Rahmatullah Kairanwi (died, 1891) which are considered to be the last word in the repudiation of Christianity and the critical assessment of the Torah and the Bible. The Ulema of Turkey, Egypt and Syria have prescribed Maulana Rahmatullah's books for students of the subject as well as for those who aspire to engage themselves in disputations with Christian

[27] It was written under the guidance of the famous scholar and Traditionist of Bihar, Maulana Shamsul Huq Dayanawi (who was the most favourite pupil of Maulana Syed Nazeer Husain). At first, the Maulana himself had begun to write an exhaustive commentary of Sunan-i-Abi-Dawood under the title of Ghayat-nl-lliaqsood but he gave it up after only the first volume had been published. He then had this book written under his supervision and advice by his pupil, Maulana Mohammad Ashraf. Malik. In addition to these, Maulana Anwar Shah kashmiri's comments and annotations on Saheeh-i-Bukhari, published under the title of Foiz-ul-Bari, are still looked upon as an invaluable treasure-house of knowledge on the subject of the Traditions.

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missionaries. Repeated editions of them have been brought out in these countries. *El-Faraed* by Allama Mahmud Jaunpuri (died, 1671)on Eloquence, and Maulana Hamiduddin Farahi's (died, 1930*) El-Imaan Fi Aqsamjl Quran and Jamaharatul Balaghat* along with his commentaries on the different chapters of the Quran belong to the same category of writings.Justice Karamat Hussain's Fiqh-ul-Lisan and Maulana Syed Sulaiman Ashraf's *El-Mubeen* also are admirable works on the philosophy of the Arabic language.

Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi's Commentary of the Quran (in English as well as Urdu) deserves a special mention among the modern contributions to the study of Islam. This Commentary is distinguished for the great fund of new information it contains about men and places mentioned in the Quran as obtained from recent archeological findings and the author's deep research into- the faiths of Christianity and Judaism. It fills a great need in Islamic literature.

Apart from the Arabic language, in Persian and Urdu, also, the Indian Ulema have produced literary and theological works of unsurpassed value and importance in their respective branches. There are, for instance, Mujaddid Alf-Sani Hazrat Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi's Maktoobat (Letters) on higher religious and spiritual truths, Hazrat Shah Waliullah's Jzalatul Khefa on the principles of the interpretation of the Quran, Shah Abdul Aziz's Tohfa-i-Isna-Ashariya in the refutation of Shiaism, Hazrat Syed Ahmad Shaheed'.s *Sirat-i-Mustaqeem* on Islamic mysticism and spiritual reorientation, Maulana Shah Ismail Shaheed Dehlavi's *Mansab-i-Imamat* on the nature of Imamate and the duties and qualifications of the Imams and the deputies of the Prophet, Maulana Mohammad Qasim Nanotwi's *Hujjat-ul-Islam* and *Taqreer-i-Diipizeer*, Maulana Abdul Shakoor Farooqi's books on the refutation of Shiaism and his commentaries on certain chapters of the Quran, Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadwi's Seerat-un-Nabi and Khutbat-i-Madras, Qazi Mohammad Sulaima Mansurpuri's Rahmatullil A'almeen and Maulana Syed Manazir Ahsan Gilani's *An-Nabi- ul-Khatim* on the life of the Prophet and Maulana Shibli's *Sher-ul-Afam* on the history of Persian poetry. Many of these books have been translated into the Turkish and Arabic languages.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's writings were few and rather limited in their scope. Nevertheless, he was a magician with the pen. He founded a new style of Urdu prose which also ended with him. For the rich eloquence· of expression and the grandeur and majesty of the manner of writing which are the high-lights of his Tazkira and Tarjemanul Quran, he is sure to

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go down in the history of Urdu literature as a great writer and a powerful stylist.

Included among the works of Maulana Syed Abul A'la Maududi (who from the point of view of birth belongs to India and it was here that his literary career began and attained its fullness) are a number of books, pamphlets and essays which are of an outstanding value. The collections of his essays known as Tanqihat and Tafhimat, and his books on Purdah, Jehad and Usury offer excellent specimens of scholastic writing.

Islamic Literature in English

The Indian Muslims were the first among their coreligionists in the world to realise the need of producing Islamic literature in the English language. They had the occasion to come into the closest contact with English and saw clearly that for the popularisation of the teachings of the faith among non-Muslims and the Western educated sections of Muslims themselves it was necessary to bring out standard books on Islam in that language. Books written by them in English are regarded to be the best and most useful vehicles for the introduction of Islam and its precepts that are found in any Western language and are most widely read in the Muslim World also. Some of the better known of thesebooks are Syed Ameer Ali's *'Spirit of Islam'* and *'History of the Sara- cens '*, Khwaja Kamaluddin',s *'The Ideal Prophet' and 'Sources of Christianity'*, and Abdullah Yusuf Ali's '*Commentary of the Quran '*. Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi s *'Commentary of the Quran'* makes a most commendable addition to Islamic literature in English.

Hindi

In keeping with their historical traditions and the sense of realism and large-heartedness conferred on them by the liberal teachings of their faith, Muslims showed no prejudice towards Hindi and Bhasha. Although Arabic was their religious and Persian their literary and court language, they, instead of treating Hindi as an alien tongue, produced, excellent poets and literateurs in it. Besides Amir Khusro and Abdul Rahim *Khan-i- Khanan*, Maulana Rizqullah Dehlavi, the author of Paimain and Joot Niranjan and Malik Mohammad Jaisi, who wrote the immortal

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Padmavat command a position of unique importance in Hindi literature. There have been a number of Hindi poets in Bigram as we learn from Maulana Ghulam Ali's *Sarv-i-Azad*. Bang Darpan was written by a Muslim poet of that very town, and so was Prem Prakash. Sheikh Qasim of Daryabad (author of Han Jawahar), Molvi Rahat Ali of Bijnor, Shah Kazim Qalandar of Kakori and 'Maulana Mohammad Zahir of Rae Bareli are among the numerous other Muslim poets in Hindi whose poems sparkles with life and the things of the heart and are richly representative of the finest literary values.

Arabic Language and Literature

From the very beginning, a deep attachment has been shown to Arabic language and literature by the Indian Muslims. They have cherished Arabic all along as a language of literary expression. There have been excellent Arabic poets among them, such as, Kari Abdul Muqtadir Kindi Dehlavi (died, 1388), Sheikh Ahmad bin Mohammad Thanesari (died, 1417), Maulana Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgrami (died, 1785), Mufti Sadruddin Dehlavi (died, 1868), Maulana Faizul Hasan Saharanpuri (died, 1886), Maulana Zulfiqar. Ali Deobandi (died, 1904), Mufti Mohammad Abbas Lakhnavi, Maulana Nasir Husain Kintoori, Maulana Baqar Madrasi and Maulana Auhaduddin Bilgrami. The literateurs of Arabic have paid unqualified homage to Indian scholars like Prof. Abdul Aziz Memon and Maulana Mohammad Surti for their command of the Arabic language. By appointing the former on the Committee set up to revise the most authoritative Arabic lexicon, Lisan-ul-Arab, they have, to take a case in point, made an unqualified recognition of his ability as a linguist. His Abul Ala'wa Ma llaih and the brilliant editing by him of simtul-La'ali, are indicative of his great erudition and mastery over the Arabic language.

Arabic Journalism

Even now, after all the deterioration their position has suffered in India, they are hugging Arabic to their breasts. The standard books of Arabic learning and literature are included in the syllabi of their Madrassas, and a fair amount of literary work is being done in it. Journals in Arabic have been making their appearance, from time to time, underlining the fondness of Indian Muslims for that language. Some time ago, El-Bayan

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used to be published from Lucknow under the joint editorship of Maulana Abdullah Emadi and Molvi Abdul Razzaq Malihabadi and then there was Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's El-Jam'ia from Calcutta.

In 1935, an Arabic magazine, called El Rizwan, was started from Lucknow under the editorship of Hakim Mohammad Askari Naqvi which, however, ceased publication after four or five years. El Zia, the Arabic organ of Nadwatul Ulema, Lucknow, was read with interest in the literary quarters of the Arab World. It was edited by the late Maulana Masood Alam Nadwi whose proficiency in Arabic was acknowledged by, the highest in the line. Now-a-days, also, a monthly Arabic magazine devoted to the cause of Islamic regeneration is being brought out under the patronage of Nadwa under the title of Al-Ba'as-ul-lslami, and the students of that institution publish their own fortnightly Arabic journal, El-Raed. Recently, the Darul Uloom of Deoband also has started to bring out an Arabic magazine called, El-Yaqaean, which is published every month.

Present Day Writers in Arabic

Moreover, the Nadwa College has produced a crop. of Arabic writers and scholars who have earned a name for their literary endeavors in the Arab countries. It is not possible, indeed, for an impartial critic to overlook the services of the Nadwa scholars and writers while taking stock of the various intellectual and literary movements of the modern Islamic World. As writers they have evolved a style of their own representing a most pleasant blending of literary charm with the vitality and radiance of faith, and classical chastity and maturity with the spontaneity and freshness of modern literature.

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Chapter III

SOME OUTSTANDING MUSLIM PERSONALITIES

Intrinsic Strength

The appearance, from time to time, among a people of personalities that are endowed with exceptional abilities in the different branches of human endeavor is a proof of its intrinsic strength and creative vitality. It shows that the sources of its thought and action have not yet run dry, that its spirit is alive and it has not forfeited its right to existence with honor and dignity in the world. The Indian Muslims have reason to be proud of them in this respect. They have remained well-supplied with their share of outstanding men who have risen gloriously above the common level in their respective spheres of living and doing.

Exodus of Muslims Following Tartar Invasion

As soon as the foundations of a strong and enlighten end Muslim Kingdom were laid in India in the 12th Century, learned men and artists and skilled craftsmen bad started to assemble under its benevolent shadow from all parts of the Islamic World . A tremendous impetus was given to this exodus by the Tartar invasion of the Muslim East. The Tartars had laid desolate the entire Islamic Empire, but their wrath had fallen most ferociously on its capital, Baghdad, and on its other important centers of learning and culture. The result was that the process of migration was greatly speeded up from the cities that had fallen a victim to the ruthless barbarism of the Tartar and the Mongol hordes. Educated and aristocratic families fled from one country to another in search of peace and security against the uncivilized invaders. At that time India was under the rule of monarchs belonging to what is known in history as the Slave Dynasty-a dynasty of Turkish slaves-and it stood out to be the only country that could finally hold at bay the Savage attackers by repelling successfully their repeated inroads. Consequently, a large number of enlightened, high-class families of Iran and Afghanistan abandoned their homes and took refuge in India during that fearful stretch of -time. Innumerable noblemen who

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for generations had been distinguished for high respect, learning and cultural refinement and were holding positions of honor and trust in their countries came here to settle permanently, particularly during the reigns of Shamsuddin Il-tut-mish, Ghayasuddin Balban and Alauddin Khilji. Discussing this huge exodus, and its causes, the noted historian, Ziauddin Barni, writes,

> " All these families of respected noblemen, accomplished scholars and exalted spiritual leaders left their homes and wended their way towards India as a result of the invasions by the Mongols and by Chengiz Khan. Princes of the blood; experienced generals, celebrated teachers, learned jurists and illustrious religious and spiritual masters were included among the migrants ".[28]

From these families and the families of Indian origin which came into the fold of Islam through their efforts there sprang up a steady stream of spiritual and intellectual luminaries, administrators, statesmen, army generals and conquerors. Among them some were blessed with such uncommon greatness that they can legitimately be a source of pride and honor to the entire Muslim World.

Great Monarchs

Take Sher Shah Suri. When one considers his gigantic undertakings for public welfare, the mighty development plans he put through successfully, his splendid administrative achievements, his revolutionary judicial reforms, and weighs them against the fact that his rule extended over a bare five years, one becomes convinced automatically of the unique versatility and brilliance of this genius among kings. Some of his attainments during that brief span of time were so strikingly marvelous that many a well-established government would find it hard to accomplish them during much longer periods of time. Sher Shah, indeed, was one of the greatest rulers the world has yet seen.

[28] Tarikhi-i-Firoz Shahi

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"Without a doubt ", says Marshman Clarke, " Sher Shah was a most wise, kind-hearted and sagacious person. He was as accomplished an administrator as he is famous as a soldier. Though he got little respite from the wars he reformed every branch of administration and made it perfect. The laws and regulations enacted by him continued to be in force even after his death till Akbar adopted them as models for his administrative reforms which later became known as *Ain-i-Akbari*[29]

Then there is Akbar. Whatever the difference between the teachings of Islam and his religious views and the *Din-i-Ilahi* which he founded, and however much may a Muslim historian grieve at the intemperate developments that took place during the later part of his reign, it goes without saying that judged by his high-mindedness, his legislative and administrative ability his conquests and annexations, and his natural knack for leadership and the splendid patronage he extended to arts and learning, he was a magnificent ruler and empire-builder.

Aurangzeb's equal also will not be easily found in history. His excellent virtues of mind and character, his eventful life loaded with destiny, half-a-century of continuous warfare and incessant struggle, his enormous conquests and far-reaching reforms, his simple, ascetic life, his matchless courage, fortitude and determination, the strict regularity of his hours the management of a vast, sprawling empire, the direct personal command of armies in the battlefield, even in old age, the zealous observance of the obligatory as well as the supererogatory prayers, and his unceasing love for learning and study in spite of extreme occupation mark him out as a man and an emperor of a class by himself. He was a man of steel who knew not what fear, indecision or despair were. He is sure to walk in his own right, into any list that may be prepared impartially and with a due sense of responsibility of great men of all times.

Similarly, what a sublime picture of saintliness and scholarship does the life of Sultan Muzaffar Halim of Gujerat (died, 1525) present ! His faith and earnestness, his piety and moral excellence, integrity and self denial, religious enthusiasm and high-mindedness and his prodigious scholarship can scarcely be found .even in those who have nothing to do with kingship and statecraft and spend their lives exclusively in religious and literary pursuits. The following incident illustrating the loftiness of his

[29] Marshman Clarke: History of India (1842)- Retranslated from Urdu

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character and his utter, over-whelming unselfishness will always be remembered in the annals of imperial exploits, wars and conquests.

"For a hundred years", says a historian of Gujerat, " the rulers of Malwa had tried in vain to make war on Gujerat. But when Mahmud Shah II of Malwa was deposed by his minister, Mandli Rai, and the rites of Islam there began to be wantonly outraged, the religious pride of Muzaffar Shah, the king of Gujerat, was stirred. Setting out with a powerful army, he covered the distance to Malwa with the utmost speed and besieged its fort. Realizing that he was no match for the besieging force, Mandli Rai begged Rana Sanga to come to his aid. But before Rana Sanga could advance as far as Sarangpur, Muzaffar Shah dispatched a detachment of his valiant army to deal with him. Soon the fort of Malwa fell.

"The sum and substance of the story is that when Muzaffar Shah entered the fort and the chiefs of his escort beheld the enormous wealth the rulers of Malwa. Had amassed in it and heard accounts of the richness of the land, they ventured to suggest in his presence that since 2,000 of their horsemen had been killed in the fighting, it would not be wise to restore the kingdom back to the ruler, who owing to his incompetence, had lost it to his minister. As soon as Muzaffar Shah had heard it, he cut short the round of inspection and came out of the fort, instructing Mahmud Shah not to allow any member of his party into the fort. The latter entreated him to stay on for a few days more, but he firmly declined. Explaining his action on a later occasion, Mahmud Shah said, 'I had waged that war simply for the sake of earing the pleasure of God. When I heard the conversation of the chiefs, I became apprehensive lest some unwholesome desire should crop up in my heart to ruin the sincerity of my act. I have not done any favor to Mahmud Shah. On the contrary I feel indebted to him for it was through him that I was given the opportunity of doing a noble deed' ".[30]

As for his deep learning and passionate devotion to the theological sciences and the Traditions of the Prophet, it will suffice here to reproduce the following words from the ' public acknowledgement of boons conferred on him by God,' he made a short while before his death.

"By the grace of God," he said, "in addition to knowing the Quran by heart, I have a full command over the points of law and precepts arising

[30] Syed Abdul Hai :-' Mira't-i-S·ikanda

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out of every verse of it, the occasion of its revelation and the method of its recitation. I remember by heart all the Traditions of the Prophet

-their texts, references, the antecedents of their narrators and everything. I possess such knowledge, of Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) that I hope to bear testimony to the veracity of the Prophet's words that : ' For whom God makes a decision of virtue, He makes them the jurists of His faith '.

"I have now been engaged for some time in the purification of the self after the system of the Sufis and as pire for their blessings on the strength of the dictum that, 'he who makes himself resemble a people (ultimately) becomes one of them', I have read the *Tafseer Ma'al:m- ul-Tanzeel* once. I am now revising it and have finished about half of it. I hope to complete it in heaven ".

As death approached, the following prayer of Prophet Yusuf was on his lips :

> *"0 my Lord, Thou hast given me (something) of sovereignty and hath taught me (something) of the interpretation of events-Creator of the heavens and the earth, Thou art my Protecting Friend in the world and the Hereafter. Make me die submissive (Into the), and join me to the righteous ".*
> *- (Quran : XII, 101)*

Statesman

Cutting short. the story of kings and emperors, we will take up now the lives and attainments of some unusually talented ministers and statesmen. The first name to command notice in this connection is that of Imaduddin Gilani alias Mahmud Gawan (died, 1481) who besides being an administrator and statesman of exceptional brilliance was also a man of profound learning and a noted writer of his time. It seems as if he combined in himself the goodness and greatness of both the worlds temporal as well as the spiritual. His fame had spread to distant lands like Iran, Arabia and Turkestan. He was without a peer where devoutness and piety and administrative acumen were concerned.

The life of Abul Qasim Abdul Aziz Gujerati (died, 1515) , who is famous by the name of Asaf Khan, Minister of Gujerat, presents another astounding picture of composite excellence and versatility. Allama Shahabuddin Ibn-i-Hajar EI-Makki, the most important Arabian scholar

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of that time, wrote a book on him in which he paid glowing tributes to his high learning and spiritual merit. In it he says, " A peculiar glow had come over Mecca during the period of Asaf Khan's stay over there. The wise and the learned considered it a privilege to converse with him. There was a great fostering of learning . . ."

Several panegyrics were written in his praise by the poets of Arabia. There is also a mournful elegy by a distinguished Arab poet on his death.[31]

The renowned Mughal commander-in-chief, Abdul Rahim Khan-Khanan wrote exquisite poems in Persian, Arabic and Hindi, apart from being a literary critic of a high order. He was equally proficient with the pen and the sword and was also an excellent linguist. An unimpeachable historian says of him:-

> "His intelligence and sagacity, his magnanimity and high mindedness, his liberality and munificence were beyond words. He was excessively fond of poetry and literature, and was a voracious reader, particularly of historical books. He admired greatly the company of men of learning and excellence and shunned the society of those who were otherwise. His life was one of piety and rigid self-discipline. He loved to do magnanimous deeds and things that were outside the pale of pettiness. He was such a versatile person and in him there was an assemblage of such diverse virtues that the like of him cannot be found far and wide in the world and over long stretches of time in history ".[32]

In the same way, Abdul Razzaq Khawafi has observed in Ma'aser-ul-Umara that "Abdul Rahim Khan stands unrivalled among his contemporaries for courage and generosity. He enjoyed mastery over Persian, Arabic and Hindi. He could converse freely and compose beautiful verses in all the three languages."

Abdul Rahim Khan was a celebrated Hindi poet. He still commands a distinguished place in Hindi poetry. He was among the front-rank poets in Persian also but his wealth and the many-sided splendor of his genius cast a veil over the quality of his Persian poetry. Had he made it

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[31] Nuzhat-itl-Khawatir, Vol. IV

[32] Nuzhat-ul-Khawatir, Vol. V, p. 217

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the vehicle of his fame or chosen it for the display of his talents, he would, surely, have risen to as high an eminence as any of the Iranian poets of his Court with whose songs the mansion of Persian poetry is still resounding majestically.

Abul Fazl and Fyzee were the choicest glories of the court of Akbar. Irrespective of their religious and spiritual views and conduct and the harm they did there by to the cause of Islam in India, they were without a doubt among the most outstanding men of their time not only in India but the whole literary world. Both of them were gifted with exceptional mental faculties, with a rare love for learning and an extraordinary poetic and literary taste and aptitude. Fyzee deserves a place among the all-time masters of Iran for his Persian poetry, while Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari and Akbar Nama are marvels of knowledge and wisdom and observation and analysis. Says Carr de Vaux of Akbar Nama:

> "Akbar Nama is an extraordinary literary work; it is overflowing with life, ideas and facts. A study of it reveals that all the fields of human existence have been thoroughly examined and the conclusions thus reached have been critically arranged and analyzed. The eyes are dazzled by the continuous evolution of ideas it contains. It is a literary document which the entire oriental civilization can be proud. The persons whose mighty intellects have introduced themselves through this voluminous book seem to be far ahead of their age in administration and state-craft, and not only in administration and state-craft but religious philosophy as well. Those poets and thinkers saw the material world with a highly penetrating eye; They were given to observe 'everything very deeply and to preserve in their minds what they saw. They used to experience everything personally and to examine their own views and notions against the background of facts. On the one hand, their mode of expression was rich and eloquent, and,· on the other, they supported and fortified their statements with facts and figures ".[33]

[33] Carra de Vaux : 'Penseiir de Islam ' (Paris, 1921)

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Solitary Exception

A sort of intellectual stagnation had come over the Muslim World after the Mongol invasion. Minds had become sterile and blindly imitative. Intellectual activity was brought almost to a standstill. The picture of degeneration became complete with the approach of the 14th century when lethargy and inertia crept also into the ' other branches of life. With a few exceptions, like Ibn-i-Khaldun, the Islamic World could not produce anyone during the period under review who was above the general level of mediocrity. But India, on account of its physical remoteness from the scene, managed comparatively to escape from the ravages of the decay. The Tartars who had descended upon the World of Islam like a terrible curse, spelling ruin and destruction wherever they went, could not spread their tentacles fully over India because of its geographical isolation. Consequently, a major proportion of the 'finest brains of the Muslim World had sought safety by migrating to India and settling down here as permanent citizens. Because of them intellectual activity here was kept going for a considerable length of time, brisk endeavors continued to be in evidence in the literary field, and men of learning and wisdom did not cease to come forward as can rightfully be ranked among the foremost thinkers and scholars of Islam. One discovers, for example, in the writings of Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri (died, 1370), Sheikh-ul-Islam Shah Waliullah Dehlavi (died, 1762), Shah Rafiuddin Dehlavi (died, 1817) and Shah Ismail Shaheed Dehlavi (died, 1830) new literary values and original modes of thinking that are generally absent from the works of their contemporaries in the other parts of the Muslim World.

Reform and Renovation

Owing to various natural and historical factors, which we propose to discuss in the third volume of our *'History of Religious Preaching and Endeavour* '[34], India had come to be the nerve-center of religious and spiritual correction and reform during the declining phase of Islamic supremacy. Proselytizing and reformationist activities made such an advance in India that many other countries were also duly influenced by them. Religious preachers and renovators were born here who on the

[34] Tarikh-i-Dawat-o-Azimat (only the first two volumes of the book have so far been published-Translator)

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strength of their earnestness, learning and popularity, the effectiveness of their appeal and the great number of people who profited by their efforts and by their natural harmony with the real spirit of Islam and its call constituted the choicest examples of Islamic missionaries and reformers.

The most elevated among these religious guides and redeemers was Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi (died, 1624) upon whom men of vision and understanding have, on ferried the title of Muja did Alf-i-Sani (the Renovator of the Second Millennium).It was he who renewed and strengthened the bond of Indian Muslims with Islam and saved the Shariat from being corrupted by innovation s and by the apostasy of the extremist Sufis, inclined openly as they were, towards the pantheistic doctrine of *Wahdat-ul-Wajood* (God is everything and everything is God). It was he, again, who rescued the Mughal Empire from the whirlpool of irreligiousness in which it had got caught, and put a check on the highly dangerous movement for the unity and amalgamation of faiths, as well as on the revival of *Brahmanism*; the great devotee of God and indefatigable crusader in His cause, Aurangzeb, himself being a product of his mighty struggle. The Sufistic Order founded by him still endures, besides India, in countries like Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Kurdistan and Syria. The popularity this Order acquired through the efforts of his disciple, Allama Khalid Shahrazori Kurdi (died, 1826) in Arabia, Kurdistan, Syria and Turkey has not come the way of any other Sufi System.[35]

Then there was Syed Ahmad Shaheed who so splendidly reawakened the spirit of Jihad among the Muslims. He aroused them to make heroic sacrifices for the victory, of the faith and the establishment of a truly Islamic government on the lines of *Khilafat-i-Rashida* '[36]. As a result of his struggle, a wave of true religiousness and righteous-living swept over the Muslims, or, in other words, a gust of wind belonging to the early decades of , Islam blew in breathing a new life of faith and endeavor into the dead body of the Indian part of the *Millet.* He had endowed his followers with a rare religious devotion and enthusiasm. The religious steadfastness, scrupulous

[35] Usman-us-Sanad: Asfat Mawared fi Tarjuma Hazrat Saiy-yidna Khalid, and Mohammad Amin Ibn Omar *Abideen: saua Husam-il-Hindi* Le Nusrat-i-Maulana Khalid Naqsh bandi

[36] The reign of the first four Caliphs of Islam.-Translator

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Observance of the Shariat and the ardent zeal for Jihad they displayed were simply unique. P Writes Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan of Syed Ahmad Shaheed and the splendid men he had collected around himself :

> "…the gist of the matter is that a man of his stature has not been heard of in the current age in any part of the world, nor has a fraction of what his haloed band has done for the Muslims been achieved by any of the contemporary religious teachers or divines ".[37]

In the modern times, India has once again become the center of Islamic propagation and reform. It began under the inspired leadership of Maulana Mohammad Ilyas of Delhi (died, 1943)-and we must confess that throughout our travels in Muslim countries we have not had the experience of coming across a more staunch and fervent preacher of Islam than him. His special distinction lay in his absolute reliance in God and total dedication to the cause of Islamic revival and resurgence.[38]

The missionary movement founded by the Maulana is now actively at work in all parts of the Muslim World and parties of preachers are sent out regularly even to far-off lands like the United States, the European countries and Japan. This movement has succeeded in howsoever small a measure in warming up again the frozen furnaces of the hearts of Muslims by rekindling in them the sublime flame of faith.

These are but a handful of instances of men of endeavor, faith and learning that arose from among the Indian Muslims to leave an indelible mark on the ' Sands of Time'. The eight volumes of Nuzhat-iil-Khaiv'atir Contain an account of 5,000 Muslims of confirmed excellence in various walks of life who sprang from the Indian dust. It shows how inexhaustible, indeed, is the capacity of this land of ours to throw up sons of exceptional ability and caliber in all branches of human activity.

The sapling of Islam which the early Muslim had planted on the Indian soil with their hands and nourished with their life-blood is still in bloom. The Indian Muslims have during all the stages of their career produced such exalted personalities as have been the envy of the world. Even under the British regime, where a deliberate policy was pursued to liquidate them

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[37] Tiqsar

[38] Abul Hasan Ali : Mowlana Mohammad Ilyas Ali Unki. Deeni Dawat

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intellectually and economically[39] , they did not stop sending forth eminent legists, administrators, mathematicians and educationists and such brilliant masters of the English language whose proficiency and skill was acknowledged by the English- men themselves.

The Indian Muslims have produced world-class leaders, legislators, debaters and orators. The fame of their thinkers and poets has travelled to Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey and their works have been translated into a number of foreign languages, particularly of Muslim countries.

Throughout, they have also held dear, in their hearts the Arab culture and civilization and made their own contribution to it. Judging from the prevailing trends, it would seem that a new mode of thought and expression will soon get evolved in Arabic literature under the influence of Indian writers which will be richly representative of both literary and spiritual values. The glorious past of Indian Muslims holds for them the guarantee for the future. Passing though they, at present, are through the most critical phase of their history, the Muslims of India do not lack the ability to live and they are also determined to ensure for themselves an honorable place in the Indian sun. Their personality is indestructible; it is touched with eternity.

[39] Hunter, W. W Indian Musalmans

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Chapter IV

SUFI SAINTS OF INDIA AND THEIR IMPACT ON SCOCIETY

Sufistic Order

Although the chief Sufistic Orders had their origin outside India, they attained the greatest success in this country. This was due partly to the circumstances of history and partly to the inherent Indian character and temperament. There branched forth from these Orders such fraternities in India which themselves grew into permanent Orders and recognized. Schools of Islamic mysticism. Apart from the well-known Sufistic Orders-the Qadriya, the Chishtiya, the Naqshbandiya and the Suhrawardiya-there are other Orders and fraternities that are essentially Indian and are attributed solely to men who were born in India and returned to its dust, as for instance, the Madariya Order, the Qalandariya Order, the Shattariya Order and the Mujaddidiya Order. India has been the standard-bearer of Tasawwuf (Islamic mysticism) and spiritual evolution and self-reform since the 17th Century. It was at that period of time that an infinite number of persons profited spiritually from Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi and his illustrious son and successor, Khwaja Mohammad Masoom. The deputies of the latter · were found in several foreign countries like Iran, Afghanistan and Turkestan. Similarly, votaries from Turkey, Syria, Baghdad, Samarkand, _Bokhara, Egypt, China and Ethiopia were drawn to the *Khanqah*[40] of the 19th Century saint of the Mujaddidiya line, Shah Ghulam Ali Dehlavi. The Mujaddidiya Order was popularised in Iraq, Syria, Kurdistan and Turkey by Sheikh Ghulam Ali's deputy, Maulana Khalid Rumi, where it still endures. Then at the beginning of the current century, it was the turn of Haji Imdadullah Muhajir to rise to dizzy heights of fame. Known popularity in the Islamic World as the 'Spiritual Guide of the Arabs and the Non-Arabs ', innumerable Arabs, as well as non-Arab Haj pilgrims coming to Arabia, availed themselves of his priceless spiritual guidance during his stay in that country. In the contemporary Muslim World, also, it is India which

[40] Spiritual Seminary.-Translator

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is keeping the spirit of God-seeking alive. An uninterrupted chain of earnest and exalted men of God has enabled it to maintain its distinction as the universal center of spiritual and Sufistic endeavor. It is now the sole refuge in the world of the votaries of Sufism.

Popular Enthusiasm

The Muslim epoch in Indian history was, in fact, heralded by the Sufi divines, particularly by Khwaja Moinuddin Ajmeri who also la.id the foundations here of the Chistiya Order of Islamic mysticism. From the earliest days the rich vied with the poor and the high with the low to do homage to these elevated, self-denying men of God till the whole sub-continent was lit with a thick cluster of spiritual luminaries and their religious establishments. Apart from the more important towns, there was hardly a Muslim hamlet which was left without a moral teacher or a spiritual guide.

The enthusiastic devotion of the people to the Sufi saints and their overwhelming responsiveness to religious emotion can well be imagined by the facts and incidents we are now going to narrate.

The daily average of votaries staying at the Khanqah of Syed Adam Bannuri (died, 1643) was one thousand. They took their meals at the *Khanqah,* A great throng of men including hundreds of theological doctors follow ed the saint wherever he went. It is stated in *Tazkira-i-Adamiya* that 10,000 persons formed his entourage during his visit to Lahore in 1642. Seeing the phenomenal po•pularity of Syed Bannuri, Emperor Shahjehan became so apprehensive that he thought of a plan to send him out of India. He sent to him a large sum of money and then suggested that as possession of money made the Haj pilgrimage obligatory for a Muslim he should waste no time in proceeding to the Hejaz to discharge the duty. The saint, thereupon, migrated from India.

Hazrat Mujaddid's celebrated son and spiritual deputy, Khwaja Mohammad Masoom (died, 1668) had as many as 9,00,000 disciples who

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did the *Bai'at*[41] and repentance at his hand. Of them, 7,000 rose to be his *Khalifas*[42].

It is recorded about Shah Ghulam Ali in Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's Aasar-us-Sanadeed that, "Not less than 500 destitute persons used to live in his Khanqah all of whom were fed and clothed by him ".

Unprecedented scenes of popular enthusiasm were witnessed during the missionary tours of the famous divine and spiritual leader of the 19th Century, Syed Ahmad Shaheed, as also during his journey to Calcutta while on the way to Arabia for the Haj. In many of the towns that fell on Syed Saheb's route few persons were left who did not offer bai'at and repentance at his hand. At Allahabad, Mirzapur, Benares, Ghazipur, Azimabad (Patna) and Calcutta, specially, his disciples must have run into lakhs. The limit was that at Benares the indoor patients of the Sadar Hospital sent to him a petition begging that since they were unable to move out he might condescend to visit them in the hospital so that they could take the *bai'at*. About a thousand persons became his disciples every day during his two months' stay at Calcutta. From morning till late at night a stream of men and women would pour in where he was staying.

There was hardly any time left for Syed Saheb to attend to his personal needs. When it became impossible to administer the vow to everyone individually, it was arranged for the aspirants to collect in a large house where Syed Saheb went and initiated them into the fold. Seven or eight turbans were unrolled on the ground when he went there and the aspirants were told to hold them at different places, while one end of them was held by Syed Saheb himself. He then taught them the fundamentals of the faith and read out the oath in a loud voice like the *Azan*[43] which they repeated and thus the ritual was completed. This was done seventeen or eighteen times each day.

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[41] Here it means the oath taken by a person at thil time of becoming the disciple of a saint.-Translator

[42] Spiritual deputies.-Translator

[43] Muslim call to prayer.-Translator

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CHAPTER 4

Social Significance

The virtuous Sufis would call upon those taking *bai'at* at their hands to offer earnest repentance for their sins and make a solemn affirmation of loyalty and obedience to God and the Prophet. They would warn them against licentiousness and self-indulgence, injustice, oppression and the violation of the rights of others. These pious teachers addressed themselves to the moral elevation of their disciples by prescribing measures for the eradication of vices like vanity, malice, jealousy and the lust for wealth and power. They urged them to remember God and to do well by His creatures and practice self-abnegation and contentment. Besides the *bai'at* which symbolized forging of a special link between the guide and the disciple, the revered teachers also exhorted and gave good counsel to whoever came to them and strove to awaken in his breast the love for the Divine and the ambition to earn His pleasure and to strive with all his might for self-correction and inner reform.

Illustrative of the powerful inspiring and morally regenerating influence exercised on the society by the Sufi leaders though their tremendous sincerity, moral excellence and preaching and instruction is the following extract from the renowned historian, Ziauddin Barni, depicting the social conditions prevailing in India during the reign of Alauddin Khilji.

> "The leading Sufi saints at the time of Allauddin Khilji were Sheikh-ul-Islam Nizamuddin, Sheikh-ul-Islam Alauddin and Sheikh-ul-Islam Ruknuddin. A world received enlightenment from them and took the bai'at at their hands. Sinners were inspired by them to repent for their sins and thousands of evil-doers and habitual defaulters of Namaz abandoned their evil ways and became devout worshippers ; a strong fervour was created among them for religious deeds and their repentance attained perfection. The obligatory duties of worship and Divine ordinances in the other spheres of life began to be observed as a matter of course. Excessive attachment to worldly desires and aspirations, which lies at the root of most of the evils, got reduced under the force of the high morality, asceticism and profound self-denial of these spiritual masters People grew truth- ful as a result of their blessings ; they became honest in the management of their worldly affairs and were fired by the ambition to improve and evolve their inner selves due to the inspirational influence exercised

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> by the laudable moral conduct, abstinence and spirituality of the Sufi leaders"

The historian goes on to say:

> "In the last years of Sultan Alauddin's rule the general moral level had improved so much that a majority of the people abstained from drink, adultery, gambling and other social and moral perversions. The major sins were shunned as equivalents of infidelity. Muslims refrained from open usury and hoarding for fear of each other's censure. Adulteration. deceit and under weighing were eliminated from the market "[44]

It is manifestly impossible, in these few pages, to give a coherent, historical picture of the reformation brought about in public morals by the Sufi divines. It is enough to know here that the Sufi saints have made an enormous contribution towards the evolution of a healthy, conscientious environment in India which is the nation's greatest asset and which has provided it with worthy leaders and redeemers at every critical turn of its history. Leaving aside the intervening centuries, the material on which is widely distributed in the memoirs and biographies of the spiritual leaders, we will take an instance from the life of Syed Ahmad Shaheed, a religious reformer and Sufi saint of the 19th Century, to show the extent of the moral impact of his personality on society. It is recorded in connection with his brief stay in Calcutta, that

> "…the liquor business in that great city was suddenly brought to a standstill. The liquor merchants complained to the authorities that though they were paying the taxes regularly, they had been forced to close down their business since the arrival in the city of a saint under whose influence more and more Muslims were getting reformed daily and taking the vow not to indulge in intoxicants any more. They did not even look at the liquor shops now ".[45]

The venerable divines enjoined on the new entrants into their Orders fairness in monetary dealings, the paying back of debts and scrupulous satisfaction of the claims of others. To cite an example, Khwaja Nizamuddin Aulia was bidden emphatically by his spiritual mentor,

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[44] Condensed from Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi by Ziauddin Barni p. 346

[45] Waqa-i-.tthrnadi

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Khwaja Fariduddin Ganj Shakar, "to do his level best always to placate the opponent and render to everyone what was his due ". Khwaja Nizamuddin Aulia owed a person some money, and a book he had borrowed from someone had got lost. When, on arriving in Delhi, he went to settle these accounts, the person to whom he owed the money remarked, "It seems you are coming from the society of Muslims ", while the owner of the book said, *" It is always like that at the place from where you are coming "*[46]

People, likewise, were endued with the desire to oblige and be of help to others under the guidance and instruction of the Sufi saints. During the entire course of their long Haj journey, Syed Ahmad Shaheed and the large band of his companions missed no opportunity to do an act of public service. While they were sailing down the Ganges they came across, at the landing-ghats of Mirzapur, a boat which was laden with cotton. The owner of the cotton was in need of laborers to remove it to the go down. Seeing his plight, Syed Saheb, at once, told his companions to unload the boat and so energetically did they apply themselves to the task that in a couple of hours the whole of cotton was taken off and deposited in the godown. People who witnessed the deed were left thoroughly amazed. " What sort of men they are ?" they commented among themselves, " They did not even know the cotton merchant and yet they have toiled so hard for him without charging a pie. Surely, they are the devout men of God ".[47]

What was achieved by the Sufi divines in India in the sphere of general moral uplift was solely the result of their evolved spirituality and loftiness of character. No government, no law, no other institution could bring about so much improvement in so many people or keep them so steadily within the bounds of moral propriety and rectitude.

Fearlessness

A most valuable service rendered by the holy Sufi saints was that they stood fearlessly against the unjust and degenerate ways of powerful despots and tyrannical rulers, and saved the kingdom and the society in general from the consequences - of their follies by boldly telling the

[46] Fawaid-ul-Fuwad, p. 14

[47] Seerat Syed AhrntUI Shaheed, pp. 249

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truth at their face. Inspire by their example, people also shed fear and became courageous and straightforward. The history of Muslim rule in India offers any number of instances when Muslim saints threw the consideration of personal safety to the winds and fulfilled, at the gravest peril of their lives, the Islamic: duty contained in the Prophet's Tradition that, " A most superior form of Jihad is to speak the truth in front of a tyrannical ruler". Sheikh Qutubuddin Munawwar was a Chishti saint who lived in solitude at the time of Mohammad bin Tughlaq. Once the King chanced, on one of his tours, to pass through the area in which the saint lived, but the saint did not come to meet him. The King then summoned him to Delhi. When the Sheikh entered the royal palace, the court nobles, ministers, heralds and attendants were

Standing in a double row in front of the throne. On the imposing spectacle, his young son, Nuruddin, who was with him, and had never been in a king's durbar before, was seized with fright. The Sheikh admonished him sternly.

"Glory is for God, Baba Nuruddin ", he said to him in a loud voice. The son related later that as soon as he had heard these words, he felt a new strength surging within him, all the fear disappeared and the Court grandees began to look to him as meek as goats. The King complained to the saint, " When I was in your neighborhood you neither counselled me nor honored me with a visit". The Sheikh replied, "The *dervish*[48] does not consider himself worthy of royal society. In his solitary corner he prays for the King as for the general body of Muslims. He will now beg to be excused ". After the interview, the King confided to a nobleman that he had noticed with all the spiritual leaders with whom he had the occasion to shake hands, that their hands trembled at the time, but Sheikh Munawwar's grip was so firm that he seemed to be completely unaffected by the event ". The King then presented to him a purse of one Lakh gold coins, whereupon the Sheikh exclaimed, "Glory be two seers of pulses and rice and a pice worth of ghee are enough for the dervish. What will he do with all this money?" After great persuasion and on being advised that the King would be antagonized by a blank refusal, he agreed to accept 2,000 pieces which, too, he distributed among his brother-saints and other poor and indigent people before returning from Delhi ".[49]

[48] A Muslim ascetic.-Translator

[49] Siar-ul-Aulia, pp. 253-55

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To take another instance, again from the reign of Sultan Mohammad bin Tughlaq, Maulana Fakhruddin Zarradi had a strong aversion to meeting him. He used often to say that he saw his head rolling in his durbar (meaning that he will not hesitate to speak the truth in his presence and the King will not forgive) . At last, he was once called by the Sultan to his court. " Give me some good advice ", the Sultan asked, " Suppress anger ", the Maulana said "What anger ? " asked the Sultan. "The anger of the wild beasts ", the Maulana replied. The King grew red in the face at the reply, but he kept quiet. After this, the royal meal was ordered. The King shared his vessel with the Maulana and sometimes even fed him with his own hand. The Maulana ate with apparent dislike. When the meal was over, the Maulana came away.[50]

The Sufi saints upheld steadfastly the traditions of detachment, fearlessness and undaunted championship of the truth though those were the days of absolute monarchy and despotic rule. The Kings, too, under the force of their spirituality felt compelled to allow them the freedom to perform their duty even when they showed no consideration to the forthright and honest Ulema. The spiritual leaders guarded zealously their self-respect and dignity before mighty rulers, chieftains and noblemen right till the last days of the Mughal Empire. It is reported that " Emperor Shah Alam, once, was present in the *llfohfil-Sima'a*[51] of Khwaja Mir Dard when, troubled by a painful leg, he could not help stretching it a little. The Khawaja protested. "It is against the decorum of the society of the *fakir*[52] to sit like this", he said. The Emperor apologized and indicated his discomfort upon which Khawaja Mir Dard remarked, "If you were not feeling well, what was the need to come ?"[53]

Propagation of Knowledge and Learning

The Sufis of India were great patrons of learning. Some of them were outstanding men of letters themselves. Their belief was that it was impossible to know God without knowledge, and also that, ' An ignorant Sufi is the Devil's plaything'. There are instances when they refused to admit in their folds votaries of striking promise and aptitude

[50] Siar-ul-Aulia, pp. 271-72

[51] Literally, a musical entertainment. Among the Sufis it is applied to an assembly in which hymns are sung to produce spiritual ecstasy.-Translator

[52] Same as dervish.-Translator

[53] Gul-i-Ra'ana p. 171

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until they had completed their education. As we will see in proper detail in another chapter, the remarkable educational and literary progress of India under the Muslims was due directly or indirectly, to the encouragement given by . the Sufi divines. The two of the greatest scholars and teachers of the 14th Century, Qazi Abdul Muqtadir Kindi and Sheikh Ahmad Thanesari were the spiritual proteges of Khwaja Naseeruddin Chiragh-i-Dehli. The renowned 17th Century educationist and teacher, Maulana Lutfullah of Kora Jahanabad, through whose pupils, and pupils of whose pupils, educational activity was kept going till the 19th Century, was a Sufi saint of the Chistiya Order. More often than not, the *Khanqah* and the Madrassa formed the natural complements to each other. The Khanqah-i-Rasheediya of Jaunpur, the Madrassa of Shah Pir Mohammad at Lucknow, the educational seat of Shah Waliullah at Delhi and the *Khanqah* of Maulana Rasheed Ahmad at Gangoh were the best examples of it.

Benevolence

The needs of thousands of men used to be satisfied through the saints ; in countless homes the hearths were lighted because of their benevolence ; a vast number of people lived in their *Khanqahs* as permanent guests, enjoying all the reasonable comforts of life. At the dinner spreads of the Sufi ascetics no distinction was observed between the rich and the poor, the friend and the foe and the kindred and the stranger. The dinner-spread of Khwaja Nizamuddin Aulia was proverbial both for extensiveness and the sumptuousness of the meals served on it. At the Khomqah. of Sheikh Saifuddin Sirhindi, a Mujaddidiya divine of the Seventeenth Century, 1,400 persons used to dine every day and every one of them was served with food of his own choice[54] Of another Chishti saint of the late Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Centuries, Syed Mohammad Saeed alias Shah Bheek, it is reported by his biographer that apart from the 5,000 votaries who lived permanently in his Khanqah, an equal number from among the daily visitors also joined in at the meals with the result that about 1,000 persons dined with him regularly. Once Roshanuddaula, who was a *Seh-Hazar*[55]*i* feudal lord of the Court of Emperor Farrukh Siyar of Delhi presented to him Rs.70,000 for the construction of the *Khanqah.* The Shah Saheb advised him to leave the

[54] Niizhat-iil-Khawatir, Vol. V

[55] Meaning a Mansabdar commanding 3,000 soldiers.-Translator

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money and go and have a little rest : the work would commence in the afternoon. After Roshan uddaula had retired, Shah Bheek sent the entire money to widows and other needy and indigent people of Ambala, Thanesar,. Sirhind and Panipat through the ascetics of the *Khanqah*, When Roshanuddaula returned in the afternoon, the Shah Saheb said to him, " You could never have earned so much Divine reward by the construction of the *Khanqah* as you have by serving so many poor, helpless persons and hermits. What would an humble ascetic like me do with a palatial building ?" On another occasion, Emperor Farrukh Siyar, Roshanuddaula and Nawab Abdullah Khan sent him promissory notes worth Rs. 3,00,000 along with their petitions. The divine had all the money distributed in the neighbouring towns and among indigent families of good birth[56]. Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani had very appropriately observed that :

> "The *Khanqahs* of the Sufi saints served as the connecting link between the rich and the poor. Even reigning monarchs paid tribute to the courts of these august men. Take the case of Sultan-ul-Mashaikh. It has been shown how Khizir Khan, the heir-apparant to the throne of Delhi, was his bondman. Sultan Alauddin Khilji used to collect the tribute from all parts of the country, but there was one treasury in which he also had to deposit the submission money The *Khanqahs* were the channels through which the share of the poor and the needy used to reach them throughout the land. This is what was implied by the well-known saying that 'the property of the Sufi is at everybody's disposal'.
>
> "This confluence of poverty and riches, i.e., the holy Order of the Sufiis to which the rich and the poor alike paid their homage was the agency by means of which the needs of innumerable destitute Muslim families were satisfied. Indeed, there was no phase in the whole era of Muslim supremacy in India, and no province, in the entire sub-continent, in which the Prophet's command that, ' it should be taken from those among them that are rich and given to those among them that are poor ', was not dutifully carried into practice by the Sufi saints, specially by those among them who by some extraordinary circumstance had come

[56] Manazir Ahsan Gilani : Nizam-i-Talim wa Tarbiyat Vol. II. pp. 221-22

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> to acquire influence over the rich and the privileged sections of the community: the fortune of the distressed sections would then literally wake up".[57]

Resignation and Contentment

The holy Sufis generally abstained from accepting offices of the State or gifts or grants from the wealthy lords, princes and other well-to-do people. By their conduct they set a tradition of sublime asceticism, contentment, reliance on God and self-respect which encouraged and sustained in the general Indian society the ideals of magnanimity, large-mindedness and integrity, and held aloft the honour and dignity of humanity in this market-place of gain and loss which is the world, and where human beings also are bought and sold. Their life principle and open declaration in this behalf was :

> *I'll not exchange my tattered pallet for the royal standard*
> *Nor my poverty for Solomon's dominions ;*
> *The treasure I have discovered in my heart because of poverty's pang*
> *I'll not exchange it for the comforts of Kings.*

There is practically no Sufistic Order which does not abound in glorious episodes of the triumph of the abstract and spiritual values of life over worldly and materialistic urges and temptations. Here, however, we will quote instances only from the last two centuries to show on what a lofty plane did the Sufis continue to operate even when materialism had made its headway in the Indian society and transcendental values had begun ,to be at a disadvantage everywhere.

Mirza Mazhar Jan-i-Janan was a Sufi leader of the Naqshbandiya Mujaddidiya Order. The Emperor of Delhi approached him with the request to be good enough to accept something from the vast Empire God had blessed him with. Came the reply, " God has said about the Kingdom of seven climes (i.e. the whole habitable world) that ' the stock of the world is meagre '. Of it only a country of one clime has come to your lot. How much can it be that I extended a covetous hand towards it "

[57] Nizam-i-Talim wa Tarbiyat. Vol. II, p. 220

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CHAPTER 4

Once Nawab Asaf Jah presented him with 20,000 rupees which he refused. The Nawab urged, "Take them and give them away to the poor". Mirza Jan-i-Janan replied, " Start distributing them as you proceed from here and they will be used up by the time you reach your home. If any of them will be left they will be finished there ".

Nawab Mir Khan, the ruler of Tonk (in Rajasthan) wanted to make a grant for the maintenance of the Khanqah of Shah Ghulam Ali of Delhi. The divine, when he came to know of the ruler's intention, had this verse written to him:

"We do not disgrace resignation and contentment, Tell Mir Khan, one's portion is pre-ordained."

Once a high-ranking Government officer, who had come to meet Maulana Shah Fazlur Rahman of Ganj Moradabad (died, 1895), was so much impressed by the high moral level of his conversation that he said, "L' you are willing, I can move the Government to bestow a grant on your *Khanqah* ", The Maula.na observed, " What will I do with the grant of your Government? By the grace of God, I have a stringed. cot, *two earthen lotas*[58] and two pitchers of clay. Some disciples bring me a little millet from which bread is made, and my' wife cooks some pulses or cheap vegetables with which I eat the bread ".

Again, it is related by Molvi Mohibbullah that Nawab Kalb-i-Ali Khan of Rampur once expressed the desire that the Maulana honored him with a visit. Molvi Mohibbullah asked what would he offer to the Maulana if he came, to which he replied, "One lakh rupees ". Molvi Mohibbullah then went to Ganj Moradabad to persuade the Maulana to undertake the journey. "Come to Rampur ", he pleaded with him, "Nawab Kalb-i-Ali Khan is very eager to have you as his guest. He will make a present of one lakh of rupees if you went there ". The Maulana heard as if it mattered absolutely nothing to him. Then he said, *"Forget the one lakh (of rupees), and listen to this : When I behold His favours on my heart, to me it appears far more precious than the cup of Jamshed ".*

58 A vessel for holding water having a snout.- Translator

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CHAPTER 4

Refuge of Humanity

People got imbued with excellent humanitarian ideals in the society of the Sufis. They were guided by an earnest solicitude for humanity to render whatever service they could to fellow-men without regard to their race or creed. They believed in and fashioned their conduct on the Prophet's advice that 'God's creatures are His family : among His slaves, He loves him most who serves His family with the greatest devotion *"Khwaja Nizamuddin Aulia is reported to have said about himself that, When a person comes to me and relates his troubles I feel twice as much distressed as him ".*[59] Another of his favorite dictums was: "On the Day of Judgement, nothing will carry greater weight than the desire to serve and to please Many a soul-weary and broken-hearted person would find refuge in the Khanqahs of the saints. The arms of the revered Sufis were ever open to welcome those whom fate had jilted or who had been forsaken by their kinsmen or the society. The dejected, the anguished and the outcaste would come to them and find shelter, food, love and recognition. They would find the balm for their broken hearts and wounded spirits. When the spiritual guide and mentor of Khwaja Nizamuddin Aulia was sending him off finally to settle in Delhi, he had bestowed this blessing upon him : *" You will be like a huge, shady tree under which God's creatures will find comfort ".* [60]

History bears witness to the fact that for full seventy years people came from far and near and found shelter and protection under his benevolent shadow. Thanks to the Sufi ascetics there existed at hundreds of places in India such ' huge, shady trees ' under whose merciful shade broken-down travelers used to find new life and freedom.

[59] Siar-ul-A'rifeen (Manuscript)

[60] Siar-iil-Aitlia, p. 28

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Chapter V

INDO-ISLAMIC CULTURE

Two Determining Factors

The cultural structure of Muslims everywhere· is determined by two major factors :(i) Islamic belief, way of life and system of ethics, and (ii) the indigenous cavitation and local customs which are bound to make their influence felt as a result of living and mixing with the original elements of the population.

The first constituent-Islamic faith, way of life and code of ethics-is the common attribute of the cultural make-up of Muslims all over the world. Wherever they may be living, and whatever their language or dress, this attribute is shared by them universally, and by virtue of it they impress as members of a single brotherhood in spite of the so many things that differentiate them locally. The other component forms that part of their culture which distinguishes them from their co-religionists living in other parts of the world and imparts to them their individual national character.

The Indian Muslims are not exempt from this general principle. Their culture, which has taken centuries to evolve itself, is a combination of both Islamic and Indian influences. This two-fold aspect has, on the one hand, endowed it with a beauty and a richness which is characteristically its own and, on the other, it holds forth the assurance that this culture will operate here not like an alien or a traveler but as a natural, permanent citizen who has built his home in the light of his peculiar needs and circumstances, past traditions and new impulsions, and has also made a pleasant and enduring contribution to the native environment that surrounds him. To seek to deprive a person-or to make him revolt against transcendental values and ethical ideals which are common between him and large pounces of mankind spread all over the globe will mean an attempt to freeze his spiritual fountain-heads and destroy the universality of his outlook. In the same way, it will be utterly futile and unjust to expect him to cut himself aloof from his environment and lead a life of complete immunity from the local influences.

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CHAPTER 5

Characteristics Of Ibrahimi Civilization

From the point of view of Islamic belief, morality and way of life, Indian Muslims, along with Muslims of all other lands, possess a distinctive civilization for which there can be no more appropriate and comprehensive title than "*Ibrahimi Civilization*". 'This Civilization has three essential attributes which have fixed their stamp on its entire spiritual, intellectual and social design and given it a flavor and a character that are manifestly its own. The three attributes are God-consciousness, Monotheism (which has been taught ceaselessly by all the Prophets belonging to the line of Hazrat Ibrahim and a complete elaboration of which is contained in the Quran), and a permanent, natural awareness of human dignity and equality that never deserts the mind of a Muslim. It is these characteristics which lend a distinctive personality to the Ibrahimi civilization. As far as we can say, in no other system of civilization are these features so strikingly in evidence.

Place of God in the Life of Muslim

Faith in the existence of God and a constant awareness of Him and a ready expression of this awareness is a fundamental and inalienable constituent of the life and culture of Muslims. Islamic Civilization can aptly be compared to a dress which is worn in different styles at different places according to the taste and climatic and other conditions prevailing there but its texture is the same everywhere and it is dyed in the same hue so deep that every tissue and fiber of it is totally impregnated with it. The name of God and His remembrance run like blood in the veins and arteries of Islamic Civilization. When a child is born in a Muslim home, the first ceremony it undergoes, within a few minutes of its birth, is that the *Azan* is spoken in its ears. Thus, the first name it becomes familiar with, even before he acquires his own name, is that of God. On the seventh day, the *Aqiqa*[61] is performed, as approved by the Prophet, when an Islamic name is given to it, the choice generally falling on one which expresses the sentiment of loyalty to God or proclaims His absolute Unity and Oneness or is patterned after the names of that most exalted group of Monotheists-the

[61] The Christening ceremony among Muslims. The hair on the head of the infant is shaven and sacrificial offering of a goat (or two goats) is made to God.- Translator

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Prophets-or their pupils or immediate disciples. When the time comes for the child to begin his education and go to the school, it is celebrated with the recitation of the name of God and a few verses from the holy Quran.4 This ceremony is known among Indian Muslims as *Tasmiya Khwani* or *Bismillah.* At marriage, again, the name of God is invoked to unite together in a permanent bond two mature and responsible persons who also have to take the pledge to uphold the prestige of that name throughout their lives.

The wedding sermon is delivered in the manner sanctified by the Prophet's practice, expressing gratitude to God for having created the human race in pairs of men and women and exhorting the couple to live and die in a. state of faithfulness to Him. When the auspicious day of *I'd-ul-Fitr* [62]arrives, a Muslim is called upon to raise his voice in the affirmation of His Glory and Greatness (*Allah-0-Akbar*) and offer two rakats of prayers in thanksgiving, after he has bathed himself and put on a clean dress. At *I'd-ul-Azha*[63] he is desired to offer up animal sacrifice in God's name. Finally, when the ultimate stage of life's journey is reached, a Muslim is instructed to focus all his attention on that very name. Every Muslim, man or woman. Has the ambition of dying with the sacred name of God on his or her lips. When the news of his death circulates all educated (and even uneducated) Muslims who hear it spontaneously repeat the Quaranic word, *Inna Lillah-e-wa Inna Ilaih-e-Rajeoon* (meaning, " To God we belong, and to Him do we return) ". The funeral prayers, which are the last act of service to him, reverberate with the name of God from beginning to the end. These prayers are a solemn request to the Almighty by the participants for the salvation of the soul of the ·departed and for themselves that they may be granted a life of loyalty and devotion to Him in this world and of peace and felicity in the next. As the body is lowered in the grave it is to the accompaniment of these words : " *In the name of God, and according to the way of His Apostle's religion and the Millet*". In the grave, the face is turned towards that universal center of Divine worship and Monotheism which goes by the name of *Ka'aba* (House of God).

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[62] The greatest Muslim festival held on the Ist of the month of Shawwal. It is a day of thanksgiving at the successful conclusion of Ramazan which is a month of fasting .among _ them.-Translator

[63] The Second greatest Muslim festival. It is celebrated on the 10th day of the month of Zil-Hij in commemoration of Abrahm's offering up of his son Ismail.-Translator

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Where ever a Muslim may be buried his face will, without exception, be in line with that one place at Mecca in Arabia. After the burial, no Muslim passer-by will, usually, fail to offer the Fateha7 at his grave and pray for the remission of his sins and the deliverance of his soul. In fine, the name of God and its remembrance are a constant companion of a Muslim's life from the cradle to the grave.

But these were the more important landmarks of man's earthly sojourn. In his everyday existence, also, a Muslim is never destitute of God's remembrance. When a Muslim sits down to eat, he begins his meal with the name of God and ends it also in the same manner. Those who are particular about the observance of the Sunnah of the Prophet carry out the minutest details of life with the name of the Lord on their lips and His thought embedded in their hearts. Take such a trifling thing as a sneeze. A Muslim is required to remember God when he lets it out, and those who hear it, also, are instructed to send up a prayer for him. What is more, the daily conversation of a Muslim is interspersed with phrases like *Masha Allah* (as God willed), *Insha-Allah* (If God wishes so) and *La Haul-a-Wa La Quwata, Illa Billah* (There is no power or virtue but in God) . These phrases, apart from being ideal prayer-formulas, have gained currency as terms of everyday speech not only in Arabic, but in the languages of those countries too, where Muslims have been living for some time and which have received the impress of Islamic Civilization. In truth, these phrases are in the nature of convenient aids to God-remembrance. The culture, language and the daily life of no other people will be found to be so thoroughly soaked in faith in God-existence and an all-embracing consciousness of Him.

The basic ingredient of the culture and civilization of Indian Muslims, transcending the frontiers of race, nationality and geography, is this very faith and consciousness which has become the mark and symbol of their daily existence.

Monotheism

The second main constituent of their culture is the creed of Monotheism. Belief in the Oneness of God is manifest in all their activities from spiritual conviction to practical conduct and from worship to festivals and ceremonies. Five times in a day, it is proclaimed from the minarets of their mosques that no one is worthy of worship except One God. Their homes and studios are expected to be free from every

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trace of idolatry and polytheism-photographs, statues and images having been prohibited to them by their religion. The same principle has to be followed even while making or buying toys for children. Be it a religious or a national celebration, the birthday of a spiritual leader or a political hero, or the ceremony of national flag-hoisting, it is forbidden to Muslims, and repugnant to their Monotheistic civilization, to bow before a portrait or an image, to stand reverently before it or to pay it floral tributes in any form. Wherever Muslims will be honest in their loyalty to the Islamic civilization, they will remain strictly removed from such practices. The transgression of the limits of Monotheism, in imitation of the manners and customs of another people or from any other motive, even in such minor matters as the giving of a name, the observation of a function or ceremony, the showing of respect to elders or the expression of one's modesty and humility is an act prejudicial to the spirit and teachings of Islam.

Human Dignity and Equality

The notion of human dignity and equality has become a part of the essential nature of Muslims and a permanent attribute of Islamic character. Things like social exclusiveness or untouchability are completely foreign to Muslim society. A Muslim will have no hesitation in dining with another Muslim or any other person. Several Muslims will readily eat from the same vessel ; one will freely partake of the other's left-over, or drink the water left behind in his tumbler. The master and -the slave will fall in the same row and offer the Namaz standing shoulder to shoulder with each-other. Any learned person, however lowly he may be, socially or economically, can lead the prayers and the highest dignitaries and noblemen will follow him readily.

Lesser Attributes

Besides these fundamental characteristics there are some other distinguishing features of a lesser importance of the Ibrahimi Civilization which are common to Muslims everywhere. These include habits and customs, such as, the performing of all good deeds, like eating or drinking or the passing over of something to anyone with the right hand, dress-restrictions for example, the dress must cover the body properly the garment for the lower extremities should be long

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enough to conceal the knees and short enough to stop above the ankles-men are forbidden the use of silk-, and stress on cleanliness. Adherence to these regulations will generally be the rule where Islamic Civilization is present in its true, unpolluted form, and where it is not so, it will be a sign of social and moral degeneration.

Fine Arts

Its simplicity and sobriety is another characteristic of the Islamic Civilization. In the matter of fine arts it adopts a balanced, temperate, attitude. It does appreciate beauty and refinement, yet, at the same time, it frowns severely upon certain forms of self-indulgence and sensuality to which the West has given the imposing label of ' Fine Arts '. Some of these are dancing, painting and photography (of living beings) and sculpture. Similarly, there are certain things in which Islam has advised caution and moderation. For instance, a Muslim is permitted to enjoy music, but within certain limits. Absorption in fine arts is, in any case, contrary to the spirit and social destiny of Islamic Civilization and inimical to the generation of that fear of God, solicitude for the Hereafter and the high ethical standard which are expected of a Muslim. Had the check and control of the Islamic Shariat and Civilization not been there, H would not have been possible for Indian Muslims to maintain the temperateness that is their distinction, to some extent or another, in this respect in a country which has been so strongly attached to fine arts from the ancient times that they have become a part of popular worship.

Islamic Morality

Among the moral attributes which have particularly influenced the Islamic culture are hospitality, liberality and open-handedness. These qualities, again, are a heritage from Hazrat Ibrahim about whose generous reception of guests there has occurred the following verse in the Quran :

> *Has the story reached thee of the honoured guest of Abraham? (LI : 24)*

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CHAPTER 5

Pilgrims and foreign chroniclers who had the occasion to live, for any length of time, among communities, tracing their descent from him either racially or spiritually, have recorded most pleasant memories of their stay in this respect. They have invariably been impressed by their warm hospitality and friendly feeling towards guests and strangers. One can still notice in the countries of the Middle East, which have not yet been swept off their feet by the mounting tide of Western Civilization, glimpses of the hospitality that had enabled globetrotters like Ibn-e-Batuta and lbn-e-Jubair to enjoy the comfort and warmth of home during travel. The Indian Muslims in spite of their being placed so far away from the natural seat of Islamic Civilization and the fact that Islam had reached their country long after it had passed the peak of its glory, also are conspicuous for their cordial treatment of the guests. Hospitality is a part of the tradition of Muslim homes, and although modern economic conditions have put a curb on it, Muslims still feel happy on the arrival of a guest and consider it a source of good fortune and an Islamic virtue to entertain him open-heartedly.

Indian Influences

One of the most valuable fruits of Indo-Islamic fusion is the Urdu language. Refined and progressive to the very core, this language represents what is best in the Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Sanskrit languages. The dress of the upper and urbane sections of Indian Muslims is another noteworthy example of the inter-mingling of Indian and Islamic cultures. It reflects refinement of taste and polished living in good measure. Further, there is the graceful, easy and well-mannered mode of life which grew up in Delhi, Lucknow, Hyderabad and the other important centers of Muslim influence towards the end of the Mughal rule. Excessive respect of parents, including the display of a particular kind of humility and correctness of behavior in their presence, and the exaggerated purdah of women along with certain other special regulations governing their conduct are features which are generally not found among Muslims belonging to other lands. In their evolution the peculiar conditions of life in India, the needs and interests of Muslims as the ruling race and indigenous customs and traditions have obviously taken an active hand.

The practice so commonly observed among Indian Muslims of marrying only in the family or in their own particular group of families or in a

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family of an equal genealogical status with them is also typically Indian and influenced wholly by the caste and other permanent distinctions of birth obtaining in the country. Muslims living outside India look upon such customs with curiosity, They are not bound down by them and give thought only to social and economic considerations-apart from personal inclination, of course,-while contracting matrimony. Similarly, the custom of making too much fuss over occasions of joy or grief, of spending beyond means on them and going in for unnecessary ostentation, is a specialty of the Indian society which has made its way among Muslims, otherwise the Islamic mode of carrying out such ceremonies is one of simplicity and quiet dignity.

The disgraceful treatment meted out to servants by their masters, which is sometimes so outrageous as to reduce the servants to the level of '*untouchables* ', is, again, a product of the social impulses received from India together with the general degeneration that had set in among the Muslims during the declining years of their power.

All said and done, it is an incontrovertible fact that Muslims have benefited immensely from the ancient cultural heritage of India. It has enriched them in a number of ways. The successful manner of their meeting the onslaught of the Western Civilization and preserving their cultural identity unnamed - a thing which has not been possible in the so-called Islamic countries, the depth and profundity evident in their thought, and mysticism (Tasaunouf) are due largely to the action. exercised on them by the social, cultural and intellectual processes native to India. These processes have, in conjunction with the basic impulsions of Islamic thought and way of life, given shape to a composite Indo-Islamic Culture representing at once the supranational Civilization of Islam and the local philosophy and social design of India.

With all this, Islamic values and ethical standards have also suffered a distinct transfiguration in India. Though it is much less as compared to what has been the experience of other peoples who, like Muslims, came from alien lands to make India their home, it is still profound enough to have moved a sensitive and well-meaning Muslim poet of the nineteenth century, Khwaja Altaf Husain Hali, to make a friendly complaint about it to the motherland[64]. When two civilizations meet, the transmission of cultural effects and impulses between them is always a two-way process. It cannot be that one exercises its influence on the

[64] The reference is to Hali's poem, Shikwa-i-Hinu,

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other without being simultaneously influenced by it. Such a thing would be both unnatural and incorrect. Human existence is based essentially on the noble principle of give-and-take. In it lies its strength and its glory.

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Chapter VI

SOME SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE MEDIVAL EDUCATIOAL SYSTEM

The medieval educational system was not without its faults. Both from the technical and the academical points of views it suffered from a number of defects and shortcomings. Yet the glowing religious fervor of its architects and other leading men associated with it had endued it with certain values which had come to belong to it typically, and are not to be found in the educational structure of the modern times. Here we aim to deal briefly with some of them. The examples we are going to cite form but a fraction of the innumerable instances of lofty idealism and religious zeal one is struck by while examining the educational history of India under the Muslims.

Sincerity and Self-Denial

Utter sincerity and self-effacement were the chief distinguishing features of the teachers of old. The religious merit of the profession of teaching and the reward promised on it in the Hereafter had become a part of faith with them ; hence, a majority of the teachers, if not all, looked upon their work as an act of worship and engaged themselves in it wholly as a high religious duty and with a view to propitiate God and to earn His pleasure. Many among them lived like ascetics, enduring poverty with resignation and good cheer. Remarkable instances of it are found in the records of the lives of Muslim Ulema and teachers of those days.

Take this incident. It is related by Maulana Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgrami from his teacher and mentor, Mir Tufail Mohammad Bilgrami, about the well-known teacher and Traditionists of Bilgram, Mir Syed Mubarak that:

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"One day I was with Mir Syed Mubarak when he rose to perform the *Wazu*[65], but staggered and fell down. I rushed to his aid, and lifted him up. It took him some time to regain consciousness ; then I enquired about his condition. After great persuasion he told me that he had eaten nothing for the last three days. The Maulana had not revealed his situation to anyone nor accepted anything from anybody during that time. I was moved to tears on hearing it, and returned home at once. I got prepared the Maulana's favorite dish at home and took it to him. The Maulana expressed great pleasure at it ; he bestowed much affection on me and blessed me profusely, but, then, he said, ' If you don't mind, may I say something ?' I begged him to do so, whereupon he observed, 'Such a food is known among us, the Sufis, as *Ta'am-i-Ishraf*[66], and although the Fiqh does not prohibit it-the Shariat even allows the eating of impure food after three days of continuous starvation-it is against the practice of the Sufi-ascetics to avail themselves of *Ta'am-i-lshraf* '.

"After this I quietly left the place taking the food back with me. I waited outside for some time, then went in again and asked the Maulana,
'Were you expecting me to bring back the meal after I had taken it away?'.

'No' the Maulana replied. 'Then it has ceased to be *Ta'am-i-lshraf* now', I said, 'You were not looking forward to it'. My argument appealed to the Maulana and he agreed to eat. He remarked, 'You have acted very wisely today"[67]

This, admittedly, is a unique case of its kind, but the educational history of medieval India is so abundantly studded with glittering episodes of ascetic self-abnegation and devotion to the cause of learning as a high religious duty that these qualities seem to one to have become a part of the tradition of the educational set-up of those days. No less

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[65] Ablution performed before prayer.-Translator

[66] Ta'am-i-Ishraf means food one begins to look expectantly to from a particular source

67 Ma'asir-ul-Keram, pp. 96-7

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astonishing is this further example of sincerity and self-denial on the part of teachers belonging to the same period of time. Maulana Abdul Rahim (died, 1884) was a teacher in Rampur. He was offered by Mr. Hawkins, the Commissioner of Rohilkhand, the post of a teacher in the Bareilly College on a salary of Rs. 250 per month with a promise of further rise in future. The Maulana declined the offer, pleading that he would thereby forfeit the monthly stipend of Rs.101 he was getting from the Rampur State. Taken by surprise at this reply, the Commissioner enquired why should the Maulana bother about the stipend when he was offering him twentyf ive times as much. The Maulana then said that there was a jujube tree in the courtyard of his house in Rampur, the fruit of which was of the sweetest, and he would miss it sorely at Bareilly. The materialistic Englishman could still not get to the real meaning of the Maulana's excuses. He explained that the jujubes could easily be brought to Bareilly from Rampur for the Maulana to enjoy. The Maulana then brought up another argument. He said that his pupils in Rampur would be put to great loss if he moved to Bareilly, while, at the same time he too would be deprived of the opportunity of serving them The Commissioner replied that he would grant them scholarships to complete their education at Bareilly. The Maulana then played his last card. He submitted that what answer would he give to God on the Day of Judgment for accepting remuneration for the sacred work of teaching. The Englishman then gave up in desperation and the Maulana spent the rest of his days in Rampur on a stipend of Rs. 101- per month.[68]

Engrossment

The teachers of the bygone days were so thoroughly engrossed in their profession that it is not possible to convey even a faint idea of it today without the aid of examples. They had made the work of teaching and instruction the sole passion of their lives, and kept themselves engaged in it during most of the hours of day and night, till the end of their time. Allama Wajihuddin Gujerati, for instance, taught regularly for 60 to 65 years, Maulana Abdus Salam Lahori, Mulla Abdul Hakim Sialkoti and Maulana Ali Asghar Kannauji for 60 years, and Maulana Ahmad Amethwi, alias, Mulla Jiwan, till the last day of his life.

[68] NurhatuZ Khawatir VoZ., VII, p. 259

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It is said of some teachers that they used lo give lessons even while eating or going out somewhere. Mulla Abdul Qadir Badayuni says of his teacher, Maulana Abdullah Badayuni, that, "A party of pupils used to accompany him when he went to the market to buy provisions for his family, and the Maulana would teach them in the way"[69]

Maulana Abdul Hai Firangimahali, an outstanding master of the ultimate phase, regularly gave a lesson before the *Fajr* (early morning) prayers. Many other teachers in the past are known to have been in the same habit.

Devotions to Pupil

The deep and sincere affection the teachers of the former days had for their pupils will definitely appear now to be a thing of the fables. They literally treated them as their own children. Not infrequently would they bear their expenses and share their meals with them. It is written for example, of the famous teacher and royal physician to the Court of Akbar, Hakim Ali Gilani that, "He regularly gave lessons to them and never took his meals without them"[70]

Maulana Mohammad Afzal was so strongly attached to his pupils that when a pupil, Mulla Mahmood Jaunpuri, died, the shock of it proved too much for him. Writes Maulana Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgrami, "No one saw the Maulana smile (after it), till after forty days he himself went up to join his pupil"[71]

Maulana Abdul Ali Bahrul Uloom. was invited to Bohar {Burdwan) on a sumptuous salary by Munshi Sadruddin. The Maulana pointed out that there were about a hundred students with him, and it was not possible for him to accept the offer unless adequate provision was also made for their boarding and lodging. It was only after Munslii Sadruddin had agreed to the condition that the Maulana went. Similarly, when the Maulana took up service at Madras," at the invitation of Nawab Wala Jah, he used to spend his entire salary of Rs.1,000 per month on his students and no part of it would reach his family at Firangi Mahal in Lucknow. Worried, his son, Maulana Abdul Nafey, went to Madras to

[69] Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, p. 56

[70] Tazkira-i-Ulema-i-Hind, p. 51

[71] Maasir-ul-Keram

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plead with him to send some part of his income for the maintenance of his dependents, but the Maulana remained adamant.[72]

Attachment of Students to Teachers

The students, on their side, were bound to their teachers by the strongest ties of devotion, reverence and loyalty. In this connection, it will perhaps always be remembered that on hearing the news of the death of Mulla Nizamuddin of *Firangi Mahal* (which later turned out to be false) one of his pupils, Syed Kamaluddin Azimabadi, died of shock while another, Syed Zarif Azimabadi, cried so hard that his eyes were permanently damaged. Even if these episodes are treated as an exception the boundless devotion of the pupils for their teachers was a must common feature of the former educational system as we learn from the records left behind by scholars of their masters.

Patronage by Kings and Nobleman

Kings and noblemen vied with each other in the patronage of learned scholars and teachers. They considered it a privilege and a religious obligation to serve men of arts and learning and provide for their needs and comfort. To illustrate our point we will reproduce the following incident as narrated by Mohammad Qasim Bijapuri in his *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*:

> "Once Qazi Shahabuddin Daulatabadi was gravely ill. Sultan Ibrahim Sharqi went to visit him, and after enquiring about his condition and making proper arrangements for his treatment and looking into other necessary things, he asked for a cup of water. When it was brought the Sultan made a circular movement with the cup round the Maulana's head, in token of an offering, and then drank the water, praying, 'Oh God! send down on me the affliction ordained for the Maulana, and grant him recovery"[73].

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[72] Nuzhat-ul-Khawatir, Vol. VII

[73] Vol. IV. p. 677 (The Maulana died after the Sultan in the same year-1436-, or two years later, in 1438)

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On the death of Amir Fathullah Shirazi, Emperor Akbar is reported to have expressed his grief in these words:

> "Had the enemy taken him prisoner and demanded the whole of my Empire's treasure as ransom, the bargain would still have been a most profitable one ; that precious gem would not have proved costly at that price ".

Mulla Abdul Hakim Sialkoti was weighed twice in silver, and Qazi Mohammad Aslam Harawi (father of Allama Mir Zahid) once in gold by Emperor Shahjehan, it being the highest form of recognition with the rulers of old. The stupendous reception Maulana Bahrul Uloom was accorded in Madras has been described thus by Maulana Wali ullah Firangimahli :

> "When his palanquin reached the royal palace the Maulana wanted to step down from it, but Nawab Wala Jah motioned him to remain seated and, applying his own shoulder to the palanquin, he carried it in. The Nawab, then, urged the Maulana to sit in his place on the throne ; he kissed his feet, and said, ' I never knew that my stars were so blessed that you would grace me with a visit and shed lustre on my house by your presence"[74]

Due to the magnanimity and encouragement of the noble lords and other well-to-do persons a vast network of madrassas had been set up in the country. We can imagine about the other parts of the land from the undermentioned account furnished by Maulana Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgrami of the marvellous expansion of education through private patronage in his own Province of Oudh :

> "Throughout the Province of Oudh, as also in the Province of Allahabad, there are found, at every five or, at the most, ten miles, settlements of respectable and high-ranking (Muslim) families. These families enjoy pensions or fees, in land or cash, granted to them by the Government for their maintenance. They have built mosques, schools and spiritual seminaries, from place to place, where teachers

[74] Aghsan-i-Arba'a

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> and learned men are actively engaged in the spread of education. They have produced a great urge among the people for the pursuit of knowledge. Students, in large numbers, travel from one town to an other in quest of learning, and take up their residence where they find the greatest scope for the prosecution of their studies. Their needs are taken care of by benevolent persons who regard it as an act of great virtue. Emperor Shahjehan often used to say, 'The eastern areas are the Shiraz of my Empire'."[75]

Solicitude for Spiritual Advancement

With all their intellectual and literary attainments and importance, the learned scholars of old were fully alive to their, spiritual needs and strove hard for self purification and the cultivation of a living, all-pervading consciousness of the Almighty. They believed that it was as necessary for their fulfilment to render respectful service to spiritual guides and mentors as it-was to sit at the feet of secular teachers for the acquirement of temporal knowledge and learning. No considerations of prestige were allowed by them to stand in their way. They upheld their honour and dignity zealously before the worldly kings and peers and bent not even by an inch in obedience to them, and yet were submissiveness and humility itself when it came to the humble lords of the spiritual realm. This unique combination of awareness of the self with self-denial was a grand characteristic of the lives of the teachers of the former days. It is an incontrovertible fact of the educational history of medieval India that the exceptional personalities belonging to it were all unfailingly bound in allegiance and loyalty to some spiritual leader of their time. The entire educational and intellectual structure of India bore, in its initial stage, the impress of these three masters, Allama Abdul Muqtadir Kindi Thanesari (died, 1388), and his two pupils, Maulana Khwajgi Dehlavi (died, 1406) and Sheikh Ahmad Thanesari (died, 1398).

All of them were the spiritual disciples of Sheikh Naseer Uddin Chiragh-i-Dehm. Then we come across with the name of A.llama Wajihuddin bin Nasrullah Gujerati (died, 1589), "who devoted 67 years of his life to

[75] Maasir-ul-Keram, p. 222

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teaching religious and secular sciences at Ahmedabad. His pupils were dispersed over a wide area, from Ahmedabad to Lahore, spreading light and learning wherever they were, He had the signal honor of being elevated to the rank of ' Master of Masters' in his own life-time"[76].

The famous educational centers of Kora Jahanabad, Amethi, Jaunpur and Lucknow shone solely with his radiance. He, in his turn, was the spiritual protege of Sheikh Mohammad Ghaus Gwaliori and had received numerous blessings from him. Two other notable scholars and teachers of the time, Shah Pir Mohammad and Maulana Ghulam Naqshband, who were an institution by themselves, also belonged to the same line of spiritual guidance and instruction.

Finally, it was the turn of Mulla Nizamuddin to dominate exclusively the educational scene from India to Iran and Afghanistan. He was not only a devoted follower of a Qadria divine, Syed Abdul Razzaq Bansawi, but was literally intoxicated with the love for his mentor. Every word of his biographical study of him, Manaqib-i- Razzaqia, breathes out the depth and the intensity of his devotion.

The founder of *Darul Uloom*, Deoband, with its countrywide activities of religious and spiritual guidance and reform, Maulana Mohammad Qasim Nanawtawi (died, 1879) and its other patron and benefactor, Maulana Rasheed Ahmed Gangohi (died, 1905), again, were the disciples and *Khalifas*[77] of Hazrat Haji Imdadullah Mahajir Makki. Likewise, Maulana Syed Mohammad Ali Monghyri, who founded the Nadwatul Ulema at Lucknow, was a Khalifa of Hazrat Maulana Fazlur Rahman of Ganj Moradabad in the district of Unnao. Thus, at every turn of its history, we find the educational endeavour of the medieval days touched by the spiritual magnificence of some deep-hearted man of God. Therein, we imagine lay the secret of its strength, its effectiveness and its rich spiritual glory.

Curiously enough, teachers and scholars of impeccable worth and ability were, not unoften, bound in allegiance to such spiritual leaders as were technically not scholars themselves and were not considered as learned by their contemporaries. Some remarkable instances of it are afforded by the dutiful attachment, as disciples, of the Ulema of the eminence of Maulana Mohammad Ismail Shaheed and Maulana Abdul Hai

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[76] Syed Abdul Hai : Tarikh-i-Gujerat

[77] The word Khalifa means 'deputy' or "successor".-Translator

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Burhanwi to Hazrat Syed Ahmad Shaheed, of an outstanding genius like Mulla Nizamuddin to Hazrat Syed Abdul Razzaq Bansawi, and of that great scholar with an original mind, Maulana Mohammad Qasim Nanawtawi to Hazrat Haji Imdadullah. These instances, wnich can surely not be ascribed to mere chance, speak in clearest terms of the utter humility and total selflessness of the learned scholars of that time. They tell of priceless qualities of head and heart that held the key to the phenomenal success they achieved in their mission. As we have said earlier, moral and spiritual evolution together with the attainment of intellectual glory and the endowment of learning with earnestness and the spirit of God-seeking were the chief attributes of the older educational set-up. Consequently, there was forged an intimate contact between men of learning and enlightenment and the masses, which enabled the former to exert a strong and ennobling influence on the society as a whole. Further, the scholars and other learned men were generally able to summon up enough moral stamina to resist the pull of worldly temptations and of benefits accruing from alignment with princely courts, and save themselves from other moral weaknesses-a thing which could not be possible merely on the strength of intellect and learning. The single-minded devotion, the immaculate sincerity and the unalloyed unselfishness with which the educationists, teachers and scholars continued to serve the cause of learning for as many as 800 years were due, in no small measure, to the guidance, training and moral and spiritual purging and sanctification they received at the hands of holy men.

Till the very end, it was a tradition with Arabic institutions that their students, after they had completed their studies, went to live for some time with spiritual guides, whom they or their teachers held in high regard and with whom they also felt themselves to be in tune spiritually, for the development of that aspect of their personality which could not be taken care of in a purely academical environment. The students coming out of the institution founded by Maulana Lutfullah (which was an international seat of learning of the last phase) , sought the· haloed society of Maulana Fazlur Rahman of Ganj Moradabad, while the inclination of the teachers and pupils of the madrassae of north-western India (like those of Deoband and Saharanpur) was towards Thana Bhawan, Gangoh and Raipur where Haji Imdadullah Mohajir Makki, Hazrat Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi and their disciples served as beacons of moral and spiritual guidance.

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Chapter VII

MODERN RELEGIOUS, CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL CENTERS OF MUSLIMS

Darul Uloom, Deobond

The failure of the Uprising of 1857, whose leadership had been in the hands of the Muslim religious leaders, had produced among the Muslims a dangerous sense of defeat and frustration. They were falling victim quickly to a universal feeling of dejection and self-pity. Encouraged by the victory of the British arms, the Christian missionaries had begun openly to say that India was a gift and a trust of Jesus, and it was now their bounden duty to strive for the propagation of Christianity in the land with all their vigor and earnestness. The Muslims, on the other hand, were caught in spiritual and moral confusion and they were becoming progressively ignorant of their faith under the influence of Western culture and education. It was feared that their future generations will be lost, for all practical purposes, to Islam. They will be having nothing in common with the Islamic Shariat, moral system and civilization. In these circumstances, the courageous and far-sighted Ulema awoke to the need of establishing theological institutions which could keep alive the link of the rising Muslim generations with their faith and also be instrumental in the preservation and promotion of Islamic religous and moral knowledge. 'I'he Darul Uloom of Deoband occupies a position of foremost importance among the Muslim religious institutions thus established.

Beginning in a modest way, as an unpretentious madrassa the Darul Uloom made a steady progress, thanks to the sincerity and the spirit of dedication of it’s founders, patrons and teachers, till it blossomed into, a big Islamic university, or, rather, the biggest seat of Muslim religious learning in the whole of Asia.

It was in 1866 that this worthy institution started its career in a small mosque in the town of Deoband, in Saharanpur, as a primary *madrassa* run by a local Muslim divine, by the name of Haji Mohammad Abid. For its magnificent progress and development it is

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indebted mainly to the courage, fortitude and religious fervor of Maulana Mohammad Qasim Nanawtawi, who was associated with the institution from the very beginning. In the later years of his life, the Maulana ungrudgingly devoted his entire time and energy to its advancement. The Darul Uloom has been most fortunate in enjoying the services and patronage of earnest workers and high souled teachers from its earliest days with the result that the spirit of piety, humility and selfless endeavor has become a part of its very existence. Among its teachers of outstanding merit and sincerity the names of Maulana Mohammad Yaqoob Nanawtawi, Sheikh-ul-Hind Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan, Mufti Azizur Rahman, Maulana Ghulam Rasul, Maulana Anwar Shah, Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, Maulana Syed Asghar Husain and Maulana Aizaz Ali will always remain green in memory. There has been kept up a steady expansion in the range of its academic activities, and its fame together with that of its teachers for their high learning and moral and spiritual integrity and specialized skill in the Traditions and Islamic Jurisprudence has travelled far and wide, attracting students to it not only from all over India but from far-flung Islamic countries as well. It has now more than 1,500 students on its rolls.

Over 10,000 young men have gone out of its portals after completing their studies, half of them having done the course of *F'arigh-ut-Tehsil* and attained the highest degree in Islamic theology. Of them, about students came from foreign lands such as Daghestan, Afghanistan, Kiev, Bokhara, Kazan, Russia, Azerbaijan, the tribal belt on the north-west of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent, Asia Minor, Tibet, China, the islands of the Indian Ocean and Arabia. Beneficial efforts of the reformist endeavors of the Ulema emerging from Deoband are evident in the religious life of Indian Muslims. Their efforts have been particularly praiseworthy in the branches of conceptual rectification, the weeding out of innovations from the faith, religious preaching and propagation and the rebuttal of charges levelled against Islam by malicious critics through discussion and debate. A number of Deoband men have made their mark in politics. They were in the vanguard of the struggle for freedom also.

Unflinching loyalty to the faith, strict adherence to the Hanafi school, upholding of the way of the pious precursors and the defense and safeguarding of the Sunnah of the Prophet can be said to be the major constituents of the tradition of the Darul Uloom.

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Mazahrul Uloom, Saharanpur

Another great religious institution in Saharanpur is the *madrassa* of Mazahar-ul-Uloom. It stands next only to the Darul Uloom of Deoband so far as the number of pupils and keenness for theological learning are concerned. Named after Maulana Mohammad Mazhar Nanawtawi, its foundations were laid in 1866 by the auspicious hands of Maulana Sa'adat Ali Saharanpuri. It had the privilege of enjoying in succession the patronage of Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi, Maulana Khaleel Ahmad Saharanpuri and Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi. Among its more eminent teachers we can mention the names of Maulana Sabit Ali, Maulana Inayat Elahi, Maulana Khaleel Ahmad, Maulana Mohammad Yahiya, Maulana Abdul Latif, Maulana Mohammad Ilyas, Maulana Abdul Rehman, Sheikhul Hadees Maulana Mohammad Zakaria and Maulana Asadullah.

Ideologically and in respect of its traditions and environment, Mazaharul Uloom is very much akin to Deoband. It, too, has produced a large number of f'ull-fledged Ulema and ardent votaries of Islamic learning. Its scholars have, in particular, rendered admirable service to the study of the Traditions. They have produced valuable commentaries on several standard collections of the Prophet's Traditions. Its teachers, as well as students, have been famous for plain-living, contentment and high religious conduct.

Other Madrassas of Nizamia Pattern

Besides these, there are several other *madrassas* which follow the Nizamia course of study[78] and are similar to them in many other ways also. They have played a meritorious role in the promotion of Islamic theological learning and the general religious correction and reform of Indian Muslims. Of them, the Shahi *Madrassa* of Moradabad and the *Madrassa-i-Imdadia* of *Darbhanga* are more famous in northern India.

The *Ahl-i-Hadees* sect also has several of its own theological madrassas, such as, Madrassa-i-Rahmania of Varanasi and *Madrassa-i-Ahmadiah*

[78] Meaning the course of Islamic theological instruction formulated by Mulla Nizamuddin of Firangi Mahal, Lucknow. Translator

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Salafia, Lahria Sarai, Darbhanga. Us institution (*Madrassa-i-Rahmania*) at Delhi had to be closed after Partition in 1947. The others are doing useful work.

Among the official and semi-official Arabic madrassas, the Madrassa-i-A'lia of Rampur, *Madrassa-i-A'lia* of Calcutta and *Madrassa-i-Shamsul Huda* of Patna deserve special mention. Some time back, the *madrassas* of Rampur and Calcutta also commanded great importance among the Muslim religious institutions of the land.

A number of madrassas are run by the Shia Muslims, too, most of which are found in their chief religious and educational centre, Lucknow. Better known among the Shia madrassas at Lucknow are Sultanul Madaris, *Madrassa-i-Nazimia* and *Madrassatul Waizeen.*

In the South, where considerable religious awareness and interest for religious education are noticed among the Muslims, there are functioning a large number of Arabic madrassas. More prominent among these madrassas are the Madrassa-i-Nizamia of Hyderabad, Jami'ai-Darus-Salam of Omarabad and *El-Baqiyat-us-Salehat* of Vellore. The *Madrassa-i-Jamalia* of Madras was once a very flourishing and progressive seat of Islamic instruction, but it went defunct some time ago. Attempts are now being made to revive it.

The area of Malabar (now a part of the State of Kerala) has always been known for its religious devoutness and attachment to the Arabic language. A large number of Arabic madrassas are found there. *Madrassas* located in and around Calicut, like Rauzatul Uloom, Madinatul Uloom and Sullam-us-Salam are more prominent. The Arabic language ranks in importance next only to the State language, i.e., Malayalam, and English, and is taught in Muslim schools. and colleges as the second language. The Kerala Government even have formulated an Arabic curriculum which is fairly successful.

There are many madrassas, both of the old and the modern styles, in Gujerat. The Jamia Islamia of Dabhel was really a great institution once, claiming on its staff men of the calibre of Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri and Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Osmani. Jami'a-i-Husainia and *Jami'a-i-Ashrafia* of Rander and the Arabic *madrassas* of Chhapi and Anand are the more noteworthy.

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CHAPTER 7

Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulema, Lucknow

Maulana, Mohammad Ali of Monghyr often had the occasion to hold theological discussion with Christian missionaries. He also brought out a missionary and dialectical journal called, *Tohfa-i-Mohammadiyah*. He was a man of vast study and possessed a sensitive mind, He realized that the traditional syllabus and educational system and the ancient scholastic theology could no longer deliver the goods. They had ceased to be adequate for combating the cultural impulses released by the West and producing preachers and interpreters of the faith who could cope with the changed needs of the times. To achieve these objects it was necessary to work out an improved and integrated syllabus, cutting short or amending the older and far-fetched philosophical studies and including the modern sciences in its fold.

It was a time when fierce controversies were raging among the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence-the *Hanafi*, the *Shaf'i*, and the *Ahl-i-Hadees* culminating in riots and litigation and the general humiliation of Muslims as a whole. The Maulana came to the conclusion that this dismal state of affairs could not be remedied till the \qualities of broadmindedness and tolerance and the ability to rise above trifles and disputations on the details of *Fiqh* were not developed among the teachers and scholars of Muslim religious institutions. He formed an association known as Nadwatul Ulema to reconcile the differences among the contending Muslim sects and later, in 1898, founded a model institution at Lucknow. By and by, the Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulema succeeded in winning the support and good will of the genuinely solicitous and broad-minded Ulema and leaders of Muslim opinion representing different schools of thought, who voluntarily lent to it their services in various capacities. The names of Maulana Shibli Nomani, Maulana Habibul Rehman Khan Sherwani, Maulana Abdul Haq Huqqani, Maulana Shah Sulaiman Phulwarwi, Munshi Athar Ali Kakorwi, Munshi Ehtisham Ali Kakorwi, Maulana Mohammad Ibrahim Aarwi, Qazi Mohammad Sulaiman Mansurpuri, Maulana Sanaullah Amritsari, Maulana Sir Rahim Bakhsh Maulana Masihuzzaman Khan (teacher of the late Mir Mahboob Ali Khan, the Nizam of Hyderabad), Maulana Khalilul Rahman Saharanpuri (son of Maulana Ahmad Ali muhaddis), Maulana Hakim Syed Abdul Hai, Nawab Syed Ali Hasan Khan (son of Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan of Bhopal) and Maulana Hakim Dr. Syed Abdul Ali deserve specially to be put on record in this connection.

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Ignoring with equal severity the view of the older madrassas that to depart in the smallest degree from ancient learning was a transgression and a sin, and of the modern universities that, apart from modern knowledge, everything in the domain of knowing and learning was absurd and worthless, the Nadwa was planned from the earliest to pursue a balanced and moderate course. Its founders were suspicious of extremism, both ancient and modern, and considered the mental and social exclusiveness and rigidity of the Ulema and their juristic dissensions and fine disputations as highly detrimental to Islam and the Muslims.

Nadwa, thus, was designed fundamentally to strive towards a synthesis of the old and the new. Its sponsors believed that where faith was concerned, it was emphatically eternal and absolute, permitting neither .alteration nor amendment, but knowledge was evolutionary and changing. The high objective before the institution was to bring together the various sects of *Ahl-i-Sunnat* into a single unity. It has never subscribed to the view that the Islamic theological sciences or syllabus of teaching were sacrosanct and unalterable.

The Nadwatul Ulema focused its attention primarily on the teaching of Quran as an eternal program of life. It also took up the teaching of Arabic as a living language since it held the key to the understanding of the Quran. It did not commit the folly-as the case was in India generally-of regarding Arabic as a dead, classical language which was no longer current and in everyday use anywhere in the world. It excluded from its curriculum-or reduced the importance of-such sciences as had ceased to be of real value in the existing times, and in their place, it introduced those modern branches of study whose knowledge was essential to the Ulema for rendering an effective service to Islam in the prevalent context of things.

Another major aim and purpose before it was to produce preachers and interpreters of Islam who could present the faith to the present-day world in a striking manner and in a form and language it could understand. By the grace of God, it has achieved commendable success in all these directions. It has produced exemplary servants of Islam and high-ranking scholars who can well be held up as models to the world of Islam. These scholars have made invaluable contributions to the study of Islamic history, literature, scholastic theology and life history of the Prophet .

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Madrasa-tul-Islah, Sarai Mir

Madrassatul Islah was started by Maulana Hameed Uddin Farahi at Sarai Mir in Azamgarh in 1909, on the lines of Nadwatul Ulema, Lucknow. The subject of special study here also has been the commentary of the holy Quran. Its teachers and pupils have faithfully followed the path shown by Maulana Farahi in his own commentary of the Book. It is noted for austerity and a lofty academical atmosphere.

Darul Uloom, Bhopal

Bhopal has been an important seat of Muslim theological learning. It was, however, feared at the time of the merger of Indian States, after the attainment of independence in 1947, that religious learning will come to an end not only in Bhopal but the whole of central India (now called Madhya Pradesh) . This fear was dispelled by the i prompt action of the Ulema of vision and courage. A madrassa, called Darul Uloom, was founded, under the patronage of Syed Sulaiman Nadwi (who was then the Qazi of the State and Rector of *Jami'a Ahmadiyah* in Bhopal) and due to the untiring endeavors of Maulana Mohammad Imran Khan Nadwi, in the spacious mosque- *Taj-ul-Masajid*-of Bhopal. It is modelled after the Nadwatul Ulema of Lucknow so far as the course and method of instruction are concerned. It is functioning admirably under the Managership of Maulana Mohammad Imran Khan Nadwi and has risen, within a few years, to be a foremost Muslim theological institution of Madhya Pradesh.

Modern Institutes

In addition to the Arabic *madrassas*, there are the universities founded by Muslims at Aligarh, Delhi and Hyderabad to afford the Muslim youth the opportunity to acquire higher proficiency in modern learning and foreign languages, and to train it to enjoy its share of the Public Services and play an unrestricted part in the various fields of national activity.

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Muslim University, Aligrah

The oldest and the most famous among these universities is the Muslim University of Aligarh. It has wielded a powerful influence in shaping the mental attitude, the collective character and the politics of the modern Indian Muslims, and is included among the biggest seats of learning in the country. It was founded by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in 1875 when it was called *Madrassatul Uloom* or the Mohammaden Anglo-Oriental College.

A lamentable intellectual and social decay had set In among the Muslims after the Upheaval of 1857 They had fallen to acute despondency and frustration The British rulers were excessively mistrustful of them ; they looked upon them with suspicion and contempt. One of the results of this policy was that the doors of public appointments were almost totally barred to them. Till yesterday they were the ruling race and the arbiters of India's destiny ; now they had been completely ejected from its government and administration.

Sir Syed was blessed by God with an awakened heart and a sympathetic soul. He had seen the twilight of Muslim power in India. When the night eventually descended on Muslims it stirred him powerfully and he made earnest efforts for their recovery and rehabilitation. He decided that so long as Muslims did not receive English education and adopt the Western mode of living they would not be able to shed the inferiority complex they had so mournfully acquired, nor would the British masters be willing to treat them with equality. It was to, fulfil these needs that he established the college at Aligarh, which later, in 1921, attained the status of a University.

The Muslim University was eminently successful in its aims. It gained in no time the confidence of the British Government. Students from well-to-do Muslim families were attracted to it in an ever-increasing number, and, after completing their education, they were appointed to the highest offices of the State that were open to Indians. The University has also played an unforgettable part in the political life of the country, particularly of Muslims. It is here that the movement for a separate Muslim homeland, as against the ideal of a united Indian nationhood, was born. Not only has it successfully preserved its denomination and many of its basic traditions in the post-freedom days, but also developed and progressed in several ways. Its annual (recurring) expenditure has reached the

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figure of Rs. 65,00,000 and there are about 5,000 students on its rolls, 30% of them being Hindus. The standard of discipline here has been higher than in the other universities as a whole.

Jami'a Milla, Delhi

Some outstanding alumni of the Muslim University had, on losing faith in it during the hectic days of the Khilafat agitation, founded an independent national University, under the title of Jami'a Millia, in 1920. Its foundation-stone was laid by Sheikh-ul-Hind Maulana Mahmud Hasan Deobandi of blessed memory. A few years later, the new university was shifted to Delhi. The chief architect of the idea of a national university was Maulana Mohammad Ali, in the execution of which he had the assistance of his well-known colleagues, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari. The Jami'a had on its staff men whose sole ambition was the service of the nation and the country. Having chosen for themselves a life of trial and hardship, they stood valiantly against many a storm under the inspiring leadership of the renowned educationist, Dr. Zakir Husain Khan (now Vice-President of India). The Jami'a holds a brilliant record of work in the promotion of learning and culture. Now it is a flourishing institution under the generous patronage of the Union Government and the able guidance of its Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Mohammad Mujeeb.

Jami'a Osmania, Hyderabad

The most remarkable feature of Jami'a Osmania, Hyderabad, was that the medium of instruction over there was Urdu. For this purpose, a vast store-house of knowledge, covering all subjects, was converted, under its aegis from foreign languages into Urdu. The highly useful work of evolving Urdu equivalents for technical and literary terms was also taken in hand by it. Thus, Osmania University has been a source of boundless aid in the development of the Urdu language. Some of the best teachers and educationists of the land have served on its staff", and even now, after all the revolutionary changes that have taken place, specially in that part of India, since independence, it has managed to preserve some of its old characteristics.

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Intermediate and Degree Colleges

Moreover, Muslims have opened numerous Islamia Colleges where the officially-prescribed curriculum is followed with certain suitable additions. There is at least one Intermediate or Degree College of Muslims in all the important towns of Northern India, while in the South, there are flourishing a number of such institutions in the states of Madras and Kerala of which the New College of Madras, the Jamal Mohammad College of Trichinopoly, the Osmania College of Kurnool and the Farooq College of Calicut are better known.

Darul Musannifin, Azamgarh

A literary academy, called Darul Musannafin, was formed by Maulana Shibli Nomani at Azamgarh in 1914. It was its high good fortune to function for over a quarter of a century under the distinguished guidance of Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadwi. The fellows of the Academy had till 1960 brought forth some ninety books on various topics relating to religion, literature and history. No library worth its name in the country is today without the books produced by the Academy. It also brings out a standard monthly journal *Ma'arif* under the editorship of Shah Moinuddiu Ahmad Nadwi.

Nadwatul Musannifin, Delhi

A similar institution is Nadwatul Musannifin of Delhi. It was founded in 1938, and has so far (i.e. till 1960) produced eighty-eight works of research and merit on cultural and historical subjects. It also publishes a monthly literary magazine called, Burhan, with Maulana Saeed Ahmad Akbarabadi as its editor.

Majlis-i-Tahqiqat-o-Nashriyat-i-Islam, Lucknow

Yet another body of scholars and writers has recently been formed in Lucknow. It is called *Majlis-i-– qat-o-Nashriyat-i-Islam* (Academy of Islamic Research and Publications) and aims at producing Islamic literature worthy of meeting the needs of educated sections of Muslims,

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as well as non-Muslims. It has brought out quite a few fine books within these couple of years of its existence.

Muslim Educational Conference, Aligarh

The Muslim Educational Conference is the oldest educational association of Indian Muslims, It was founded by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in 1886 for the promotion of education among Muslims. This Conference has performed yeoman service in the creation of Muslim political and educational awakening in the country. It was under its wings that the Muslim League was born in 1906. Since 1947 it has almost been a dead organization. In the past it had among its secretaries men of the renown of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Nawab Waqar-ulMulk, Nawab Sadar Yar Jung Maulana Habibul Rahman Khan Sherwani.

Dini Talimi Board and Dini Talimi Council

Though India has chosen for itself the ideal of a secular state and the Indian Constitution, refusing to discriminate between one community and another, has guaranteed the enjoyment of the rights of citizenship to all citizens alike, the courses of study prescribed for schools in certain states are such that they cut across the basic ideals of Islam and pose a serious threat to the religious future of Muslims. To meet this danger, as well as to safeguard in general the interests of Muslims as a religious community, two organizations, namely, the Dini Talimi (Muslim Religious Education) Board and Dini Talimi (Muslim Religious Education) Council, U.P., have recently been formed, one under the auspices of *Jami'at-i-Ulema-i-Hind* and the 'other by representatives of the various sections of Muslim opinion in Uttar Pradesh. Both of them are doing useful work in their respective spheres of influence and madrassas are being set up by them where Muslim children can receive instruction in Islamic theology and Urdu.

Dairatul Ma’arif Hyderabad

The Dairatul Ma'arif of Hyderabad has enjoyed great prominence among the higher literary institutions of India. It was founded in 1888 through the untiring efforts of Emad-ul-Mulk Syed Husain Bilgrami, Mulla Abdul Qaiyum and Fazeelat Jung Maulana Anwar Ullah Khan (teacher of Mir Osman Ali Khan, ex-Nizam of Hyderabad). The main

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purpose of its establishment was to unearth and publish rare manuscripts of literary or religious significance that were lying buried and forgotten in the ancient libraries and private collections of India. So far it has published over 150 priceless works on Traditions, *Asma-ur-Rajol*[79], History, Mathematics and Philosophy. These books had long been forgotten in India and the larger Muslim World, or they existed as mere names in the minds of scholars and learned men. It goes to the lasting credit of the Daira tliat it brought them for the first time within the reach of the general public, and enabled the research workers and scholars to derive full benefit from them. It is an achievement of which any literary institution can legitimately be proud.[80]

The services of the Daria have been recognized by distinguished scholars both of the East and the West. In 1937, a party of teachers of the University of Azhar, Egypt, had come out to India on a tour. Its leader, Sheikh Ibrahim el-Jibali, had expressed his appreciation of the activities of Dairatul Ma'arif in these words :

> "We greatly admire the efforts the Dairatul Ma'arif of Hyderabad is making towards the promotion and progress of Islamic learning and culture. The ambitious men of the Daira have not only succeeded in discovering a large number of books by ancient writers which were lying in obscurity, or had been given up as untraceable, but whose names were still ringing in the ears, and minds were yearning to profit by them, but they have also published them after proper verification, correction, annotation and editing. They have spared neither money nor pains. They have cared nothing for the hardships of long journeys they had to undertake in the quest of manuscripts nor for the great industry and · mental labor involved in their copying, checking and verification "[81].

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[79] A special branch of Islamic literature appertaining to names of the narrators of the Traditions of the Prophet.-Translator

[80] Its admirable literary activities were kept up by the Daira for a long time under the directorship of Maulana Syed Hashim Nadwi and Dr. Nizamuddin.

[81] Risala-i-Dairatiil Ma'arif

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Darul Tarjuma (Now Defunct) Hyderabad

When the Osmania University of Hyderabad adopted Urdu as its medium of instruction, the need was felt for a bureau of translation to transfer the standard works on the different subjects of study into Urdu. This led to the establishment of Darul Tarjuma in 1917. Translations of 358 books in all on History, Geography, Politics, Economics, Sociology, Logic, Philosophy, Metaphysics, Ethics, Psychology, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Medicine and Engineering were successfully undertaken by it.

The Bureau was also charged with the work of converting current technical terms into Urdu which has been of immense benefit to the intellectual and literary circles of the country. Among the writers and scholars who were associated with it were Dr. Abdul Haq,' Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi, Maulana Abdullah el-Emadi, Molvi Waheeduddin Saleem Panipati, Molvi Inayatullah Dehlavi, Molvi Masood Ali Nahwi and Qazi Talammuz Husain Gorakhpuri.

The annual expenditure of the Bureau in 1948 was Rs. 2,61,415/-. It was abolished after the merger of Hyderabad, and its huge library containing books and manuscripts worth crores of rupees was destroyed by fire.

Jama'at-i-Islami's Institution at Rampur

The Jama'at-i-Islami (Hind) has taken a commendable part in the production of Islamic literature. Its most praiseworthy contribution has been the preparation of a religiously-inspired course of study and text-books for Muslim children in Urdu and Hindi. It is also running a model educational institution in Rampur.

Old Libraries

A reminder of the keen interest .taken by Muslims in the encouragement of learning during the days of their ascendancy, and a commonly accepted source of India's intellectual glory, are some of the libraries built by them which have withstood the ravages of time.

Muslim rulers, noblemen and scholars had paid a great attention to the establishment of good, first-class libraries with the result that a vast

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number of them had come into being at different places. At present the biggest Muslim library is the Khuda Bux Library of Bankipur, Patna. This library is literally a huge treasure house of rare books, oldest and most unique documents and original manuscripts of universally celebrated books. The Raza Library of Rampur, the Kutub Khana-i-Asafia and the Sir Salar Jung Museum of Hyderabad, the library of Nawab Sadar Yar Jung Maulana Habibul Rahman Sherwani (Hyderabad), the Nadwa Library of Lucknow, the Library of Darul Uloom, Deoband, the Azad Library of Aligarh, and the library of Nasir-ul-Millet Maulana Nasir Husain at Lucknow are some of the other more important Muslim libraries. Scholars from Islamic as well as Western countries are regularly drawn to these libraries. A delegation was sent to India by the Arab League in 1952 to make for its international library microfilm copies of priceless books that could be found nowhere else in the world. It travelled throughout the country and microfilmed hundreds of old and rare Arabic books preserved in Muslim libraries of Lucknow, Rampur, Hyderabad, Aligarh, Tonk, Azamgarh, Patna, Calcutta and other places.

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Chapter VIII

ROLE OF MUSLIMS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

Muslims in the Forefront

Muslims have played a very significant role in the national struggle s for freedom. They have been in the forefront of it. It was, after all, from their hands that the British had wrested power in India. When British Imperialism was spreading its tentacles over the country and _devouring one Province after the other, the first man to realize the gravity of the danger was the lion-hearted Tipu Sultan of Mysore. He saw clearly that unless determined efforts were made in time to thwart the nefarious designs of the greedy aliens, the whole of India would ultimately be swallowed up by them. With this resolve, he unsheathed his sword and jumped into a fierce, life-and-death struggle against the British exploiters.

Tipu Sultan's Crusade

Tipu Sultan made a valiant bid to unite the Indian princes against the British usurpers. He even wrote to Sultan Salim III of Turkey to join handa with him for the expulsion of the British. His whole life was spent in the struggle. He came on the verge of success, the English were about to be swept out of the land, but they managed to achieve through diplomacy what they could not gain by arms. They cleverly obtained the support of some rulers of the South and by the use of other methods of treachery and deceit brought to nought the patriotic ambitions of that gallant son of Mysore. Tipu Sultan was finally killed in the thick of battle on May 4, 1799. He preferred death to a life of servitude under the British. His famous, historic, words spoken a little

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before he met his death were : " To live for a day like a tiger is far more precious than to live for a hundred years like a jackal ".

It is reported that when the British Commander, General Horse, received the news of the Sultan's death and went to inspect his corpse, he cried out in exultation : " From today India is ours ".

The history of India does not tell of a braver patriot and a more uncompromising enemy of foreign rule than him. In his life-time he was the most hated man among the English. To give vent to their spite, Englishmen in India even went to the extent of giving to their dogs the name of Tipu[82] . It continued to be like this with them for a long time.

War of Independence

The Indian sepoys, in May 1857, rose in open revolt against the oppressive misdeeds of the British masters, against the contemptuous treatment meted out by them to their Indian subordinates, their insatiable lust for money and persistent violation of the religious sentiments of Hindus and Muslims. The sepoy uprising quickly developed into a national war with Hindus and Muslims fighting shoulder to shoulder for the emancipation of the motherland. The rebels marched towards Delhi, the seat of the last of the Mughal Emperors, Bahadur Shah Zafar, and proclaimed him to be the spear-head of their struggle and the symbol of national resistance. Battles were fought all over India under his flag. He was the unanimous choice of the people and their rightful leader and ruler, and Delhi, the nerve-center of patriotic India[83].

Share of Muslims

Though the War of Independence was really and truly a national war in which Hindus and Muslims had participated freely and equally and

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[82] Paying tribute to the Sultan, Gandhiji wrote in 'Young India ' that he had no peers among those who attained martyrdom in the cause of the country and the nation

[83] Unfortunately the Sikhs and some of the rulers did not join the popular upsurge. On the other hand, they allowed themselves to be used by the English to crush the movement.

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India had not yet seen a more stirring spectacle of popular enthusiasm, unity and patriotism, its leadership was predominantly in the hands of Muslims. More often than not, the leaders of the movement, at various levels belonged to the Muslim community[84].

Vengeance of the British

After the failure of the movement, for reasons that are well known, the British took a savage revenge from the Indians and let loose a spate of fury which revived the memories of Chengiz Khan and Halaku[85]. The rebels were ruthlessly pursued, caught and punished. There was ruin and desolation everywhere. The three young sons of the Emperor, whom the British themselves had given asylum, were killed by them so ruthlessly that it made even the Englishmen shudder. Thirty-three other members of the imperial family, including the old and the infirm, were also slain along with them The aging Emperor himself was put to the severest indignity. He was tried for treason in excessively humiliating circumstances and would have certainly been put to death had a high English army officer not guaranteed the security of his life. He was exiled to Burma to spend the rest of his days in utter poverty and indigence.

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[84] Azimullah Khan, General Bakht Khan, Maulana Ahmadullah, Maulana Liaquat Ali and Begum Hazrat Mahal were among the front-rank leaders of the revolt, Maulana Ahmadullah being the most outstanding. Holmes in his History of the Indian Munity' has spoken of Maulana Ahmadullah in these words : " The most formidable enemy of the British in Northern India ". (p. 539). In another book of his, The Sepoy War', he has paid him the following tribute : " A man fitted both by his spirit and his capacity to support a great cause and to command a great army. This was Ahmadullah, the Moulvi of Fyzabad ". Similarly, Malleson has said of him that, "The Moulvi was a true patriot. He had not stained his sword with assassimation. He had connived at no murders ; he had fought manfully, honourably and stubbornly in the field against the strangers who had seized his country, and his memory is entitled to the respect of the brave and the true-hearted of all nations". (-Vol. IV, P. 381)

[85] Admittedly, the Indians too had been guilty of gross excesses during the war like the slaughter of English women and children, but what the Englishmen did by way of retaliation could only be described as barbaric madness and bestiality. It certainly did little credit to a people laying claim to culture and civilization

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CHAPTER 8

Death and Desolation

As the victorious British army entered the city of Delhi the terrible havoc it wrought there provided eloquent commentary to the Quaranic verse that :

> Kings, when they enter a country despoil it, and make the noblest of its people the meanest : thus do they behave. (XXVII : 34)

The troops were given a free hand to plunder the city for three days and they made use of the opportunity with such enthusiasm that an English officer, Lord Lawrence, felt compelled to write to General Penny, who was the General-in-Command, in such strong words about the whole affair, " I believe we shall lastingly, and indeed, justly be abused for the way in which we have despoiled all classes without distinction "[86]

For three days death and destruction reigned supreme in Delhi. People were slain indiscriminately, shops were looted, houses were burnt. Men, women and children fled the town in thousands. In the end, the city which, till yesterday, was the seat of Muslim splendor was reduced to shambles. A graphic account of the general ruin and spoliation is furnished in his memoirs by Lord Roberts who had led the English army from Kanpur to Delhi. This entry bears the date, September 24, 1857, which means that it was made soon after the Red Fort of Delhi had fallen to the British. Wrote Lord Roberts:

> "That march through Delhi in the early morning light was a gruesome proceeding. Our way by the Lahore Gate from the Chandni Chowk led through a veritable city of the · dead ; not a sound was to be heard but the falling of our own footsteps ; not a living creature was to be seen. Dead bodies were strewn about in all directions, in every attitude that the death struggle had caused them to assume, and in every stage of decomposition. We marched in silence

[86] Bosworth Smith : Life of Lord Lawrence (1883). Vol. II

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> or involuntarily spoke in whispers, as though fearing to disturb those ghastly remains of humanity. The sights we encountered were horrible and sickening to the last degree. Here a dog gnawed at an uncovered limb, there a vulture disturbed by our approach from its loath some meal, but too completely gorged to fly, fluttered away to a safer distance. In many instances the positions of the dead bodies were appallingly life-like. Some with their arms uplifted as if beckoning, and indeed, the whole scene was weired and terrible beyond description. Our horses seemed to feel the horror of it as much as we did, for they shook and snorted in evident terror. The atmosphere was unimaginably disgusting, laden as it was with the most noxious aria sickening odors"[87]

Islamic Rebellion

It was, indeed, a general massacre, but the wrath seemed to be directed particularly against the Muslims, for many among the higher British authorities associated the uprising with an Islamic Jihad and believed that the moving spirit behind it were Muslims. To. quote Henry Mead:

> "This rebellion, in its present· phase, cannot be called a sepoy Mutiny. It did begin with the sepoys, but soon its true nature was revealed. It was an Islamic revolt"[88]

Another narrator of the dreadful drama says : "An English officer had made it a principle to treat every Muslim as a rebel. He would enquire from everyone he saw if he was a Hindu or a Muslim, and would shoot him dead right there if he turned out to be a Muslim "[89]

Mass Execution of Muslims

After Delhi had been subdued and the British control was firmly established over it, there began the public executions. Scaffolds were

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[87] Field Marshall Lord Roberts : Forty One Years in Indian (1898), p. 142

[88] Reproduced from Ghulam Rasool Mehr : 1857

[89] Urooj-i-Sultanat-i-Englishia, Vol. II, p. 712

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built on the thoroughfares and such places were treated as centers of entertainment by the Englishmen. They would collect there in groups to 'enjoy' the executions. Several localities of Muslims were totally wiped out. "Twenty-seven thousand Muslims were executed, to speak nothing of those killed in the general massacre. It seemed that the British were determined to blot out of existence the entire Muslim race. They killed the children and the way they treated the women simply belies description. It rends the heart to think of it"[90].

Lord Roberts writing to his mother on June 21, 1857 remarked, "The death that seems to have the most effect is being blown from a gun. It is rather a horrible sight, but in these times we cannot be particular ". The purpose of this ‘ business’ was to show " these rascally Musalmans that, with God's help, Englishmen will still be the masters of India[91]"

Price of the Struggle for Freedom

The Muslims, thus, had to pay most heavily for waging the struggle for freedom. The British held them to be the major offenders and decided that their future generations should also be made to bear the burden of their guilt. The attitude of the British bureaucracy can well be gauged from the following quotation from Henry Harrington Thomas of the Bengal Civil Service in his pamphlet, 'Late Rebellion in India and Our Future Policy' written in 1858, i.e. only a year after the rebellion :

> "I have stated that the Hindus were not the contrivers or the primary movers of the 1857 rebellion and I now shall attempt to show that it was the result of a Mohammadan conspiracy. . . . Left to their resources, the Hindus never would or could have compassed such an undertaking They (the Mohammadans) have been uniformly the same from the times of the first Caliphs to the present day, proud, intolerant, and cruel, ever aiming at Mohammadan supremacy by whatever means, and ever fostering a deep hatred of Christians. They cannot be good subjects of any

[90] Kamaluddin Hyder : Qaiser-ul-Tawareekh. Vol. II, p. 454

[91] Edward Thompson : The Other Side of the Medal (1926)

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> government which professes another religion ; the precepts of the Quran will not suffer it "[92]

Exclusion of Muslims from Public Service

This attitude towards the Muslims continued to be the cornerstone of British policy in India for a long time. The Muslims were debarred from lucrative government jobs and were ejected from all other gainful occupations, their trade was ruined and the endowments from which their schools used to be maintained were seized. A system of education which ran counter to their cultural and intellectual ideals, and aspirations was introduced deliberately in the country.[93]

It was, sometimes, openly stated in official notifications: for government vacancies that only Hindus would be considered for appointment. Thus, Sir William Hunter has reproduced the following extract from a Calcutta Persian paper (Durbin), dated July 14, 1869:

> "Recently, when several vacancies occurred in the office of the Sunderbans Commissioner, that official in advertising them in the Government Gazette, stated that the appointments would be given to none but Hindus"[94].

Commenting on the above complaint, the author goes on to say :

"the Muslims have now sunk so low that, even when qualified for Government employment, they are studiously kept out of it by government notifications. Nobody takes any notice of their helpless condition, and the higher authorities do not deign even to acknowledge their existence"[95].

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[92] Adopted from Tufail Ahmed : Responsible Government and the Solution of the Hindu-Muslim Problem. (1928), p. 56

[93] Details can be obtained from W. W. Hunter : The Indian Musalmans (1876)

[94] Ibid., p. 175

[95] Details can be obtained from W. W. Hunter : The Indian Musalmans (1876). p. 176

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CHAPTER 8

Unconcealed Vindictiveness

The British made no attempt to conceal their ill-will against the Muslims. They caught hold of them at the slightest excuse and showed no mercy. They waged a fierce war against the small band of *Mujahids* (Crusaders I beleaguered in the tribal belt of the North-West. Whoever was suspected by them to be in league with the *Mujahids* or with the party of Syed Ahmed Shaheed was arrested and legal proceedings were started against him. Innumerable religious leaders, merchants: and noblemen were tried on these grounds at Patna, Thanesar and Lahore, and sentenced to heavy terms of imprisonment. Some of them were branded as *Wahabis*[96] and punished on that account. Symptomatic of the boundless British malice and hatred towards the Muslims was the judgement delivered by an English judge while condemning the three alleged Wahabi leaders, Maulana Yahya Ali, Mohammad Jafar Thanesari and Mohammad Shafi Lahori to death. The learned Judge, in the course of his judgement remarked:

> "You will be hanged till death, your properties will be confiscated and your corpses will not be handed over to your relatives. Instead, you will be buried contemptuously in the jail compound"[97].

After the sentence of death had been passed, parties of English men and women visited the jail to see the condemned prisoners in their cells and to take delight in their sighs and groans. But when they found that the prisoners, instead of being sad and dejected, were actually exulting in their state and looking forward expectantly to the martyrdom that had so blissfully fallen to their lot, they felt cheated and urged upon the government for the revision of their sentence to one of life-imprisonment. Ultimately, it was announced by the Deputy Commissioner of Ambala to the unfortunate men that the Chief Court had altered the death penalty passed against them to transportation for life. He said :

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[96] Meaning, belonging to the movement for Islamic revival founded by Sheikh Abdul Wahab, an Arabian reformer of the 18th Century.-Translator.

[97] Mohammad Jafar Thaneswari: .Kala Pani

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> "You rejoice over the sentence of death and look upon it as martyrdom. The Government, therefore, have decided not to award you the punishment you like so much. The death-sentence passed against you has been changed to that of transportation for life"[98]

The three prisoners along with two others, Maulana Ahmadullah Azimabadi and Molvi Abdul Rahim Sadiqpuri were then deported to the Andamans in 1865 where Maulana Yahya Ali and Maulana Ahmadullah died. The entire property of the family of Sadiqpur in Patna was seized by the Government, their houses were ploughed down and official buildings were constructed on their sites. The tombs of their ancestors were demolished. All this was done to quench the mad thirst for vengeance.

Several other noted Ulema were sent to the Andaman Islands to serve life-sentences in banishment. These included Maulana Fazl-i-Huq Khairabadi. Mufti Inayat Ahmad Kakorwi and Mufti Mazhar Karim Daryabadi, of whom Maulana Fazl-i-Huq met his death in exile while the other two returned home on completing their sentences,

This policy of unmitigated spite and revengefulness was responsible for the political. and educational backwardness that came over the Muslims during the earlier stages of the British rule and from which they have not yet been able to recover.

The Formation of Indian National Congress

The first session of the Indian National Congress was held in 1884. It was attended by some prominent Muslim representatives. The fourth session at Madras, in 1887, was presided over by a Muslim, Mr. Badruddin Tayyabji, and Muslim delegates drawn from different walks of life participated in it in sufficient strength. A donation of Rs.5,000 was announced in that session to the Congress by Mr. Humayun Jah.

[98] Ibid

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Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's Disagreement

Initially Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was a supporter of a common political platform, but he later changed his mind. His contention was that the political and educational backwardness of Muslims demanded that they should dissociate themselves from the national movement and avoid incurring the displeasure of the British Government by joining hands with the extremists of Bengal and other Hindu agitators., He felt that a separate non-political organization would serve the interests of Muslims better, the other course, that of political collaboration with the Hindus in opposition to the British being fraught with the danger of reviving old wounds and creating fresh difficulties for them.[99]

The Support of Ulemas to the Congress

Notwithstanding Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's opposition, a large number of independent Muslims, under the leadership of the Ulema, extended full support and cooperation to the nationalist activities and the Congress. They did not consider politics to be the ' forbidden fruit ' for Muslims. In 1888, a whole set of religious decrees was published by Maulana Mohammad Saheb of Ludhiana urging upon Muslims to ally themselves with the Congress. These decrees were signed not only by prominent religious leaders of India like Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi and Maulana Lutfullah of Aligarh but of Medina and Baghdad as well.

The Balkan War and its Repercussions in India

A wave of repugnance and anger arose among Muslims against the European Powers-particularly Britain which was then their spearhead-with the outbreak of the Balkan War in 1912. The Islamic political

[99] This viewpoint was decidedly wrong. It really was sponsored by Mr. Beck and his successor, Mr. Morrison who for a long time exercised a powerful influence on Muslim politics. The abstention of Muslims from politics during those days proved extremely harmful for them.

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consciousness, gaining in strength as it had been steadily, reached its climax and burst in the East like a boil that had been suppurating for a long time. It was during these days that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad started publishing his fiery weekly paper, *El-Hilal*. It became popular immediately and acquired a readership among Muslims running into thousands and lakhs. Its bold and trenchant criticism of Britain and the West was followed eagerly throughout the country. In addition to it, Maulana Mohammad Ali's English weekly, Comrade (which made its appearance originally from Calcutta and was later shifted to Delhi) and Maulana Zafar Ali Khan's Zarnindar (Lahore) and a host of other Muslim newspapers and periodicals helped to produce a vigorous anti-British feeling among the educated sections of the community. In the upshot, Maulana Mohammad Ali, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulana Hasrat Mohani were arrested and put behind the bars.

Maulana Mahmud Hasan of Deobond

The Principal of the Muslim religious institution of Deoband, Maulana Mahmud Hasan (who later came to be known as Sheikhul Hind) was a sworn enemy of British Imperialism. No greater antagonist of the British had, indeed, been seen in India since the time of Tipu Sultan. A staunch ally of the Ottoman Empire-since it symbolized the power of Islam in the world and also held the Muslim Caliphate-and an indefatigable fighter in the path of India's freedom, he had dedicated his whole life to work for the liquidation of the British Empire. He did not stop even at establishing secret contacts with the Afghan Government and with the revolutionary lea ders of Turkey like Anwar Pasha[100]. He was taken into custody in 1916 by Sharif Husain at Medina in Arabia who handed him over to the British. The Maulana and his associates, Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, Maulana Uzair Gul, Hakim

[100] During his tour abroad the Maulana had succeeded in obtaining letters from the Turkish leaders, Anwar Pasha and Jamal Pasha, promising support to India in its struggle against the British. He managed to send those letters to India concealed in a wooden chest which was packed with - silk. This incident is known in history as the incident of Silken Letters and has been mentioned as such also in the Rowlatt Report.

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Nusrat Husain and Molvi Waheed Ahmad, were deported to the Mediterranean island of Malta in 1917 where they remained till 1920.

Maulana Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal

So was Maulana Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal a tireless champion of India's freedom. He organized the *Jami'at-i-Ulema-i-Hind* to bring the religious leaders of Muslims on a united platform in the struggle for national independence and took a leading part in Khilafat agitation. During his lifetime the Firangi Mahal in Lucknow functioned as the key-center of Muslim politics.

Rowlatt Report

Came the Rowlatt Report in 1918, which made the Muslims the main target of its attack and laid the blame for anti-British activities largely at their door. It further brought matters to a head.

Khilafat Agitation and Hindu Muslim Unity

The Ali Brothers Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali were released a year later.A wonderful spectacle of Hindu-Muslim unity was seen thereafter everywhere in India. The two communities gloriously forgot their dissensions and linking their destinies with each-other marched forward like a single body to do or die for the attainment of national freedom and the preservation of the Ottoman Empire. The country's atmosphere was altogether electrified with rare revolutionary feeling.

India had witnessed a stupendous political awakening. It was ablaze from end to end with resentment against the British masters. Such was the setting in which Gandhiji made his debut on the political stage of the nation. He undertook a countrywide tour in the company of Maulana Mohammad Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali, addressing mammoth public gatherings from place to place and arousing the masses for the national struggle. Such a tremendous popular upsurge had never been seen in India before.

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CHAPTER 8

Non-Cooperation Movement

In 1920, Gandhiji and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad presented before the people the two-pronged programme of non-cooperation with the British Government at all levels and the boycott of foreign goods. The proposals found ready acceptance with the masses as the major weapons of their movement and they proved to be so very effective that the Government was compelled to take full note of them. The British ,were' threatened in India with a complete breakdown of the administrative machinery and a general insurrection. The inherent weakness of foreign rule was thoroughly exposed.

British Atrocities of Moplas

During the struggle for freedom, the severest loss in terms of life and property was suffered by the Mopla Muslims of Malabar. Provoked by unmitigated tyranny and coercion, the Moplas rose in armed, revolt against the British Government on August 21,1921. The rebellion, which lasted for a little over· six months, assumed such massive proportions that the Government had to call in even a warship to deal with it and fifty-one lakhs of rupees were spent by them on its suppression from August to December alone. Thousands of Moplas were killed. As an instance of the ghastly atrocities perpetrated by the British, Mopla prisoners were herded together like cattle in the compartments of a railway train which three doctors had unanimously declared unfit for human transport, with the result that a great many of them perished in the way. The British paid no heed to their loud cries of anguish and pathetic requests for water. The detents were kept under strict vigilance and subjected to all kinds of humiliation after the rebellion had been quelled,. and, for a long time, the Moplas, in general, were denied the enjoyment of ordinary civil liberties. The Committee of Inquiry appointed in 1922 by the Special Commissioner of Malabar reported that :"There are at least 35,000 Moplas women and children whose condition is extremely miserable and unless proper measures are taken for their relief, many of them are likely to die of disease and starvation".

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CHAPTER 8

The Last Resort

The British Government in their desperation took resort to the most favorite strategy of imperialists everywhere that of "Divide and Rule". They sowed seeds of communal discord in the land. The then Viceroy took a prominent Hindu leader into confidence and impressed upon him the need for starting powerful missionary movement to bring back into the fold of Hinduism those who had embraced Islam. The Viceroy also advised him how essential it was to organize his community on a militant basis after the Khilafat agitation had demonstrated beyond doubt the strength, religious fervor and organizational capacity of the Muslims-the Hindus having foolishly allowed the initiative to pass into the hands of Muslims by making common cause with them on the issue of Khilafat which was wholly a Muslim affair.

Shuddhi, Sanghatan and Tabligh Movements

This was the starting point of Hindu revivalist activities which under the twin names of *Shuddhi* and *Sanghatan* spread all over India. As a reaction to them the Muslims also came forward with the Tabligh movement. An unending series of religious discussions, debates and conferences ensued, culminating, not unexpectedly by any means, in violent communal disturbances. The country was caught in the grip of the terrible Hindu Muslim Riot. The Congress manfully stuck to its task in the midst of this fearsome madness. It continued to hold its annual sessions regularly. A special session to take stock of the tragic turn of events was summoned in 1922 under the Presidentship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad while the regular annual session in the same year was held at Co-Canada and presided over by Maulana Mohammad Ali.

Countrywide Communal Conflagration

The communal frenzy remained unchecked till the peak was reached in 1927, when as many as twenty-five riots were recorded within the space of a few months. The nationalist sections of both the communities were profoundly distressed at this state of things but there

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seemed to be nothing they could do to restore communal peace and harmony. The gulf between Hindus and Muslims grew wider and wider. Ultimately, the malady began to cast its sinister shadow on the minds of the leaders of the two communities also till the parting of ways between Hindus and Muslims came up before the world as a reality from which there was no escape.

Parting of Ways

A general impression was created among the thinking classes of both Hindus and Muslims that the patriotic fervor of the leaders of the nationalist movement was cooling down quickly and they were getting divided more and more openly into separate communal camps. The basic impulsions of their thought and ambitions being communal in essence, they could not be looked up to standing fast by the ideals of Indian nationalism in the hours of trial and opportunity. The Muslims felt in their hearts that the Hindu leaders (whose guiding spirit now was Gandhiji) had failed lamentably to take adequate steps for combating the communal menace. They had not brought forward that open mindedness, impartiality and determination which was expected of them. By virtue of belonging to the majority community they wielded greater power and influence in the country, and could, therefore, have succeeded in putting down the riots had they shown greater courage and objectivity of outlook and denounced the communalists, whoever they were, openly and without fear or favor.

Maybe, this view was wrong or exaggerated but it did alienate the sympathies of many Muslim leaders, who had been in the vanguard of the nationalist movement, from the Congress. The Muslims, in general, were persuaded to believe that in order to safeguard effectively their rights and interests they would better rely on their own strength.

Separate Muslim Fronts and Demand for Partition

In consequence, Maulana Mohammad Ali resigned from the Congress along with his friends and associates and joined the Muslim political camp. The separatist instincts among Muslims became sharper

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and stronger with the passage of time. Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah revived the Muslim League in 1937, and, in a few years, it rose to be the most powerful representative organization of Indian Muslims. After the League had consolidated its position, it raised the demand for Pakistan. Thanks to the anomalies of Indian social existence, the bitter experience of communal discrimination in official circles, political immaturity of the people, and intercommunal fears and suspicions, the country was eventually partitioned in 1947.

Maulana Husain Ahmed and Jama't-ul-Ulema

Muslim religious leaders connected with the *Jami'at-ul-Ulema* stayed firm in their loyalty to the Congress till the end. They did riot waver in the least from their traditional nationalist stand[101]. In the forefront of them was Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani who by his uncompromising hostility towards the British and extraordinary patriotic zeal and sincerity of purpose proved himself to be a worthy successor of his teacher and mentor, Maulana Mahmud Hasan Deobandi. These Ulema cheerfully bore the concentrated opposition and disfavor of their co-religionists, a large majority of whom had come to share the views of the Muslim League. Maulana Madani strove to the best of his ability, during those fateful years, to make the Muslims realize the folly of the Pakistan demand. He undertook extensive tours of the country, preaching the gospel of unity from town to town and village to village. Morally and religiously, his conduct remained absolutely stainless and above suspicion throughout that period of trial and crisis, and friend and foe are unanimous in their praise of his integrity and sincerity. After the independence, too, when unlimited opportunities had opened up for personal gain, he sought no favors for himself, so much so that he politely declined to accept the title of Padma Vibhushan, which was conferred upon him by the President of India in 1954, saying that it was against the traditions of his precursors to receive honors from the Government. It is tragically true that the high hopes he had entertained from freedom

[101] Noteable among them were Mufti Kifayatullah, Maulana Ahmad Saeed, Maulana Sajjad Bihari, Maulana Hifzur Rahman, Maulana Ataullah Shah Bukhari and Maulana Habibur Rahman Ludhianwi.

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remained largely unfulfilled and he felt frustrated and heart-broken, but during the struggle he remained firm like a rock, and even after the independence had been won there occurred no change in his political views and convictions.

Another leader of the *Jami'at-ul-Ulema*, whose services cannot be overlooked in the course of the present narrative, is its General Secretary, Maulana Hifzur Rahman. The courage, resoluteness and enthusiasm with which he strove for the freedom of the motherland before 1947, and has since then been displaying in the safeguarding of the rights and interests of Muslims will not easily be matched by other contemporary Muslim leaders. His heroic services during the post-independence communal riots will always be remembered with gratitude and admiration. He has never hesitated to expose the bitter truth in connection with these outbreaks, in the Parliament and elsewhere, and in criticizing the local administration where it was found to have conducted itself unjustly towards the Muslims during a communal disturbance.[102]

Maulana Azad

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had the distinction of serving as the President of the Congress for the largest number of years and at the most critical junctures of the nation's history. Two important British official missions the Cripps' Mission and the Cabinet Mission-visited India during his ultimate term of office to negotiate with the Indian leaders. The Maulana, as the President of the Congress, took an active part in the negotiations. The delegates, including Sir Strafford Cripps, were deeply impressed by his keen political foresight and acumen. It was during the Maulana's Presidentship of the Congress that India attained freedom. His memoirs, published shortly after his death, show that his was the role of a luminous mind in the machinery of the Congress. He commanded universal respect for his sagacity and political insight. His contribut1on to the cause of freedom has been as profound as that of anyone anywhere.

[102] The Maulana died in August, 1962.-Translator

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Chapter IX

CURRENT DIFFICULTIES AND PROBLEMS

Trials and Hardships: A Necessity

At some stage or another of its history, every nation or community has to pass through a period of trial and hardship. These trials and hardships test its mettle and awaken within it the all-important will to live. They arouse and strengthen its latent potentialities ; they turn the flint into fire. They act on it like a spur. Nations that, from time to time, are not rocked by a calamity or brought face to face with a severe crisis lose the impulse for self-improvement : their self-confidence is shaken, and they eventually slip into sloth and complacency.

At present the Indian Muslims are passing through what may justly be described as highly testing times. They are confronted with a score of difficulties and problems. Some of them are of their own making, some a heritage from the past, and some a product of the unsparing march of history. But, whatever they be, they are, by the very nature of things, transitory. They are bound to disappear in course of time, provided, certainly, that Muslims grapple with them in a calm and disciplined manner, which, in turn, can be possible only under a leadership that in addition to being imaginative, courageous and honest is also mature, balanced and realistic.

Here we will deal with some of these problems and hardships. We will leave aside the communal riots and disturbances for although they constitute the biggest tragedy of free India today, they are, in our opinion, nothing more than a passing phenomenon in the evolution of our national life over which the governmental machinery and the enlightened civic consciousness of our people will not fail, before long, to obtain control. What are really alarming and deserving of urgent and earnest attention are the questions that, like a slow fire, are sure to destroy,

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bit by bit, the very fabric of Muslims as a distinct religion-cultural entity.

Hindrance to Religion: Preaching and Propagation

First of all, there are the obstacles Muslims are experiencing in the field of religious preaching and propagation. Who does not know that Islam is a missionary religion ? Throughout the world it has spread through preaching and proselytization. In India, also, the number of Muslims who were converted to Islam through the missionary efforts of its noble servants is much larger than that of those who came here directly from the Islamic countries, such as, Arabia, Iran and Turkey. The silent, unselfish propagation of Islam has kept the faith supplied regularly with new blood and a new spirit. It is through this channel that the brotherhood of Islam has always received fresh and worthy members who subsequently have made their mark in the entire Islamic world. The descent of many a distinguished Indian Muslim can be traced to the Hindus. Among such men of, for instance, the immediate past we can mention the names of Maulana Obaidullah Patialawi (author of *Toh-fatul Hind*), Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi, Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal, Maulana Sanaullah Amritsari and Sheikh-el-Tafsir Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori. Few among the Muslims themselves will be knowing today that these distinguished brethren of theirs sprang originally from the Hindu stock.

The missionary character of Islam was maintained even through the declining days of Muslim power in India, right up to the termination of the British rule. Every year a considerable number of men would enter the Islamic fold of their own accord and free will and for the simple reason that Islam enjoyed a superiority over other faiths because of its rationalistic teachings, its solidly monotheistic creed and its enlightened concepts of universal brotherhood and social justice. There was no room in its social order for things like casteism and untouchability. The glorious message of the Quran, the glittering life-example of the Prophet and the simple, impeccable precepts of the faith did never cease to conquer new minds and captivate new hearts, and, if circumstances had not undergone a change, it was quite possible that Islam would, eventually, have emerged as the strongest religious force

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not only of the subcontinent but the whole of Asia. But, as ill-luck would have it, a dismal and uninspiring political tussle ensued between .the Hindus and Muslims which rapidly assumed such awful proportions that it filled the two communities with repugnance and anger against each other, and resulted, finally, in the division of the country into two in dependent states of India and Pakistan. Whether this extreme step was proper or not, and whether it was inevitable or could be avoided, is not for as to decide. We will leave the verdict to the historian of the future, and confine ours-elves to an examination of the atmosphere of mistrust and hostility that has become heavier still between the two communities in India in consequence of the Partition. .One community looks upon everything associated characteristically with the other with suspicion and dislike no matter whether it belongs to the realm of belief, thought or culture. This feeling of distrust and intolerance is proving to be the greatest barrier in the way of Islamic preaching and propagation. A general impression has got created in India about Islam that it is the religion of a state whose position with regard to it is that of a confirmed rival or enemy, and of a community with which bitter conflicts have taken place in the past. Memories of these conflicts are still fresh in the minds. To make matters worse, things sometimes also take place in Pakistan which have the effect of putting the clock back.

This, in short, is the situation which is vexing the Indian Muslims more than anything else today. But, with all this, we can confidently say that as time will pass, and relations between India and Pakistan will improve, and there will be a return of sanity to the pattern of Hindu-Muslim relationship in India, this gloomy state of affairs will disappear and Islam will regain its popularity and appeal. The condition, of course, will be there that the Muslims pursued their missionary activities with wisdom and self-less devotion and without being enamored in the slightest measure by considerations of political advantage or power. The very nature of the work demands that Muslims, in this sphere, should be inspired solely by the ideal of service to mankind through enabling it to work out its salvation both in this world and the next. They should, as a first step, set a high religious and moral standard before their countrymen by their own example. It will also be necessary, in the . current context of things, to produce forceful Islamic literature of real merit and relevance to the modern times in Hindi and other regional

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languages of India. The Muslims should, further, participate wholeheartedly in the schemes of national development and reconstruction and discharge other patriotic duties with a full sense of responsibility and proper enthusiasm.

Unjust and Partial: System of Education

The next question is that of education. It is, indeed, of no less consequence to Muslims than the one we have just discussed for while difficulties in the path of their missionary endeavors hinder the progress of Islam, the current educational system strikes at the very roots of their existence as a separate religious and cultural com- munity and throws their whole future in the land into jeopardy.

The Indian constitution has guaranteed the freedom of creed and cultural development to all individuals and communities and bestowed a status of complete equality on all citizens irrespective of their religious affiliations. This constitution is most ideally suited to the conditions of our country which has a heterogeneous population and where a number of religious and linguistic groups live side by side with each-other. In the same way, here only that system of education would have answered the needs to perfection, which represented the teachings of all the faiths popular in the land fairly and faithfully. But, perhaps, an arrangement like this was not possible in India in view of great diversity of its religions. The next best thing would, then, have been to keep education strictly secular, in design as well as in content, as was the intention of the framers of the Constitution and had also been the practice under the British regime. Such a course would have given no cause for grievance to any religion-cultural community including the Muslims. Nevertheless, it has to be recorded in sorrow that in the field of education the secular ideal of the Constitution has remained only on paper. In most of the States-and in Uttar Pradesh, in particular-courses of study were introduced that were literally loaded with the religious beliefs and mythology of the majority community. A curriculum of this kind naturally militates against the very foundations of the Islamic faith, against its concepts of Divinity and monotheism and against the Divine institution of Prophecy and Apostleship.

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CHAPTER 9

A glance through the officially prescribed school text-books will unmistakably convey the impression that those responsible for them regard a multi-religious country like India exclusively as the home of Brahmins and attach value only to their deities, festivals, temples, pilgrim centers and religious customs and practices. The books recommended for general study whose aim is to acquaint the children with their ancient heritage and the heroes of their history also are such that they deal solely with the ancient heritage and the heroes of a particular community, and ignore everything that is Muslim. One is simply struck with wonder at the inability of their authors to find in history a single Muslim spiritual leader, ruler or man of learning who could be worthy of mention since there was no sphere of existence in which Islam had not produced personalities of the highest class, a study of whose lives can have a tremendous inspirational value for the students. Anyhow, the heroes of the Muslim phase of the Indian history have been treated by these writers as aliens and strangers, and if ever an Islamic personality has received their notice, it has been presented in most unflattering, and even positively disgusting, colors. The limit is that the Prophet himself has been referred to in some books in terms which are completely at variance with the established facts of history. They are based on colossal ignorance and prejudice and are a source of great pain to the five crores of Muslim citizens of India. At places, Muslims have been described as *Yuwans*, meaning, '*unclean*' or '*foreigners*'.

To include books of this type in the school curricula and to teach them compulsorily to all children (including Muslim children) is patently unjust to Muslims and a flagrant violation of their rights and sentiments. It has posed a most serious threat ,to their religious and cultural solidarity and the religious survival of their future generations.

The fear of the Muslims that the new educational system is rapidly throwing their children in the lap of religious and intellectual apostasy is not imaginary The writing has already appeared on the wall. The lethal effects of the system can easily be seen in Muslim. families which, for one reason or another, could not take special care to keep alive in their midst the basic ideals of Islamic civilization. The children of these families are progressively accepting the influence of un-Islamic and

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manifestly Polytheistic teachings and practices. This, obviously, is a highly distressing situation for Muslims.

Yet, we hope strongly that such a reactionary educational scheme will not be allowed to perpetuate itself. It is a passing phase. The inherent democratic spirit of India, for which it is famous in the world, will not tolerate this injustice to an important section of its population for long, and the Government as well as the educationists will step forward to put an end to this outrage against the Indian Constitution whose consequences can be extremely hurtful to the larger interests of the country.

At the same time, the situation, as it is today, is exceedingly alarming for Indian Muslims. A Conference of Muslims-Muslim Educational Conference-was held at Basti in U.P., towards the end of 1959 to ventilate their grievances in this behalf. It was attended by over 300 delegates, representing all shades of Muslim opinion. The Conference called upon the Government to make necessary changes in the school syllabi by expunging from the textbooks chapters that were hostile to the fundamental doctrines of the Islamic faith or were intended to propagate the religion .and culture of a particular community exclusively, and, thus, restore to the educational structure its secular character. It was also decided by the Conference to open privately morning and night classes for the theological instruction of school-going children and also to set up *Maktabs* where the Quran, Islamic theology and Urdu could be taught in addition to the subjects prescribed by the Government. The Conference evoked a heartening response among the Muslims and now its branches are functioning in most of the towns of Uttar Pradesh.

The Question of Urdu

Then there is the question of language. The Urdu language is a product of the inter-mixing of various races, cultures and classes. It has 'its roots in as many as four classical languages, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and Turkish. During the British regime a large number of English words also made their way into it. Urdu, thus, is truly symbolical of the Indian national design. It started as a language of the people which was

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later elevated into a language of cultural and literary expression through the joint efforts of intellectuals, poets and writers drawn from different communities. Then, as the time came, it was called upon to meet the needs of modern journalism and to interpret the urges of the national struggle. It blossomed into the most popular language of the country and became the greatest medium of communication and understanding among its various parts and communities. It is now the mother-tongue of the inhabitants of Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Bihar, Hyderabad, Delhi and their surrounding areas. After some of the more important English newspapers, it is the journals-dailies, weeklies and monthlies-appearing in Urdu which enjoy the largest circulation in India.

Urdu was the second official language of the country under the British (standing next only to English). It was widely in use in schools, law-courts and Government offices. Hindi was introduced into the field as a competitor for the first time in 1900 when Sir Anthony MacDonald, the then Lieutenant-Governor of U.P., conferred recognition on it as a court language. Thus it was that the seed of discord was initially sown between the two languages, and, thereby,· also between the people who spoke them Then came the Partition. The Constitution of the Indian Union decided in favor of Hindi as the official language. " The Official language of the Union ", it said, "shall be Hindi in Devanagri script"[103] But, apart from Hindi, fourteen other languages were also recognized as national languages, one or more of which could be adopted by the Legislature of a State "as the language or the languages to be used for all or any of the official purposes of that State"[104]

The President was, further, empowered to direct a State to recognise officially a language spoken by a substantial section of its population as its regional language provided that he was satisfied that it was the mother tongue of a fairly large number of its inhabitants. Article 347 of the Constitution reads :

> "On a demand being made on that behalf, the President may, if he is satisfied that a substantial proportion of the population of a State desire the use of any language

[103] Article 343

[104] Article 345

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> spoken by them to be recognized by that State, direct that such language shall also be officially recognized throughout the State or any part thereof for such purpose as he may specify".

In spite of these safeguards, Urdu was given marching orders even from Delhi and Uttar Pradesh where it had been born and where it had :flourished and attained maturity and which were its strongholds and natural home. It was expelled from schools as a medium of instruction at all stages, including the primary stage. In Uttar Pradesh, the Government got down to the job with such thoroughness that, practically, a total ban was placed on Urdu in schools as well as Government offices and law-courts.

This sudden turn of events took the Urdu-speaking sections by surprise. They were greatly perturbed and agitated over the treatment meted out to their mother tongue. Particularly disturbed were the Muslims, for, in addition to the cultural and social loss, the banishment of Urdu had raised before them the question of the survival of their creed and religion also. Urdu was their sole instrument of contact with the Islamic culture and civilization, their entire religious literature was in that language, and its script being closely similar to the Arabic script, a knowledge of Urdu considerably facilitated the reading of the Quran. To deprive the Muslims of the Urdu language was not very different from depriving them of their social and cultural identity and their spiritual inheritance. The Urdu-speaking people, consequently, made a vigorous protest against the official policy towards their language with the result that a conference of Provincial Education Ministers was called at Delhi in August 1949, and the following resolution was adopted at it regarding the medium of instruction in schools :

> "The medium of instruction and examination in the Junior Basic Stage must be the mother tongue of the child and where the mother tongue is different from the Regional or the State language, arrangements must be made for instruction in the mother tongue by appointing at least one teacher, provided there are not less than 40 pupils speaking the language in the whole school or 10 such pupils in a class. The mother tongue will be the language

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declared by the parent or the guardian to be the mother tongue".

The resolution, unfortunately, turned out to be nothing more than a pious declaration. Hindi was taught in the Government and Municipal schools of U. P., not only as a compulsory subject, but it also continued to be the sole medium of instruction both at the basic and the secondary stages, and the teaching of Urdu was altogether stopped. Children whose mother tongue was Urdu were totally denied the opportunity of learning it even in the junior basic classes. The Muslims and other Urdu-speaking people made repeated appeals to the Government to act on the resolution passed at Delhi in August, 1949 and provide facilities for the teaching of Urdu to their children in the schools. In the city of Lucknow alone, 10,000 parents and guardians petitioned to the State Education Minister, but there was nothing doing. The minister promised to look into the matter and, then, he apparently forgot about it.

When these efforts proved fruitless the Urdu-speaking people decided to submit a memorial to the President of the Republic under Article 347 of the Constitution. A vigorous campaign was launched in the State of Uttar Pradesh for this purpose, under the direction of Anjuman *Taraqqi-i-Urdu*, and signatures of no less than 20,50,000 adults and 20,00,000 children[105] were obtained for the memorial in a voluntary and peaceful manner. A deputation consisting of eminent public men and educationists, both Hindu and Muslim, was formed with Dr. Zakir Husain, the then Vice-Chancellor of Muslim University) Aligarh and President of *Anjuman Taraqqi-i-Urdu* (now Vice-President of India)-, as its leader. It waited on the President on February 15, 1954 to present the memorial demanding the recognition of Urdu as the regional language of U.P. Other points made in the memorial were that facilities should be provided for children whose mother tongue was Urdu to receive instruction in that language at the primary stage ; Urdu teachers should be appointed where there were at least ten pupils with Urdu as their mother tongue in a class or forty in a school ; petitions and applications etc., written in the Urdu script should be entertained in Government offices and law-courts and given full consideration ; all government notifications, bills, hand-outs and other publications shall

[105] The signatures of the children were later excluded from the memorial

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be brought out in Urdu also ; awards should be granted by the Government to Urdu writers on producing works of outstanding merit, as the practice was formerly, and their books should be bought by Government libraries, academies and reading rooms to give them adequate encouragement ; and, lastly, the status of a court language should be restored back to Urdu.

The deputation was received cordially by the President who gave it a patient hearing and showed a sympathetic interest in its demands, but that was the end of it. No action was taken on the memorial; the position of Urdu did not improve. It continued to be treated in a step-motherly fashion by the authorities, and Urdu speaking children remained deprived, as before, of the right to receive instruction in their mother-tongue with the result that their link with their cultural past and the creed of their ancestors became weaker, till now the stage has been reached when the currently rising generation of Muslims, for reasons detailed already, is finding itself separated, as if by centuries, from its spiritual and cultural roots, and it is proving exceedingly difficult to take it back to its moorings for the connecting bridge between the past and the present, which. in its case was Urdu, has been destroyed.

More recently, in August 1961, a Conference of Chief Ministers of different States was called by the Union Government in Delhi in which what is commonly known. as the Three-Language Formula was evolved. According to this Formula, students at the secondary stage will be required to study three languages-Hindi, English and an Indian language other than Hindi. It was hoped that in this way Urdu-speaking students will get an opportunity of studying their mother-tongue in Secondary schools, but the U.P. Government thought otherwise and in utter disregard of the claim of Urdu it decided that the Formula did not apply to it. The third language, it held was to be one of the South Indian languages. This curious interpretation, manifestly, is another act of gross injustice to this unfortunate language for with three compulsory languages and the other subjects of study the prospects of offering Urdu have become very thin. It is going to mean in practice the ejectment of Urdu from the secondary stage of education as well.

In 1961, again, a Committee was set up by the U.P. Government under the chairmanship of Acharya J. B. Kripalani to investigate into the

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popular grievance that the Government orders and directives with regard to the protection of Urdu were not being implemented in practice and suggest suitable remedies in this connection. The report submitted by the Committee has proved to be thoroughly disappointing. Instead of containing a single suggestion for meeting the grievances of the Urdu-speaking people it has concerned itself mainly with Muslim *maktabs*, Islamia schools and Arabic and Persian madrassas. If the recommendations of the Committee are accepted, the position of Urdu will be weakened further and it will gradually lose its separate existence. The Muslim theological institutions which have been functioning in the State for over a century will also come to an end if the recommendations of the Kripalani Committee which have been made with the avowed object of their betterment and reformation are acted upon.

The denial of justice to Urdu has, in brief, thrown the Indian Muslims in a quandary. It has put them under a tremendous strain. They are in danger of losing their personality in their own homeland. Still, we earnestly feel that there is no cause for them to give way to despair. As political consciousness will gather greater force in India, a fair and just solution is bound to be found to the problem. Enlightened public opinion will ultimately realize the wisdom, if nothing more, of satisfying the linguistic and cultural aspirations of Muslims and other Urdu-speaking sections of the population. It is not hard to see that an essential prerequisite of national progress and prosperity is that a climate of hope and confidence is created for the different communities that inhabit the country in respect of their language, religion and culture. The minorities must be made to feel that the days of arbitrary discrimination and exploitation are gone now that freedom has been won, and no language, even if it be Hindi, will be allowed any more to stand m the way of the development of other languages. The Indian National Congress had guaranteed unequivocally the protection of the social, religious and cultural rights and interests of all communities· and groups when it had raised the banner of revolt against the British, and the Indian people had marched unitedly in the fight for freedom in the hope that after the battle was won the right of religious and cultural self-expression that had been snatched away from them by the alien

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rulers would be restored back and they would be free to develop and flourish according to their needs and genius.

The Economic Problem

And, finally, the economic problem. It is needless to emphasize how important economic peace and security is to the mental and physical well-being of a people. There is nothing more degrading than constant financial distress and anxiety, for individuals as well as for communities. It destroys all that is good and noble in them, distorts their sense of values, breeds in them an acute sense of frustration, and a perpetual feeling of injustice and denial of opportunity, and, eventually, it crushes them down to the level of a backward and depressed people. Their intellectual and spiritual springs -of life soon get dried up, and they are rendered bereft of all creative impulse and the joy of living. The main sources of income among the Muslims, till 1947, were the Zamindaris (land-owning), Government services, and the higher branches of trade. The Zamindari system was abolished, and, to a great extent rightly too, after the attainment of independence, and as far as public services; are concerned, the proportion of Muslims in them is falling day by day. These two factors have brought the community on the verge of economic ruin. A community wise analysis of recruitments made to various Government departments, during these years,-particularly to the Armed Forces, the Police and other key services-cannot but drive a person unacquainted with the true shape of things to the conclusion that either the Muslims have completely migrated from India or they are altogether an illiterate lot and, therefore, unfit for Government employment. It will also explain the fear of Muslims that when, in due course, the senior Muslim officers will retire from service, it will mean virtually the end of their representation in the bureaucratic and administrative set-up--no Muslim officer will be seen in government offices after that. We will reproduce some authoritative comments and facts and figures in support of our contention. To begin with, take this extract from Pandit Nehru's address to the All-Indian Congress Committee at Delhi on May 11,1958 :

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CHAPTER 9

> "I called for statistics from the States to ascertain the percentage of minorities in the recruitments to public services. I found that the representation of Muslims was progressively declining, one of the reasons being the procedure adopted for competitive examinations that are held for recruitment to all-India services. In these examinations insistence is laid on the knowledge of Hindi and candidates who fail to qualify in it are rejected. Question papers are also required to be answered in Hindi and candidates belonging to minority communities find it hard to come up to the standard of literary Hindi"

Further, it was admitted officially in the Delhi State Legislature (in 1952) that "the strength of Muslims in Delhi Police Force in 1946 was 1470, now it has dwindled to 56. Since 1946, only two Muslim Constables and one Head Constable have been recruited. The total strength of the Force today is 2058 ". In other words, from 1946 to 1952, only three Muslims had been taken in the Delhi Police Force.

The speech delivered by Mr. Mahavir Tyagi, Union Minister of State for Defence, ·in the Muslim University Union, Aligarh, tells the same tale. The Minister of State observed, "The percentage of Muslims in the Armed Forces which was 32 at the time of Partition has now come down to 2. To correct this state of things, I have instructed that due regard should be paid to their recruitment".

These extracts speak for themselves. They leave no one in doubt as to what the position of the Muslims today is in the higher services, though they still possess the same qualities of head and heart which till a short time ago used to qualify them for highest appointments and the standard of education among them also is steadily rising. The constitution of India has, moreover, guaranteed equality of status and opportunity to all citizens whatever their caste or creed. One of the results of this policy of unconcealed discrimination is that frustrated in their attempts to find suitable employment in the land of their birth, many educated Muslim young men are migrating every year to Pakistan.

To wind up, these are some of the major problems and hardships that are bedeviling the Indian Muslims at the present juncture of their history. In a way,, the development of such a situation is not inconceivable in

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a country which has just emerged from a long spell of foreign rule, and it is in it, that lies the ray of hope for the future. This phase of reaction can, by the very logic of facts, be only temporary. It cannot go on for ever. The clouds will disperse, as they are bound to, and there will be sunshine again. The Muslims will regain the position in the country which is justly theirs. All the schemes for national reconstruction will remain incomplete if they are left to rot and decay. But for that the Muslims will have to produce within them an undying faith in God. They will have to cultivate the virtues of patience and steadfastness of purpose, and to give a convincing proof of their worth and merit and usefulness to the country and the nation.

