SIR SAYYID AHMAD KHAN AND THE
GENESIS OF THE MUSLIM
SEPARATIST MOVEMENT
IN POLITICS:
AN INTERPRETATION

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Contents.


Chapter II. The Rulers and the Ruled. Page 40.

Chapter III. Political Theory and Practice. Page 64.

Chapter IV. The Muslims and the State. Page 78.

Chapter V. An Indian Nation? Page 120.

Chapter VI. The Separatist Tendencies. Page 140.
Recent political developments in what is now called, the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent would necessitate an examination of the foundation of the Muslim Separatist Movement. An inquiry into the recent past (when emotion-rousing controversies are still alive, and when passion and prejudice still play their part in shaping events) is a peculiarly difficult undertaking. And any way, origins cannot always be satisfactorily traced.

It is the fashion to deal with the Separatist Movement at the wrong end. The "two nation theory" was decried as a product of loose imagination but the thing it represented was certainly old. What the administrators of India called "the Muslim Question" in the seventies of the last century is given little space in the current text-books of history. The "communal" problem is said to begin with the Simla Deputation (1906) which, led by the Aga Khan and "representing the most prosperous elements in the Muslim community", waited on Governor-General Minto to demand separate Muslim representation in legislatures; the pleading was successful. This Deputation has been characterised as a "managed affair", utterly lacking in spontaneity. All the facts about it have not been made known. But the relevant and available evidence would not wholly warrant that assumption.

In the following pages an attempt has been made to clarify the political and cultural background of Muslim Separatism. The Simla Deputation had nearly four decades of history behind it, and was a decisive stage in the progress of the Movement, rather than its starting-point. (The Separatist Movement is studied here, primarily, as a reaction against "Indian" nationalism and the aggressive revivalism of the allied religious creeds. What part the rulers of India played in encouraging this Movement in its earlier phase would appear to be negligible. Sayyid Ahmad's relations with Bureaucracy were not always cordial and his
Institute Gazette was an unspiring critic of the arrogant ways of the ruling class.

In 1885, the Indian National Congress (which was destined to play a valiant and spectacular role in India's political emancipation) was just experimenting with the Western concept of Nationality, an alien graft on indigenous soil: it did not itself believe in the existence of an Indian nationality. One of the declared objects of the First Congress was to weld together different elements in the life of the country into a homogenous Indian Nation!

The story of the genesis of the Muslim Separatist Movement in politics is here told round the personality of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, easily the most outstanding political figure in post-Mutiny India for forty years. He was quick to perceive that

(a) future leadership of the world lay with the West,
(b) the British had come to stay in India,
(c) the system of Democratic Government would be fatal to Indian Muslims in view of their educational and economic backwardness, and
(d) now that Muslim supremacy was extinct beyond revival, Muslims must accept the new order and make the necessary compromises and adjustments with it.

These prepositions would appear axiomatic in retrospect, but they eluded the Muslim intellect in Sayyid Ahmad's own generation.

The present writer believes that the great achievement of Sayyid Ahmad lay in awakening the communal consciousness of Indian Muslims and that most of his reforms and projects were intended to lead to political results. (He even pressed religion into the service of politics. If he was pro-British, he was theologically so.) Sufficient data has been brought together in chapters VI and IV respectively to substantiate this thesis.

To depict Sayyid Ahmad as a flunkey and a sycophant, whose only object was to please officialdom by appearing to be anxious about the
strength and stability of British dominion in India, is a cheap caricatur
Such statements cannot be reconciled with his character; and they will no
bear examination on other grounds as well. Although, it must be added,
his extravagant professions of loyalty were at times apt to produce that
impression.

Some points which need to be emphasised about the dissertation
itself are:

(a) The first four sections of Chapter One deal with such features
of the British rule in India as are indispensable for an understanding
of Sayyid Ahmad's contribution to the public and political life of this
sub-continent.

(b) Sayyid Ahmad himself got some of his Urdu works translated into
English. English versions of his earlier Urdu speeches were prepared by
Col. Graham for his "Life and Work". While quoting Sayyid Ahmad the
present writer has freely drawn on translations of both categories (leav-
ing their grammar and spellings untouched), he had to translate a large
number of passages from the Urdu speeches and writings of Sayyid Ahmad
into English for the present dissertation. In doing this he has tried
to combine accuracy with renderings none too literal.

(c) Best efforts have been made to eliminate page-long errors creeping
into the references given in footnotes. But 'the best' may well fall short of
good. It is possible that some errors have still escaped detection. The
absence of a uniform system of transliteration will also be very much
apparent throughout these pages. The author regrets thesis-like
features of his Thesis.

(d) Difficulties resulting from Partition prevented access to materials
available with the Lytton Library, Muslim University, Aligarh. Morison's
"History of M.A.O. College", Beck's "Letters" and the old files of the
Institute Gazette are missing from the Bibliography, as they are not found
in any of the public libraries (and the private collections that the
present writer knows of) in Western Pakistan. Likewise, H. Kraemer's article on Sayyid Ahmad in the *Muslim World* (1921) was unobtainable.

(e) The Annual Reports of the Mohammadi Educational Conference became available after the last paragraph of this Thesis had been written. If received earlier, they would have furnished some illustrative material for the text as well as the footnotes without affecting the main argument.

(f) The account of the social ideas of Sayyid Ahmad and his criticism of the contemporary Indian Muslim society has been omitted from this dissertation. The rough draft of a note on this subject, intended for insertion at the end of Chapter IV was, at first, mislaid. Later it was decided not to rewrite it. In any case, its contents would have entailed unnecessary repetition.

The present writer is indebted to Professor F. M. Hussain, Shaikh Abdul Aziz, Bar-at-Law, Dr. Sayed Mohammad Abdulla and his own brother, Mr. Abdul Majid, for many valuable suggestions. Mr. Shaukat Ali (formerly of the Punjab Public Library, and now of Government College, Lahore) helped in securing some useful journals. Finally, Maulavi Mohammad Amin Zuberi was good enough to allow access to his unpaginated, unpublished manuscripts.

Government College,
Lahore.
December 31, 1950.
A note on Bibliography.

Sayyid Ahmad's own writings constitute the most important source of this study. Of the books mentioned under this head, Nos. 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, and 17, were issued by Sayyid Ahmad himself. Others were edited and published by his friends and admirers.

However, the best known and the most authentic work on Sayyid Ahmad is the voluminous, Hayat-i-Jawad, divided into two parts and covering more than 500 pages. Its author, Altaf Husain Hali, a close student of his hero, first met the Sayyid in 1876, and was intimately connected with the College from that date till his death in 1914.

Hali planned Sayyid Ahmad's biography when the U.A.O. College had already been established and was making rapid strides (i.e. sometimes in the early eighties). He prepared some notes on the subject and presented Sayyid Ahmad with a long questionnaire seeking information on several aspects of his life and career. The questionnaire remained unanswered, and, for the time being, the author dropped his plan "on the advice of some friends".

Later Hali decided to resume the task, and, beginning with 1894, he paid a series of visits to Aligarh specifically for this purpose, and spent such time there, laboriously scanning Sayyid Ahmad's published and unpublished writings, old files of the Institute Gazette and Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq, soliciting information from Sayyid Ahmad's associates and relations and studying Sayyid Ahmad's private letters to friends. Extracts from "English journals", "Government reports" and the speeches of "high Government officials" seem to have provided him with "valuable" materials. The work was completed and published in 1901, some three years after Sayyid Ahmad's death. It is a monumental compilation and a veritable storehouse of information on Sayyid Ahmad. What Hali omitted to mention about his hero is not likely to be known to posterity.

Ever since its publication, some critics have taken exception to the
complimentary tone of the work. A careful reading of it, however, would reveal that it is fairly critical, though its criticism is subdued and respectful. The limitations imposed upon the author by the political conditions then prevailing in the country and by his own position as a Trustee of the N.A.O. College might be largely responsible for it.

Graham, "a well-wisher of Indians", who claimed to know Sayyid Ahmad as a "relative......than a friend", was a member of the Police service and a frequent visitor to Aligarh. He left India in 1885, just before his "Life and Work" was published, and the two friends never met afterwards. Even their correspondence ceased after 1888. Nevertheless, a second edition of this book was brought out by Graham himself in 1902 with certain additions and alterations. The most valuable feature of this later edition is an appendix reproducing a number of letters written by Sayyid Ahmad to the author.

Both Altaf Husain Tal and Graham were friends and contemporaries of their hero, and too near him in point of time to adopt the viewpoint possible to a later generation possessing the perspective and the wisdom which only comes after the event.

A small, practically forgotten, but critical biography of Sayyid Ahmad, entitled "Tazkira Sir Sayyid Warhum", by Maulavi Nur-ur-Rehman Ali, appeared in 1925. For the greater part, it summarised the contents of Hayat-i-Jawad but, in a short paragraph, its author drew pointed attention to the political import of Sayyid Ahmad’s many-sided activities.

Dr. Beljon’s monograph, "The Reforms and Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan", published in 1949, is, like the following pages, a dissertation for a doctor. Dealing specifically with the social and religious ideas of Sayyid Ahmad, it allows little space to his politics.

So far as the present writer is aware, no other independent work on Sayyid Ahmad exists, apart from the four books described above.

With the exception of Nos. 24, 25 and 29, all books appearing in
Section C., were either written by Maulavi Mohammad Amin Zubari, or written at his request with the help of materials supplied by him. This comparatively little known gentleman is an authority on the Aligarh movement. Born in 1872, in Harhara in U.P., Maulavi Zubari had his education in his home town. While yet in his teens, he showed a keen aptitude for journalism. In 1893 he went to Bombay, where he secured a reporter’s appointment with an Urdu journal run by Mohsin-ul-Mulk. Later he acted as Secretary to the Nawab. This was how he came into intimate contact with the leader number two of the Aligarh Movement.

During his journalistic career in Bombay, Maulavi Mohammad Amin met two veteran Aligarhians, Maulavi Abdul Haq and M. Zafar Ali Khan. There soon developed a warm and intimate friendship between them. Maulavi Zubari left Bombay in 1895, and took over as historiographer at the court of Bhopal after some years. He filled this post till 1931, dividing his time between his official duties and writing fiction, biography and history. The little but useful biographies constituting the Bashir Pasha Series (Nos. 22, 30, 31, 34, 36, 37) were published during this period.

But the most important period of Maulavi Zubari’s literary activity, from our point of view, was spread over the thirteen years from 1931 to 1944. This was entirely spent at Aligarh. Here he completed and published detailed biographies of Mohsin-ul-Mulk (with whom he was in constant contact from 1893 to 1907) and Waqar-ul-Mulk (who was a blood relation of the Maulavi) from original records lying in the archives of the Muslim University and the Muhammadan Educational Conference.

In 1948, Maulavi Zubari came over to Karachi. Nearing eighty (October 1950) the Maulavi is an engaging conversationalist, has an extraordinary memory and is very much of living history.

The unpublished works of this author include (a) History of M.A.O. College, (b) History of the Muslim University and (c) Life of Dr. Zia-ud-Din. None of them is likely to be published in the near future.
Naulavi Zuberi surveys events, situations and personalities in plain and balanced prose and his works are marked by a factual and objective outlook.

Section D names the memoirs consulted in preparing this Thesis. Nos. 40 and 47 excepted, the authors had personally known and met Sayyid Ahmad.

Similarly, all biographies (Section E) except Nos. 60, 67, and 68 deal with the lives of Sayyid Ahmad's contemporaries.

Special mention must here be made of M. Tufail Ahmad Ali, who died very recently and was one of the oldest living Ahmadiyyas. He was a student of the V.A.O. College while Sayyid Ahmad was yet alive and he spent the greater part of his life at Aligarh. His work (No. 95) has been examined in Chapter V.

**ABBREVIATIONS.**

The abbreviations used in this Thesis are

1. **Majmu'a Lectures** for Majmu'a Lectures by Honourable Dr. Sir Sayyid.
2. **Mukammal Majmu'a** for Mukammal Majmu'a Lectures was Speeches.
3. **Makateeb** for Makateeb-i-Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk was Nahib Naqar-ul-Mulk edited by Mohammad Amin Zuberi.
Chapter I.

The Environment and the man.

The establishment of the British rule in India inaugurated a cultural revolution in the country. Contacts with the West, the educational and Samaritan activities of the Christian missionaries, the growth and increasing influence of the Press, the distance-destroying effects of the railway, telegraph and steamship and the steady infiltration of Western ideas paved the way to a great transition. European ideas began to flow into the country on all sides; their impact was felt by all. But the character and intensity of the response varied from group to group. Bengal with its longest experience of British rule and Western associations has been in the vanguard of all social and political movements. By temperament the Bengali is a good learner and quick assimilator, so that modern Bengal is very largely a product of British rule.

(Of the Hindu social movements, Brahmo Samaj comes first in the order of chronology, if not of importance. It exercised a potent influence on the life of Bengal in the sixties and seventies of the last century. (1) Founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy it professed to restore Hindu worship to its pristine cast "uncontaminated by idolatry" and beckoned the Hindus back to the religion of their forefathers. Ram Mohan Roy's thought lacked (2)

(1) Bannerjea, Sir Surrendranath, A Nation in Making, P. 8
(2) Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) was born of a high Brahmin family and studied Arabic, Persian and Hindu literature, law and religion. At the age of twenty he began to associate with Europeans and found them "generally more intelligent, more steady and moderate in their conduct" and felt that "their rule would lead more speedily and surely to the amelioration of the native inhabitants".

To Ram Mohan Roy belongs the credit for starting the first Indian newspaper. He was also an internationalist; thus he gave a public dinner in Calcutta when the Spanish people got a constitution. And, on his way to Europe, he asked to be allowed to do honour to the flag of Liberty and Equality.

(3) Farquhar, J.N., Modern Religious Movements in India, P. 37.)
form but not content: it borrowed freely from Islamic mysticism, Christianity and the Hindu Upanishads. He assisted in the preparation of a Bengali translation of the New Testament, for he had come to the conclusion that the doctrines of Christ were "more conducive to moral principles, and better adapted for the use of rational beings, than any other" that he came to his knowledge. (Later he quarrelled with the missionaries and came to believe that "Christology" was at variance with the principles of Christ). The Raja was also the pioneer of Western education in Bengal.

It was the stewardship of R.N.Tagore that saved the Samaj from an early disintegration after the death of the founder (1833). The new leader did not share the founder's passion for social reform, or his enthusiasm for the precepts of Christ. However, he worked out more fully the rationalism of the Master. Differences within the organisation led to a schism in 1864 and the irrepressible Kashub Chandra Sen seceded with his band of younger and more spirited followers. Sen fought idolatry and spoke freely of Christ's greatness and not unnaturally, led many to believe that he was lost to Hinduism.) Matters came to a head when in 1878 he allowed a minor daughter of his to be married to the Prince of Cooch Behar "in obedience to a heavenly ordinance" under the very Hindu formulæ, which he had breathlessly denounced all his life. The dissidents who constituted the majority first protested and then parted in anger. (Kashub collected the remnants, christened his creed as the Church of New Dispensation and taught that Christ was Supreme and God-man and that all religions were equally true and equally good. His theology

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(2) Ibid, P.37.
(3) Ibid, P.38.
(5) Also known as Maharishi. (d.1906).
(6) Modern Religious Movements in India, P.41
(7) Ibid, PP.44-44
(8) Ibid, P.45
(9) Ibid, PP.33-34
(10) Ibid, P.56
is full of inconsistencies; so is his ceremonial, which is a queer graft of Christian observances upon the essentially mythological Hindu worship.

An offshoot of the Brahmo movement was the New Samaj founded at Lahore in 1882 by an ex-school master. This was an atheistic society whose creed was avowedly based on the findings of science. It worked for the moral and educational regeneration of the freemasonry and encouraged temperance and vegetarianism.

Theistic movements in other parts of India followed more or less insular lines of development. The Prathana Samaj of Bombay, for instance, was largely based upon the Hindu scriptures, used the hymns of Marathi poets in its services and permitted idol-worship privately.

(The religious-political Arya Samaj was founded in Bombay in 1875 and worked, for sometime, in collaboration with the venturesome Theosophical Society, which had evoked the admiration of its founder. This spiritual coalition proved embarrassing and had to be dissolved in 1881. Afterwards the Samaj headquartered itself at Lahore. Dayananda, the founder, possessed considerable erudition in Sanskrit. In his creed modern ideas are made to align themselves with reactionary Hinduism. Thus he paid homage to Western science, emphasised the necessity of social reform, derided idolatry, scoffed at Hindu superstition and caste prejudice, and strongly disapproved of child marriage. Alongside of all this we find him preaching the sanctity of the cow, organising an association for its "protection."

(13) Ibid., P.58
(14) Ibid., PP.175-82
(15) Ibid., P.178
(16) Ibid., PP.78-79
(17) Ibid., P.110
(18) Dayananda (1824-83) was born of devout Hindu parents in Kathiawar and, by the age of fourteen, had learnt long pieces of Vedas by heart. In 1846 his parents decided to get him married but he fled from home. In course of his wanderings he met a learned but blind and "irritable" Brahmin (1860). With him Dayanand studied for two and a half years and willingly suffered corporeal chastisement at his hands. Five years later he began the public exposition of his ideas. He wore only a minimum of clothing, addressed his listeners in Sanskrit and never spoke to women. In 1872 he came down to Calcutta and met Keshub Chandra Sen. From that date onwards he began to wear regular clothes and deliver his public lectures in Hindi. His most important work was Satyarath Prakash first published in 1874.
(19) Modern Religious Movements in India, P.115
and presenting a monster petition to the Government praying for the
imposition of a ban on its slaughter. He preached a return to the
ancient Vedic faith, stressed Unity of God and the extirpation of alien
faiths like Islam and Christianity. His battle cry "India for Indians"
(i.e. Hindus) was charged with momentous political consequences.)

A competent observer discerns a distinct advance in Hindu thought
after 1870. "The Indian now regards himself as a full grown man, unwilling
to be set aside as an Asiatic". He will not be submerged under the
welter of foreign ideas and is prepared to defend his "glorious" heritage.
This tendency can best be studied with reference to the Rama Krishna
Mission and its representative spokesman, Swami Vivekananda, who, "on
account of a shallow facility" made a good impression at the Parliament
of Religions in Chicago in 1893 and again at the Congress of Religions hel
in Paris seven years later. He fretted over the failures of foreigners to
understand and interpret India aright, asserted that India had taught the
world in the past and that the world had still much to learn from the
"spiritual Hindu nation"; the "baneful influences" from across the seas
had corrupted the Hindu society. The Hindu civilisation was "priceless";
every shred of it had to be saved for posterity. Idolatry was the most
admirable and edifying form of devotion.

B.

(20) Ibid, P.111
(21) Ibid, P.112
(22) Ibid, P.112
(23) Ibid, P.186
(24) Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) received good English education and
graduated from a missionary College in Calcutta. A sceptic in youth, he
later came under the influence of the "saint" Rama Krishna. He
renounced the world on his Master's death, and spent six years as a
recluse on the Himalayas and emerged from his retirement in 1892. With
a view to carrying on social reforms and also to giving permanence to
the message of the Master, he founded the Rama Krishna Mission, which
proved to be an effective organisation for fighting social evils among
Hindus.

(25) Modern Religious Movements in India, PP.202-205.
inspired, not by Western influences but by the Puritanical Wahabi-ism founded in Central Arabia towards the end of the previous century. The earliest expounder of the Wahabi doctrines in India was Shariat Ullah. Born of humble parents, he went on a pilgrimage to Mecca in early youth, stayed and studied there for the next twenty years, returned home in 1802, suffered persecution for denouncing the Hindu excrescences which had corrupted Islam, steadily won a devoted following and was ultimately admired and venerated by his people for his blameless life. (His work was continued by his son after his death.

While the movement led by Shariat Ullah was more or less local (being confined to Bengal), another vigorous and influential attempt at ridding Islam of Hindu polytheistic practices was made by Sayyid Ahmad of Rai Bareli on a country-wide scale. Born in 1782, he came, as a young man, under the influence of Shah Abdul Aziz of Delhi and soon distinguished himself as an effective preacher. On his return from Meccan pilgrimage (1822 he began to preach "with renewed vigour...centring his attack on abuses, seeking to free Islam" from "degradations...which had grown up largely from contact with Hinduism".

The following passage taken from Dr. Hunter's "Indian Musalmans" contains an excellent resume of doctrines central to Sayyid Ahmad's teachings:

"The law of the Prophet is founded on two things: First, the not attributing to any creature the attribute of God; and second, not inventing forms and practices which were not invented in the days of the Prophet, and his successors, the Khalifas. The first consists in disbelieving that angels, spirits, spiritual guides, disciples, teachers, students, prophets or saints remove one's difficulties. In abstaining from having recourse to any of the above creations for the attainment of any wish or desire. In denying that any of them has the power of granting favours or removing

(26) Titus, Murray T., Indian Islam, PP.179-181
evils; in considering them as helpless and ignorant as one's self in respect of the powers of God. In never making any offering to any Prophet, saint, holy man or angel, for the attaining of any object, but merely to consider them as friends of God. To believe that they have the power to rule the accidents of life, and that they are acquainted with the sacred knowledge of God, is downright infidelity.

"With regard to the second point, true and undefiled religion consists in strongly adhering to all the devotions and practices in the affairs of life which were observed by the Prophet. In avoiding all such innovation as marriage ceremonies, mourning ceremonies, adoring of tombs, erection of large edifices over graves, lavish expenditure on the anniversaries of the dead, street processions and the like, and in endeavouring as far as may be practicable to put a stop to these practices"."

The later history of Indian Wahabi-ism will be found elsewhere in these pages.

The second great Muslim movement for social and religious reform was initiated by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, the subject of this dissertation. Although the Wahabi movement exercised a powerful conscious influence on him in his formative years, yet his rationalist approach to Islam brought with it a "new liberalising theology" and "a revaluation of the traditional social ethics of the Muslim community".

Dr. Titus has instituted an interesting comparison between the two Sayyids part of which runs as follows:

"...Each desired to rest his case on the Prophet, the Quran and the Traditions; each sought to sweep away the theological and legal incrustations of intervening centuries that had covered the true Faith; but there they parted, and moved in completely opposite directions. The one (i.e. Sayyid Ahmad of Rae Bareli) had no use for modernism: Muslims must go back to the original purity of Islam. The other would employ "Reason" to adapt Islam to modern conditions".

(28) Hunter, Sir J.W., The Indian Musalmans, P. 54
(29) Hall, Altaf Hussain, Hayat-i-Jaweed, Part II, P. 10
(30) Gibb, H.A.R., Mohammedanism, P. 182
(31) Indian Islam, P. 178
In the Punjab, attacks on Islam by the Arya Samajist preachers and Christian missionaries led to the Ahmadiyya movement of the nineties which also represented a reaction against the Aligarh Islam. Basing itself largely on the personal claims of the founder, it interpreted "true Islam" as a middle path between an "impossible orthodoxy" and the aggressive rationalism-cum-naturalism of Sayyid Ahmad Khan.

(32) Mohammedanism, P.186
(33) Modern Religious Movements in India, P.146
II.

The "Indian Renaissance" began earlier in Bengal where modern education reached a larger and poor class and "provided a wider basis for nationalist feeling". The opinion of the educated middle classes became a living force towards the close of the seventies in that province. Mass meetings and demonstrations constituted the technique of political movements of the time which had not acquired the fullness or dimensions of those that followed them. As yet they appealed to a limited class. The man in the street had no appetite for politics. The press had not acquired the "hegemony" over public life that it did later. The daily paper had not yet appeared and the weeklies supplied a sufficient quantity of news and views to satisfy the civic curiosity of an intelligent reader. The use of the platform was rare.

Surrendranath Bannerjea may be easily named the first Indian

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(1) Reconstruction of India, P.58
(2) Thompson Edward, A Nation in Making, PP.5-6. Lord Dufferin wrote to Cross: "Some of the older Indians... seem to consider it unadvisable for the Viceroy to make any reference to public opinion as signified through the newspapers, and maintain that it ought to be lightly ignored". (Lyall, Sir Alfred, The Life of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, Vol. 2, P.148).
(3) Ibid., P.76. A Nation in Making, p.76.
(4) Surrendranath Bannerjea (1848-1925) joined the Indian Civil Service (in the sixties of the 19th century) from which he was removed a few years later, entered public life and took to teaching and journalism, was the central figure on the Congress platform for many years, sat in the Bengal Legislative Council and lived to serve as a Minister under the Montague-Chelmsford reforms. Sayed Ameer Ali, spoke of him as follows: "I could never understand why particularly one newspaper, the Bengalee, should be so bitter (against me). It was owned and edited by Surindra Nath Bannerji. For a year or more I had lectured to the classes instituted by him and also had induced my friend K.N. Chatterji to assist him. Surindra Nath Bannerji was a great orator and proved a formidable enemy to the Government..." He said in one of his speeches to students that "he would shake the foundations of the British rule" and he fully justified this threat until the Government recognised the merit of having its foundations shaken by rewarding him with a knighthood... He laid the foundations of that bitter anti-foreign spirit which had become the main policy of the stalwart patriots of Bengal and elsewhere in India. I remember a time when large bands of the youth of the province were wont to slink away with the utmost celerity at the shadow of a policeman. They now valiantly stand up to the police with sticks and umbrellas, and occasionally even shoot down inoffensive foreigners. The development of the spirit of independence and aggressiveness among a people by nature so mild and law-abiding is due to Surindra Nath Bannerji..." Islamic Culture (1932), P.178
political strategist and "whirlwind campaigner" of note. He was the guiding star of the political awakening that came over Bengal and the rest of the country. Thrilled by the cult of Mazzini, he popularised the Italian patriot among the young men of Bengal by having his works translated into the Bengali language. It was through his efforts that the Indian Association of Calcutta came into existence in 1876. Next year he helped to organise a press association at Delhi that awaited upon Governor-General Lytton to apprise him of their views and worries about the relations of the Press with the State. The contempt proceedings instituted against him, as Editor of the "Bengales", for criticising an English judge of the Calcutta High Court who had brought a Hindu idol into his court room, and his subsequent conviction caused a tremendous emotional stir and provoked an outburst of indignation.

In Indian politics, the period of six years 1874-80 was a period of reaction. During his term of Viceroyalty (1876-80) Lord Lytton followed a policy which his successor branded a policy of "repression" and declared "It is not easy to overstate the mischief which the whole tone of Lytton's Government produced on Indians of all classes". During these years the maximum age limit for the open competitive examination for the Indian Civil Service was reduced from twenty-one years to nineteen. The war with Afghanistan (1878-80) which "had disastrous financial consequences for India" and which "caused practically no unrest in the country except on the Frontier" was held by Lord Lytton and his Council to justify the enactment of the Arms Act which made it obligatory on Indians to obtain

(6) A Nation in Making, P.43
(6) Ibid, P.41
(7) Ibid, P.59
(8) Ibid, PP.74-84
(9) Wolf, Lucien, Life of the First Marquess of Ripon, Vol.2, PP.94-95
(10) Ibid, P.59
(11) Ghintamani, C.Y., Indian Politics since the Mutiny, P.14
(12) A Nation in Making, P.58
licenses for carrying firearms. Then came the Vernacular Press Act which imposed stringent restrictions on the Vernacular newspapers in the interests of "law and order". This Act was passed, as Lord Lytton himself said, "with less than usual formalities", that is to say, in one sitting of the Imperial Legislative Council when normal rules of business had been suspended with the previous sanction of the Secretary of State.

The Indian Association of Calcutta decided to launch a country-wide agitation against the new Civil Service regulation which, in practice, amounted to racial discrimination against Indians. Surnandramath Bannerjee was chosen as a "special delegate" to visit different provinces. He addressed crowded meetings at the places he visited. At his instance, political organisations were formed in various cities to act in concert with the Indian Association of Calcutta. This laid the foundation of concertorium in political matters on a country-wide scale.

(Lord Ripon's four-year term of Viceroyalty (1880-84) constituted the starting-point of the nationalist movement in India.) This statesman was popularly known as "the friend of India". He dispensed with his bodyguard at Simla and "reverted to older and simpler precedents". Lord Lytton horrified Lady Ripon by telling her (in London) that her husband was in the "habit of wandering about the hills alone". It had agreeably surprised the observers to watch Lord Ripon pay a visit to the Roman Catholic Cathedral immediately after landing at Bombay, and in the streets of Calcutta he could be seen acknowledging the greetings of his Indian acquaintances contrary to all Viceroyal custom. "You have made

(13) But the European subjects in India were exempt from the provisions of this act.
(14) The Vernacular Press represented the English in India as afraid of Russia, as defeated without a fight by Russia, as rapidly to be driven out of India by Russia" (from the speech of Lord Lytton to his Council (Balfour, Lady Petey, The Indian Administration of Lord Lytton, P.513).
(15) Ibid, P.513
(16) A Passion in Making, P.58
(17) Ibid, PP.46-48
(18) Holst, Lucien, Life of the First Marquess of Ripon, Vol. 2, P.13
(19) Ibid, P.13
(20) Blunt, Wilfrid Scawen, India under Ripon, P.3
the task of your successor difficult", Dufferin wrote him shortly after
the assumption of office. "Under Ripon the system of government
remained unchanged, but a great change came over its spirit". He
reversed the Afghan policy of his predecessor and repealed the Vernacular
Press Act. He also gave a start to the institution of local self-
(22)government, allowed them a "certain freedom of action", was anxious
that "they should not be overshadowed by the constant presence of
(23)Huqra Sahibs" and prepared the officers to put up with "considerable
(24)losses of administrative efficiency", for there is no way of learning
except through making mistakes. The statute embodying his ideas was
a timid measure, but the transparent sincerity of Lord Ripon left an
abiding impression on educated Indians. Sir Henry Cotton says that
"the first evidence of national organisation manifested itself in the
extraordinary enthusiasm with which the natives of India honoured Lord
Ripon on his departure from India....the date of Lord Ripon's departure
(26)is the natal day of a new India". But it must be noted that "people
in general were not in touch with this awakening".

Other causes that helped to heighten the patriotic feeling may be
indicated briefly: India was under a foreign government and it did not
need much ingenuity to represent the rulers as pitiless destroyers of
a proud and ancient civilisation, the race-hatred and race-contempt of
Europeans as exhibited in their dealings with Indians confirmed the
worst charges of malevolence. Mill's influence on the intellectuals
of India in the sixties of the last century was profound; his ideas
that every citizen must not only have a voice in the ultimate exercise
of sovereignty, but must also personally discharge some public function,
were indifferent to this scheme. Ibid., P.105
(22),(23)Life of the First Marquess of Ripon, Vol.2, P.98. It may be
noted in passing that most members of Ripon's Executive Council
were indifferent to this scheme. Ibid, P.105
(26)Ibid., P.100
(25)India under Ripon, P.271
(26)Cotton, Sir Henry, New India, P.5
local or general, were taken up by Indian nationalists. Finally the Theosophists discovered for the orthodox that the Indian gods, Indian philosophy and Indian morality were on a higher plane than the West had ever achieved.

The Indian National Congress was founded in 1885. The movement for establishing such an organisation had originated in Bombay rather than in Bengal, but the fluent spokesmen of Bengal soon distinguished themselves on its tribune. Their training and temperament inclined them to the Western pattern of democracy and parliamentarism. Loyalty to the British connection is a remarkable feature of the early nationalist movement. (Westernised Indians had no liking for the Indian society).

(However the Nationalist movement, as it shaped itself in Bombay under B.G. Tilak, was aggressive, revivalist and brimming with religious and racial jealousies.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak was an adroit politician, who stood for Direct

Tapa, Ishwar Nath, The Growth and Development of National Thought in India, P.83

Chirol, Sir Valentine, Indian Unrest, P.29

Here is a typical speech on the subject from the Congress platform: "What is an Englishman without representative institutions? Why, not an Englishman at all, a mere sham, a base imitation, and I often wonder as I look round at our nominally English magnates, how they have the face to call themselves English and yet deny us representative institutions, and struggle to maintain despotic ones over us. Representative institutions are as much a part of the true Briton as his language and literature... We call on England to be true to her traditions, her instincts and herself and grant us our right as free born British citizens". (Quoted in Reconstruction of India, P.65)

In 1890 a speaker relied on some words of Mr. Gladstone to the effect that a man would be deemed mad who denounced the system of popular representation. (Lovet, Sir Verney, A History of the Nationalist Movement, P.43)

The Growth and Development of National Thought in India, P.113

Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920) graduated with Honours from the Bombay University, took to journalism and entered public life in the early eighties but it was during the agitation against the Partition of Bengal (1905-1912) that he came to the forefront of the political struggle. For the rest of his life he continued to exercise a decisive influence on the policies of the Indian National Congress. His learning in Sanskrit was profound and his knowledge of Indian antiquity remarkable. His researches in these fields pointed to the Arctic as the original home of the ancient Aryans.
Action, and despised parliamentary methods of opposition. He revived the militant Maratha religious and political tradition and carried it into the Congress. "It was an idea with him that Indians should never express appreciation of anything, however good, done by the Government, for that would blunt the edge of agitation". He was quick to seize any opportunity and was an adept at improvising new ones to stir up disaffection against India's past (i.e. Muslim) and present (i.e. British) rulers. With him any stick was good enough to beat the adversary with. When, for instance, the Age of Consent Bill became law (1890) he thundered out curses on the Hindu supporters of the measure, and branded them as "renegades" and "traitors" to the cause of Hinduism. (He started an anti-cow killing society and agitated against the Government ban upon "music before mosques" (a prohibition designed to dam just one source of irritation between the two communities) as "offensive to the Hindu sentiment". The annual fairs that he organised to do honour to the Hindu god of learning, Ganesha (and known as Ganpati celebrations) provided the much sought-after opportunity of maligning the "enemies" (British and Muslim) in folk songs. His violent denunciation of the unpopular anti-plague measures led to the assassination of two British officers (1897). In short, the course of Hindu revival in all fields of activity under Tilak was invariably and methodically anti-Muslim and anti-British.) "The rehabilitation of Hindu customs and beliefs has proceeded pari passu with the growth of political disaffection" and it has been consistently sought to secure "the virtual ascendancy of Hinduism under the specious
mantle of Indian self-government". The "Indian" nationalism was, therefore, indistinguishable from "Hindu nationalism. It must be added, however, that some of the moderate Hindu leaders did desire the two major communities of India to sink their racial and religious binomials in an "Indian nation". But their feeble voices were soon stilled.

(41)

Year after year, the Indian National Congress passed resolutions emphasising the urgency of introducing self-government in India. The tone of the speeches delivered from its platform was moderate, responsible and conciliatory. It demanded the expansion of the legislatures into representative institutions, the extension of the jury system, the appointment of Indians to the Privy Council, the expansion of technical education, simultaneous Indian Civil Service examinations in India and England, modification of the Arms Act, the creation of Indian Volunteer Corps and the establishment of military colleges, the removal of the salary of the Secretary of State for India from Indian to home estimates.

(42)

For the rest, the history of India in the latter half of the 19th century is a record of periodical famines and pestilence, overcentralisation of the Government of India, (though some tendencies were also initiated in the reverse direction), the increased interference of the "home" authorities in Indian affairs, attempts at formulating famine and educational policies, the two Imperial durbars (1877 and 1897), the "discovery" of the Wahabi conspiracy and occasional disturbances on the North Western Frontier."

In external affairs, the principal interest of the times lies in the "Russophobia" of Imperial Britain. For the larger part of the century, Russian advance in central Asia continued to cause grave anxiety to the various governments in England, who feared that the ultimate object of Czarist territorial ambition was the great dependency of India. The

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(40) Ibid., P. 119
(41) Ibid., P. 120
(42) The Reconstruction of India, P. 47
British suspicion continued to thrive on the persistent Russian refusal "to bind themselves by any formal convention to stop short in the midst of Central Asian plains, declaring ... that the conditions and circumstances of such a position would always be liable to unforeseen vicissitudes". It is fairly certain now that Russia had no intention of seizing India any more than Britain desired to cross into the Asiatic possessions of Russia. And the British stand on the Eastern question was appreciated by the Indian Muslims as a reminder of Britain's interest in the stability of the premier Muslim State in the world. In this context Russia was made to appear as the arch-enemy of Islam, and the Second Afghan War (1878-80), in its earlier stages, was understood by Indian Muslims to mean "an indirect onslaught on the Northern Imperialism". Mr. Blunt thought that "in the decay of Constantinople the Muslim world is looking more than ever for a champion; and (that) if England refused the office it may be offered to another Christian power".

B.

(The Muslim politics of the latter half of the 19th century may be dismissed in a few paragraphs. The Mutiny left the community in a state of sullen despair. Some of its influential divines immediately raised the question whether India was Dar-ul-Harb or Dar-ul-Islam. If it were the former, it was no longer a fit land for Muslims to live in and they had to seek salvation either by migrating to a Muslim country or else

(43)Thus Lord Ripon declared: "The fear of Russian invasion is purely chimerical, and I dismiss it at once for all practical purposes". (Life of the First Marquess of Ripon, Vol.2, P.58)

Lord Dufferin observed as follows: "I am one of those who do not believe that Russia will actually invade India during the present (i.e.XIX) century, unless indeed she should produce a hero with the genius and ambition of Napoleon or Alexander and even then, I think, she would come to grief."(The Life of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, Vol.2, P.109)

(44)Blunt,Scawen, Ideas on India, P.96
(45)India under Ripon, P.294
(46)Ideas on India, P.97
waging a holy war against the British. But as the strength and stability of the new order unfolded itself gradually, this position had to be abandoned. In the sixties and seventies of the 19th century when Mahabis were "under a cloud", the representatives of other sects dissociated themselves from the warlike denomination. Thus, a Shia divine, named Munshi Mir Ali Bahadur, stressed in pamphlet the illegality of a Shia taking up arms against the constituted authority, except under the command of the Imam who had not yet manifested himself to his devotees. The Sunni ecclesiastics started from a set of conflicting premises but arrived at a similar "no-Jihad - against-the-British" conclusion. (Sir Sayyd Ahmad Khan preached the gospel of "political quietism" and, throughout a long public career, repudiated the proposition that Islam required its adherents to wage war against the non-Muslim suzerain.)

The signs of a timorous political activity among Indian Muslims were visible (in 1877, when the Central National Muhammadan Association was founded by Sayed Ameer Ali in Calcutta. It soon established thirty-four branches, "spreading from Madras to the Punjab, and from Chittagong to Karachi". Its object was to protect and safeguard Muslim interests and help their political training. Upon its recommendations, the Government established one hundred and twenty educational scholarships for the Indian Muslim subjects of the Queen. It also pressed (with what results we are not told) for the appointment by the Government of a Muslim Endowments Committee to inquire how such endowments were being utilised to promote the welfare of the Muslim people. Beyond that the Association does not

(47) Indian Islam, P.192
(48) The Indian Musalmans, P.112
(49) Ibid, PP.115-21
(50) (1849-1928) was called to the Bar in 1873, worked as Presidency Magistrate in Calcutta (1878-81), was a member of the Bengal and Imperial Legislative Councils, served as Judge of the Calcutta High Court and finally sat in the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council from 1906 to 1928.
(51) Islamia Culture, 1931, P.541
(52) Islamic Culture, 1932, P.9
(53) Ibid, P.10
(54),(55) Ibid, P.171
(17)

seem to have amounted to anything. You could not force him to support this conclusion, he declined. In 1931, Saeed Amr Ali urge upon him "that unless as a co-religionist, their (i.e. Muslims') political training ran on parallel lines with that of their Hindu compatriots, they were certain to be subjugated in the chain's side of new nationalism". But (57) Sayyid Shadd would not admit the "correctness" of this "forecast".

The terror-stricken Muslim community seemed to Mr. Blunt in the eighties as "sitting still thinking Providence for the favours denied to them". The Muslims of Calcutta, we are told, were shy of voicing their (58) feelings on the Albert Bill. They held their tongues in a crisis like the (59) Egyptian War (1882) and pretended to sympathise with the Government. Saeed Amr Ali wrote a letter to the Times indicating that all the Indian (60) Muslims supported the action of the British Government in Egypt. In all this Muslims were "throwing away their advantages" as the only way of getting "attention paid to the wishes of the...community was to inspire a certain amount of fire". (61)

Mr. Bijan Chandra De tells us that in 1921 when Jamal-ud-Din Afghani came over to India he had "confidential conversations with the leaders of the "Ahmadian community". During his stay in Calcutta he met the small

(56) Islamic Culture, 1931, p. 541
(57) Ibid., p. 541
(58) India under Bhupen, p. 111-12
(59) Ibid., p. 88
(60) Ibid., p. 87
(61) Ibid., p. 98
(62) Jamal-ud-Din Afghani (1879-1927), the central figure in the Pan-Islamic Movement, lived at the Afghan Court, where he enjoyed the confidence of the sultan. Then in on exceptional degree, he travelled extensively in the Muslim countries and his influence in their politics was deep and far-reaching. Generally speaking, he was warmly received by one Muslim potentate after another, but was ultimately expelled from their dominions as a dangerous character. He came to India from times, but the details of his stay are not known. He also visited Britain, France, Germany and Russia. He advocated vigorous reforms for Muslim countries, and attempted to bring about a renaissance in the Muslim world by strengthening the sentiment of religious unity.
group of Muslims elite including Sayed Zainul Abidin, "and inculcated them with the virus of Pan-Islamism". The educated Indian Muslims of Bengal who had so far co-operated "loyally" with Hindus "for the common advancement of national political interests" commenced to draw themselves away from the political activities of their Hindu neighbours after his visit "until gradually a wide gulf was created between the Hindu and the Muslim intellectuals in the country" in regard to political endeavours.

The influence of Sayed Zainul Abidin need not be minimized or denied; but it could hardly be accepted as an adequate explanation for the bitterness which created a "wide gulf" between the two communities. "Dr. Pal is nearer the truth when, in a different context, he candidly blames the "nationalist propaganda" for this unfortunate development...[this] "gradually awake, at least in a section of the Nationalists, the foolish and suicidal ambition of once more re-establishing either a single Hindu state or a confederacy of Hindu states in India. Some people, thus, secretly incorporated Sarej as a Hindu Raj, and this folly is also to some extent responsible for the wantonism, in any case, of the soberer section of our Islam fellow-countrymen towards our Nationalist ideals and activities."

It is obvious that Dr. Pal expressed himself with a restraint and hesitation natural to a leader making a public criticism of his own political creed.

(63) Memories of My Life and Times, p. 417
(64) Nationality and Empire, p. 368-92
The complaints of the company "suckers," to begin with, bailed the British rule for the "patriotism" and security it gave to their war-tempered land. The second-rate British officials of the early days of the Company rule lived in India like Indians, served freely and made friends among the people, followed the "native" ways, contracted matrimonial or semi-matrimonial relations with Indian women, and settled down in the country after their retirement to adjust the Indians adjustment to the unaccustomed environment of Britain. Even before the Mutiny, the English had constituted themselves into a caste "feeling and disliked by all their neighbours."

With the easing of the Flow cost the Englishmen's visits to England become easier and more frequent. As the "home" ties were revived, those with India were correspondingly weakened. Englishmen felt no longer reluctant to seek matrimonial careers in India. Their influx into this country completed, so to speak, the personal of the Anglo-Indian society, their feminine companions tended all social intercourse with Indians.

Another contributory cause of this racial bitterness was the institution of competitive examinations: recruits to the Company services were formerly drawn from families having traditional association with India, and their sympathetic knowledge of the country and its affairs emplv qualified them for their responsibilities, but the "competition wallahs" were decidedly less considerate towards Indians. With little experience of Indian peoples and conditions, they were called upon to fill positions calling for statesmanship of a high order, and "habitually adopted an insolent demeanour of assured superiority" to cover their ignorance. Finally, with the development of the administrative system, an increased volume of work done under onerous conditions left the

(1) India under Ripon, P.60
(2) Morison, J.L., Lawrence of Lucknow, P.52
(3) India under Ripon, P.260-61
(4) Ibid, P.261
(5) Ibid, P.267
(6) New India, P.55
officials little time or inclination to enter into personal ties with the people. All along, the bitter memories of the Mutiny continued to rankle on both sides, and, in course of time, the alienation between rulers and ruled was complete.

The British were birds of passage in India. To them it was a "land of regrets", of "heat", "insects" and "malaria". They fancied that they were condemned to a life of "exile amidst a people, half savage, half decadent". Not only did they despise the dark skin, they also scorned all Indian art and literature. Thus, Governor-General Bentinck seriously considered the proposal for demolishing the Taj Mahal to tide over the financial difficulties of the Company by the sale of its marble. He was diverted from this course "because the test auction of materials from the Agra palace proved unsatisfactory". As a rule the governing classes did not bother to know much about the country or its people. Lord Dufferin, otherwise an astute and wide-awake administrator, could never wholly master the distinction between the two widely different provinces of Bihar and Berar.

The Englishmen in India even "forgot the most elementary rules of decent behaviour". Indians were not allowed into English society, restaurants and clubs. In a garden enclosing a memorial to Mutiny victims, no Indians, except gardeners, were permitted to enter. It was dangerous for Indians to visit public places frequented by Englishmen; they were often insulted and assaulted and whenever such brutalities ended fatally, the Anglo-Indian Defence Association of Calcutta strained every nerve to secure clean bills for the culprits. Sir Rampfylde Fuller has recorded that when he drove through the streets of Cawnpore along with the District Officer, the latter cracked his whip at the passers-by "who did

(7) India under Ripon, P. 268
(8) Garrett, G.T. (Editor), Legacy of India, P. 411
(9) Ibid, P. 401-02
(10) Fuller, Sir Rampfylde, Some Personal Experiences, P. 56
(11) India under Ripon, P. 263
(12) Some Personal Experiences, P. 5-6
(13) New India, P. 68
not hastily obliterate themselves. The fun and frolic at English social gatherings included caricatures of Indian life, which only served to deepen the spectators' contempt for the Indian way of living. The Anglo-Indian circles deprecated and derided the National movement as a "school boys' agitation". The more anglicized an Indian, the more detested he was by the English. The few educated Indians who came into Ripon's pages would seem to have been introduced to satisfy the deep-seated prejudices of his countrymen in India. Sir Henry Cotton tells us how on his first arrival in India, his more experienced colleagues impressed upon him the vital importance of exacting "all outward deference and respect from the Oriental". An English collector or judge thought it beneath his dignity to return the visit of an Indian acquaintance, regardless of the latter's eminence or character.

(The racial antipathies were aggravated, as never before, by the Anglo-Indian agitation against the Ilbert Bill engineered mostly by the planter community.) "The question at issue was originally raised by a note forwarded to the Bengal Government by a Bengali Hindu civilian who represented the anomalous position in which the Indian members of the Civil Service were placed under the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which limited the jurisdiction to be exercised over European British subjects outside Calcutta to judicial officers who were themselves British European subjects". (The Anglo-Indian official class was openly in sympathy with the colonists.) Attempts were made to seduce the army. The British non-official community boycotted Ripon's levees. There was a proposal to boycott the Government loan. (The Viceroy was openly insulted in the streets of Calcutta by planters brought from outside for the purpose. The Anglo-

(14) Some Personal Experiences, P.6
(15) New India, P.25
(16) Ibid, P.28
(17) Legacy of India, P.416
(18) Indian and Home Memories, P.66
(19) Raza Ali, Sayed, 'Amalnama, P.220
(20) A History of the Nationalist Movement, PP.25-26
(21) India under Ripon, PP.5-6
(22) Life of the First Marquess of Ripon, Vol.2, P.128
Indian journals characterised the Bill as an unprecedented and "revolutionary" measure designed to "put every Englishman and woman at the mercy of native intrigue and native fanaticism". In one particular district the planters resolved that they would knock out without much ado, the first Indian magistrate who "presumed" to try a European. In course of a public utterance a European member of the Calcutta High Court Bar made a "savage" attack upon Indian culture and character citing the "medieval" social institutions of caste, child-marriage, zenana seclusion and the prohibition of widow remarriage as conclusive evidence of the moral degradation of Indians and of their absolute disqualification to sit in judgment upon European criminals.

Sir Henry Cotton has reproduced in "New India" the following specimen of Anglo-Indian journalistic writing on a subject of Indian interest:

"Baboo Lal Mohan Ghosh has decided to accept the invitation of Deptford 400 to become the Liberal candidate for the representation of their new borough. It is not too much to say that this rabid, worthless mob of four hundred is more fit for the inside of a lunatic asylum than for catering for the political well-being of our native land. If a Bengali Baboo can enter Parliament, it will soon become a favourite resort for Aryans. In an insensate, idiotic thirst for novelty, where will an English mob stop? Could a chimpanzee be trained to stand for a borough, doubtless he will be found to have an excellent chance with a county constituency. And perhaps a chimpanzee would be a cleverer animal than this Ghosh Baboo, whose publicly uttered sentiments in Decca obtained for him the distinguishing title of pole-cat. Thank Heavens! Four hundred do not represent an English constituency, and the Baboo may find to his cost at the last moment that the English nationality has revived. In such a case his insolence and presumption in seeking a seat in Parliament would be fitly rewarded by an infuriated crowd of roughs."

(23), (24) India under Ripon, PP.5-6
(25) Pal, Bipin Chandra, Memories of My Life and Times, PP.410-11
(26) New India, P.186
These lines were written when the Ilbert Bill agitation had practically died out; the gentleman referred to in this passage rose to be the President of the Indian National Congress in 1903.

However, it would be unjust to suggest that the foregoing account applied to all Britishers in every walk of life. Honourable exceptions will readily occur to the student of the period. Sir Surrenderanath Bannerji has told us that his European and Anglo-Indian professors did not show a particle of racial feeling in their treatment of him. Among officials the names of Sir Henry Cotton and Hume stand out for their keen and kindly interest in the welfare of the masses and their broad sympathies with the political aspirations of the educated classes. Parliamentarians like Blunt, Bright and Bradlaugh championed the cause of India from their seats in the House of Commons. India owes much to several Governors-General who modernised India, promoted education, created local bodies and advanced the cause of representative government.

To complete this sombre account, it has to be added that the Indian abhorrence of the westerners and their ways was also deep and undying. It is recorded of a minister in an Indian State that he loathed clocks and watches, scrupulously refrained from writing on paper of European manufacture and rinsed his hands with soap and water for hours together after shaking hands with his European visitors. The installation of telegraph wires in his territory so offended a sulky prince that he shut himself up in his palace never to be seen in public again for fear of having to pass under the cursed wires. An Indian aristocrat was reported to have fastened a disc bearing the legend K.C.S.I. to the collar of a dog and drove it in the direction of the British residential quarter of the city. A Muslim Professor of Delhi College was so infuriated at the

(27) A Nation in Making, P. 4
(28) Ditto
(29) Bilgrami, Iftikhar Alam, Hayat-un-Nazir, P. 97
(30) }
sight of an English-knowing co-religionist helping himself to a tumbler of water from the earthen pitcher lying in his class room that he had the vessel smashed instantly. A Muslim student who translated a chapter of a critical work on Islam for one of his teachers was deemed to have his marriage tied dissolved for this offence. The compiler of an Oriental lexicon defined a European as "an aquatic animal who appears on the coast from time to time". The only redeeming quality which Indians credited the Englishman with was his craftsmanship and skill in casting cannon.
(India's first Occidental preceptors were Christian missionaries.) But Churchmen were treated as unwanted intruders on the Company territories throughout the 18th century. Those who landed were liable to be deported in the absence of a satisfactory explanation. But the Charter Act of 1813 reversed this policy and gave the missionaries full freedom to settle and work in India. Still, the Company did not employ "native" Christians in any grade of its service. Chaplains in the army were bidden not to speak at all to the native soldiers on the subject of religion. In some interior provinces Christians were subject to Muslim Law. Converts to Christianity were not allowed to practise as lawyers and had to part not only with their property but also with their wives and children. If a soldier of the Bengal army adopted the Christian faith, he was discharged from service straightaway. In one instance, when the Government's attention was drawn to a dilapidated church building in an outlying station, the authorities sent orders to pull it down. Quite a number of Hindu temples and other holy estates were administered by the Company who met the cost of ceremonial observances and of feeding the Brahmins. Troops were paraded in honour of Hindu deities. The district magistrate of a district pressured men for dragging the cars of a famous idol and declined to exempt Christians from this general corvee. The Government offices remained open on Sunday, but were closed on Indian holidays.

Time and again, solitary voices were raised against imparting Western education to Indians. Some said that the "effects of the education must

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(1) Lawrence of Lucknow, P.33  
(2) Modern Religious Movements in India, P.10  
(3) Lawrence of Lucknow, P.54  
(4) Lyall, Sir Alfred, Asiatic Studies, P.272  
(5) Ibid, P.263  
(6) Modern Religious Movements in India, P.10  
(7) Asiatic Studies, P.268  
(8) Modern Religious Movements in India, P.9  
(9) Asiatic Studies, P.264  
(9a) Legacy of India, P.308
be regarded as a veneer rather than as a far-reaching alteration of character and ideas. A great publicist declared in the same strain that "all efforts of Britain to modify Indian thought and behaviour were absolutely hopeless"...and that:"there is no sign that the British are accomplishing more than the Romans accomplished in Britain....It is still true that if they departed or were driven out they would leave behind them, as Romans did in Britain, splendid roads, many useless buildings, an increased weakness in the subject people, and a memory which in a century of new events would be extinct". In 1835, the Government of Lord William Bentinck decided in favour of New Education after a prolonged and spirited controversy; in 1844, Lord Hardinge ordered that English speaking "natives" alone were eligible for the public services; in 1854, the Department of Public Instruction was organised and two years later the Universities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras were founded. In the fifties the Missions pushed forward the education of girls and followed it up with "the visitation of zenanas by women missionaries and their assistants."

The Government-sponsored education came in for a good deal of judicious criticism. It was blamed for its bureaucratic administration, an overloaded curriculum, a dead uniformity which failed to recognise individual differences, a paucity of teachers, a faulty system of examination, rigid rules of promotion and superficial instruction. It was argued that Western education remained imperfect to the end as it involved many years' laborious effort in mastering a foreign tongue. "For more than forty

(10) Political India, P.35
(11) Modern Religious Movements in India, P.13
(12) But in spite of this decision Oriental learning was not suppressed. In 1839, Lord Auckland refused to starve Oriental institutions and allowed grants for Oriental publications. (Hayhew, Arthur, The Education of India, P.25)
(13) To be sure, this order remained a dead letter.
(14) The Christian medical Missions also took shape about the same time. They sent out doctors to heal and preach.
(15) Sayyid Ahmad, Report of the Committee for the Better Diffusion of Education etc. etc. P.17
(16) Ibid., P.21
or fifty years the Government has been exerting itself by every possible means to instruct and educate the people of this country...and no one (through the education so imparted) ever became a great philosopher or a renowned and distinguished author". In Calcutta Madrasa, a Government institution, Dr. Hunter tells us, the "puerile and conceited" scholars who had acquired a smattering of ecclesiastical lore knew it "as an absolute truth that the Arabic Grammer, law, rhetoric and logic comprise all that is worth knowing upon earth. They learned that the most extensive kingdoms in the world are, first Arabia, then England, France and Russia, and that the largest town next to Mecca, Medina and Cairo is London. An rest, the English are infidels, and will find themselves in a very hot place in the next world".

At the lower level, some of the state-kept schools existed only in name. Sayyid Ahmad's experience as a member of a district education committee revealed that enrolment registers maintained by schools were fictitious in most cases. When he went out to a school which appeared to be a richly going concern on paper, he discovered that it was no other than the village buffalo shed. On another occasion he found a cow tied in a village school-house.

In Central India, officials employed reprehensible, scandalous and third degree methods of enforcing school attendance. Parents omitting or refusing to send their children to schools were sent for by the Deputy Commissioner, made to travel with him long distances, sometimes detained at his bungalow for as many as ten days and only let off on executing agreements on stamped paper binding them to send their children to school regularly. A woman guardian of a school boy, on being so summoned, cut an end to her life by jumping into a well.

(17) Ibid, P.23
(18) The Indian Mussulmans, PP.203-04
(19) Graham, G.F.T., The Life and Work of Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan, P.218
(20) Ibid, P.132
(21) Report of the Committee for the Better Diffusion of Education etc. etc. P.38
The use of English as the medium of instruction, says Mr. Mayhew, “was originally intended as a purely temporary expedient”... It was the genuine intention of the authorities to employ vernaculars for the dissemination of useful Western information. The same writer adds: “But much attention was not paid to the development of Vernaculars”... For instance “The Vernacular text books in use...in schools of the Bellary district, were reported to be written in verse, which was unintelligible to teachers as well as taught”.

The year 1870 marks the departure by the State from its educational policies in two directions. First, an attempt was made to carry education to the masses. Lord Mayo, who took the initiative in this direction, wrote to a friend: “I dislike this ‘filtration’ theory. In Bengal we are educating in English a few hundred Babus at great expense to the State... In the meanwhile we have done nothing towards extending knowledge to the million. The Babus will never do it... Let us do something towards teaching the 3 R’s to rural Bengal”. Lord Lytton told the Secretary of State: “The only political representative of native opinion are the Babous when we have educated to write semi-seditious articles in the native Press and who really represent nothing but the social anomaly of their own position”. Lord Ripon expressed the view that it was through the indigenous medium alone that learning in various branches could be “easily

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(22) The Education of India, P. 38
(22a) The Education of India, P. 84
(23) This statement is not quite accurate. In the Medical and Engineering Colleges at Agra and Roorkee respectively, students were free to receive professional education in either medium, English or Urdu. In the famous Delhi College (which was closed down during the Mutiny) Western education was imparted in Urdu. About 125 books comprising independent works or translations had been compiled by 1857. (Urdu Quarterly, April ’50, pp. 35 and 46)
(23a) The Education of India, P. 84
(24) In Bengal there flourished higher education, while scanty provision was made for primary and indigenous schools. It was believed that the education would “filtrate” downwards.
(26) The Indian Administration of Lord Lytton, P. 109
advanced and cultivated". Taken together, such observations made by the rulers of India in private letters and public utterances led many to believe that the Government were out to abolish "higher (English) education in the country. Colour was lent to this suspicion when the University of the Punjab was chartered in 1882 to pursue these "new-fangled" ideals. Secondly, the number of Muslims who had taken advantage of education was decidedly very small, and now the Government interested themselves in the promotion of Muslim education in different ways, such as, recognition and encouragement of the classical and vernacular languages of Muslims in Government schools and colleges, the appointment of qualified Muslim teachers in Muslim districts, adequate grants-in-aid to enable the community to open schools of its own, a liberal provision of scholarships and the appointment of special inspecting officers "to inquire into the cause that hindered, and the means of developing", literary consciousness among Muslims. The Education Commission of 1882, recommended that this community be treated not merely with justice "but with a leaning towards generosity". This plea for special treatment did not go unchallenged. Critics averred that "the spirit of exclusiveness has been the worst foe of the Muslims" and that special encouragement to any class is in itself an evil. However, the Government of India were careful "to avoid unnecessary widening of the line between Muslims and other sections of the community".

The results of Western education were partly good and partly bad. It created the modern educated class in India. V. C. F. Andrews has preserved for us Munshi Zaka Ullah's recollection of the intellectual life of Delhi College: After each lecture notes were studied, over and over again and copied out by many hands. "It was like entering into a wholly undiscovered

(27) Hayat-i-Jawad, Part II, P.111
(28) Ibid, P.110
(29) Croft, Sir Alfred, Review of Education in India, P.311
(30) Ibid, P.313
(31) Ibid, P.317
(32) Ibid, P.317
hemisphere of human mind. The young students were also taught by enthusiastic teachers. They were allowed to try astonishing experiments with unknown chemical gases. They were invited to dip into the mysteries of Magnetism which was then just coming to the front as a freshly discovered science. There was much yet to come but these things formed actually for them a new world".

The New Education also gave a common cultural background to the educated classes and made for an outward unity between the different racial elements living on the sub-continent. "The language of Milton and Shakespeare became the common language of India" and thus was the confusion of tongues transcended. It is significant that the Indian counter-agitation over the Ubert Bill could only be disseminated by means of the English language in the different parts of the country. But in spite of all this and "in the absence of any positive unifying aspirations" ... the acquisition of Western ideas and ideals in itself "did not annihilate politically or materially" India's unyielding racial distinctions.

This education engendered in the youth an attitude of irreverence towards their religion. It undermined the basis of Indian society but was "unequal to laying down the foundation stone of reconstruction". Dr. Hunter averred that "no young man ... passes through our schools without learning to disbelieve the faith of his forefathers. The luxuriant religions of Asia shrivel into dry sticks when brought into contact with the icy realities of Western science". The morals of the educated youth were the subject of unedifying comment everywhere. There was a widespread feeling that "a system of education in which moral training was neglected would be unworthy of the name of education" and

PP-42-43
the minds of scholars. The Education Commission of 1882 stated the problem and recommended the preparation of a moral text-book based upon the "fundamental principles of natural religion" to be taught in Government and non-Government colleges. But the proposal was shelved as impracticable. The Government did not approve of the idea of drawing up a code of morality and issuing it officially for the instruction of students.

Finally, the Indian political movement was very largely the outcome of Western influences imbibed through education. The writings of Paine and the Philosophical radicals and the speeches of Burke were read by the University students "as suggesting that all the political and social evils from which India was visibly suffering might be amended by the introduction of representative institutions". Occasionally, the education authorities sought to keep away the youth from this "literature of revolt". Calcutta University, for instance, interdicted the writings of Burke "probably" for the reason that Burke teaches revolutionary doctrines. A Bombay Governor "prohibited the use of Macaulay's essays on Clive and Hastings as text-books in Bombay schools lest they prove subversive of loyalty".

If by "most effective education", we mean "that which represents the efforts of a community to impose its cultural life and its ideas and aspirations on the rising generation", it is not difficult to see where and why the Indian education failed. A foreign Government ignored the soil and the social background of the different communities and "declared the importation of foreign culture". "It was also forgotten that a fruitful assimilation of Western ideas involved a Western attitude of mind, a close connexion between ideas and facts".

(36) The Review of Education in India, PP.331-32
(37) Political India, P.32
(38) A Nation in Making, P.142
(39) Life of the First Marquess of Ripon, Vol.2, P.104
(40) The Education of India, P.31
(41) Ibid, P.59
Sayyid Ahmad was born in Delhi on October 17, 1817. His grandfather, Sayyid Hadi was a dignitary at the Mughal Court and served under Emperors Alamgir II and Shah Alam. His father, Mir Muttaqi, an other-worldly recluse, practically renounced his hereditary rank at the court. But with the accession of Akbar Shah II, he gained in influence, as he had been intimately known to the new monarch from his childhood. (Sayyid Ahmad often accompanied his father to the palace, and was received in audience by the King. Though the family was connected with the "fort," as the palace was called, they did not lack contact with the British; General Ochtorley was a family friend and a frequent visitor of Sayyid Ahmad's maternal grandfather, Khwaja Farid-ud-Din.)

Khwaja Farid-ud-Din, an accomplished man of letters and an astronomer and mathematician of repute, worked for sometime in the famous Muslim College of Calcutta, was deputed on diplomatic missions to Tehran and Burma by the British authorities, served as Chief Minister to Akbar Shah II for short intervals on two different occasions, exposed himself to the odium of court circles for effecting unpopular retrenchments to save pecuniary embarrassment to the indigent royalty and (a few years before his death) declined the offer of a high ministerial office under Ranjit Singh.

The city of Delhi had been administered by the British ever since 1804. The society of the capital was decadent but its life was colourful. A number of festivals were enthusiastically celebrated. Aquatic sports were popular. The aristocracy patronised musical concerts. Poetical symposiums were held at the court and elsewhere. Fine arts flourished. Renowned scholars taught pupils at home. The city was dotted with theological seminaries. Religious fervour was much in evidence. But the "Empire" had foundered and with it was sinking the Muslim community. Mir Muttaqi's death landed the family in financial straits. Much against the inclination of the senior members of the family, Sayyid Ahmad

took service with the East India Company and served successively at Agra (1832-41), Vainabari (1841-42), Fatehpur Sikri (1842-46), Delhi (1846-54) and Bijnor (1854-58). During his nine years' stay at Delhi, he found time to edit a newspaper, indite a number of pamphlets on theology, write (2) his monumental Agar-ud-din and prepare a collated edition of Ain-i- Akbari amidst the busy round of his official duties. At Bijnor he edited a history of the district which was lost in the Mutiny. Right up to the Mutiny Sayyid Ahmad's interests were mainly cultural. He looked backward and not forward. He "showed no appreciation of the present or anxiety about the future" and held out little promise of his later work. (3)

The upheaval of 1857 swept away the last relics of Muslim rule in India. The various actions of the Mutiny were fought with unprecedented brutality: no quarter was given or asked for. At the end the victors treated the vanquished on a sub-human level. "The British troops were seeing the Muhammadans in pig-skins, smearing them with pork-fat, and (4) burning their bodies, and forcing Hindus to defile themselves". Governor-General Canning protested against the violent temper of his countrymen and told the Queen in his usually measured language: "There is a rabid and indiscriminate vindictiveness abroad even among those who ought to set a better example... No one man in ten seems to think that the hanging and shooting of 40,000 or 50,000 men can be otherwise than practicable and right". (The Mutiny guilt was fixed upon Muslims and they had to pay a

(2) This remarkable book was first published in 1847. Subsequent editions appeared in 1854, 1900 and 1904. It is a laborious survey of the historical monuments of Delhi and contains several tables of the Kings of Delhi (Queen Victoria being 202nd in line), and transcriptions of historical inscriptions and ends with a brief history of the Urdu language. It was translated into French by an Orientalist and won for its author the membership of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

(3) The details of Sayyid Ahmad's life contained the first four paragraphs of this section are almost entirely based upon Sayyad-i-Jawad, Part I, pp.16-67.

(4) Garret and Thompson, The Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India, p.439.

(4a) Cunningham, H.S., Earl Canning, p.119.
heavy penalty for their "complacency in the plot". They were subjected to indiscriminate seizures, confiscations and executions.

Sayyid Ahmad was posted at Bijnor when the Mutiny broke out. The prison house in the city was broken open. The mutineers pillaged the stocks of grain and sugar selling the two commodities at the same rate. At grave personal risk, Sayyid Ahmad saved the lives of the British officials in distress, and had them safely escorted to Roorkee after an argument with a rebel chief. Earlier at his instance, the contents of the Government treasury, amounting to Rs.1,50,000/-, were thrown into a well to prevent their appropriation by the insurgents. Sayyid Ahmad kept a detailed and day-to-day diary of the course of the Mutiny in the district of Bijnor when he was almost in hourly peril of life. He was firmly convinced from the very outset that the British had come to stay, and when a mutinous leader allowed him to continue in his official position, he agreed to do so only as a functionary of the Company Government.

Sayyid Ahmad enthusiastically welcomed the return of peace. The assumption of the Company dominions by the Crown directly linked the destinies of India with those of Britain. Sayyid Ahmad considered this to be the luckiest event in the history of the two countries. The British had, he thought, an aptitude for government which the previous administrations, Hindu or Muslim, utterly lacked: "After a long period of unmitigated slavery, it was ordained from on High, that the destinies of India should be placed in the hands of an enlightened nation. The Hindu and Muslim governments of the past were stark autocracies. They stood neither for

(5) Sayyid Ahmad, Bijnor Rebellion, P.11-12
(7) Ibid, P.11
(8) This diary was published later under the title of "Bijnor rebellion". The books opens with Sayyid Ahmad's remarks on the responsibility of a historian which will be read with interest: "The contents of this book mostly deal with what I saw with my own eyes and did with my own hands. I have taken great pains to ascertain the truth of events and incidents beyond my personal experience. Partial history-writing is a distinctly dishonest undertaking. (It damages the truth and) its evil influence works for ever. Thus the sinful responsibility of historian is eternal". (9) Bijnor Rebellion, P.33
(10) This feeling was shared by most educated Indians. The transfer of power was looked upon as a step towards greater freedom of action and life. (The Growth and Development of National Thought in India, P.78).
the Hindu dharma nor for Muslim Shariat. They looked upon might as right. The British alone with their love of probity, justice and toleration are fitted to rule over the vast and varied masses of India... We cannot expect anything better from Russia, Prussia or any other power". But he was not altogether unmindful of the faults of the British. In a different context he declared that "their methods of carrying out their good intentions are open to criticism? 

However, Sayyid Ahmad did not represent an attitude of passive acquiescence in the new order. Events had brought the country within the ambit of European civilisation. "Her people could work out their salvation and evolve a satisfactory culture in contact with the most advanced of the European peoples." To this end it was vital to have an informed appreciation of the European way of life and the Western mode of thought.

In 1859, Sayyid Ahmad decided to accompany his son, Sayyid Mahmud, to England, In route he was struck by the engines, cabins and baths of the steamship, by the manners of his English fellow travellers, the cleanliness and impeccability of the cooking arrangements, the antics of the flying fish in the sea, the skilful diving of the savage-like seals on the coast of the Red Sea, the invulnerability of Aden, the invincibility of the British who could not be out-witted by any other power, the European mastery of the art of navigation, the picturesque sight of the lonely light houses standing on the sea, the smart Turkish functionaries on the Egyptian soil, the pluck and determination and the patience and patriotism of M.de Lesseps in designing the Suez Canal, the docks of Marseilles, the brilliant illumination of its streets, the beauty and splendour of its shops, the courtesy of the French customs officials, the glittering city of Paris in the reign of Napoleon III and the art treasures of Versailles. He reached London in the first week of May.

Summing up his observations and impressions of the English life,

(11)Majmu'a Lectures, p.236
(12)The Life and Work of Sayyid Ahmad Khan, 1828 edition, p.84
(13)The Life and Work of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, PP.76-124
Sayyid Ahmad told the Secretary of the Scientific Society in a letter, dated October 15, 1869.

"It is nearly six months since I arrived in London, and have been unable to see many things I should have liked, been able to see a good deal, and have been in the society of lords and dukes at dinners and evening parties. Artisans and common working-men I have seen in numbers. I have visited famous and spacious mansions, museums, engineering works, ship-building establishments, gun foundries, ocean-telegraph companies which connect continents, vessels of war (in one of which I walked for miles...), have been present at the meetings of several societies and have dined at clubs and private houses".

"The politeness, knowledge, good faith, cleanliness, skilled workmanship and thoroughness" of the English made a lasting impression on him. He attributed these qualities to "education and civilisation", and came to the conclusion that "all good things, spiritual and worldly, which should be found in a man have been bestowed by the Almighty on Europe, and especially on England".

Overwhelmed by the superiority of the English, he pointedly declared in the same letter: "Without flattering the English, I can truly say that the natives of India, high and low, merchants and petty shop-keepers, educated and illiterate, when contrasted with the English, in education, manners, uprightness, are as like them as a dirty animal is to an able and handsome man. What I have seen and seen daily, is utterly beyond the imagination of a native of India. If any of my countrymen do not believe what I say, you may certainly put them down as frogs and fishes".

"Greater praise", observes Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, "no man could give to the British and to Europe, and it is obvious that he was tremendously impressed.

(14) Ibid, pp. 175-27
(15) An Autobiography, p. 461
and the journal of the Scientific Society had to discontinue the narrative of his travel, hitherto regularly featured in it.

While in England, Sayyid Ahmad paid a visit to the University of Cambridge and studied its working at first hand. He was struck not only with the quality and variety of formal instruction imparted to scholars, but also with the valuable training given them in the art of civilised living. His sojourn in England was a remarkable piece of self-education. It broadened his outlook and gave him fresh ideas and new hopes. He came back with a firm resolve to uproot the social evils prevalent among Muslims, to disseminate “European literature and sciences” among them, to safeguard Muslim youth against irreligion, to promote good feeling between rulers and ruled and to break down the social barriers that separated the two.

Nature had endowed Sayyid Ahmad with a robust physique. His capacity for work and single-mindedness were unusual and the range of his activities and interests astonishing. He was an “organiser, statesman, preacher and practitioner”. He abundantly possessed eloquence, initiative, vigour and loftiness which mark out the leader from the flock. He wielded an uncommon fascination over those who came in contact with him.

Sayyid Ahmad had markedly puritan leanings. Nonconformist propensities he inherited from his mother. No less striking was the revolutionary facet of his character. He had attained to discretion in an atmosphere steeped in tradition; his own education had been conducted on traditional lines, and yet he could denounce the prevalent Muslim system of education in the following terms:

“The old Mohammedan books and the tone of their writings do not teach the followers of Islam independence of thought, perspicuity and simplicity.

(16) Hayat-i-Jawaed, Part I, P.141
(17) Ibid, P.159
(18) Among other things, he attempted to compile an encyclopaedia in Urdu and popularise Homeopathic system of medicine.
(19) Hayat-i-Jawaed, Part I, P.29
nor do they enable them to arrive at the truth of matters in general; on the contrary, they deceive and teach men to veil their meaning, to embellish their speech with fine words, to describe things wrongly and in irrelevant terms, to flatter with false praise, to live in a state of bondage, to puff themselves up with pride, haughtiness and self-conceit, to speak with exaggeration, to leave the history of the past uncertain, and to relate facts like tales and stories. All these things are quite unsuited to the present age and to the spirit of the time, and thus instead of doing any good they do much harm to the Mohammedans. 

And again

"With the exception of the sciences of theology and jurisprudence... all other sciences that existed among the Mohammedans were utterly useless and of no practical importance. Some of them were founded on wrong, and others on imperfect, principles.

"The greater portion of the Greek philosophy, of which Mohammedan scholars were proud, and similarly many other sciences reputed to be 267 in number were of no real use to the human race".

It is remarkable that being himself uneducated in English, Sayyid Ahmad "became one of the torch-bearers of English education in India". Mr. Jiwaharlal Nehru characterises his decision to concentrate on this education as a "revolutionary" resolve.

And yet a sector of his mind was curiously inaccessible to certain "new" ideas. Thus, he opposed the development of female education on 'modern' lines, and was quite satisfied with the adequacy of the old-fashioned education given them at home. He approved of Tardah (i.e., seclusion of women) as essential under conditions prevailing in the country. He desired matrimonial unions to be contracted with due regard

(20) Ibid., P. Report of the Members of the Committee for the Better Diffusion etc., P. 50.
(21) Ibid., P. 42
(22) Ibid., P. 43
(23) An Autobiography, P. 462
(24) Najm's Lectures, P. 155
(25) Sayed Ross Nasr (Editor), Khutut-i-Sayyid, P. 209
for consanguinity, and he strongly protested against Muslim youth taking European wives during their studies abroad.}

We are told that Sayyid Ahmad was despotic by temperament. The charge is admitted by his biographer, Aitf Hussain Wali. In managing the College, as we shall see later, he brooked no opposition to his ideas and kept dissenters away from its counsels. And yet this despot could enact a self-denying ordinance by vesting the control of religious instruction at the College in a committee whose membership was, in the first instance, offered to his most unrelenting opponents.

And finally, no student of Sayyid Ahmad's career can fail to be impressed by his legal temper. For long years he had served in the judicial branch of the administration and his mind had been very largely trained by his vocation. That is why, in the field of politics he came to have unbounded respect for the constituted authority. That is why, again, this legal-cum-factual temper is so much in evidence in his religious argument. That is why, lastly, his observations were always marked by an objective, analytical and incisive quality.

(27) Zuberi, Mohammad Imin, Tazkira Taqat, p. 115
(28) Hayat-i-Jawed, Part I, p. 321
(29) Ibid, Part III, p. 323
Chapter II.
The rulers and the ruled.

In this Chapter we shall review Sayyid Ahmad's endeavours to bring about a better understanding between the British rulers and their Indian subjects. The first contribution to this end, in order of chronology as well as importance, was an Urdu pamphlet entitled 'The causes of the Indian Revolt', written in 1858, and translated into English many years later by two of his English friends: it was a factual analysis of the causes of the revolt. With an informed sociological background, it drew up a courageous indictment of the Company rule; represented the revolt not as a planned affair, but merely as an outcome of the frustrations and accumulated wrongs of decades; and viewed it as a tragedy of misunderstandings. By its indiscriminate, though at times well-intended acts, the Government had forfeited the trust of the people; its actions were always suspect. People accused it of bad faith and assumed that all new-fangled regulations were calculated to humiliate and degrade them.

The most powerful source of dissatisfaction with the Company rule was the proselytising activity of the Christian missions. It was widely believed that the Government would gradually, but none the less surely, convert the whole people to Christianity, that it was surreptitiously developing its plans and that in due course it would take advantage of their ignorance and poverty, and Christianise them easily. Strong colour was lent to this

(1) Sayyid Ahmad, Risala Asbab-i-Baghwat-i-Mind, P.17
(2) "A rebel proclamation asserted that it was matter of common knowledge that four things were dearer to every man beyond everything else, his religion and caste, his home and life and those of his kinsmen and his property. The British were opposed to all four". (Asoka Mehta, 1887, PP.31-52).
(3) Very few Indians understood that the missions were private affairs. "At the banquet given by the Directors of the East India Company to Lord Canning on his appointment as Governor-General, Lord Palmerston had used language, which alarmists in India might not unreasonably interpret as suggestive that the conversion of the people was among the hopes, if not immediate project, of the Government". (Earl Canning, P.64). "Reports among the upper Muhammadan classes that the Government contemplated their forcible conversion to Christianity became so prevalent, that in 1853 the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal issued a conciliatory proclamation on the subject". (Wood, Sir Evelyn, The Revolt in Hindustan, P.6).
accusation when in the famine of 1837 a large number of orphans were made over to the missionaries to be brought up as Christians. In 1856, a cleric named Edmund, issued a letter from the Governor-General's house in Calcutta to the Company's Indian servants of all grades, urging them to ponder over the truths of Christianity, and consummate the process of indigunity initiated by the modern means of transport and communication, by the deeper and more spiritual bonds of the Christian faith. This was interpreted as a "general invitation to apostasy" and confirmed the suspicion that the Christian missionaries were appointed by Government and their activities financed out of the public exchequer. High officials contributed liberally to missionary funds and enthusiastically entered into religious argument with their Indian subordinates; they compelled the servants to come to their houses and listen to missionary preachings. Now, in India religious preaching has always been conducted in private, but Christian evangelists adopted a new technique; they came out in public, distributed tracts full of insinuations against other religions, and disgusted their listeners by their offensive and irritating language. The missionary schools (made eligible for Government grants-in-aid in 1854) grew fast in numbers, importance and influence. Their curricula included instruction in the doctrines of Christianity. The Government officers inspected these schools frequently and encouraged the study of scriptures by awarding prizes to scholars, who answered their questions "agreeably to the Christian faith". In village schools, where attendance was secured by compulsion, Urdu alone was taught; Persian and Arabic were completely excluded. Parents thought that the Government intended their sons to

(5) Risala Asbab-1-Baghawat-1-Hind, p.28
(6) Ibid, pp.31-32
(7) Ibid, p.39
(8) Ibid, p.39. "Certain officers, indeed, preached the gospel to their men with the enthusiasm of Cromwell's Ironsides and incurred the displeasure of the Government for their proselytising zeal". (Cambridge History of India, Vol.VI, p.173). "Another (officer) had inscribed the Lord's prayer on pillars on the main road entering the capital of his district". (Earl Canning, p.64)
(9) Risala Asbab-1-Baghawat-1-Hind, pp.29-30
(10) Ibid, p.30
The vigorous efforts to promote female education were interpreted as an ill-concealed attack on the time-honoured institution of Purdah. Altogether no one felt certain of being allowed for long to adhere to his ancestral faith.

Common cooking arrangements for prisoners of all denominations were held to militate against caste rules of hoary antiquity. The Act of 1850 made it criminal to withhold due share of inheritance from a member of the family renouncing his religion; no one could fail to perceive that the measure was designed to benefit the converts to Christianity. The law of 1856, permitting widows to remarry (and thus conferring an independent status upon women), appeared as a blatant assault upon Hinduism, which had never countenanced the practice.

The severity of the Sales law, the capacity of the money-lending classes and the unusually heavy rates of revenue assessments landed many families of repute in financial straits and undermined their allegiance to the British rule. The use of stamps on legal documents was detested and understood to mean sale or denial of justice. The administration and procedures in non-regulating provinces gave arbitrary powers to the presiding officers of law-courts.

The confiscation of rent-free grants had already told heavily upon the peasantry, indigenous industry was throttled by the competition of cheap machine-made goods imported from Britain; currency policies of the Company brought disaster on the finances of the country. Prosperity

(11) Ibid, P.31
(12) Ibid, P.31
(13) Ibid, P.32.Previously every prisoner received a monetary allowance and cooked for himself. (Revolt in Hindustan, P.5).
(14) Originally enacted in 1832 for Bengal, it was extended to the whole of British dominion in India in 1850. It "evoked loud complaints from Hindus, not unnaturally as under Hindu law inheritance of property was attended by religious ceremonial obligations". (Cambridge History of India, Vol. VI, P.125)
(15) Risala Asbab-i-Baghawat-i-Hind, P.35
(16) Ibid, PP.37-38
(17) Ibid, PP.40-41
(18) Ibid, P.41
(19) "Bentinck's resumption of rent-free tenures had regained for the state much revenue that had been fraudulently withheld, but it was also redu-
vanished. People groaned under penury. When Mutiny broke out, hordes of malcontents took service with the rebel armies on the ridiculous wage of six pice or a seer and a half of grain per day. Every success of the British arms grieved the populace who, sighed for the overthrow of British rule as the only way out of a sub-human existence.

The covenanted officers of the Company loved to be surrounded by sycophants, and were notorious for their sensitiveness to criticism and intolerance of independent opinion. They displayed no interest in the fortunes of their subjects and were indifferent to their weal and woe. The misery and privations of the masses were utterly unknown to them. The extension of the Company's territories and the consequent disbandment of princely armies and the dissolution of the courts gave rise to widespread unemployment, but strangely enough, the Government "had kept itself isolated from the people as if it had been the fire and they dry grass; were the two brought into contact, the latter would be burnt up".

Such in outline was Sayyid Ahmad's analysis of the causes of the Indian Revolt. The "Asab" is a closely reasoned document of considerable historical value. Its outspokenness is equalled only by its moderation.

(21) Risala Asbab-i-Baghwat-i-Hind, P.44
(22) Ibid, P.45. Many years before the Mutiny, Metcalf had observed: "All India is at time looking out for our downfall. The people everywhere would rejoice at our destruction. And numbers are not wanting who would promote it by all means in their power". (Lawrence of Lucknow, P. 55).
(23) Risala Asbab-i-Baghwat-i-Hind, PP.42-43.
(24) Ibid, P.48
Sayyid Ahmad held that the solution of the difficulties described above lay in bringing the rulers and the ruled closer together by the admission of Indian members to the Legislative Council, to ensure that the laws approved by this body represented a response to the needs of the country, and not merely to academic theories of foreign extraction. At the same time he candidly confessed: "I do not wish to enter into the question as to how the ignorant and uneducated people of Hindustan could be allowed to share in the deliberations of the Legislative Council, or as to how they should be selected to form an assembly like the British Parliament. These are knotty points".

If Sayyid Ahmad's first and foremost object was to acquaint the British with the Indian mind, his next anxiety was to bring within the ken of his countrymen the manifestations of the European spirit in the fields of literature, science and technology. This would dispel the chronic misapprehensions between the two peoples and the "maddening recollections" would be gradually forgotten. It was with this end in view that the Scientific Society was founded in 1863 at Ghazipur (where Sayyid Ahmad was posted at the time). It was a social as well as educational venture intended to provide a platform where Indians and Britishers could meet to talk over subjects of common interest. Its main purpose was to translate standard English works (on different subjects) into Urdu and utilise them as media of popular education. In his opening address, Sayyid Ahmad explained that the Society would disseminate knowledge of history, ancient and modern, to enable people to profit from the past of the human race. The science of agriculture and political economy he listed next in importance to history. "The knowledge of political economy should dispel such absurd notions that...rupees as fast as they are collected are shipped off to England".

(25) Ibid, P.27
(26) Hayat-i-Jawed, Part I, P.120
(27) Ibid, P.210
(28) Life and work of Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan, pp.52-53
(29) Ibid, P.54
The Scientific Society was almost the first learned association in Northern India. In order to win popular support for it and publicise the beneficial nature of its aims and objects, Sayyid Ahmad undertook a journey to Calcutta and made several public appeals on its behalf. The response was encouraging.

On Sayyid Ahmad's transfer to Aligarh, the assets of the Society were also transferred along with him. Aligarh became the permanent home of the Society and the centre of its manifold literary activities. Its membership mounted up and included many sympathetic Europeans. The number of its Hindu members, however, was insignificant. The Society was housed in a fine building, employed a corps of translators, owned a press and ran a newspaper, the weekly Aligarh Institute Gazette (1866-1898) which set an example of sober and responsible journalism new to Indian Press in the earlier stages of its development. The motto of this journal was epitomised in the following words: "Liberty of the Press is a prominent duty of the Government and is a natural right of the subjects! The very first article printed in it discussed the British Parliament.

In the beginning it was full of news from England and all other parts of the world.

Meeting once a month, the Society arranged discourses on law, natural sciences and historical topics of popular interest. There necessary scientific experiments were performed before the audience. The publications of the Society included treatises in Urdu on Chemistry, Physics, Light, Heat and other scientific subjects, as well as elementary and advanced works on Mathematics.

For some years Sayyid Ahmad's enthusiasm for the transmutation of Western sciences into Indian vernaculars continued unabated. He even forwarded a detailed scheme for a Vernacular University of Northern India to the Government for consideration. In a letter from London (1869) he

(30) Political thought of Sayyid Ahmad Khan, an article in the Indian Journal of Political Science (1944), p. 312
(31) This account of the Scientific Society is based on Hayat-i-Jawed, Part I, pp. 123-126, and Life and work of Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan, pp. 49-54
(32) Hayat-i-Jawed, Part I, pp. 133-137
said:

"The cause of England's civilisation is that all the arts and sciences are in the language of the country...Those who are really bent on improving and bettering India must remember that the only way of compassing this is by having the whole of the arts and sciences translated into their own language."

But on mature reflection he lost faith in the utility of translations as a means of acquiring higher learning, and began to insist upon the indispensability of English. In the early eighties, the University of the Punjab was chartered upon a "somewhat different foundation from that on which the other and old Universities of India were based" inasmuch as its object (so its princiely 40...ers under government influence desired) was the "improvement of Oriental learning and the extension of sound vernacular literature, by transmuting into the language of the country the knowledge, literature and sciences of the West". Sayyid Ahmad viewed the whole scheme with distrust. He denounced it in the following terms:

"The only knowledge that can equip us for the struggle of life today is the knowledge of European literature and sciences...Vainly do the people of the Punjab expect to master them through the medium of translations. I was the first person in the country to think of it twenty years ago. Not only did I plan but I also carried my plans into practice. I called into existence the Scientific Society, which still endures. We embarked upon an ambitious programme of translations. But experience has taught us the futility of this device. I am not opposed to people learning through translations...I only take exception to basing higher education exclusively on works of translation...(in the first place) there is the insuperable difficulty of coining a sound terminology and, secondly, the frontiers of knowledge are being constantly pushed forward."

(33) Life and work of Sayed Ahmad Khan, P. 132
(34) Bruce, J.P., A History of the University of the Punjab, P. 76
...composition it was an association of landlords and aristocrats and a proposal to lower its subscription did not succeed. Established in 1864, it aimed at keeping the British Parliament in touch with Indian affairs. India was not a live subject in parliamentary circles in those days; whenever she was discussed in the Commons, the House invariably wore a deserted look and the "generally inaudible speech" of the Secretary of State was addressed to empty benches. The East India accounts were laid before Parliament annually. But members seldom evinced any keenness about the affairs of this vast dependency. "Nothing short of a great famine or a great surfeit, or a great earthquake or a terrible pestilence, a victory or a defeat will attract attention" to India. The country was held to be beyond the pale of party politics. A distinguished Secretary of State declared from his place in Parliament that every member of Parliament was a member for India. Indians interpreted it to mean that "What is everybody's business is obviously nobody's business. Both parties have been scrupulously impartial in their attitude of indifference towards India."

Sayyid Ahmad was of opinion that a fearless, frank and day-to-day ventilation of Indian grievances before the higher tribunal of Parliament would ensure their speedy redress and thus materially contribute to the contentment of the people and the stability of the British rule in India.

(35) Majnu's Lectures, Pp. 197-98
(36) This body is to be distinguished from the Indian Association of Calcutta (inaugurated 1876) with its branches spread out in different parts of the country. It was formed to represent the views of "educated middle classes". (A Nation in Making, P. 40)
(37) 1844 Indian Journal of Political Science, P. 21
(38) New In
(39) A Nati
(40) Majnu
He believed with Mill that "the rights and interests of every or of any person are only secure from being disregarded when the person interested is himself able and habitually disposed to stand up for them" was as applicable to India as to any other community or country. However, these excellent intentions did not materialise and the Association "withered away" without accomplishing anything useful primarily because "the creation of public opinion by direct appeals to people did not form part of its recognised programme".

The dissertation on the Mutiny, the establishment of the Scientific Society, and the foundation of the British Indian Association were all animated by Sayyid Ahmad's cherished object of bringing about harmonious relations between the rulers and the ruled. Sayyid Ahmad also adopted the European style of living to be able to welcome Englishmen to his home as friends and comrades. His visit to England was prompted by a desire to achieve a closer understanding of the English character and achievements. He felt gratified when his English biographer claimed to have known him like a blood-relations, and once jocularly expressed a desire to take an English wife so that he might mix more freely in English society!

How far did Sayyid Ahmad succeed in promoting good feeling between Indians and Britons? It was quite clear then, as now, that his valiant efforts met with no more than the limited success. The relations between the "native" and his master had irremediably deteriorated after the Mutiny.

The rulers and the ruled were separated by impenetrable psychological barriers. The vast majority of Englishmen resident in India, irrespective

(41)Ibid, P.239
(42)Life and work of Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan, P.265. But his living was not expensive. He dined at the table and used knife and fork whenever necessary but he ate Indian food and wore Indian dress at home. (The Urdu Quarterly for April, 1950, P.30)..."he (Sayyid Ahmad) had an outside guest chamber for much of his friends as shrank from changing their customs, and to excite the curiosity of his guests, he brightened its walls with coloured illuminations of eclipses and of phases of the moon". (Fuller, Sir Bampfylde, Studies of Indian Life and Sentiment, P.133)
(43)Life and Work of Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan, P.268
(44)Ibid, P.266
of their vocations, behaved like an army of occupation in a subjugated territory. They carried aloofness to extremes. Governor-General Canning earned the contemptuous appellation of "Clemency" and a "humanity pretender" for his feeble, though well-meaning, efforts to restrain the conquerors' appetite for revenge and to assuage the lacerated feelings of the vanquished. On their own part, Indians were reconciled to the British rule as if to a decree of Fate. The ruling castes, prompted by motives of self-interest, threw their entire influence against the occupancy by Indians of responsible positions under the Crown. The home authorities contributed to the same end in their own way: the entry of Indians into the Indian Civil Service was virtually banned under the new regulations for recruitment framed by the Secretary of State in 1876.

(45) Rise and Fulfilment of British rule in India, P.464. India's administrators fully knew that the British soldier was real mainstay of the British rule in India. Thus Sir Henry Lawrence said: "The true basis of British power in India is often lost sight of, namely, a well paid, well-disciplined army, relying from experience, on the good faith, wisdom and energy of its leaders". (Itnes, J.J. McLeod, Sir Henry Lawrence, P.150) Similarly Lord Mayo observed: "I admit to the full that a complete and efficient military organisation is the base and foundation of our power here (i.e. in India)". (Lord Mayo, P.170)

The Anglo-Indian petition to the Queen in 1857 (see foot note 46) urged a "policy of such vigorous repression and punishment as shall convince the native races of India -- who can be influenced effectively by power and fear alone -- of the hopelessness of insurrection against British rule". (Earl Canning, P.153)

A cry of vengeance on the rebellious city (i.e. Delhi) had shamed itself into a loud demand for its utter destruction, as a warning to all traitors who dared to plot against our rule. Lord Canning actually ordered the levelling of the city walls and bastions to the ground. (Trotter, L.J., Lord Lawrence, P.77).

(46) Lord Canning wrote to a friend in the Mutiny: "I will not govern in anger -- I will never allow an angry and indiscriminating act or word to proceed from the Government of India so long as I am responsible for it...I do not care two straws for the abuse of the papers, British and Indian...We are not going, either in anger or indolence, to punish wholesale." (Earl Canning, P.125)

Towards the end of 1857, the European community of Calcutta petitioned the Queen to draw her attention to "various calamities of which India had of late been the theatre", attributing these to the "blindness, weakness and incapacity of the Government". The principal remedy, the petitioners went on to say, lay in the recall of the Governor-General. (Ibid, P.145).

(47) The Rise and Fulfilment of the British Rule in India, PP.464-65
The lower age-limit for candidates was fixed at nineteen instead of twenty one. The object of this amendment was too transparent to be mistaken. It created a "painful impression" in India. Under the social conditions prevailing at the time, it was practically impossible for an Indian youth to proceed to England and compete successfully for a place in the Civil Service before his nineteenth birthday. Thus the rule placed high executive positions in administration beyond the reach of Indians. A vigorous campaign was launched to secure the removal of this disability and to press for the holding of simultaneous examinations in England and India. But India Office were adamant and refused to revise their decision. Sir John Strachey had the candour to admit plainly that the policy of excluding the "natives of India" from lucrative and responsible performances was calculated: "Let there be no hypocrisy about our intention to keep in the hands of our own people those executive posts...on which... our actual hold of the country depends". However, in 1893 a private member of the House of Commons moved a resolution in favour of 'simultaneous examinations'. It was carried. India Office promptly repudiated it; the Secretary of State held it to be a snap vote not binding on the Government.

The noisy agitation sponsored by the European planter community against the Albert Bill added fuel to the fire and further embittered educated Indians against the British rule. This moderate measure, which involved no new principle and aimed merely at correcting a comparatively minor procedural anomaly in law by conferring upon Indian magistrates of a certain standing the power of trying of European criminals (an authority

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(48) Surrendranath Bannerjea who led this agitation and toured the country in 1877-78 and again in 1884 tells us that true aim and purpose of the Civil Service agitation was awakening of a spirit of unity and solidarity among the people of India". (A Nation in Making, P.44). It should be noted that about the year 1883, Lord Ripon expressed himself in favour of simultaneous examinations in India and England. This, however, aroused the strongest protests from his Council (Life of the First Marquess of Ripon, Vol. 2, P.117).

(49) Singh, Gurmukh Nihal, Landmarks in Indian Constitutional and National Development, P.135

(50) A Nation in Making, PP.132-33
enjoyed by their opposite numbers in Ceylon) was greeted with a chorus of rancorous denunciation. If allowed to pass without opposition it "would have proved innocuous and completely ineffective in any direction." Lord Ripon was slighted and vilified. But his dignified attitude in the face of his countrymen's unreasonable clamour enhanced his personal popularity and created the Ripon legend in India. The agitation contributed powerfully to the growth of nationalist sentiment and anti-British feeling (the two invariably went together) in this sub-continent.

(At individual and personal level also Sayyid Ahmad experienced (in common with countless Indians) the disdainful insolence of some of the power-intoxicated bureaucrats. One or two incidents will bear narration. The Agra exhibition of 1867 was followed by the Lieutenant-Governor's durbar. The District Magistrate of Agra ordered Indians and Europeans to be segregated at this ceremonial. The inconspicuous seats set apart for Indian visitors were only disregarded their status. A respectable Indian invitee to the durbar unwittingly occupied a vacant seat meant for a British official. He was instantly admonished to make room for its 'proper' occupant and find a place for himself among his own people.

Sayyid Ahmad felt greatly humiliated and incensed at this vulgar display of colour prejudice, and had a sharp exchange with some British officials present there. One Mr. Thornhill flew into a rage and shouted at him: "You did your worst against us in the Kutiny. How do you now expect to be seated on terms of equality with our womenfolk"? Sayyid Ahmad left the place in protest; this annoyed his superiors who called upon him to account for his unruly conduct.

In his evidence before the Education Commission of 1880, Sayyid Ahmad mentioned the following incident: When the M.A.O. College was about to be established, he solicited pecuniary aid for the institution from a

(51) India under Ripon, p. 271
(52) New India, p. 4
(53) Mayat-i-Jawed, Part II, pp. 52-54
highly placed British official. He refused all help in the matter "saying that the institution was a child of ours and not his, and that he would be rather inclined to spurn it than to hug it with paternal affection." 

It was in an atmosphere of bitterness and suspicion (1858) that Sayyid Ahmad started his mission of reconciliation and understanding outlined in this chapter. Nearly twenty years later he reminded Englishmen: "For a whole century and more, you gentlemen, have lived in the same country; you have breathed the same air; you have drunk the same water; you have lived upon the same crops as have given nourishment to the millions of your fellow Indian subjects; yet the absence of social intercourse, which is implied by the word 'friendship' between the English and the people of this country has been most deplorable." 

(Towards the end of his life, he went so far as to despair of equality of treatment between the conquerors and the conquered, even in the distant future. These apprehensions were much increased by the compulsory retirement in 1893 of his son, Sayed Muslim, from the judgeship of the High Court of Allahabad.)

("In my opinion the time has not yet come, and perhaps will never come, when our European friends, conquerors of this country, and naturally full of pride of their conquest, will condescend to sit on the same bench with a conquered and naturally hated Indian, who is desirous of performing his duties with equal honour and respect to his high position. If the Indian wants to keep up his self-respect as an honest and well-bred gentleman, his life becomes unbearable. On the contrary, if he yields to his European colleagues, who, on account of his being a member of the conquering race, regards himself an altogether superior person, or if he acts on certain directions he can be happy. But if an Indian desires to

(54) Life and Work of Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan, P.220
(55) Ibid, P.188
to obey the dictates of his conscience, and even if there is a little blood of his ancestors in his veins, then he cannot perform his duties. It is no secret that the treatment which English people accord to their own countrymen and that which they accord to Indians are as different from one another as black is from white. People might brag and contend that it was otherwise, but the wise alone know the whole truth of the matter."

Expression of extreme racial arrogance were by no means uncommon from the most exalted ruling personages in the land. Lord Curzon, for instance, declared in his usual pompous style in 1904 that Indians were unequal "by their environment, heritage and upbringing" to the responsibilities of high office under British rule.

Writing in 1885, the thoughtful biographer of Sayyid Ahmad commented on the provoking ways of his countrymen and observed: "the sooner we alter this behaviour of ours the better for the stability of the British rule in India". But not very many Britons were capable of learning or unlearning anything in this sphere.

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(56) *Eminent Musalmans*, P. 36
(57) *Sitaramayya, B.Pat'abhai, History of the Congress*, P. 168
Chapter III.

Political Theory and Practice.

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It was in 1858 that Sayyid Ahmad wrote his temperate and reasoned account of the causes of the Mutiny. This marks the starting-point of his public and political career. But he would not allow himself to be called a politician. On various occasions he disclaimed all concern with politics and statecraft and declared the educational betterment of his community to be his sole preoccupation. Such disclaimers only indicate his anxiety to avoid all diversions and suspicion; they do not, however, reveal the informing spirit of his sustained labours. A careful study of his post-Mutiny career would, nevertheless, suggest that most of his objectives had been determined by political necessities as he himself understood them.

Sayyid Ahmad has been characterised as the prophet of an extreme political reactionaryism among the Muslims of India. (Simplified generalisations of this nature arise out of an attempt to read his ideas in a vacuum; divorced from the proper perspective, they do him much less than justice.

His principles and policies were shaped by his environment, and were meant to suit a particular set of circumstances. A better acquaintance with that phase of history can help a proper evaluation of his ideas and aims.) A prominent Muslim left-winger in politics declared from the presidential chair of the Indian National Congress in 1923 that the attitude of Sayyid Ahmad Khan was "eminently wise" and that "no well-wisher of Musalmans, nor"

(1) Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru subscribes to this view: "So to this education he (i.e., Sayyid Ahmad) turned all his energy, trying to win over his community to his way of thinking, he wanted no diversions or distraction, it was a difficult piece of work to overcome the inertia and the hesitation of the Muslims. The beginning of a new nationalism, sponsored by the Hindu bourgeoisie, seemed to him to offer such a distraction, and he opposed it". (in Autobiography, PP. 461-62)

(2) Sir Henry Cotton, for instance, charged him with an acute sense of "political opportunism" for his promptness to "seize the practical advantage which would accrue to the interests of a minority which dissociated itself from any political demonstrations distasteful to the authorities". (New India, P. 231)
of India as a whole could have followed a very different course in leading the Musalmans', and that "it is my firm belief that his advocacy succeeded because of the soundness of the policy advocated" (Sayyid Ahmad's message), observes Mr. J.I. Bhru, "was appropriate and necessary when it came... It is possible that had he lived a generation he would himself have given another orientation to that message or other leaders could have reinterpreted his old message and applied it to changing conditions." (Empiricism, then, is the first quality of Sayyid Ahmad's thought, which lacks the coherence of a system.)

(In a letter to an English friend, Sayyid Ahmad has thus described his political creed):

"I am a Muslim domiciled in India. Racially I am a Semite; the Arab blood still courses in my veins. The religion of Islam in which I have full and abiding faith preaches radical principles. Thus by blood and faith I am a true radical... Islam is opposed to all forms of monarchy, whether hereditary or limited. It approves of the rule of a popularly elected president; it denounces the concentration of capital and compels the division of properties and possessions among legal heirs on the demise of their holders. (In this way) even a mine of wealth would suffer countless sub-divisions in the course of two generations. But the religion which gives me this ideology of emancipation also teaches certain other principles.) First, if God wills our subjection to another race, which grants us religious freedom, governs us justly, preserves peace, protects our life and belongings, as the British do in India, we should wish it well and owe it allegiance. Second, the principles of our religion bequeathed by our forefathers shall only be put into practice under suitable conditions)."

(3) Tazkira Jagar, PP. 161-62
(4) An Autobiography, PP. 463-64
(5) In another context he affirmed that he was a "liberal and not a conservative". Of course, such labels as "radical", "progressive", "liberal", "conservative" and "reactionary" are relative to time and place.
As noticed earlier, an almost complete estrangement between the rulers and the ruled was the most ugly feature of social life in post-Mutiny India. Sayyid Ahmad pleaded with the British to end their insular habits and pointedly drew their attention to the danger of the ruling classes segregating themselves from the rest of the population. In their own interest the rulers should keep their fingers steadily on the pulse of the people; sympathy and kindness would yield rich dividends. He cites history to show that the stability of governments is built upon the contentment of the subjects; during the reigns of the Turkish Sultans of Delhi, he goes on to say, there was little cordiality between the rulers and the ruled. But in course of time the foreigners were assimilated with the indigenous population and the cleavage was finally healed by the wisdom and generosity of Akbar. This evoked an enthusiastic response from Hindus. The goodwill between the two peoples lasted till the time of Shah Jehan. The unfortunate reversal of Akbar’s policy by Aurangzeb and his rigour and harshness towards Hindus in other ways dried the springs of mutual trust. The Muslim rule in India ultimately foundered on the rock of intolerance. Here was a lesson for the British. It was painful to have to observe that "now the English government has been in existence upwards of a century and up to the present hour has not secured the affections of the people."

The errors of the rulers lay in..."the passing of such laws and regulations and forms of procedure as were discordant with the established customs and practices of Hindustan, and the introduction of such as were in themselves objectionable, ignorance on the part of the government of the conditions of the people, of their modes of thought and of life, and of the grievances through which their hearts were becoming estranged..."
The wearer alone knows where the shoe pinches. It is essential to associate Indians with the making of laws under which they lived.)

(The advice was well received. The Indian Councils Act passed in 1861 gave a start to what has since been termed the policy of "association".

The Executive Council of the Governor-General had already been enlarged for legislative purposes under the provisions of the Charter Act of 1858. But its personnel was exclusively official. (The legislature had no independent existence till long afterwards). The Statute of 1861 increased the number of added members and, under the regulations framed to give effect to it, it was stipulated that one half of them would be non-officials.

Sayyid Ahmad was acutely aware that even such a cautious experiment as this could only be worked at a certain level of understanding and intelligence. He told an audience at Chasipur (1864): "The decision of the British Government that the natives of India should be eligible for a seat in the Viceroy's Council both rejoiced and grieved me. It grieved me because I was afraid that the education of the natives was not sufficiently advanced to enable them to discharge the duties of this important office with credit to themselves and benefit to their country".

The appointment of an Indian to the Supreme Council, nevertheless, gratified him as a "memorable incident in the history of India." (That it certainly was) its significance can only be gauged in retrospect. Today, the

This Council constituted itself into a "grand inquest" and a "petty Parliament" with standing orders as numerous as those of the House of Commons. (Keith, A. B., Editor, Speeches and Documents on Indian Policy, Vol. II, P. 10)

It was intended that "native" chiefs alone would be called upon to assist Government in law-making. (Ibid, P. 17).

As a rule, this Council did not initiate measures, most of the laws which it framed came up to the Government of India from the Provincial Governments in the shape of enactments. (Ibid, P. 90). No measure could be brought into it except by the previous sanction of the Governor-General-in-Council (Ibid, P. 91). The right of interpelation, upon matters not under discussion, did not exist. Consequently intelligent political discussion found its "main vent" in journalism, and the functions of the opposition were undertaken by the newspapers.

Not infrequently persons were nominated to the Legislative Council for "psychophancy and unmeritorious services" and used to be "magnificent non-entities". "Their constituency was the Government House." It is significant that the same members who voted for the Vernacular Press Act also voted for...
student of constitutional development has to trace the evolution of responsible government in this sub-continent to this modest, almost timid beginning.) Sayyid Ahmad's insistence on education for good government has considerably gained in urgency since his day. The extension of enlightenment has not kept pace with the extension of suffrage and the appalling ignorance of the vast masses constituting the sovereign electorate still continues to be the most fatal weakness of democracy in this part of the world.

(In 1878, Lord Lytton nominated Sayyid Ahmad as a member of his Council. Lord Ripon renewed the appointment. Thus he sat in the Council for a little over four years "not to pursue personal policies but to voice the views and needs of" his countrymen. He was not a silent spectator of its proceedings. As a legislator he took his duties seriously and spoke practically on every bill that was laid before this body. He was the first Indian to introduce a private bill into the legislature which eventually found place on the statute book; his Bill on Compulsory Vaccination belonged to this category. His speeches on the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Bill and the Abert Bill display a firm understanding of social questions underlyinh the legal issues. He also interest ed himself in the waning fortunes of the once-prosperous Muslim families and sought to arrest their growing impoverishment by legislation. But his draft bill could not come up for consideration before the Council on technical grounds.)

(It should also be noted that the device of "association" on a lower administrative level was of questionable utility. Sayyid Ahmad attributed this to a want of courage and candour on the part of his countrymen in their dealings with the British officials and to their innate disposition to suffer silently and without protest. Proposing the foundation of the British Indian Association of Aligarh, he observed:

(12) Life and Work of Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan, pp. 203-10
(13) Najmu'a Lectures, pp. 281-88
(14) Sayat-i-Jaweed, Part I, pp. 238-41
"The natives have at present little or no voice in the management of the affairs of this country; and should any measure of government prove obnoxious to them, they brood over it, appearing outwardly satisfied and happy, whilst discontent is rankling in their hearts -- you are in the habit of inveighing against various acts of government in your homes and amongst your... friends, (but) in the course of your visits to European gentlemen, represent yourselves as quite satisfied with the justice and wisdom of the same acts." Sayyid Ahmad did not consider such a temper dignified or helpful.)

Another instance illustrative of this servile attitude was provided by the record of the district education committees established under the orders of Lieutenant-Governor Drummond in the North Western Provinces to provide opportunities of consultation with Indians in matters connected with education. The bearing of the Indian committees stultified the very purpose of those deliberations. "It is much to be regretted... that the native members of the said committees, when they sit with European and educational authorities in the same room, look more like thieves who have entered a gentleman's house for theft... They are on the other hand, looked upon by European members as men of the opposite party, to defeat whom is deemed by the educational authorities as well as by other European members, as their right established by the law of nature... They (i.e. Indian members) are as useless as the wax figures in Madame Tussaud's exhibition". It was for this reason that Sayyid Ahmad suggested radical changes in their composition and working to the Education Commission of 18 (17) 1882.

(Addressing the citizens of Amritsar (1884) he deplored the same failing: "I am not conversant with the conditions prevailing at Amritsar or the contribution of the municipal councillors to..."
presiding officers in committee rooms. Then they come out they are heard to say: 'Our proposal was thoroughly sound. But the collector's mind was already made up. We had to give in". Sayyid Ahmad strongly deprecated this attitude. He wanted his countrymen to be open and forthright in their demeanour, to stand up to any wrong from whatever quarter it emanate and never to conceal the truth for fear of offending a petty Caesar. For himself, Sayyid Ahmad lived up to this. He never called on the boorish British officials, who required their Indian visitors to put off their shoes before they could be received, and would not let down a personal friend and a benefactor of the Scientific Society merely on the unfounded suspicions of a divisional commissioner.

In this context it is anomalous to find that Sayyid Ahmad frowned upon political agitation and tabooed all organised opposition to the policies of the established government. He identified party with faction and agitation with sedition. His advice on this subject runs as follows: "Be loyal in your hearts, place every reliance on your rulers, speak out openly, honestly and respectfully all your grievances, hopes and fears, and you may be quite sure that such a course of conduct will place you in the enjoyment of all your rights; and this is compatible, nay synonymous, with true loyalty to the state". (And again: "you should conduct yourselves in a straightforward and calm manner; not come together to make noise and hubbub like a flock of crows".)

This abhorrence of organised political activity was typified in his attitude towards the Indian National Congress. This body owed its inception to the exertions of a retired civilian, Mr. Hume, and the encouragement of Governor-General Dufferin. The Governor-General, who did not wish to be publicly associated with the idea till he was relieved of his exalted office (lest it should embarrass him in the execution of his

(18) Majmu'a Lectures, P.156
(19) For these and other instances see Hayat-i-Jawaid, Part II, PP.481-83
(20) Life and Work of Sayed Ahmad Khan, P.62
(21) Sayed Ahmad Khan on Mohammadans and the National Congress, P.13
duties) desired this organisation to develop into a responsible opposition
Mr. Hume, even proposed that a provincial governor be allowed to preside
over its deliberations. But Lord Dufferin did not approve of the sugges-
tion, as, he thought, it would involve many difficulties. At the Second
Annual session of the Congress, the Governor of Madras entertained the
delegates to an evening party. Thus the relations between the Congress
and the Government were quite cordial in the earlier phase of its career.
It was almost a government-sponsored body, a "blood-less" organisation
judged in the light of later developments and not a coterie of agitators,
(22) History of the Indian National Congress, pp.23-24; Allan Octavian Hume
C.B., P.60. As a political organisation the Congress was viewed
differently by the various rulers of India. Thus Lord Dufferin
called it a "microscopic minority" but wrote to Lord Cross that "though
this (i.e. the educated) class is at present small and unimportant,
it is both wise and right to count with it, and we must remember that
it is above all things a growing power". (Life, Vol. 12, p.149). In 1887,
the Governor of Madras helped the Congress reception committee with
supplies from the Government House (Indian Politics since the Mutiny,
P.19) Lord Lansdowne held it to be a "legitimate political organisation". Sir Auckland Colvin would not allow the Congress the use of a
piece of land (1889) where it was proposed to set up the venue of its
annual session (Ibid, pp.18-19). Lord Curzon informed his Secretary
of State "that the Congress is tottering to its fall, and one of my
great ambitions while in India is to assist it to a peaceful demise".
Hume predicted in the Eighties that "within three years all opposition
to the Congress would collapse". (A.O.Hume C.B., p.72). In 1914, the
Governor of Madras (Lord Pentland) himself attended the Congress. In
1916, the Governor of United Provinces addressed this body. (Indian
Politics since the Mutiny, pp.19-20)
The old aristocracy held aloof from the Congress. Only 72 delegates
attended the first Congress; "all of them had been got together with
some difficulty" (Reconstruction of India, p.60). Only two of them were
Muslims. The Congress confined itself to the discussion of purely
political subjects. It was feared that if social questions were taken
up on its platform "it might lead to serious differences, ultimately
culminating in a schism". (A History of the Nationalist Movement, p.44)
(22a) A.O. Hume (1829-1912) a man of great ability and private means, was the
son of a well-known English Liberal. Being a member of the Bengal
Civil Service (1843-1882) he did good work in the Mutiny for which he
was decorated C.B. Later on he worked as a Secretary to the Government
of India "where he paid little attention to his duties" and was alto-
gether absorbed in the pursuit of Ornithology. He collected a museum
and a library and was known as the "Pope of Ornithology". Lord Lytton
offered him the Lieutenant-Governorship of the Punjab which he declined
After his retirement from the Civil Service he continued to live
in India and "conceived the idea of an All-India organisation which
should work for the social regeneration of India as a means for
political advancement". Consequently he addressed an open letter to the
graduates of Calcutta University in which he stressed the need of
union and organisation, asserting that the Government was out of touch
"though its proceedings were marked by some crudity and inexperience". (Sayyid Ahmad himself need not have doubted its constitutional attitude. But, primarily, it was the technique of concerted action ("making noise... like a flock of crows") that repelled him. He had also other reasons to reinforce this attitude. The lasciviousness of the Victorian India had been disturbed and a good deal of heat engendered by Surrindranath Banerjee’s propaganda tour to arouse public opinion for the relaxation of Civil Service rules in favour of Indian candidates, the foundation of the Bengal League, the publication and widespread circulation of the anonymous and 'seditious' pamphlet entitled the "Star of the East", the embittered controversy over the Ilbert Bill, the rise of Hindu Nationalism and the growing influence of the vernacular press preaching the patriotic obligation of defying an alien government. These were the portents of the gathering storm. What if all these sources of discontent rallied together under the aegis of this nascent organisation?)

(23)Wajmu'ad Lectures, p.256
(24)PP. 9-10 above.
(25)Hayat-i-Jameed, Part I, p.268
(26)Ibid, pp.268-269
cartridges, he told Badr-ud-Din Tyabji, who had promised to get the Congress objectives modified to accommodate the Muslim viewpoint, had originated with Hindus, but the blame for planning and instigating the Mutiny had been laid upon Muslims alone. If things went away a second time, they would be totally annihilated as a community. The Mutiny had done incalculable harm to the country. "It had thrown us back a century". He was firmly persuaded that the Government was strong enough to suppress any agitation and that it would be utterly futile to launch a fresh struggle. He characterised the Congress demands as "unrealisable and impossible". The critic will read in his tirade against the Congress a contempt for all liberal ideas and institutions. These ideas, however, will be more closely examined in a subsequent chapter.

(In short, Sayyid Ahmad inculcated an attitude of "political quietism" in Muslims; it was this: Put implicit trust in the government. "Eschew all agitation. Refrain from meddling with the intricacies of statecraft." If the government fight Afghanistan or Burma, it is no business of ours to criticise this policy. Our interests will not suffer from these matters being left in the hands of government." This part of Sayyid Ahmad's preaching continued to dominate the Muslim mind till long after his death. To them agitational politics was a forbidden fruit. (Even those who loathed Sayyid Ahmad's theological "aberrations", heartily acknowledged his political creed.)"The very success that came to Sir Sayyid Ahmed and the

Badr-ud-Din Tyabji (1844-1908), Born in a family of merchant princes, he was educated in Bombay and London. Called to the Bar in 1867, he set up a practice at the Bombay High Court, being the first Indian barrister in the place. To a keen forensic ability he added an eloquence of a high order. After 1880, he threw himself into educational and social work, among the Muslims of Bombay. For some time, he sat in the Bombay Legislative Council, was one of the founders of the Indian National Congress and presided over its third annual session held in Madras in 1887: in his presidential address he declared that he found nothing in the aims and methods of the Indian National Congress which could justify Muslim aloofness from it.

Later he was made a judge of the Bombay High Court.

Hayat-i-Jawed, Part I, P.281
Ibid, P.271
Sayyid Ahmad Khan on Mohammedians and the Indian National Congress, P.10
Ibid, P.2
Waqar-i-Hayat, PP.559-60
reverence that clung to his memory made it difficult for others to depart from... (this) faith... the Muslims of India were strangely lacking in men of outstanding ability who could point a new way. Prominent Hindu leaders used every means to secure Muslim participation in the Congress, sometimes even paying the fares of Muslim delegates and offering them other facilities, but the results were not very encouraging.

Sayyid Ahmad was of opinion that the monarchical form of government was best suited to India. While love of pageantry "is deeply ingrained in the masses," the system of Company administration was impersonal. The courts held by the different Governors-General were not gorgeous enough; they failed to capture the Indian imagination. However, the durbars of Auckland and Ellenborough were right royal in conception and much appreciated all over the country. But the Home Government, for reasons best known to them, had banned such orgies of display. The transference of the Government to the Crown had restored the "magnetic centre of the state" and India would have the opportunity of seeing more of royalty and at closer quarters.

Sayyid Ahmad did not fail, however dimly, to foresee a vast extension of the representative system in the country under the British aegis. Speaking on the occasion of the foundation of the Ghasipur school, he said:

"The day is not far distant, I trust, and when it does come you will remember my words when that (i.e. Supreme Legislative) Council will be composed of representatives from every division or district, and that thus the laws which it will pass will be laws enacted by the feeling of the entire country". This, however, is an isolated utterance and cannot be cited to prove his faith in the future of democracy. The reasons will appear as we proceed.

Sayyid Ahmad was the scion of a distinguished baronial family and an aristocrat to the core of his being. He bitterly bemoaned the liquidation

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(33) An Autobiography, P.464
(33a) A Nation in Making, P.108
(33b) Risala Aabab-i-Baghawat-i-Nind, PP.52-53
(34) Majmu'a Lectures, P.20
of the Muslim aristocracy after the Mutiny, and did his best to reclaim them from degradation. Social equality was anathema to him. The association of the well-born Muslim children with the vulgar and the base-born was repugnant to his sense of social propriety. His innate patrician temperament made him distrustful of the conventional concept of democracy in which theoretically every individual counts for one unit of influence and which, in the absence of effective correctives, might easily convert itself into a despotism of the numerical majority. "Ours is a vast country inhabited by diverse folks deeply divided by racial and religious antagonisms. They lack homogeneity. Different sections of the population stand at varying levels of cultural development. So long as religion and caste are the chief props of the Indian social system electoral machinery based upon the Western pattern would lead neither to equality nor to fraternity. It would enable the more advanced sections of the population to hold their less fortunate countrymen in thrall. Cultural differences, caste dissensions and religious wranglings would be more pronounced than ever. Inequalities would sink deeper into the structure of society".

(These observations were made by Sayid Ahmad in the course of a debate on the Central Provinces Local Board and Municipalities Bill in the Supreme Legislative Council during the Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon in 1883.

"The Governor-General was a radical. He intended all seats on the local (35) Thus the following passage occurs in the record of the discussions of the Committee for the Dissemination etc. etc. "Sayid Ahmad was of opinion that the phrase "nobility and meanness should not be held to consist in riches and poverty"; though very pleasant to the ear, was quite inconsistent with our manners and customs and he saw no reason why nobility and meanness should not be held to depend on riches and poverty". P.26

(36) He proposed to the Committee that the children of well-to-do families should be educated in a particular manner and under special care. (P.58)

(37) Hujnwa Lectures, pp.375-76. This is a summary of his argument.
boards to be filled by election". Sayyid Ahmad was the only member of the Council to oppose his views. "If I am not bragging too much, I may, I think, say that it was on account of my speech that Lord Ripon changed his opinion and made one-third of the members appointed and two-thirds elected?"

Sayyid Ahmad viewed with unmixed dismay the prospect of the Viceregal Legislative Council being constituted by election on the basis of universal franchise. Under this arrangement even cobblers would be enfranchised and every one stand a chance of being returned irrespective of his station in life. That would reverse the natural order of things and on account of the preponderant Hindu majority in the country the whole of the Council would consist of "Babu so-and-so Witter, Babu so-and-so Ghose and Babu so-and-so Chuckerburty", to the exclusion of noble blood and superior breeding. That would be a humiliating predicament for our aristocracy. Moreover, it would put the Governor-General in an unenviable position. "It is very necessary for the Viceroy's Council that the members should be of a high social position. I ask you: would our aristocracy like that a man of low caste, or insignificant ability, should be in a position of authority above them, and have power (of) making the laws that affect their lives and property? Never! Nobody would like it. A seat in the Council of the

Sir Sayed Ahmad on Mohamedans and the National Congress, P.15. Lord Ripon wrote to a friend at home: "I am inclined to think that election by caste or occupation would in many cases be more consonant with the feelings of the people than direct election, and more likely to lead to the right sort of men coming forward as candidates". (Life, Vol. 2, P.98). Even a critic like Sir Henry Cotton admits that in India "representation in the English sense of election by vote is not so much what is wanted as the selection of representative members of the community who will possess the highest possible qualification for the discharge of local duties". (New India, P.109). And again "India is and has always been an aristocratic and conservative country...the fundamental objection to the system of election arises from its incompatibility with the Indian conception of personal dignity. There is an intense dislike to the humiliation of canvassing, and the best men are reluctant to put themselves in competition with a candidate whom they consider socially inferior to themselves". (Ibid, P.176).

Sir Sayed Ahmad on Mohamedans and the National Congress, P.15. That the system of election without proper 'safeguards' worked to the detriment of Muslims was fairly evident to Sayyid Ahmad: "Now, just consider the result of election. In no towns are Hindus and Mohamedans equal. Can the Mohamedans suppress the Hindus and become the masters of our "self-government"? In Calcutta an old bearded Mohamadan of a noble family met me and said that a terrible calamity had befallen them. In his town there were eighteen elected members, not one of whom was a Mohamedan; all were Hindus. Now he wanted Government to appoint some
Viceroy is a position of great honour and prestige. None but a man of
good rank can the Viceroy take as his colleague, treat as his brother, and
to invite to those exalted entertainments at which he may have to dine
with dukes and earls".

Discretion and prerogative are foreign to English jurisprudence, and,
as a member of the subject race, Sayyid Ahmad was greatly fascinated by
the principle of 'equality before law'. Speaking on the Albert Bill, he
told the Council: "I am convinced that laws based on racial discrimination
will prevent the growth of friendship and amity between our two peoples.
Pleasant social life and political equality are born out of submission to
a uniform system of law. It is time that all subjects of the crown,
whether Hindus, Muslims, Europeans or Eurasians, should enjoy the same
political and constitutional rights, and he subject to the same disabili-
ties". Again "no community would gain in prestige unless it attained to
an equality of status with its rulers. Petty clerical jobs do us no credit.
They will not heighten our stature in the eyes of foreigners. Our people
ought to occupy the same position of trust and responsibility as are, at
present, the exclusive preserve of the ruling race. In theory there is
nothing to prevent us from scaling the highest rungs of the official
ladder. But in practice our legitimate share in the government of our
country is withheld from us. Our difficulties are many and serious. We
should not lag behind merely for fear of stumbling over obstacles". In

Mohammadan; and he hoped Government would appoint himself. This is the
state of things in all cities...Then how can we walk along a road for
which neither we nor the country is prepared". (Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan
on Mohammadans and the National Congress, Pp.13-16)

(40)Ibid, P.9
(41)Ibid, P.9. This makes a strange reading today. But Sayyid Ahmad was
by no means unique in this. "Many Congressmen of the day had spoken
in the same strain". (An Autobiography, P.463)
(42)Nayat-i-Jawaed, Foot note (P.V) to Page, 126.
(43)Majmu's Lectures, P.146. A reference to the systematic exclusion of
Indians from higher administrative positions.
another context he spoke in the same strain: "All who live under the same government are entitled to equal rights and privileges. It is the duty of Government to frame one law for all its subjects, and no distinction should be made between those who fulfill the requirements of that law".

When the unpopular Statutory Civil Service was instituted, he was highly critical of the new arrangement, characterised its incumbents as "mock civilians" and declared that it was sickening to see them so willingly branded with inferiority; "as honourable people, Indian youth should have nothing to do with it, but the law of necessity is reckless of considerations of honour".

Sayyid Ahmad's views on the nature of law were derived from the thought of the historical school of Political Science, and are to be found in a lecture entitled "Manners and Customs", that he delivered before the Scientific Society. Here are the salient points made by him:

To a very large extent, every legal system rests upon custom. Custom, in its turn, is rooted in the environment, and possesses a tenacity all its own; it may contradict the faith we profess, but religion cannot uproot it; it is an exacting master: the wise and the foolish, the high and the low, are alike slaves to it.)

(44) Tufail Ahmad, Musalmenon ko Haushan Mustaqbil, pp.278-80.
(45) In 1870, at the instance of Lord Mayo, the Duke of Argyll, the Secretary of State for India, obtained from Parliament an act permitting Indian authorities to appoint Indians to the Indian Civil Service (without the necessity of having to take the competitive test in England) subject to rules framed from time to time by the Governor-General-in-Council. The rules framed in 1873 were disallowed by the "home" Government; those framed in 1875 were practically inoperative. Lord Lytton took up the matter in 1877 and recommended that appointments to this service should be made not by competition but by nomination and that the new service "should be remunerated on rates of pay less than those of Convenanted Service, but should be equal to it in status and position". These recommendations were substantially approved by the Secretary of State. The service was confined to young men of good family and social position, possessed of fair abilities and education. Only fifty-seven appointments were made to it. Ultimately it was abolished on the recommendation of the Public Service Commission of 1887.

(46) Najmu'a Lectures, p.174
Customs evolve out of conditions and situations. And as the world is always in a state of transition, customs vary from place to place and time to time. Religion is also a species of custom. A Hindu sets fire to the funeral pyre of his parent but a Muslim decries the practice as a relic of barbarism. America has emancipated her slaves; but the prince of Zanzibar continues to enjoy his 'legitimate' revenue from slave trade. Female infanticide was sanctified by immemorial usage among Hindus, but the legislators of Fort William have made it a capital offence. A Hindu can lawfully marry any number of wives that pleases his fancy; a Muslim must restrict himself to four. The West punishes bigamy as a felony, while polyandry is known to prevail in many parts of the world.

Some customs are positively harmful; they hold up social progress and must be done away with. The violators of a custom are often derided—a derision which very few can brave. Our education and training should enable us to discriminate between good and bad customs. But this is neither practicable nor desirable.

What are the limits of political control? This is a complex and difficult question. Sayyid Ahmad dealt with it in a lucid speech on his Bill for Compulsory Vaccination. To the contention of the opponents that the measure would involve an undesirable diminution of individual freedom, he replied:
justified in collective interests. Smallpox is an infectious disease. Its mischief is not restricted to its victims. Even if a citizen has the right to die of smallpox, he has no privilege to communicate the disease to his neighbours...."

This statement of the limitations of individual freedom bears a striking resemblance to T.H. Green's dictum: "the state has to enjoin or forbid acts of which, the doing, or not doing from whatever motive is necessary to the moral end of society".

The intense legislative activity of the earlier phase of British rule in India bewildered many people. With his keen sense of historical change Sayyid Ahmad understood the process clearly.

"The multiplicity of laws depends upon the conditions of the country and of its people. New companies, new industries are springing into existence. New and unforeseen legal rights have arisen which are not provided for in Mohammadian law. Hence, when the country is changing at such a rate, it is absolutely necessary that new laws should be brought forward to deal with the new circumstances. Government does not want to increase the number of laws, but when the conditions of the country change it becomes unavoidable".

And finally, every people gets the government that it deserves. "Just as the course of water is determined by the level of the terrain, the nature of Government is determined by the character of the people."

(48) Majdul's Lectures, P.269. In the essay referred to in the previous note he says that the functions of the state are negative rather than positive; its province is limited to the protection of life, liberty and property and that an efficient government should cut down the wastage to a minimum (Intikhab-i-Mazamin-i-Sir Sayyid, P.69). Moreover, a decent administrative system is not an end in itself but only a means to important ends. (Ibid, pp.68-69).

(49) Sir Sayed Ahmad on Mahommedans and the National Congress, P.5

(50) Intikhab-i-Mazamin-i-Sir Sayyid, pp.70-71
A Note on Muslim "Political quietism".

The rise of Hindu nationalism has been sketched in an earlier chapter. It was frankly religious in outlook and temper. It deified the 'golden' past of India. It believed that the latest inventions and discoveries of Western Science were implicit in its ancient scriptures. It predicted that the Hindu nation had a destiny to fulfil and a place in the sun to make for itself. The restoration of the pristhine Hindu glory could only be effected by the suppression or elimination of foreign elements (i.e. British and Muslim) from the country's body politic. Small wonder that these articles of faith drove the already hard-hit Muslims into the protection of the Government, bred in them a sense of insularity and inferiority and made them view with greater sympathy the fortunes of the world of Islam rather than the political struggle at their door-step. Thus at the opening of the next century, it was clear to the leaders of the Sayyid Ahmad School that the Muslim way of life was doomed to extinction if the British withdrew from the country leaving it to be "democratically" governed. With them this fear was not vague or nebulous. Maulavi Mushtaq Husain spoke of it as follows:

"Muslims in India constitute about one-fifth of her population. It is clear, therefore, that with the lapse of the British rule, authority should pass on to those who are four times as numerous as we are. What is going to be our lot then? Our honour, life, religion and belongings would all be endangered. Even under the powerful arm of the British Government we have our difficulties with our neighbours. (Cursed be the hour which strikes our subservience to the people bent upon visiting the "misdeeds" of Aurangzeb upon us.) An occasion may arise when we have to line up and do or die under the British banner in defence of the constituted authority. In doing we shall not be doing a good turn to the British (1) but to ourselves."

Certain gains both long-range and short-term, accrued to the

(1) Taskira Wasar, PP.169-70
community by following Sayyid Ahmad's political strategy. But it had its injurious consequences as well. The Muslims remained wedded to a tame submissiveness even when events failed to justify a trust in "the sense of justice of the British Government and the fair-mindedness of the British people" and called for a more dynamic policy. The other-worldly detachment of Muslims from the political movement prevented the growth of political maturity. Dependence upon the Government sapped their initiative. To their economic and educational ills was added political backwardness. The Government could not always resist the demands of the vocal, organised and determined majority. The Musalmans were taken for granted, could be easily trifled with and the community was accustomed to receiving rebuffs from the authorities in a spirit of stoicism. This is clear from the dealings of Lieutenant-Governor MacDonnel of the North Western Provinces with the Secretary of the N.A.O. College, the recognised leader of Muslim India.

When Sir Anthony MacDonnel, ("that man of liberal instincts" (this is how Surrendranath Banerjea described him)) censured M. Mehti Ali for (2) his public criticism of state policies, the latter sought to allay gubernatorial suspicions about the bona fides of the Aligarh movement and its founder by bringing to his notice countless affirmations of loyalty contained in various addresses to the distinguished official visitors to Aligarh by sending him 'a book of addresses and the replies thereto', (3) his honour refused to look into its contents or even to receive it. Contrary to the established convention by which the outgoing head of the province came down to Aligarh to receive a farewell address, the terror-stricken authorities of the College travelled three hundred and fifty miles by rail to Allahabad to express their fulsome admiration —
who had not missed many opportunities of humiliating them. As if this were not enough a memorial to this malevolent satrap was actually raised in the College precincts after his departure from India. And a Muslim member of the Supreme Legislative Council tabled a resolution praying for an extended term of office for the retiring governor. Such indignities went on adding to Muslim frustration.

The 'Hindi resolution' of the government of Sir Anthony MacDonnel (1900) putting Hindi on a par with Urdu in the law courts substantially conceded the Hindu demand. The annullment of the Partition of Bengal (1911) and the Government refusal to charter a "Muslim" University at Aligarh completed the disillusionment. The Muslims had been made to hail the former as the favour of fortune: the step taken by Lord Curzon, emphatically for reasons of administrative convenience, had created the Muslim majority province of East Bengal and Assam. To secure its reversal the Hindus worked themselves up into a frenzy of violence. The Governments in Britain from 1905 to 1912 took a firm stand against this campaign and treated the matter as a 'settled fact'. The revocation of what was, to all intents and purposes, an irreversible decision was construed as a breach of faith and released revisionist trends in the time-honoured creed of loyalty. A responsible Muslim leader described it as an "artillery cavalcade remorselessly trampling upon the Muslim corpses".

In the next year (i.e. 1912) the demolition, under the orders of the Improvement Trust of Cawnpore, of bath rooms (which obstructed the progress of a road under construction) attached to a mosque infuriated the local Muslims, many of whom gathered round the debris to put the bricks (without mortar) in their position. The police opened fire on this

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(4) Ibid, P.118  
(5) Ibid, P.114  
(6) Ibid, P.114  
(7) Nakateeb, P.117
unarmed gathering and there were several casualties. Those who escaped the bullet were arrested and put on trial for defying the law. This deeply stirred Muslims all over the sub-continent. The irrepressible enthusiasm of Lieutenant-Governor Neston who visited Cawnpore, a few days later, to congratulate the police force on their praiseworthy discipline and award certificates of merit to the members of the firing party added insult to injury. The proceedings of the case were displayed prominently by the Muslim newspapers and anxiously perused by their readers. The growing tension between Muslims and the Government was somewhat eased when the matter ended (not very satisfactorily, from the Muslim point of view) by the personal intervention of Governor-General Harding. But it was becoming increasingly clear that Muslims would not now take such affronts lying down.

(8) For a fuller account of this incident see 'Amalnama, PP.308-330.
Chapter IV.

The Muslims and the State.

Section I. The Muslims in post-Mutiny India.

The great political avalanche of 1857 wiped out the last vestiges of Muslim political supremacy in India. The Muslims lay prostrate and bleeding. It had been assumed by the rulers that the Muslim was spiteful and scheming and that he alone let loose this deluge of fire and brimstone upon the unsuspecting and guileless emperor. Thus there grew up a legend of Muslim bloodthirstiness, ferocity and intolerance. Symptomatic of this bureaucratic and official temper was the query posed by Dr. Hunter: Are the Indian Muslims "in conscience bound to rebel against the Queen?" After a searching examination of the various religious, cultural, economic and historical tendencies operating in the Muslim society, he came to the conclusion that they were. Consequently the Muslims were penalised and persecuted.

Speaking of Bengal, where his vocation brought him into intimate contact with the populace, Sir William Hunter declared, "If any statesman wishes to make a sensation in the House of Commons, he has only to truly narrate the history of one of these (i.e. ruined) Muhammadan families in Bengal". The dwellers of palaces were compelled to live in stable-yards. The houses of impoverished aristocrats "swarmed with grown-up sons and daughters" none of whom had a chance of doing anything for himself or herself in life. "A hundred and seventy years ago", states the same writer, "it was impossible for a well-born Muslim to become poor; at present it is almost impossible for him to continue rich". The magnificent system of popular Muslim education had been wrecked by unabashed pillage of trusts devised to maintain it.

(1) The sub-title of 'The Indian Muslims', Dr. Hunter was a member of the Civil Service.

(2) Therefore, he recommended a more just and sympathetic treatment of this community to wean them from their disloyal ways. "Let the Government try to remove the impression now prevalent among the Muslims that it is imminent to them and desires their degradation".

(3) The Indian Muslims, P.154

(4) Ibid, P.155

(5) Ibid, PP.181-86
Positions in public service were gradually snatched away from Muslim hands. It appeared that the Government singled them out for exclusion from employment with what was to all intents and purposes, the flourish of a trumpet. When, for instance, a number of vacancies in the office of the Sunderbans Commissioner were advertised in the Government Gazette, it was bluntly stated that the appointments were to be given to Hindus alone. An official inquiry in Bengal disclosed that when the serving Muslim employees were placed on the retired list, the Government offices would be altogether cleared of Muslims. On another occasion it was noticed in the same province that in an extensive department staffed by an army of employees, not a single scribe could decipher Patois, i.e., Bengali Muslim dialect. The conditions prevailing in the metropolitan city of Calcutta were still worse. In the year 1871, there was no Government office in which a Muslim could hope for any post "above the rank of porter, messenger, filler of inkbots and a mender of pens".

A pitiable petition presented by the Crissa Muslims to the Divisional Commissioner as the sole representative of "Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen for Crissa Division" stated that their people had been "levelled down and down, with no hope of rising again"; it continued: "the penniless and parsimonious condition which we are reduced to, consequent on the failure of our former Government service, has thrown us into such everlasting despondency, (that we speak from the very core of our heart), that we would travel into the remotest corners of the earth, ascend the snowy peaks of the Himalayas, wander the forlorn regions of Siberia, could we be convinced that by so travelling we should be blessed by a government appointment of ten shillings a week". "In short", observes Dr. Hunter "the Muslims have sunk so low..."
that the higher authorities do not deign even to acknowledge their existence."

(Speaking of the countless Muslim landlords who were expropriated in the North Western Provinces, for their "perfidy" in the Mutiny, Sayyid Ahmad declared: "Scores of illustrious families were laid low. Theirs is a harrowing tale of woe. I was headless of my personal sufferings, grievous though they were. (I was shocked at the afflictions and humiliations of my people....I declined the government offer of the lately confiscated Muslim estate of Chandpur in consideration of my loyal services in the Mutiny. I was seized with despair. I lost all hope of Muslims ever rising again and recovering their lost splendour. I stood aghast at the tragedy. I found Muslim tribulations unendurable. This gnawing agony aged me prematurely. I wanted to say good-bye to the country of my birth and settle down in a foreign land. However, it was at Muradabad, where Muslim losses were beyond all reckoning, that I resolved not to desert my people, but to stand by them in their ordeal and to sink or swim with them."

In the Punjab things were somewhat better, we find Mr. Arnold, the Director of Public Instruction, viewing with concern the Muslim preponderance in the teaching profession, the universal esteem enjoyed by the Muslim preceptors, the high percentage of literacy among their coreligionists, the growing number of Hindu boys receiving instruction in schools staffed by the Muslims, the undesirability of continuing in a policy of drift and emphasising the paramount necessity of reversing these tendencies. His successor, Mr. Fuller, pleaded his inability to rectify the situation and laid down the long-term plan of attracting Hindu pupils to normal schools and fixing them up, on the completion of their training, in places where Muslim teachers were not insistentilly demanded. In the Central Provinces the Inspector-

(11)Ibid, P.172
(12)Lukummal Majmu'a, P.399. The Talukdars of Oudh and their retainers had proved to be the most inveterate enemies of the British in the Revolt. Confiscation of their lands was declared as the general penalty after the Mutiny. (Earl Canning, P.159)
(13)Kusalamon Ka Raushan Mustaqibil, PP.168-69
(14)Ibid, P.169
General of Public Instruction passed orders banning the appointment of Muslim teachers in the normal school at Raipur.

A Government survey in Madras revealed that the Muslim element in services hardly came up to five per cent. In the extreme South, this community isolated "in a population wholly Hindu", possessing no traditional industry or commercial aptitude, appeared to Mr. Husainvar to "dumbly await its extinction". When a sympathetic education officer in Trichinopoly offered to admit Muslim children to school as free students, parents viewed the proposal coldly, for they were reluctant to send their half-naked children to schools. (The total number of Muslim University graduates in the entire sub-continent in 1875 was only twenty. During the years 1860-62, there was only one Muslim to every ten Hindu students in the government schools of Bengal.)

The Muslims as a community had fallen on evil days. They were generally backward educationally and impoverished economically. They were treated as pariahs in government offices and had practically no share in industry, commerce or professions like medicine, law and journalism.

The transition had disorganised the spiritual, no less than the secular life, of these people. Sayyid Ahmad "saw" thousands of imposing mosques in ruins, and other places of devotion deserted, learned and pious families decaying. The Ulema were steeped in ignorance. With them religion was lost in fables and formalism. Stuck in intellectual stagnation, they represented a mis-shapen Islam and were extremely intolerant of inquiry and criticism in matters of religion. Few of them had a rational or philosophical basis for the faith they professed. False pride, mutual recriminations and

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(15) Report of the members of the Select Committee for the Better Diffusion and Advancement of Learning among Muhammadans of India, P.38
(15a) Maimu'a Lectures, P.49
(16) India under Ripon, P.P, 288-89
(17) Maimu'a Lectures, P.49
(18) Yaskira Sir Sayed, P.59
(19) The Indian Muslims, P.178
(19a) "The Hindus...were in possession of the ground; they naturally disliked the competition of outsiders; and combined to render the admission of a Muhammadan difficult and his service unpleasant". (Studies of Indian Life and Sentiment, P.P, 131-32).
obstinate wranglings were the by-products of their religious practices. They regarded religion as no more than a lucrative vocation. This element in the community was largely to blame for the sad pass to which things had come. By that as it may, Sayyid Ahmad's frequent and vigorous criticism of this class was not always happily conceived or temperately phrased.\(^{(20)}\)

The rulers of India candid, then, that the mutiny had been of Muslim designing; that their belief in the doctrine of Jihad inevitably disposed Muslims to sedition and disloyalty towards the non-Muslim suzerain; that the were politically irreconcilable; and would never take the good the gods had provided them, that Islam was the cult of steel embodying all that was ugly and beastly in human nature; that the record of Islam in world history was "gory and dripping" with blood; that most of the Muslim monarchs were ferocious and bloodthirsty tyrants; and that Islam was a set of unprogressive tenets professed by inherently backward communities "insusceptible to the influences of the modern world".\(^{(21)}\)

\(^{(20)}\)These ideas run through Sayyid Ahmad's utterances and theological writings. A less harsh critic of the ulema observes: "I found that in the Punjab, as elsewhere, whilst some of the Maulavis were profound in matters of verbal and grammatical detail, to an extent and in a manner scarcely sufficiently recognised by European Orientalists, all were, more or less, ignorant of some of the most prominent facts of Arabian History and Literature. It was necessary to inform the Maulavis that the History of Arabia had a chronological and well-ascertained sequence which did not allow them to consign it to the age of fable. It was something to point out that the Arabian Literature was not confined to commentaries on the Qur'an, to a few law treatises, erotic poems, or to grammar." (O. L. Leitner in preface to Sinin-i-Islam).

\(^{(21)}\)The Muslim grievances against the British rule were thus listed by Dr. Hunter: "They accuse us of having closed every honourable walk to professors of their creed. They accuse us of having introduced a system of education which leaves their community unprovided for, and which has landed it in contempt and beggary. They accuse us of having brought misery into thousands of families, by abolishing their law officers, who gave the sanction of religion to the marriage tie, and who from time immemorial have been the depositories and administrators of the Domestic Law of Islam. They accuse us of imperilling their souls, by denying them the means of performing the duties of their faith. Above all, they charge us with deliberate malversation of their religious foundations, and with misappropriation on the largest scale of their educational funds..." The Indian Musalmans, Pp. 145-46

and again

...."there is now firm conviction that we have failed in our duty to the Muhammadan subjects of the Queen...." Ibid, P.148

...."it is a people with a great tradition and without a career...." Ibid, P.150

Sir Alfred Lyall (whom Lord Ripon described as a "man of subtle intellect") commented on the above observations thus:
Sayyid Ahmad, who had become the intermediary between his community and the Government, countered this tornado of invective, diatribe and denunciation with the assertions that nobody had ever blamed the Mutiny; that, at any rate, the Muslim responsibility for its mass butcheries was negligible; that Muslims were bound by their faith to live in peace and amity with the "people of the Book"; that they had been faithful allies of the British in building up the British paramountcy in India and remained unfaltering in their allegiance during the crisis of the Mutiny; that Islam did not preach the obligation of resistance to any political order regardless of its character; that the doctrine of Jihad, as understood in the West, was a flagrant distortion of an unexceptionable doctrine; and that faith in Islam was compatible with social progress and material prosperity.

II.

We shall proceed to review, first, Sayyid Ahmad's attempts at effecting an entente cordiale between the Muslims and the state on the political level. His exposition of the causes of the Indian Revolt was intended to demonstrate that the grievances leading to dissatisfaction were genuine and well-founded.

The risings, sporadic to begin with, were spontaneous and lacked direction and planning. The essay sought, rather unobtrusively, to minimize or explain away the Muslim share in the insurrection. The Muslims did not join the revolt out of sheer nervousness; they had an understandable case against the Government. The rigours of the administrative system bore harshly upon them.

"I doubt whether these sharp-set sentences really present to us the actual feelings and utterances of the general body of Muhammadans; I am more inclined to affirm that they derive their force and weight principally from the rhetorical power and the imagination of the writer. (Asiatic Studies, P.232)

"Whatever is substantial in their (i.e., Muslims') complaints is, for the most part, either inseparable from the situation, or else the remedy lies with themselves. In so far as these grievances are part and parcel of the actual situation, we must depend on time and reason to allay them." (Ibid, P.258)

On this subject Mr. Blunt held the view that "...in some ways the Muhammadans are less hostile to the existing order of things than the others are. They suffer on some points less, and they are certainly less inclined in the abstract to revolutionary doctrines." (Ideas about India, P.7)

(22)P.56 above.
them. "The indiscretions of the authorities were repugnant to all communities but much more so to the Muslims. - The reason is obvious. They had occupied an honourable place in the life of the country for centuries past. They are a proud and sensitive people, not interested in the calculations of profit and loss. They will never consent to self-abasement, whatever the temptations held out to them. It is common experience that they will not, what others may, take lying down....This is unfortunate. But Muslims are not to blame for it. They are cast that way....That is why they rejoiced at the reports of British disasters".

Another circumstance which caused vexation to the Muslims was, continues Sayyid Ahmad, their systematic exclusion from higher administrative ranks, which they had practically monopolised in the past under successive dynasties. They desired this privilege to continue. The institution of competitive examinations made for efficiency in the government departments but substantial offices came to be filled by the "low-born", the "vulgar" and the "ill-bred", who did not inspire respect in people.

Earlier in this pamphlet, Sayyid Ahmad had stated that the Muslims did not join the Mutiny in the spirit of a crusade. Those who raised the standard of Jihad were neither divines nor ecclesiasts, but merely "depraved and filthy bacchanals". The pilferage of the treasuries and "the cold-blooded murder of hapless victims, regardless of age and sex, were acts of gross irreligion". The few villains who yelled the cry of "religion in danger" did so from ulterior motives. This was a piece of rascality and no Jihad. The alleged clerical pronouncement of (the Mutiny as) Jihad was a forgery. "A large section of Delhi schoolmen and their disciples who accused the ex-king of pernicious heresies had, for many years before the Mutiny, kept away from the mosques under regal maintenance". They could never have set their

(23) Risala Asbab-i-Baghawat-i-Hind, p.61
(24) Ibid, p.52
(25) Ibid, p.21-22
(25a) Ibid, p.22. This is inaccurate. One of the principles accused in the treason trials after the Mutiny told the court, "The Fatwa was genuine. I set it down and I still continue to be of the same opinion". (Baghi Hindustan, PP.21-22 and 363).
seal on a "treasonable document" and countenance a holy war against the British under royal auspices. "None of its alleged signatories were ever known to have engaged in the insurrection and quite a number of them extended protection to Christians in distress". The Muslims, on the whole, were on the side of law and order. War-like slogans in the mouths of a few isolated miscreants do not constitute a proof to the contrary.

(Sayyid Ahmad reverts to this subject again and again, and reiterates his belief that Jihad is only permissible in a land where Islam is threatened with extinction and the government of the day forbids the practice of the devotional imperatives enjoined by Islam. Even in that situation the Muslims must not try to shake off the burden laid upon them. Others might wield the sword on their behalf. Under the conditions obtaining in British India the injunction was inoperative. Here is a typical passage:

"Now we Muhammadans of India live in this country with every sort of religious liberty; we discharge the duties of our faith with perfect freedom; we read our Asma (i.e., calls to prayers) as loud as we wish; we can preach our faith on the public roads and thoroughfares as freely as Christian missionaries preach theirs; we fearlessly write and publish works against the Christian faith; and last, though not the least, we make converts of Christians to Islam without fear or prohibition".

Loyal Muhammadans of India. The object of an intended series of pamphlets under this title, of which only three appeared, was to give a wide publicity to the steadfast Muslim loyalty to the British in the 1857 rebellion. In an explanatory preface, Sayyid Ahmad denied that the fair name of Mussalmans had been besmirched by "unconscionable calumny". Foul deeds done by others had been laid at their door. Of all
classes of people in the country, Muslims alone were bound by their religion to stand by Christians in the hour of trial, to share their woes and succour them in adversity. The two communities were held together by indissoluble spiritual ties. Both hailed the same long line of Prophets; both venerated the same scriptures as divinely revealed. These doctrinal considerations were reinforced by concrete instances based upon "unimpeachable" evidence to prove that in the "terrible cyclone" that had swept the country, the Muslims had stood unshaken by the British. Many Musalmans had pulled English men, women and children literally out of the jaws of death with the result that in a number of instances, their own women and children were hacked to pieces by infuriated mobs. These citations were interspersed with a good deal of theology and scriptural quotations to lend weight to the special pleading. The publication of these pamphlets had to be discontinued in 1861, for want of interest on the part of those whose heroism they sought to publicise. Sayyid Ahmad claimed that Muslims had been on their best behaviour during the Mutiny. But evidently individual acts of bravery and devotion, prompted mostly by personal loyalties, cannot be said to constitute the collective attitude of the community.

(30) Sayyid Ahmad traced this teaching to the following Qur'anic verse:—"Thou shalt surely find most violent of all men in enmity against the true believers to be the Jews and the idolaters; and thou shalt surely find those among them to be the most inclinable to entertain friendship for true believers who say we are Christians. This cometh to pass because there are priests and monks among them, and because they are not elated with pride". Chapter V, Verse 85, quoted in Review on Dr. Hunter's Indian Musalmans, P.45

(31) Some extracts from these pamphlets as given in the appendix III (Page VI) to the review on Dr. Hunter's Indian Musalmans run as follows:—

...and this obedience to the laws and Government of the British..."is nothing more than the proper and bounden duty of their Mohammedan subjects, as inculcated and enforced by the precepts of our religion." In one of the commentaries on the Alkoran, it is written, that if any person is debared the privilege of worshipping God in conformity with this education and belief...he is perfectly justified in withdrawing into another country". Now, although it is well known that the Government has not hitherto opposed any obstacle to the free use and observance of the ordinances of their religious subjects, and also, that it will not do so in the time to come...yet, allowing for the sake of argument, that this neutrality were violated, still, even then the Mohammedans would not be justified in rebelling against the Government. All that they can do under such circumstances would be to expatriate themselves".
Sayyid Ahmad even put forward the astounding proposition that Muslims were closely allied with the British in the extension of the British dominion in India. Proposing the health ("drunk in tea according to the Aligarh custom") of Mr. Blunt, "the great friend of the Oriental nations" and a member of Parliament, he made the following observations (1884):

"Mr. Blunt has visited our country and acquainted himself with our community. Our unflinching devotion to the person of the Queen Empress must have impressed him deeply. We Muslims look up to the British to take a benign and sympathetic interest in our aspirations. But this expectation has not been fully met with....Our two peoples have never been at cross-purposes. No discords have ever divided us....We don’t grudge you (i.e. the British) your transcendent superiority...You have no revenge to wreak upon us....(Historically) the Crusades were the bitterest trial of strength between Islam and Christianity. But the English, as a people, had very little to do with them. We ruled this ancient land for centuries. Ours is a departed glory. We hold the memory and cherish it. But we bear the British no malice or ill-will on that account.....We accept all responsibility for the establishment of the British rule in this country. In this venture the cooperation between us (i.e. the British and the Muslims) has been as close and unfailing as between the two blades of a pair of scissors. ...It is erroneous to suggest that the Muslims resent the new order. The British came to this land not as foes but as friends. May their rule have a long span of life in India, nay, we wish it eternity, not for the good of the English themselves----I do not humour them-----but for the sake of this country". Sir Alfred Lyall, the then Governor of the province.

(32)Mr. Blunt who had denounced Gladstonian dealings in Egypt as a "scandal and stupid aggression, a war and intrigue, undertaken in the interests of Cosmopolitan finance, and in defiance of both law and principle", could hardly appreciate the sentiments expressed in this speech. At first he was "rather disappointed in Sayed Ahmad". "On the whole Aigart bores me". Five days later he recorded in his diary: "I fancy he has considerable experience of people differing from him...I like him better than I did at first, and have no doubt he is a good and sincere man".(India Under Ripon, PP. 156 and 158)

(33)Hayat-i-Jawed, Part II, PP. 49-51
characterised this as an "unusual utterance". Sayyid Ahmad's biographer, Altaf Husain Hali, avers that the "Anglo-Muslim collaboration" in this speech probably referred to such incidents of Indian History as the clandestine deal between Robert Clive and Mir Ja'afar, Shah Alam's flight from the Maratha custody to seek asylum with the British and the Nizam's entry into Wellesley's system of Subsidiary Alliances. It is true that these episodes brought vital accession of strength to the striking powers of the British arms in some of the most critical phases in Imperial History, but it may altogether be doubted if Mir Ja'afar, Shah Alam or the Nizam ever consciously cast themselves for the role of 'empire builders', which Sayyid Ahmad seems to impute to them.

Dr. Hunter's 'Indian Mussalmans'. This book published in 1871 was avowedly intended to pave the way to a better understanding of a "persistently belligerent" class of Asiatic subjects, (i.e. Indian Mussalmans), to bridge "the gap between the rulers and the ruled" and thus safeguard the British power in India against the "chronic peril" which environed it.

Attributing the bounden duty of the faithful to 'reduce the whole earth to obedience, giving to every nation the alternatives of conversion, a submission almost amounting to slavery or death' to a Quranic injunction, Dr. Hunter traced the origin of the "puritanical", "revivalist" and "militant" Wahabi-ism in Arabia and its subsequent career in India under the dynamic, though "fanatical", apostolate of Sayed Ahmad of Barello and his successors.

Easing his assertions on the evidence adduced at the successive state trials, he concluded that there was a close and causal connexion between the Wahabi activities and the perennially disturbed state of the North Western frontier, and that the entire country was dotted with an unbroken chain of "treason depots" from the East of Bengal to the "bleak mountains".

(34) Ibid., P.51
(36) Ibid, P.113
(37) Ibid, PP.56-60
(38) Ibid, PP.12-19, 61
(39) Ibid, PP.55-63
which rise beyond the Punjab”. The underground movement, he went on to say, was skilfully organised, and its leaders arrogated to themselves all functions of sovereignty over their constituents. The ties which bound the members of the secret order were of extraordinary toughness and endurance. The central office located at Patna and controlling the permanent machinery throughout the rural areas for spreading disaffection, sent out a multitude of lonely, melancholy and wandering zealots carefully indoctrinated with treason and equipped with extensive literature on the duty of waging war against the British. An uninterrupted stream of money and ardent recruits sworn to extirpate the infidel, flowed towards the frontier.

This vivid portrayal of the Wahabi transgressions against the established order evoked a sharp protest from Sayyid Ahmad, who branded the book as mischievous, unhistorical and a libel against his community; the Muslim loyalty to the Government had been questioned and, thus, their political reputation damaged; it was calculated to rouse up the bitter past at a time when old suspicions had just begun to die away. Sayyid Ahmad challenged the basic assumptions underlying Hunter's thesis. These were:

(a) That the Wahabis wielded a considerable influence over their co-religionists and typified the Muslim attitude towards the Government;
(b) That a Wahabi qua Wahabi was spiritually and intellectually bound to refuse allegiance to "heretical" rulers and, if not actually up in arms, was at least, a potential rebel and (c) That the conclusions drawn from the political behaviour of East Bengal Muslims held good for the Muslims all over the country.

(43) In a lengthy review of "Indian Musalmans", Sayyid Ahmad pointed out several inaccuracies in Hunter's statement of the Wahabi tenets, and

(40) Ibid., p. 3
(41) Ibid., pp. 68-69
(42) Ibid., pp. 66-67, 71
(43) Published in the Pioneer of Allahabad, the Aligarh Institute Gazette and also issued in book form.
(44) Review on Hunter's Indian Musalmans, pp. 8-10
critically surveyed the history of the movement from 1823 up to the
generation of Hunter's book. He admitted that Sayed Ahmad of Barelly had
proclaimed a Holy War against the Sikhs, but none of his numerous declara-
tions contained anything against the British. The official circles fully
knew of the details of Wahabi preparations. Not only did they connive at
them, but actually cast diplomatic discretion to the winds by aiding and
abetting hostile developments against a technically friendly power, i.e.
the Sikhs.) Dr. Hunter had grossly overrated the Wahabi influence over the
Frontier tribes. The mountaineers were Hanafi Muslims and their hatred
of Wahabis was both intense and bitter. Sayed Ahmad Barelvi's death was
directly due to the reluctance of the tribes to compose their differences
under the Wahabi aegis. The relentless trans-border hostility to the
British rule could not be ascribed to Wahabi fermentations. It was largely
prompted by the continued presence on the frontier of a large, disloyal
and terror-stricken population (both Hindu and Muslim), who had fled the
British territory after the Mutiny to escape the wrath of the conquerors,
sought asylum with the tribes and started life anew amidst unfamiliar
surroundings. There was nothing unusual in these migrants receiving
visitors and gifts of money from their relations in India. Finally, the
tribal enmity against the constituted authority to the east of the river
Indus is a recurring phenomenon of Indian History. The expeditions sent in
the past by the emperors Akbar, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb (all Muslims)
failed to subdue the ever-refractory highlanders.

(46) Ibid, pp.14-21
(46) "A Hindu barker of Delhi, entrusted with money for the Wahabi cause on
the frontier, embellished the same, and a suit was brought against him
before Mr. William Fraser, late Commissioner of Delhi. The suit was
decided in favour of the plaintiff, Moulvi Ishaq, and the money paid
in was forwarded to the frontier by other means. The case was after-
wards appealed to the Sudder Court at Allahabad, but the decision of
the Lower Court was upheld". (Ibid, p.15)

(47) Ibid, p.12
(48) Ibid, p.13
(49) Ibid, p.22
(50) Ibid, p.19
(88)

(Studying the two volumes, "The Indian Muslims" and "the Review" together, it would appear that Sayyid Ahmad had the better of the argument and a number of eminent Europeans were convinced of the invalidity of Dr. Hunter's deductions.)

Sayyid Ahmad set his face sternly against the extra-territorial sympathies of the Indian Muslims, which would tend to spoil their relations with the government of the day. Lord Lytton's Afghan policy, with the costly and unrighteous war in which it ended, was viewed with grave misgivings both in England and India. Years afterwards he informed his co-religionists that it was no concern of theirs to criticize such affairs. He watched with an amused detachment the course of events leading to the establishment of the British protectorate over Egypt and expressed the view that the occupation had been forced upon the Gladstone Government.

(51) Hayat-i-Jaweed, Part I, pp. 184-88. In 1882, Dr. Hunter, who by then had turned into a warm personal friend donated £1,500 to M.A.O. College funds in recognition of the impressive work done by Sayyid Ahmad for Muslim education. He expressed the wish that the money should be spent in building a boarding house, and the rent proceeds be devoted to founding a scholarship for a poor Muslim youth. (Life of Sir W.W. Hunter, p. 318)

(52) Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan on Muslims and the National Congress, p. 2

(53) Sayyid Ahmad told Col. Graham: "Our position in Egypt reminds me of the story of the man who lived by picking up floats and jetties on the Indus. One day he was sitting with some of his friends, when he saw something black floating down the river which looked like a blanket. He swam out and seized it, but found to his horror, that it was a black bear, which at once hugged him. The man struggled hard, but he could not escape, and was going down; when his friends saw his struggles, and thinking that the blanket was too heavy for him, called out to him to let it go. "All very well," cried the despairing man, "but the blanket won't let me go." England...is the man, and Egypt the bear". (Life and Work of Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan, p. 239). But..."it is beyond doubt that the Muhammadans of India wholly sympathised with Arabs during the war, that they were disgusted with the false issues raised in connection with the Sultan's proclamation of his rebellion". (Ideas about India, pp. 96-97).
Government of India's forward policy in the tribal areas lashed the Indian Muslims into indignation. He strongly disapproved of their "futile and pointless criticism". Happily for him, the relations between Britain and Turkey were quite friendly in the earlier part of his public career, and did not confront him with the problem of conflicting loyalties. But after 1878, the two began to drift apart and when he had to take sides, he did it unambiguously:

"We owe no allegiance to Sultan Abdul Hamid. He wields no authority over us. He is a Muslim potentate and we rejoice at his good luck and grieve over his misfortunes. But he is not our Caliph. His spiritual suzerainty is limited to the Muslims living within his dominions".

In 1897, Turkey was involved in a "ridiculous war" with Greece. A Turkish general named Edhem Pasha heavily defeated the Greeks. The Turkish victory thrilled the Indian Muslims. They showered felicitations on the Porte. It was widely believed that Britain sympathised with the other side. Consequently Sayyid Ahmad struck a cautious note:

"We are not aware of the British attitude towards the Greco-Turkish question. It seemed unbelievable that our Protector should be at cross-purposes with Turkey.... But even if this be true, we are bound by our faith to bear true allegiance to our rulers and should pray God for smooth and cordial relations between Britain and the Muslim states like, Iran, Afghanistan and Turkey".

He went on to characterise the congratulatory messages as "undignified and unbecoming". "It is deplorable", he wrote, "that Muslims should have done all this without the prior consent and approval of their Government...

(54)Kutut-i-Sir Sayyid, P.319. In these days Governor-General Elgin visited Aligarh and told an Assembly of the College that "there (have) not been wanting those who have alleged that there was a real and growing antagonism between British rule in India and its Mohammedan subjects" but that he had "never believed that the Mohammedans of India would fail to recognise the benefits which he derives from the Government under which he lives or the obligation of loyalty to the sovereign in whose name that administration is carried on...." He also testified to "the loyalty and gallantry" of the Muslim soldiers engaged in fighting the Muslim tribes and was glad to recognise that there was growing up in the College under peaceful circumstances the same spirit of loyal devotion which had been exhibited in the field. (Speeches by the Earl of Elgin, PP.370-71)

(55)Ibid, P.33
(56)Ibid, P.39
In political matters affecting foreign princes we must not act independently of our rulers. Law and religion alike demand our total subservience to their will". He even reproached his jubilant co-religionists for "ingratitude" and recalled that twice during the Century (i.e. in 1856 and 1878) Britain had saved the Turks from utter extinction. Why did they not vote thanks to France and England then?

III

(A system of education which challenges the foundations of a strongly established political order can never hope to endure. Consequently, we find Sayyid Ahmad working out concretely the implications of his political ideology in the field of education. The temple of learning raised by him was intended, among other things, to serve as a prop of the post-Mutiny political order in India.

From what he saw in England, Sayyid Ahmad concluded that the true function of education was not merely to impart book-learning: it was essentially a process of emotion-trimming and character-building. He planned an educational institution on the pattern of an English Public School. The foundation stone of the W.A.O. College was laid on the 8th of

(57) Ibid, pp.63-64
(58) Ibid, p.64
(58a) Although Sayyid Ahmad was no believer in the spiritual authority supposed to rest in the office of the Sultan of Turkey, he was by no means oblivious of his "fraternal" obligations to the Turkish people. This will be evident from the fact that in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 he opened a fund for the relief of Turkey and remitted the collections to Constantinople. In the same year he invited a Turkish diplomat touring India to Aligarh and showed him round the College although his programme did not include a visit to that place. He incorporated the Turkish Crest in the College crest and prescribed the Turkish dress as College uniform. In 1882 he wrote an article to congratulate the members of the College who had faced a high Turkish functionary in his absence from Aligarh. (Zikar-i-Shibli, pp.45-46).

More recently Sir Theodore Morison, in the course of an article, reported him as saying in the nineties of the last century:

"When there were many Muslim kingdoms we did not feel much grief when one of them was destroyed; now that so few are left, we feel the loss of even a small one. If Turkey is conquered that will be a great grief, for she is the last of the great powers left to Islam. We are afraid that we shall become like the Jews, a "recolе without a country of our own". (Political India, pp.95-96)."
January in 1877 by Governor-General Lytton. Sayyid Ahmad desired its alumni to imbibe the qualities of the English Public School, hold fast to their communal traditions and educate their community out of social and political reaction. The aims of this institution were stated by its founders in a well-worded address presented to Lord Lytton on the occasion. These were "to reconcile Oriental learning with Western literature and science, to inspire in the dreamy mind of the people of the East the practical energy which belongs to those of the West". It went on to extol the British rule in India as the most "wonderful phenomenon" of all history, since its main business was to promote the well-being of a vast subject race by "establishing peace, by introducing the comforts of life which modern civilization had bestowed upon mankind"...That it would... "make these facts clear to the minds of our countrymen; to educate them so that they may be able to appreciate these blessings; to dispel those illusory traditions of the past which have hindered our progress" and also "to make the Muslims of India worthy and useful subjects of the British Crown; to inspire in them that loyalty which springs, not from servile submission to foreign rule, but from genuine appreciation of the blessings of good government". Thus it would be education for a proper political attitude, a social morality and "to make Islam in India instinct with the modern spirit".

In a number of years the College grew into a cluster of magnificent buildings. Extensive play grounds and spacious lawns were laid out. From

(58b) It had been decided to locate the College at Aligarh on account of its agreeable climate which was neither hot nor cold, neither damp nor dry. (Bilgrami, Iftikhar Ahmed, Mohammadan College History, P. 26).
A record of the inaugural proceedings was sent to the Queen by the Governor-General. (The Indian Administration of Lord Lytton, P. 130).

(59) Life and Work of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, P. 178
(60) Ibid, P. 178
(61) Ibid, P. 179
(62) Ibid, P. 179
its residential system, there flowed a continuous stream of rich, buoyant and vigorous corporate life. The College encouraged a healthy love of sport. It also instilled its pupils to the habits of punctuality, discipline and obedience. In their different ways the debating society, the duty shop and the riding school provided valuable training to the youth. Sayyid Ahmad was convinced that British educationists alone were fitted, by training and temperament, to run the institution agreeably to his ideals. The rules of the College framed by himself, made it obligatory for the management to engage at least four "European" professors on the teaching staff, in addition to a European head master for the school. Some quarters voiced audible criticism of the fat salaries allowed to these "outsiders". But, on the whole, the money seems to have been well-spent. These employees identified themselves with the institution and entered into its life with zest. The students formed valuable contacts with them on the playing field, in the common room, debating societies and other social functions. Sayyid Ahmad alluded to this aspect of the matter when he spoke at the institution of a "Fellows' Table in the College:"

"No doubt I want a Principal for the K.A.O. College; but not a man who comes here for salary. I require a man who comes here for the sake of education; not a man who would teach some barbarian boys as a tutor of monkeys, but as a man who would teach our boys the lessons of good morals and social progress; not one who would only teach them modern science and literature, but one who would help the nation which was once the most famous in the world, but has now lost their position". It may be added

(63) Hayat-i-Jawadd, Part II, pp. 86-103
(64) Ibid, P. 102. To all intents and purposes 'European' meant a Britisher.
(65) He told the Mohammedan Educational Conference in 1889 that "Critics maintain that the employment of foreigners means unbearable expense; they point out that educated Bengalis could be engaged on smaller salaries, would teach as efficiently and see our boys through their examinations." (Yukamal Majmu'a, P. 416).
(66) Mr. (Later Sir Thomas) Arnold, for instance, used to attend the College functions clad in the Oriental costumes.
(67) Life and Work of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, P. 181
that the European staff employed by him did not lose sight of this aspect of education.

Up to 1889, the College had been run practically single-handed by Sayyid Ahmad in the name of the College Fund Committee and his authority was unhampered by many formal regulations. As years went by, he grew anxious to put the conduct of College affairs on a more orderly basis. (69)

(This he described as giving the College a "strong constitution"). Accordingly, he prepared a detailed code, popularly known as the "trustees bill". Its one object was to steer the College through some unforeseen shoals. One was the apprehension lest upon Sayyid Ahmad's death the management of the institution should devolve upon Maulavi Sami Ullah Khan. Now the Maulavi was persona non grata with the Britishers serving in the College, for he had long advocated the complete "nationalisation" of the staff; his succession would naturally jeopardise the security of their tenure. Consequently the "European" professors prevailed upon Sayyid Ahmad to provide (68)

This consisted of 82 members. Five constituted the quorum. (Mukammal Majmu'a P. 408)

(69) Op. cit. P. 422

(70) Maulavi Sami Ullah Khan (1834-1908) was almost a co-founder of the College and a blood relation of Sayyid Ahmad. After the customary schooling he taught in a theological seminary for sometime. In 1856, he entered the subordinate judicial service, but left it six years later to practise law. Distinction in that sphere won him a more remunerative assignment in 1873. In 1880, he visited England and the Continent; in 1884, he was posted on the personal staff of Lord Northbrook when the latter took up a diplomatic appointment in Egypt; in 1885, he returned to India, was promoted district judge and decorated C.I.G. in 1892 he retired from public service.

The lamentable Muslim backwardness in post-Mutiny India touched him as deeply as it had touched Sayyid Ahmad. Consequently he find him closely associated with his distinguished contemporary in helping the community out of disgrace and degradation. But for his drive and earnestness the establishment of the College and School would have been long delayed. He would not wait, as Sayyid Ahmad was prepared to wait indefinitely, for "effectual" funds and counselled an immediate start. He declared that the working of the institution would win over the opposition. The School began functioning in 1875 and the first pupil to be enrolled in it was the eldest son of the Maulavi himself. His energy, influence, character, reputation for piety and orthodoxy contributed not a little to the stability of the institution in its earlier days.

Sami Ullah Khan abhorred the heterodoxy of Sayyid Ahmad and strenuously opposed the "surrender" of the boarding house to the "Christian" principal. Mr. Blunt who visited him at Aligarh described the atmosphere of his house as one of "chill simplicity" savouring of "the convent". After his dissociation from Aligarh he spent most of his time at Allahabad, where he sponsored the Mohammadan Boarding House.
against that contingency. It was said to have been even hinted from official quarters that the continuance of the grant-in-aid would depend upon the solution of this difficulty to the satisfaction of the European staff. Sayyid Ahmad had ever looked upon these gentlemen as integral to his educational scheme. He had a very high opinion of their capacities, academic and executive. Theirs was a liaison function between the West and the East and the Government and the Muslims. If they were told to go, his life work would be undone. If he could help it, he would not allow that to happen even after he had been laid in his grave. The life secretaryship of Sayyid Ahmad was duly provided for in the "bill". But the draft contained two highly contentious provisions. One created the office of joint Secretary. This appeared innocuous enough. The same provision nominated Sayyid Mahmud to this office. This was by no means so innocent.

Some other English friends also advised Sayyid Ahmad to the same effect. Of them he declared: "My European friends insist that it is absolutely essential in the interests of the College to assure the European staff about their future...On this particular issue I attach much greater weight to their views and wishes than to those of my Indian comrades". (Mukammal Wajmu'a, P. 420)

Sayyid Ahmad told the Mohamadan Educational Conference in 1889: "It is my responsibility to provide for the future. The holy and the saintly would leave things to a Provident Divinity...but I am a man of the world and have to look forward". (Mukammal Wajmu'a, P. 420).

Sayyid Mahmud (1850-1903) the gifted son of Sayyid Ahmad had his early education at the Norsabad and Ghazipur Schools. In 1869, he entered Cambridge as a Government of India scholar; in 1872, he was called to the Bar; for some time he worked as a teacher of English in the School and College at Aligarh and later advised the Hyderabad State Government on the codification of laws and improvement of judicial procedure; in 1879, he was appointed district judge and three years later was promoted to the High Court Bench at Allahabad. As a judge he distinguished himself by his weighty pronouncements.

Sayyid Mahmud's role in the Aligarh movement was substantial rather than conspicuous. Thus he deepened his father's understanding and appreciation of the British educational system and assisted him in the preparation of the blue-prints of his schemes, selection of the college staff, correspondence with Government, drafting of addresses to distinguished visitors, etc. His ultimate object was to raise the College to the status of a University.

Sayyid Mahmud's 'History of English Education in India' is a masterly exposition of an important subject. He also wrote a treatise on the Law of evidence in Urdu, regularly contributed to Tehsil-ul-Akhlaq and sat in the provincial legislative council. Through his advocacy, the Mohamadan Educational Conference incorporated the conservation of valuable historical manuscripts into its aims and objects. He was interested in poetry and mysticism and appreciated the value of Oriental learning much better than his father.
The bill further required the joint secretary to succeed the secretary on the latter's death. Maulavi Sami Ullah Khan, who had a considerable following in the councils of the College, was outraged by the unseemly procedure. In the acrimonious correspondence that followed, both parties freely imputed unworthy motives to each other. Sayyid Ahmad would not budge by a hair's breadth from the position he had taken up. He threatened to withdraw altogether from the management and suffer the institution to perish, if the trustees failed to pass the bill as he had shaped it. "The bill, the whole bill and nothing but the whole bill," was his attitude. He even challenged M. Sami Ullah Khan to a duel on the soil of France, where this method of settling private scores was still legally permissible. The virulence of the wrangling is unprecedented in the annals of the College. The bill was ultimately passed. Upon this Maulavi Sami Ullah Khan and the trustees of his way of thinking severed their association with the College and the breach was never healed.

(75) Khutut-i-Sir Sayyid, pp. 130 and 135; Tahāya Nawab Waqar-ul-Mulk, p. 39
(76) Hayat-i-Ja'weed, Part I, p. 291
(76a) The meeting of the College Fund Committee which finally passed this measure was boycotted by Maulavi Sami Ullah Khan and his friends. The passage of this "bill" gave a set-back to the finances of the College and retarded the flow of subscriptions. The number of students on the roll fell down.

Apprehending lest these developments should spell disaster to the College, Sayyid Ahmad requested the provincial government to acquire extensive powers of interference in the affairs of the institution by a statute. The Government declined to legislate but announced their assumption (with minor amendments) of the powers proposed by the founder in a letter, dated October 15, 1882. Although, Government interference was unfortunate at times, it was, on the whole, beneficial; it saved the College from worse calamities.

The growing laxity in administration led directly to a ruinous embroilment in 1895. This gave the old man the shock of his life. Silent and grief-stricken, he sat listlessly for hours every day "resting his head on his hands". The loss undermined the public confidence and gave the critics a handle. The salaries of the staff were not regularly paid; the future appeared highly uncertain; consequently, many professors left the College. (The History of the College by Mohammad Amin Zubari in M35.)
Sayyid Ahmad's numerous and far-reaching excursions into the domain of religion were actuated almost entirely by the compelling political exigencies of the times. His early education, which was neither sound nor thorough, had included the rudiments of Muslim Law and Theology. In his youth he had written a number of pamphlets on the various aspects of religion. But he lived long enough to recant most of the views expressed therein. His knowledge of Arabic, the scriptural language of Islam, remained imperfect to the end, and his contentious religious researches were only made possible by the assistance of Arabic scholars.

Religion looms large in Sayyid Ahmad's writings, because for Muslims their faith is co-extensive with life. It is "not merely a matter of abstract belief but also the ultimate guide in most secular concerns of life". Almost every course of conduct is governed by Divine ordinances. Sayyid Ahmad stood for, what he termed, Islam "pure and unalloyed", fought against its "accretions", but disclaimed all intention of founding a new sect or school.

Islam, its history and institutions, have fared badly at the hands of European critics. In Sayyid Ahmad's opinion, this ill-informed criticism had a direct and adverse bearing on the political fortunes of the Muslims of India. A vilified creed would inevitably bring its votaries into contempt. Accordingly, he informed the West that its version of Islam was a gross distortion. At the same time, he told his own people that the Islam practised by them was a caricature of the great creed and a stupid glorification of forms at the expense of its spirit.

There is a strong affinity between Islam and Christianity. Sayyid Ahmad set out to establish their essential kinship with the object of bringing about a rapprochement between the Christian government and their "much misunderstood" Muslim subjects. The task was by no means an easy one.

(77) Madarast-i-Shirwani, PP. 54-56
(78) Khutut-i-Sir Sayyid, PP. 328 and 329
(79) Hayat-i-Jawad, Part II, P. 57
one. No Muslim had ever attempted it before. But Sayyid Ahmad took it up in earnest, studied Hebrew with a Jew and produced a Muslim's commentary of the Bible entitled "Tabyeen-ul-Kalam".

He approached the two faiths very much as a student of comparative religion and reasoned away their doctrinal disagreements; he questioned the popular Muslim suspicion regarding the authenticity of the Biblical text and supported the teachings of the Gospels by copious reference to the Quran and the Muslim Tradition; he underlined their similarities and emphasised their common differences with other faiths. Both, for instance, believe the apostolic office to be divinely ordained. Faith in revelation is integral to both. Sayyid Ahmad also pointed out that the Hebrew scriptures were extant in the Prophet's day and that the Muslim divines of the past had unreservedly accepted their purity. These have no more

(80) His acquaintance with the Bible went, at least, as far back as 1847: in Assr-us-Sanadid he seeks to disprove the Hindu theories of creation with reference to the Book of Genesis.

(81) If an Islamic precept is repugnant to a Biblical injunction, it can only mean that the earlier pronouncement held good for a limited period. Vol. II, pp. 265-288

(82) The eighth discourse (Vol. I) is devoted to answering the question: "Are the books which compose the Bible identical with the original writings of the inspired authors?" Sayyid Ahmad concluded that "it must be accepted as establishing beyond cavil... that these books are very ancient, and far more trustworthy than the works of later times" (P. 135) and that "the Christian doctors have, as faithfully as they could, endeavoured to... restore the text in conformity with the originals of the sacred writers in the best way they could". (P. 148). But it is still "probable" that some passage "may not correspond... with the autographs (of) the apostles themselves" (P. 148) "The Christian commentators themselves hold the same opinion respecting them" (P. 150).

(83) Here are a few instances:

"We (i.e. Muslims) unquestionably believe this book (i.e. Genesis) to have been written under Divine inspiration... and the several narratives which are contained in our Holy Koran, in which we have implicit faith, are also found embodied in it"... Vol. II, pp. 26-27

"Our best doctors are of opinion that no great debate should be undertaken... in respect to the matters of the creation of the world... These are the fundamental principles of the faith believed in, and received by us Mohammadans, as well as by the Jews and the Christians". Vol. II, p. 56

"God having rested on the seventh day as stated in this verse (of the Genesis) is identical with the corresponding passage in the Holy Koran". Vol. II, p. 108

"The tradition prevalent among our countrymen that after Adam had been expelled from the Holy Garden, he settled himself in the island of Ceylon, is entirely groundless; not being supported either by the Pentateuch, nor by any of our sacred writings". Vol. II, p. 128

(84) Vol. I, pp. 7-19
been tampered with than the verses of the Quran or the Traditions of the Prophet. The inaccuracies creeping into the translations do not impair the integrity of the original text. (Thus Sayyid Ahmad sought to dispel the Muslim scepticism about the reliability of the Biblical text and fought the Christian prejudice by asserting that “true” Christianity was synonymous with “true” Islam. Tabyeeen-ul-Kalam is bilingual: the English version is given in parallel vertical columns opposite to the Urdu original on every page.) Its subject matter is too abstruse and “tedious” to make a popular appeal. All the same it is a valuable comparative study, remarkable for its “tolerant tone”. Its theology admits of the supernatural, which Sayyid Ahmad altogether denied in his later work, the Tafsir.

Sayyid Ahmad also wrote a pamphlet to show that Islam did not interdict Muslims and Christians dining together provided no wines and forbidden foods are served. This irrational inhibition had been borrowed from the Hindu society. For this “innovation”, he was promptly dubbed a Christian. (Discourse VII, pp. 64-65) Sayyid Ahmad started by defining corruption as the “willful corruption of the word of God from its true and original purposes and intent” and went on to say that Muslim doctors of law hold that no liberties have been taken with the scriptural texts, for, this was not practicable. The scriptures “were generally known and widely circulated, having been handed down from generation to generation”. Therefore, they were “beyond the reach of mutilation”. As they stand they are in the “same state of purity in which they were sent down from Heaven”. The corruption is of a “less vicious kind” and has consisted in “misconstruing the meaning of the words of God”, giving them “a significance inapplicable to context”, “misrepresenting the sense of whole passages” and the “admixture of false with true interpretation”.

The Reform and religious ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, P.77  
We believe the Christian Scriptures to be authentic and genuine gifts from Heaven (Vol. I, P.38). Apostles of Jesus Christ were inspired men. Their writings are true, holy and worthy of respect and they may be used as religious guides. (Vol. I, P.30). Inconsistencies in their writings are attributable to the variable human element but that does not weaken our respect for their holy and exalted characters. (Ind, P.31)

The argument of this pamphlet (entitled Ahkam-i-Taam-i-Ahl-i-Kitab) may be summarised thus:

The Muslim objection to the inclusion of the English among the “people of the Book” on the ground that they do not follow the precepts of the Bible is unsound. (pp. 61 and 133). The question really turns upon the nature of utensils in which Christian hosts serve food to their Muslim guests. Glass and China crocketry is impermeable and does not get permanently tainted with forbidden foods; Farthenware is permeable and gets infected for good. The Muslims can unexceptionably take food in the vessels of the former kind but not in those of the latter. (P.149)
by an irate theologian.

The Quran speaks of Christians as Nasa'ar and Muslims followed the Quranic usage. Some British officials took offence at this; they construed it as a term of contempt. In the Mutiny a Muslim was hanged at Cawnpore for this lapse. In a small tract, Sayyid Ahmad explained that the term was in no sense opprobrious, as it had nothing to do with Nazareth, the birthplace of Christ, but was, on the contrary, derived from the Arabic word NASR (meaning 'help'), and Muslims, according to the Quranic injunction, could rightfully expect all help and brotherliness from Christians.

(For reasons already explained, Sayyid Ahmad wrote extensively on Jihad. His defence of this doctrine is voluminous and laboured, and its tone is one of unrelieved apology throughout.) In the prevalent political context, the underlying import of the following passage in his Tafsir will be evident:

"Islam does not countenance treachery and rebellion. It enjoins upon Muslims the obligations of obedience and fidelity to their protectors and the faithful execution of contracts entered into with non-believers. It categorically forbids conversions at the point of the sword. Nobody is to be forced into the pale of Islam. The sword may be wielded for certain legitimate ends: in the first place, to save Islam from extermination, and secondly where Muslims qua Muslims are denied the security of person and belongings and are forbidden the ministrations and observances of their

The Prophet himself cut meat with a knife before taking it. (P.153).

Nowhere does the tradition forbid dining at a table. (P.155) Some Ulema hold it to be lawful (for a Muslim) to inter-dine with Christians once or twice but not more. If this is accepted, it is difficult to see how more frequent inter-dining could be regarded as sinful. (PP.162-63)

If Islam allows Christian women to be married to Muslim husbands without the necessity of having to change their religion, it cannot possibly forbid Christians and Muslims dining together. (P.165)

(89) Hayat-i'zawaed, Part I, PP.101-02.

(90) Sayyid Ahmad's exposition of the "true" nature of Jihad was intended for Europeans as well as Muslims. Professor Gibb says: "While the faith itself was not spread by the sword, it was under the wing of Muslim dominance that its missionaries found most favourable conditions for their activities of conversion. This view of Islam as a conquering religion was universally held by its adherents; the theologians found justification for it in the Koran, the jurists made it the basis of their exposition of Muslim law, and the mass of people accepted it as a self-evident fact. Its expansion by this means was regarded as having been divinely ordained, and as the supreme proof of its divine origin."
faith. Even in the latter situation Muslims are not to mutiny. They must suffer the tyranny patiently or withdraw from the country. But independent neighbours or friendly peoples outside the jurisdiction of the tyrannical state may fight on behalf of the persecuted Muslims. But the insurrection must not be tainted with ulterior motives. Otherwise it loses its sacred national character*. Not only that, Sayyid Ahmed quoted times without number the authority of the Prophet to prove that "loyalty to the powers that be was ordained of God". "Obey him who bears rule over you, even if he be a negro and a bondsman", runs a well-known tradition. The Prophet himself had desisted from warfare and advised a section of his persecuted Meccan followers to seek sanctuary in the Christian principality of Abyssinia in the early days of Islam.

The essence of Jihad is "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". Sayyid Ahmed contrasts this with Christian "humility" and Hindu "ahimsa", and dismisses them as 'contrary to nature', theoretical and unworkable.

*(91) Quoted in Hayat-i-Jaweed, Part III, pp. 222-23. In another passage he holds that divine law sanctions war against three categories of infidels: (a) those who take up arms against Muslims (b) those who break solemn engagements and join the enemies of the Faith and (c) those who torture Muslim (women and children) prisoners of war. Tasanif-i-Ahmadiyya, Vol. I, Part V, p. 66.

(92) This extreme statement of the doctrine of non-resistance has a respectable theological pedigree. Professor Gibb explains it as follows: "Originally the Caliph of Islam, by position and function, was regarded as the temporal embodiment of the sacred law of Islam. He was charged with the duty of maintaining its supremacy both against external enemies and internal rebels. Being himself bound by the law, he may neither modify it nor interpret it on his own responsibility, but is concerned solely with the task of applying it, and in the carrying out of this purpose he is entitled to claim from all the Muslims the same unhesitating obedience as they owe to the law itself. His office was essentially a political one, but the sanctions upon which his authority is based are primarily religious...But the great day of the 7th and 8th centuries, when the entire length and breadth of the Islamic world was ruled by a single caliph, had left their mark on the ideal policy of Islam. But in the succeeding centuries...the duty of obedience laid upon the citizens ministered to the appetite for autocracy on the part of the rulers, and at a time, when the autocratic power passed from the hands of the Caliph into those of secular sovereigns the duty of submission to established religious authority was still based in theory on the religious principle that power is the gift of God...Muslims were bade in the name of religion to render unquestioning obedience even to a despised ruler as a lesser evil than civil strife and anarchy*. Whither Islam, pp. 38-39

(93) Hayat-i-Jaweed, Part II, pp. 221-22
The wars fought by the Prophet of Islam were forced upon him and were entirely defensive in character. Subsequent Muslim history is replete with wars of aggression. But the doctrines of Islam cannot in fairness be blamed for the misdeeds of its adherents any more than Christianity can be held to answer for the massacre of St. Bartholomew’s day. The Qur’an stresses again and again that converts may be won not by violence but by peaceful persuasion. “There is no compulsion in religion.” Iconoclasm and vandalism are much publicised features of the history of Islam, but the large-hearted tolerance, security and protection enjoyed by numerous creeds under Muslim rule is often overlooked.

(ESSAY ON THE LIFE OF MOHAMMED: SIR WILLIAM MUIR’S “LIFE OF MOHAMMED”
(first published in 1861, in four volumes) led to a powerful attack on the Prophet of Islam and his teaching. In preparing this work, Sir William had made an intensive study of the writings of the Muslim historiographers. They provided him with some of his most telling arguments against the religion and its Founder. He cited Muslim history to bring out the “inherent” contradiction between Islam and civilised living, and concluded

(64) Essay—“Whether Islam had been beneficial or injurious to human society in general”, pp. 30-31.
(66) Sir William informed his readers that “the work was first undertaken, and the study of Oriental authorities entered upon, at the instance of the Revd. C. G. Pfander, D.D., so well known as a Christian apologist in the controversy with Mohommetans, who urged that a biography of the Prophet of Islam, suitable for the perusal of his followers, should be compiled in the Hindustani language from the early sources acknowledged by themselves to be authentic and authoritative”. Quoted in the preface to the Essays, p. xviii.
(67) Sir William Muir’s charge-sheet against Islam runs as follows: “First: polygamy, divorce, and slavery strike at the root of public morals, poison domestic life, and disorganise society; while the veil removes the female sex from its just position and influence in the world. Second: freedom of thought and judgment are crushed and annihilated. Toleration is unknown, and the possibility of free and liberal institutions foreclosed. Third: a barrier has been interposed against the reception of Christianity. No system could have been devised with more consummate skill for shutting out the nations over which it has sway from the Christian faith. The sword of Mohammed, and the Koran, are the most stubborn enemies of civilisation, liberty, and Truth which the world has yet known.” (Life of Mohammed, PP. 521-22)
that the backwardness of the Muslim world was directly traceable to the faith it professed. Sayyid Ahmad examined this thesis in his rejoinder (published in London, nine years later) entitled "A series of essays on the Life of Muhammad and subjects subsidiary thereto".

He showed that Muir had leaned heavily upon Traditions of dubious veracity and altogether ignored the well-understood Muslim criteria of evaluating the various sources of history. Sayyid Ahmad justified in a lengthy discourse the bitterly derided institutions of Islam like polygamy, divorce and slavery. He combated Muir's dictum that Islam was intolerant of dissent, affirmed that it maintained a high standard of individual and social conduct and reminded the critics that the various phases of the

These essays are twelve in number. In their preparation Sayyid Ahmad was considerably hindered and hampered by his total ignorance of European languages, the difficulties of collecting materials, his pecuniary embarrassments and the inhospitable English climate. He told all this to M. Mehdii Ali in his letters from London. (Rutut-i-Sir Sayyid, pp. 40-42, 54, 55, 56-62 etc.)

Muir preferred Wazidde to all Muslim chroniclers and based his main conclusions almost entirely upon materials derived from his work. "Wazidde, however, is the worst author of all, and divines have declared him to be in the least degree of any authority, and as being the least entitled to credit." Preface, p. xiv.

"It (i.e. polygamy) may be justified by the requirements of climate, the comparative number of sexes, and by various physiological and social reasons." Essay. "Whether Islam has been beneficial or injurious..."

"Notwithstanding, however, Muhammad's rooted antipathy to divorce, he gave it the importance and consideration it justly claimed and merited. He allowed it under circumstances when it could not fail to prove a valuable boon; when either it entirely removed, or at least greatly alleviated, the cares, troubles and embitterments of wedded life; and when, if not taken advantage of, society would suffer still more than it already did..." Ibid, pp. 14-16

"Two rules are laid down for the treatment of...captives after the war; one is, that of giving them a free disemision; the other that of exacting a ransom...But when the owner is unwilling to grant him his liberty, in that case alone he can become a slave, remaining so only until he pays ransom, or till the owner emancipates him. It must be evident that the Prophet did almost entirely abolish slavery." Ibid, pp. 24-26.

The principle upon which Moses was allowed to use the sword - to extirpate all idolaters and infidels, without exception of one single individual - is by no means applicable to Islam. Mohammedanism grasped the sword, not to destroy all infidels and pagans, not to force men to become Muslims at the sword's point, but only to proclaim that eternal truth - the Unity of the Godhead throughout the whole extent of the then known globe..."Ibid, pp. 33-30
history of Christendom were full of devastations, intrigues, assassinations, all on the score of theological argument. Originally written in Urdu, these essays were translated into English by Sayed Wahmus, though this does not seem to have been generally known at the time.

(102) On this point Sayyid Ahmad quoted Sir W. Muir himself who says that Islam "banished for ever, many of the darker elements of superstition. Idolatry vanished before the battle-cry of Islam...the doctrine of unity and infinite perfection of God, became a living principle in the hearts and lives of the followers of Muhammad...Brotherly love is inculcated within the circle of faith. Orphans are to be protected, and slaves treated with consideration. Intoxicating drinks are prohibited, and Mohammedanism may boast of a degree of temperance unknown in any other creed," Ibid, P.2.

(103) Ibid, PP.31-35.
A note on the College.

After the abortive "Dismiss Principal Beck" strike of 1887, laments a chronicler of the Aligarh movement, the management of the boarding house was entirely made over to the "European" staff who, among other things, finally pronounced upon the quality and flavour of the fare served to the resident scholars. Beck soon ingratiated himself with the students and the relations between teachers and taught registered a marked improvement.

Towards the evening of his life, Sayyid Ahmad behaved like a despot and managed the College very much like a private estate. His fellow-workers felt uneasy and dispirited but held their tongues. Those who summoned the courage to argue with him were summarily snubbed into silence. The system of nominations to the College Fund Committee (later, the Council of Trustees) stifled all initiative and independence of opinion. This eagerly sought-after honour was dispensed among "safe" mediocrities and moneyed nincompoops, who were expected to make handsome contributions to the funds of the institution without bothering about its affairs. An overwhelming majority of seventy trustees hailed from the Punjab and the North Western Provinces. A trustee held office for life and was irremovable. It was not uncommon for a single family to obtain plurality of seats on this influential body.

In January 1887, Sayyid Ahmad added twenty-one names to the roll of the trustees by virtue of his emergent powers as Secretary under the statute, and informed the Councillors accordingly. No emergency could be established. The proceedings amounted to "packing" and was, therefore, unconstitutional. Old comrades discerned the hand of Mr. Beck in all this.

(1) Taskir Waqar, P.203
(1a) "To students he was kindness itself: the diet prescribed for boarders in the sick room was generally prepared at his residence and sometimes the beds of ailing students were removed to his bungalow where they were looked after amidst homely surroundings. (The Aligarh University Urdu Magazine for January 1939, P.189)
(2) Taskir Waqar, P.148-50
(3) Majnu's Khutut-i-Heli, Vol. I, P.72
(4) Taskir Waqar, P.151-53
and were perturbed at the drift of events. M. Wohdi Ali, Mushtaq Husain and

(5) M. Wohdi Ali (1837-1907) better known as Wohsin-ul-Mulk was born at Etawah where he underwent the customary course of education and joined Government service under Mr. A.O.ume (later, the "Father of the Congress") on a humble salary of Rs. 10/- a month. He won rapid promotions, rising to the post of Deputy Collector in 1867. Seven years later Sayyid Ahmad had him employed in Hyderabad State where he served till 1893 in various high administrative offices.

His first meeting with Sayyid Ahmad was marked by a violent theological quarrel but soon the two entered into a very intimate friendship. During Sayyid Ahmad's stay in London, Wohdi Ali contributed to him generous help (financial and otherwise) which greatly facilitated the preparation and publication of the "Essays". He was born orator, wrote extensively and contributed regularly to Tehsib-ul-Akhlaq, was deeply interested in the activities of the Mohammedan Educational Conference over which he presided in 1893 and whose message he carried to distant parts of the country.

Wohsin-ul-Mulk succeeded Sayyid Wahrud as Secretary of M.A.O. College in 1899. In this capacity he organised successful subscription-collecting campaigns on behalf of the College and succeeded in completing the building of a boarding house, a laboratory and a museum.

In politics, he followed Sayyid Ahmad's orthodoxy but arranged the famous Simla Deputation which (led by the Aga Khan) waited on Governor-General Minto in 1906 and secured his consent to the principle of separate (communal) Muslim representation in the legislatures.

His failing health, indiscipline among students and the obduracy of the "European staff" embittered the last two years of his life and Secretaryship.

He died a broken man at Simla in 1907.

(6) Mushtaq Husain (1830-1917) better known as Wagur-ul-Mulk had his early education at a Government school. In 1861, he joined Government service and, for sometime, served under Sayyid Ahmad; in 1875, he was taken in Hyderabad State service; with a break of a few months in 1879, he continued to serve there in various capacities till he was pensioned off in 1891.

In the "Trustees' Bill" controversy, Mushtaq Husain was violently opposed to Sayyid Ahmad's wishes and readied with the old men in long letters and oral discussions. But when the measure was ultimately passed by the College Fund Committee, he loyally accepted the majority verdict. In spite of his many and deep differences with Sayyid Ahmad on matters relating to College administration, his enthusiasm for the welfare of the institution and its students remained undamped. He succeeded Wohsin-ul-Mulk as Secretary and held this office till his death in 1917.

He was a member of the Simla Deputation and one of the founders of the All-India Muslim League. He was also the first leader of the Sayyid Ahmad school of politics to make a public admission of the failure of the "loyalist" creed and the dangers of pursuing it further.

His (rather narrow) orthodoxy and philanthropy made an abiding impression upon those who came into contact with him. He defended his opinions with remarkable tenacity and is best remembered in the history of M.A.O. College for his courageous attitude in the disputes of 1908 when the ascendancy of the "European" staff was terminated to the complete satisfaction of the friends of the institution.
Altaf Hussain Hali decided to address a signed appeal to the community to revoke the trust reposed in Sayyid Ahmad and prevent the ruin of his life work. But Sayyid Ahmad's death in March 1898 rendered this drastic step unnecessary.

While he lived with a walking stick in hand, Sayyid Ahmad went round the College premises every morning, calling out students by name, upbraiding some of them for inattention to studies, telling others of their parents' grievances, testing their progress in studies by putting questions and encouraging those who returned correct answers. He regularly attended the meetings of the debating society and frequently participated in debates. Once a resident student beat a servant. Sayyid Ahmad immediately ordered him out of the hostel to be taken back only after he had apologised to the aggrieved party. He proposed the institution of honorary lectureships in the College and himself delivered the first lecture as honorary lecturer. He picked out promising undergraduates and personally instructed them in Urdu literature.

With the founder's removal from the stage, the College entered upon the most critical phase of its existence. The administration was in a state of chaos. Some of its regulations were highly ambiguous; others were positively harmful. Crushed under the weight of a heavy debt it was heading for...
bankruptcy. The Council of Trustees were divided into irreconcilable
cabalas. The Principal and the "European" professors were undisciplined to
a degree, and were resentful of the slightest abridgement of their
prerogatives. Gubernatorial support of their inflated claims complicated
matters till further. (Sayed Rahman, the equilibrium of whose brilliant
mind was now rendered precarious by years of interpenetration, succeeded to
this unenviable charge under the rule previously noticed. But he had to be
deposed from the Secretaryship in favour of W.Kehdi Ali within a year.)

The new incumbent of this office was a seasoned administrator, a
skilful negotiator and an adroit politician. But these excellent
qualities were more than counterbalanced by a lack of initiative and
purpose and a pronounced weakness in dealing with men. The character
of the institution was largely determined, not so much by the original
ideals of Sayyid Ahmad as by the personalities of its principals. For that
reason Mr. Beck and his successor deserve more than passing notice.

Mr. Beck joined the College in 1883 and remained in the saddle till
his death in 1892. He was essentially a politician. Educational and
academic matters did not occupy him seriously. Almost from the beginning
he played upon the fears of Sayyid Ahmad. By constant suggestions, he
convinced the old man of the wisdom of his lead to the Muslims vis-a-vis
the Indian National Congress and, thus, acquired a remarkable hold over
him. He also won Sayyid Ahmad's gratitude by discouraging the game of
(cricket during prayer hours and enforcing attendance at the "jamat"
(congregational prayer). Not infrequently, did Mr. Beck turn his uncurbed

(9) Tasikira Muhsin, P.28; Tasikira Wavab Muhshin-ul-ulk, P.44
(10) Amalmama, P.124.
(11) Mr. Blunt who met him in 1884 says: "A pretty young man with pink cheeks
and blue eyes, certainly not an average Englishman, and an average
Englishman certainly could not succeed here. So Beck may succeed. He
is probably clever". (India Under Ripon, P.156)
(12) Amalmama, P.168
(12a) The Aligarh Institute Gazette, 1889, P.316
authority against the former colleagues of Sayyid Ahmad. He threatened Mirza Abid Ali Beg, for instance, with removal from the Board of Trustees. The Trustees Bill had been drafted and finalized in accordance with his wishes. Forgetful of his duties to the institution, he freely exploited the factionalism and intrigue rife among the trustees, asking for opinion on the merits of particular decisions, proffering unsolicited advice and directing votes in divisions. He played an almost decisive part in engineering the events which culminated in Mr. Mahmud's removal from the stewardship of the College. These gratuitous manipulations gave deep offence to W. Mushtaq Husain.

(The decision in 1884 to adopt the Turkish dress as College uniform was made in Mr. Beck's absence from the country. On coming back to Aligarh, he did not appear to be very happy about the change, but kept quiet over it. After some time and, in all probability, to discourage the wearing of uniform, he ordered the attendance by students of the compulsory military drill classes in ridiculous uniforms consisting of Achkans and turbans of fine coloured silks. The students murmured but obeyed. Ultimately the matter was taken to Sayyid Ahmad, who personally intervened to have the distasteful regulation rescinded, and the jubilant students marked the occasion by tearing their silken uniforms into curtains and handkerchiefs.)

Mr. Beck was inordinately addicted to politics. In contemporary newspapers articles, he is described as a leader and benefactor of the Muslim community. He treated his job as a diplomatic assignment, and once declared that the real purpose of the College was to forge an Anglo-Muslim alliance. On Sayyid Ahmad's death, he asked for a public meeting to be

(13) Tasikra Mohain, P.233
(14) Hayat-i-Kohain, P.81
(15) Ibid. P.79. Tasikra Waqar, P.157
(15a) The Urdu Quarterly, April 1890, PP.22-23.
(16) Speaking on the occasion of Lord Elgin's visit to Aligarh (1897), Mr. Beck made the following observation in the course of his speech: 'Educated Indian Muhammadans (are) as a class...thoroughly loyal, and they (have) a noble example in the founder of the College, Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan. On the other hand, the Indian Universities had, as a rule, entirely ignored the duty they owed to the state of training loyal citizens'. (Speeches of Lord Elgin, P.366)
convened under the presidency of the district collector to assure the Government of the continued loyalty of the community to the political ideals of the departed leader. He made persistent efforts to get himself appointed the life-principal of the College; this might have become an issue but for his premature death at Simla in 1889. During his term of office, he abolished the chair of Sanskrit, which was only restored at the personal intercession of Mr. Mahmud. Sportsmen and athletes basked in the sunshine of his favour and were much flattered by the alma mater. The intellectual type of student was barely tolerated. In fact the suspicions of the authorities easily alighted on his class. M. Mohammad Ali, one of the finest products of Aligarh, was esteemed in his student days, not for his uncommon talent but entirely for his being the younger brother of the doughty cricket captain, Shaukat Ali. Mr. Beck declared openly that the Indian cricketer, Ranji, deserved a far more honourable place in society than the politician and patriot, D.B. Naoroji. An ex-student of the college deeply soaked in this tradition signed himself "healthy barbarian" in one of his contributions to the press. On Mr. Beck's death, the obituary note in London Times lamented the passing away of an empire-builder in a distant land, who had died at his post.

(17a) Taskira Waqar, P.165
(18) Taskira Sayed Mahmud, P.43
(19) ‘Amalnama, PP.75-76
(19a) Ibid., P.75. Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917) was a realist in politics whose life was remarkable not only for its longevity but also for its usefulness. He visited England many times and was closely in touch with Liberal and Socialist circles. He was elected to the House of Commons in 1892. He made an intensive study of the economic aspect of the British rule in India and produced a volume entitled "Poverty and Un-British Rule in India". Its conclusions were not particularly flattering to the rulers of India. He was elected President of the Indian National Congress on three occasions and his advice and balanced wisdom always commanded respect.

(20) Ibid., P.76
(21) Sayed Turail Ahmad, Ruh-i-Raushan Mustaqbil, P.74
Beck's successor, Mr. (later Sir Theodore) Morison was a genuine educator. His tenure of office is memorable in the history of the College for many-sided reforms, improvements and expansions in the academic sphere. Mrs. Morison held a small class in polite letter-writing at her residence, which was restricted to the favourite pupils of her husband. Another curious feature of the Morison regime was a club without a name, without rules and without formal organisation, that met at the Principal's house, at regular intervals, to transact business of which its privileged members had no previous notice. Less ambitious than his predecessor, politically Morison was of the same complexion. The Government heaped honours upon him one after another. Sir Anthony MacDonnell, who never cared to conceal his anti-Muslim prejudice, made him the channel of communicating his angry rebukes to the Secretary of the College (Lord Curzon nominated him a member of the Imperial Legislative Council to pilot his favourite Universities measure of 1904. Finally, he was knighted.) The cumulative effect of these distinctions was considerable. The Secretary, his formal employer, was reduced to a nullity and the Principal looked like a British resident accredited to the court of an Indian Prince.

While the College appeared to flourish under this renowned educationist, developments too ugly to escape notice were manifesting themselves in other departments of activity. These were a worsening of the teacher-pupil relationship, the growing indiscipline among students and the impaired cordiality between the European staff and the College directorate. When some of the local trustees questioned the principal's competence to spend money out of the college funds without proper authority as was done in certain instances, Morison fretted and fumed and clenched

(22) Taskira Mohsin, P.206
(23) 'Amilnma, P.168-70
(24) Ibid, P.171
(25) Taskira Mohsin, P.201
(26) Ibid, PP.204-05
his fist at the disloyal critics. He confided to the late Sir Abdul Qadir that he used to destroy, every year, hundreds of applications for admission to the College to keep down the numbers without the knowledge, and against the wishes, of the management. He banned student visitors to his bungalow when the Secretary disallowed the attendance by the collegians of a Bible class maintained by a young Christian evangelist at her house. A scheme of increased salaries for the European staff was presented to the Secretary with the warning that non-compliance with its modest demands would render the management liable to concede far more generous terms in no distant future. A point of crisis was reached when Morison's attempt to secure for Mr. Corna (his crony and colleague) the headship of the College after his own retirement met with determined resistance. Mr. Corna was outspoken to a degree and lacked balance and judgment. He was reported to have expressed to his classes sentiments to the effect that while he loved the College, Morison only professed affection for it; he (Corna) himself loathed it positively. To ensure Corna's succession, Morison sought to eliminate the other candidates by pointedly telling them that they would not prove equal to the charge.

The Secretary, M. Mehdi Ali, had reluctantly agreed to Corna's succession, but other trustees were adamant and stood their ground. Altaf Hussain Hali pointed to the danger inherent in creating a precedent by allowing a retiring principal to nominate his successor.

Popular opinion in this sub-continent has always viewed the Universities Statute of Lord Curzon as calculated to discourage and damage higher education. That may or may not be true. But it is on record that Morison seriously applied himself to a scheme designed to confine Aligarh to the teaching of Arabic, Persian, Theology, Muslim jurisprudence and

(27) Ibid, P.234
(28) Tazkira Waqar, PP.106-97
(29) Tazkira Mohsin, P.204
(30) Ibid, P.205
(31) 'Amin, P.236
(31a) Nakateeb, PP.101-02
allied subjects, to the complete exclusion of scientific and technical studies. Its prompt and unanimous rejection considerably added to his frustrations.

Morison also presided over the Mohammadan Educational Conference in 1904. Two years later he left this country to take his seat on India Council, London, which he held for about a decade. In 1918, he revisited India as a member of the Islington Commission on public services.

To a Western observer, the tone of the College appeared to be somewhat secular. In 1906, the Government showed curious concern for Arabic teaching (which was undoubtedly poor) by prevailing upon the Council of Trustees to appoint a European Orientalist to the chair of Arabic (to improve the teaching of this language) and agreed to pay his salary out of public funds. Most of Aligarh students have read for Government service or law. The College enjoyed the unique distinction of receiving from Queen Victoria "autograph copies of her books".

(During Sayyid Ahmad's lifetime, the Ulema kept away from the institution. But Mohsin-ul-Wulk adopted a conciliatory attitude towards them. The pious Waqar-ul-Wulk brought them into its inner counsels and paid greater attention to students' regularity at prayers and other religious observances. Every Friday he was seen solemnly waiting at the gate of the College mosque to receive those who came to offer the appointed

(33)'Ainalnama, PP.173-76. Hayat-i-Mohsin, PP.97-98
(34)Political India, P.86
(35)Ibid, P.86
(36)'Ainalnana, PP.331-32
(37)The Mohammadan World Today, P.194
(38)Nakateeb, PP.59 and 136
(39)Nakateeb, P.136
(40)The Aligarh Institute Gazette, 1899, P.818. Professor K.M.Husain of Government College, Lahore, who taught in Aligarh for eighteen years, informs the present writer that he is not aware of any "autograph copies" of Queen Victoria's books presented to Aligarh by that sovereign. But there is a large number of Queen's letters in the University Library. How they were obtained he
prayers. Many clever lads ingratiated themselves with him merely by putting in regular appearance at the congregations. This Secretary also banned the students' dramatic club as, in his opinion, its activities would offend against the canons of Shariat.

The earliest opposition to Aligarh education was voiced by the ecclesiastics who branded every kind of aid to the College as an irredeemable heresy; they said that the College would disseminate false doctrines, teach its pupils to believe that the earth revolves round its axis and disbelieve the material existence of the heavens, and reduce the five daily prayers to three. They went so far as to allege that its inmates were already compelled to take prohibited foods.) Parents received unsigned letters informing them that (on a certain date) an earthquake had rased the College buildings to the ground and that their boys lay buried under its debris. But besides this ill-informed and irrational antagonism, there also existed a more cautious and responsible opposition (never voluminous) which was reflected in the attitude of those who took no exception to Western education as such but black-balled Aligarh solely on account of Sayyid Ahmad's heterodoxy.

(Not only that. A section of Anglo-Indian newspapers started a virulent campaign against the very idea of a Muslim College for Western education.) They published articles against the College under such headlines as:

"The Muslims are a haughty and arrogant race".

"The proposed College would disseminate the doctrines of Jihad".

(43) Khumbaha, P.238
(44) Ibid, P.243
(45) Ibid, P.259
(46) Mohammadan College History, PP.90-92
(47) Ibid, P.94
(48) The Urdu Quarterly, 1941, PP.377-78
The Muslims would knit a silken purse out of bristles.
The "Pioneer" of Allahabad carried an article entitled "Sayyid Ahmad and the College" which contained the following passage:
(With such plans in his head, Sayyid Ahmad) looks just like a huge dog facing a mirror, grimly watching its own reflection, attacking its imaginary rival in a fit of fury, smashing the mirror into pieces and hurting itself fatally. This is how the Sayyid is going to end himself.

In the beginning the Hindu students were admitted to the College as day scholars only, and were exempt from religious instruction. The Deening House was managed by a Committee of twenty-five including four Hindus. So long as this Committee endured, a Hindu invariably sat on it.

Later, separate hostel accommodation was provided for Hindu students. Cow-slaughter was forbidden within the College precincts and beef was not allowed to be served.

From the very beginning the founders of the College made a liberal provision for stipends and scholarships to help the needy students. But good care was taken to see that this financial aid did not partake of the character of charity or otherwise injure the self-esteem of its recipients. Disbursements were made individually and in private. This wholesome tradition is still respected in Aligarh.

(48b) Translated from Urdu. Yad-i-Ayyam, p. 31
(48c) A History of the M.A.O. College by Mohamed Amin Zuberi, in Manuscript.
(48d) Ibid.
(48e) Ibid.
The general nature of Sayyid Ahmad's religious thought.

Sayyid Ahmad believed that the rapid advances made by the physical and experimental sciences, the system of knowledge derived from the West and the missionary activities and preachings in the country represented a dire (1) threat to the integrity of Islam; the menacing trend must be arrested or the faith would be irreparably damaged. In this context the intellectual defence of Islam had to be raised upon foundations other than traditional.

The situation then facing the faithful was not altogether unprecedented. In the brilliant Abbasid age, the eagerly studied Greek philosophy had fostered doubt and disbelief. The Muslim divines of the day improvised a dialectic to meet the challenge of the "new learning". To the purely academic and non-experimental Greek philosophy, they opposed apparently unrebutable, if equally unverifiable conjectural propositions. This technique served well at the time but was entirely outmoded in the now vastly changed circumstances. The mounting tide of scepticism was being continually fed by the momentous achievements of science. An enfeebled Islam entrusted with forms and ceremonial would founder on this rock. The Muslim youth educated on Western and scientific lines pinned their faith on the "ocular" and the physical, to the complete exclusion of the transcendental and the metaphysical. A new dialectic was needed to by-pass (2) the irreligious enfranchised by contemporary education. This consisted in proving Islam to be the religion of man intended by nature, harmonising the doctrines of the Quran with the conclusions of science where possible, and in the last resort, producing good reasons to suspect the findings of (3) science, if the two proved irreconcilable.

(1) Much the same was true of Egypt and Turkey; with the penetration of Western influences, the hold of religion was weakened and the traditional unity of the world of Islam broken. With increasing admiration for the West there was an eagerness to profit from its achievements without by-passing religion. Consequently, attempts were made to interpret Islam in the light of modern facts and trends. Shaikh Mohammed Abduh (1849-1905), the rector of Al Azhar, for instance, held that it was no use adopting an attitude of unconcern towards the progress of science and that its facts could be harmonised with the eternal truths of the faith.

(2) Majzu'a Lectures, PP.175-79
(3) Ibid, PP.181-82
(4) Ibid, P.181
This was an uphill task, for religion as commonly understood then, was in a state of perpetual warfare against science. In his attempted synthesis Sayyid Ahmad rested his case entirely on "nature", reason and intellect; he declared them to be infallible guides to the ultimate reality. He could perceive no conflict between the "word of God" and the "work of God", made free use of the favourable testimonials given to Islam by European scholars and maintained that the errors of the Muslim doctors of law did not take away anything from the splendour of the faith. He measured Islam essentially in terms of the ethical values prevailing in mid-Victorian Britain, and came to the conclusion that Islam was a moral, presentable and humane code of conduct worthy of a civilised people. He told the Midey of Egypt that... "the most liberal views and opinions upon the sciences and knowledge in general are perfectly consistent with the precepts and practice of our holy religion".

But a "rational" presentation of Islam has to reckon with two main difficulties. First, the social morality of Islam, as embodied in hadseas and, second, the conventional code of Islam, called the Ta'leed.

The vast literature comprising the Traditions of the Prophet of Islam was not collected, collated and verified long after his death. Those who engaged in this task were careful to rely upon authentic sources and veracious narrators. With the lapse of time, this lore grew in volume, occasionally falling into the hands of unscrupulous interpolators. The fund of knowledge has, time and again, been given a handle to the hostile critics of Islam with some of their most plausible arguments.

In the strategy of defence planned by Sayyid Ahmad, due heed was paid to this vulnerable spot. He made a sharp distinction between the revealed word of God (the Quran) and the human compilations attributing certain

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(5) Ibid, PP.183-84
(6) Khutat-i-Sir Sayyid, P.72
(6a) (7) The Life and Work of Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan, P.115
(8) Sayed Ahmad, Essay on "The Mohammedan Theological Literature", PP.6-7
canons of conduct to the Prophet (i.e. the Ḥadīṣ). The authority of the former is absolute. But every Tradition must pass a rigorous logical test before it could be accepted as authoritative. The reasons for this are obvious. In the first place, no Ḥadīṣ reproduces the actual words of the Prophet. It is at best a report of what the narrators understood him to say. Secondly, numerous anecdotes relating to Jewish and Christian history have unaccountably found their way into the Muslim Tradition. Thirdly, the editors of the Tradition attached undue weight to the character and trustworthiness of the immediate narrators to the exclusion of some of the intermediaries who served as links in the process of oral transmission. Fourthly, authorities of equal repute violently differ in their estimate of one and the same narrator. Finally, some Traditions are directly at variance with the precepts of the Qur’an; they have to be denied credence straightaway. From all these considerations Sayyid Ahmad concluded that in any sound presentation of Islam, the role of Tradition must necessarily be a minor one. However, he indignantly repudiated the charge of discrediting the Tradition.

The other and the more crippling brake upon the progressive tendencies of the Muslim society was Taqleed, i.e. the imperative duty of the faithful to conform to the time-honoured modes of thought and conduct deemed expedient, useful or virtuous by the earlier doctors of law. The critics point out that this type of behaviour is repressive of all progress - social, economic, moral or intellectual. Consequently, Sayyid Ahmad

(9) Khutut-i-Sir Sayyid, Pp.321-22
(10) Ibid., P.322
(11) Ibid., P.322
(12) Ibid., P.322
(13) Essay on "The Mohammadan Theological Literature", P.6
(14) Khutut-i-Sir Sayyid, P.323. In the Urdu version of the "Essays", the fifth discourse dealing with Muslim canonical literature is sub-headed: "For us the Book of God is all-sufficing". (P.311)
(15) Sayyid Ahmad called it "a blind belief in the opinions of others". This is not quite an accurate rendering of the term.
vigourously advocated liberation from intellectual subservience to the past; subjection of its values to objective criticism, breaking of the bond of convention, destruction of the standardized moulds of thought, and forging of new patterns of conduct appropriate to the scientific temper of the age.

His greatest work, the Commentary on the Koran, somewhat follows the principles outlined above, but his opponents questioned his equipment and competency for the task. They seized upon his insufficient knowledge of Arabic and his ignorance of the principles of scriptural interpretation. On his own part, Sayyid Ahmad branded as 'alloverical' without much ado, the quranic verses which did not immediately yield to his rationalisation. In the field of theology, he saw nothing undesirable or sinful in certain disapproved practices.

A contemporary of Sayyid Ahmad's viewed his religious movement as "of a negative nature", whose "chief strength lay in denying whatever could not be defended"; and that, "having no vitality in itself", it practically "lapsed into a sort of a social and political movement". His religious theories, according to another writer, "have not much more in view than the caressing and caressing of 'reason' and the unfolding of nineteenth century Western thought". To these two judgments, whose essential justice will not be questioned, a third one might yet be added: "to a considerable

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(18) Pp. 71, 72, and 100

(17) It should be evident that his one object in preparing this commentary was to avert the spiritual confusion attendant upon the dissemination of Western education for which, so far as Muslims were concerned, the main responsibility was his. He even wished that his ideas had better been kept away from the generality of Muslims. "That is why it is printed in limited numbers and sold at high prices"... (Taskir Sayyid, P. 113)

(19) For instance, partaking of a fowl that had been wrung by the neck, offering prayers with shoes on, shaving the chin, etc.

(19) The Mohammadan World Today, P. 198

(20) Balje, p. 25, The Reforms and Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, p. 285
extent the modernisation of Islam in India was, in form, a reaction to the stimulus of Christian assault. Almost without exception, the reformers wrote their expositions of new Islam as apologetic answers to the criticism of the missionaries.... The Christian attack was this: that Islam failed to come up to the standard of humanitarian and liberal idealism that western bourgeois culture had produced and Western Christianity had absorbed. Those who saw the point of the attack, (Sayyid Ahmad being the foremost among them) produced in Islam which the Christian writers (21) often claim is mostly Christian”.

In short, Sayyid Ahmad appealed to religion to vindicate the transitory, the politic and the expedient and his “heresies” brought hornets’ nest about his ears. There grew up an unbending opposition to his educational projects. The pious were alarmed lest his religious ideology should corrupt the youth, and through them the future generations, by finding its way into the College curriculum. Many pamphlets were written and journals started in opposition to his ideas and plans. Threatening letters continued to pour in practically to the end of his day. Katman confirming his apostasy were procured from the Nizam doctors of Muslim law. He withstood all this undaunted. But his latitudinarianism (which had never appealed even to his closest associates) practically died with him.

(21) Smith, W.C., Modern Islam in India, P.45. After reading Sayyid Ahmad’s “Essays”, Sir William Muir is reported to have said that he had attacked the Islam practised by Muslims, not the one interpreted by Sayyid Ahmad. (Tasvira Sir Sayyid Warhum, P.101).
Chapter V.

An Indian Nation?

The words, written or spoken, of a prolific writer and ready speaker may be easily misconstrued. Sayyid Ahmad wrote extensively and spoke frequently. A collection of his speeches and writings would fill many bulky volumes and a clever juxtaposition of extracts from them can be made to foist upon him opinions which he would have been the first to disavow.

A recent publication, half propagandist and half scholarly, sets out to do this job. It traces the deterioration of Sayyid Ahmad's liberalism to the single influence of Mr. Beck, the Principal of A.I.O. College. By significant omissions, tendentious editing and setting aside a mass of incontestable facts, its author builds up a thesis well worth scrutiny. (He bases his conclusions upon extracts from some of the speeches made by Sayyid Ahmad. They run as follows:

"A community is constituted by those who inhabit one and the same country. The terms Hindu and Muslim have denominational reference only. In fact, all communities domiciled in India are one people....Their political interests ought to be indistinguishable. This is not the time to allow religion to draw dividing lines between the citizens of a state."

Addressing a deputation of Arya Samajists at Lahore, Sayyid Ahmad is reported to have said: "You distinguish yourself from others by the appellation of 'Hindu'. I cannot agree to this. Hinduism is not an orthodoxy. Everybody living in this country can style himself a Hindu. I am sorry to have to point out that you do not take me for a Hindu, although I am as much a son of the soil as you are." (Replying to an address of welcome by the Indian Association of Lahore, he observed: "I regard Hindus and Muhammadans as my two eyes. The people would generally mark a difference by calling one the right and the other the left eye; but I regard the Hindus and Muhammadans as one single eye. I wish I had only

(1) Nasrullah Khan Faqir Mustaqbil by M. Tufail Ahmad (Aliq).
(2) Nasrullah Khan Faqir Mustaqbil, p. 283
(3) Sayyid Ahmad Khan Ka Safar Nama Punjab, pp. 139-40
one eye, in which case I could compare them with advantage to that single (4)
eye". Continuing he said: "By the word 'nation', I mean both Hindus and
Muhammadans. This is (now) I define the word 'nation'. In my opinion,
It matters not whatever be their religious belief, because we cannot see
anything of it: but what we see is that all of us, whether Hindus or
Muhammadans, live on one soil, are governed by one and same ruler, have
the same sources of our advantages, and equally share the hardships of a
famine. These are the various grounds on which I designate both the
(5) communities that inhabit India by the expression 'Hindu nation'. Speaking
of the M.A.O. College, he told the same audience: "I would be sorry if any
one were to think that the College was founded to mark a distinction
between the Hindus and the Muhammadans...I am happy to be able to say
that both brothers (i.e. Hindu and Muslim) receive the same instruction
in that College. All rights at the College which belong to the one who
calls himself a Muhammadan, belong without any restriction to him who
calls himself a Hindu. There is not the least distinction between the
(6) Hindus and the Muhammadans...both are equally treated as boarders".

The above extracts are taken exclusively from the record of Sayyid
Ahmad's itinerary in the Punjab in early 1884, when he was rated on all
sides. The Hindu students of Government High School, Jullunder, for
instance, told him that his public and political activities had benefited
all communities alike, that he had the same benevolent regard for the
followers of Swami Dayananda and Keshub Chandra Sen as for his own
co-religionists; and that he had not only served his own community but
the entire country. A combined delegation of the representatives of Arya

(4)Ibid., p.160
(5)Ibid., pp.160-61. Commenting on this speech, the 'Tribune' of Isbore,
dated February 9, 1884, wrote "We heartily welcome his words which we
do not often hear from the lips of our Muhammadan compatriots", and
that "there is at least one great man among them who does not yield to
any one in large hearted patriotism". (Quoted in Sayyid Ahmad Khan Ka
Safar Nama Punjab, p.162)
(6)Sayyid Ahmad Khan Ka Safar Nama Punjab, pp.159 and 160
(7)Entitled Sayyid Ahmad Khan Ka Safar Nama Punjab compiled by Sayed Ikbal
Ali.
(8)Sayyid Ahmad Khan Ka Safar Nama Punjab, p.44
Samaj and Brahmo Samaj waited upon him to convey their gratitude, on behalf of the Punjab Hindus, for his selfless services to the country, as a member of the Supreme Legislative Council generally and for his commendable attitude towards the Ilbert Bill particularly. The princely legislators of their own community had shown a want of solicitude for the rights of their own countrymen by voicing opposition to this equitable measure, and thus forfeited public confidence. The Indian Association of Lahore praised his large-hearted liberalism, the breadth of his views and his kindly attitude towards all sections of the community.

(9) The author of the work building its thesis on such quotations concludes that Sayyid Ahmad was a generous radical, a genuine patriot and an ardent "nationalist", who saw in Hindus and Muslims the two corporate components of the 'Indian Nation', and all this up to 1884. But after that date, he began to lose faith in old causes, drift away from time-honoured loyalties, view things from a narrower and more exclusive angle, and emphasise and consolidate Muslim separatism. The instigator of this metamorphosis, we are told, was no other than Mr. Beck. V. Tufail Ahmad continues his story thus:

"When Mr. Beck joined the V.A.O. College he was comparatively green for the charge. Nevertheless he was a fine speaker and much too astute for his years. In some circles he was accused of taking his duties lightly and spending most of his time "roving and rambling". Maulavi Sami Ulah, particularly, chafed at this. But Mr. Beck met Indians on terms of perfect equality, and his urbanity won him many friends. He warmed himself

(9)Ibid, PP.142-43. Sayyid Ahmad and Kristo Das Pal were the only non-official members of the Council who supported the Ilbert Bill. (Fleming (10)Muslims, P.31 (10)Sayyid Ahmad Khan Ka Safar Nama Punjab, P.157 (11)Muslims, Ka Rausan Gustaqbil, PP.281-92 (11a)The next six paragraphs are based on Tufail Ahmad's account. (12)Mr. Beck was appointed Principal of the College in November, 1883. At the time he was younger in years than many of his pupils. (13)Muslims, Ka Rausan Gustaqbil, P.288."
into Sayyid Ahmad's confidence, and the latter's fondness for him grew almost into an infatuation and by degrees he began to wield a prodigious influence over the old man and virtually became the keeper of his conscience. His suavity was viewed as a transparent disguise for his insidious designs.

In the course of his whirlwind tour of the country, Babu Surrendranath Bannerjea visited Aligarh in May, 1884, and addressed a public meeting at the Institute Hall under the presidency of Sayyid Ahmad. In many respects, it was a memorable gathering. It was the last great spectacle of Hindu-Muslim unity which, from thence, was a doomed cause. Never again would the two communities join hands in matters of common concern. Surrendranath Bannerjea's fine oratory kept his listeners spell-bound till late in the evening. He advocated the urgency of lifting the embargo on the entry of Indians into the Indian Civil Service by liberalising the rules of recruitment, holding simultaneous examinations in India, increasing the Indian element in the army, and sending elected, instead of government-appointed, representatives to the Legislative Council and a drastic overhauling of the outworn and irresponsible administrative system. He complained: "We fill the exchequer and they (pointing to an Englishman present in the assembly) appropriate the revenues to their own advantage". The Englishman particularised was Mr. Beck who found it most embarrassing to be thus singled out by the accusing finger of the orator.

When the meeting ended, some students accompanied Mr. Beck to his residence. In the conversation that followed he paid a striking tribute to the speaker who, he said, looked like the typical British parliamentarian.

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(14)'Amalnama', P.169
(15)P.101 above. Referring to this tour in his autobiography, Surrendranath Bannerjea observes: "We started with a cry, but the central idea was the promotion of unification between the different Indian peoples and provinces, and of a feeling of friendliness between the people of Bengal and the martial races of the North. We counted for nothing in those days. It was constantly dinned into our ears that our political demands, whatever they were, came from the people of the deltalike Ganges, who did not contribute a single soldier to the army, and who were separated from the sturdier races of the North by a wide gulf of isolation, if not of alienation. We wanted to dissipate this myth". (A Nation in Making, P.87)
(16)Musulmanon Ka Raushan Mustaqbil, PP.288-90
speaking to his constituents rather than an Indian politician addressing his own countrymen. But the speech, pointed out 'Mr. Beck, ill accorded with the temperament of the people to whom it was addressed. Such sentiments had better be confined to the timid and talkative Bengalis, who were a harmless race. But if this ideology travelled to Northern India, the home of martial races, it may give rise to unwholesome consequences.' Babu's speech worked a change in Mr. Beck. He wanted to cry a halt to this 'tempest' and save the uncountryside from the infiltration of new ideas. Whenever he came across a Jat, a rajput or a rathak, he confronted him with the inquiry: "Would you warlike people allow yourselves to be governed by the pusillanimous Bengali?" The answer was invariably in the negative. "But", Mr. Beck would turn round to say, "that eventually would be the state of affairs if Civil Service Examinations came to be held in India. Your children could never successfully compete with the quick-witted Bengali, and that would perpetuate Bengali domination. From that day Mr. Beck resolved to secure the exclusion of Maulavi Sami Wlah Khan from the college management, and keep Sayyid Ahmed at a distance from the popular and progressive political movement. He proceeded with these sinister machinations steadily and surreptitiously, and waited for an opportunity which was not long in coming.

Overburdened with numerous engagements, public and private, Sayyid Ahmed could hardly devote sufficient time to his magazine, the Aligarh Institute Gazette. It was languishing in incompetent hands. Mr. Beck, who had a flair for public speaking and popular journalism and was, moreover, anxious to enter the arena of politics as a prize-fighter, volunteered to take over the Gazette. The offer accepted, he filled its columns with articles deprecating popular demands and deriding their

(17) Ibid., p.280
(18) Ruh-i-Raushan Mustaqbil, p.4
(19) Musalmans Ka Raushan Mustaqbil, p.281
(20) pp. 93-95 above.
(21) Ruh-i-Raushan Mustaqbil, p.5
advocates. These writings were attributed to Sayyid Ahmad and sorely strained his relations with the Bengalis, who charged him with a volte face, as he had formerly bestowed unstinted praise on them as the pioneers of enlightenment. Sayyid Ahmad's hostility to the Indian National Congress, based on cold calculation as it was, provided a fertile soil for Mr. Beck's propaganda and he succeeded in turning him into a bitter-ender and last-ditcher. Abandoning his old convictions, he embarked on a campaign against the system of elections, the competitive examinations and the identity of Hindu-Muslim interests -- causes he had espoused in the past. This is borne out by his famous Lucknow speech delivered on December 28, 1887, in which he inveighed against the elective principle and justified the nomination of landed aristocrats to the Viceroyal Council in these words: "It is very necessary for the Viceroy's Council the members should be of high social position...A seat in the Council of the Viceroy is a position of great honour and prestige..." Hence the Government could not be fairly blamed for excluding the commonalty from their councils. He also opposed the transference to India of the Civil Service competitive examination held in England, for the selectees who come from there "come from a country so far removed from our eyes, that we do not know whether they are the sons of lords or tailors and therefore, if those who govern us are of humble rank, we cannot perceive the fact". He began to view with utter

(22)Musalmmanon Ka Raushan Vustaqbil, p.292
(23)As for instance: "I confess that the Bengalis are the only people in our country of whom we can rightfully feel proud. It is solely on account of them that the progress of learning, the progress of liberty and the feeling of patriotism have spread in our country. I can rightly say that they are certainly the head of all the people in India". (Sayyid Ahmad Khan Ka Safar Nama Punjab, p.159)
(24)Also pp.60-63 above.
(25)Musalmmanon Ka Raushan Vustaqbil, p.302
(26)This speech, part of which is reproduced on pp.66-67 above has not been quoted in full by K.Tufail Ahmad (Ibid, p.300). It should be read along with the following passage which immediately precedes the extract. "It is a great misfortune...that the landed gentry of India have not the trained ability which makes them worthy of occupying those seats. But you must not neglect the circumstances which compel the Government to adopt this policy". (Sir Sayed Ahmad on the Muhammadans and the National Congress, p.3)
(27)Quoted in Musalmmanon Ka Raushan Vustaqbil, p.301, from Ibid, p.6
disfavour the merit principle itself. "Every one can understand that the first condition for the introduction of the competitive examination into a country is that all the people in that country, from the highest to the lowest, should belong to one nation... the second is that of a country in which the two nationalities which have become so united as to be practically one nation. England and Scotland are a case in point. But this is not the case with our country, which is composed of different nations. Consider the Hindus alone. The Hindus of our province, the Bengalis of the East, and the Marathas of the Deccan, do not form one nation. If, in your opinion, the peoples of India do form one nation then, no doubt, competitive examinations may be introduced, but if it be not so, then competitive examination is not suited to this country. The third case is that of a country in which there are different nationalities which are on an equal footing as regards the competition, whether they take advantage of it or not. Now, I ask you, have Mohammedans attained to such a position as regards higher English education, which is necessary for higher appointments as to put them on an equal level with Hindus or not?" This change in Sayyid Ahmed's outlook, M. Tufail Ahmad goes on to say, was a signal triumph for Mr. Beck's ascendancy over his "medium" was complete. The old man played into his hands. He followed up this success by persuading Sayyid Ahmad to organise an anti-Congress front. This was the farcical United Indian

Patriotic Association. It was called 'United', because it enrolled Hindus

(28)Kusalmaloon Ka Raushan Mustaqhil, P.301, quoted from Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan on the Mohammedans and the National Congress, P.7

(29)In a letter to his biographer, Col. Graham, Sayyid Ahmad Khan acknowledged the assistance rendered him by Mr. Beck in this undertaking... "Still more I have undertaken a heavy task against the so-called National Congress, and have formed an Association, "The Indian United Patriotic Association" the work of which is much more (sic) greater than the other works, and I am very glad to tell you that Beck gives me a good deal of assistance in the matter, otherwise it would have been much more difficult, or rather impossible for us to go on further with it". (Life and Work of Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan, P.273.) In the course of newspaper articles Mr. Beck went so far as to suggest that the time had arrived to use once more the iron hand in the velvet glove to put down the Congress agitation. (Masani, R.P., Dadabhai Naoroji, P.305).

The Patriotic Association issued tracts, subsidized journals and sent anti-Congress literature to the people of the United Kingdom. One of its pamphlets was entitled 'Showing the seditious character of the Indian National Congress and the Opinions held by Eminent Natives of India who are opposed to the Movement'. Theodore Beck was the editor.
as well as Muslims. In fact, this was an agglomeration of the elements of the extreme "right" in politics. It repudiated the Congress, challenge its representative character and affirmed loyalty to the government established by law. One of its impetuous members invited ridicule upon himself by walking into the Allahabad Session of the Congress and conducting himself impudently only to be expelled. The Association continued its inglorious career for five years (1889-93). Most of its business was conducted ostensibly for the benefit of Muslims and in their name.

In 1889, Mr. Bradlaugh's bill seeking to reform the system of government in India by expanding and democratising the legislative councils came up for discussion before the House of Commons. Mr. Beek felt greatly perturbed. He decided that opposition to the proposed measure should come from India itself. Accordingly, he drafted a petition to Parliament on behalf of Indian Muslims certifying to the unwise, if not positive danger of introducing popular government in a country with a heterogeneous and multi-racial population. Groups of students were sent out to canvass signatures for this queer entreaty. Mr. Beek himself headed one of these parties. His crew occupied positions on the steps of the Shah Jahan Mosque of Delhi and obtained the signatures of Muslims returning from prayers on the pretext that these would be used to counteract the Hindu demand for a ban on cow slaughter. Finally, this ludicrous petition bearing 20,735 signatures was despatched to England in 1890 to be laid before the House of Commons. But it failed. Lord Cross' Indian Councils' Bill which "Among the named contributors were some Raja's, intellectually ciphers unable to write a single page of good English". (Ibid, P.305).

(30)I.e. Princes, Jagirdars and landed aristocrats and was generally known as "anti-Congress". Musalmanon Ka Raushan Mustaqbil, P.307

(31)In December, 1888.

(32)Musalmanon Ka Raushan Mustaqbil, P.310

(33)Mr. Bradlaugh visited India in 1889 and had introduced in the House of Commons on different occasions two bills dealing with reform of Indian Councils. His proposals, the India Under-Secretary G.N.Curzon, told the House, should have swelled "the numbers on those Councils to quite impracticable and unmanageable proportions". (Speeches and Documents on Indian policy Vol. 2, P.59). Mr. Curzon further explained that Mr. Bradlaugh's total for all the five Councils should not have exceeded 260. (Ibid, P.59)

(34)Musalmanon Ka Raushan Mustaqbil, P.310

(35)Ibid, P.P.311-12
advanced the Indian political system a few steps further on the road to self-government, was passed into law in 1892.

Mr. Beck, however, did not lose heart. The fateful events of 1893 gave him yet another opportunity of driving a wedge between the two communities. The Hindu-Muslim frases in Bombay, the anti-Muslim Ganpati fair of Poona in which a frenzied Hindu mob desecrated a mosque and the frantic Hindu agitation for securing legal prohibition of cow-killing provided Mr. Beck with the much-needed excuse for dissolving the Patriotic Association. On its rubble was raised the exclusively Muslim organisation known as the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental Defence Organisation of Upper India. Thus ended the semblance of Hindu-Muslim concord. Even an unholy alliance between the two communities was an eyesore to Mr. Beck. The communal estrangement was engineered and fostered by historians like Elliot and Empire-smiths like Beck.

This is a highly plausible reading of the facts. V. Tufail Ahmad's intimate contact with Aligarh, spread over decades, has enabled him to rescue valuable facts from oblivion. Nevertheless, his narrative is highly purposive, and therefore, his conclusions cannot be accepted unreservedly. It would, no doubt, be flying in the face of facts to claim a cast-iron consistency for Sayyid Ahmad's political views. He had, for

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(36) This bill in no way a great or heroic measure, made a tardy progress through the two Houses of Parliament, causing serious misgivings in India. Finalised after seven years of preparation and consideration, it was based upon the despatches of Governors-General, Dufferin and Lansdowne. It extended to the Indian Councils the privileges of (a) indulging in "free and fair criticism of the financial policy of the Government and (b) interpallation". The regulations framed under this statute recognised the elective principle indirectly. (Speeches and Documents on Indian policy Vol. 2, P.55).

(37) It aimed at safeguarding the political rights of the Muslims, keeping them away from disloyal politics, strengthening the British rule over the country and the ties between the Muslims and the State. Mr. Beck acted as Secretary of the Association. In his opening speech he declared that the National Congress and the anti-cowkilling campaign were the two pincers of the same movement. One was directed against the British and the other against the Muslims. So the British and Muslims had to pull together. (Ruh-i-Raushan Mustaabil, PP.10,11).
instance, identified himself with the demand for simultaneous examinations (by presiding over the public meeting at Aligarh) in 1884. In 1887, he ranged himself against it and signed the majority report of the Public Services Commission to that effect. He had sternly disapproved the Muslim "right" to cow-slaughter, but ultimately lent the authority of his name to a body insistent upon vindicating it. He first eulogised the Bengalis and later characterised them as architects of ruin. The enormity of Mr. Beck's influence is also affirmed by the Aligarh tradition. We have it on the authority of a well-informed old Aligarhian that towards the end of Sayyid Ahmad's day, all his public utterances were put into his mouth by Mr. Beck.

(41) W. Tufail Ahmad is partially corroborated by Shibli Na'umani who 'wondered' (euphemistically, of course) why the fearless and outspoken author of the pamphlet on the Indian Revolt, the rebel of the Agra Exhibition and the unsparing critic of the Government policy of vernacularising higher education, should bid a long farewell to all his greatness and express undignified sentiments in abject accents. Mr. Smith, a painstaking student of Islam in India, also believes the year 1884 to mark a turning-

(38) A Nation in Making, P. 49. Upon Justice Vahmud's forced retirement, a Deccan newspaper carried the report that the incident had been an eye-opener to Sayyid Ahmad, that he was much nearer the Congress and that he had decided to support its demand for simultaneous examinations. In a statement to the Pioneer of Allahabad, he characterised all this as an unconscionable slander and added that the removal of his son from a high judicial office, however distasteful to him personally, left his politics intact. (Akhir-i Vazamin, P. 48-52)

(39) He told the students of S.A.O. College: "I have argued with my people again and again that we should waive our right to cow-slaughter in the interests of Hindu-Muslim amity. The friendly feeling of our neighbours is of far greater value to us than an empty claim of this kind".

(40) 'Amanama, P. 169

(41) Muhammad Shibli Na'umani (1857-1914) the historian, poet and a man of letters, identified himself closely with the Aligarh movement in its earlier phase. He taught at the W.A.O. College for sixteen years and severed his connection with the institution after the death of Sayyid Ahmad. He was a careful scholar and is best remembered for his erudite portrayal of some personalities and epochs of the history of Islam. In politics he later became a left-winger and expressed his political sentiments in verse. He steadily worked to initiate the Ulema into modern learning through the academy known as Nadwat-ul-Ulama. The better known of his biographies are by Sayed Suleiman Nadvi, Mohammad Nohdi and S.M. Kkrham.

point in Sayyid Ahmad’s progress towards diehardism, though he does not single out Mr. Beck as the villain of the piece. It is, however, more appropriate to draw the line in Sayyid Ahmad’s career at 1870 instead of 1884 as would appear from the evidence adduced in these pages. (Before that year his appeals were invariably addressed to his ‘countrymen’ and after it to his ‘community’ alone). Sayyid Ahmad’s inconsistencies and contradictions can be easily resolved if we bear in mind that he was not a ‘democrat’ or a ‘nationalist’, as we understand these terms. He did toy with ‘democratic’ ideas for some time, but they never really pierced the armour of his aristocratic conservatism.

Sayyid Ahmad’s Punjab utterances read like the valedictory address of a good-will mission. But a careful perusal of his writings and speeches would reveal that he never accepted “Hindu-Muslim unity as a fait accompli. Again and again he exhorted the two peoples to cultivate mutual trust and tolerance. In this alone lay their salvation. Too beside those who sowed dissensions between them. The two communities are inseparably enrobed together. Religion is personal, but our humanity is common. We live together, suffer together and die together. Let us behave as charitable neighbours.

The charge that Sayyid Ahmad’s distrust of popular institutions was altogether Beck-begotten is belied by his observations (quoted earlier) on the Local Boor’s Bill (1883) in the Supreme Legislative Council, where, at his instance, the device of nomination was introduced to rectify the injustice to Muslims under the elective system. The inability of the competitive examinations to produce the right type of administrator in the Indian conditions can be read in his critique of the Indian Revolt written as far back as 1859. His opposition to the Congress was forthright and easily intelligible to any one familiar with the working of his mind.

(43) Modern Islam in India, P.25
(44) PP.65-66 above.
(45) P. 66 above.
(46) P. 81 above.
(47) PP.62-64 above.
It is unfair to charge Sayyid Ahmad, as Tufail Ahmad does, with abandoning views (about the desirability of popular elections and competitive examinations) at a certain date (i.e. 1884) which he had never actually held. However, a hardening of his views is unmistakable towards the close of the eighties. The fact is that he had outlived his age. The India that he had known was slipping away from under his feet. Things were moving forward but not in the manner he would have them go. New movements were rising and gathering momentum. Even if he was unable to gauge their depth he comprehended their meaning and, therefore, receded into his native conservatism. The rise and growth of Hindu Nationalism, the highly provocative anti-Muslim hymns of hate on the tongues of Tilak's followers and the bitterly aggressive tone of the Bengali Hindu Press towards the Muslims, provoked a pointed statement of his views. And even if the responsibility for reorientating Sayyid Ahmad's politics be laid at Mr. Beck's door, the latter had the ineradicable logic of facts on his side.

It will be of some interest to note that Governor-General Dufferin was deeply impressed by the impelling nature of the changes coming over the politics of India. He wrote:

"The task of administration is becoming every year more difficult and complicated... from the pressure... of a very able, intelligent and respectful educated class of natives. (Letter to Lord Russell quoted in the Life of Lord Dufferin, Vol.2, pp.162-63). Continuing he said:

"Unpleasant incidents occur daily, so that you have no sooner patched up a hole in one part of the kettle than another shows itself on the opposite side". (Ibid, p.163)

On this point the following observations of Mr. B.C. Pal, who had been in the vanguard of the Indian Nationalist movement, will be read with interest:

"I still remember the memorable utterance of Sir Sayyid Ahmad at a reception held in his honour at the house of Babus Fyari Mohan and Hari Mohan Roy, in Amherst Street, when the Sayyid was on a visit to Calcutta in 1876 or 1877, in which he compared the two hands of a man. It is notorious how rapidly this spirit and attitude was changed and the revered Sayyid openly set himself up as an antagonist to the Indian Nationalist Movement, then represented by the Indian National Congress. We attributed it at the time to the influence of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy. That influence was not doubt at work.....The Pan-Islamic spirit was at least partly responsible for it". (Nationality and Empire, pp.385-86).
In spite of the fact that the Muslim community is largely influenced by caste practices derived from its long contact with Hinduism, assimilation has not been effected by time and they remain two distinct social systems with different scriptures, heroes and outlooks upon life.

The ingrained Hindu fidelity to caste has proved fatal to the concept of Indian nationality. Sayyid Ahmad understood this fully, scrupulously respected the caste-taboos of his compatriots and never thought of riding roughshod over them. The school he helped to establish at Chasipur was intended to admit and instruct ru-ils irrespective of caste. Nothing the might outrage caste prejudice was permitted, "otherwise all scholars were (50) to be treated equally". During his visit to Lahore in 1884, a number of Hindus urged upon him the desirability of extending the scope of the (51) Muhammedan Civil Service Fund to enable the comparatively poor but promising Hindu youth to proceed to England to take the Civil Service Examination. He, however, pleaded his inability to help on the ground that a Hindu crossing the waters was ostracised, never to be received back into the caste fold.

That he never regarded Hindus and Muslims as one people will be evident from the following passage in his treatise on the Indian Revolt. He charged the British with the error of packing two discordant elements together in the units of the Indian Army.

"When Nadir Shah conquered Khurasan and became the master of the two kingdoms of Persia and Afghanistan, he invariably kept the two armies at equal strength....When the Persian army attempted to rise, the Afghan army was at hand to quell the rebellion, and vice versa. The English did not follow this precedent in India.....Government certainly did put the two antagonistic races into the same regiment....It was only natural to expect that a feeling of friendship and brother
sprung up between men of a regiment constantly rubbing shoulders together and thus the difference which exists between the Hindus and the Muhammadans in these regiments been almost entirely smoothed away.  

The advice smacks of the well-known imperialist dictum 'Divide and rule' and is thoroughly Machiavellian in toto. It may be conceded that the note is not quite representative of the man; it is, nevertheless, the unsophisticated expression of an innate conviction of his pre-public career. In his "Bijnour Rebellion", published immediately after the Mutiny, he addressed the people of Bijnour thus: "Citizens of Bijnour! Recently your district passed through three chases. For some days there was utter chaos...it was dangerous to travel from one village to another. Power was, then, captured by Muslim nawabs...You have seen the results. Numerous Hindus were taken prisoner and slain. Landlords were expropriated and exiled. In between the two periods of Muslim ascendency, sovereignty was wielded by Hindus and you also tasted the Hindu rule. That did they do to Muslims? They plundered Muslim homes, burnt Muslim villages and dishonoured Muslim women. But no one, Hindu or Muslim, was hurt, in the least, during fifty-four years' British rule". That he was frankly pessimistic about the prospects of Indian unity is clear from his assertion that India could never be ruled by Indians and yet remain peaceful. He also repeatedly referred to the certainty of India reverting to 'state of nature' in the event of British withdrawal.

The inside story of Sayid Ahmad's relations with the other community can best be studied with reference to the linguistic controversy which raged with unabated fury from his day till half a century after his death.

(53) Risala Asbab-i-Baghvat-i-Hind, PP.57-58. The army reorganisation of 1851 seems to have been carried out in accordance with this suggestion "Great care has been taken by observing a wise distribution in regard to the contingents, to render any combination geographically difficult and indeed impossible by reason of the barriers of caste and race". (Hunter, Sir K.W., India under the Queen etc., PP.59-60).

(54) Bijnour Rebellion, PP.142-43
(55) Hafiz's Lectures, P.168
(56) Bijnour Rebellion, P.94
He broke many a lance with Hindu publicists, and it was during this debate that he was driven to the gloomy belief that Hindu-Muslim unity was a forlorn hope.

The following narrative follows the account of the highlights of the dispute given by Sayyid Ahmad’s biographer, Al-Muṣṭaf Aḥmad Bālī.

Ever since 1835, Urdu had served as the court language and the common medium of communication in the Punjab, North Western Provinces and Bihar. Regarding it as a relic of Muslim domination, the Hindus desired to be rid of it. In an organised move in this direction was launched from Benares in 1867. A cultural centre in the city took the lead. A vast network of associations, societies and groups with different names, but the one object of supplanting Urdu with Hindi sprang up throughout these provinces. A central office was opened at Allahabad to plan, coordinate and direct the activities of these satellites, and, in some cases directly affiliated bodies. Sayyid Ahmad viewed these developments with undisguised misgiving and felt that they assured ill for the future; in the face of such a

(57) Hayat-ı-Jawād, Part I, PP.140-41. M. Tufail Ahmad’s otherwise detailed account avoids all reference to this matter. A fuller account of the Hindu propaganda in favour of Hindi, which formed part of a larger revivalist movement, will also be found in the discourses of the French Orientalist, M. Caron de Tassy, translated from French into Urdu. The collections of his addresses are entitled “Ag-ī-lat-ı-Caron de Tassy” and “Khutbat-ı-Caron de Tassy.” Particular reference should be made to pp.752-774 of the latter volume.

This author speaks of the Hindu zealots as attempting to revive the Middle Ages in India (Khutbat, P.753) and asserts that Hindus are highly prejudiced against Urdu in their patriotic fervour, they are out to undo everything that could possibly remind them of Muslim rule. (Ibid, PP.752-53).

The number of Hindi publications was on the increase and many Urdu books were being issued in Hindi version. (Ibid, P.633) The first standard work on Hindi Grammar was published from Benares in which its Christian author expressed the opinion that the use of Urdu was confined to Muslims alone. (Kanālī, PP.24-25).

Rahul Shriv Prasad, a great protagonist of Hindi, advocated that only three languages (i.e. English, Sanskrit and Hindi) need be taught in India. (Ibid, P.46).

The supporters of Hindi argued that its adoption as the court language would greatly benefit the court-attending Hindus of rural areas who could not understand the legal terminology of Arabic and Persian derivation. (Ibid, PP.15-16) and that it would make forgeries impossible. (Ibid, P.161). They also derided the Urdu script as indecipherable and bearing a marked resemblance to the complicated Chinese script! (Khutbat, P.755).
cultural fissure, he thought, the two communities would inevitably fall apart. His conversation with an English civilian, Mr. Shakespeare, on the subject runs as follows:

"...In the course of my talk on Muslim education, Mr. Shakespeare astonishingly interjected 'How is that? I never heard you talk of Muslims alone! I have known you to be all along interested in the welfare of both communities equally! I told him that the current disputes had convinced me of the futility of expecting the two communities to join hands on any issue whatever.... At present the danger is almost imperceptible. But disruptive elements are bound to triumph in the long run. Those who live after me will bear me out. On my own part, I can clearly read the writing on the wall..."

About the same time the cause of Urdu received a serious set-back in Bihar. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal ordered the replacement of Urdu by the Bhari language, written in Faithi script, in the courts of Bihar. The immediate apparent cause was his failure to understand the high-sounding and figurative vocabulary of an Urdu address presented to him on behalf of the Scientific Society of Benazalpur. His honour declared that an "unintelligible" language like Urdu was administratively inconvenient and must be given up forthwith. Some sections of people in Bihar, mostly Muslim, vainly endeavoured to get the order annulled. This initial success gave a fillip to Hindu efforts. In the late sixties and off and on till the nineties, mass meetings were held in the North Western

Provinces and the Punjab; memorials signed by thousands of Hindus praying

(58)Reported by himself to his biographer, Altaf Husain Walji.
(59)Hayat-i-Ja'eed, Part I, P.140
(60)This Lieutenant-Governor stated his views on the subject in a minute which read as follows:

“A few days ago when I visited Bihar I found a hybrid language flourishing in that province. It is taught in the schools and its terminology has found way into our legal enactments.....It is a highly artificial language.....I have never heard a more unnatural language spoken.....It is called Urdu.....the term defies definition.....Urdu is the language of Delhi harlotries. It cannot be allowed to become the common language of the country. I am determined to stop its teaching in schools to the limit of my authority". (Translated from Urdu. The Quarterly Urdu, April, 1950, P.52).
for the abolition of Urdu were submitted to Government. For years public controversy dragged on between Sayyid Ahmad and the sponsors of the Allahabad Association. Even in his last illness, the dying leader had to wield his pen in defence of Urdu to prove its eminent serviceability as a language against its rival.

The language controversy came to engage the whole of Sayyid Ahmad's mind. His Institute Gazette, which had been started in 1866 in order to educate the country in the politics of England, the Empire and the world at large, was silent on these subjects in 1869, and its pages were entirely filled with the Urdu-Hindi controversy. He thus wrote to W. Mehd Ali in a remarkable letter from London in 1869.

"It is disquieting for me to learn that on Babu Shiv Prasad's initiative Hindus are determined to discard the Urdu language and the Persian script. These are a precious legacy of our glorious past. We cannot agree to their supersession. I also understand that Hindu members of the Scientific Society are asking for the publication of its journal in Hindi instead of Urdu, and also desire the translations to be made in Hindi. This is the way to a rift. If it comes to be, it would open an unending vista of split and strife between Hindus and Muslims. The rupture would never be healed. The two communities would be irrevocably rent asunder....So far so good. I am quite confident that if the two peoples ordered their affairs separately, Muslims stand to gain everything and Hindus to lose much...."

In visualising Hindus and Muslims parting company to put their respective houses in order Sayyid Ahmad revealed a striking premonition of momentous historic developments.

The importance of the language-script question is apt to be overlooked in the political conflicts between the communities. The linguists tell us that "Every social differentiation gives rise to special ideas and enhance social diversity."

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"national consciousness sees in the national language the principal traditional bond of the community, the means of educating people to solidarity, and a symbol of national personality". Every script, moreover is characteristic of the group mind. As already noticed, Sayyid Ahmad reacted sharply to the Hindu attempt at undermining the status of Urdu. The Government resolution of 1900, permitting the use of Hindi in legal documents earned its authors Hindu gratitude in profusion, but left the Muslims shaken and shattered. The Muslim political activity visible at the opening of this century was almost entirely due to the feeling of humiliation and resentment at this decision. The suggestion to organise Muslims under a revived Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association was abandoned in the face of certain difficulties, mostly financial. After a period of indecision the All-India Muslim League was founded at Dacca. This was a purely political organisation which for the first time gave the Indian Muslims a common political platform, and owed its inception mainly to the anti-Urdu regulation.

The Hindus of Upper India fought for the legal position of Hindi in courts, administration and schools for close on two generations after Sayyid Ahmad's death. Not only that. They have also been seeking to rid their language of all foreign admixtures. Jealousy of Islamic influences has been most marked. Writers of Bengali, Marathi and Hindi have been systematically eliminating from their writings words of Muslim origin. This literary purism is plainly inspired by political motives.

Thus it is a superficial reading of history to suggest, as Surrendranath Bannerjea does, that the Hindu-Muslim question is purely the legacy of the 1905 Partition of Bengal.

(65) Ibid., p. 87
(66) Ruh-i-Raushan Mustaqbil, p. 26
(67) Musalmannon Ka Raushan Mustaqbil, pp. 351-52
(68) A'malnama, p. 126
(69) An article by Dr. Sayed Mahmud in the Statesman, dated the 16th July, 1949, p. 6
(70) Statesman, dated the 17th July, p. 6
(71) A Nation in making, P. 124
Writing in 1920, Professor R.N. Gilchrist, who drew upon his immense (72) erudition to expound the "constructive side of Indian nationality", declare "that though the normal bases of Western nationality may be absent in Indi it may be possible to trace certain threads which, woven together, may serve to bind the various antagonisms of India together at no distant (73) future" and found religion and language to be the two main obstacles to this consummation.

"That politics and language are closely connected in India needs no (74) demonstration". "National Unity, if it is to be more than the ramshackle unity of Austria-Hungry where the oath of allegiance was administered in (75) eight different languages, must have a common medium of expression". He deals with this difficulty in a long argument and concludes that "in a common language...will be found one element of Indian unity" and indicates that language to be English: this will serve to unify the Empire as well (76) as mankind.

Coming to religion he says: "I repeat that religion is the central (77) antinomy of India". "The Hindu writer or politician almost invariably speaks of the future India as a Hindu India. I could fill this book with quotations from speeches in various Councils and Congresses, from pamphlet books and articles, in which Hindu speakers or writers envisage a future (78) India as Hindu India".

But facts do not altogether point that way..."there are many Hindus of lower classes whose Hinduism contains considerable flavour of Mohamadanism...many Mohamadan converts from Hinduism have preserved (72) The monograph entitled, "Indian Nationality".

(72) P. 56
(73) P. 56
(74) P. 65
(75) P. 64
(76) P. 82
(77) P. 105
(78) P. 92
much of their "Hinduism". Professor Gilchrist treats this and certain other facts of economic life as having superseded social or religious differences.

But realities are too hard to be brushed aside so lightly, and the author writes in despair: "In India the two religions are so opposed in creed and religious institutions that it may be almost hopeless to find a meeting place for national fusion".

This, however, does not discourage the Professor: he explores the subject with unlimited patience and consoles himself with the idea that after all "the antagonisms of race, language, religion and social class are set off by a common government, equality before law, a recognised system of rights, and organisations, both local and central, which help to bring before and keep before the people the common interests on which the state and government rest". But even if these factors do not help evolve an Indian nationality, a time may come when the future India is "so industrial that race, creed, politics and everything else were swallowed up in Trade Unions, and Unions of Trade Unions".

It is not difficult to see that this argument only seeks to prop up the concept of Indian nationality on the crutches of an industrial revolution not very far removed in point of time from an international proletarian revolution!
Chapter VI.

The Separatist Tendencies.

(1) It was about the year 1870 that Sayyid Ahmad embarked upon the educational, social and religious renovation of the Muslim community stricken with frustration, defeatism and despair. He devoted himself almost exclusively to their welfare, but there was nothing exclusive about his methods. It would be useful to re-emphasise that "his intellectual starting point is the backward and impoverished condition of the Muslims." Given the blessings of peace, good fellowship, a steady dissemination of western education, tempered by religion and a growing infiltration of scientific culture, he believed, the millennium would usher itself. In his public career there is nothing to show that he harboured ill-will against any other community. He finds him at pains to correct the impression that his College was founded "to mark a distinction between the Hindus and the Mohammadans". It was only the poverty and degradation of his people that had led him to make special arrangements for them. Just as a dutiful gardener will take extra pains to dress a piece of virgin soil, he would see to it that the "diseased" and "decaying" element in society (i.e., the Muslim) was helped towards recovery. But that he was unaware of the centrifugal forces at work in his time: he was very much alive to their reality, condemned them unequivocally and predicted the hazards that lay ahead.

(2) It is true that he would not set the Muslims "over and against" any other community, but the germs of Muslim separatism are latent in all his great activities. Of course, the Muslims were a recognised "religio-

(3) Sayyid Ahmad wrote in an essay: "India is inhabited by two peoples: Hindu and Muslim. It is in their interest that the two flourish side by side. The country will be hurt if one of them outpaces the other in the race for progress." (Nasemin-i-Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq, P.97)
political" entity even before his day; as a community they had been victim-
ed after 1857, and, again, as a community they had been admitted back into grace after 1870. Sayyid Ahmad threw into sharp relief the Muslim grievances against Authority, defined their hopes and fears, prescribed the pattern of their political behaviour, ventured the religion of what he believed to be its accretions, laid down the guiding principles of the education they could receive without damning their souls, made them conscious of their great past, and urged them to work out their salvation by sturdy self-reliance. In all this he had to encounter strong opposition; the theologians rejected his 'materialistic' interpretation of religion; the orthodox abhorred his 'heretical' admiration of Western education and culture; the politically irreconcilable scorned his enthusiastic praise of the virtues of the British rule. The masses were, at the best, apathetic to his programme of social and educational reorganisation. Nevertheless, his influence was decisive and his ideology found widespread acceptance.

The separatist tendencies that he initiated can be discerned in all fields of his activity. We shall start with the finding of the 'Committee for the better diffusion and advancement of learning among the Mohammadans of India', sponsored by himself and consisting of his most loyal lieutenants. He rendered it secretarial assistance, guide its deliberations and shaped its conclusions. Consequently, the record of its proceedings bears a profound impress of his convictions. This Committee painfully recognised the fact that the proportion of Muslim pupils receiving instruction in Government schools and colleges was much less than what was warranted by their population figures and that Muslim parents were reluctant to send their children to these institutions because their curriculum did not include religious instruction. They were further of opinion that the Muslims should not look up to Government to

(4)PP. 4-5
supply this want. An appropriate system of education to cater for the special needs of the community should be devised by, and its management vested in, the Muslims themselves. Of course, religious instruction would be given its proper place in this arrangement. A grounding in religion was indispensable because Western education invariably included diabolic Sayyid Ahmad told the Committee that he had yet to set his eyes upon an educated young man bearing respect for his religion.

The absence of religious education was just one of the reasons that kept the Muslims away from schools. A host of other prejudices, some legitimate and some otherwise, worked in the same direction and with the same results. It was, for instance, widely held that the study of English was forbidden to the faithful, that Muslim teachers and scholars were prevented from offering Friday prayers, that the schools were staffed almost entirely by non-Muslims, whose severity towards Muslim pupils made matters worse, that government schools corrupted the manners and morals of the pupils, that purely secular education was distasteful to Muslims as it ran counter to their national habits and customs, that boys were made to read books containing scornful references to their religion and holy places, that the mode of education was lifeless and insipid, that it brought no material gain to its recipients and that they despised the study of impious sciences on conscientious grounds.

After an exhaustive examination of the state-administered education from the Muslim point of view, Sayyid Ahmad’s Committee emphasised the

(5)PP. 7-8

(6)While conceding the imperative necessity of religious instruction, Sayyid Ahmad rated the current text-books on theology and religion very low as they took no account of the observed facts of the Universe and man’s mastery over nature made possible by the rapid advance of the physical sciences; their narrow dogmatism would still further accentuate irreligion and disbelief. (Ibid, p.10)

(7)P. 13
(8)P. 13
(9)P. 14
(10)P. 12
(11)P. 22
(12)P. 23
urgency of dissociating the state from education. The existing connexion between the two was the source of almost all the evils recounted above. It was preposterous to saddle the Government with the responsibility for educating the people; its interference should be restricted to mere superintendence.

The Committee who looked upon education as the process of fitting the individual for the business of life observed that "education cannot always be one and the same, nor is it possible that any large community should have only one particular and in view; the different classes constituting a large community having always different objects and pursuits". The flexibility and adjustability implied in this view is necessarily absent from a formal, uniform and departmentalised system where the state accept liability for educating the masses.

At this stage the question may well be asked: Why was the source of the Hindu goad, a poison for the Muslim mender? Why was it that the education which stuck in Muslim throats, had been willingly swallowed by the Hindus? Dr. Hunter returns the answer that the pliant and versatile adaptable Hindu was not agitated by the scruples which had tormented the Muslim. Under the Muslim supremacy, Government employment depended upon a knowledge of Persian, and he acquired Persian; under the British raj, it depended upon familiarity with English, and he learnt English. His conception of religion is radically different from that of his Muslim neighbour, "instead of an indivisible and regular system which occupies the whole extent of the believing mind", the Hindu religion is "composed of a thousand loose parts, and the servant of the gods was at liberty to define the degree and measure of his religious faith". The Muslims had a way of life to

(13) Ibid., pp.33-34
(14) Ibid., p.53
(15) The Indian Musalmans, p.174
(16) Ibid., p.18
preserve and an ideology to foster. Therefore, no wonder, that they
loathed, spurned and resisted a system which made "no concession to their
prejudices; made no provision for what they esteemed their necessities;
which was in its nature unavoidably antagonistic to their interests, and
at variance with all their social traditions". That is why Sayyid Ahmad's
Committee implored the state to divest itself of its educational and
instructional functions. It was in this context that Sayyid Ahmad told
the Education Commission of 1882, that "the use of the word ourselves in
any national sense, with reference to the people of India, was out of
place."

Ten years earlier (1872) he had written: "As regards the present
system of education, so eagerly embraced by the Hindus, but so repugnant
to the ideas of Mohammedans, it must be borne in mind how wide is the
difference between the two races...it is not to be expected that
Mohammedans who are made of such sterner material than Hindus, will
adapt themselves so readily to the various phases of this changing age".
And when Dr. Hunter pleaded for the conduct of the Muslim education
"upon our own plan" which should render that "religion perhaps less
sincere, but certainly less Catolic", Sayyid Ahmad observed that if
the Government did not deal openly and fairly with the Mohammedan subject
and decided to deal with them in an "underhand manner" recommended by
Dr. Hunter, he foresew much trouble both in his day and thereafter.

(17)Ibid., pp.179-80
(18)Life and Work of Sir Sayad Ahmad Khan, p.219
(19)Review on Hunter's Indian Musalmans, p.51
(20)The Indian Musalmans, p.210
(21)Review on Hunter's Indian Musalmans, p.52
as a forum of discussion of the educational problems confronting the Indian Muslims and propounding their solutions. It was permanently located at Aligarh and held eleven annual sessions during the lifetime of its founder. Its objects included the advancement of Western knowledge, the revival of the decaying academies of Oriental and Islamic learning, supervising or reinforcing the religious instruction imparted in English schools and reviving the indigenous Muslim (elementary) educational system and schools devoted to the teaching and memorizing of the Quran.

The critic points out that the Conference was parochial, Aligarh-dominated and that it burked most of the issues it ought to have faced squarely. But an examination of its record does not bear out the charge in its entirety. The Conference attracted hundreds of enthusiastic Muslims from far-flung corners of the country and brought them together in a common effort. Utterances from its rostrum, consultations in committee conclaves and informal conversations among the delegates, developed a sentiment of unity, a community of outlook, and identity of interest and a feeling of communal solidarity. It was thus a "focus of practical effort for progressive Islam in India". A good slice of the subscriptions collected at its sessions went to subsidize the education of the impecunious. It also gave impetus to research on subjects pertaining to the history and culture of Islam, and published valuable monograph on Jisya, the library of Alexandria, the rights of the non-Muslim subject of a Muslim state, the life of Al-Biruni, etc. etc. Lectures and speeches:

(22) Hayat-i-Jawed, Part I, PP.257-58.
(23) Musalmanon Ka Raushan 'ustaqbil, P.236
(24) Addressing the first Conference he said: "so far this has been our situation: although we are said to belong to the same community, yet the people living at one place are unacquainted with (the conditions of) people living at another, so that we are, so to speak, strangers to each other....We have not an institution where people may form time to time, come together from various provinces in order to hear about the conditions of each other....so that a national unity, or, I should rather say, a national brotherhood may be born, in spite of our being a community consisting of different races....With these considerations in mind it has been planned that every year people from various towns and provinces should assemble to study the education and the progress of the Muslims". (Najmu's Lectures, P.215)
(25) Hayat-i-Jawed, Part I, PP.262-63
(26) Ibid, P.263
delivered by M. Nazir Ahmad, Zaka Ullah, Mehdi Ali and Sayed Mahmud at its various sessions were fine oratorical performances, and constitute a valuable addition to Urdu literature. The Conference exerted itself successfully to get Cox's anti-Muslim history text-book excluded from the courses of reading prescribed by the Allahabad University, led the agitation against the elimination of Persian from the University curriculum and procured Government consent to the introduction of religi

(27) Nazir Ahmad (1831-1913). Born of poor parents, he originally belonged to a small village in the district of Bijnour but came over to Delhi at the age of fourteen and completed his education in the famous Delhi College. For some time, he worked as Deputy Inspector of Schools in the Punjab but was soon promoted Inspector (for saving the life of an Englishwoman in the Mutiny) and transferred to Allahabad where besides his ordinary official duties, he assisted in the translation of the Indian Penal Code, adding many ingeniously-coined terms to the Urdu language. Like his distinguished contemporaries, Mehdi Ali and Mushtaq Husain, he filled several important posts in Hyderabad and ultimately rose to the membership of the board of revenue.

Nazir Ahmad was a gifted writer. He wrote novels (depicting the virtues and vices of the middle-class Muslim society of Delhi), books on theology and religion but his great literary achievement was the Urdu translation of the Qur'an, published in 1886. One of his writings offended a section of conservative theologians who had it burnt at a gathering of the divines in Delhi. He had an extraordinary memory and was a great orator. His speeches attracted huge gatherings.

After his retirement from Hyderabad he worked as honorary professor of Arabic in the St. Stephen's College, Delhi, and also taught pupils at home.

(28) Zaka Ullah (1832-1910). A man of great piety and massive learning, was born in a family who had, generation after generation, given tutors to the royal house of Delhi. At the age of twelve he joined the old Delhi College and specialised in Mathematics as he grew older. He brought out his first Mathematical work in Urdu when he was only seventeen.

In the Mutiny his ancestral home, along with many others, was demolished for "military reasons" and the whole family was uprooted. Zaka Ullah taught Science, Urdu, Arabic and Persian at Muir College, Allahabad, where he built up a reputation for careful scholarship. However, his life work is to be found in his writings rather than in his teaching career. He firmly held the opinion that higher Western education could be carried on in Indian languages without insistence upon English as the only medium of instruction: "We must not become foreigners to our own people", he used to say. He was an untiring and prodigious writer and the greater part of his leisure was occupied in preparing a series of text-books in Science and Mathematics.

(29) Hayat-i-Javed, Part I, P.263
(30) Ibid., P.263. 'The Muslim nationality will not survive the suppression of Arabic and Persian'. (Khutut-i-Sir Sayyid, P.179)
instruction in Government schools on certain conditions. Mr. Reck's proposal for a Muslim educational census was carried at the Conference in 1897, but much keenness was not evinced in surveying this useful field.

**Politics.** When we enter the field of politics we encounter an earnest attempt to draw a cordon sanitaire round the Muslim community and to isolate it from other sections of the people on account of its peculiar circumstances. The course that Sayyid Ahmad held in politics has been noticed in an earlier chapter. Few relevant items will be added here to complete the picture. Sayyid Ahmad viewed the Congress demands as premature; in the absence of Hindu-Muslim unity it was futile to expect spectacular results from the political movement. He advised his community to keep on the right side of the Rubicon and never seek alliance with the forces of disaffection. (Of course a quid pro quo was expected for this attitude). The Muslims were a viable but poverty-stricken minority, backward in education. The weaker must be protected against the chicanery of the well-connected. In institutional terms that meant a vote against parliamentary democracy in a country where electoral majorities and minorities are unalterably fixed (being based on religious distinctions) and the system of competitive examinations where the book learning of an "unmanly" people would place them at an undue advantage. If the

(31)Nayat-i-Jawed, Part I, P.151. The Government agreed to the appointment of Muslim teachers of theology in Government schools provided their salaries were paid by the Muslims themselves. Such teachers were actually engaged in a few schools but their salaries remained in arrears and the scheme was abandoned. (Nayat-i-Jawed, P.151)

(32)We wrote in an article: "I seriously pondered over the suitability (or otherwise) of the representative system of government in India long before the Congress took up the matter. Having carefully gone through the (clearly explained) opinions of John Stuart Mill, I am convinced that where the majority vote is the decisive factor in a political system, it is essential for the electors to be united by the ties of race, religion, language, customs, culture and historical traditions. In the absence of these factors, representative government is practicable and useful; in their absence, it would only injure the well-being and tranquility of the land". (Afzal Uzzaman, P.61)

Mr. Time wrote to Sir A. Calwin that Sayyid Ahmad's opposition to the Congress was not of much consequence, holding that "excluding an inappreciable fraction, the whole culture and intelligence of the country was favourable to the Congress and that the opponents of the Congress were "a few Indian Cassilas, honest but wanting in understanding". (Allan O'Hume, P.71)
legislatures were popularly elected, the incidence of authority would always be biased against Muslims, because of the numerical Hindu superiority. Charity is not the rule of politics. The Hindu votes would invariably go to Hindu candidates. Likewise, Muslim voters would vote for their own co-religionists. Calculating on the basis of universal suffrage, the proportion of Hindu legislators to their Muslim colleagues would be four to one "because their population is four times as numerous. Therefore, we can prove by mathematics that there will be four votes for the Hindus to every one for the Mohammedans....It would be like a game of dice, in which one man had four dice, and the other only one". Things would be still worse for Muslims if the franchise were restricted to the holders of property or earners of income. They are a paupered lot suffering from a chronic indigence. Therefore, the proportion of qualified Muslim voters would be far less than their actual numerical proportion in

(33) Sir Henry Cotton who castigated Sayyid Ahmad as a turn-coat in politics and whose experience of Indian affairs was unrivalled in his own day admits that the system of election was unsuited to Indian conditions because "it has proved a practical obstacle to the success of local self-government....It has proved on occasions to be the source of racial and religious quarrel. It is a practical difficulty in the way of providing adequate representation of minorities, such as Mohammedans for instance; a difficulty which exists in a greater degree in India than in most countries." (New India, P.175). The subsequent extension of representative system in the country did not improve matters for Muslims. In 1916, for instance, Mian Fazl-i-Rusain decided to enter the Punjab Legislative Council. At once he "came up against the sad realities of political life for a Muslim in India. "An Indian Muslim in the Punjab", he observed later "may be intensely national, sincerely non-communal, not only in thought but in action, in all his dealings and none may point out a single incident to the contrary and yet when the occasion arises the non-Muslim leaders and the public would not prefer him especially if he happens to be capable and strong. Of nearly thirty Hindu leaders, some of them of the most eminent position, and for whom he had the highest regard, he found only three who were prepared to support him, while the other twenty-seven, with profuse apologies and regrets, withdrew their support, saying: 'You are the best man, and we trust you will succeed, but we very much regret we are not free to give you our vote'" (Fazl-i-Rusain, P.91). Also see Pp. 66- above.

(34) Sir Sayed Ahmad on the Mohammedans and the National Congress, PP.8-9
the total population. Not only that. Educationally the Muslims did not count for much. It would be hard to find a single Muslim with an adequate capacity or aptitude for legislative work.

The Muslims of this country are a martial race. So are the Rajputs. They are intensely proud of their war-like traditions. The swords of their ancestors "are still wet" with the blood of their enemies. They would never be governed by the Bengali who has "never seen a battle field or the mouth of a cannon", and would crawl under his chair at the sight of a table knife...."we do not live on fish, nor are we afraid of using knife and fork lest we should cut our fingers....Our nation is of the blood of those who made not only Arabia, but Asia and Europe tremble". Admittedly, the Bengalis are the best educated people in India, but nature has not endowed them with the virtues which enter into the making of successful administrators. If recruitment to services were made to depend upon the marks scored in competitive examinations, these people would monopolise "the tables of justice and authority", and it would mean the end of peace in the land. The brave Rajputs and violent Pathans would never brook the domination of the puny race of rulers discovered through bookish tests.

"Now, I ask you, O Mohammedi! weep at your condition! Have you such wealth that you can compete with the Hindus? Most certainly not. Suppose for example, that an income of Rs.5,000/- a year be fixed on, how many Mohammads will there be? Which party will have larger number of votes. In the normal case no single Mohammad will secure a seat in the Viceroy's Council". (Ibid, P.2)

In the whole nation there is no person equal to the Hindus in fitness for the work. I have worked in the Council for four years, and I have always known well that there can be no man more incompetent or worse-fitted for the post than myself....And show me the man who, when elected will leave his business and undertake the expense of living in Calcutta and Simla, leaving alone the trouble of journeys". (Ibid, PP.9-10). However, such views did not go unchallenged.

Mr. Hume wrote to Sir Auckland Colvin: "The wretched pleas of the Muslims being so inferior to Hindus that they will have no chance of a fair field is conceded to all classes and sects is monstrous. I swear that no good true Mohammad ever, if he reflected on it, would put forward so base a libel on his coreligionists". (Allan G. Hume, P.73)

Sir Sayed Ahmad on the Mohammads and the National Congress, P.12.

Op.-cit. P.8
Religion. That religion is the basic ingredient of the Muslim concept of nationality is the most recurring refrain of Sayyid Ahmad's speeches and writings. A few typical extracts will bear this out.

"Some reflection is required to grasp the nature of Muslim nationalism. From time immemorial, communities have been held together by ties of common descent or common homeland. The Prophet Mohammed obliterated all territorial and ancestral conventions and laid the foundations of a broad and enduring kinship which comprehends all those who subscribe to the formula of faith.... This tribe divines assimilates all human beings regardless of colour or place of birth."

"We Muslims should hold religion in our right hand and worldly pursuits in the left". In Islam alone lies our salvation, he told a gathering of Muslim students at Lahore, "I use the word community to include all Mussalmans. Faith in God and His Prophet and the proper observance of the precepts of the faith are the only hands that hold us together. You are irrevocably lost to us if you turn back upon religion. Have we no part or lot with transgressors or heretics even if they shine like the stars of the firmament. I want you to dive deep into European literature and sciences, but at the same time I expect you to be true to your faith". Describing the aims of the Aligarh education, he told the Educational Conference:

"Internal solidarity is the first requisite of our national well-being. It is essential for us to practise Islam. Our youth must receive instruction in the religion and its history alongside of the English education. They must be taught the postulate of Islamic brotherhood, which is the most vital and intimate part of our faith. An acquaintance with Arabic or, at least Persian, is necessary to counteract disruptive tendencies. Fraternal feeling within the group can be best

(39) Majmu'a Lectures, P.130
(40) Ibid, P.165
(41) Ibid, P.308
fostered by large numbers of students living together, eating together
and studying together. If this cannot be brought about we can neither
progress, nor prosper nor even survive as a community.

It is clear from all this that for Sayyid Ahmad religious sentiment
alone imparted cohesion and homogeneity to the fraternity. "If that
feeling ceased to exist Muslims would perish as a community". Moreover,
he set a high value on the internal unity of the faithful. Nothing
irritated him more than the attempts to fan the embers of sectarian
controversies. His College provided religious instruction to Shi'as and
Sunnis by the divines of their respective sects and its mosque is
probably the only mosque in the world where the two sects held their
congregational prayers side by side.

(The Tahzib-ul-Akhlq. This journal was started by Sayyid Ahmad
almost immediately after his return from England in 1870.) Its sub-title
"The Mohammadan Social Reformer" does not quite indicate its true
character. The vexed question relating to the reform of Muslim society
involved a discussion of religious sanctions as most of its effete
encumbrances are said to derive from the precepts of the faith; therefore
a correct appreciation of religion would serve as a powerful lever of
reform. For this reason religion figured prominently in the pages of the
Tahzib-ul-Akhlq. The reformer had to lead an offensive against the
idols of the den and the petrified folly of the ages. His attempts

(42)Mukammal Majru's, P. 514
(43)Majru'a Lectures, P. 308
(44)It had been intended in the first instance to provide separate mosque
for Shi'as and Sunnis but the idea was abandoned on the advice of
Khilifa Mohammad Hasan. Addressing the students of W.A.O. College
Sayyid Ahmad said "In offering your prayers in congregation you do
your duty to the Waker. Not only that. You furnish a practical
proof of your communal solidarity. The Shi'as and Sunnis are, in
sheer ignorance, divided over the fulfilment of this Divine obligatio
I cannot do away with this disharmony. No one can do that except the
Almighty Himself". (Mukammal Majru's, P. 527)
(45)Hayat-i-Jawed, Part I, P. 167
at a more "rational" understanding of religion (or, rather his deviation from orthodoxy) earned him the opprobrious nick-name of 'nechri' (naturalist). The controversies started by the Tahzib lingered on to counteract Sayyid Ahmad's plan of social reform and foil his scheme of education. But time worked on his side and the ugly phase soon passed away. The courageous and trenchant articles written by Sayyid and his colleagues entered into the views of an influential minority. They gave a common ideology, supplied an approach to social problems and furnished the reformist creed with its intellectual foundations. The necessity of reform came to be recognised gradually. Today, Sayyid Ahmad's essays occupy a conspicuous place in Urdu literature for the enlightening clarity with which a wide range of significant problems have been handled in them. They stimulated the growth and development of higher education in the community, contained the forces of irreligion, directed the attention of readers to the rich cultural heritage of Islam and its enduring conquests in the fields of science, literature and art, exhor
ted the Muslims to subordinate personal ends to collective interests and condemned the righteousness which placed individual salvation before the common good.

Sayyid Ahmad was not a waiter on Providence. He advised the Muslims to have their wits about them, not to look up to Government for exception indulgence, to put their shoulder to the wheel and live by their own efforts and talents. (The W.A.O. College "was the practical outcome of the principle of self-help". It was the expression in bricks and mortar of the unconquerable spirit of self-help which he kindled in their breasts.

(48) Ibid, Part II, pp.62-71
(47) A contemporary observer: "Instead of clamouring for government patronage, or cursing the change of times, Sayed Ahmad set to preaching that God will help those who help themselves, and told his co-Muslims that they would deserve to remain impoverished and slighted unless they set themselves to remedy their own condition by means of education". (The Mohammedan World of Today, P.191)
(48) Life and work of Sayed Ahmad Khan: P.251
It is not always possible to lie on the sunny side of the hedge. He would have his people face resolutely the frustrations, adversities and pressure of the times. When a member of his 'committee for the advancement and dissemination of education among the Mohammadans of India' hazarded the suggestion of pressing the Government to abolish Hindi schools in the Muslim majority areas on the ground that the study of Hindi was distasteful to the community on the whole, Sayyid Ahmad recorded an emphatic dissent which is worth reproducing in extenso:

"That for the good of the Mohammadans it would not be advisable to make everything suitable to the circumstances, that it would be apparently more beneficial that everything should turn against them, that all the village schools should be made Nagri schools, and the the language of the courts should also be Nagri, so that the conditions of the Mohammadans might come to such a pass that they would have no means left to satisfy their wants by any means whatever....they would awake from their slumbers and would make endeavours for their own welfare". He reproached the Muslims of Amritsar for their inability to finance the only Muslim school in the city and relying upon the state subsidy from Bahawalpur. In 1888 when the National Mohammadan Association of Calcutta petitioned the governor for an adequate representation of Muslims in government service, Sayyid Ahmad deprecated the move, inveighed against its sponsors, characterised it as impracticable and asserted that the only effectual and practical means of ameliorating the lot of the community was to strive hard for their educational advancement.

Finally Sayyid Ahmad sought to buttress the political and spiritual unity of the Muslims by advocating the use of Turkish dress by their elite and students. This was creating a 'stereotype', a visible symbol to produce more intra-regarding effects. Strangely enough, the adoption of

(49) Report, PP.35-36
(50) Sayyid Ahmad Khan Ka Safar Nama Punjab, P.62
(51) Quoted in Musalmanen Ka Raushan Mustaqbil, P.320
this costume was taken amiss by a section of the Anglo-Indian officials
and it is believed to have caused umbrage even to Governor-General
Dufferin.

Thus Sayyid Ahmad's task was two-fold. He pleaded for adjustment
with the new environment created by Western influences, scientific and
philosophical. With an inexhaustible energy he plunged himself into the
crucial task of "revaluation of values" for the new society that was
rising on the ashes of the old. Times had changed. But the Muslims
were slow to recognise this. He made them understand the quasi-permanent
nature of the new order. Not only that, he gave Muslims faith, self-
confidence, a way of thinking and a system of opinions. He instructed
them to leave alone all political agitation savouring of disloyalty to the
state. He held that the education imparted by the state-managed schools
was spiritually stultifying for the Muslim youth and that their education
system must be reared upon independent foundations. The Urdu language
embodied their cultural heritage and must be defended against hostile
attacks. Parliamentary democracy in a country like India, a veritable
museum of races was an anachronism and recruitment to public service bas-

(52) Addressing the College students Sayyid Ahmad declared: "Uniformity
in dress would promote unity among you. Some of you would doubt this
but it is erroneous to believe that externals have nothing to do with
the spirit. ... Appearances do have a significant influence on thought.
Two persons who communicate with each other in code gestures have
much in common and belong to the same freemasonry. Others do not
share their mutual affection and regard. Uniformity in dress would
lead to deeper understanding (among you) and more positive effort...
Educational institutions in civilised countries prescribe uniforms
for students under their care... The British officials who resented the
wish to destroy good feelings between the rulers and the ruled... We
are bound to behave as loyal subjects (to them) but they have also got
to respect our feelings on this score." (Mukammal Najma, PP.527-28)

Maulavi Abdul Haq tells us that these words were spoken at Mr.
Beck. (The Quarterly Urdu, April 1960, P.28. Also see P.108 above)

It should also be noted that the generality of the Muslims also
detested the Turkish dress in those days. One who went about in a
Fez had it snatched off his head by street urchins to the hilarious
amusement of Muslim spectators who sent out peals of laughter. Shoes
of Western type were commonly stolen away from the mosques. (Yad-i-
Ayyam, PP.37-38)
on competitive tests would have the effect of shutting out from it the educationally backward Muslims.

True that the Aligarh movement was almost entirely confined to the Punjab and the North Western provinces in the lifetime of the founder, but within a decade of his death it spread out to other parts of Muslim India and Aligarh became the "visible emblem" of Muslim hopes and desires. True also that the controversies of Sayyid Ahmad's day were being pursued at the upper level and the masses were not, for the most part, in the picture. Nevertheless, it also remains true that Sayyid Ahmad's period was the "seed time" of vast changes. It was then that the issues were framed, propositions laid down, attitudes defined and the persistent pattern of Hindu-Muslim relations cast.

Let us not make a facile assumption that Sayyid Ahmad was conscious creating the separatist movement. The contributory causes of all movements in history are found in the environment itself. Leaders are seldom aware of the full implications and possibilities of the attitude they strike and the tendencies they initiate. Movements easily overflow their original banks; sluices widen into flood-gates. Sayyid Ahmad did no more than "drive a stream of tendency" through the Muslim affairs in this sub-continent and in doing so he was making the future.

(33) Dr. J.W.S. Balfon, the author of "the Reforms and Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan" says: "Almost at the moment Indian Islam is unthinkable without (Sayyid) Ahmad Khan, and the self-consciousness and energy of present-day Pakistan are essentially the ultimate consequence of the stimulation and inspiration which he gave to his indolent community". (P.93).

"In politics he (i.e. Sayyid Ahmad) had stated that the Muslims were a nation (who could not and must not be submerged in a system of government by majority vote). The Pakistanis rightly claim him as one of the fathers of their country". (The Making of Pakistan, P.32)
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X

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