

SIR SAYYID AHMED KHAN'S  
EDUCATIONAL POLICY  
AND PROGRAMME

By

FATIMA K. RIZVI

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
of Master of Arts in the Department  
of Education, American University  
of Beirut.

June, 1965

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am grateful to Dr. M. Akrawi who kindly agreed to be my advisor and for all the help and advice he gave.

I must also thank Dr. Habib A. Kurani and Dr. Nystrom who agreed to be the members of my Thesis Committee.

I am most grateful to Mr Muzaffar Ali, Assistant Librarian, Aligarh Muslim University, who kindly lent me some collections of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's works.

I am also greatly indebted to my friends in Pakistan, especially to Miss Qaisar Sultana and Mr Moen U. Khan who did their best to provide me with the greater part of the literature I have used in writing this thesis. Unfortunately, there was extreme scarcity of printed material relevant to my topic not only in the Jaffet and Education Department Libraries, but also in other libraries and bookshops in Beirut. Without the help of these friends I would have had to give up the study. They did not confine themselves to sending me books available on the market, but borrowed for me books from private collections, some of the rare and out of print books which must have cost them a great deal of effort.

I am thankful to my husband and daughter who were

a great moral support and who kindly agreed to my leaving them in Baghdad while I worked on my thesis in Beirut. I must also thank Mr Alay Ahmed Rizvi whose kind hospitality I enjoyed during my stay in Beirut.

Beirut,  
June 1965.

FATIMA K. RIZVI

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENT .....	111
ABSTRACT .....	viii
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
. Significance of the Study	
. Limitations of the Study	
. Method of the Study	
. Sources and Material	
. Plan of the Work	
II. DECLINE OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE AND THE RISE OF BRITISH RULE .....	10
. Decline of the Mughal Empire	
. Rise of the British Rule	
III. THE REVOLT OF 1857 AND ITS AFTERMATH .....	26
. Causes of the Revolt	
. The Revolt of 1857	
. Aftermath of the Revolt	
IV. EDUCATION IN INDIA BEFORE 1857 .....	42
Education During the Later Mughals	
Education under the East India Company	
Muslims in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century	
Educational Implications of the Revolt of 1857	

V.	SAYYID AHMED KHAN AND HIS PERSPECTIVE .....	73
	Biographical Sketch	
	Sayyid Ahmed Khan - The Person (Character)	
VI.	SAYYID AHMED KHAN'S EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PROGRAMME .....	103
	Introduction	
	Sayyid Ahmed Khan's Religious Belief	
	Man and His Nature	
	The Aim of Life	
	Aims of Education	
	The Kind of Education	
	Emphasis on Higher Education	
	Technical Education	
	Education and Training	
	Self-Help in Education	
	His Plan of Education	
	Sayyid Ahmed Khan's Ideas on the Use of Vernaculars as Medium of Instruction and Education	
VII.	SAYYID AHMED KHAN'S EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS	139
	School at Ghazipur	
	The Scientific Society	
	Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq	
	Muhammadian Anglo-Oriental College	
	Muhammadian Educational Conference	
VIII.	EVALUATION OF SAYYID AHMED KHAN'S EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PROGRAMME .....	164
	Influence of Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq	
	Education as a Means to Economic Recovery	
	Education of the Young	
	Religious Education Conflict with the Popular Religious Attitudes	
	Compromise on Religious Education	
	Emphasis on Higher Education	
	Adult Education	
	Education of Women	

Independence of Thought and Action in  
Educational Matters  
Sayyid Ahmed Khan's Views on Taking  
Part in Politics  
Sayyid Ahmed Khan's Influence on Urdu  
Literature and Language  
Conclusion

BIBLIOGRAPHY ..... 210

## ABSTRACT

In the educative process the present is the most important period, but this present is the resultant of the past; hence the need to know the past. Pakistan is a very young country and can learn much from the experiences of others. Because of the many similarities between India and Pakistan we can benefit considerably from the history of education in India.

For the Muslims of the sub-continent, Sayyid Ahmed Khan was the greatest reformer who tried to bring about healthy changes in almost all walks of life. In the present study only those policies and programmes of Sayyid Ahmed Khan have been dealt with which had a direct bearing on education. Reference to his religious, social, economic and political policies is made only when these had educational repercussions.

The study of his educational policies and programmes could not be exhaustive because of the limited resources at the disposal of the present writer. As far as possible effort has been made to study Ahmed Khan through his own writings and through his practical achievements. Some reliance on secondary sources, however, was inevitable.

The present study is a historical analysis of Ahmed Khan's educational policies and programme. Study of the circumstances that turned a sub-judge from an aristocratic family into a great reformer was also necessary. To understand the religious, social, moral, economic and political degeneration of the Muslims at the time when Ahmed Khan appeared on the scene it was necessary to go back into the history of the Indian sub-continent, to study the downfall of the Mughal Empire and the rise of the British Rule. Failure of the Revolt of 1857 resulted in the end of Muslim rule in India and the establishment of foreign rule. It had not only political but also economic, social, moral and educational consequences. To understand Sayyid Ahmed Khan's policies one has to know India of his days and to understand, to some extent, how it came to be so. One has to know the causes of the degeneration of the society of his days to understand the significance of his actions and his limitations.

Following this background description, Ahmed Khan's educational activities and achievements which were spread over more than three decades were analyzed. An attempt has been made to give a brief account of his major aims, his educational outlook and his enterprises. Finally an humble attempt has been made to evaluate Ahmed Khan's various policies



and programmes. The intellectual and educational activity he caused in his own time, and the great influence he had on later generations is so great that it needs a separate study by itself. In the present study an attempt has been made to give a brief account of Ahmed Khan's influence in his own days and on later generations.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The partition of the Indian subcontinent and the creation of Pakistan on the grounds that the Muslims had a right for a separate homeland for the preservation and advancement of their ideological and cultural heritage, was thought a political impossibility only three decades ago. Apparently, nobody had even dreamt of it fifty years ago. But if we carefully study the history of the sub-continent we will find that the idea of Indian Muslims being a separate nation had already taken birth in the second half of the nineteenth century. We also come to know that it was Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan who heralded the emergence of the Muslims as a definite and separate political force. He was the first to propagate the idea of 'nation' in the modern sense for the Indian Muslims. Before him when Muslims thought of 'Qaum', it meant Mughal, Shaikh, Pathan or Sayyid. "It was Sayyid Ahmed Khan who broke these artificial barriers and gave the Muslims of India the concept of being a nation and of national progress and

welfare."<sup>1</sup>

In 1877, when his periodical, Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq<sup>2</sup> was discontinued after seven years of publication, in an article in the last issue of the periodical, Sayyid Ahmed Khan himself wrote:

To a great extent Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq has achieved ... its aims. If we have not been able to create love of nation, national honour and self-honour in our nation at least we have introduced these words in the Urdu language."<sup>3</sup>

Referring to Muslims in India, Hali<sup>4</sup> says, "the wide sense in which the words nation, nationality, love of the nation and national honour are used today, are taught by Sir Sayyid through his writings in the newspaper of the Society<sup>5</sup> and later through Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq."<sup>6</sup>

Another quotation from a contemporary writer, Dr. Mohammad Ashraf, who is a distinguished old boy of the Aligarh University, may not be out of place. In his article "Aligarh and Siasat-i-Hind" (Aligarh and Indian Politics), referring to Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan

<sup>1</sup> M. Noman (ed.), Our Struggle 1857-1947 (Karachi, Pakistan: Pakistan Publications, 1947), p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> A periodical started by Sayyid Ahmed Khan for the social and moral reformation. For details see infrapp. 144-149

<sup>3</sup> M. Ismail (ed.), Maqalat-i-Sir Sayyid (Urdu; a collection of articles, addresses and reports written by Sayyid Ahmed Khan), (Lahore: Majlis Taraqqi-i-Adab, 1962), part X, p. 61.

<sup>4</sup> Altaf Husain Hali, Hayat-i-Javid (a biography of Sayyid Ahmed Khan). For details see infra p. 57.

<sup>5</sup> Here the reference is to the Scientific Society and the Aligarh Institute Gazette, both founded by Sayyid Ahmed Khan.

<sup>6</sup> Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., p. 423.

he says,

one was the founder of Indian nationalism and the other of new Islamic nationalism... Raja Ram Mohan Roy is greatly appreciated by the Indians and they are grateful to him. The same way Pakistanis are all praises for Sayyid Ahmed Khan and are thankful to the Aligarh Movement.<sup>1</sup>

Thus a study of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's thought and achievement becomes important to every student of Pakistan.

The educational aspect of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's policy and programme is chosen purposely. For education is one of the most important means for maintaining the life of any society, and is one of the chief agencies for attaining national unity. Hence, it is through education that the ideas of Sayyid Ahmed Khan did and will influence the life of the nation. Education maybe viewed as the sum total of all cultural forces which play upon the life of the individual and the community. It consists of all those formative social and personal influences which shape and powerfully modify the ideas and conduct of individuals and groups.

The creation of Pakistan as an independent sovereign state in 1947 produced new hopes and ideals in the nation. All thoughtful citizens realized the need for, and importance of, education in helping the people take up their due place in the community of nations. No nation can march forward unless it is aware of its past, its needs and the steps to be taken

---

<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Ashraf, "Aligarh and Siasat-i-Hind", (Aligarh and Indian Politics). ed. Nasim Qureishi, Aligarh Tahrik Agaz Ta Imroz, (Lucknow, Ahab Publishers, 1960), p.172

to meet them. The success and failure of the past provide a leading light for planning the present and future. Study of Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan may not provide us with exact solutions for our present educational problems as the times have changed. Still it is surprising to note that many of our needs are more or less the same. Many of the solutions he presented and the aspects of education he emphasised are still what educationists of today are suggesting. It is true that Sayyid Ahmed Khan's policy and programme was for nineteenth century India but it certainly reflected the culture, ideals, hopes and aspirations of Muslims in the sub-continent. As it was based on Islam, its universality and everlasting aspect is bound to remain valuable. So long we in Pakistan profess to be an Islamic state, his ideals cannot be ignored as they are ideals of Islam.

In the same way his emphasis on overall development of the child and the importance he attached to environment in the educative process are also enlightening, especially to people in Pakistan. Study of foreign educationists and educational thinkers is of great use to us, but the study of those who rose from the same soil, belonged to the same culture and faced similar problems is of still greater value. Another point to note is that Sayyid Ahmed Khan not only presented his own educational thought, but his greatness lies in the fact that he was both the thinker and the

executor. For a nation of dreamers, which we are, such examples are of the greatest value.

Unfortunately after Hayat-i-Javid (1901) by one of his close friends, Altaf Husain Hali, no comprehensive study has been made of this great man. Especially no exhaustive work has been done on his educational thought in the light of his writings, speeches, and practical achievements. The present study itself is by no means exhaustive, but it is hoped that it may inspire some other student of education, particularly those who have greater access to Sayyid Ahmed Khan's work, to do further research on this subject and fill a gap in the study of education in the Indian sub-continent.

## II. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Sayyid Ahmed Khan developed his policy and programme under peculiar circumstances, which in a way were unique. Today his ideas may not seem novel but in his days they were, and so was the effect they created. Thus it is hard to compare him with any other educational figure of his own times or with that of any modern educationist.

The study has been delimited in certain respects as follows:

First, the study deals with Sayyid Ahmed Khan's educational policy and programme. Therefore, it deals with

only those aspects which have a direct bearing on education. Reference to other policies is only made if necessary for the explanation of his educational policies. The treatment of his policies and programmes is not exhaustive but limited within this framework of reference.

There is no contention to discuss at full length the multifarious policies and activities with which his life is bejewelled. No attempt has been made to philosophise Sayyid Ahmed Khan's ideas. An attempt has been made to reflect on the problems of Muslim education in India of those days, and what practical steps Sayyid Ahmed Khan took to improve the situation and with what results.

### III. METHOD OF THE STUDY

The nature of a study determines the methods to be followed. The method employed in studying the present problem is mostly historical; critical analysis and comparison of original writings and sources of Sayyid Ahmed Khan and reliable sources about him. Greater emphasis is laid on his own writings instead of relying mainly on what others thought of him and his policies. To this is added the study of philosophy in general and philosophy of education in particular. A study of general history of the Indian sub-continent during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is also made. A particular study is made of education in India during the

same period.

The study of literature is supplemented by an analysis of the implications of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's views about the educational process and its problems.

#### IV. SOURCES AND MATERIAL

The materials studied consist of books, magazines, and articles. All possible efforts have been made to consult the available literature which has any bearing on the problem. A few collections of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's articles, speeches, and letters which have been published in Pakistan were of great help in making the primary sources available to the present writer. The articles were published mostly in Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq from 1870 to 1897. Thus one is able to study at first hand the development of Ahmed Khan's policy and thought over the years. The same is true of the letters and his speeches, spread over a span of time they help in getting an over-all view of this great leader

Besides the primary sources, i.e. Ahmed Khan's own writings, ample use is made of Hayat-i-Javid (Eternal Life), the Urdu biography of Altaf Husain Hali, published in 1901. This work of one of the nearest co-workers of Ahmed Khan is a splendid storehouse of the data one may want to know. Hali is one of the greatest literary figures in Urdu literature, highly esteemed for his poetry as well as his prose.<sup>1</sup> He is

---

<sup>1</sup> In prose mostly as a biographer and as a literary critic.



also well known for his authenticity. While reading Hayat-i-Javid one finds use of superlatives about the qualities of Sayyid Ahmed Khan but at the same time we find that he had not omitted any weaknesses of his hero. Naturally enough the language used in this respect is mild. "Yet the care and accuracy with which all the various details and things worth knowing are scraped together make it a historical standard work in Urdu literature."<sup>1</sup>

The Reforms and Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmed by J.M.S. Baljon, is another valuable book for a student of Sayyid Ahmed Khan. Baljon has made much use of Hayat-i-Javid, at the same time he has referred to primary sources, e.g. articles of Sayyid Ahmed Khan published in the periodical Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq and several collections of Ahmed Khan's essays. For references to primary sources, Baljon's book has been of great help.

History of the Freedom Movement, which is edited by the Historical Society of Pakistan, includes articles written by several distinguished Pakistani historians and men of letters, who are more or less taken as official authorities on the topics they have written. This book proved very useful in providing authentic background for the present study.

---

<sup>1</sup>J.M.S. Baljon Jr., The Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan (Leiden; E.J. Brill, 1949), pp. ix and x.

And last, but not the least, important is Aligarh Tahrik Aghaz ta Imroz (Aligarh Movement from the Beginning to the Present). It is a recent book published in 1960. It surveys various aspects of the Aligarh Movement, religious, political, utilitarian, etc., and deals not only with the origin of the Movement but also with how it affected Indian Muslims throughout the past ninety years or so. The book contains articles written by distinguished persons who are either old boys of Aligarh or are in one way or another directly related to the Muslim University of Aligarh.

#### V. PLAN OF THE WORK

The following plan has been adopted for the study. First of all, the nature, significance, method and limitations of the study are stated. Then the general background on which Sayyid Ahmed Khan appeared, especially the educational background in the sub-continent is studied. This is followed by a short biographical sketch of Sayyid Ahmed Khan and a brief character sketch of the man he was. After this structural work his chief educational policies and programmes are presented and have been discussed in view of his general philosophy of life and educational thought. This followed by a brief analysis of his achievements. Finally an attempt has been made to evaluate the impact of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's thought and his achievements on Muslims, and modern Muslims thought in the Indian sub-continent.

## CHAPTER II

### DECLINE OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

#### AND

### RISE OF BRITISH RULE

#### DECLINE OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

To get an insight into the conditions of the nineteenth century Indian Muslims, one has to go back to the history of the Mughal dynasty which had ruled the Indian sub-continent for more than three centuries. The Mughal rule in India started with the conquest of Delhi by Babar in 1520 A.D. His grandson, Akbar, was the greatest of the Mughal emperors. He built up a strong empire and enjoyed the loyalty of both, Hindus and Muslims. The next three successors to the throne viz., Jehangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzib, though did not reach his greatness, were men of unusual ability. During the reign of these four great Mughals the empire expanded and flourished. Aurangzib was able to conquer southern India and for the first time almost the whole of the sub-continent came under one rule, but these conquests cost him much in many ways. The strain of continued and widespread war exhausted the treasury and

broke down the administration. Moreover, twentyfive years of absence from the capital gave enough chance to plotters in the north, and all the troubles and risks involved were not really worth the conquest.

Aurangzib was an able and strong emperor, but made many enemies on account of his strictly religious policies and the bloodshed of many of his own close relations to eliminate them as competitors. He mistrusted his kin and kept his sons away with the fear that they would do the same to him what he had done to his father.<sup>1</sup> Aurangzib trusted his generals and viceroys who "as a rule served him well during his vigorous life but at his death they usurped his children's inheritance".<sup>2</sup> Aurangzib's sons, who during his long reign ( 1660-1707 ) "were benumbed by the crusty weight of paternal control, lost all capacity for government."<sup>3</sup> The prolonged anarchy during the repeated wars of succession was a potent influence in bringing about the ruin of the imperial

---

<sup>1</sup>During Shahjahan's illness, in 1559 Aurangzib imprisoned his father and ascended the throne.

<sup>2</sup>W.W. Hunter, A Brief History of the Indian Peoples (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), p. 150.

<sup>3</sup>Percival Spear, Oxford History of India (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 422.

broke down the administration. Moreover, twentyfive years of absence from the capital gave enough chance to plotters in the north, and all the troubles and risks involved were not really worth the conquest.

Aurangzib was an able and strong emperor, but made many enemies on account of his strictly religious policies and the bloodshed of many of his own close relations to eliminate them as competitors. He mistrusted his kin and kept his sons away with the fear that they would do the same to him what he had done to his father.<sup>1</sup> Aurangzib trusted his generals and viceroys who "as a rule served him well during his vigorous life but at his death they usurped his children's inheritance".<sup>2</sup> Aurangzib's sons, who during his long reign ( 1660-1707 ) "were benumbed by the crusty weight of paternal control, lost all capacity for government."<sup>3</sup> The prolonged anarchy during the repeated wars of succession was a potent influence in bringing about the ruin of the imperial

---

<sup>1</sup>During Shahjahan's illness, in 1559 Aurangzib imprisoned his father and ascended the throne.

<sup>2</sup>W.W. Hunter, A Brief History of the Indian Peoples (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), p. 150.

<sup>3</sup>Percival Spear, Oxford History of India (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 422.

fabric.<sup>1</sup> "Then the hardy, frugal Marathas pricked the bubble, and proved by the experiment the worthlessness of the glittering imperial host."<sup>2</sup> The succeeding emperors were puppets in the hands of the too powerful soldiers or statesmen "who raised them to the throne, controlled them while on it, and killed them when it suited their purpose to do so."<sup>3</sup> With the decline of military power and weaklings at the centre, internal uprisings went beyond control. "Governors of provinces set up as independent potentates and the war-like Hindu races, who had helped Akbar to create the Mughal Empire, became under his foolish posterity, the chief agents of its ruins."<sup>4</sup> There were hostile communities /e.g. Sikhs in the north, Rajputs in the west, and Marathas in the south. In the southeast was Shuja-ud-daula, an able and ambitious hereditary governor of Oudh. Ejection of his father from

---

<sup>1</sup> From 1707 (when Aurangzib died) to 1719, in 12 years six Mughal kings were enthroned and dethroned. The reign of the last six Mughals lasted much longer, 1719-1857, but by then the situation had degenerated so much that even those who had individual qualities were reduced to mere figureheads.

<sup>2</sup> Percival Spear, op. cit., p. 422.

<sup>3</sup> W.W. Hunter, op. cit., p. 150.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 153.

the office of Wazir<sup>1</sup> had made him rebellious. In the East of Delhi, the Rohilla tribe of Afghans had revolted. This completed the circle of hostile powers and left the imperial district to Delhi only, i.e., "roughly a rectangular wedge of territory of about 250 x 100 miles."<sup>2</sup> If the above mentioned powers were strong enough and were under good administrators, the Indian political situation would not have degenerated the way it did. Unfortunately "they were all greedy and predatory, and suffered from a greater or less degree of disorganization."<sup>3</sup>

Stories of riches of India had always attracted foreign invaders and internal troubles usually paved the way for foreign interventions. The Mughals in the last half of the eighteenth century were faced with foreign enemies on two fronts: the Persians and Afghans from the north-west, and the French and the British from the sea.

The Marathas in the name of helping the Mughal Emperors against foreign powers had themselves taken hold of the Emperors. Since 1785, Shah Alam had been a puppet in the hands of Sindhia.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>During the reign of the Mughals, this word was used for the Prime Minister.

<sup>2</sup>W.W. Hunter, op. cit., p. 150.

<sup>3</sup>Percival Spear, Twilight of the Mughals (Cambridge: The University Press, 1951), p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>A Maratha chief.

In 1803 the British captured Delhi and "freed" the Emperor from the Marathas. The Emperor himself realized that he no longer was in a position to rule and did not insist on it. However, he "was the 'de jure' sovereign and wanted not only to retain that position but also secure its recognition."<sup>1</sup> In the beginning Emperor Shah Alam made it clear to the 'Company' "that hereafter there be no want of obedience or cause of dissatisfaction to me."<sup>2</sup> Gradually the position of the East India Company changed. During the first half of the nineteenth century it had "snatched power from the hands of various princes and rulers and had ultimately reduced them to the position of puppets or pensionaries. They followed the same policy in the case of the Mughal Emperor."<sup>3</sup> Gradually Shah Alam was deprived of the privileges of honour and dignity which in the beginning he was allowed to enjoy as a matter of right. Ultimately, the Company decided to end the institution of the Mughal throne. Bahadurshah, the last Emperor, had to agree that after his death his heir would not be called emperor, but only "Shahzada" (prince), and would not live in the Red Fort, which

---

<sup>1</sup> History of the Freedom Movement (Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society, 1960), II, part I, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 8.



was the ancestral palace of residence.<sup>1</sup>

To acquire a better understanding of the causes and happenings of the Revolt of 1857 and its aftermath, a brief survey of the British East India Company may be useful.

#### B. RISE OF BRITISH RULE

The British East India Company was formed on purely commercial basis in 1600. From time to time many British trading companies were formed to trade with India, but soon were wisely amalgamated, and formed a strong competitive force against the French and the Dutch East India Companies.

Trade flourished and profits were high. For about a century the British East India Company remained more or less a purely trading concern. Between 1634 and 1700, the Company acquired several small territories on the coastal areas to build their godowns and to provide places of protection for their people. Bombay, Calcutta and Madras were thus acquired, which later became the centres of the three Presidencies of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. Thus the British influence, at first economic, later political and cultural also, took roots in the coastal areas.<sup>2</sup> Till the final

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> This had educational repercussions also. These areas specially Bengal got acquainted with Western thought much earlier than the rest of the Indian sub-continent. North western India was the last to come under the British influence and thus remained almost untouched by western thought and learning.

showdown in 1857 these areas remained the stronghold of the British.

In 1645 an English surgeon obtained from Emperor Shahjahan exclusive privileges of trading for the company in Bengal, as a reward for his professional services to the Emperor.<sup>2</sup> Through this act of patriotism of this surgeon the British got a definite advantage over other European companies.

Indian trade was a prize for which many of the European nations strove with one another. The keenest rivals of the British were the French, whom they faced in quite a few battles on the Indian soil. In spite of the opposition and wars the British influence kept on increasing.

With the disintegration of the Mughal Empire after the death of Aurangzib, the English backed the native governors and chiefs in their rebellion against each other. This proved very fortunate to them and increased their territory and power in India. It also helped monetarily. "They made the Indian chiefs pay heavily for the services rendered."<sup>1</sup>

The British East India Company was in the most favourable situation in Bengal where they had special trading privileges. After Aurangzib's death Bengal had declared its cession from Delhi. The state changed hands, and there

---

<sup>1</sup>W.W. Hunter, op. cit., p. 182.

were a few ups and downs, but all went well till Siraj-ud-daula, a youth of eighteen years, succeeded to the throne. The British tried to take advantage of his youth and on the slightest pretext bullied him and exhorted concessions from him.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of their increasing influence in Bengal the British were not satisfied as Siraj-ud-daula showed some independence of spirit, and in 1757 were able to dethrone him and place Mir Jafar their nominee on the throne.

Between 1757 and 1764, Mir Jafar was throned and dethroned and rethroned to suit the ambitions of the Company. Getting the 'zamindari', or landlord's rights, over an extensive area around Calcutta was among the grants which the Nawab had to bestow on the Company.<sup>2</sup> On another occasion he had to grant similar rights over the districts of Bardawan, Midnapur, and Chittagong, estimated to yield a net revenue of half a million sterling a year.<sup>3</sup>

The Nawab of Oudh and Shah Alam, the Mughal prince (who later became the Emperor), who sided with the Nawab of

<sup>1</sup>The History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>W.W. Hunter, op. cit., p. 182.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 184.

Bengal were also made to pay heavily. Shah Alam granted to the English Company 'diwani', or fiscal administration, of (Lower Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, and also the territorial jurisdiction of the Northern Circars.<sup>1</sup>

The grant of 'diwani' in 1764, had started a dual control of government (British as well as Mughal). Hastings, the Governor General of India, abolished it, which meant absolute control of the English. In 1773 he also stopped the tribute to the Moghul Emperor at Delhi which was agreed upon by Clive on the grounds that "His Majesty was no longer independent, and to pay money to the emperor would practically be paying it to the Marathas, who were our most formidable enemies."<sup>2</sup>

Hastings bettered the finances of the Company by two million sterlings a year, part of which came from fines and tributes from native chiefs.

Lord Cornwallis (another Governor General from 1786 to 1793), in order "to place their finances on a more stable basis first fixed the revenue for five years. Later a 'Permanent System' was introduced and revenue was fixed for all times to come. No attempt was made to measure the

---

<sup>1</sup> Thompson and Garrat, Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India (London: 1934), p. 256.

<sup>2</sup> W.W. Hunter, op. cit., p. 189. The Mughal Emperor Shah Alam was at that time in the custody of Maraths, who had rescued him from the Afghans and were acting as his agents.

fields or calculate the out-turn."<sup>1</sup> Due to unsettled conditions and frequent changes of hands, land was deteriorating constantly and revenues on the basis of the good old days were crushing the cultivators. Moreover, the Company had fixed only its own share. Their agents were at liberty to extract as much as they could. This system almost ruined the peasantry, but did not concern the Company as long as they were getting their money.

In southern India there were three major powers with whom the British had to deal with, viz., rulers of Hyderabad and Mysore and the Marathas. The Nizam of Hyderabad, a Muslim ruler, was the weakest of the three, and was easily converted into a useful follower throughout the succeeding struggles.

Mysore was under Haider Ali who was a strong man. He tried to unite the Nizam and the Marathas against the British. The diplomacy of Hastings did not let it work, but it did not discourage Haider Ali either. He was determined to keep his independence. From 1782 to 1784, till the time of his death he fought against the British who wanted to bring Mysore under their control. In 1784, a temporary peace was concluded with his son, Tipu Sultan.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 192. See also History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 59.

But Mysore, with strong men ruling, was a sore in the eyes of the British. With the Nizam and the Marathas on their side they kept on trying to take over Mysore. Between 1790-1799 there were many wars between the British and Tipu Sultan. In 1799 Tipu lost his life while fighting and the English won. The state of Mysore was divided between the allies. In the centre of Mysore they set up a nominal Raja of no consequence.<sup>1</sup> The state of Mysore was finally annexed in 1830 and it was brought under direct British administration.

The Marathas were next on the list, who seemed to be a very loosely knit confederation. The British thought it would not be difficult to break them. Some of them proved easy and agreed to come under British 'protection' against other Maratha chiefs and thus increased the territorial control of the British. But three of them, viz., Sindhia of Gawaliar, Hulkar of Baroda and Bhonsla of Nagpur were not easy to break. Between 1800-1817, there were several campaigns against them. It was in 1817 and almost in the same month that the three great Maratha powers rose separately against the British and were finally defeated.<sup>2</sup> By 1818

---

<sup>1</sup>H.H. Dodwell, (ed.), The Cambridge History of India (Delhi, India: S. Chand & Co., n.d.), Vol. V, p. 342,

<sup>2</sup>It is one of the many examples of disunity among the Indians, which paved the way for British rule in India.

all resistance was at an end.

Marquess Wellesley, the Governor General from 1798 to 1805, had from the first laid down his guiding principle that the English must be the paramount power in the Indian peninsula, and the native princes could only retain the insignia of sovereignty by surrendering their political independence.<sup>1</sup> The sword of Clive, and the policies of Warren Hastings had made the British paramount in North eastern India. Wellesley did his best by breaking down the powers in the South.

The financial strain caused by the great operations of Lord Wellesley had meanwhile exhausted the patience of the Court of Directors of the East India Company at home. In 1807 Lord Minto replaced Wellesley. The Company ordered him to follow a policy of non-intervention, and he obeyed the instructions without injuring the prestige of the British name.

In 1813 the East India Company's charter was renewed but its monopoly as a trading company with India was abolished.

Lord William Bentick's rule (1828-1835) was not signalized by any victory but formed an epoch in administrative reforms. He restored equilibrium to the finances,

---

<sup>1</sup>W.W. Hunter, op. cit., p. 194.

suppressed the 'Thagi' (bands of organized robbers) and abolished 'sati'.<sup>1</sup>

In 1833, the charter of the East India Company was again renewed for twenty years, but on condition that the Company should abandon its trade entirely. It was thought necessary in view of the highly increased and complex political engagements. At the same time a new law Member was added to the Governor General's Council. Macaulay was the first Law Member and the first President of the Law Commission.<sup>2</sup>

Lord Metcalfe served as Governor General between 1835-36. He gave entire liberty to the press, and followed other policies of Lord Bentick. Both public opinion in India and the express wish of the Court of Directors was that Lord Metcalfe was the most suitable successor of Lord Bentick. "Party exigencies, however, led to the appointment of Lord Auckland (1836-1842). From this date commences a new era of war and conquest, which may be said to have lasted for twenty years."<sup>3</sup> Lord Ellenbrough (1842-44), "who loved military pomp, had his tastes satisfied by more wars." In

---

<sup>1</sup> Hindu custom of burning alive of widow with the dead body of her husband.

<sup>2</sup> Macaulay's coming to India had its educational repercussions also, *infra* p.55

<sup>3</sup> W.W. Hunter, op. cit., p. 212.



1843, the Muslim rulers of Sind, whose chief fault was that they would not surrender their independence, were crushed. Hunter praising the "brilliant feats of arms in Anglo-Indian history" had to admit this, "but valid reason can scarcely be found for the annexation of the country."

By now the only remaining Indian power worth the name were the Sikhs, originally a religious sect, who later were bound together by the additional ties of military discipline. Ranjit Singh (1780 - 1839) was their greatest Raja and managed to keep his independence, but he left no son capable of 'wielding his sceptre.' Lahore was torn by dissensions between rival generals, ministers, and queens. In 1845, the first war with the Sikhs was fought in the name of 'restoring peace and order'. It was won by the British and their influence spread over north western India also. In 1849, it was thought best to annex the Punjab. Maharaja Dileep Singh was given a handsome annual allowance and he lived in England like a country gentleman.

The first step in the pacification of Punjab was disarmament. Settlement of land tax came next. It was fixed lower than the rate levied by the Sikhs. Roads and canals were laid out. "The security of British peace, and the personal influence of the British officers, inaugurated

a new era of prosperity, which was felt to the farthest corners of the Province.<sup>1</sup> It thus happened that, when the Revolt of 1857 broke out the Sikhs were on the side of the British, which to a great extent saved the day for them.

Oudh was the last state to be annexed (1856). It had been loyal to the British since 1765. The Nawabs of Oudh had individual qualities and Oudh had become an asylum to Muslim talent and arts. On the other hand, the last Nawab, Wajid Ali Shah, was not a good administrator. He was sunk in a luxurious and useless life. The British, who, no doubt, had their eyes on those fertile districts, had warned the Nawab to put his house in order. These warnings did not have much effect and in 1856, "after long and painful hesitation the Court of Directors resolved on annexation"<sup>2</sup>, which was done without any bloodshed. The Nawab was pensioned and retired to live near Calcutta.

Thus, on the eve of the Revolt of 1857, the whole of the Indian subcontinent was under the British control.

The political policy of the British East India Company could briefly be said to be the following:

Whenever there was any internal trouble in the Indian

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 215.

<sup>2</sup> The Cambridge History of India, op. cit., pp.584-85

states the Company was there to intervene and take advantage of the situation, both territorially and monetarily. In wars of succession they usually backed the weakest in order to get greater control. Whenever they dethroned any native chief they tried to find a nominal figurehead for the same reasons.

Whenever there was any trouble between different Indian states, or with any foreign power, the British were there to "protect" their protégés and acquire greater rewards both monetary as well as territorial.

It was not necessary to find any pretext for intervention and taking over any Indian state as is obvious from the example of Sind.

Sometimes they throned and dethroned native rulers so that they could get rewards.

The East India Company made some reforms in the country and developed means of communications and transportation (partly for their own convenience), but mostly they were concerned with building the British Empire, especially in the later part of the Company's existence.

To summarise the history of the British East India Company one could roughly divide it into three periods:

1. 1600-1707 - A purely commercial concern
2. 1707-1833 - A rising territorial power, still  
with commercial interest and obligations
3. 1833-1857 - A purely political organization.

## CHAPTER III

### THE REVOLT OF 1857 AND ITS AFTERMATH

#### A. CAUSES OF THE REVOLT

What caused the Revolt of 1857? "The greased cartridge<sup>1</sup>" is the usual answer. It is not generally realized that however offensive, the greased cartridge alone could not have caused such a mighty explosion. A variety of causes — religious, economic, social and political — lay behind the Revolt.

Dissaffection in the army had started much earlier. Most of it was based on three factors. (1) The humiliating attitude of the British officers towards the native troops. (2) Suspicion of the officers and lack of confidence which made the Indian troops feel insecure and led them to join the rebels. (3) Indifference and lack of respect for their religions, customs and superstitions.

Discontentment was not confined to the army. It soon spread to all sections of the people. "Everywhere

---

<sup>1</sup>In 1856, the army was given Enfield rifles instead of old fashioned muskets. The cartridges used for the new rifles were heavily coated with grease, and the soldiers were asked to bite-off the outer packing before loading. The cartridges were made in India and it came to be known that fat of pigs and cows was being used. This caused great resentment as pig is repugnant to the Muslims and cow is sacred to the Hindus.

there was apprehension that the people were going to be made Christians."<sup>1</sup> The fear was fed by the activities of Christian missionaries. They were everywhere — in schools, hospitals, prisons and at the market place. "They not only preached what was written in the Bible but also ridiculed the customs and rites of both Hinduism and Islam and said very bad and insulting things about sacred people and places of other religions, which was very hurting to the people."<sup>2</sup> As the Government and missionaries worked in great unity, and the preachers were openly supported by the authorities "it was impossible not to think that the missionaries were speaking on behalf of the Government."<sup>3</sup> In 1857, Mr Mangles, the chairman of the board of directors of the East India Company, said in the House of Commons

Providence has entrusted the exclusive empire of Hindustan to England in order that the banner of Christ should wave triumphant from one end to the other end of India. Everyone must exert all his strength that there may be no dilatoriness on any account in continuing the grand work of making all India Christian."<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> S.N. Sen, The Great Rising of 1857 (New Delhi: The Publications Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India, 1957), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Causes of the Indian Revolt (Urdu), as reproduced in the appendix of Hayat-i-Javid, op. cit., p. 899.

<sup>3</sup> History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 256. See also Sayyid Ahmed Khan, op. cit., p. 899.

<sup>4</sup> V.D. Sarvarkar, The Indian War of Independence, p. 45, as quoted in the History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 252.

Apart from the work of the missionaries and their open support by the Government there were many other innovations and regulations which, to the Indian mind, were deliberate interference with their religion.

Political policy of the East India Company was no less a cause of the Revolt of 1857. Lord Dalhousie's "Doctrine of Lapse"<sup>1</sup> created widespread anxiety among the rulers. Maratha states of Satara, Jhansi and Tanjore were some of the outstanding examples. Oudh, which had been loyal to the British for generations, was annexed in 1856. This completely destroyed any faith that was left in British fairness.

The dispossessed princes were looking for the earliest opportunity to restore their former power and position. When the "mutiny offered them a chance, they plunged headlong into it."<sup>2</sup>

The numerous annexations gave the impression that the British were determined to wipe out the traces of Indian rule in the subcontinent.

The East India Company had underestimated the strength

---

<sup>1</sup>Under the "Doctrine of Lapse", the Indian rulers who had no offspring were not allowed to adopt an heir to the throne. Consequently on the death of the ruler, the state would go to the Company. The practice of adoption was in accord with the Hindu faith.

<sup>2</sup>History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 238.

of popular sentiment for native rulers. The Mughal Emperor, the Peshwa, Rani of Jhansi, all were symbols of a historic past to many — symbols become dearer when the substance had departed. Shabby treatment of these rulers hurt the pride of the people also.

Indians were not only distressed and resented the religious and political policies of the British, but were also under great economic stress. Indian arts and crafts were in the state of decay. With the end of the states came the end of their native patrons. England which once had been a good buyer of the fine Indian crafts had changed its policy. Now it wanted to promote the export of its own manufactured goods and imported only raw materials from India. All this affected the Indian craftsmen very adversely and many had to give up their profession. This increased pressure on land. It also created a class of semi-employed dissatisfied artisans.

Agriculture was no better off under the new regime. "The new revenue system with its 'sale law' was universally feared and hated."<sup>1</sup> Under the new system rent was to be paid in cash and the Government could realize a defaulter's rent by selling his land. Loss of land was not merely a financial blow; it affected a man's social status as well.

---

<sup>1</sup>This law permitted the forced sale of land for payment of debts and in case of non-payment of rent.

The rural economy was completely upset. This caused widespread discontentment. The deposed landlords willingly joined hands with the sepoys in rising against the British.

There was great resentment among the educated also. "This was caused by the systematic exclusion of Indians from higher Government posts."<sup>1</sup>

The social attitude of the British was also one of the major causes of the Revolt.<sup>2</sup>

Whatever may be the field, one finds that in most cases the real cause was lack of understanding between the rulers and the ruled.

Thus a series of ill-timed, ill-conceived and misunderstood measures shook the faith of the people in the British rule and created hatred instead. "The Revolt has thus long been brewing and the greased cartridge only precipitated it."<sup>3</sup>

#### B. THE REVOLT OF 1857

The cantonment of Meerut was one of the biggest in India. Reports of severe punishments for disobeying orders to use the greased cartridges had reached Meerut. cantonment

<sup>1</sup> History of the Freedom Movement, op cit., p. 235.

<sup>2</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, op. cit., p. 918.

<sup>3</sup> S.N. Sen, op. cit., p. 12.



and had caused great discontentment among the soldiers there. The British officers, on the other hand, were bent upon making the troops obey whatever orders were given to them. On April 24, 1857, a parade was called but only 89 sepoy turned up and 85 of them refused to accept the cartridges. An investigation was held and it was decided that the 85 'offenders' should be punished. On May 9, 1857, they were stripped of their decorations in front of their colleagues, and were shackled and sent to prison for hard labour. "The folly of the action in heaping public insult on the sepoy was obvious and difficult to exaggerate."<sup>1</sup> The reaction of the unusual punishment became apparent when the next day sepoy at Meerut rose in arms and the 'Mutiny' was declared. The rebels broke the jail and freed their colleagues. After killing some of the Europeans at Meerut the rebels marched towards Delhi.<sup>2</sup> To them Delhi was the symbol of Mughal greatness and that is why they rushed to Delhi.

On May 11, 1857, the revolutionaries reached Delhi. "The 80-year old king was taken by surprise."<sup>3</sup> He informed the British officers of the situation who tried to check

---

<sup>1</sup> Forrest, G.W., A History of the Indian Mutiny, Quoted from History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 273.

<sup>3</sup> Percival Spear, op. cit., p. 202.

the inflow of the revolutionaries, but the British were not able to control the situation. Some of them were killed in the effort, the rest escaped. The revolutionaries killed many Europeans and plundered some public buildings and homes, mostly of Europeans.<sup>1</sup>

The troopers pressed the king to join them. He pleaded that he was old and that "he had neither money nor power. To this they said they will provide both. The only thing they wanted from him was his blessings."<sup>2</sup> The unwilling king still hesitated. And it was not until nightfall when the British help asked for from Agra by the King failed to come that he decided to cast his lot with the rebels.<sup>3</sup> The association of the King inspired military contingents stationed in different cantonments and they came to help Delhi. To them were added the volunteers who offered their services to the 'cause' and were known as 'Mujahids'.<sup>4</sup> The revolutionaries overpowered the local authorities of the city.

When the news of the Revolt reached other British cantonments forces from all over the British territory in

---

<sup>1</sup> Percival Spear, op. cit., p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 203.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Fighters for the faith.

India were directed to recapture Delhi. Siege of Delhi lasted four months, which, on the one hand, proved the valour of the Indian fighters, and on the other hand it also proved that even the bravest cannot win unless they have good leaders. On September 20, 1857, Bahadur Shah, the last of the Mughal Kings, was taken a prisoner and Delhi finally and completely fell in the hands of the British.

The news of the outbreak of the Revolution, the capture of Delhi and the establishment of Bahadur Shah's Government soon spread to different parts of the subcontinent. A number of important towns and cantonments, particularly in the central and western parts of North India, rose against the British Government. In most cases they swore allegiance to Delhi and set up their own administration in the name of Bahadur Shah. They fought bravely but the Revolt was unplanned and unorganized. Moreover, the fall of Delhi affected their morale adversely. Though the conflict lasted another year, they had lost the initiative.

Chief among the Indian states that joined the sepoys in the Revolt were Nana Saheb of Kanpur, Begum of Oudh, Rani of Jhansi and Kanwar Jegdish Singh. They fought bravely but due to insufficient resources and lack of planning and

coordination they failed in their efforts.

An account of the risings and details of the fightings is not necessary for the present study. But it maybe of interest to know the causes of failure of a movement which lasted for about two years, spread over a large part of the Indian subcontinent and was backed by a good number of native soldiers.

All evidence demonstrates that the uprising was an unorganized effort to get rid of the British. "The outbreaks had no fixed timings and followed no common pattern."<sup>1</sup> It was because of the unpreplanned and uncoordinated nature of the Revolt that the British were able to defeat even the bravest, one by one. Had the British been attacked at the same time on all fronts it might have been difficult for them to hold on.

Lack of leadership was an equally important cause of the failure. In case of Delhi, the king was old and was resigned to a life of helplessness. "The princes were as incompetent as the king; they were hardly the persons to control the trooper who had already tasted indiscipline."<sup>2</sup> The sepoys unfortunately had no officer of ability to guide them.

---

<sup>1</sup> S.N. Sen, op. cit., p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

In the fall of Delhi much was also attributed to treachery from within. "Repeated failures soured their spirits, and the sepoys attributed their ill success to treachery in high quarters."<sup>1</sup>

At other places too, the traitors helped the British in defeating even the toughest of the fighters like Tantia Topi. In the fall of Lucknow the inside information supplied by native spies helped the British greatly in capturing the city.

Apart from the traitors and spies there was a good number of native soldiers who were still loyal to the British. The number of British officers in India was too small to take any effective action, much less victory, unless they had the support of a good number of the native army. Sikhs and Gurkhas were particularly staunch supporters of the British.

Among the native rulers also, there were quite a few like the Raja of Patiala and the Nawab of Rampur and the Wali of Sawat who, if they had not helped the British, they could have strengthened the cause of the revolutionaries greatly.

Lack of finances was another cause of failure. In the case of Delhi it was one of the main causes. "Maintaining

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid. See also History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 285.

a big army and keeping up the supplies, needed much money which the king and his Generals were not in a position to command."<sup>1</sup>

Lack of modern warfare equipment was another cause of the failure. "If Enfield rifle caused the 'mutiny', it also helped to overthrow the mutineers. They could not fight with their old fashioned muskets against the new rifles."<sup>2</sup>

#### AFTERMATH OF THE REVOLT

Whatever were the causes of the Revolt and its failure, what followed it, is of great importance to us. It was the havoc resulting from the Revolt of 1857, which turned Sayyied Ahmed Khan, a sub-judge into "the greatest reformer and educationist of the India of those days."<sup>3</sup>

The revolutionaries could be held responsible for many acts of treachery. Many innocent persons, especially women and children were killed. Quite often bad characters and lawless people joined the sepoys. "Many a time unsuspecting wayfarers were ruthlessly robbed and murdered, and

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 25

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>3</sup> History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., Vol. II, Part II, p. 450.

Indians suffered at their hands as much as Europeans.<sup>1</sup> For example the lawless tribes of Gujjars "robbed both sides with impunity."<sup>2</sup> However, these people were not responsible alone for the killing of innocent Europeans. Bahadur Shah, Nana Sahib, Rani of Jhansi, all were blamed, rightly or wrongly, for the bloodshed.

However, this does not justify the mass killings and inhuman cruelties done by the British army, which, on its way to suppress revolts at different places, punished the natives indiscriminately. "Officers as they went to sit on court martial, swore that they would hang their prisoners, guilty or innocent .... Prisoners condemned to death after a hasty trial, were mocked and tortured by ignorant privates before their execution, while educated officers looked and approved."<sup>3</sup> The Commissioner of Fatahgarh, Mr Power, whom his English friends called "Hanging Power", at each halting place ... held court of summary jurisdiction, and condemned to death the

---

<sup>1</sup>S.N. Sen, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>2</sup>History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 279.

<sup>3</sup>T. Rice Holmes, A History of the Indian Mutiny (London: 1898), pp. 119-20.

truculent traitors."<sup>1</sup> Too many examples of mass killings, mostly on mere suspicion, and of wholesale devastation brought by the British armies could be found easily everywhere but it was Delhi which suffered most.

For the British, victory was incomplete as long as the King and the princes were free. Cold blooded murder of the three sons of Bahadur Shah by Captain Douglas has since then been condemned by many an Englishmen as well as Indians. Several other members of the Roayl family were shot without trial. The imprisoned King was treated like a criminal. "He was not put into irons, but he was miserably lodged. Every Englishman or woman who passed through Delhi could intrude on his privacy to cast scornful glances at him. The Queen was not spared similar humiliation."<sup>2</sup>

Revenge of the victorious British was not limited to the Royal family or to punishing those who had fought against them. "In the city no man's life was safe, all able-bodied men who were seen were taken for rebels and shot."<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> S.N. Sen, op. cit., p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of Mrs Saunderses, wife of the Commissioner of Delhi, as quoted by S.N. Sen, op. cit., p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Percival Spear, op. cit., p. 218.



"The initial massacres, which lasted for some days, followed a more systematic reign of terror,"<sup>1</sup> which according to Percival Spear went on for some months. The entire population of Delhi which survived these massacres was driven out of the city and had to spend the winter in the open or in hastily prepared shelter.<sup>2</sup>

Loot and plunder went on for months. The looters were given the official title of prize agents, and the administration was directly responsible for what was happening.<sup>3</sup>

Next to suffer were city buildings. The principal mosques were occupied by the troops and were used as barracks and stables. Some of these were not returned to Muslims till as late as 1875.<sup>4</sup> The fate of the Imperial palace was no better. Most of it was not thought good enough from an architectural point of view to deserve preservation.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 288.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. See Also Percival Spear, p. 216, and S.N. Sain, op. cit., p. 32,

<sup>4</sup>History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 290.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 291.

Perhaps a bigger loss was the destruction and dispersal of the Imperial Library where rare and illuminating works were collected since the days of Babur and Humayun. The private libraries and collections of scholars also suffered the same fate. Perhaps the biggest loss was cultural. Many scholars, poets and men of letters perished in the massacres.<sup>1</sup> Others had to take refuge at Rampur, Haiderabad, Lahore and other places.<sup>2</sup>

Worst of all were the feelings of animosity which took deep roots in the hearts of the Indians and Europeans against each other. The Revolt, and its aftermath, created a gulf between the rulers and the ruled. It was more so in case of the Indian Muslims. The English came to believe that the Muslims were the real rebels, who can never be suppressed enough.<sup>3</sup>

These feelings continued long after the Revolt which kept the English suspicious of the Muslims. They, on the other hand, had such a bitter experience of cruelty and

<sup>1</sup>Maulana Imam Bukhsh Sahbai who was a distinguished poet and a very learned man was among those who were killed by the British soldiers.

<sup>2</sup>Muhammad Husain Azad, who could be called one of the fathers of modern Urdu prose, and Dagh who was among the classical poets of Urdu, were among those who left Delhi and took refuge in small Indian states.

<sup>3</sup>It may be interesting to note that out of the native states who rose against the British many were Hindu states. The same was the revolutionary army that the Hindus and the Muslims fought side by side against the British. But the overall impression somehow was that it was the Muslims who were against the British.

suppression that they could not easily get over it. In fact, the behaviour of the British authorities continuously reinforced it. Thus both the parties were not prepared to meet each other on any cordial grounds. The British tried to humiliate Muslims as far as possible and the Muslims tried to avoid everything which was in any way related to the British.

It was on this antagonistic ground that Sayyid Ahmed Khan appeared to bring reconciliation between the two and to advocate Western knowledge and learning to the Indians in general and to Muslims in particular.

## CHAPTER IV

### EDUCATION IN INDIA BEFORE 1857

#### EDUCATION DURING THE LATER MUGHALS

"Seek knowledge even if in China," said the Prophet and Muslims have not only been great scholars but have also helped in the spread of knowledge. Under the Mughals, education and learning received great encouragement. But after the death of Alamgir, the Mughal Empire began to decline and most of the princes who succeeded to the throne during the next century and a half were too weak to arrest the process of decay. No doubt some of them were interested in education and made some contribution to the development of educational institutions, but generally speaking, most of the colleges and schools established during this period owed their existence either to the generosity of philanthropists or to the zeal of some scholar. Madrasah-i-Firangi Mahal, Lucknow, which even today is a famous seat of Muslim learning, had become one of the leading educational institutions of Northern India under Mullah Nizam-ud-Din Sihalawi, who taught there for over fifty years. He was regarded as one of the greatest and best known scholars of his time.<sup>1</sup> His

---

<sup>1</sup>Maulana Fazli Imam, Tarajim-al-Fudala (Karachi, Pakistan: Pakistan Historical Society, 1956), p. 11.

fame rests mainly on the curriculum prepared by him (1747 A.D.).<sup>1</sup> It is known after his name as 'Dars-i-Nizami'. The main subjects of the 'Dars' were: SARF (Conjugation), NAHW (Syntax), MANTIQ (Logic), HIKMAT (Philosophy), RIYADIYAT (Mathematics), BALAGHAT (Rhetoric), FIQH (Jurisprudence), USUL-i-FIQA (Principles of Jurisprudence), KALAM (Dialectics), TAFSIR (Commentary on the Qur'an), HADITH (Tradition). In the course of time it became so popular that it was adopted all over the subcontinent and forms even today the basis of the syllabi in most of the institutions devoted to Muslim learning.

The 'Dars-i-Nizami' aimed at bringing about harmony in the two branches of medieval Islamic learning "Maqulat" and "Manqulat", the rational and the traditional. Natural sciences were included in the curriculum but the emphasis on rational sciences was heavy, which is rather striking in view of the fact that Islam produced some of the greatest thinkers and scientists of the Middle Ages. "Perhaps an explanation may be found in the growing indifference of the Muslims during this period towards the natural sciences ... Barring this drawback the syllabus seemed to be balanced and comprehensive in scope."<sup>2</sup> But in the face of rapid scientific

---

<sup>1</sup>It was a revision of the curriculum of the old Muslim schools.

<sup>2</sup>History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., Vol. II, Part I, p. 175.

developments of the nineteenth century neglect of these sciences became a great drawback of this curriculum, as scholars of the Muslim schools in India remained ignorant of the modern sciences. The most significant aspect of 'Firangi Mahal' was that it produced a number of distinguished scholars who founded or developed their own institutions.

In Delhi a 'madrasah' was founded by Ghazi-ud-Din, father of Nizam-ul-Mulk Asf Jah I, in the reign of Bahadur Shah I. In 1828, an English class was added to it, though not without some opposition. In course of time the English class became popular. Thus developed the famous Delhi College. "The most striking feature of the institution was that unlike other colleges of the period, Urdu was the medium of instruction for all subjects, even at higher stages.<sup>1</sup> There were separate faculties for Eastern and Western learning, but both were under the same principal."<sup>2</sup> "Many great scholars of the day were on the staff of the College. "The conversion to Christianity of one of the well-known teachers, Ram Chandra created some dissatisfaction among the people; it came to be considered a centre of Christian missionary activities."<sup>3</sup> In the Revolution of 1857 it was attacked and

---

<sup>1</sup> Usually Persian, and sometimes Arabic, was the medium of instruction in Oriental Colleges. In the Western style colleges English was the medium of instruction.

<sup>2</sup> History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., op. 179.

<sup>3</sup> G.F. Andrews, Zakaulah of Delhi, p. 73. See also History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., Vol.II, p. 179.

closed.

Madrasah-i-Rehmaniah at Delhi which was founded by Shah Waliullah's father is another notable one. Shah Waliullah expanded it. The curriculum was more or less the same as in other Madrasahs of the day, but he laid greater stress on 'Hadith'. He also laid great stress on specialization and took great care in the selection of teachers. He compiled a short treatise on the qualifications of a teacher and the manner in which he should treat his pupils. He also discussed several cognate problems of pedagogy.

There were many other institutions in different parts of India, run by scholars and supported at first by the Crown and later when the Kings at Delhi became almost powerless these institutions were encouraged by provincial chiefs and moneyed gentry.

There were two kinds of institutions, (1) Maktabs, i.e., elementary schools, which were hundreds and thousands in number. It was generally in his fifth year that a child was sent to school. Thereafter his progress depended upon his aptitude and no age limit was prescribed for the various stages of education. Persian was the main language taught in the primary stage. At the secondary stage Arabic was also included in the courses of studies.<sup>1</sup> In 'Maktabs', i.e.,

---

<sup>1</sup> History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 191.

Muslim primary schools learning of the Quran was the first thing a child did. These 'Maktabs' were usually attached to the local mosque, the teacher being the mulla<sup>h</sup> and the mosque served as the school building. Children did not pay any fees. The teacher was paid out of the endowment for the mosque. In smaller places and villages if the income of the mosque was not sufficient parents usually sent commodities of every day and grain as present to the teacher, not as payment.

For higher education there were Madrasahs, some of which have been mentioned already. Higher education was also free. It is neither possible nor necessary to make a complete list of all the maktabs and madrasahs. But it would not be out of place here to review briefly the attitude of the state towards education. The Muslims did not believe in subordinating education to the policies of the Government; it was left to prosper and develop independently. The ruling princes, however, realized their responsibilities and extended patronage and support both to the scholars and the institutions. As mentioned above, education was free even to the highest level. The idea of paying a tuition fee at the school or college was foreign to the Muslim conception of the dissemination of learning. It was the moral responsibility of those who lived in the vicinity of schools that the teachers working there were provided with necessities



of life. On the other hand a scholar who decided to devote his life to imparting knowledge started it with the assumption that he is to work not for money but for winning the favour of God, living modestly. Education and religion have always been closely related. One great advantage of this free education at all stages and in all institutions was that even the poorest child could study in the best college and under the most reputed teachers. The teacher played a great role in matters pertaining to the management of educational institutions, and thus these institutions remained more or less unaffected by political upheavals.

From the earliest days the Muslims attached religious sanctity to the idea of seeking and disseminating knowledge, and the primary object of knowledge was ma'arifat or gnosis of God. Thus religious knowledge always constituted an important element of the syllabi throughout the Muslim world and during all the stages of growth and development of Muslim civilization.

Non-Muslims were neither ignored nor did they suffer from lack of facilities. Besides the 'Patshalas' (equivalent to Maktabas) and Hindu institutions of higher learning in different parts of India,<sup>1</sup> there were many schools in which

---

<sup>1</sup>These were also supported by Hindu philanthropists as well as by the state and also through the help of the gentry.

Hindu and Muslim boys studied Persian and subjects of a secular nature.<sup>1</sup> History seems to have been the special subject of these schools, as "during the Mughal period we find many Hindu historians of renown. To the list of historians may be added a large number of Hindu poets, writers, lexicographers, translators, and others who have left behind books on their special studies."<sup>2</sup>

The 'purdah' system created difficulties for the education of women and it was not possible to open schools for them. The rich could make private arrangements, but, for the daughters of average Muslims, generally speaking, education meant only reading the Qura'n, which was usually taught by the educated ladies of well-to-do families as an act of piety and also as a hobby.<sup>3</sup>

Reviewing the period as a whole we face two main shortcomings. Firstly, the Muslim educational system was out-dated. In non-religious subjects this out-datedness kept Muslims in India still in the medieval stage of development, while some other parts of the world especially Europe

---

<sup>1</sup>C.F. Andrews, op. cit., p. 42.

<sup>2</sup>History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 192.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 193.

had gone far ahead. Religion when taught by conservative, rigid and narrow minded, mediocre teachers did not serve any healthy purpose. Leaving their womenfolk almost out of the field of education made it still easier for superstition and conservatism to pass on from one generation to the other. The second defect was not that of schools and colleges. It was the decadent society which was going from bad to worse. The young of the rich were too lazy to make any effort for learning. The poor were too poor to think of education. With the deterioration in the economic conditions of Muslims in India any education worth the name was beyond the means of the masses. Not that education entailed any expense, but the child of the poor man had to contribute for his bread at an early age.

#### EDUCATION UNDER THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

The East India Company, during the early years of its administration quite understandably, did not consider the promotion of education among its Indian subjects as part of its duty and concern. Its main object, as a commercial company, was to profit by trade. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries some missionaries came to India and realized that to 'save the souls' of the natives they will have to educate them to some degree. They rightly thought that teaching through vernaculars would be the

best means of reaching the masses, but because of lack of suitable books their job was not an easy one and the knowledge they imparted could not be much. As F.W. Thomas says, "If in the midst of multifarious occupations of writing textbooks in a foreign language, but half understood, of training teachers and keeping a close watch on them when trained, we shall not be surprised to find that the knowledge imparted was extremely elementary."<sup>1</sup> Anyhow, writing textbooks in vernaculars was a great contribution and the efforts at Fort William College in Calcutta, under Dr. John Gilchrist merits appreciation. At a later stage we find a change in the policy of the missionaries and instead of elementary education through vernaculars they changed over to secondary and higher education through English.

In the beginning the Company did not mind the missionary activities. In many cases it sympathized with them and even gave them some grants. "But a change began to come about as soon as the Company became a political power in India. The acquisition of sovereignty made the Company conscious of the political importance of maintaining strict religious neutrality."<sup>2</sup> Incidents like that of

---

<sup>1</sup>History of Prospects of British Education in India, p. 19, as quoted by K.S. Vyas, in The Development of National Education, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

the sepoy mutiny at Vellor strengthened these ideas.

In 1793 when the charter of the Company came up for renewal, Wilberforce<sup>1</sup> who was on the side of the missionaries moved the following resolution in the House of Commons:

That it is in the peculiar and bounded duty of the British Legislature to promote by all just and prudent means the interest and happiness of the inhabitants of the British Dominions in India; and that for these ends such measures ought to be adopted as may gradually tend to their advancement in useful knowledge and their religious and moral improvement.<sup>2</sup>

It was a pious resolution, but had no administrative value. For that purpose he proposed to insert a clause in the Company's charter to the effect that

The court of directors of the Company shall be empowered and commissioned to nominate and send out from time to time sufficient number of skilled and suitable persons who shall attain the above said object by serving as school masters, missionaries, or otherwise.<sup>3</sup>

The proposal "was met by such violent opposition from India House, that the ministry was forced to withdraw the clause from the Charter."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>William Wilberforce (1759-1833), English philanthropist, whose name is chiefly associated, with the abolition of slavery, was a member of Parliament and took every opportunity in the House of Commons of exposing the evils and horrors of the slave trade. He also interested himself in a variety of schemes for the social and religious welfare of the community, and a method for disseminating, by government help, Christianity in India.

<sup>2</sup>Selections from Educational Records, Vol. I, p. 17, as quoted by Nurullah and Naik, A Student's History of Education in India (Bombay: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1955), p. 38.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>A. Howel, Education in British India, p. 4., as quoted in History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., Vol. II, p.198.

After 1793, the relations between the missionaries and the officials of the Company became very strained. "By about 1800, the East India Company became a staunch opponent of all attempts at proselytization and tried to keep the missionaries out of its territories as far as possible."<sup>1</sup> In India the missionaries were powerless to fight against this policy, but in England they and their friends began an intensive agitation with the object of persuading Parliament to legislate on the matter and give necessary freedom and assistance to missionaries.

Their efforts bore fruit and in spite of much opposition, on June 23, 1813, Wilberforce was able to carry his "pious clauses" against the opposition of the old Indian party to his "most wild, extravagant, expensive and unjustifiable project."<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, here and there efforts to promote education in India were being made by Europeans. Some from purely Christian or humanitarian point of view, and others with the objective of producing useful servants for the Company. The year 1813 is a milestone in the educational history of the East India Company. Not only that in this

---

<sup>1</sup>Nurualh and Naik, op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>2</sup>History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 199.

year the Company allowed the missionaries to go to India again, but according to the Charter of 1813<sup>1</sup> the Company was required to spend not less than Rs. 100,000 each year on encouragement of literature and learning in British territories in India.<sup>2</sup> "It is significant to note that in this first communication on education, the Directors did not consider the interests of the Muslim community at all, though specific reference was made to Hindus."<sup>3</sup> One possible explanation of this lack of interest can be that the British, in the early days of their rule did not want advancement of the Muslims from whom they had wrested the power recently. There was also the desire to conciliate the Hindus who had co-operated in the overthrow of Muslim authority in Bengal.

Whatever responsibility the East India Company took will look remarkable when it is remembered that the

---

<sup>1</sup>The Charter of the East India Company was renewed every twenty years. By the end of the eighteenth century the Company was rising more and more as a territorial power, and there was a growing concern in the House of Commons as to what should be the duties and obligations of the Company towards the Indians as a ruling power. Controversies in 1793 and 1813 were closely related to the general feelings on this subject in England.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes of Evidence regarding the renewal of the Charter in 1813 as quoted in History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 198.

<sup>3</sup>History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 199.

British Parliament had not yet voted any grant for the education of the English people; but to Indians, especially to Muslims, who had enjoyed the patronage of the state in education, there was nothing significant in it.

The sum officially allotted for annual expenditure in 1813 was not spent until 1823.<sup>1</sup> And even then because of the limited nature of the funds in comparison to the great needs of the millions, the officials had to adopt the so called "downward filtration" policy of concentrating on the education of the upper and middle classes, leaving it to them to educate the masses. Here again, the attitude was partial. Hindus were encouraged to learn English while no steps were taken to introduce English in Muslim Madrasahs.<sup>2</sup>

Between 1813 when the Company took some responsibility for education in India and 1835 when Government appointed a committee to decide matters is a period of conflicts and controversies. The main issues were:

(1) what kind of knowledge and literature was to be financially supported and encouraged, Oriental or Western?

---

<sup>1</sup>Nurullah and Naik, op. cit., p. 53. See also F.E. Keay, A History of Education in India and Pakistan (Calcutta, India: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 200.

<sup>2</sup>Board of Collections, as quoted in the History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 204.



(2) What should be the medium of instruction? (a) classical languages, (b) modern Indian languages, or (c) English.

In 1835, Macaulay, who was a Member of the Governor-General's Executive Council and also the Chairman of the recently appointed General Committee of Public Instruction, when asked by the Government to decide between the Orientalists, who were in favour of oriental languages and learnings and Anglicists, who were in favour of Western knowledge through English, decided in favour of the latter. The East India Company was to finance only Western learning and only through the medium of English, which he preferred not only as the language of learning of the ruling class, but for its "extreme superiority over oriental languages and learnings."<sup>1</sup>

About the aims of educating the Indians there were widely diverse opinions. There was Macaulay who wanted to create "a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and intellect."<sup>2</sup> There were others who supported promotion of oriental languages and learnings, as they thought that Macaulay's policy will produce a community of Indians who will not be acceptable either to the English as their equals or to the Indians as one of them. There were others among the Orientalists who

---

<sup>1</sup> History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

thought it politically dangerous.

In October, 1844, Lord Harding's Government announced that candidates with a knowledge of English would be preferred for government employment, which was another step in favour of the Anglicists.

Actually it was a period of experimentation. In different parts of the British Indian territory different ways and means were being tried by local authorities. In Bengal Lord Auckland gave financial support to the oriental schools and for the publication of books in oriental languages but made it clear that (1) "the principal aim of educational policy should be to communicate western knowledge through English; (2) "attempts of Government should be restricted to the extension of higher education for the upper classes of society who have the leisure for study and whose culture would filter down to the masses."<sup>1</sup>

In Bombay through the encouragement of Mountstuart Elphinstone, the Bombay Society of Native Education was established and on his recommendation it was accepted as the principal agency for the spread of education among the people. The Society aimed at spreading western education, but it attached great importance to establishing a number of secondary schools in smaller cities. The aim was not

---

<sup>1</sup>Nurullah and Naik, op. cit., p. 65.

to produce a few highly educated Indians but to provide general education for as many as possible.

Official attempts in education in Madras make a painful reading. They mostly consist

... of minutes by successive governors... outliving policies which were never fully adopted, of reports from the educational boards submitting schemes which were never brought into effect, of orders of the local government constituting new educational authorities each of which was short-lived, together with dispatches from the Court of Directors criticizing the policies framed by the Governors, rejecting the schemes submitted by the educational board and dissolving the new educational authorities constituted by the local Government.<sup>1</sup>

In the North-Western provinces, the control of the educational institutions was transferred from the Government of Bengal to the Provincial Government in 1843. One of the earliest decision of the Provincial Government was to educate the people through the medium of their mother tongue and not through English.<sup>2</sup> This decision was mainly due to Thomason who was then the Lieutenant-Governor of the province and was a great champion of mass education and indigenous schools.

As far as female education was concerned, the government promised its frank and cordial support. In 1849,

---

<sup>1</sup> Selections from Educational Records, History of Freedom Movement, Vol. II, Op.cit. p.177

<sup>2</sup> Nurullah and Naik, op. cit., p. 77.

Bethune College for girls was started in Calcutta. It was the only one of its kind in the sub-continent, where Indian girls could study upto the highest degree. But no further efforts were made to spread female education in India. Individual efforts like that of Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidya Sagar secured little help.<sup>1</sup> The cause of reluctance on the part of Government maybe that it did not want to infringe in any way upon the social customs and traditional ideas regarding the seclusion of women.

Macaulay's famous minutes of 1835 had made the official decision on many issues but the controversies did not end. One of the reasons could be that the policy was decided but the details were not made.

The following were the four main issues:

(1) What should be the object of the educational policy — to spread western knowledge or to preserve eastern learning?

(2) What should be the medium of instruction — English, Sanskrit or Arabic, or the modern Indian languages?

(3) What should be the agency for the spread of education — the mission schools, the institutions directly controlled by the Company, or the indigenous schools conducted by Indians themselves?

---

<sup>1</sup>K.C. Vyas, op. cit., p. 23.

(4) What should be the method of spreading education? Should government try to educate the masses directly, or should it only educate a few Indians and leave it upto them to educate the others?

"The Despatch of 1854"<sup>1</sup> set these conflicts at rest. for the time being by declaring that the main object of the educational system was to spread western knowledge and science, although it was desirable to grant some encouragement to oriental learning at the collegiate stage; that both English and the spoken languages of the people should be used as media of instruction at the secondary stage and that the efforts of government should cease to be directed to the education of the few and that the education of the masses should in future be regarded as a duty of the state.

With the receipt of this important document of educational history we come almost to the close of the East India Company era. Another important step taken by the Company just before it handed over the rule to the Crown was the establishment of three universities in the Presidency towns of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras in 1857, which were only examining bodies.

---

<sup>1</sup>The occasion for the Despatch was provided by the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1853. At this time, as at the earlier renewals of the Charter in 1813 and 1833, a select committee of the House of Commons held a very thorough enquiry into educational developments in India.

MUSLIMS IN THE FIRST HALF  
OF NINETEENTH CENTURY

During the eighteenth century, Delhi had been a favourite place for looting and devastating by hosts of rebelling vassals, whose attacks culminated in the raids of the barbarous Marathas. In 1803, Lord Wellesley had captured Delhi and a firm rule was established. The British had wisely allowed the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam to retain his sovereignty within the area of his big palace, the "Red Fort". He was left with a handsome income 'to maintain an imaginary royal dignity'.<sup>1</sup> An outward show of pomp and glory was kept; and everything was done to preserve artificially the 'grand manner' of the good old times. But "the affairs of administration as far as they remained within the Emperor's power, went from bad to worse. The Emperor himself became the prey of greedy courtiers, who flattered him on his musical and poetical abilities... The royal princes had their own way in state affairs. They quarrelled among themselves, while the old Emperor sank down into senility and dotage."<sup>2</sup>

During this period of "English peace," in the first half of the nineteenth century, especially during the latter part of it, Delhi enjoyed a kind of renaissance in literary and cultural activities. Learning and literature found ample

---

<sup>1</sup> C.F. Andrews; op. cit., p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

patronage in Delhi. We find a galaxy of Urdu poets whose names are immortal, with almost an army of small poets gathered around them. The Emperor himself was a poet and patronized poetic symposiums. "The city regained its gay atmosphere. Festivals were common, and they were observed with great pomp. Ceremonial processions through the city were daily occurrences during the marriage season, and immense sums of money were spent on wedding festivities and decorations.<sup>1</sup> The daily intercourse and intermingling of the citizens in the streets was full of colour, variety and charm."<sup>2</sup>

Religion played an important role in the lives of the people. There were many religious leaders in the city and religious discussions were common, though mostly on secondary issues. A common man's religion was a mixture of tenets of Islam, old customs and traditions and superstitions many of which were of local origin and a result of Hindu influence. The religious scholars of the day were still sticking to *Ilm-ul-Kalam* which was developed in the later part of the eighth and the ninth century. Neither

---

<sup>1</sup>This description also brings us to one of the social evils of the day, i.e. unnecessary expenditure.

<sup>2</sup>C.F. Andrews, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

<sup>3</sup>C.F. Andrews, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

the leaders nor the masses were ready to meet any modern force, material or intellectual. The Revolt of 1857 was a blow which made all that was old, crumble down, but the decay had been going on for centuries. The disaster only made it obvious.

Some of the officials of the East India Company and some other enlightened and good hearted Europeans had been trying to improve the state of affairs and to introduce some new blood into the almost dead veins of the old educational system. The three Presidencies, viz., Bengal, Bombay and Madras were more influenced with western ideas as they had come under the British influence earlier than the rest of India. Bengal was foremost in this respect where Raja Ram Mohan Roy who was the founder of Brahmusamaj movement (started for the religious and social reforms of Hindus) had advocated western education as early as 1816. His influence was great and he was able to inspire a new spirit in that province, which was fortunate to have other great social and educational reformers like Ishwar Chandar Vidya Sagar and Kashab Chandara Sen, etc., whose efforts not only resulted in many new educational institutions but also brought in many social reforms.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately the

---

<sup>1</sup>Agreement of the Hindus to the abolition of 'sati', i.e. burning alive of the widow with the body of the dead husband, was one of the great achievements.



efforts of these learned and good persons and their movements were almost limited to Bengal. Educationally speaking, the most backward area was the North-Western provinces, where the indigenous system was decaying fast and the new influence had not penetrated yet.

In the early years of the nineteenth century, the indigenous system of education held the field. Soon afterwards in those parts of India which were under the British missionaries began to spread western knowledge and encouraged the study of the English language and literature. They were joined by the officials of the Company and a few enlightened Indians who were either educated under the new system or valued its advantages, and between the combined efforts of these three sets of workers the modern system of education started taking shape.<sup>1</sup>

The history of the evolution of the modern system of education in India may be likened to a great drama. The setting of the play is provided, not only by the social, political, and constitutional history of India, but also by the social, political and educational developments in contemporary England. Several Indian institutions were planned along English models. Often the controversies in Indian education arose from contemporary controversies in

---

<sup>1</sup>Nurullah and Naik, op. cit., p. 1.

English education; and oftener still, a change in the educational policy of England had its echoes in Indian education sooner or later. An attempt to understand Indian educational policy apart from this background is like trying to understand the effect without knowing the cause.

The English system of education, like the English constitution and the British Empire, has grown up by a series of accidents, ... not based upon any theory or on any preconceived planning, but introduced as the occasion or the social needs and changes demanded.<sup>1</sup>

Another characteristic of the British worth noting is "freedom and liberty for the individual and for social groups to work out their own salvation with a minimum of state interference the Englishman regards as his most precious possession, and in no field of social endeavour more than in education."<sup>2</sup>

The effect of this habit of mind on the development of a national educational system has been to postpone state action as long as possible, and to rely on social or group action.

When the state did embark slowly and tentatively making the initial steps, as it did in 1833 and 1870 in the field of elementary education, in 1888 in technical education, and in 1902 in the

---

<sup>1</sup> I.L. Kandel, Comparative Education (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1933), p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

general attempt to bring together the various strands that had been woven in the preceding century... it limited itself to 'suggesting' the minimum standard to be maintained and as far as possible the state refrained from 'prescribing'.<sup>1</sup>

British policy makers of the Company sitting in England to a great extent treated Indians the same way. The difficulty was that the conditions in India were entirely different and Indians were not Englishmen. Local and private initiative in India was not as great as in England and could not fill the gap left by government non-interference.

The grant of 'Diwani'<sup>2</sup> in 1765 had made East India Company a ruling power in India. It was only then that the Company was called upon to encourage education among its subjects as the earlier Hindu and Muslim rulers had done. But the Court of Directors, naturally enough, drew their inspirations from English models rather than from Hindu or Muslim traditions, and as Parliament itself did nothing to educate the English people, the Company also refused to recognize any obligation towards the education of Indians. Even when it did recognize it officially, not much was done

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>2</sup>"Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa were handed over to the English by an Imperial grant in 1765. We obtained these three fertile provinces as the nominee of the Emperor." W.W. Hunter, op. cit., p. 153.

actually. The educational policy of the Company and the educational system which as a result came into being, is an illustration of British character. "The English dislike to think or formulate plans of action, however plausible they may be, before the immediate need for them is apparent on the surface."<sup>1</sup> The policy makers were ignorant of the actual conditions and needs of the Indians, which not only resulted in lack of action but also in many controversies. The conflicts in the beginning of the nineteenth century centred mainly around two issues. Firstly there was the unwillingness of the Court of Directors to accept any responsibility for the education of the Indians,<sup>2</sup> and the agitation of their officers in India, mainly on grounds of political exigency, to persuade them to accept it. Secondly, there also arose a conflict between the desire of the missionaries to go to India and the unwillingness of the Board of Directors to admit them to their territories, for fear that their activities might arouse the opposition of the people. It was only after a prolonged agitation that the Company was compelled, by the Charter of 1813, to incur some expenditure for the fulfilment of this obligation,<sup>2</sup> and

---

<sup>1</sup>Kandel, op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>2</sup>It was not till 1833 that the Crown took any direct responsibility of educating the English people.

to admit missionaries to its dominions for spreading "light and knowledge." This was the beginning of the state system of education under the British rule. There are several features of this period which could be clearly observed. To begin with, the British people of the Victorian era complacently believed that their methods were the best in the world and the Indians could do no better than to adopt them in toto. Hence the neglect on the part of the British to understand Indians and their economic and social and educational problems. Generally speaking, Muslims were conservative and were suspicious of new things. Political degeneration had brought intellectual degeneration along with it. They preferred to live in the past glory. Whatever the ancients had said and done was to them the last word. The best one could do was to keep up with it. They had also developed reluctance towards western knowledge and had particular dislike towards learning English. It was mostly because of the activities of the missionaries and their schools, where every attempt was made to convert Indians to Christianity. The average Muslim thought that anybody who learned English could not remain a good Muslim. To him western knowledge and Christianity were synonymous.

## EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE REVOLT OF 1857

Whatever were the religious and political causes of the Revolt of 1857, the consequences were grave, especially for the Muslims.

The inhuman slaughter of Europeans by the Indians could not but be deplored and taking revenge by the victorious English was nothing unnatural, but the amount and the nature of that unrestricted revenge was something nobody could help being ashamed of. Again we are not so much concerned with what exact happened at that time, i.e. in 1857, or who was to be blamed, but with the consequences, which were spread over the years.

The Christians since the times of Crusades did not have much goodwill for Islam and Muslims. Nor did the British held a high opinion of Indians (in the eighteenth and more particularly in the nineteenth century). To a great extent, they were justified in their attitude. It was not only that Muslims were politically degenerating and the atmosphere was full of intrigues and petty jealousies, but many social evils had infiltrated deep down and had become part of the system. So it was also with degenerating moral conditions. The Revolt of 1857 strengthened the British animosity to Indians, in particular to the Muslim from whom they had taken the power and whom

they thought responsible for the Revolt and the brutal killing of Europeans. They took the whole community as a gang of criminals to be hanged or shot at the slightest pretext and to be deprived of their properties and sent to the prisons. To be Muslim was enough to make one a suspect in the eyes of the British.

On the part of the Muslims, they were mostly ignorant about Christianity and thought it something against Islam.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the inhuman treatment they got from the British during and after the Revolt was enough to make them hate the English and anything associated with them, religion, education, anyting.

Briefly speaking, the British were suspicious of Muslims and preferred to employ Hindus in places where they had to take Indians at all.<sup>2</sup> In many cases the doors were barred to the Muslims. "Even the Government advertisements sometimes made it clear that only Hindus need apply for the post advertised."<sup>3</sup> Hunter gives statistics which show that out of 2,111 posts of a certain category, only 92 or a little over four per cent were

---

<sup>1</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan and others had to spend much time and energy disproving it.

<sup>2</sup>This too had educational implications.

<sup>3</sup>History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 342.

occupied by Muslims; he adds that in less conspicuous posts they were completely excluded.<sup>1</sup>

In education also, the British were ready to help the Hindu to acquire western knowledge and also encouraged his ancestral language (Sanskrit) and tradition.<sup>2</sup> Muslims were in an uneviable plight. They had lost political power and with it were gone most of the high posts and grants of estates, etc., which were their main way of getting their livelihood. (Many of the estates, including charitable trusts for religious purposes were confiscated by the Government). Muslim craftsmen were dying an economic death. Because of lack of patronage, (their former patrons were either dead or were too poor to be of any use), and because of the official encouragement of British goods. Muslim agriculturists, unprotected by the new laws and because of their age old habits of extravagance and of the uncertainty of rainfall were now more and more in the hands of money-lenders (who were mostly Hindus). Thus deprived of their economic resources and their well-to-do patrons their educational institutions were also dying out. Moreover, many of their scholars who were religious leaders

---

<sup>1</sup>W.W. Hunter, op. cit., p. 145. See also Mahmud Benglori, Tarikh-e-Sultanat-e-Khudad (Bombay: Taj Office, 1941).

<sup>2</sup>Apart from the political factors, there had arisen a genuine interest in Hindu philosophy and Sanskrit among the western orientalist during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. V.K. Vayas, op. cit., p. 59.



too were either killed or put into prisons on suspicion of conspiracy against Government, thus giving a fatal blow to their schools of higher learning.

The old system was dying and the Muslims were very reluctant to go to the new schools. The reasons for their reluctance were well summed up by the Education Commission of 1882 in comparing the attitude of Hindus and Muslims towards western education. Three points are enumerated to elucidate the causes of the conspicuous difference between Hindus and Muslims: (1) while the Muslim boy must first spend some years in going through a course of sacred learning in the mosque,<sup>1</sup> the Hindu boys entered schools straight-away; (2) The Muslim parents often chose for their son, while at school, an education which will secure for him an honoured place among the learned of his community, rather than one that will command success in modern professions or

---

<sup>1</sup>Government schools were secular institutions and for Muslims religious education was an integral part of education. On the contrary, according to Hindu religion the right to receive religious education vested with the Brahmans only and those who violated it were supposed to have committed an act of sacrilege.

"The Hindu attitude to the Mission schools... was less suspicious than that of the Muslims, for the personality of Christ gave the Hindu much that enriched and sweetened his life without destroying its foundations. The Mohammedan found in this creed a direct challenge to the teaching that underlay his life." A. Mathew, The Education of India (Faber and Gringer, 1926), p. 47.

in official life; (3) the Muslim parent belonging to the better classes is usually poorer than the Hindu parent in a corresponding social position. He cannot afford to give his son a complete education. To these three causes can be added the frank avowal of Sayyid Mahmud that "a candid Muhammadan would probably admit that the most powerful factors (i.e. accounting for the backwardness of Muslims in English education) are to be found in pride of race, a memory of by-gone superiority, religious fears,<sup>1</sup> and a not unnatural attachment to the learning of Islam."<sup>2</sup>

On this background of social evils, political unrest, economic ruin and educational backwardness appeared the giant figure of Sayyid Ahmed Khan, and it needed a giant to face successfully such a situation.

---

<sup>1</sup>These fears were mostly based on the attitude of the Mission Schools, whose main aim of education was conversion. No doubt, during the middle of the nineteenth century the Mission schools were the best schools in India, but fears of Muslims were not altogether baseless.

<sup>2</sup>Sayyid Mahmud, History of English Education in India (1781-1893) (Aligarh, India: M.A. College, 1895), p. 148, as quoted by J.M.S. Baljon J. in The Reforms and Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1949), p. 24.

## CHAPTER V

### SAYYID AHMED KHAN AND HIS PERSPECTIVE

#### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The greatest Indian Muslim reformer and statesman of the nineteenth century, Sayyid Ahmed Khan, was born on October 17, 1817. Both from his father's side as well as from his mother's, the families were noble, distinguished and learned. They were also notable for their keen interest in religion and for their broad-minded views. His maternal grandfather, Khawaja Farid, had been appointed wazir and given the title of 'Dabir-ud-Daulah Amin-ul-Mulk Muslih Jang' by Akbar Shah II. He had also worked as superintendent of the Calcutta Madrasah and led a political mission to Iran during Wellesley's governor-generalship.<sup>1</sup> He was a very learned man and in addition to being good at administration, finance and diplomacy, also excelled in mathematics.

Sayyid Ahmed Khan's grandfather, Sayyid Hadi, held a 'mansab' and the title of Jawwad Ali Khan in the court of Alamgir II. Shah Alam added 'Jawwad-ud-Daulah' to his titles. Sayyid Hadi's son, Mir Muttaqi, had been close to Akbar Shah since the days of his princehood, but being

---

<sup>1</sup>History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., Vol. II, Part II, p. 451.

a man of care-free nature he had not accepted any office or title. However, he had access to the private sittings of the Emperor. Sayyid Ahmed Khan several times accompanied his father to these meetings. Thus he had known the decaying Mughal dynasty not as an outsider, but had observed it at close quarters. He also had an early chance to know something about the working of the East India Company and its educational policy, as not only his maternal grandfather but other members of his family were also working for the Company. These observations later helped him decide that fighting for the Mughals, against the East India Company would not do any good to the Indians, as the 'Mughal Empire' had finished much earlier.

Sayyid Ahmed Khan's mother, Aziz-un-Nisa Begum, not only belonged to a noble and distinguished family but herself was quite an educated lady according to the standards of those days. She did not believe in most of the superstitions which had become part of Muslim religion, in India then. She took greater interest in his education and upbringing than his father, and had very definite and clear views about the advantages of a good education. As Sayyid Ahmed Khan himself had acknowledged it many a time her supervision counted for much in the formation of his character.

The early years of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's life were

spent in the family atmosphere. There were not many restrictions in Khawaja Farid's 'haweli',<sup>1</sup> a big mansion having spacious grounds where his grandson played with other children of his family. Thus he did not have to go out much and get mixed with other children and get some of their habits or superstitions. There was nothing in young Sayyid Ahmed's behavior to suggest that he was different from the other boys. What, however, distinguished him from them was his extraordinary good physique. As a boy he learned swimming and archery, which were the favourite sports of those days and of which his father was an expert.

Sayyid Ahmed Khan received his education under the old system. He learned to read the Qurān under a woman teacher in his house. After that he was put under the charge of a private tutor. Having completed a course in the Persian and Arabic languages, he took up the study of Mathematics which was the favourite subject of the family. Later he became interested in medicine and studied some of the well-known books on that science, but soon he gave it up without completing the course. At the age of eighteen or nineteen his career as a student came to an end, but he continued his studies privately. He also started taking interest in the literary and cultural activities of Delhi and met some

---

<sup>1</sup> His maternal grand-father's house where he lived.

distinguished literary personalities of the day.<sup>1</sup>

As all the allowances and grants of land to his father were only for his life time, and as Sayyid Ahmed himself had not taken any active part in court life, the death of his father in 1838 left the family in difficulties, and he was obliged to look for a career and decided to enter the service of the East India Company. He started with a very junior post in Delhi and later became a record-keeper in the Divisional Commissioner's office at Agra. As told by Hali he was offered a better post at Delhi but refused to accept it saying that he did not think he was competent for it.<sup>2</sup> Throughout his life he was notable for his outstanding honesty, in matters of money, friendship or doing a job well. While at Agra, he studied the revenue branch of law and achieved great proficiency in it. From a junior clerk he slowly rose to positions of responsibility. In 1842, while he was on a short visit to Delhi, the Emperor conferred upon him his ancestral title of 'Jawwad-ud-Daulah' with the addition of 'Apif Jung'.

---

<sup>1</sup>The Mughal Empire was falling down but there was quite a hustle and bustle of literary activities in Delhi and some of the most notable Urdu poets are the product of those days. Ghalib, Zauq, Azurda, Shaifta, Sahbai, were among them, who are immortals in Urdu literature.

<sup>2</sup>Altaf Husain Hali, Hayat-i-Javid, op. cit., p.110.

In 1846, when he was posted at Delhi as 'Munsif',<sup>1</sup> though twenty-nine years old, he resumed his studies in literature, Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence), Hadith, and the Qurān, and took lessons from some of the distinguished teachers of his time. It was during this stay at Delhi that he wrote to his famous book 'Athar-us-Sanadeed'.<sup>2</sup>

In 1856 he was promoted and sent to Bijnore as 'Sadar Amin'. While he was still in Bijnore the Revolt of 1857 started. Sayyid Ahmed Khan by now had judged the futality of fighting against the British and also the uselessness of the Mughal Emperors at Delhi. Even if the British had lost, it would not have brought peace and prosperity or progress to the country. He tried to keep peace and order in his area, and at the risk of his own life saved the lives of Englishmen and women in his

---

<sup>1</sup> There was a dual system of administration of justice during the East India Company's rule. There were judges who were appointed to adjudicate according to laws prescribed by the Company officials. But local matters, e.g. inheritance, marriage, etc., were judged according to the local traditions. The judges of original jurisdiction of the latter category were known as 'Munsif', while those of appellate jurisdiction were known as 'Sadar Amin.'

<sup>2</sup> It is about the historical monuments of Delhi. It is not just descriptive, but contains much research work of significant value on Mughal architecture and history. Garccon de Tasi, the famous Orientalist translated it into French and thus it came to the notice of the west. On the merit of this book Sayyid Ahmed Khan was made an honorary member of the Royal Asiatic Society.

district. His family was in Delhi and were affected very badly by the disturbances. His mother had suffered so much that she did not live long after that. During all these disturbances Sayyid Ahmed Khan did what he thought was his duty as a human being. He served the British loyally but looked after the interests of Indians as well. After the Revolt when he was offered a big estate for his services to the British, he refused to accept it, as it had belonged to a Muslim family who were turned out on suspicion of taking part in the Revolt.<sup>1</sup>

The Revolt of 1857 and the events that followed it were disastrous for the Muslims. In a wave of unrestrained revenge thousands of Muslims were killed and their properties confiscated. Many were deprived of their means of livelihood. The destruction was so wholesale, and most of it was so unjust, that it shook Sayyid Ahmed Khan to the roots. He realized the unenviable plight of the Muslim masses, low and degraded in every field; educational, social, economic and political. At one time he thought nothing could be done to improve such desperate conditions and thought of migrating to Egypt. Fortunately he changed his mind, and thought it would be cowardly to leave his brethren in their misfortune and take refuge in a safe place.<sup>2</sup> The catastrophe made him think over seriously of the causes of the depressed

---

<sup>1</sup>Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., p. 138.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 139.



conditions of the Muslims, of the means of removing them, and improving the conditions of the Muslims in India. He had always been helpful to the needy.<sup>1</sup> Now after due consideration he came to the conclusion that help on an individual basis could not solve the problems of a nation. The causes of all evils to him were ignorance and misunderstandings. The remedy was education, suitable to the time and needs of the people.

Since 1857 we find that all his efforts were concentrated on educating the Indians in general and Muslims in particular.<sup>2</sup> In 1858 he wrote his famous treatise: Asbab-i-Baghawat-i-Hind (Causes of the Indian Revolt), in which he tried to explain to the British Government that the main cause of the Revolt was lack of understanding between the rulers and the ruled. He also said it boldly that the English were to be blamed mostly for it. At a time when the country was under martial law, even to be

---

<sup>1</sup> He had helped in the building of many mosques and had often given money to the poor. After he had decided that educating the Muslims was the best course, he stopped all other philanthropic activities. Once asked to contribute for the building of a mosque, he said, "You want to build a house of bricks and mortar for God; I am trying to make a living house of God" (the College), and did not give any money. Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>2</sup> He aimed at the enlightenment of the minds of the adults and the schooling of their young. Ibid.

suspected of disloyalty was enough to be shot. At the insistence of his friends he did not publish it in India. Five hundred copies were printed. One copy was sent to the Viceroy, a few copies he kept for himself, and the rest were sent to the members of the Parliament in England. This attempt to educate the British Parliament was a very courageous step which, barring a few, was fortunately taken in the correct light and did bear some fruit. The British Government tried to remove many of the causes suggested by him. About the same time he wrote another pamphlet: Loyal Mohammadans of India. This was again a step to remove the suspicion from the minds of the British that all Muslims were against them. His conviction that the Revolt was not a national attempt to drive out the English may be right or wrong, but he expressed it in such a powerful way that it did help in removing some of the suspicion from the minds of the English people — a result which was beneficial to the Muslims. In 1858, he was promoted and was transferred to Muradabad. There he started writing a commentary of the Bible. Missionaries used to hold public arguments about Christianity being the only true religion. Muslim religious leaders used to refute those arguments, usually in a negative way. Even before 1857, Sayyid Ahmed Khan had thought of refuting the arguments of the missionaries. Now he made up

his mind to do it, but in a scholarly and constructive way. For this purpose, he made a comprehensive collection of literature written for and against Christianity and different commentaries on the Bible. His aim was to prove that Islam and Christianity were not against each other. In fact, they are the only two religions which are most harmonious and are complementary to each other. He employed a scholar of Arabic and collected relevant books on Islam. As he thought that present contradictions between Islam and Christianity were due to later interpretations of the Bible. He started learning Hebrew from a Jew, Salim, in order to read the original. Salim also helped him in his commentary. In 1862, he was transferred to Ghazipur and took the work of writing and publishing Tabyin-al-Kalâm with him. He employed an Englishman to translate what he wrote in English and as he was sure that nobody will be ready to publish it, he bought his own printing press for this purpose. The original Hebrew text of the Bible was put in one column, underneath it were written the Urdu and English translations. In the second column a verse from the Qur'an on the same topic was written in Arabic and into Urdu and English translations were written. After that he would write his own commentary.<sup>1</sup> The work, due to insufficient support was never

---

<sup>1</sup>Altaf Husain Hali, Hayat-i-Javid, op. cit., p. 167.

completed, but whatever was done was appreciated by many Christians and by many Muslims. To some extent it served the purpose of creating better understanding.

He thought that unless Muslims got interested in the modern thought and sciences they would not go in for western education. For this purpose, in 1864, he established the Scientific Society. Its aim was to translate good books from English into Urdu. It also arranged lectures on literary and scientific topics.

In 1864, he started a high school at Ghazipur. The same year he was transferred to Aligarh which was destined to be the seat of one of his most important activities. When he came to Aligarh he brought the 'Society' along with him. In 1866 the Scientific Society started its own paper called Aligarh Institute Gazette. Its aim was to acquaint the Government and the public with each other's views and to develop political consciousness among Indians. In 1867, when he was transferred to Benaras he left the work of the Society in responsible hands and tried to look after himself also.

In 1869, Sayyid Mahmud, his elder son, was awarded a scholarship by the provincial government for studies abroad. Sayyid Ahmed Khan seized the opportunity and decided to accompany him. His decision to undertake this

Journey in spite of financial difficulties<sup>1</sup> gives an indication to his determination to put through his scheme of popularizing western education among his people. He was genuinely convinced that his visit to England was necessary because without it he could not get first-hand knowledge of the English educational system and the cultural, social and political characteristics of English life.

His stay in England was made pleasant and fruitful by many people. Among them, his English biographer Graham, may be specially mentioned. Lord Lawrence was another. He was able to move in the highest society of England and was presented to Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales. He met many notable educationists, writers, scientists and statesmen. He also observed the common people, e.g. the coachman and the house-maid and thus gained knowledge about the various classes of the British people. He was much impressed by what he saw, and came to the conclusion that all this was possible only because of widespread education, which had also resulted in creating a cultured and civilized environment. He visited many educational institutions and was much impressed by Oxford and Cambridge. He studied the system and working of Cambridge University very closely, as

---

<sup>1</sup>He sold his library and mortgaged his house in Delhi in order to collect enough funds for his journey. A.H. Hall, op. cit., p. 120.

the idea of establishing a university in India on similar lines was already taking shape in his mind. Nobody who has carefully studied the character and outlook of Sayyid Ahmed Khan would agree with the exaggerated view that in seeing "European civilization in full swing he was overwhelmed by it, dazed like a young child."<sup>1</sup> However, there can hardly be any doubt that his first contact with western life made him more firm in his conviction that Indians' salvation laid in discarding medieval outlook and in taking the new ideas and methods. Hali's remark that, "he saw everything, he ignored the defects of western civilization and picked up its good features,"<sup>2</sup> is much nearer to the truth.

In his decision to visit England Sayyid Ahmed Khan had another main aim. He wanted to write a book on the life and work of the Prophet of Islam in refutation of Muir's, Life of Muhammed, which, as he said, 'had burnt his heart' and he could not rest in peace unless he had given a rejoinder to that 'scandalous' book. During the Revolt of 1857 many of the good libraries and most valuable private collections of books were burned and he could not find in India enough material for his book.<sup>3</sup> The British

---

<sup>1</sup> W.C. Smith, Modern Islam in India and Pakistan (Lahore, Pakistan: Minverva, 1947), p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> A.H. Hali, op. cit., p. 427.

<sup>3</sup> Letters from London to his close friend Muhsin-ul-Mulk, Mushtaq Husain, (ed.), Makatibi Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan (Aligarh: Friends Book House, 1960), p. 49.

Museum and the India Office Library had rich collections and he rightly thought that London was the place to write the book he wanted. Essays on the Life of Mohammad, published in English was the result, which is still taken as one of the best and most rational books ever written about the Prophet of Islam.

His visit to England was successful one. He achieved both of his objectives.<sup>1</sup> It also created a good impression about Indians in England. Another good which resulted from this visit was that other Muslims were encouraged to go to England. One of them was Amir Ali who went to England after Sayyid Ahmed's return.

On his return Sayyid Ahmed lost no time in taking necessary steps to implement his scheme for educational and social reforms. To educate public opinion he started his journal Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq which rendered great service in disseminating his ideas and those of his colleagues. It became one of the pillars of the Aligarh Movement. It propagated his educational ideas and made his projects and institutions known to his people.

Publication of these ideas gave rise to a tirade of

---

<sup>1</sup>To study the educational system in England and to write refutation of Muir's book.

abuse and opposition but it also provided him with some very staunch and able supporters. Soon after his return to India he set up a committee, called the Committee Striving after the Educational Progress of the Muslims,<sup>1</sup> which tried to find the reason why Muslim students in government colleges were so few. After due consideration the committee came to the conclusion that the government institutions were not suited to meet the needs of Muslims,<sup>2</sup> hence the need to establish their own educational institutions.

A second committee was then established under the name Fund Committee for the Foundation of a Muslim College, and again Ahmed Khan became the secretary. With the help of his colleagues he was able to collect some funds. As they were not enough to establish a college it was decided to start modestly with a school, which was opened at Aligarh in 1875. Two years later the foundation of the Mohammanan Anglo-Oriental College<sup>3</sup> was laid. Though the government had provided some financial help and support, the college was mostly financed through private contributions, and was more or less an independent institution, but had to be affiliated first to Calcutta University and later to Allahabad

---

<sup>1</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan was elected its secretary.

<sup>2</sup>Baljon, op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>3</sup>Usually known as M.A.O. College.



University.<sup>1</sup>

The College was founded on the lines of Cambridge, though it could not rise to the status of a university till 1920, still it served the Muslims much more than the other universities in India. The courses of study consisted of modern arts and sciences and oriental languages. What made it different from other government colleges was that religious education was compulsory for all the Muslim students. It also had the distinction of being a residential institution where much emphasis was laid on corporate life, national feeling and character building. "It was not just a seat of learning; it soon became the centre of the political, cultural, and literary life of the Indian Muslims."<sup>2</sup>

In spite of all the good it did, Sayyid Ahmed Khan seems to have realized very early that the establishment of a college will not solve the problems of Muslim education in the vast Indian sub-continent. He decided to set up the 'Mohammadan Educational Conference', which soon became the second great pillar of the Aligarh Movement. It was a forum to discuss educational problems of sixty million Muslims of the Indian sub-continent, with their common as

---

<sup>1</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan wanted to establish an independent Muslim University, but the government did not agree to it.

<sup>2</sup>History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit., p. 491.

well as regional problems.

Sayyid Ahmed Khan was a firm believer in Islam. He had always tried to prove its supremacy and to remove misunderstandings about it. Still he felt that there remained much to be done. He thought that the Qur'an as interpreted by orthodox religious leaders could be confusing to the Muslim youth who were receiving western education. It had happened in Bengal, where western education came earlier and was much more popular, many of the young Bengalis, mostly Hindus looked down upon their religion. With the efforts of Christian missionaries some were converted to Christianity, some became atheists and some just indifferent to religion.<sup>1</sup> The study of western philosophy and physical sciences, he thought, tended to shake the beliefs of the educated young men, because they found it difficult to reconcile the prevailing religious ideas with the postulates of science. Most of these ideas had found currency because of previous religious writings. Ahmed Khan took the stand that the Qur'an is the fountain head of Islamic teachings and these, he maintained, did not come into conflict with the laws of nature. He realized that a new commentary on the Qur'an written along modern lines was needed, especially for those who were receiving a western education. He started work on the 'Tafsir' in

---

<sup>1</sup>V.K.Vyas, op. cit., pp. 9-10.

1876 and continued it with remarkable patience inspite of opposition from many quarters. He could not complete his work and had come up to about the middle of the Qur'an when he died.<sup>1</sup>

In 1878 he was nominated to the Legislative Council by the Viceroy, Lord Lytton. Two years later, he was re-nominated. All this time he served the cause of the Indians well. "Though unable to express himself in English or understand it fully he made his mark in the Council."<sup>2</sup> He introduced and got two bills passed for the benefit of Indians.

He was a member of the Education Commission of 1882 under the chairmanship of W.W. Hunter. As Ahmed Khan did not agree with the procedure adopted by the Commission, and as the chairman refused to make the changes suggested by him he resigned his membership, but had no hesitation in appearing as a witness before the Commission so that the case of Muslims might not go by default.<sup>3</sup>

In 1888 he was knighted in recognition of his services to the government and to the Indians. In 1889 he was awarded an LL.D. degree 'in absentia' by Edinburgh

<sup>1</sup>Seven volumes of the 'Tafsir' were printed, bringing it upto Surah Anbia.

<sup>2</sup>A.H. Hali, op. cit., p. 286.

<sup>3</sup>At the request of Lord Lytton he did not object to his eldest son Sayyid Mahmud being a member of the Commission in his place.

University. This very year in which his reputation had reached its zenith, also saw the beginning of disappointments. The controversy over his nominating Sayyid Mahmud<sup>1</sup> as joint secretary and after his death to be the secretary of the Board of Trustees of the College was the first. He won the issue, but lost some of his closest friends and colleagues, Maulvi Sami-ullah Khan being one, and the wound never healed. Embezzlement of more than Rs. 100,000 from College funds by his trusted head clerk, Shiam Bihari Lal, was another blow. The money which had been collected literally by the sweat of his brow was lost. Later, in 1897, Sayyid Mahmud the 'distinguished son of a distinguished father', for whom he had many hopes was attacked by a severe illness. In his last year he started keeping abnormally quiet. When asked for the reason he said, "the time is near when I will be quiet for ever." He died on March 27, 1899 and was burried in the compound of the College mosque.

---

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Mahmud was among the first Muslim Indians to go abroad for education. He was the first Muslim to be a Judge of the High Court. Most important is that he was his father's right hand in all his educational efforts.

SAYYID AHMED KHAN - THE PERSON (CHARACTER)

If we take an overall survey of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's career an interesting and a very outstanding personality emerges from the multifarious activities which kept him busy throughout his long life.

Perhaps the very first to be noticed is his common sense and intelligence. He had grown up in the shadow of the palace at Delhi. He could have easily got a respectable post from the Imperial Court. Instead he chose to take a very ordinary post under the English. At that time he was only twenty-one years old. It is difficult to say how far this decision was the result of his early recognition of not only the lost empire, but the inability of the Muslims to rule, and that therefore another people had to rule over India.

In 1857 the same attitude was taken by him but by that time it was definitely a deliberate decision.<sup>1</sup> During the Revolt of 1857, Ahmed Khan did not join the Indians against the British. Not because he was not a patriot, but he could see that the Mughal Empire was finished and there was no other real force which could stand the foreign invaders. The English had come to stay for some time. He was able to judge and wisely so, that violence was not the way

---

<sup>1</sup> Altaf Husain Halli, op. cit., p. 142.

to overthrow the yoke of foreign domination.<sup>1</sup> To his mind, the best way for the Indians was to equip themselves with western knowledge and sciences, to learn how to live effectively and respectably in the modern world, and to learn how to run a government on modern administrative lines.<sup>2</sup> When the Indians were thus equipped, only then, they will be in a position to demand for their rights (of self-government), and will be able to make profitable use of such rights. For the same reason he was against Muslims getting mixed up in politics. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the economic position of Muslims in India was deteriorating.

They had no positions in the government services and thus there was no power to back them. Moreover, they were very backward in modern education. Their entering into politics and joining in agitations would have been suicidal. The English were suspicious of Muslims and any criticism of the government coming from them would have made their chances of recovery still remote.

It was not simply from doggish affection for the English that Ahmed Khan made such abundant praise of English rule and declaration of his loyalty towards their government. Although there is no doubt

---

<sup>1</sup> Baljon, op.cit., p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., p. 487. Quotation from a speech delivered at Lucknow. Mushtaq Husain, (ed.), Makatib-i-Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan (Aligarh: Friends Book House, 1960) "Letter to Sayyid Muhammad Ali Hasan," p. 350. Also Rashid Ahmed Siddiqi, Sir Sayyid and Aligarh from Aligarh Tahrik Aghaz Ta Imroz, op.cit., p. 8.

that he was upright in his admiration of their achievements, yet mainly his sense of reality told him that their cooperation was essential for the success of his enterprises.<sup>1</sup>

It was the same sense of reality and foresight which made him propagate a new interpretation of Islam. He could foresee that the study of the physical sciences will make young Muslims doubt many religious beliefs. As he firmly believed that Islam pure and simple was not against reason he made it one of the aims of his life to present to his people the real Islam which was compatible with modern ideas. His articles in Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq, many of his speeches, and above all, his writing of the Tafsir were a preventive measure to protect young Muslim minds from corruption by atheism or anti-Islamic ideas.<sup>2</sup>

We advocate western knowledge but unless we free Islam from the shackles of superstition and blind following there is a great danger that our western educated young men will lose faith in religion. Today the greatest service we can do to Islam is to re-interpret it in the light of reason.<sup>3</sup>

He was a Muslim first and a Muslim last. But his faith was not a blind faith. He himself said that he was a believer in Islam not because he was born a Muslim. It

---

<sup>1</sup>Baljon, op. cit., p.7;

<sup>2</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, X, op. cit., p. 107.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 108. Also, Altaf Husain Halli, op. cit., p. 369.

was through his own investigations that he had come to the conclusion that Islam was the true religion. He said, "If it was not so, I would have given up Islam."<sup>1</sup> Once he believed it to be true he spent a great deal of his time and energy in proving it to others. But this did not make him narrow minded. He always showed regard for other religions. In the beginning when he talked of the 'nation' he meant Indians, Hindus as well as Muslims.<sup>2</sup> Later the current of events showed him that Hindus and Muslims were two different nations, not only different in religion but in outlook also. As Hindus were in the majority and were more advanced and well off than Muslims there was the danger of Muslims being dominated by the Hindus. He, therefore, devoted all his energies for the uplift of the Muslims only. But he always said that Muslims and Hindus were like the two eyes of a beautiful bride. If either of these were spoiled it would mar the beauty of the whole.<sup>3</sup> Though working for the cause of Muslims only,

---

<sup>1</sup>Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., p. 365. This spirit of investigation is also evident throughout his life. To go to England in spite of great obstacles and study the educational system there, was another example of this spirit.

<sup>2</sup>Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., pp. 192-93.

<sup>3</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, quotation from a lecture delivered at Gurdaspur on January 27, 1883, as quoted by Abdul Haq, Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan, op. cit., p. 65. Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., p. 873.



he never showed any feelings against Hindus. Some of his very close friends were Hindus. Raja Jai Kishan Das was one of his trusted friends in whose hands he left the work of the Scientific Society when he went to England. Here an incident showing his broad-mindedness may not be out of place.

It is the custom among the Muslims that when a child is about four years old he starts learning to read. Usually it is an occasion to celebrate. Close friends and relatives gather together. The child sits with some elderly member of the family (usually the most respected one) and the 'Mulla' asks the child to repeat a few verses from the Qur'an after him. After that, sweets are distributed or there is a feast to enjoy. When Sayyid Ahmed Khan's only grandson Ross Masud was to undergo the ceremony it was arranged in the big hall of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College.<sup>1</sup> Masud was sitting in the lap of Raja Jai Kishan Das, whom he called 'Grandpa'.

The same spirit prevailed in the M.A.O. College. There were many Hindu students who lived in the boarding house. Every care was taken to respect their religious sentiments and customs.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The first Muslim College in the Indian sub-continent which was founded in 1877. For details see *infra* pp. 149-160. The College was usually known as M.A.O. College.

<sup>2</sup> *Infra* p. 157

His kindness was also well-known. He was polite to people irrespective of their rank or position. To his worst critics he had nothing but courtesy and polite reasoning.<sup>1</sup> To those who unreasonably abused and threatened him he had nothing to say but he prayed to God to forgive them as they knew not what they did. To his subordinates and his personal servants he was always kind. Once somebody was attached to him. He was not ready to listen to anything against him. The result was that his servants took advantage of it, but he did not mind.<sup>2</sup> (Mostly there was cheating in the house-keeping accounts.) Both master and servants gave unquestioned loyalty to each other. The same was with his friends. Once he took somebody as a friend he was ready to do anything for him.<sup>3</sup> In turn his friends' support proved a great strength to his reform movements.

Unusual honesty and boldness were among his other main characteristics. At the age of 21 years his refusal

<sup>1</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, X, op. cit., p. 56.

<sup>2</sup>Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., p.829. The only incident where his trust was sadly betrayed was when Shiam Biharilal took away money from the College account. It was a blow from which Sayyid Ahmed Khan could not recover.

<sup>3</sup>Along with numerous incidents his letters to his friends clearly give the picture of his affection for his friends.

to take a job for which he thought he was not fit shows his honest approach towards life. He did not do things in which he did not believe. And once he believed in something nobody could stop him from doing it. Writing Risala Asbab-i-Baghawat-i-Hind and sending it to the members of the British Parliament clearly shows this characteristic. His life is full of such incidents. His not attending the 'Darbar' at Agra because Indians were not given the same seats as were given to Europeans was another example of his acting what he thought was his duty as a self-respecting Indian, even if it caused the displeasure of the British Government.<sup>1</sup>

From the mere fact that Ahmed Khan enjoyed no western schooling his youth and that he made his own way in acquiring a knowledge of European civilization successfully, one can imagine that he must have possessed good brain.

When he was a member of the Legislative Council, because of his lack of knowledge of the English language he had to take great trouble in making speeches in the meetings of the Council. He used to write the speech in Urdu, then got it translated in English and then wrote it in Urdu characters and delivered it in the meeting. He did not make just formal speeches which he had to make,

---

<sup>1</sup>Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., p. 405.

but took active part in the discussions and introduced his own ideas on various subjects. After one of his speeches, when the Council adjourned, Lord Lytton, the Viceroy, came after him and putting his hand on Sayyid Ahmed Khan's shoulder said that he had not heard such a scholarly speech before.<sup>1</sup>

Though the influence of his popular writings is not to be neglected, it was his speeches that gave him his actual grip on his people. In them he got the opportunity to put all the weight of his great personality in the scale in order to win support for his plans. And even from reading his speeches one can guess what the effect must have been. J. Kennedy tells us that "Ahmed Khan could work up native audiences to the wildest enthusiasm."<sup>2</sup> According to Halli, Ahmed Khan's speeches were the most exciting "when he was informed of fierce opposition against his views, especially in educational affairs... Then his patience was no longer bridled, his voice echoed through the whole hall and his opponents crept away terrified."<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Abdul Haq, op. cit., pp. 327 and 228.

<sup>2</sup> "Personal Remiscences of Sir Syad Ahmed Khan," Asiatic Quarterly Review, 1899, quoted by Baljon, op. cit., p.10.

<sup>3</sup> Altaf Husain Halli, op. cit., p. 89.

All this he could not achieve merely because of his talents in oratory. He could challenge anybody because he had nothing to be afraid of and he was doing much more himself for the nation than he asked others to do.

Sayyid Ahmed Khan had inexhaustable energy for work. At the same time he could write leading articles for the Aligarh Institute Gazette and Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq, keep accounts of the College, supervise College buildings, write reports and addresses, answer innumerable letters, make arrangements for the meetings of the Muslim Educational Conference and other meetings for different educational purposes. Whatever job he undertook, big or small, he did with such enthusiasm as if his life in this world and the hereafter depended on it. Amidst all this his door was always open to anybody who wanted to meet him. He went on with dictating letter and his other intellectual and administrative activities and at the same time having a pleasant and enlightening conversation with friends and visitors.<sup>1</sup>

If we take into account all he did for his nation, we realize that the Muslims of the sub-continent can never pay him enough homage, but he never thought of himself

---

<sup>1</sup>Abdul Haq, Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan, op. cit., pp.74-75.  
 Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., pp. 792-93.

more than a humble worker. When it was proposed to celebrate 'Founder's Day' at the M.A.O. College he opposed the idea saying that it is different in the West where educational institutions are founded by large donations given by a single person. In case of M.A.O. College, nobody could be called the 'Founder' because it was established by the help of the nation as a whole. Hundreds of thousands of people had contributed for it.<sup>1</sup> So instead of a Founder's Day the College should celebrate the Foundation Day. The same way he opposed the idea of dedicating the main gate of the College in his name.<sup>2</sup>

The same selflessness he showed in collecting funds for the College. He travelled throughout the country at his own expense and met people, addressed public gatherings and made appeals for the College fund. When anyone wanted to invite him, he declined very politely, but firmly, and said, "Whatever you wanted to spend on the dinner please give the money to the College. I will take it as your hospitality to me."<sup>3</sup> Once a poor man who wanted to invite Sayyid Ahmed Khan gave one rupee for the dinner and the

---

<sup>1</sup> Altaf Husain Hall, op. cit., p. 266.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 266,

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 253.

latter accepted it as a great honour to him.<sup>1</sup> In this way he collected thousands of rupees from a nation which was largely made up of poor people and which was not used to contributing for education.

To him, the nation was first. Even his beloved College came next. When Hali wanted to give all copyrights for his popular book, Musaddas-i-Hali, to M.A.O. College, he refused to accept it. "It is such an effective poem which has awakened the sleeping Muslims of India," he said, "Let anybody who wants to publish it do so. Let it be as much printed and published as possible. I do not want any restriction on such a national asset."<sup>2</sup>

Summing up his total personality in the words of Hali: "The features of his face, the structure of his body, in short the total impression he made was so overwhelming that only from looking at him one guessed his inner grandeur."<sup>3</sup> And probably in his great personality we must seek the secret of the ultimate victory Ahmed Khan won over a community which persisted in its bigotry, and suspected every innovation, and which was suffering from a great inferiority complex. Muslim India was longing for

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 254.

<sup>2</sup> Abdul Haq, Muqdamat-i-Abdul Haq (Urdu; Collection of reviews on literary books. Lahore: Urdu Academy, 1956), p. 65.

<sup>3</sup> Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., p. 444.

a leader whom it could venerate, whom it could trust, and who could restore its lost self-confidence. And in Ahmed Khan it found an honest man with high principles, a burning love for his country, and free from any evidence of self-interest. Although at first it was hard for Muslims to accept his advanced ideas which had little in common with their own, and time was needed before they could perceive instinctively that he was working for their benefit only, eventually he became their acknowledged leader.



## CHAPTER VI

### SAYYID AHMED KHAN'S EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PROGRAMME

#### INTRODUCTION

Before we take up a discussion of the educational policy of Sayyid Ahmed Khan, we have to outline briefly the philosophy underlying this policy. Ahmed Khan was not a professional philosopher in the strict sense of the term. His philosophy therefore is the philosophy of an intelligent educated person who has arrived at certain general conclusions about life and the living. It is the result of personal observation without any technical reference to various schools of philosophy. Yet we cannot ignore the fact that no educational policy can be devoid of a philosophy in general and a philosophy of education in particular. But we must keep in mind that Ahmed Khan's interest in philosophy was neither purely academic nor theoretical. He took upon himself the task of educational reforms under the dictates of purely practical exigency. He wanted to pull his nation out of the decadance and decline. For this, he thought education was the only remedy. Thus his educational policy and programme were of a subsidiary nature and were

meant to help his nation against the political and social odds, and the prime mover for this initiative of his was his religious spirit. Thus the cornerstone of his intellectual edifice was religion, which permeates everything he attempted to do.

#### AHMED KHAN'S RELIGIOUS BELIEF

He was a Muslim, not only because he was born in a Muslim family but because he had embraced his belief after due thinking. "If I had not investigated and had not come to the conclusion myself that Islam is the true faith, I would have given up Islam."<sup>1</sup> "After putting aside the thought that I am a Muslim, I have done much thinking about Islam and after due consideration my heart is convinced that if there were any true religion it is Islam. I propagate Islam because of my belief in it and not because I was born in a Muslim family."<sup>2</sup>

He believed in Tawhid (the oneness of God). In his own words:

God is One and Eternally existing and therefore His Being is Necessary Being (Wajib-ulWujud). He reveals himself through His Attributes identical

---

<sup>1</sup>Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., part II, p. 858 (quotation from a letter of Ahmed Khan to Mehdi Ali Khan).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 584. Quotation from a lecture on Islam, delivered in 1884 at Lahore.

with His Person (Zât). None is comparable with Him or rivals with Him. Nobody can be associated with Him. He is the imperceivable and beyond our rational comprehension, but He is Omni-present in our thoughts and ideas. And as there is none identical with Him, He is Transcendental to the limitations of space.<sup>1</sup>

Apparently, this belief in the oneness of God as given by him is insignificant to our study. But in reality the matter is quite different. From this indication as to the nature of God's Attributes, we can say that he had beliefs similar to the Mu'tazilite group. This is a very significant point in order to understand and appreciate Sayyid Ahmed Khan's religious beliefs and its effects in the formation of the policy of reform which he adopted. Apart from other significant distinctions between the Mu'tazilites and the Ash'arites, an important one is on the emphasis on reason and on the rational basis of religion. The Ash'arites believed that the good and the evil are ordained by God according to his arbitrary will and have nothing to do with rationality. This creed was officially and formally adopted by the Sunnite sect of Islam.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq, July 5, 1895, (as quoted by Baljon, op. cit., p. 51).

<sup>2</sup> Umar Farrukh, Tarikh-ul-Fikr-Al Arabi, p. 183. For a detailed discussion see, Sajjad Rizavi, "Islamic Philosophy of Education" (M.A. Thesis, American University of Beirut, 1963), pp. 125-38. Also see Muhammad Iqbal, Development of Metaphysics in Persia, (Lahore: Bazm-e-Iqbal, n.d.), p. 71.

The most significant effect of the adoption of the Ash'arite creed by the Muslims was that, as they say, the door of Ijtihad (new interpretation of religion) was finally closed after the four leading jurists compiled their principles of Jurisprudence, and it told upon the Muslim communities in general. Initiative was curbed and the Muslims all over the world fell a victim to stagnation and decadence.<sup>1</sup> We may conclude that Sayyid Ahmed Khan was a Muslim who had ideas similar to the Mu'tazlites, and took upon himself to pull the Muslims of the Indian sub-continent out of their lethargy by attacking the basis of their ills, which was a complete curb of initiative by the professional theologians.

His belief in reason in religious matters and possibility of the re-interpretation of Islamic injunctions is evident from his speeches and writings: "Wherever one goes or turns, reason remains the only base upon which knowledge, certainty and faith can be founded."<sup>2</sup> But he also admits that the human reason, given by God is not unlimited and that "there are realities hidden from mental perception beyond the reach of man... like the nature of the Attributes of God, the way in which the world came into being, the essence of spirit

---

<sup>1</sup>Sayed Amir Ali, Spirit of Islam (London: Christophers, 1923), p. 469.

<sup>2</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Majmu'a Madamin (Lahore: Mustafai Press, n.d.), I, pp. 213-14.

and soul."<sup>1</sup> ✓

The second important point, for the present study is that he considered Nature as the touchstone through which one knows whether a religion is true or not.

For the truth of every religion with which we are confronted, this can be a touchstone: if that religion is in conformity with human nature or with nature in general, then it is true, and a clear proof hereof is that religion is given to a person as an integral part of him ... the whole creation, mankind included, is the work of God and religion is this word; these two cannot contradict each other.<sup>2</sup>

This kind of conception of God and of the nature of religion results in his idea of free will. On the issue of free will and pre-destination there has been a great split in the ranks of the Muslims, the Ash'arites believing in the pre-destination of man's future actions while the Mu'tazilites held up the notion of free will. The majority of the Muslims in the Indian sub-continent being Sunnite believed in the Ash'arite notion of pre-destination and unchangeability of man's fate. Sayyid Ahmed Khan believed that God is Omnipresent. He is the First Cause, and "has the knowledge of the conditions and deeds of all what exists in the world, of their past as well as their future."<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq, March 25, 1895; as quoted by Baljon, op. cit., p. 63.

<sup>3</sup> Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq, August 22, 1895; as quoted by Baljon, op. cit., p. 64.

On the other hand he declares that "man can make a free use of all the potentialities entrusted to him."<sup>1</sup> From this we can deduce that he believed that although everything is in the knowledge of God, but He does not fix the destiny of human beings and gives them free choice of the use of their abilities and potentialities. Thus, man can make his future. This was quite in opposition to the common belief of the Muslims of his days in the Indian sub-continent, who believed that whatever good or bad comes, comes from God and man being forced and compelled to submit to the arbitrary will and decision of God has no power to change the course of events. This, to a great extent, affected their whole attitude towards life in favour of lethargy, attributing the results of their inactivity to the will of God.

The nineteenth century did not bring changes only to India. It was revolutionary for the world as a whole. Natural and physical sciences shook the very roots of old philosophies, and when their influence reached religion the effect was more widespread and the influence penetrated deeper. Dogmatic arguments of religion did not have any force in the face of scientific proofs. Moreover, the mode of life was changing with

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

the new inventions and it was not possible to follow the old customs rigidly. Unfortunately in the Indian sub-continent these customs were taken as religion and thus there was a general notion that one cannot be religious and believe in modern science. Sayyid Ahmed Khan asserts the necessity of ijtihād, "We should be aware of the fact that time changes, and again and again, we are confronted with new questions and new needs... In other words, today we need mujtahidīn,"<sup>1</sup> to reinterpret the verdicts of the orthodox theologians.

#### MAN AND HIS NATURE

He starts with a belief in God, the Creator and Destroyer of all living beings. Thus man is a created being. He says:

Out of all the creation man is the only one whom God has given unlimited potentialities for learning and doing. The major gift of God to man is his intellect. But intellect alone cannot take very far. Just by possessing intellect, he cannot solve all his problems. Intellect is a help in learning, and doing through intellect and knowledge man has discovered and achieved all that he has done upto now.<sup>2</sup>

In another place he remarked:

---

<sup>1</sup>Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq, September, 1874, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat-i-Sir Sayyid (Urdu; a collection of essays), M. Ismail, (ed.), (Lahore: Majlis Taraqqi-i-Adab, 1962), part VIII, p. 2.

We find that change is a natural phenomenon in all the things in this world, but man is the only one who has some hand in his own development and that of his environment. Though man cannot create anything but he has the abilities to control things and he is a collaborator in the natural process of change.<sup>1</sup>

From the above quotations, we may derive Sayyid Ahmed Khan's general approach to the problems of life. His views may be summed up as follows:

(1) He believed that God is the Ultimate Cause of all creation. Man is, therefore, a creature of God.

(2) Man has the distinction of being the supreme creation by virtue of the fact that he has been given intellect.

(3) This intellect is not unlimited in its functions and there comes a point when the intellect surrenders in the solution of certain problems, which may be called transcendental.

(4) The function of the intellect is to help man do and learn through doing. Thus the distinctive quality of man is his ability to benefit from his experiences.

(5) Man can mould his destiny through the help of the intellect and can exploit the natural phenomenon of change in his favour.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 19.



THE AIM OF LIFE

According to him, the aim of life is two-fold:<sup>1</sup>

- (i) to be a good Muslim; and
- (ii) to be a respectable Indian.

He considered it a misfortune that Islam in India had become polluted by the beliefs, customs and social manners, which the Muslims had acquired from their Hindu neighbours during their stay in the country, with the result that it was rather difficult to discern the true principles of the Muslim religion. The plight of Muslims after the Revolt of 1857 was not quite enviable. Their degradation was boundless. Frustration was rife among them. And to crown it all they were suffering from all kinds of social and moral ills. Their economic condition was poor; their ignorance was pitiable. They were suspected and hated by the ruling English.

RELIGION AND EDUCATION

To him the remedy of these evils was that the Muslims should become true Muslims, which could be done through education. But the existing system of education was not adequate to meet the needs of times. Religious education provided in Muslim schools in India had

---

<sup>1</sup>Abdul Haq, op. cit., p. 59.

had become obsolete. Sayyid Ahmed Khan firmly believed that it was only because Islam in India then was not preached and practised in its pure form. To him Islam in its original form was compatible to all places and times. For this reason he advocated to free the religious thought from the shackles of blind following and to reinterpret Islam. This was necessary to make them good Muslims. It was also necessary in order to defend their religion against the criticism of the Westerners, and to save the faith of those who acquired western education.<sup>1</sup> As western sciences were bound to create suspicion and disregard of many of the religious beliefs the way those beliefs were presented and not a few were mere superstitions and customs taken as religion.<sup>2</sup> "But Islam presented in its true form will only increase their faith with the increase in western knowledge."<sup>3</sup>

Sayyid Ahmed Khan did not advocate only improved religious knowledge to become good Muslims. As Islam does not preach giving up this world, to Ahmed Khan being a respectable Indian was also part of being a good Muslim.

---

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, X, op. cit., p. 170.

<sup>2</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op. cit., p. 76.

<sup>3</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Makatib-i-Sir Sayyid, op. cit., p. 318.

Well being in this world was also important for the Muslims so that they live a respectable life. For this purpose acquisition of such knowledge which will improve their worldly position was necessary. To him, knowledge of western arts and sciences was necessary to achieve the above-mentioned purpose.

### AIMS OF EDUCATION

As it has been said that he considered education and especially education of the western type as the only way to lead Muslims to a respectable position in the country and enable them rise to the occasion and prove their mettle if they wanted to survive under the changing circumstances. The aim of education, in his views, was not to prepare oneself for a government job only. In fact he criticised government colleges on this point because their sole effort was to create a class of Indians who could fit themselves in the government. Describing the aims of M.A.O. College, he said that "the aim of M.A.O. College is that the Muslims should acquire the knowledge of different Arts and Sciences so as to be able to earn their living without depending upon the government service."<sup>1</sup>

In the Report of the Committee on the Advancement

---

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op. cit., p. 73.

of Muslims in Education we can easily trace why he wanted education to be given prime importance. The educational aims, according to his views, can be divided into the immediate and ultimate. In the introductory remarks of this report he said:

Whatever we decide now should not be only to meet the immediate needs or that which suits our present conditions and can be achieved now. We should plan in such a way as to achieve the maximum progress for the Muslims. We have to know what is all that has to be done and how much of it can be achieved now.<sup>1</sup>

"The aims of education cannot be the same for all classes of people. Every group has its particular needs and the education given to any group of people must be according to their needs."<sup>2</sup> Elaborating on this point, he gave examples of different aims of education for different kinds of people, namely,<sup>3</sup>

- (i) to secure government jobs and respectable positions;
- (ii) to promote trade and commerce;
- (iii) to look after the land and promote its yield;
- (iv) to devote one's self in the pursuit of religious knowledge.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Thus these different aims of education necessitate different kinds of education. Hence, in his opinion, "the educational system should be such that it should provide opportunities of progress to all the groups of a community."<sup>1</sup>

This is why he thought that the old type of education then available to the Muslims had become out-moded and led to social and moral evils. It was planned at a time when the needs of the Muslims were different from the present ones.

#### THE KIND OF EDUCATION

Considering that the root cause of all the backwardness of the Muslims in the country was the lack of education, the question arose as to what kind of education should be provided for them. It has been said that he did not approve of the system of education which was available to the Muslims at that time. He was not satisfied with the educational opportunities provided by the British either as it aimed at producing men fit for lower grade government service only. His point of view was that education must meet the needs of the community. The old system did not take into account the change which had obtained in the country. They were not only ignorant of

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

the recent developments in the different fields of knowledge, but also were not willing to know them.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, education provided by the government neglected the religious aspect which according to him was an integral part of the life of the community. He wanted his countrymen in general and Muslims in particular to acquaint themselves with the latest developments in the different fields of human knowledge especially sciences, and also to become and live like true Muslims.

Through his writings it is quite evident that he did treat the Muslims of India as one nation, an idea which later gained roots and became the basis for the establishment of Pakistan. Addressing a gathering of the students of M.A.O. College, he said, "By being Muslims you make one nation. If you achieve the heights of learning and success while you forget that the best belief is that there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His Prophet, then to us you are a non-entity even though you may shine like the stars in the heaven."<sup>2</sup> Thus despite the fact that he pleaded for differentiated education for different classes of people, he emphasised one thing: to prepare the youth for

---

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, X, op. cit., p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> Altaf Husain Halli, op. cit., p. 469. Quotation from a speech by Sayyid Ahmed Khan.

this world and the world hereafter. Education's aim was "to produce good Muslims and respectable Indians."<sup>1</sup>

Although, as it has been said, he did not consider government service as the aim of education, he did realize its importance, because of the fact that in addition to providing work for those without any professional skill, it brought power and prestige for the Muslims which they did need. This is why he put due emphasis on English education without which it was not possible to enter government service. In one of his letters he clearly said: "The plight of Muslims is becoming worse every day. All government positions are slipping through our hands. Hindus and Bengalis are progressing fast . . . . If we do not want to be overwhelmed by them, the only way is to provide an English education."<sup>2</sup>

#### EMPHASIS ON HIGHER EDUCATION

In his opinion there was no use of producing half educated persons which is harmful for society.<sup>3</sup> He rather emphasised the need for higher education. He time and again reiterated for the creation of a nucleus of educated men

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 472.

<sup>2</sup> Makatib-i-Sir Sayyid, op. cit., p. 350.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 272. Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op. cit., pp. 132 and 136.

which might serve as a spring. "The students trained in this institution would in turn spread it far and wide and thus through this process sound education could be spread."<sup>1</sup> In one of his letters, he maintained, "In my opinion, it is better to give a sound education to a limited number of students than providing unsound education to large number."<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, he did not approve of extensive education, but was in favour of intensive study. Hali has observed:

Sayyid Ahmed Khan did not believe in a large number of subjects. He rather approved of a deep and intensive study of a few. He used to remark about the superficial type of education being then provided in the colleges. This is why no writer of originality and leader of thought has come up whose name could go down to posterity or who could influence the nation. This is a great problem for social and moral progress.<sup>3</sup>

But his emphasis on higher education does not mean that he was by any means against the masses and wanted to

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 272.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 273. In his evidence before the Education Commission of 1882, criticizing the prevailing system of university education, he said, "It is better to learn a few things to the very excellence than to learn many things superficially... It is better to learn one subject well than to acquire incomplete knowledge of a hundred, as that is the way intellect is trained. Altaf Husain Hali, Hayat-i-Javid, op. cit., p. 293.

<sup>3</sup>Altaf Husain Hali, ibid., p. 293. At the same time he believed in providing many subjects for studies so that the students had the option to choose what they were interested in, instead of studying a subject compulsorily.



restrict education to certain privileged classes. His approach was a practical one. He had realized that with meagre resources of Muslims it was quite impossible to educate all the people. He was therefore of the opinion that in view of the practical problems, it was more advisable to educate a few persons but educate them well. Theoretically his ideas in this behalf may sound undemocratic. But theory is often different from practice especially when the theory is formulated in a country quite different from the area in which it has to be implemented. Professor A.S. Bukhari observed about achieving the target of one hundred per cent literacy in Pakistan, that if all the financial resources of Pakistan were exclusively earmarked for this purpose, it would need about three or four decades to reach this goal.<sup>1</sup> If this opinion is correct, and there is no reason to doubt it keeping in view the personality of Professor Bukhari, then we have but to admit that Sayyid Ahmed Khan was quite on the right path in this connection.

#### TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Another opinion of his may seem strange in our times is that he was not so much in favour of technical education. His point of view was that "Indians were already skilled in

---

<sup>1</sup>A.S. Bukhari, Whither Education (Lahore: Pakistan Times Annual Number, August 14, 1950).

different crafts and they did not need schools for learning these skills. At the same time, India had not achieved that stage of industrialization and mechanization which necessitated that type of education which we now mean by the word "technical education".<sup>1</sup> As against technical education he thought intellectual education as of foremost importance. It has been said that he considered 'intellect' is the differentia of human beings. Hence his insistence on intellectual education is quite understandable. But he did not undermine the importance of vocational training. In one of his essays he says:

Science no doubt is a very good thing and one who knows science has mastery over almost all the crafts and has good means of earning his livelihood. But the things are different in Europe, where they have many big factories. . . . But in India we do not have such factories nor is there hope that we shall have such factories for a long time to come. Under such conditions learning sciences will not help people earn their living.<sup>2</sup>

In the same essay he observes:

There is a great need for intellectual education, of high quality, for the improvement of moral and social conditions, but it is lacking or is not given properly and completely. First we must do that. All the other issues are to be considered later. It is not appropriate to wish to get all the things done at the same time. We should give preference to those issues

---

<sup>1</sup>Altaf Husain Halli, op. cit., p. 475.

<sup>2</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat X, op. cit., p. 10.

which are comparatively more important and leave the others for a later occasion.<sup>1</sup>

But the emphasis on intellectual education does not mean that he pleaded for pure theoretical education. Instead he believed that more theoretical knowledge is not sufficient. According to Hali, he thought it necessary to see and observe and experiment. First-hand knowledge is better than mere second-hand information as is clear from the advice he gave to the Indian students studying in Europe, that they should not only join a college for a university but also travel and see the things for themselves.<sup>2</sup>

#### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Another important aspect of his educational thought is the distinction he discerned between education and training. He said, "It is a great mistake to think that education and training are one and the same. These are two separate things. To bring out what is in a person is education and to enable him to do things is training."<sup>3</sup>

To educate a person is indeed not pouring something in him from without, but to actualize his potentialities which can be done only through bringing about a mental activity and letting it flourish.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., I, p. 203.

<sup>3</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat VIII, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

Training is different from education. If a person is well-trained, it does not necessarily mean that he is also well-educated. It is possible that a person is well-trained but badly educated.<sup>1</sup>

In his opinion, most of the learned men of the age were only well-trained, without having an inner blossoming of their capacities. "To teach books is the least of all the functions of education. In fact, much reading without an insight into the heart of the matter is harmful."<sup>2</sup> He cites the so-called learned people of his days who had not developed their inner selves, having read much without proper assimilation, and thus without any mental activity. In this way their spiritual qualities or creative capabilities are deadened. The more they read, the better trained they become. But it makes them book-worms and their knowledge becomes a limitation for them.<sup>3</sup>

Thus we have seen that by education Sayyid Ahmed Khan meant the real flowering of the creative potential of a person and development of an insight in him. If a person lacked these qualities, when the knowledge acquired by him did not become a part of his personality he called him to be trained, not educated. He was extremely conscious of

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>3</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op. cit., p. 16.

the defects of the education which was being given during his period. In his view a child was born with immense potentialities which could actualize only through good education. He lays a great emphasis on the period between 7-15 years of age. He thinks that "this is the most impressionable age when the memory is the sharpest and curiosity is at its prime while all other capacities including the thinking and argumentative powers are developing. If the children get the right type of environment at this stage of their lives, their intellectual development along with moral, bears fruit and seeds of goodness are sown in them. If we neglect it at this age, nothing can be done later on."<sup>1</sup>

But he preferred a child being uneducated rather than being given bad education. He said: "When children are not educated it is thought to be bad by everybody. But many a times what they think is good education is what only hinders their development."<sup>2</sup> Here he is referring to those parents who "bring up their children under strict inhibitive control, and do not let them mix with other children lest they may acquire bad habits. They teach them social manners

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

and etiquette very rigidly, and consider it a great achievement of theirs if they can read a few books."<sup>1</sup> In Sayyid Ahmed Khan's view, "this is not sufficient as education, because it makes the children grow up like trained animals. Education must broaden the outlook while suppression is not character-building."<sup>2</sup> He says:

For a proper up-bringing of the child, the acquisition of useful knowledge is necessary but equally necessary is the fact that he should spend his time in such an environment which may encourage the development of his thoughts, his sense of honour which is a great human quality and which keeps him away from many evils.<sup>3</sup>

#### SELF-HELP IN EDUCATION

He was a great believer in the notion of self-help in the field of education and was of the opinion that it was not possible for the foreign rulers to provide proper education to the millions of Indians, who belonged to different casts and creeds and were in fact many nations within one nation. He firmly held that it is the people themselves who should come forward and build up the edifice of their educational system. Furthermore, government help affects the policy and views of the administrators. In a letter

---

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op. cit., p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 22-23.

from London he addresses the Secretary of the Scientific Society: "Never lose the freedom of your society and newspaper. Goodness and badness of the Department of Education is a matter of life and death for India. Keep a thoughtful and unbiased eye over it. Take only the Truth and the welfare of the people as your friends."<sup>1</sup>

His ideas about self-help were further strengthened by his travel to England where he saw with his own eyes universities, colleges, clubs, societies run by the people themselves, independent of government help.<sup>2</sup> "No nation can progress and be respectable unless it strives itself for welfare and progress."<sup>3</sup> Had it been practically possible and advisable, he would have done away with government aid in order to implement his schemes, but it was not. The Muslims were not accustomed to give contributions for such causes as education, especially English education which they treated as something against their religion and creed. He did his best to avoid seeking government help as far as it was practically possible. While giving evidence before the Education Commission of 1882, he replied to the question relating to

---

<sup>1</sup>Mushtaq Husain, (ed.), op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 53.

government help saying that "my opinion may be against the general public, but after due consideration of the aspects relating to this issue, I have come to the conclusion that unless people themselves take the administration of education in their own hands, it is not possible to provide suitable education.<sup>1</sup> He considered the degrees of those universities which were not run by the people as mere charity and alms.<sup>2</sup>

But conditions were such that he needed government help despite his reluctance to do so. His earlier efforts — establishment of schools at Ghazipur, and the Scientific Society, the Aligarh Institute Gazette, Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq — were all private ventures through the contributions of his friends and admirers and through his own relentless energy. But to open a college was not an easy job which could be done through the contributions of a few selected individuals. And for these reasons he had to make compromises.

#### HIS PLAN OF EDUCATION

In 1872, in a speech before the Committee for the Progress of Education of Muslims,<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan presented his plan for the education of Muslims in India. First

---

<sup>1</sup>Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., p. 293.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 329.



of all he emphasised the importance of residential educational institutions, pointing out that no real education will be possible unless the boys were taken away from the spoiling influences of their homes and of the degenerating society they lived in. He proposed to establish a residential institution for higher learning in a place which had a healthy climate. It should not be a big city so that students were away from distractions and of evil influences. It should not be too small either so that conveniences of life were not out of reach.

He proposed to have three sections in this College which was to be named Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College. These were:

- (i) The English Section where all the subjects were to be taught with English as medium of instruction and one of the oriental languages as a compulsory second language and some religious knowledge;
- (ii) The Urdu Section where the subjects were to be taught through Urdu with English as the compulsory second language.
- (iii) The Oriental Section to provide higher proficiency in oriental languages and specialization in religious knowledge without any English.

Besides M.A.O. College, which was to serve as nucleus,

he proposed that wherever and whenever it was possible, small schools should be opened in each big or small city on the lines of the Urdu section of the M.A.O. College. In the same way English, Arabic or Persian should be taught as second languages. These schools were to serve as feeders to the College providing education only upto a certain level.<sup>1</sup>

He also planned for the opening of small mosque-schools (Maktabs)<sup>2</sup> in each village. These schools were to teach recitation of the Qur'an, and give instruction in religious knowledge, Urdu, elementary Arithmetic, elementary Persian and a little English to enable the students recognize the alphabets and read names of implements and machines.<sup>3</sup>

Sayyid Ahmed Khan realized the need for graded education. In one of his reports to the Committee for the Progress of Education of the Muslims, he presented a detailed proposal for the education of the Muslims. The gist of it is as follows:<sup>4</sup>

In the beginning it will not be possible to put children in different grades according to age groups but later it

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 86.

<sup>2</sup>This scheme has now been introduced in West Pakistan in certain areas to expand the educational facilities. It was originally started in Bahawalpur in 1950.

<sup>3</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op. cit., p. 87.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 88-89.

should be achieved.

There were to be five stages of education:

### I. Six years to ten Years

Qura'n, some books in Urdu, elementary books on religion, a little writing, recognition of Roman characters and figures with ability to read names. Maktabs<sup>1</sup> should look after this stage.

### II. Eleven to Thirteen Years

The child should acquire knowledge and information which would enable him to do his daily work efficiently and also learn enough about his religion. This should be the functions of schools.<sup>2</sup> This is the stage upto which working class people would not mind sending their children to schools. And if all boys could do get this much education our country could be a heaven.<sup>3</sup>

### III. Fourteen to Eighteen Years

The student should acquire complete knowledge of all arts and sciences useful for practical life.

<sup>1</sup> Primay schools.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to secondary schools.

<sup>3</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan did not think on the lines of compulsory education as (1) no other example was before him even in Europe. (2) He believed in voluntary efforts. (3) The task would have been too huge to be practical and Ahmed Khan was a practical man. But from this proposal one can see that he did conceive the idea of universal primary education.

#### IV. Nineteen to Twenty-one Years

Those who wanted to specialize and become masters in some subject should do it at this stage.

#### V. Twenty-two to Twenty-five Years

It is the time when after finishing his education the boy should devote his time to the study of those things which will help him in earning his livelihood.

The last three stages are related to the proposed M.A.O. College.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout his proposals he emphasises the need to simplify knowledge and to delete the non-essential and unnecessary details. In the same report he says: "Putting all these into practice we can get out of the degradation we are in. But no government school or college can do all this for us. It is we ourselves who will have to do it."<sup>2</sup> "Until such a time we should make the best use of existing institutions."<sup>3</sup>

And this is the essence of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's policy: To plan comprehensively, but to keep the practical limitations in view and to make the best use of available resources.

---

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op. cit., pp.88-89.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

SAYYID AHMED KHAN'S IDEAS ON THE USE OF  
VERNACULARS AS MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION AND  
EDUCATION

As medium of instruction is a very important issue in the educational policy of any nation we are giving a rather detailed account of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's thoughts on the question whether English or vernaculars should be the medium of instruction.

On this issue, Sayyid Ahmed Khan's views might seem inconsistent, but if all his views are put down chronologically and if the changing historical background is also kept in view, changes in his views are readily understood.

After the Revolt of 1857, Urdu was still the language of courts of law and knowledge of the English language was not made compulsory for most government services. But Sayyid Ahmed Khan had felt the need of time and had realized that

knowledge of western learnings was necessary for the progress of his nation. As Muslims were reluctant to learn English the best means was to introduce and spread western learnings through translation. In 1864, he founded The Scientific Society,<sup>1</sup> and later The Aligarh Institute Gazette<sup>2</sup> to translate good books and useful knowledge from English into Urdu. His idea was that when people will read such literature they

---

<sup>1</sup>For details see *infra* pp. 140-42

<sup>2</sup>For details see *infra* pp. 142-44.

will get interested in it and will realize its usefulness.<sup>1</sup>

Another point which he considered important was that though the universities of Calcutta and Bombay had already been established in 1856, with English as medium of instruction Sayyid Ahmed Khan thought that along with entirely new courses of study if students were faced with the barrier of learning in a foreign language, it will only serve as a hinderance in the acquisition of knowledge. Moreover, when these students go out in life and mix with the community they will not be of much benefit to their community.<sup>2</sup> Besides, they will forget much of their English as it was not a common language. Thus much energy and knowledge will be wasted. To him the solution was to translate as many good books and as quickly as possible.

In 1867 a petition was sent to the Government of India on behalf of the Indian Patriotic Association, which was prepared by Sayyid Ahmed Khan.<sup>3</sup> It was a step forward in the spread of western knowledge through Urdu. The petition was for the foundation of a separate vernacular university in which all arts and sciences should be taught in Urdu. He was of the opinion that no nation can progress in the real

---

<sup>1</sup>Altaf Husain Halli, op. cit., p. 176.

<sup>2</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op. cit., pp.55-66.

<sup>3</sup>This petition was also published in the Scientific Society's paper of August 9, 1867. Sayyid Ahmed Khan, ibid., p. 58.

sense unless its own language becomes its medium of instruction.

He acknowledges the role of existing universities where English was the medium of instruction. He made it clear that he was not an advocate for the revival of old learnings. What he pleaded for, was that the western education should be made within the reach of more and more Indians so that their lot would be improved. As the number of Indians with good knowledge of English was limited it was advisable to provide modern higher learnings in their own language so that it reaches most people. It was difficult for a foreign language to penetrate 140 million Indians.<sup>1</sup>

To show that Urdu could be used as medium of instruction for higher learning he presented examples of the Urdu sections of the Engineering College, Rurki and Medical College, Agra.<sup>2</sup>

In brief his proposals were as follows:<sup>3</sup>

(1) A department of education should be established in which higher education is provided in Urdu in all branches of learnings; arts and sciences.

(2) Calcutta University should conduct annual examina-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 59. He was not reviving the old controversy of the Orientalists and the Anglicists as he was always in favour of western knowledge.

<sup>2</sup> Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., p. 492.

<sup>3</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op. cit., pp. 63-69.

tions in all subjects in vernaculars the same way as it does in English.

(3) Students appearing in all those examinations in vernaculars should be awarded the same degrees according to their abilities, meaning that appearing in examinations in vernaculars should not be taken as a demerit.

(4) Either there should be a separate department of Urdu at the Calcutta University or a separate vernacular university should be established in the North Western Province.

He offered the services of the Scientific Society for translating the necessary books.<sup>1</sup>

He got a favourable answer from the Government of India but was told that as at that time enough books were not available in vernaculars it was thought necessary to continue higher education in English only.

Through his efforts much translation work was done and some very learned people agreed to do translation work including Mr Piare Lal and Maulvi Zakaullah.

Later on Seyyid Ahmed Khan got the feeling that by increasing education in the vernaculars the government wanted to decrease the spread of western knowledge and learning

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



among Indians which he did not approve of as he thought western education was necessary for the progress of India.<sup>1</sup>

This scheme would not have been practical in any case. There would have been controversies over where the university should be and more so there would have been the controversy of language, i.e. which was the vernacular which should be the medium of instruction. The Urdu-Hindi controversy had already started and it would have been difficult to decide in favour of either.

But Sayyid Ahmed Khan was still in favour of making Urdu as a medium for higher learning. In a letter from London written in 1869, in which he praises the social qualities and educational development of England, he comments that all this is possible because all the knowledge of different arts and sciences is available in their mother tongue ... Remember it for all times to come that unless Indians do not receive all learning in their own language, India will never reach the level of a civilized country.<sup>2</sup>

But things were changing gradually. More and more Indians especially the Hindus, (Bengalis in particular) had started learning English. On the other hand the Government

---

<sup>1</sup> Altaf Husain Hali, op. cit., p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Makatib-i-Sir Sayyid, op. cit., p. 34.

of India also changed its policy.<sup>1</sup> Knowledge of English was more and more becoming a compulsory requisite for even ordinary government services. Sayyid Ahmed Khan was aware of these changes. "Because of alien rule India is unlike England. The language of the ruling class is not the mother tongue of the people. People do not attach so much importance to the vernaculars, because at present there are very few who care to acquire knowledge except for getting jobs."<sup>2</sup>

He warned the well wishers of the nation not to expect help from others and advises them to collect funds through voluntary contributions and to spread knowledge in all branches of learning in their own language. He predicts that "when we have reached the standard of a civilized nation we will not attach much importance to government service. And that day is bound to come."<sup>3</sup>

But the position of vernaculars was becoming more and more precarious. Learned persons were disqualified for higher posts and promotions only because they did not know English and as he said:

It is not only government services where things have undergone changes. As knowledge of oriental

<sup>1</sup>Altaf Husain Halli, op. cit., p. 190. See also Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op. cit., pp. 44-45.

<sup>2</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Makatib-i-Sir Sayyid, op. cit., p.35.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

learning and languages has become useless for getting government services, the same way they are of no use in trade and commerce. English has become necessary for social and political purposes.<sup>1</sup>

He thought over the changing circumstances and tried to find some solution.

In 1882, giving evidence before the Education Commission he makes the following distinction:

In the vernacular and English primary and middle schools which do not intend to prepare students for a higher standard of education, it is certainly better for the country that there, so far as western knowledge is imparted, instruction should be given in the vernacular. But in the English primary schools, which are erected with this purpose in view that in them the way will be paved for higher education, tuition in European sciences through the medium of the vernacular is calculated to ruin the cause of education.<sup>2</sup>

In a lecture delivered in Jalandhar on February 4th, 1884, Sayyid Ahmed Khan makes it evident that his ideas about diffusion of western knowledge through vernaculars had undergone tremendous change. "After the experiment (of this Society) I perceived that it is impossible to instruct any people by means of translated works of the modern sciences."<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>2</sup>Baljon, op. cit., p. 34.

<sup>3</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Mukammal Majmua Lecture wa Speeches 1863-1898, (Urdu; Complete Collection of Lectures and Speeches), (Lahore: Mustafai Press, 1900), p. 352.

In a statement made in 1886 he said: "In the twenty years since the Scientific Society was formed and since the time of the controversy of the Punjab University, circumstances have changed tremendously."<sup>1</sup>

As an example he put forward the case of lawyers and judges. At first the East India Company and even the British government had kept the courts of law as they had existed and those who were well versed in Oriental languages and learnings did very well, but in 1866, when the courts of law were westernized and European languages and knowledge became necessary those learned in the old ways became useless.<sup>2</sup>

His own experiences at the M.A.O. College had proved the futility of using Urdu as a medium for higher education.<sup>3</sup>

Eventually he gave up his efforts for the use of vernaculars for higher education, but still advocated their use for elementary education. And till the time of his death made efforts to enrich Urdu.

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>3</sup> Infra, p. 153.

## CHAPTER VII

### SAYYID AHMED KHAN'S EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

In the preceding pages an attempt has been made to present Sayyid Ahmed Khan's general philosophy of life and his educational thought as well as the policy and programme he presented to his nation. In the following pages his educational achievements are presented to make the picture complete.<sup>1</sup>

#### SCHOOL OF GHAZIPUR

In 1862 Sayyid Ahmed Khan was transferred to Ghazipur which did not have any school worth the name. Well-to-do Hindus and Muslims of the place wanted to establish a school

---

<sup>1</sup>The following are the main projects undertaken by him and represent his major achievements which will be dealt with in this study.

1. The School at Ghazipur 1864
2. The Scientific Society 1864
3. Aligarh Institute Gazette 1866
4. Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq 1870
5. Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, 1877
6. Muhammadan Education Conference 1886.

but there was nobody who could collect funds and look after the administration to the satisfaction of the people. There was also the need to remove the public reluctance towards English education. Sayyid Ahmed Khan solved all these problems and when there were enough funds available in 1864 the foundation stone of the school was laid in a public gathering. It was a secondary school and there were plans to raise it upto college standard. It could have been so if Sayyid Ahmed Khan had stayed a few more years, but the same year he was transferred to Aligarh. Still the foundations of this school were laid on such sound grounds that it is still functioning as Victoria High School, Ghazipur.

#### THE SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY

Another institution founded by Sayyid Ahmed Khan which had the education of the Indian people in view, was the Scientific Society. He found that the Hindus took English education mainly as a means to getting into government services. The Muslims were reluctant, even disapproved of the idea of English education. To establish the greatness and usefulness of western learning in the minds of the Indians it was necessary to get them acquainted with good books written in English on different subjects. Sayyid Ahmed Khan thought that this could be achieved by forming an intellectual society which should publish translations

of such books.

Another aim in forming the Scientific Society was to create better understanding and good relations between the Indians and the English, lack of which had been so harmful to both parties.

In 1864, he published an appeal to the people of India for the progress of education of the Indians.<sup>1</sup> Its gist was that to spread knowledge and education in India a society should be formed to publish translations of scientific, literary, historical, and other useful books. It should also publish works of its own classical writers.

In the same year the Scientific Society was formed at Ghazipur. Several Englishmen who were high government officials and many influential Indians joined the Society. In a few years many useful books were translated, e.g. History of India by Elphinston, History of Ancient Egypt by Rowland, Political Economy by Senior, History of Persia (Iran) by Sir John Malcolm, Burn's works on Agriculture, Harris' Treatise on Electricity, as well as elementary books on Arithmetic and Algebra.

---

<sup>1</sup> Abdul Haq, Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan (Urdu; Karachi: Anjuman Taraqqi-i-Urdu, Pakistan, 1959), p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> Aligarh Institute Gazette, January 22, 1875, as quoted by Baljon, op. cit., p. 36.

In 1866 the Society was getting 18 magazines and 36 newspapers from abroad as well as the ones published at home. Sayyid Ahmed Khan gave great financial help to the Society,<sup>1</sup> and was the main personality in its organization and administration.

In 1866 Sayyid Ahmed Khan started a weekly newspaper for the Scientific Society which later became bi-weekly. The newspaper which later named Aligarh Institute Gazette was regularly published till the end of his life. In spite of his enormous and multifarious engagements Ahmed Khan himself looked after the editorial section from the beginning till the end.

Besides the topics of the day one finds in it articles on social, ethical, scientific and political subjects, along with the reports of lectures and meetings of the society. When the subjects dealt with were of interest for the English reading public also, Urdu text was accompanied by an English version.<sup>2</sup> In this way, by acquainting the English with Indian affairs and opinions, it wanted at the same time to advance mutual understanding.

Apart from the very good leading articles which he himself wrote, translations of good articles from English

<sup>1</sup> He presented his own printing press to the Society.

<sup>2</sup> Baljon, op. cit., p. 36.



newspapers which were related to Indian affairs were also published. If there was any particular topic of national significance, Sayyid Ahmed Khan wrote a special article about it.

Lectures were regularly held under the auspices of the Society. They were mostly about Indian cultural and social affairs, on education, and on historical research, and were made available to the Indian public. "It won't be an exaggeration to say that at least in Northern India this was the paper which started the change in public opinion."<sup>1</sup>

The policy of the paper was to be authentic and sympathetic. It always kept itself away from harsh criticism. The paper changed the standard of journalism in India. Other papers started copying it. "Instead of publishing just a few true and mostly baseless news, they also started publishing political, social, intellectual and moral articles, and in stead of remaining just an instrument to please the local people the Indian papers rose to such a standard that the government started paying attention to what they said."<sup>2</sup>

The Society also got the government interested in the scheme of translating, editing and also in the writing

---

<sup>1</sup>A.H. Hali, op. cit., p. 185.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 398.

of good books in local languages.

For lectures on scientific subjects, Sayyid Ahmed Khan even got models of the scientific instruments and machines made so that their functions could be explained, not only verbally, but through demonstrations also.

The translation work of the Society slowed down as the other and more pressing needs of educating his people took most of his time, but the Aligarh Institute Gazette continued to publish regularly till the time of his death, and Sayyid Ahmed Khan always wrote the leading articles himself.

#### Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq

When he was in England (1869-70), Sayyid Ahmed was immediately moved by the striking contrast between the standard of civilization of the ordinary Englishman and that of his fellow countrymen. Pondering over it, he came to the conviction that these conditions were primarily due to a mental disease which required a treatment commensurate with it. Soon after his return to India he started a periodical entitled Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq (The Education of Character) which should serve this purpose. Its pattern was that of the English magazines of the beginning of the eighteenth century, The Tatler and The Spectator. In its first issue of 24th December, 1870, Ahmed Khan

announced its programmes as follows:

The aim of publishing this periodical is to make the Muslims of India desirous of the best kind of civilization, so that it shall remove the contempt with which the civilized people regard the Muslims, and the latter shall become reckoned among the respected and civilized people in the world.<sup>1</sup>

And the author ascribes the origin of this contempt for Muslims to the adoption by the Indian Muslims "... of many old stories of the Jews, and of many ideas and doctrines of the Roman Catholics, an old Christian sect which existed for a long time in Arabian countries too, and of numerous rites and customs of the Hindus.... and this is the reason why non-Muslims, by identifying Islam with the totality of all these things have a very low opinion about Islam."<sup>2</sup> He states that "it is the task of Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq to find out why we adopted these things, how they arose amongst us, and in which way we should abolish everything which harms and obstructs civilization."<sup>3</sup>

The first popular evil on which he lays his finger, is prejudice, about which he declares:

This is such a serious fault that it ruins all the good qualities of man... It happens many times that someone considers a certain deed to be very

---

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, X, p. 35, quoted from the first issue of Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

important and beneficial, but merely on account of prejudices he does not perform it, and knowingly remains entangled in evil and keeps himself from what is good... Art and sciences are such important things that through them everything must reach a very high point of accomplishment, but prejudice obstructs the development of anything by means of art and sciences.<sup>1</sup>

Closely related to prejudice is reactionism, against which the next attack was directed:

To be fettered by customs is everywhere an obstacle to human progress, as it has such control over nature that through it one continuously fails to aim at something that would be of more use and it is the first cause of the downfall of mankind.<sup>2</sup>

He wrote against asceticism, which he describes as wasted every without lasting benefits. Such exhortations are interchanged with persuasive inducements to ethical excellence, like fellow-feeling, liberal-mindedness, as well as with instruction on very practical matters, such as the principle of self-help, punctuality, etc.

Reaction to all this preaching and advice was strong. In the words of Hali, "Sayyid Ahmed Khan had to face greater difficulties than Steele and Addison. In England Luther and Calvin had reformed the people greatly therefore there was not so much religious controversy in those papers. Consequently those papers did not meet opposition."<sup>3</sup> In

---

<sup>1</sup> Baljon, op. cit., p. 26, quotation from Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Hali, op. cit., p. 218.

Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq religious discussions were inevitable because most of the things which were a hindrance to the progress of the Indian Muslims were based on the so called religious ideas. Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq met very strong opposition. Many papers were started just to oppose it. Sayyid Ahmed Khan was absolutely condemned by many theologians.

Its influence was limited to the middle classes, who really read it.<sup>1</sup> In that limited circle its influence was great, mostly because of the impressive way the articles were written. It was well known that Sayyid Ahmed Khan's writings are such that one cannot remain firm in his own faith and cannot help agreeing with him. The criticism in Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq was never of any particular person but in a very sympathetic way weaknesses of the nation as a whole were discussed. Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq did not publish news in general but it published important news about the M.O.A. College, which made things known to a wider public and strengthened the position of the College.

After seven years of publication, the magazine was stopped in 1877. Partly because according to its founder, "to a great extent it has served the function of awakening of thought among the Muslims"<sup>2</sup> and partly that Ahmed Khan

---

<sup>1</sup>The rich could not be bothered and the poor were illiterate and ignorant.

<sup>2</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, op. cit., pp. 58-59.

who was its power, became too occupied with his work for the completion of the M.A.O. College. Yet another reason was that many leading Muslims who were against his views on social and religious reforms, opposed the college because of views published in Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq. Ahmed Khan thought it better to give up the magazine and get all possible support for the college.

At the instance of old friends of the periodical Ahmed Khan re-issued it twice in the nineties. In the first number of its second re-appearance, dated April 7, 1894, he says:

The time in which people were panic stricken, and I was agitated has passed... Times have changed ... So the old moves are out of place and can no more be made. Now the only work left for Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq to do is to fight individualism. Stagnant water has started to flow, but it took the wrong direction, and it is spread over in different narrow streams. Now it is the task of the Tahdhib to show the direction, to unite all the streams, and to make them into a river.<sup>1</sup>

Muslims encouraged by the example of the M.A.O. College were opening educational institutions all over India. But Sayyid Ahmed Khan was against these individual efforts as he believed that such efforts because of lack of appropriate knowledge, and funds will not forward the cause of education in the true sense. He believed that Muslims should pool their resources and energies

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p.66.

for the development of M.A.O. College which in turn will provide the nation with qualified leaders to spread the cause of education and enlightenment throughout the country.

As mentioned above Sayyid Ahmed Khan was too busy with the affairs of the College and the writing of the Tafsir. The magazine finally stopped publishing in 1897.

#### MUHAMMADAN ANGLO-ORIENTAL COLLEGE

The Scientific Society, Aligarh Institute Gazette and Tahdhib-ul-Akhlag were great achievements but a still greater task remained to be achieved by Ahmed Khan. Whilst in England he visited many educational institutions and made a thorough study of Cambridge University. "He came to the conclusion that something similar would bring the needed rescue for his degenerated community, and from that moment he never dropped his conviction and stuck to his object with indomitable pluck and untiring energy."<sup>1</sup> Yet it must have appeared a long way to the final realization of this noble purpose.

Soon after his return to India he set up a committee, called Committee Striving after Educational Progress of the Muslims, of which he was elected secretary. It imposed on itself the task of finding out why Muslim students in the

---

<sup>1</sup> Baljon, op. cit., p.37.

government colleges and schools were so few. To get an answer to this question it announced a prize for a subject which had to deal with the problem. Of the 32 answers received Ahmed Khan made a summary of which two points deserve to be mentioned here, viz., (1) that some of the motives of the Muslims in not sending their children to government schools were unjustifiable, but that most of them had their good reason, and that the education system of the government was inadequate to meet the needs of the Muslims;<sup>1</sup> (2) that even if the government changed its educational system for the Muslims, the matter would not be settled, for the only true expedient was that the Muslims themselves should draw attention of their own people to the necessity of education. Now the principle of self-help which was visible in the establishment of the school at Ghazipur emerges more distinctly, it turned out later to be of exceeding significance for the foundation of the M.A.O. College.

A second committee was established under the name Fund Committee for the Foundation of a Muslim College, and again Ahmed Khan was made the secretary. This Committee was the centre for all that concerned the lefty aims our reformers had set before him. After due consideration Aligarh

---

<sup>1</sup>Absence of religious education from government schools was one great reason, though it could not be helped in India with the people of many beliefs.



was chosen as the site for the proposed College and Ahmed Khan started his great campaign. For the collection of funds he travelled over the whole of India and made brilliant speeches urging the need for higher education for the Muslims.

In February 1873, Sayyid Mahmud<sup>1</sup> presented to the Committee a scheme for the management and the system of education of the proposed College which he had prepared after a study of the educational systems of schools and universities in England, but at the same time was based on the needs of the Indian Muslims.

The most strenuous part of the preparation for the College was the collection of subscriptions. "The Indian in general and particularly the Muslim was not at all accustomed to the institution of giving contributions for a national cause."<sup>2</sup> Ahmed Khan took recourse to every means he could find and it was due to his untiring efforts and those of his friends that within a few years a reasonable amount was collected. On December 21, 1873, the Fund Committee decided to start a primary school, subordinate to the proposed College. For, in the meantime, the opposition from the side of the Maulawis, the champions of the

---

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan's son.

<sup>2</sup> A.H. Hali, op.cit., p. 199.

old school was growing in strength and range, and threatened the aims of the Committee. The members of the Committee held the view that the best way to remove that opposition was the foundation of a school which could serve as a model to show the people that the desired new educational methods did not contradict the principles of Islam. On 24th May, 1875, this school was opened.

The next important date in the history of the College was January 8, 1877, when with proper ceremonial the Viceroy Lord Lytton laid the foundation stone of the College.

The buildings of the College were erected on a grand scale, for Ahmed Khan knew that, where a long time is required to make common people aware of the benefits of instruction and education, the splendour of the buildings would instantly have its effect on the average Muslim.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>A.H. Hali, op. cit., p. 261. Another quotation from Hali about the buildings is interesting. There was no overseer or engineer to plan and supervise the construction of College buildings. Sayyid Ahmed Khan did it all by himself. At one place in Hayat-i-Javid, Hali says, "It is possible that the College buildings may have defects from an engineer's point of view or may not be faultless as far as comfort of the students is concerned, but it was impossible for the nation to get such an engineer for the College and who would collect the funds, plan and supervise the construction, do all the work with utmost honesty and with such interest as if he was building his own house and never accept a penny as remuneration." A.H. Hali, op. cit., p. 264.

On January 1st, 1878, the classes were started. There were two sections: (1) an English section in which university courses were run in English; and (2) an Urdu section in which modern sciences were taught in Urdu, and the old culture and learning in Persian and Arabic, while English was a compulsory second language.<sup>1</sup> The Urdu section, however, had a short existence. Too few students entered it, "as it could not promise them sufficient livelihood for the future."<sup>2</sup>

In both the sections students were prepared for the Intermediate, B.A., B.Sc., M.A., M.Sc., D.Sc., and LL.B examinations of Calcutta University. (Later the College was affiliated to Allahabad University).

The proposed subjects to be taught in the College were as follows:<sup>3</sup>

#### I. Religious Knowledge

Fiqh (Jurisprudence)

Usul-i-Fiqh (Principles of Jurisprudence),

Hadith (Tradition), Usul-i-Hadith, Tafsir (Commentary on the Qur'an Muslim doctrine.)

---

<sup>1</sup> Ahmed Khan wanted to have a third section also, for higher study and research of oriental languages and religious knowledge. This he wanted for the benefit of those who had studied oriental learnings elsewhere and wanted to do research work and who did not want to study English or western sciences. Because of lack of support he could not fulfill this ambition.

<sup>2</sup> Baljon, op. cit., p. 41. <sup>3</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op. cit., pp. 79-80.

## II. Humanities and Social Sciences (Ilm-al-Adab)<sup>1</sup>

- a) Linguistic and languages; Urdu, Persian, Arabic.
- b) Sanskrit, English and Latin.
- b) History, geography, ethics, logic, philosophy, political economy, political science.

## III. Mathematics

Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Elementary Trigonometry.

## IV. Physical Sciences

Physics, Chemistry, Zoology, Botany, Animal physiology, Anatomy, Geology, Mineralogy, Engineering.

Most of these subjects were introduced from the beginning, the rest were introduced later. Every day one period was devoted to lectures on theology and attendance at these lectures was enforced by regulations as stringent as those regulating the ordinary class work of the College. Muslim religious knowledge was not compulsory for non-Muslim students, instead they studied moral education. All Muslim boarders were also required to pray five times a day and, except in case of a reasonable excuse, to fast during Ramadan.

To Sayyid Ahmed Khan religious knowledge was an integral part of education. He himself had very progressive

---

<sup>1</sup> He was using the term 'Ilm-al-Adab' in his own way to include the subjects mentioned in item II (a) and (b). We have translated them in English as Humanities and Social Sciences.

ideas, but experience had made it clear that people in general were not ready to accept those. In fact, it was his religious ideas<sup>1</sup> which had raised the strongest opposition and he was called a non-believer. He was not ready to give up the faith which was true to him but he also knew that if the College had anything to do with his personal religious views it will not get much support from the nation. Nor will he get support of learned Muslims, a support which he needed badly. After much thought he came to the conclusion that it was better to have a College to meet the specific needs of Muslims than to insist on the education of his progressive views and not to have the College at all.

As a compromise he declared that M.A.O. College will have nothing to do with his personal religious opinions. He suggested that people should select a committee of seven members to manage religious education of the College. He denied himself even the membership of the committee. These members should be from different sects of Muslims and should prescribe courses in religious knowledge which they think appropriate. Shia students should be provided religious knowledge according to their faith and Sunnis according to theirs.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mostly published through Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq.

Here another remarkable aspect of the M.A.O. College needs mention. It was especially founded for the education of Muslims. Students from all over India came to Aligarh. It also attracted students from abroad especially Muslims from African countries. There were students belonging to different races, castes and creeds. They not only studied together but lived together also, which in India of those days was an uncommon phenomenon. The number of Hindu students was ever increasing. The following tables are self-expressive.

TABLE 1<sup>1</sup>

## NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN MAJO COLLEGE SCHOOL

	1875	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880	1881	1882	1883	1884	1884
Muslims	66	89	113	134	155	132	186	179	193	193	
Hindus	0	6	12	41	30	40	57	53	53	77	

TABLE 2<sup>2</sup>

## NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN M.A.O. COLLEGE

	1880	1881	1882	1883	1884	1885	1886	1887	1888
Muslims	8	8	14	14	34	19	23	19	39
Hindus	7	8	13	13	33	30	27	33	30

<sup>1</sup>Nasim Qureshi, (ed.) Aligarh Tarikh Aghaz ta Imroze (Urdu), (Lucknow, India: Ahbab, Publishers, 1960), p. 204.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

It is evident that in the beginning the Hindus were reluctant but after observing the working of the College they joined in ever greater numbers. Religious sentiments of the Hindus were strictly cared for. Their food was prepared according to their customs and beef was forbidden to be served even for the Muslim students. Among the Indian professors, Mr Chakarwari, a Hindu, was the highest paid and was thought to be the right hand of Sayyid Ahmed Khan in the working of the College. The M.A.O. College library had a good collection of Sanskrit books and from the very beginning Sanskrit was offered as a subject for study. Most of the scholarships were open to all students irrespective of their beliefs. There were some scholarships which according to the wishes of the donors were for Muslims only, but at the same time there scholarships which were for Hindu students only.

Besides religious instruction and tolerance, another important respect in which the Aligarh College differed from all other institutions for higher education in India was, the attention paid to character building in those trained within its walls.<sup>1</sup> Ahmed Khan was very particular about the selection of the principal and professors, as he thought that not only the educational standards of the

---

<sup>1</sup>Baljon, op. cit., p. 41.

institution depended on the kind of its staff, but men of high scholarship and character were necessary to create the right spirit among the students. The principal and professors resided within the College precincts and were in constant intercourse with their pupils. Well known scholars like T.W. Arnold, Jos. Horovitz, A.S. Tritton were once lecturers in Aligarh. To benefit the students from Indian learned persons of exceptional ability, he arranged extension lectures. Among the speakers were great men like Dr Nazir Ahmed and Halli. Sayyid Ahmed Khan himself kept in close touch with the students. Occasionally he addressed their gatherings, which was very inspiring for the students. Sometimes he came to their debates and took part in their discussions, which used to be a great day for all.<sup>1</sup>

There was a separate boarding house for the students of the primary school of the College, so that they could live with children of their own age. An able person was put in charge of this boarding house and lived there night and day. Many a time when Sayyid Ahmed Khan went out for a morning walk he went to see the young ones and spoke to them kindly.

In short, Aligarh was a place where the young Muslim

---

<sup>1</sup>Abdul Haq, Chund Hum Asar (Urdu; Some Contemporaries), (Karachi: Urdu Academy, 1959), p. 232.



was at home. He wore a special college uniform (though not compulsory), consisting of a black Turkish coat, white trousers and a fez and English style shoes. He could take part in a flourishing Union life with regular debates and other activities, and also ample opportunity was offered to him for sports, like hockey, cricket, swimming and horse riding etc.

The Aligarh College did not fail to attain quite soon visible results. The following figures from 1893 are very instructive and significant. While in that year according to the census in Bengal, for instance, the number of Muslim graduates should have been 45.9 per cent, it was in fact only 3.4 per cent, in Madras 0.9 per cent instead of 6.8 per cent; in the N.W. Provinces and Oudh, the direct sphere of influence of M.A.O. College, however, the percentage was 17.6 in stead of 11.2.<sup>1</sup> Still Ahmed Khan was not satisfied with the achieved success. The dream that haunted him till the end of life was that "in the garden which we have planted now, such a mighty tree will arise that its branches will overshadow the country, and that by its fresh power will be created, and the College will grow into a university, which will make free researches with an open mind and well developed character."<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Baljon, op. cit., p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Aligarh Institute Gazette, Jan. 12, 1877.

From the very beginning Sayyid Ahmed Khan's ultimate aim was not just to have a college but an independent Muslim university which had the right to determine its own policy and to choose the courses of study and set the examinations. Government of India was opposed to the idea and declared that if the Muslims want to do so the government will not give any support to it. At a time when financial help from his countrymen was insufficient, government help was much needed. Government patronage was also needed to give the institution prestige in the eyes of most of his countrymen. It was not given to him to see his vision of a Muslim university realized. Not until 1920 did the Government of India agree to promote the College to the rank of a university.

Today the University of Aligarh along with full-fledged faculties of arts and sciences consists of a number of allied institutions of which the engineering college, the polytechnic, the medical college and the ophthalmic institute are outstanding. The Ophthalmic Institute is the only of its kind in Asia.<sup>1</sup>

#### MOHAMMEDAN EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

For our indefatigable reformer the foundation of the College was not yet a sign that now he had done his duty and could rest on his ears. He recognized that, even if the

---

<sup>1</sup>Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. I (London: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1963), p. 633.

College did answer the purpose, the problem of national education could not be solved by it, and one College could not secure the education of 60,000,000 Muslims. So he planned for a kind of national education institute, when all the available powers could be centralized for furthering instruction among the Muslims. In 1886 he embodied this idea in the establishment of what was called the Mohammedan Educational Conference.<sup>1</sup> At its start it had a big programme containing 20 points. Four of them are

---

<sup>1</sup> Quotation from the opening address at the Conference on 27th December, 1886, in the Aligarh College: "Till now this is our situation that, although we are said to be one Muslim community, yet the people living at one place are unacquainted with (the conditions) of people living at another, so that we, so to speak, are strangers to one another. We do not know what views people in the Punjab hold about their popular education and the promotion of their national cause, and what they do and want to do... We have not such an institution where people come together at a certain moment from various provinces in order to hear about the conditions of each other ... in order that national unity, or, I would rather say, national brotherhood should be born, in spite of the fact that we are a community which consists of different races ... On account of these considerations the project was made that every year people from various towns and provinces should assemble to study the education and progress of the Muslims."

A.H. Hali, Hayat-i-Javid, op. cit., pp. 301-303.

are mentioned here: (1) To try to spread the highest western education among the Muslims; (2) To inquire into the state of religious instruction in English schools founded by Muslims, and to conduct it in the best possible way; (3) To support the instruction of oriental learning and religious subjects which Muslim divines were giving everywhere on their own, and to make provision for it so that it could be kept going regularly; (4) To examine the state of instruction given on the old lines in the vernacular schools and to make preparations for its restoration, if it had decayed.<sup>1</sup> The last point is a remarkable concession on the part of Ahmed Khan to the Maulwis..

He did not agree with the people who proposed that the incomes of waqf (bequests for oriental and religious education) should be used for English education of the Muslims. "A waqf should be kept inviolable, and it is our duty not to be unfaithful to the purport of something which is entrusted to us." (Speech from the Conference held in December 1887).

For the practical execution of the proposed schemes two courses of action were followed: (1) annual sessions were held each time in different towns, and there educational experts from all over India assembled to put and discuss

---

<sup>1</sup>Baljon, op. cit., p. 43.

various educational questions and proposals; (2) Committees were formed to report, for example, on the progress or decline of Muslim schools. The results of the discussions in the annual meetings were expressed in resolutions. And to have an idea of the problems treated, we will quote here some of the accepted resolutions: (a) to ask the help of Muslim Anjumans (local societies) for scholarships for poor students; (b) to make an appeal to the government that in the government schools the Muslims should get an opportunity of receiving religious instruction; (c) to urge the Allahabad University to exclude from the curriculum Cox's history which contained chapters offensive to the Muslims; (d) the obligation of every Muslim to give one per cent of his income for the diffusion of western knowledge amongst the Muslims of his district, etc.

The number of fine projects and good intentions was inversely proportionate to that of the actual results; only a fraction of the aims they strove for were realized. Yet the impact and driving power of the conference could not be overlooked, for it was a rallying-point where many Muslims from near and remote places met each other, made acquaintances and studied national affairs. Consequently its meetings have done so much for the union and revival of a Muslim community, so scattered and cast adrift.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>  
Ibid., p. 44.

## CHAPTER VIII

### EVALUATION OF SAYYID AHMED KHAN'S EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PROGRAMME

#### INTRODUCTION

When a picture is very big and colourful one has to stand at a distance to get the right perspective. It is the same with Sayyid Ahmed Khan. He was such a great man and his personality was studded with so many multicoloured facets, that to get the right perspective it needed distance of some time. In this respect we are better off than those who were nearer to him. On the other hand to understand the Aligarh movement it is necessary that we keep in mind the circumstances under which it came into being, while we are evaluating the ways and means which from time to time were used to meet various situations. It will not be appropriate to keep in view the situation as it is today and judge the incidents which happened three quarters of a century ago. Much water has flown in the Ganges since then.

#### NEED FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

In the nineteenth century, changes in India had been

so slow that it gave the impression of being almost static. An immense problem arose when this tradition-bound India came into direct contact with the fast changing West and in a way became a part of it. If the conflict between East and West was left to itself, it could have been disastrous. Sayyid Ahmed Khan realized that instead of resisting change people must go out to meet change. To him it was not enough to accept submissively the stream of unplanned change. He believed that social change should be deliberately planned and guided. People must be made to work and they should be selected as the basis of group action and enough attention should be given to making them work. He did not undermine the individual but his emphasis was on group action. Experiences from the immediate past history of India and the Revolt of 1857 had made the importance of group action very clear to him.

"The necessity of planning for social change in a society seems to be an imperative need. This function is performed by a number of agencies, namely, the family, the peer group, the Church,<sup>1</sup> the school, etc."<sup>2</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan tried to mobilize all of these forces through different

---

<sup>1</sup>As Church here stands for religion it could be applied to Sayyid Ahmed Khan also.

<sup>2</sup>L.L. Bernard, Social Control (New York: MacMillan Company, 1939), p. 663.

means. The Scientific Society, Aligarh Institute Gazette, Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq, M.A.O. College, Tafsir (Interpretation of the Qur'an) and Muhammadian Educational Conference, all were part of the same all over plan, aiming to bring changes in different aspects of the lives of the Indian Muslims. The great emphasis he laid on education especially of Indian Muslims was due to the fact that Muslims were backward in Western education. They had to be given extra impetus to come forward. Moreover, they were backward as compared to the Hindus and in a country where there were two major nations, it was essential to bring about a balance in power as well as in education. It was his sincere opinion that if balance was not maintained the gulf between the Muslims and the Hindus would become wider and wider and would result in great conflicts. Later events and eventual partition of the Indian sub-continent proved how right he was.

It has been seen that the need for bringing about a deliberate change was necessary for the Muslims of India and education was the best vehicle to serve that purpose. Sayyid Ahmed Khan had not confined himself to the education of the young only. His programme was for the nation as a whole. Education of the society as a whole was necessary for its own sake as well as to provide the right environment for the proper upbringing of the young.



INFLUENCE OF TAHDHIB-UL-AKHLAQ

To bring about the desired social change his main vehicle was Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq. "The activity, intellectual and physical, which Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq stirred up in a few years could not have been achieved in centuries".<sup>1</sup> In one of its issues Sayyid Ahmed Khan himself gave an account of the awakening caused by his magazine:

Stagnant water does not create anything except bad smell. There should be a flow, then sooner or later it will find the right direction..... Today the whole nation is discussing that something should be done to correct its evils..... Isn't there an all-over movement to improve the conditions of the nation? Isn't there the discussion of civilization, patriotism, and of national progress all over India. Pick up any newspaper there is an article big or small about these topics. Go anywhere people are discussing Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq and Sayyid Ahmed Khan. They talk good or bad of me but all this stirred up condition shows signs of awakening and if this were true, Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq has achieved its aim.<sup>2</sup>

"The reason for the hold Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq had on people was mostly Sayyid Ahmed Khan's impressive articles and Mehdi Ali Khan's attractive essays. It is well known about Ahmed Khan's writings that after seeing them one could not remain firm in one's own beliefs"<sup>3</sup> as the way of criticising the evils of his society was sympathetic and was not aimed at any particular person, but was of the nation in general.

---

<sup>1</sup> Altaf Husain Halli, op.cit., p. 200.

<sup>2</sup> Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq, Vol. VI, 1879, pp.2-12, as given in Maqalat, X, op.cit., pp.111-112.

<sup>3</sup> Altaf Husain Halli, op. cit., p. 222.

On the one hand articles of Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq were creating opposition and on the other hand they were bringing a revolution in the ways of thinking of the people and more and more support came forward for the College. Even the opposition was beneficial to the nation the more they opposed him the more anxious they were to establish Muslim schools, and many schools were opened because of the awakening caused by Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq. "It is Sir Sayyid's voice which had created even in his critics the spirit on which progress of a nation depends".<sup>1</sup>

Some of the theologians who in the beginning had declared Sayyid Ahmed Khan a non-believer because of his progressive views of Islam after twenty years were saying more or less the same things which he had said. A learned theologian from Nudwat-ul-Ulama<sup>2</sup> said, "Foundations of Islam are not on sand. It cannot crumble down at meeting new philosophies and theories. If the fallacy of old knowledge (of history and mathematics) is proved it does not hurt Islam as the old learnings are not Islam itself".<sup>3</sup>

"Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq decreased prejudice considerably loosened the shackles of blind following and the misconception of contentment and fate which had made people lazy and

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 418.

<sup>2</sup> A famous Muslim College at Lucknow. For details see *infra* p. 170.

<sup>3</sup> Altaf Husain Halli, op.cit., p. 419.

static".<sup>1</sup> It changed the way of thinking of thousands of people and made them aware of the use of their own will and effort. It made them realize the importance of self-help, without which no nation can progress. Muslims who did not know to spend more than Rs.2 (about 50 cents) per month on their children's education became willing to spend Rs. 50 - 60 per month without hesitation and to spend Rs. twenty to thirty thousand on sending their children to Europe for higher education. "The money which was previously spent on the marriages and other ceremonies and on useless pomp and show is now being spent on the ways and means of developing the abilities of their children".<sup>2</sup>

As a result of the interest created in education by Ahmed Khan's movement many Muslim schools were opened in different parts of India. Though Ahmed Khan was against spending the limited resources of the nation on ill-equipped schools, he was happy that at least Muslims had started attaching importance to education and to the principle of self-help, instead of just waiting for providance to change their lot. He used to receive letters containing all sorts of threats e.g. threat of public insult and manhandling, even threats of killing were not uncommon.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 422.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 423.

He treated most of them with difference and only sometimes refuted that criticism which he thought might effect the establishment and later the progress of M.A.O. College. In fact he got so much used to criticism that if there was nothing in the newspapers against him he would say, "What is the matter with them; why are they so quiet these days?"<sup>1</sup> In fact some newspapers of those days had made it a point to criticize Ahmed Khan and his colleagues just because it was the "hottest topic" of the day and it increased their sales considerably. Someone once said, "though Sayyid Ahmed Khan is a Christian, if anybody is going to uplift the Muslim nation it is this Christian who will do it". When Ahmed Khan came to know about it he was very pleased and said "if it were true I would prefer to be a Christian".<sup>2</sup> Extreme opposition in the beginning was a hinderence to the progress of the movement but it had its beneficial effects also. All the hew and cry against the movement worked as publicity. More and more people came to know about Sayyid Ahmed Khan and his movement. Among those who opposed his religious and educational ideas some were learned and sincere, who wanted preservation of Islam and Islamic studies. They took stock of the existing ways of

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 650.

<sup>2</sup> Abdul Haq, Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan, op.cit., p. 257.

imparting knowledge especially that of religious knowledge. They realized some of the short-comings of the existing Muslim institutions of learning. In order to fight back Sayyid Ahmed Khan's ideas which they thought were un-Islamic, these learned men tried to reform the conservative ideas, to Shibli Nonani, who was in the beginning a colleague of Sayyid Ahmed Khan and was on the staff of the M.A.O. College. Later on differences between the two leaders increased to that extent that not only Shibli left Aligarh but began opposing Ahmed Khan publicly. Shibli was among those who were the founders of Nudwat-ul-Ulama at Lucknow; a college founded to save the minds of the young Muslim from the encroachments of science and materialism and at the same time to provide Islamic studies on more rationalistic lines. Whether the Nudwa succeeded or failed is another issue, but the establishment of this institution was a direct result of Ahmed Khan's educational movement, to the extent that some people mistook it to be founded by Ahmed Khan himself.<sup>1</sup> It was not so but as Hali said, وهذا ايضا من بركات البرامكة ("This also is of the blessings of the Barmecides")<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> M.L. Ferrer, "India", in H.A.K. Gibb, Whither Islam? (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1932), p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> Allusion to an Arab story about the munificence of the Barmecide, family members of which had served as Ministers to the Abbassid Caliphs of Baghdad towards the end of the 8th century, A.D.

<sup>2</sup> Altaf Husain Hali, op.cit., p. 418.

Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq was not only serving the Indian Muslims by broadening the outlook of the conservative theologians, it was also serving Islam on another, on no less important front. Many western educated Muslims had started doubting the validity of Islam. Sayyid Ahmed Khan and his group mostly through Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq cleared their doubts and showed them that the pure and original Islam was not in contradiction with modern knowledge and learnings.<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan used to get letters from students educated in the western style, saying that if he had not showed them the right path they would have given up their faith.<sup>2</sup>

#### EDUCATION AS A MEANS TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY:

To Sayyid Ahmed Khan the primary aim of education was to create intellectual, social, cultural and religious enlightenment. At the same time he was well aware of the importance of the economic factor in the recovery and progress of a nation. He thought of various ways and means of improving the economic conditions of the Muslims. Entering government services was one of them. He wanted

---

<sup>1</sup> Ahmed Khan's book Life of Mohammad, had the same beneficial effect on the minds of the young western educated men.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Sayyid ki Dini Burkatin, Urdu, (Sir Sayyid's Religious Blessings), (Lucknow, India: Dilgudaz Press, 1913), p. 9, as quoted in Aligarh Tahrik Aghaz to Imroz, op.cit., p. 252.

educated young men to get responsible positions with the government. As he had close personal relations with many high government officials, students of M.A.O. College were usually able to get good jobs. "Sayyid Ahmed Khan has been much criticised for laying emphasis on acquiring English education and to enter government services"<sup>1</sup>. The critics overlooked the fact that for centuries Muslims in India had belonged to the ruling class and most of their prosperity depended on their occupying higher positions in administration and on landed property. With the end of the Mughal Empire and especially after the Revolt of 1857 they lost both of these. In the latter half of the nineteenth century they were at the bottom of economic, social and political despair. Entering government services would have not only provided economic uplift but social and political as well. Hence any scheme for the uplift of the Indian Muslims could not have wisely neglected this aspect. "It would have led to sure destruction"<sup>2</sup>. But government service was not his only aim. He wanted Muslims to control the commerce of their country; "not petty business but to establish big commercial companies with branch offices in

---

<sup>1</sup> Ghulam Rasul Mehr, "Religious Services of Sir Sayyid", Aligarh Tahir Aghaz Ta Imroz, op.cit., p.93.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

London, Paris and Amsterdam. But all this cannot be done without acquiring higher education."<sup>1</sup> He wanted Muslims to study mining and to discover the hidden resources of their country from under the earth. That too required modern higher education.<sup>2</sup> Along with such high aims for the improvement of the economic conditions he did not neglect one of the vital needs of an agricultural country like India. He was aware of the need of providing modern education on farming also. Thus to improve the lot of the peasantry. All this clearly shows that Sayyid Ahmed Khan was well aware of the different ways of improving the economic conditions of his nation by providing diversified education. Whether he was able to mobilize activity in all these directions or not is something different. If his practical efforts were limited to certain fields it does not disprove the breadth of his vision.

#### EDUCATION OF THE YOUNG:

In the beginning of his educational career Sayyid Ahmed Khan devoted almost all his energies towards enlightening the Muslim society in general, but the cause of educating the young was always near to his heart. While he was reforming the Muslim society he was also paving the way for the education of the young by creating an appropriate

---

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Lecturon ka Majmua, op.cit., p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



environment, and as soon as he thought he could get some support he started his campaign for the education of the Muslim boys.

To the question as to what kind of education was suitable of Muslim boys, his policy was clear, Western learnings along with Eastern languages and religious knowledge.

Need for the Western learnings was obvious. "The Revolt (of 1857) had decided the material superemacy of the West ... it was a decisive moment for the Muslims (in India), there was no way of getting back what they had lost. To bycot the West was also not possible. Whether to accept it or to get rid of it, in both cases it was necessary to know it".<sup>1</sup>

After the establishment of the M.A.O. College the number of Muslim graduates increased considerably.<sup>2</sup> Partly increase was in the students of the M.A.O. College and partly it was due to the influence of M.A.O. College which made Muslims all over India conscious of the value of education and stimulated them to send their boys to Government Colleges.<sup>3</sup> From 1857 to 1881 the number of Muslim graduates in the whole of India was only 43. From

---

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ihtisham Husain, "Basis of the Aligarh Movement", Tahrik Aghaz to Imroz, op.cit., p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Altaf Husain Hali, op.cit., p. 430.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 430.

1881 - 1893 i.e. in twelve years only the number rose from 43 to 339<sup>1</sup>. And this was in the beginning when the pace of progress in education was bound to be slow as the families who are uneducated themselves do not put high value on education. As the time passed the value attached to education increased and the number increased by leaps and bounds. The same was true of about sending children abroad for higher studies. Sayyid Ahmed Khan himself set a personal example. The scholarship given to his son Sayyid Mahmud was insufficient but Sayyid Ahmed Khan in spite of his financial limitations spent necessary money on his son's education in England. After Sayyid Mahmud came back his success set an example to other young men. By 1901 there were 31 Barrister-at-law from the old boys of M.A.O. College and 4 were studying medicine in England.<sup>2</sup>

In government services if M.A.O. College had not come into being and educational movements of Sayyid Ahmed Khan had not influenced the position, no Muslims could have been in any responsible government service as English was becoming more and more a compulsory requirement for government services. In 1820 Pioneer (a standard English daily newspaper of India) wrote "In Bengal there are a few Muslims on government posts who will soon retire. It is

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 431.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 431.

definite that no Muslim will take their place (they are not educated enough). In future Muslims will not hold any government post except as peons and clerks".<sup>1</sup> But within a short time the situation changed considerably and the number of Muslims in responsible positions increased. The significance of this fact is not only economic uplift of the Muslims but it also meant increased social and political influence of the Muslims.

It is true that educational standard of M.A.O. College was no different than that of any other college. The reason was that it was not an independent college. It had to follow the system prescribed by the government universities. But at the same time the college had some distinctive features. e.g. "The amount of money spent on scholarships was by far more than by any other college".<sup>2</sup> Keeping in view the financial conditions of the Muslims the college always tried to provide financial help to bright students from poor families. It also tried its best to provide financial assistance so that the students from poor families could live the same way as the rest of the students.<sup>3</sup>

The most distinctive feature of the M.A.O. College as mentioned before was its being a residential institution

---

<sup>1</sup> Altaf Husain Hali, op.cit., p. 434.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 438.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

and the environment it created to influence the education of the students. John Dewey says "It is the business of the school environment to eliminate so far as possible, the unworthy features of the existing environment from influence upon mental habits. It establishes a purified medium of action. Selection aims not only at simplifying but at weeding out what is undesirable .... It is the office of the school environment to balance the various elements in the social environment and to see to it that each individual gets an opportunity to escape from the limitations of the social group in which he is born, and to come into a living contact with a broader environment".<sup>1</sup>

"We never educate directly, but indirectly by means of the environment. Whether we permit chance environment to do the work, or we design environment for the purpose makes a great difference."<sup>2</sup>

It seems that Sayyid Ahmed Khan had fully realized the importance of weeding out what was undesirable in the environment of his days.<sup>3</sup> The emphasis he laid time and again on the importance of keeping the children away from their homes where society was degenerated and stagnant and

---

<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, op.cit., p. 48. also Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op.cit., p. 22.

putting them in a boarding house in a place which was away from the evil influences of big cities.<sup>1</sup> But eliminating undesirable influences was not his only aim. His emphasis on what was desirable was no less, hence the importance he attached to the selection of the teaching staff and their relationship with students. Sayyid Ahmed Khan wanted to see to it that the young of the nation (if not all at least some) got an opportunity to escape from the limitations of the social groups they were born and to come into living contact with a broader environment.<sup>2</sup> An environment which maintained balance between East and West, between well-being in this world as well as the world of the hereafter. Students of the M.A.O. College to a great extent fulfilled the aims of Sayyid Ahmed Khan. They had great scholars like T.W. Arnold as professors to create love of learning. At the same time the varied activities of the Students Union prepared them to meet different situations in life. It was no exaggeration to say that boys from Aligarh knew how to make way for themselves in the world. "The residential life was aimed to create nation-mindedness and feeling of unity. When boys from different socio-economic stratas came to live together, took part in common activities, learned and played together, and were treated the same way,

---

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op.cit., p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> Altaf Husain Hali, op.cit., p. 439.

it was bound to create a feeling of fellowship".<sup>1</sup>

Sir Aucland Calvin who was the governor of the North Western Provinces on one occasion said,

"anyone who knows the young men who come of this college will most probably agree with me that these boys show the signs of their education and upbringing as clearly as those from our public schools and universities. A student of Aligarh College is thought to be broad-minded, progressive and a well-educated and well brought up person, with freedom as one of his characteristics."<sup>2</sup>

But before all this could be achieved and such praises were won Sayyid Ahmed Khan had to face quite a few hurdles.

#### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: CONFLICT WITH THE POPULAR RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES:

When Sayyid Ahmed Khan decided to introduce Western learnings the opposition he met was not so much to Western education itself. It was the fear that this education might pollute the faith. Ahmed Khan himself had felt the danger and we find throughout his programme of reformation the stress on being good Muslims. The conflict mainly arose from the great difference between what he thought was being a good Muslim and what the society of his day thought, especially the theologians. Even before going to Europe he was declared a non-believer as he ate with Christians at the same table even though no wine or pork was served. Going to Europe

---

<sup>1</sup> Altaf Husain Hali, op.cit., p. 451.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

was to the Maulawis a confirmation of his becoming Christian. "It was reported everywhere that instead of going to Mecca (to become a better Muslim) Ahmed Khan has gone to London to become a confirmed Christian".<sup>1</sup> On his return to India, he started publishing Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq. After two or three issues of the magazine, opposition to his views began to appear in periodicals and along with it opposition to the proposed college increased.<sup>2</sup> Many newspapers started publishing articles against Sayyid Ahmed Khan and some of the opponents started newspapers for the specific purpose of opposing him, e.g. Nurul Afaq and Nurul Anwar of Kawnpur. Not only Sayyid Ahmed Khan but his friends and helpers were also declared as Christians or atheists. The opposition was mostly because of the views expressed on social and religious reforms. To Indian Muslims of those days customs were as sacred as religion and a new interpretation of the Qur'an was heresy. Most of the people did not understand the meaning and motive of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's religious views and his re-interpretations of Islam and were suspicious of it as they were of every thing which was new and broke the age-old traditions. In their ignorance they took every thing new as against Islam and Western education synonyms

---

<sup>1</sup> Altaf Husain Hali, op.cit., p. 617.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 219.

with Christianity. The Maulawis (theologians) were against him because his views adversely effected their privileged position as the interpreters of the dogma. They were bound to be hurt as Sayyid Ahmed Khan preached the doctrine of reason, thus freeing the individual from the shackles of blind following.

Criticism from these quarters was great and most of it was at the level of abuse and declaration of atheism of Sayyid Ahmed Khan.

All this hue and cry would not have moved Sayyid Ahmed Khan as is evident from his attitude of never publishing any reply even to the most harsh and baseless criticism and always saying that God forgive them as they do not know what they are doing.<sup>1</sup>

#### COMPROMISE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Maulawi Imdad Ali who was a learned man in the style of the day and was a deputy collector in the government service and Maulawi Ali Bukhsh who was a sub-judge, both of them were influential people and their persistant condemnation of Sayyid Ahmed Khan was an adverse influence. These people did not confine themselves to the criticism of his religious views but also condemned his educational programme.

Opponents of Ahmed Khan's religious views got declarations from Mecca to the effect that it was sinful to

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 627.



help and work with such a man ... that he should be punished for his evil doings and the college if established should be pulled down.<sup>1</sup> To them he said, "when you build a mosque or get your own house built, you employ labourers and workers irrespective of their caste or creed. You do not think of pulling down a mosque because a low caste or non-believer has laid the bricks. Take me as a humble labourer in the building of the house for your nation and your children. Let me help in it and don't oppose a good cause only because I am also working for it".<sup>2</sup> But such pleas did not appeal to the critics. On one occasion Sayyid Imdad Ali said, "even if it is a true thing no Muslim can understand it correctly through Sayyid Ahmed Khan".<sup>3</sup> He himself always said, "If people are against my views it is a pity that they oppose good projects. I am a finite being, I will not be here always, but the good cause will remain. If they are opposed to my views they should prove that their views are better and get the Members of the Committee for the Progress of Muslim Education on their side and make me step down and they themselves take charge of the college."<sup>4</sup> But the opposition kept on declaring that it will be against religion to help the college which will be established by a man of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's views.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat X, op.cit., p. 82.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp.95, 96.

Maulawi Khuda Bukhsh who was a prominent Muslim of those days sent a letter to Sayyid Mehdi Ali Khan (a close friend and colleague of Sayyid Ahmed Khan) asking questions about the policy and programme of the proposed college. He frankly told that his opposition to M.A.O. college was not because he was against Western education or was opposed to Ahmed Khan personally. His opposition was because of Ahmed Khan's religious ideas. This was one of the hundreds of opinions expressed against Ahmed Khan's religious ideas. It would have taken a life time of religious scholarship to change public attitude towards religion. It also needed a man of greater religious reputation to impress his views. Sayyid Ahmed Khan thought that if he was to leave his educational programme till people were ready to accept his religious interpretations to be correct, it would be postponing progress of education indefinitely. Muslims were already backward in general and in Western knowledge and learnings in particular and were quite behind the Hindus. All this was a great obstacle in their social, economic and political uplift.

Influential Muslims like Maulawi Imdad Ali Khan had demanded that if Sayyid Ahmed Khan wants their support for the M.A.O. College 1) he should give up his heretic beliefs, 2) should discontinue publishing Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq in which most of Ahmed Khan's and his co-believers' views were published, 3) he should not have anything to do with the

religious education in the college. For the first of these demands Sayyid Ahmed Khan said that he could not comply with it as what he thought to be true he cannot give up. For the second and third he was ready to comply. He had realized that with the meager resources at his disposal he could not undertake the huge project of the establishment of an institution of higher learning unless he got the support of these influential Muslims. He discontinued publishing of Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq and agreed that his own religious view will not have anything to do with the religious education in the M.A.O. College. He went to such an extent of self-denial that he was not even on the committee set up to **look** after the religious education. Firm as he was in his progressive religious views it must have been a great sacrifice on his part to do so. But he was a practical and objective person. If there was a question of having no college and having a college in which he could not introduce progressive religious thought he decided to get whatever he could and hope for the future to look after the rest. The only **thing** he could do and did was to get the best possible teachers **for** theology who were among the most highly-paid in the staff of the college.<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to say now what would have been the result

---

<sup>1</sup> Mushtaq Husain (ed.), Makatib-i-Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan, op.cit., p. 237, (foot note).

if he had insisted on including progressive ideas in religious education at the college.<sup>1</sup> But the unfortunate fact remains that the thought which was so dear and near to his heart and for which he strove throughout his life had to be excluded from his own educational institution. What makes it still worse is that even later when antagonism to his views had died a natural death, its place was taken by lethargy. The courses of religious studies are still more or less as they were in his days. In fact, the situation became worse later. In his own days though Sayyid Ahmed Khan was not on the Committee to select courses at least he was in a position to choose the teachers and was keen to have relatively enlightened teachers who were great scholars of the Qurān and Hadith. Later generations neglected this aspect and slowly the theology teacher came to be no other than an ordinary ill-paid Maulawi with traditional views. The students did not learn much about Islam except literal translation of some parts of the Qurān, some Hadith (to be memorized) and some Muslim laws, e.g. of marriage, divorce, and about prayer and cleanliness which were to be learnt without knowing the significance.

When Sayyid Ahmed Khan wanted to establish a college,

"above all it was to create for young Muslims a centre with the true Islamic atmosphere so that

---

<sup>1</sup> Alay Ahmed Suroor, "Whither Aligarh", Aligarh Tahrik Aghaz Ta Imroz, op.cit., p. 443.

its 'alumni' would not be educated and cultured men, but educated and cultured Muslims ... But it must be confessed that it furnished them precious little equipment in the matter of their knowledge of their faith. They were progressive enough, and they were proud enough of their faith; but they were, alas, far too ignorant of it.<sup>1</sup>

The situation is not much different even now. Aligarh of Sayyid Ahmed Khan should do better than that.

#### EMPHASIS ON HIGHER EDUCATION:

M.A.O. College proved to be a great success and influenced Muslims throughout India, but M.A.O. College was only one stage of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's all comprehensive programme of education. Along with his endeavours for educating the society as a whole he had his plan for education of the young from 5 - 25 years old. He had clearly stated that in a nation needs of different groups are different and the educational plan should look after the needs of all the groups. Knowing the aristocratic background of Sayyid Ahmed Khan who would have thought that his educational programme will include education on farming also. In 1866 in a lecture he said "education about farming is an important branch of knowledge. This should be provided in the mother tongue. The students should learn

---

<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Ali, "National Muslim Education" in Afzal Iqbal (ed.), Select Writings and Speeches of Maulana Mohammad Ali (Lahore: Lion Press, 1944), p. 111.

to read and write, and arithmetic should be taught ... schools for farming should teach the art of efficient ways of breeding animals and also how to improve their breeds of cattle as Australia has done".<sup>1</sup>

It must be realized that such a comprehensive plan involving millions of people, not to speak of their backwardness and poverty, could not be given a practical shape all at the same time. Ahmed Khan thought that the first stage for the enlightenment of his nation should be provision of higher education for which he was criticised in many quarters. "How can one college meet the needs of millions of people? While Sir Sayyid is busy educating the few shall we put the rest of the children in a ship and leave it in the Arabian Sea to be drowned".<sup>2</sup> The critics overlooked the fact that the establishment of a Muslim University was not the whole of Ahmed Khan's educational programme. He himself had said that one college cannot be enough to meet the needs of sixty million Muslims. Establishment of the Muhammaden Educational Conference itself was a practical step further to bring together Muslims from all over India to discuss and plan for their common as well as their specific and regional needs of education.

Those who advocated opening primary schools all over

---

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op. cit., p. 155.

<sup>2</sup> As quoted in the History of the Freedom Movement, Vol. II, part II, op.cit., p. 481.

the country first did not realize that keeping the shortage of qualified teachers, equipment and meager finances of the Muslims in view it was nearly impossible to achieve it.<sup>1</sup> And even if there were enough primary schools to enroll all children of school going age it would have achieved literacy only. Sayyid Ahmed Khan's programme was much superior. It was to educate the masses.

"His purpose he declared at the opening ceremony (of the M.A.O. College) was, to leaven the whole community by training and sending out men who would spread the gospel of free inquiry, of large heartedness, tolerance and of pure morality. The success of his aims has been immense. The leaven has spread and there is a wide school of men who have freely acquired the new while holding to all that is vital to them in the old. From this school come all those who are working to bring Islam into line with modern Western learning, ethics and economics".<sup>2</sup>

As all could not be achieved at the same time practical as he was, he wanted to do it in stages. To him higher education was the first stage, to provide highly qualified men who in turn will look after not only primary and secondary education but who will also provide a band of leaders in all walks of life. To emphasise the need for good leadership for the Indian Muslims those days will only be emphasising the obvious.

---

<sup>1</sup> It is not yet achieved even in India and Pakistan of today.

<sup>2</sup> M.L. Ferrar, op.cit., p. 194.

<sup>3</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, X, op.cit., p. 230.

ADULT EDUCATION:

Sayyid Ahmed Khan did not establish schools for adult education but most of his schemes and the practical steps he took were leading to it.

In a lecture delivered in 1866, he urged the rich to publish inexpensive books on useful knowledge and learning. He wanted knowledge

"to become so popular that inexpensive books were sold in the streets, (like goods of every day use) and wherever people gathered together in the mornings and evenings they would read inexpensive newspapers (and have discussions). He made it clear that those newspapers and other literature available to the masses should not be of destructive policy but should have educational aims ... Besides the provision of books and other reading materials, lectures on educational and useful topics should be arranged for the public. Arrangement should be made for the education of men and women, for the education of the few as well as for the masses. Intellectual and physical development both should progress side by side. For the propagation of knowledge associations and societies should be formed and newspapers should be published to propagate knowledge in all branches of sciences and arts. Prizes should be given for literary and industrial achievements".<sup>1</sup>

An over all survey of Ahmed Khan's policies and activities is enough to dispel the misconception that he advocated education of the few only.

EDUCATION OF WOMEN:

Sayyid Ahmed Khan was in favour of female education though he himself did not take any steps for its propagation.

---

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, as quoted by Abdul Ghafore in his article "Sir Sayyid's Educational Movement", Aligarh Tahrik Aghaz Ta Imroz, op.cit., p. 430.



It may seem a great neglect on his part but he was aware that the idea of educating the Muslim women will have to face stronger prejudices than that of boys.<sup>1</sup> For himself he thought it was better to achieve concrete results in a few fields than to attempt too many things and not to achieve much. On the other hand he believed that when Muslim men were educated they will automatically think of educating their women.<sup>2</sup> He was not far from the truth.

In the generation which followed Sayyid Ahmed Khan and who had the benefit of direct personal contact with him two names are particularly worth mentioning, viz. Sayyid Muntaz Ali of Lahore and Sheik Abdullah of Aligarh who were pioneers of the cause of Muslim women in India. Muntaz Ali was a much younger person to Ahmed Khan who was greatly influenced by his policies and programme and started corresponding with him. Ahmed Khan in turn was impressed by the intelligence of the young man and took great interest in his education and later life. In his own life time Ahmed Khan did not get time to work for the spread of education of women but in Muntaz Ali he found a good disciple. Muntaz Ali started the first Urdu weekly magazine for women, Tahdhib-i-Niswan (Education of Women). This magazine on the one hand aimed at the enlightenment

---

<sup>1</sup>Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Magalat, X, op.cit., p. 175.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 176.

of women and campaigned for their rights and at the same time was careful not to publish anything which would be against the moral standards of the day. Thus it gained popularity even in the conservative families and greatly helped in broadening the outlook of Muslim women. He also started a weekly magazine Phool (Flower) for children which was also the first of its kind in Urdu.

Sheikh Abdullah who was a student in Sayyid Ahmed Khan's days and was an enthusiastic worker, later started the Muslim Girls School at Aligarh which in due course of time became a degree college. It has been a residential institution from its early days and is affiliated to the Aligarh Muslim University. Today Muslim parents do not mind sending their girls to non-Muslim educational institutions, but in the early years of 20th century when sending girls to schools was thought an act of sin by many, it was Sheikh Abdullah who crusaded for the cause of educating Muslim girls. His selfless efforts and good example of the school and the college gradually attracted students from all over the sub-continent. Many other Muslim schools and colleges were founded later which could be attributed to the good influence of Sheikh Abdullah's college, and it will not be an exaggeration to say that no single institution has done so much for the cause of Muslim women in India.

INDEPENDENCE OF THOUGHT AND ACTION IN EDUCATIONAL MATTERS:

Sayyid Ahmed Khan firmly believed that matters of education should not be left in the hands of the British Government. Time and again he urged his people to formulate their own educational aims and policies and to work themselves for the achievement of these policies. "In matters of education we should not care for the policy of the government. If we have any self-respect we should show the government that people's lives are in its hands but not their views or opinions".<sup>1</sup> On another occasion he said, "no nation which wants its young to be educated can do so unless it takes the matter in its own hands. Indians will progress only when they make arrangement for the education of their children according to their own ideas".<sup>2</sup> His evidence before the Education Commission of 1882, his proposal for the vernacular university, his opposition to the Punjab University and most of all his proposal for an independent Muslim university clearly show that he did not agree with the educational policy of the government.

But his opposition was not based on any anti-British feelings. In fact he was a great admirer of the English educational system. Many of Ahmed Khan's critics have actually accused him of being a blind follower of the English.

---

<sup>1</sup> Abdul Haq, Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan, op.cit., p. 474.

<sup>2</sup> Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maqalat, VIII, op.cit., p. 172.

One who was over-whelmed by what he saw in England. The fact is that while in England he saw with his own eyes what education can do to a nation and he was quick in taking the good points from an alien system and to adapt them to suit the needs of his country. It is surprising that Sayyid Ahmed Khan who did not know English very well and had stayed only a short while in England could grasp the main spirit of the national character of the English so well which, as Kandel puts it is,

"to rely on social or group action - that is on voluntary enterprise until this be found inadequate ... chaotic, vague, yet none the less governed by an accepted principle that social progress comes best not through state action dominating the minds of men but through a sense of responsibility on the part of the individual and groups, through freedom rather than dictation, through individual and group initiative rather than state regulations and prescription".<sup>1</sup>

"Freedom and liberty for the individual and for social groups to work out their own salvation with minimum of state interference the Englishman regards as his most priceless possession, and in no field of social endeavor more than in Education".<sup>2</sup>

Throughout the educational policy of Sayyid Ahmed Khan we find this emphasis on individual and group action with the minimum possible government intervention. This was more important in the case of Indian Muslims. The British being an alien in every respect did not and could not

---

<sup>1</sup> I.L. Kandel, op.cit., p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

identify themselves with the Indians and their needs. Hence the need for educational policies and programmes formulated by the Indians themselves.

In spite of such independent thinking he had to compromise and to take help from the government. Financial difficulties were only one of the reasons. Approval of his educational scheme by the Government was also important as it gave the scheme prestige in the eyes of the local people. Moreover, Government of India had flatly refused to support the educational scheme of Sayyid Ahmed Khan if he wanted to have a completely independent university. Being a practical man he contented himself with what he could achieve instead of losing the whole. He had to limit his plans to the establishment of M.A.O. College only which was affiliated with the Calcutta University. Thus we find that if he depended on the co-operation of the government it was because of the limitation of his resources and because of the situation he was in.

In spite of such clear evidence to the contrary the criticism that he was a camp follower of the British persisted and even today some people think that way.<sup>1</sup> Mostly it is based on misunderstanding his admiration for the English as a nation and of their educational institutions. They

---

<sup>1</sup> Khalid Nizami, "Sayyid Ahmed Khan and Sayyid Jamal-ud-Din Afghani", Aligarh Tahrik Aghaz Ta Imroz, op.cit., p. 257.

do not realize that if Sayyid Ahmed Khan praised the English as a nation it was for the qualities of that nation which appealed to Ahmed Khan and not because they were the ruling nation. If he looked up to Oxford and Cambridge as his models, it was not because they were the institutions of the ruling nation but because they were the symbols of the greatness of an educated nation.

Most of the criticism of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's so-called pro-English policy was because of the great importance he attached to the European staff of the M.A.O. College. The critics did not visualize the shortage of highly qualified teachers in those days. It is true that some of the Hindus had degrees in western education,<sup>1</sup> but we should not forget Sayyid Ahmed Khan's aim was not provision of knowledge of various arts and sciences only. He attached more importance to the development of the personality and character as a whole. For this purpose provision of an appropriate environment, intellectual as well as social and moral, was also necessary. Indians in his days might have had the degrees but they had not been brought up in a progressive environment which to Sayyid Ahmed Khan was the basis of true education. That is why again and again he sought in the West for teachers for his college, who had the appropriate academic qualifications as well as the right outlook and high qualities of character so necessary for teachers.

---

<sup>1</sup> He did employ Indians whom he found suitable.

Some of the criticism was against the very high salaries paid to the European staff which were thought to be out of proportion, keeping in view the limited financial resources of the College. On the one hand the critics overlook the fact that even the Indian staff was highly paid at the M.A.O. College<sup>1</sup>. On the other hand being the practical man he was, he knew that if learned persons were to be induced to come from England they must be offered adequate salaries. And it was not just good salaries which he offered. He respected and valued the staff of the college greatly. But at the same time he always kept an eye on happenings in the college. Once he came to know that Mr. Theodor Beck who was the Principal of M.A.O. College did not appreciate students wearing the uniform dress which had some similarity to Western dress. Mr. Beck was thought to be his trusted lieutenant but Sayyid Ahmed Khan did not overlook this shortcoming. In a general gathering of the students in which he was scheduled to address the students, when he came to speak he requested Mr. Beck to come and sit with him on the dias. After emphasising the importance and advantages of the corporate life at the college, he mentioned that he had come to know that some Englishmen because of their narrowmindedness were not in favour of

---

<sup>1</sup> For example, "The professor of theology who taught interpretations of the Qura'n to higher classes was paid Rs. 400 per month while the usual salary of a Maulwi in those days was Rs. 40-50 per month."

the uniform dress. He declared that such people were not friends of the College and he did not want to have anything to do with them. No names were mentioned but it was sufficient to make it clear to everybody that to Sayyid Ahmed Khan national unity and self-respect were the most important things for the students as well as for the nation.<sup>1</sup>

But such occurrences were rare. As a whole, the European staff proved its worth. They not only relieved Ahmed Khan of most of the administrative responsibilities but were always in close personal contact with the students and looked after their overall development of the students. "The general atmosphere was of cordiality not of subordination".<sup>2</sup> An example of the spirit of the European staff may not be out of place. In 1933 there was great indecision about the appointment of a Vice Chancellor for the Aligarh Muslim University. The Board of Trustees requested the Government of India to lend Mr. Little Heel who was the Commissioner of Education. Sir Theodor Morrison who had been one of the beloved principals of M.A.O. College and was living a retired life in England, when he came to know about it wrote a letter to Mir Wilayat Husain who was an old boy of Aligarh and was working as Assistant Head Master of the Muslim University school. In this letter he said that it was a sad state of

---

<sup>1</sup> Abdul Haq, Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan, op.cit., pp. 23 - 31.

<sup>2</sup> Altaf Husain Hali, op.cit., p.



affairs that Muslims were not able to choose a Vice Chancellor for their own university and were asking for government help. He further said, "I myself and Mr. Beck and Mr. Arnold who were highly esteemed for our work at Aligarh, were ordinary Englishmen. We became capable by being with Sir Sayyid."<sup>1</sup> He suggested them to put Sir Ross Masud in his grandfather's place and Masud would be able to look after the matters."<sup>2</sup> Some friends of the University got hold of this letter and published it. After that Mr. Little Heel refused the offer and Ross Masud was made the Vice Chancellor. He fulfilled the expectations and managed the affairs of the University very efficiently. Development of the Faculty of Science was mostly due to his efforts.

#### SAYYID AHMED KHAN'S VIEWS ON TAKING PART IN POLITICS

Sayyid Ahmed Khan himself led quite an active political life. Throughout his long life he strove for more rights and greater liberty for his nation,<sup>3</sup> but he was not in favour of political agitations and he had reasons to do so. If Muslims who had no power and influence and were already suspected of all evils by the Government, took part in political agitations it would have made things worse for them.

---

<sup>1</sup>Abdul Haq, Chund Hum Asar, op. cit., p. 194.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>For details of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's political views and activities see (a) discussion of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's political services by Altaf Husain Hali, op.cit., p. 392-488. (b) Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, "Aligarh and Indian Politics," Aligarh Tahrik Aghaz Ta Imroz, op. cit., p. 174. (c) and above all Ahmed Khan's own writings and speeches on political issues.

Moreover, they were very backward educationally and were not equipped with the knowledge of modern sciences, social and physical, and were ignorant of the new ways of administration. He was right in thinking that if such people indulged into politics and specially in agitations 1) they will make a mess of it because of their ignorance, 2) will be easily beaten by the Hindus who were better qualified and 3) will be condemned by the government thus spoiling their chances of ever rising at all. He was of the opinion that first of all Muslims should learn modern arts and sciences, only then they will be in a position to know what their rights are and how to work for their achievement. To proclaim that Sayyid Ahmed Khan "had directed the footsteps of the Musalmans along ways that fostered in them a slavish mentality instead of self-respect, high-mindedness and breadth of political outlook",<sup>1</sup> only shows the ignorance of Sayyid Ahmed Khan and his policies. "It is true that repeatedly he bridled the national passions of the Muslims, and that political agitation especially in alliance with the Hindus, was to him wandering in the dangerous field of emotionalism". "For India and particularly for Muslims of India of those days, patience, self-restraint,

---

<sup>1</sup> Mahadeva Desai, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, p.43, as quoted by Baljon, op.cit., p. 94.

combined with a keen eye for what were in the given circumstances the possible, i.e. the spiritual means for preparation for future self-rule, were certainly more urgently required than stirring up a futile second Mutiny, a nightmare which haunted Ahmed Khan all his life".<sup>1</sup>

In this connection it is not out of place to cite the following passage from an address of Muhammad Ali the Muslim President of the Indian National Congress in 1925:

"Reviewing the actions of a bygone generation today, when it is easier to be wise after the event, I must confess I still think the attitude of Sayyid Ahmed Khan was eminently wise, and much as I wish that some things which he had said should have been left unsaid, I am constrained to admit that no wellwisher of Musalmans, nor of India as a whole, could have followed very different course in leading the Muslamans,"<sup>2</sup>

Those who say that Aligarh created a slavish mentality forget to look up the history of freedom movement of India, which is studded with fighters for freedom from the old boys of Aligarh. In 1920 when the Indian National Congress in collaboration with the Khilafat Movement

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Baljon, op.cit., p. 94.

appealed to the Indians for boycotting every foreign thing, including educational institutions which were even aided by the British Government. The only institution which joined in the non-cooperation movement was the Aligarh Muslim University.<sup>1</sup> Of course all of the students did not walk out, but the foundations of the present Jamia Millia Islamia of Delhi were laid in Aligarh as a result of the non-cooperation movement. It was an old boy of the Aligarh Muslim University, viz. Maulana Muhammad Ali who had challenged Aligarh and was among the founders of the Jamia Millia. Among the helpers were students from the Muslim University Aligarh some of whom were distinguished students of their day e.g. Zakir Husain<sup>2</sup> who later became still more distinguished.

Jamia Millia of Delhi was founded and run on purely nationalistic grounds without any aid from the government or allegiance to it. It is an Islamic institution at the same time modern sciences are not neglected. It is a residential institution where a very simple life is led. Most of the work including washing, cleaning, banking and postal arrangements (for internal facilities only) and even simple

---

<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Ashraf, "Aligarh and Indian Politics," Aligarh Tahrik Aghaz Ta Imroz, op.cit., p. 183.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Zakir Husain is at present Vice President of India and is among the eminent educationalists. Incidentally, another eminent educationalist of India Khwaja Ghulam Sayyidannis also an old boy of Aligarh and for many years was on the teaching staff of the Aligarh Muslim University.

construction is done by the students. It is perhaps the first educational institution in India which adopted the project method as its basis of teaching. The teaching staff does not receive more than Rs.200/- per month (approximately \$40.00) and pledges to work for at least twenty years. In spite of the austerity observed by the staff and the students alike, life at Jamia is happy and contented. Some of the best educationists of India have been on its teaching staff e.g. Dr. Zakir Husain, Dr. Abid Husain, Mujib Ahmed, etc.

When we look back at the history of the Indian Muslims, we find distinguished men from Aligarh in every walk of life. Among the later generation the contribution of Aligarh has been no less. Just to mention a few, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Sheikh Abdullah of Kashmir, Sir Akbar Hayderi, Raja of Mahmudabad, Nawab Ismail, Sikandar Hayat Khan, Shoaib Qureshi, Abdur Rehman Sindhi, Hasrat Mohani, Zafar Ali Khan, all of them (and many more) were old boys of Aligarh of whom India could justly be proud.

As far as Pakistan is concerned the very name of Pakistan was first (in 1938) suggested at Oxford by Rehmat Ali an old boy of Aligarh. From 1939 onward Quaid-i-Azam Muhammed Ali Jinnah made it a point to come at least once a year to Aligarh and address a meeting of the Students

---

<sup>1</sup> Aligarh and Siasiat-i-Hind (Aligarh and Indian Politics), Aligarh Tahrik Aghaz Ta Imroz, p. 186.

Union to give his excellent annual review of Muslim politics.<sup>1</sup> And it must be said that the students of Aligarh knowing fully well that their university had no chance of becoming a part of Pakistan worked selflessly for what they thought was the cause of independence for the Muslims.

After the creation of Pakistan the new-born state was run almost exclusively by men educated at Aligarh. Liaquat Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan, and a great leader of Muslims, Khawaja Nazim-ud-Din, the second Governor-General after Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Abdur Rab Nishtar, Khaliq-uz-Zaman, Ghulam Muhammad, Zahid Husain, Zafar-ul-Ahsan Lari, in fact all of those who could be called the brains of Pakistan were old boys of Aligarh. Even today, President Ayub Khan, Foreign Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and many other top officials have been educated at Aligarh. As Richard Symonds, commenting on the achievements of Sayyid Ahmed Khan and his followers, puts it, "Fifty years after Sayed Ahmed's death, when Pakistan was born, though the Muslims were still behind the Hindus in education, they were able to set up a federal government, staff the services and maintain three universities<sup>2</sup> with relatively little foreign help."<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 186.

<sup>2</sup>The number of Universities has increased to six by now.

<sup>3</sup>Richard Symonds, The Making of Pakistan (London: Faber and Faber, 1949), p. 37.

Pakistan's rightly claim Sayyid Ahmed Khan to be the father of their nation.

Sayyid Ahmed Khan's Influence on Urdu Literature and language:

"Another very important sequel to Sir Sayyid's efforts was the birth of a new school of literature".<sup>1</sup> Commenting on the Urdu literature of those days Ferrar has rightly said, "So long as artificial form, insincerity and circumlocation supplied the major part of the equipment of an author it was impossible for Sir Sayyid to call in literature to aid him in his main project, which was the adequate education of his co-religionists".<sup>2</sup>

The things which give his writings a permanent and distinguished place not only in the history of Urdu literature but also in the history of thought of Muslim India is that in thinking and expression he was the first to break with the hackneyed ways and set a tradition of independent thinking and of freedom of opinion. He laid the foundation of a school of thought in which reason, nature, culture and 'well being' in this world were of basic importance. "Today these words sound ordinary but behind them lies a long struggle and many controversies of thought between East and West".<sup>3</sup> In these simple words one can hear the echo of

---

<sup>1</sup> M.L. Ferrar, op.cit., p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> Sayyid Abdullah, "Sir Sayyid Influence on Urdu Literature," Aligarh Tahrik Aghaz Ta Imroz, p. 283.

many important beliefs and slogans from the social and literary history of India of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He proved that great literature was not only the true expression of an individual's heartfelt feelings, but it was also the expressions of inner feelings of a society and of a nation. He also showed that literature was not only to be enjoyed but a thing which is a leading force in the reform and progress of the people. "Soon a band of writers came into being who between them freed the language from the shackles which bound it and produced what they termed the nechri or natural literature".<sup>1</sup> The "Literary movement of Aligarh was the first attempt in Urdu at literature with a purpose, purpose being to reexamine all branches and modes of expression and to make it the interpretation of national life and a vehicle for national progress". It created in the Muslims of India a collective awareness of intellectual, social and cultural being and the need for its progress. Most of Ahmed Khan's colleagues had studied and been brought up in the traditional way, without undermining their individual abilities which were extraordinary, in many cases it could be said that most of them, if they had not been influenced by Sir Sayyid, might have worked on the traditional lines".<sup>2</sup> Mehdi Ali Khan's impressive articles

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> Khalil-ur-Rehman Azmi, "Urdu Poetry and Literature and Aligarh, Aligarh Tahrik Aghaz Ta Iaroz.", p. 315.



and speeches, Nazir Ahmed's novels and lectures, Altaf Husain Hali's poetry and a progressive literary criticism, Ghiragh Ali, Miqar-ul-Mulk, Zakaullah and Sayyid Ali Bilgrami's literary works, in spite of his differences with Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Shibli's literary and intellectual masterpieces and above all that living movement and progressive literary and intellectual atmosphere which came into being because of the valuable works of these great personalities, all this will be taken as a direct result of the Aligarh movement.

Each of these writers is great enough to be called a landmark not only in the development of Urdu but of Muslim thought in India also. In this brief study it is not possible to give details of their individual contributions, but not to mention Mad-wa-Jazar-i-Islam, (Flow and Ebb of Islam) written by Altaf Husain Hali and popularly known as Mussadas-i-Hali, will be too great an omission. Hali was a contemporary of Ahmed Khan. He was aware of the extreme depressed conditions of Muslims in India and had written "heartmelting" poems on many of the weaknesses of his nation to make them aware of their sad plight. When Hali came into contact with Sayyid Ahmed Khan his national fervor got a further impetus and he wrote this long magnificent

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 315.

poem which begins with the pre-Islamic conditions in Arabia before the advent of the prophet of Islam. Then he gives an account of the change Islam brought over in those uncivilized nomads, how they spread the light of Islam far and wide and how they reached the heights of culture and civilization. Then comes the gradual decline, its causes and the eventual degenerated position the Muslims were in at that time. Hali knew what was ailing his nation, viz. ignorance, misinterpretation of religion and physical lethargy which was a result of stagnation of thought. In a most impressive way Hali appealed to his nation to get rid of all those evils and to regain the lost heights. When this book was published its influence spread like fire in a Jungle,<sup>1</sup> which melted the hearts of Indian Muslims and inspired them to work for their regeneration.<sup>2</sup> It is well known that Mussadas-i-Hali was written if not at the instance of Sayyid Ahmed Khan, at least under his influence. Thus the great influence it had in awakening the Indian Muslims of those days could to a great extent be attributed to Sayyid Ahmed Khan.

#### C O N C L U S I O N :

When we look back at the picture of Sayyid Ahmed Khan

---

<sup>1</sup> It is a book "which no friend of the Indian Muslims can read unmoved". M.L. Ferrar, op.cit., p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> Abdul Haq, Muqaddamat-i-Abdul Haq, Urdu (a collection of literary criticism and reviews) Delhi, Anjuman Tarraqi-i-Urdu, 1940), p. 140.

as a whole we come to the conclusion that he was a man who had recognized what was ailing his nation and had come to the conclusion that unless ignorance and prejudice which were the main causes of the backwardness of his nation were removed the nation could not progress. He did not limit himself to mere diagnosis, and after due consideration, he came to the conclusion that education was the remedy to cure the Indian Muslims of their 1) religious prejudices and 2) social, economic and political degeneration. To achieve the former his articles, speeches, Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq, and his Tafsir helped greatly. Through these he was able to create a new religious outlook which could justly be called the beginning of the Muslim renaissance in India. He was the first among Indian Muslims to say that Islam is not against progress and it is a religion which is in harmony with science and reason. This idea was carried further by Sayyid Amir Ali who said that Islam was not only in harmony with progress but was that progress itself. Iqbal is the final link of this renaissance who tried to prove the superemacy of Islam over the philosophies of the West.

A change in the educational, social, economic and political outlook was also necessary to bring about progress in these fields. To achieve his second aim he strove throughout his long life to bring about the social, political and economic regeneration of the Muslims of India, through various ways and means such as The Scientific Society,

Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq, the Muhammadan Educational Conference etc. It was also necessary to equip the coming generation with the knowledge of modern arts and sciences. For the achievement of this purpose, he used M.A.O. College as his main instrument. Ahmed Khan's educational programme was comprehensive but could not all be achieved at the same time. He, therefore, laid great emphasis on higher education because he firmly believed that without creating a nucleus of highly educated men the spread of education on modern lines was not possible. M.A.O. College not only increased the number of Western educated Muslims its real benefit was its creation of a band of leaders. It also stimulated a desire for modern arts and sciences even in those who did not study these and, whether by emulation or opposition, led to the founding of a number of Muslim schools and colleges.

The Aligarh Movement also influenced Urdu literature greatly, and raised it to the level of a living and progressive force in the lives of the people.

Thus we find Ahmed Khan's influence in every walk of life. His contemporaries as well as later generations are greatly indebted to him.

He was a great thinker and at the same time he was a man of great action. Muslims in India never had a reformer of such great abilities. His selflessness, devotion and persistence, sincerity and honesty (to the cause) have never been equalled before or after.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Books

- Alam, Iftikhar. Muhammadan College History. Agra, India: Mufeed-i-A'im Press, 1901.
- Ali, Sayyid Amir. Spirit of Islam. London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1965.
- Andrews, C.F. Zakauallah of Delhi. (Urdu Translation). Karachi, Pakistan: Ta'limi Markaz, 1952.
- Baljon, J.M.S. The Reforms and Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan. Liden: E.J. Brill, 1949.
- Barnard, H.L. A Short History of English Education 1760-1944. London: University of London Press, 1957.
- Barnard, L.L. Social Control. New York: Macmillan Co., 1939.
- Dewey, John. Democracy and Education. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1961.
- Dodwill, (ed.). The Cambridge History of India. Delhi: S. Chand & Co., n.d. Vol. V.
- Encyclopaedia Britannica, The. New York: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., Vols. 27-28, 1910-11.
- Fazlur-Rehman. New Education in the Making in Pakistan. London: Cassell and Co., Ltd., 1953.
- Ferrar, M.L. "India," H.A.K. Gibb (ed.). Whither Islam? London: Victor Gollanz Ltd., 1932.
- Graham, G.F.I. The Life and Works of Syed Ahmed Khan. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909.
- Haq, Abdul. Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan. (Urdu). Karachi: Anjuman-i-Taraqqi-i-Urdu, Pakistan, 1959.

- \_\_\_\_\_ . Chund Hum Asar. (Urdu). Karachi: Urdu Academy Sind, 1959.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . Muqaddamat-i-Abdul Haq. (Urdu). Delhi: Anjuman Taraqqi-i-Urdu, 1940.
- Hali, A.H. Hayat-i-Javid. (Urdu). Lahore, Pakistan: Academy Punjab, 1957.
- Hunter, W.W. A Brief History of the Indian Peoples. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1907.
- Ikram, M. A'ib-i-Kausar. (Urdu). Lahore, Pakistan: Ferozsons, 1958.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . Mauj-i-Kausar. (Urdu). Lahore, Pakistan: Ferozsons, 1958.
- Inam, Fazli. Tarajim-al-Fudala. (Urdu). Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society, 1956.
- Iqbal, Afzal. Select Writings and Speeches of Maulana Mohammed Ali. (Compiled). Lahore, Pakistan: Lion Press, 1944.
- Iqbal, Muhammad. Development of Metaphysics in Persia. Lahore, Pakistan: Bazm-e-Iqbal, n.d.
- Jamia Millia Islamia. Syllabus of Studies, Jamia: Senior and Degree. Delhi: Registrar's Office, Jamia Nagar, 1955.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . Review of Aims, History and Scope of Work, Report, 1954-55. Delhi: I.M.H. Press., n.d.
- Kandel, I.L. Comparative Education. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1933.
- Keay, F.E. A History of Education in India and Pakistan. Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1959.
- Khan, Sayyid Ahmed. M. Ismail (ed.). Maqalat-i-Sir Sayyid Parts IV, VIII, X. (Urdu). Lahore, Pakistan: Majlis-i-Taraqqi-i-Adab, 1962.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . Risala Asbab-i-Baghawat-i-Hind as appeared in the appendix of Hayat-i-Javid.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . Mushtaq Husain (ed.). Makatib-i-Sir Sayyid. Aligarh.

- \_\_\_\_\_ . Madamin-i-Sir Sayyid. Karachi: Educational Press, 1960.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . Majmu'a Madamin. Lahore, Pakistan: Mustafai Press, n.d.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . Mukammal Majmu'a Lecture wa Speeches, 1863-1898.  
Lahore, Pakistan: Mustafai Press, 1900.
- Mahmud Benglori. Tarikh-e-Sultanat-e-Khudad. (Urdu). Bombay: Taj Office, 1941.
- Mahmud, Sayyid. History of English Education in India 1781-1893. Agra, India: Muffasiliat Press, 1895.
- Mayhew, Arthur. The Education in India. London: Faber and Ginger, 1926.
- Mukarji, S.N. History of Education in India. Broda, India: Acharya Book Depot, 1957.
- Monroe, P. Text Book in the History of Education. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1961.
- Noman, Mohammed (ed.). Our Struggle 1857 - 1947. Karachi: Pakistan Publications, 1947.
- Nurullah, S., and Naik, J.P. A Student's History of Education in India. Bombay: Macmillan and Co., 1955.
- Pakistan, Government of. Ministry of Education. Report of the Commission on National Education. Karachi: January-August, 1959.
- Pakistan Historical Society. (ed.). A History of the Freedom Movement. Vol. II, Part I 1831-1905; Part II 1831 - 1905. Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society.
- Philips, C.H. The Evolution of India and Pakistan 1858 to 1947. (Select Documents.) London: Oxford University Press, 1962.
- Qureshi, Nasim (ed.). Aligarh Tahrik Aghaz Ta Imroz. (Urdu). Lucknow, India: Anbab Publishers, 1960.
- Rahman, N. Hayat-i-Sir Sayyid. (Urdu). Aligarh: India: Anjuman Taraqqi-i-Urdu, 1950.
- Saksana, R.B. A History of Urdu Literature. Lahore, Pakistan: Urdu Academy, 1956.

- Sen, S.N. The Great Rising of 1857. Delhi: The Publications Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India, 1957.
- Sherwani, H.K. Studies in Muslim Political Thought and Administration. Hyderabad, India: Government Central Press, 1945.
- Siddiqi, A.L. Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan. (Urdu). Karachi: Maktaba Jamia Ta'lim-i-Milli, 1950.
- Smith, W.C. Islam in Modern History. New York: The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 1961.
- Spear, Percival. Twilight of the Mughuls. Cambridge: The University Press, 1951.
- Symonds, Richards. The Making of Pakistan. London: Faber and Faber, 1949.
- Thompson, Edward and Garatt, G.T. Rise and Fulfillment of British Rule in India. London: Macmillan & Co., 1934.
- Vyas, K.C. The Development of National Education in India. Bombay: Vora & Co., Publishers Ltd., 1954.

#### Periodicals and Journals

- Ahsun, Abdus-Shakur, "Tahrik-i-Pakistan ka Paishro — Sir Sayyid" (Urdu). Karachi: Pakistan Publications, Mah-i-Nau, March 1954, pp. 25-27.
- Muslim University Gazette, Aligarh, Vol. 12, No. 4, October 24, 1962.
- Muslim University Gazette, Aligarh, Vol. 13, No. 4, October 28, 1963.
- Zuberi, Muhammad Amin. "Sir Sayyid Apni Baz Tahriron ki Roshni Min," (Urdu). (Sir Sayyid in the Light of some of his Writings). Mah-i-Nau, March 1951, pp. 19-33. Karachi.

#### Unpublished Material

- Rizavi, Sajjad. "Islamic Philosophy of Education". An M.A. Thesis. Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1963.