

QAYYUM MALICK: "H.R.H. PRINCE AGA KHAN"
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His Royal Highness

PRINCE AGA KHAN

Guide, Philosopher And Friend

of the

WORLD OF ISLAM

by

QAYYUM A. MALICK



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CHAPTER I
UNIQUE ATTAINMENTS
CONTENTS

	Pages
Chapter I—Unique Attainments	1—25
Chapter II—Early Youth	26—33
Chapter III—A Gifted Mother	34—38
Chapter IV—His Ancestors	39—42
Chapter V—Muslim India of Pre-partition Days	43—59
Chapter VI—The Muslim University that Prince Aga Khan Built	60—68
Chapter VII—Land of His Birth	69—77
Chapter VIII—Round Table Conference	78—83
Chapter IX—Service to World Muslims	84—89
Chapter X—Turkey and Other Muslim States	90—98
Chapter XI—Pakistan—"A Mighty Infant"	99—108
Chapter XII—Islam as Prince Aga Khan Sees It	109—118
Chapter XIII—Welfare State	119—129
Chapter XIV—Jubilee Celebrations	130—137
Chapter XV—"Social Advancement Greatest Where Women Enjoy Full Rights."	138—142
Chapter XVI—East African Scene	143—150
Chapter XVII—Racing and Sports	151—156
Chapter XVIII—Thus Spake The Aga Khan	157—166
Epilogue	167—171

in the world with a wide cosmopolitan outlook and an international vision. Transcending national barriers, but with those deeply embedded in Islamic culture and thought, Prince Aga Khan's heart throbs in sympathy with every nation, and he is the agent of their aspirations and renders singular advice in the resolution of their problems.

The seventy and odd years of the life of this great man are marked with achievements which shall always remain a source of pride to the world of Islam and of inspiration to youths everywhere in the world. Never has he let an opportunity pass whereby he could help promote the interests of mankind in any country.

No single Muslim alive can claim to have rendered so much service to the cause of Islam as this indomitable champion of the Muslim faith. No school of thought or sect on the face of Islam has been allowed to go unrepresented. His services in the advancement of education and of Muslim art and science are listed in gold in the history of Islam. He has not only been an indefatigable initiative in the direction of one of the largest number of mosques backed for the cause of Muslim educational organisations in many countries with unflinching effort of "pound for a pound" in monetary aid. He led a Muslim organisation, working for a worthy cause, with the aid of His Royal Highness, the only very often in: "If you collect 10,000, I will give you 10,000. If your collection amounts to a million, I'll give you a million."

He has shrouded the world with his wealth, whether good or evil, and such generous gifts have been bestowed on him as fall to the lot of a king.

"A unique case of unique attainments"

"He has the wisdom of the entire League of Nations"

"A true genius of the world—an internationalist—a pacifist"

"A tower of quiet strength"

"One of the best and best-informed and cultured men of our time"

"Leader of Muslim civilisation"

"Fountain of Muslim cooperation"

CHAPTER I

UNIQUE ATTAINMENTS

The above are some of the reasons born in the minds of people

A spiritual leader par excellence of the progressive Ismailia community spread over half the globe and an unparalleled guide, philosopher and friend of the entire world of Islam, His Royal Highness Prince Aga Khan embodies in himself a captivating personality of versatile genius which has won the respect and admiration of all in every corner of the world.

This scion of the illustrious princes of Iran, tracing direct ancestry to the revered person of the Prophet of Islam, has led a glorious life of princely munificence and active service to humanity. Where his name has added lustre to the glory of Islam, his wise diplomacy and powerful influence have helped solve many a knotty problem confronting the victorious West in its relations with the conquered East.

To the Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent, His Royal Highness has always been a beacon of light, a source of inspiration and a provider of moral and material support. Without his wise counsels and the generosity of his princely purse, Muslim India may well have foundered on the rocks of opposition and may never have been able to scale the heights of self-determination and separate nationhood.

Prince Aga Khan's genius as a statesman and his scholarly accomplishments have woven round him a halo of such unusual brilliance that he will go down in history as the most colourful personality of his time. He is without parallel in the field of virtue and munificence, is a great leader of men in the affairs of peace and an unstinting benefactor of mankind irrespective of creed or colour.

Whereas the aura of charm round his person has won for Prince Aga Khan the admiration and friendship of Europe's royalty, the depth of his wisdom and his political acumen have been the envy of men in public life—and they all have sought his help and guidance in the intricate affairs of state in times of political upheaval.

Of Persian origin, born in what is now Pakistan, residing in Europe and widely travelled, Prince Aga Khan is perhaps the only towering personality

in the world with a truly cosmopolitan outlook and an international vision. Transcending national barriers, but with roots deeply embedded in Islamic culture and thought, Prince Aga Khan's heart throbs in sympathy with every nation, catches the spirit of their aspirations and renders oracular advice in the resolving of their problems.

The seventy and odd years of the life of this great man are packed with accomplishments which shall always remain a source of pride to the world of Islam and of inspiration to youths everywhere in the world. Never has he let an opportunity pass whereby he could help promote the interests of mankind in every country.

No single Muslim alive can claim to have rendered so much material service to the cause of Islam as this redoubtable champion of the Muslim faith. No attack or threat of attack on the fair name of Islam has he allowed to go unchallenged. His services in the advancement of education among Muslims will be written in letters of gold in the history of Islam. He has not only taken commendable initiative in this direction but on a large number of occasions backed the efforts of Muslim educational organisations in many countries with unprecedented offers of "pound for a pound" of monetary help. Should a Muslim organisation, working for a worthy cause, seek the help of His Royal Highness, the reply very often is: "If you collect 10,000, I will give you 10,000. If your collections amount to a million, I'll give you a million".

He has dazzled the world with his wealth, wisdom and wit, and such generous praises have been lavished on him as fall to the lot of few.

"A unique man of unique attainments".

"He has the wisdom of the entire League of Nations".

"A true citizen of the world—an internationalist—a pacifist".

"A tower of quiet strength".

"One of the most well-informed and cultured men of our time".

"Leader of Muslim renaissance".

"Pioneer of Muslim regeneration".

"Uncrowned king of Muslim intelligentsia".

"A philanthropist with a vision".

The above are some of the reactions born in the minds of eminent men after their impact with the glorious and picturesque personality of Prince Aga Khan. His movements and doings are always spotlighted by the world Press. He is universally acknowledged as one of the most widely read, widely travelled and delightfully cultured men of his time.

Prince Aga Khan's fame as a statesman and realist has spread throughout the world and has made his name respected far beyond the frontiers of the East, to which he belongs. His writings, speeches, ideals and achievements have attracted the attention of all who count. There is no sphere of human activity and benevolence which he has left untouched.

He has put to nought the famous lines of Kipling that East and West would never meet. He is a living refutation of that writer's humiliating assertion about the East. Swinging like a human pendulum between East and West, Prince Aga Khan has brought the two together as no other person could in the history of mankind. Great men in both Europe and Asia have eulogised his achievements in bridging the gulf between the Western and Eastern cultures. "He exemplifies the best culture of both the East and the West," said Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru about His Royal Highness. An English journalist once told him: "To the West you are the East, and to the East you are the West".

Sir Samuel Hoare, an ex-Secretary of State for India, described Prince Aga Khan as "a citizen of the world par excellence, who knows more about life in many of its aspects, both in the East and the West, than anyone else I know". Sir Samuel went on to say that Prince Aga Khan had found "the secret of the art of life", by which he meant that his life has been one of service—service not only to Islam and to his own far-scattered community but to the highest ideals of humanity.

A biographer of His Royal Highness, the late Sir Naoroji M. Dumasia, in his book *The Aga Khan and His Ancestors*, wrote in 1938: "Two figures dominate the modern Indian scene. One is the Right Honourable Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah Aga Khan and the other is Mr. M. K. Gandhi. Both are



friends. While Mr. Gandhi aims at securing the substance of political independence for his country, the Aga Khan's interests embrace many countries, many nations, and many fields of activity. The difference between the two leaders is that while Mr. Gandhi seeks a short cut to political power by drastic methods, involving direct action, the Aga Khan, knowing that history is more powerful than individuals, works for its attainment through training and preparation of his countrymen for the task of government. Mr. Gandhi's methods for attaining the freedom of India are in some respects revolutionary. That way lies danger. The Aga Khan looks for safety, permanent stability and the maintenance of peaceful order to avoid disruption and disunity."

The Maharaja of Bikaner said in 1939: "The achievements of His Highness the Aga Khan in many different and varied fields have earned for him a unique position in the political and social life of today. A far-sighted statesman whose advice is sought by the highest authorities in the Empire, a religious leader looked up to with reverence by millions of his co-religionists, an Indian patriot who has championed the cause of his country in Imperial Councils, a sportsman whose name is a household word in England, the Aga Khan is undoubtedly one of the most spectacular personalities of the age. . . . He has undoubtedly been instrumental in raising the dignity and status of India before the eyes of the world and in breaking down the narrow barriers of race and colour within the British Commonwealth. He has also been the most consistent champion of Hindu-Muslim unity. His spirit of toleration, adherence to principles and freedom from narrow prejudices, whether of race or religion, mark out His Highness as one of the few in India who could bring about that unity.

"Though a genuine patriot, His Highness is also a true citizen of the world. His interest in humanity is not circumscribed by narrow geographical considerations. Equally at home in the capitals of Europe as among his own compatriots in India, the Aga Khan is a bridge between the East and the West, a connecting link between the two main civilisations of the modern world. His mission in life may justly be described as that of bringing the East and the West nearer to each other through understanding and sympathy".

At a reception in honour of His Royal Highness in Cape Town, South Africa, in the year 1946, General Smuts said that it was men like the Aga

Khan who could, if given the opportunity, turn the course of world events in a different direction and "build up a society in which justice, fairplay, commonsense and decent virtues, will be triumphant and in which wars will not be needed as arbitrators of fate".

Sir Mohammed Yakub described Prince Aga Khan thus: "He is a world personality claimed by India, England, France, Persia and Egypt. In sincerity and simplicity he is an Indian, as a statesman and politician he is an Englishman, in courtesy and polish he is a Frenchman, as poet he is a Persian, and as Egyptian he attracts the attention of all who come in contact with him."

Bequm Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz said about him many years ago: "It is no exaggeration to say that His Highness the Aga Khan is one of the greatest personalities of the world today. Our motherland has every reason to be proud of such a unique son. He has not spared himself in the service of his country but has always been ready to sacrifice his rest, comfort and pleasure for the sake of India. I, who have had the honour of working with this great personality, feel that our country and our community are lucky indeed to be blessed with such a personality as His Highness. We all know how much his influence, his tact and his ability have helped India and the Indian Muslims during the last ten years".

Chowdhri Sir Mohammad Zafrullah Khan, now Foreign Minister in the Government of Pakistan, expressed his admiration for His Royal Highness in the following words in 1946: "I have always held His Highness the Aga Khan in great respect and esteem as a zealous and devoted worker in the cause both of India and of the Muslims. I had the great good fortune of being brought into intimate association with His Highness during the sessions of the Round Table Conference during the years 1930-34. Our association together has left upon my mind a deep impression of the very gracious qualities both of head and heart with which His Highness has been endowed by Providence in a very generous measure."

The one supreme thought in the mind of His Royal Highness is to see humanity happy and contented; and to achieve this end he makes countless efforts in the most genuine way. His benefaction is thus universal and is by no means restricted to his followers only.

People who know Prince Aga Khan would not hesitate to assert that no Asiatic has equalled him in efforts, both general and specific, to secure the

ends of justice and peace in the world. He has pursued this objective with unwavering consistency through a public career extending over fifty years.

The bent of his whole life is towards the establishment of amity and goodwill in the international field. It is an ideal difficult to achieve, but Prince Aga Khan has devoted all his energies to the realisation of this object, no matter what the obstacles.

When India was widely excited over the lamentable happenings of Amritsar, Mr. Gandhi asked Prince Aga Khan for a subscription towards a Jallianwala Bagh massacre memorial. Prince Aga Khan's reply was that if the subscription was intended to relieve the misery and suffering of the people he would gladly contribute, but if it was intended to revive the memory of the strife or to perpetuate the feeling of hostility and hatred towards Englishmen he would not subscribe anything.

His devotion to the mission of the League of Nations and his fruitful labours to advance the progress of peace won him the admiration and friendship of countless numbers. In recognition of his excellent work as Chairman of the Indian Delegation at Geneva for five years, he was unanimously elected President of the Assembly in July 1937, all the valid votes cast, namely 49, being in his favour. This unprecedented honour was a tribute to his fitness as a leader of mankind. Welcoming him as President of the Assembly, the Chairman had said: "It is an honour for the League of Nations to be presided over by so distinguished a personality as His Highness The Aga Khan."

Mr. Anthony Eden, Britain's Foreign Secretary, had remarked: "We of the United Kingdom take special pleasure in finding that the character and ability of H.H. The Aga Khan, which are so well known to us, have been recognised in the signal honour done to him by the Assembly."

An Indian delegate to the League of Nations, Pandit Dharam Naraenji, spoke in terms of great admiration of the way in which the Aga Khan despatched the work of the Assembly and of the excellent impression he treated among the members of the League.

His prestige in the international field has been high ever since World War I. The moderating influence he exercised in world affairs and his successful efforts to maintain peace between Turkey and the Western powers after the Armistice had created a wide-spread feeling that his services to the cause

of peace should be rewarded in the shape of the Nobel Peace Prize. A resolution was therefore moved in India's Council of State in 1924, and unanimously adopted, requesting the Government of India "to convey to the Norwegian Parliament the view of this House that His Highness Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah, Aga Khan, G.C.S.I., G.C.V.O., L.L.D., is a fit and proper person to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace this year, in view of the strenuous, persistent and successful efforts that His Highness has made to maintain peace between Turkey and the Western Powers since the Armistice".

The resolution was a great tribute to His Highness from the Upper House of the Indian Legislature and marked the first instance, since the Nobel Prize was instituted, of a Legislative Chamber unanimously recommending a candidate for the award of the prize. The suggestion had come in the first place from some Norwegian and Swiss papers, which had advocated that Prince Aga Khan be considered a worthy candidate for this distinction, and, as soon as it became known in India, it met with enthusiastic support from every one, including several Congressmen. No Asian had so far been awarded the Nobel Prize for peace.

In his training during early youth he had imbibed the Quranic injunction which says: "There is no compulsion in religion". This spirit of tolerance learned by him in early life has guided his steps throughout his career as a leader of men. His freedom from religious prejudices encouraged the Parsis of India to request him to intercede with the King of Persia for the Zoroastrians living in that country. Prince Aga Khan had heard of their plight and though their fate did not concern him, he took up their cause and interceded with the King in their behalf. The then Shah of Persia displayed a blissful ignorance of the condition of the Zoroastrian community when His Royal Highness took up the matter with him at Paris, but on his return to Persia he did much to put matters right. He was actively assisted by Prince Aga Khan in improving their lot.

This successful intercession of the Aga Khan on behalf of a race of "non-believers" created a profound impression in the world and stamped him for all time as an apostle of toleration, non-violence, and progress.

If Prince Aga Khan had had the opportunity to rule over a State, racial and communal problems within its borders would have been of comparatively slight importance. Education and sanitation would have been the most

conspicuous features of his administration, making people healthier, happier and richer.

When the Hindu community started collection of funds for Hindu University at Benaras, His Royal Highness not only sent a princely donation unasked but also advised other Muslims to contribute freely and to give at least ten per cent from the sum that they intended to donate to the Muslim University.

Even Pandit Nehru, who was not generously disposed towards Prince Aga Khan for his what he termed as "lining up the Muslim landed classes with the British Government," has admitted that Prince Aga Khan is "far from being personally narrow-minded on communal or sectarian matters".

His work as leader of the British Indian Delegation had shown even to the most bigoted Hindus that he was free from prejudices and was very earnest and sincere in the cause of India's upliftment.

His Highness has always emphasised before his followers that between Muslims, whether they belong to one sect or the other, there should subsist a close bond of fellowship. He was wildly indignant when some fifty years ago, the fanatical enthusiasm of some Ismaili youths resulted in the murder of three persons who had seceded from the community and joined the other sect. If the miscreants had thought that they would please their leader by the dastardly act, they were disillusioned very soon.

Prince Aga Khan immediately outcasted the murderers and ordered his followers to hold no intercourse with them. He even denied them burial in the Khoja cemetery. He spoke on the subject very emphatically at the *Jamatkhana* and told his followers in unequivocal terms that he regarded only those as friends who respected law and order and that he would hold no communion with trouble-makers. He also solemnly declared that, in future, if any one again dared to raise his hand against another for the sake of religious difference, he would renounce his leadership and have nothing more to do with the community.

His spirit of fairplay does not end with religious tolerance. In civic matters also he practises and preaches what is right and just. When his followers demanded of him some years ago to issue instructions to the community to vote for a certain man, he declined to issue such a mandate. He said they were free to follow the dictates of their own conscience and vote for the best man.

It is extremely difficult to find a man who is so generous and sportsmanlike in his conduct as to be single. Added to these qualities is a philosophy in the history of physical and spiritual, and quality.

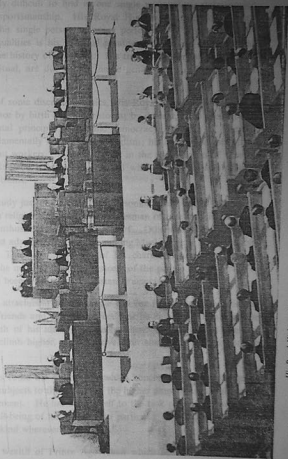
In the eyes of some the contrary. A prince by birth, basic and elemental principles, wealth, he is fundamentally humble and patient. How and Schell, and economic.

Those who study the spiritual hand of a man, the of money or an entire line on the foremost without parallel, wealth has all the with whom he has to

The personal attraction to his leader is based on power and strength of that they should climb higher, double.

He regards as a common abstract subject for man's advancement. He means "for the well-being of and of whole world, but

It is not the wealth of money. They are richer men than he in the world, but they have no power. You are not interested by meeting them. But common with some



His Royal Highness Prince Aga Khan presiding over a session of the League of Nations

It is extremely difficult to find in one single personality statesmanship, scholarship and sportsmanship. His Royal Highness is, therefore, unique in combining in his single person so many perfections of a diverse nature. Added to these qualities is his spiritual greatness, presenting him as a rare phenomenon in the history of mankind. His triple achievements, intellectual, physical and spiritual, are due to his innate genius and a wide-awake personality.

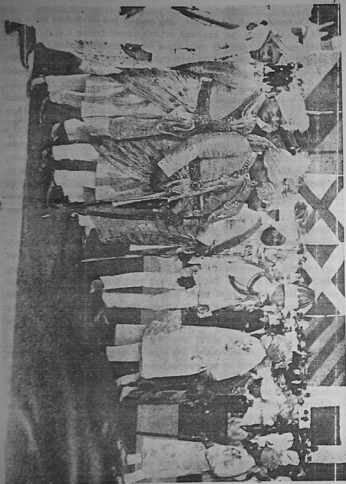
In the eyes of some discerning critics, His Royal Highness is a study in contrasts. A prince by birth and an aristocrat by descent, he is proud of the basic and elemental principle of Islamic democracy. A man of immense wealth, he is fundamentally opposed to capitalism; his heart goes out to the humble and patient workers. A man steeped in the romanticism of Goethe, Heine and Schelling, he is intensely practical when grappling with political and economic problems.

Those who study just one facet of his personality may regard him as the spiritual head of a religious community, a statesman of rare sagacity, a leader of society or an enthusiastic patron of the turf. Others may just remember him as the foremost advocate of education among Muslims or a philanthropist without parallel. These diverse facets of his character, however, serve to establish him all the more firmly in the esteem of the people he has served or with whom he has been closely or even distantly associated.

The personal attachment which people feel for Prince Aga Khan is due to his loyalty to friends and due to the fact that he enthuses others with the power and strength of his ideas. He makes those who believe in him feel that they should climb higher, should strive after something real, something definite.

He regards as futile the philosophy which concerns itself with disquisitions on abstract subjects to the neglect of the higher aims which should make for man's advancement. He has set himself to the task of devising ways and means "for the well-being of his followers in particular, of Muslims in general and of whole mankind wherever practicable."

It is not the wealth of Prince Aga Khan which has made him great. There are richer men than he in the world, but their lives are dull, drab and colourless. You are not stirred by meeting them. But contact with Prince



His Royal Highness walking to the Governor of Bander on a circumambulation when many rulers of Bander States were also present.

Aga Khan both thrills and inspires you. His mind is a storehouse of the best cultures; it is a perfect blending of the East and the West. During his sojourns in London between the two world wars, England's statesmen, philosophers and wits sat at the Aga Khan's table till late into the night, joining in discussions with a host who never seemed at a loss in any company or on any subject. In addition to his wide reading and constant refreshment by the finest minds of the day, His Royal Highness was alertly conscious of the social and political changes around him.

Prince Aga Khan has so moulded his life that all requirements of his many-sided personality, of his duties as a spiritual leader and as a man of great influence in the affairs of nations are fully met to the satisfaction of all. At an hour when most men of affluence are still in bed, Prince Aga Khan is up and about, has performed his religious duties, looked over a bunch of morning papers and gone out for air and exercise on the golf links or at the tennis court.

As an interesting and powerful personality in the field of progressive thought and life, Prince Aga Khan is respected, looked up to and admired by both men of Eastern outlook and the Western advocates of material progress. His remarkable foresight and insight and his amazing gift for organisation have made him a giant among men and brought him a popularity which even kings envy. His personality looms large on the social, religious and political horizon. He has attained the outstanding distinction of bridging the two different worlds of East and West and winning fame in both.

Soon after his early visits to Europe, Prince Aga Khan had become a remarkably prominent figure in social and political circles. He was not only invited to several state functions and dinners but he received the exceptional attention of European royalty and aristocracy. His charming manners and cultured ways made him lionised everywhere. He soon came to be regarded such an important person that his movements were constantly reported by world news agencies and his views much sought after by political and social organisations. He overshadowed every other man visiting Europe from the East.

He was, and is, held in very high esteem even by men accustomed to receiving homage from others. An eye-witness once narrated that the Jam Saheb of Nawanagar, better known to the world as the famous cricketer

"Ranji," shook hands with his friend, Prince Aga Khan, at one meeting and bowed so low in the deepest obeisance that His Royal Highness had to ask him to stand erect. Then, there is the story about Lord Wavell, the last but one Viceroy of India. His Royal Highness had accompanied some South African Muslims of Indian origin who wanted to acquaint the Viceroy of some of their grievances. Lord Wavell introduced certain extraneous issues in the talk. Prince Aga Khan pointed a reprimanding finger at him and said: "Wavell, you listen to them first and then say what you have to say."

The name of Prince Aga Khan figured frequently in journalistic writings after he made Europe a second home. His smiling face was a familiar sight at social gatherings where prominent figures and bright, shining personalities dazzled each other and provided delectable meat for the gossip columns of the newspapers. Good-humoured stories about the Aga Khan gained wide currency. One such story related to an American woman who after meeting His Royal Highness in India had said that what impressed her most in that country was a glimpse of the Aga Khan by moonlight! Evidently she was confusing the Taj Mahal with the Aga Khan.

Chatting with his customary wit and animation, he was soon the centre of a group of diplomats and politicians who found him an up-to-date encyclopaedia on the latest news from half a dozen capitals. He was never impulsive or arrogant and was always well-mannered towards those of comparatively humble degree.

His prestige in the international field brought to him many statesmen and politicians for off-the-record consultations. In London, Cabinet Ministers came to him for energetic and well-informed counsel. He had acquired reputation as a remarkable personality and achieved a status no man from Asia had so far achieved in the political and social sphere of the West. He helped remove social barriers between Englishmen and Indians. His very forceful and progressive views caused him to be invited by the B.B.C. to broadcast on the subject: "If I Were A Dictator". The speech was a brilliant affair and is still read with interest by students of political science. In this broadcast speech, His Royal Highness displayed an extraordinarily wide knowledge of world history. In fact, he spoke with the authority of living history.

His courage and forbearance had given him great influence, and his verbal tact and personal popularity and reputation for being fair and unpre-

judged raised him to the coveted position of the President of the League of Nations, of which mention has been made above.

By culture and by frequent residence in Europe, he came to be quite as much at home in West as in the East. His intimate knowledge of European affairs and public men is not approached by any other man from eastern lands. The Spectator once wrote: "The Aga Khan possesses the immense advantage of being a thorough man of the world in the Western sense as well as possessing a profound knowledge of the East". What he has done in private intercourse with leading statesmen of Europe to assist in developing a new and better angle of vision between Europe and Asia has been of incalculable value to peoples in both the regions.

There was and is a general belief among the diplomats of the West that not only has Prince Aga Khan been an ambassador for the East to the West but has often acted as an ambassador for the West to the East.

His Royal Highness likes meeting people and receiving visitors, but they should be persons of fine breeding and of superior intelligence with whom he can converse on topics of interest. He is a good listener with an understanding of people, and is the easiest of men to entertain. He fits into any kind of civilised company, his scholastic accomplishments and sharp intellectual equipment rendering him able to converse with perfect facility on subjects as remote as religion and Einstein's Theory of Relativity.

Prince Aga Khan rules over no territory and flies no sovereign flag, yet he has always been looked upon by Europe's and Asia's royalty as one of their own exclusive set. During his extensive travels and frequent visits to world's capitals, he has been accorded a welcome worthy of the bluest of blue bloods.

In his early youth, he visited Germany, Turkey, Iran and Zanzibar and was honoured with brilliant titles. The great Kaiser conferred upon him the Prussian *Order of the Royal Crown First Class*. London, once the seat of a mighty empire, was a second home to him. After being the recipient of the title of K.C.I.E. at the hands of Queen Victoria, many other titles and honours were bestowed upon him by later British monarchs.

In recognition of his services during World War I, King George V granted him a salute of eleven guns and the status of a Ruling Prince for life. Earlier he had been created a Grand Commander of the Star of India at the

time of the Coronation of King George V. In 1984 he was made a Privy Councillor.

Later in life he had occasion to visit Russia and Japan, and in both countries he was accorded a right royal reception befitting his pre-eminent position in society. His visit to U.S.A. was marked with numerous invitations from many friends. He was also feted by the members of the exclusive Four Hundred set, and New York society for long recalled with pleasure the lavish ball which Mrs. Ogden Mills gave in his honour. In Washington he was received by President Theodore Roosevelt, with whom he discussed, among many other topics, the problems of the Muslim population in the Philippines.

Prince Aga Khan also paid a visit to Hitler's Germany. It was during his Presidency of the League of Nations. The Nazi Leader had extended a very cordial invitation to him. Prince Aga Khan had a pleasant talk with Propaganda Minister Dr. Goebbels and visited the labour camps. With his liking for economic development, he expressed his pleasure at seeing fine roads and great industrial progress in Germany.

One amusing story is related of His Highness's meeting with Hitler at a tea party at Burchtesgaden. Prince Aga Khan had shown interest in Germany's anxiety to develop a horse-breeding industry, and Hitler was most anxious to find out all about bloodstock from the most successful owner and breeder of his time.

"How much would one of your best stallions cost?" he demanded.

"About £30,000", answered the Aga Khan.

"Would you take forty of my motor-cars in exchange for one of your stallions?" Hitler sought to know.

His Highness's reply was very innocent. "I don't want to open a motor shop in Picadilly", he said.

In 1951, His Royal Highness visited Iran, after the Iranian Cabinet had declared him to be an Iranian subject at his own request. The Cabinet said that the Aga Khan's family had never lost the status of an Iranian subject and awarded him the title of "His Royal Highness". Prince Aga Khan donated 6,000,000 francs to charitable institutions in Iran.

Recently when he visited Syria, the Government of that country conferred upon him the unique title of 'Star of Omayyads'.

His Highness is of an all-embracing charitable disposition. Though the principal concern of his charities are his millions of followers who yield him unquestioning allegiance, he has always supported every just cause, individual or collective, with generous help. His princely gifts to Muslim educational institutions are a source of great pride to the Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent.

Every field of activity anywhere in the world has an irresistible appeal to his generous nature. To the Coryndon Museum in Nairobi, East Africa, he donated a sum of £ 8,000 in 1950. Large funds were given by him to such academic efforts as Dr. Leakey's Research work in Africa on pre-historic times. A compilation of his numerous charities would in itself make a fair-sized book.

To illustrate the spirit of his individual charities, we may record the romance and luxury he brought into the life of a girl of humble origin—a golf caddy in France.

Maria Giraldo used to carry the Aga Khan's clubs at the Mougina golf links. She was a very quiet and well-behaved girl who seldom talked, but like many caddies had picked up quite a knowledge of golf. His Highness gave her a little house and a two-seater motor-car. She no longer carries clubs now. She lives in her little villa with her father and mother. Sometimes she drives herself down to the links where she used to work as a caddy and plays a few holes.

Another individual charity worthy of note is his distribution of £ 20,000 of prize money among the jockey, the trainees and the stable boys after his horse Talyar had won the Derby in May 1952.

When glamour comes unasked, few there are who can resist accepting it with open arms. Not so the Aga Khan. To him it must come pure and unblemished. He must refuse it if it reminds him of someone's misery. Once in Bombay, in view of his various services, it was proposed to give a public dinner in his honour. When he was informed of it, he wrote to the Secretary of the Reception Committee a letter which showed his innermost feelings on the subject of the distress of the poor people. He said: "I cannot accept

any entertainment when thousands of people are dying of starvation. It is almost wicked to waste money on rich food when thousands of people are starving. I would urge that every rupee that could be spared should be given for the relief of famine sufferers instead of wasting it on entertainments".

Many people who know Prince Aga Khan only through his wealth, may imagine him indulging in orgies associated with great riches. In actual fact, he lives more simply than many possessing not even a small fraction of his fortune. For a man of immense wealth, the Aga Khan leads a life far from being ostentatious.

A few years before the Second World War, Prince Aga Khan purchased a house in Paris, where he spent a few months each year. Nearby lived the Duke and Duchess of Windsor in a house they had rented for two years. They spent large sums of money on structural alterations and had expensive furnishings. They had a staff of sixteen servants, including two private secretaries, one for the Duke and one for the Duchess. The Windsors never spent more than three months a year in their house. The multi-millionaire Aga Khan, on the other hand, was content with a domestic staff of six.

He does not indulge in extravagances. His racing is, of course, a good investment. In Riviera, the pleasure ground of the rich, every other family has a yacht of their own. But Prince Aga Khan has never indulged such a fancy, though he can well afford to indulge it more than others.

He is a non-smoker, and buys cigars only for his guests. He does not take liquor. Once in London, says one of his biographers, he had a bad cold which he could not shake off. Somebody told him to take a little whisky, just a table spoonful. He fussed and fumed over that whisky, fearing the effect it might have on him.

"Will you have tea with me or a whisky and soda alone"? is his usual greeting to visitors.

Although now nearly 77 years of age, His Royal Highness enjoys good health, thanks to eating with care, but eating enough to have the proteins contained in either meat, eggs or fish to give him the necessary vitamins. He even avoids coffee after meals.

"If only the time and money now foolishly wasted by people in over-clothing and over-feeding were spent on golf courses, tennis courts, cricket,

football and hockey grounds, and other sports, there could be healthy recreation and exercise for all", Prince Aga Khan often tells his friends.

Some twenty-six years ago Prince Aga Khan wrote an entertaining article on "Keeping Fit", in which he said: "As a child I did far too little exercise. I was brought up to ride well from the time I was about five and rode regularly until I was about sixteen or seventeen.... Then when I wanted to walk about a mile and a half, I was completely exhausted. Riding had left me soft in all muscles with the exception of those actually exercised. It was then I decided to improve my physique. I came in touch with the late Eugene Sandow, who gave me some excellent advice which I have never forgotten. Later I took up boxing. I know of no exercise so physically beneficial as a brisk walk. A good swinging pace of between four and five miles an hour is ideal. I do a good deal of walking, and usually cover about ten miles in two and a half hours. I think it is a very bad thing for one who is heavy to try to reduce his weight by any form of exercise or diet. Rather should he try to get hard and remain big instead of being merely soft and large. Softness is the enemy, not size".

With regard to diet, Prince Aga Khan wrote: "I believe that we eat too much. I think we should all drop one or two meals a week, which is my own practice. That means that on three days a week I take only one solid meal".

Continuing on the subject of dieting, Prince Aga Khan added: "I think that missing one or two meals a week is more natural and simpler, and much less boring than some of the elaborate methods that have been worked out by the others. On ordinary days I have fruit and coffee for breakfast. Later I take a big lunch. At tea time I take tea only, and no solids. It is my custom at dinner to take a meal that is much smaller than my lunch".

His Royal Highness says that colour, which is to be avoided in clothing for exercise, is a stimulant in food. "A beautiful apple or peach becomes tempting because of its colour, and seems more enjoyable", he observes.

Prince Aga Khan believes that an ungrateful and horrible way of returning thanks to God is the most ungrateful way of returning thanks to God. "Physical beauty has a spiritual value", he says.

His Highness once wrote in an article: "I am always unpopular at the hotels at which I stay because I am usually up before the servants, alth-



Their Royal Highnesses Prince Aga Khan and Begum Aga Khan

ough I go to bed later than most. Too much sleep dulls the brain and also precludes taking full advantage of many of the beauties of nature. Five or six hours of regular sleep and a short nap after lunch are quite enough for most of us".

Prince Aga Khan loves to enjoy the dawn as it breaks on the sea or on different landscapes. During his world travels and his frequent crossings from one country to another, he usually tries to travel by night so that he can feast his eyes on the beautiful splendour of the birth of a new day.

"Travelling about the world", he said in his article, "I have always been interested in observing the physique of different people. I have noticed that the French seem to have improved enormously during the past thirty years. That cannot be due to the army, because military service was already in existence, but must have come from the practice of sports before and after military service. Football may have helped considerably".

* * *

Spiritual happiness constitutes real happiness in the opinion of His Highness. He lays great stress at being one with God.

In an article on Happiness, which he wrote in 1931, he said: "The fundamental question is: Are you in harmony with God? If you are, you are happy. After spiritual happiness I would place appreciation or enjoyment of the glories of Nature. Learn to appreciate the dawns and the sunsets. A very rich man can treasure the paintings he possesses, but every man can appreciate Nature and get the happiness that such appreciation brings.

"Then comes the happiness of poetry, the voice of God speaking through the lips of man. Next I would put the happiness that comes from games such as golf, football and, so they tell me, cricket; but the best of all is horse-riding.

"Then there is the happiness of marriage and the happiness that comes from good health. One should keep the body clean, wear clean clothes, eat clean food, drink clean water, breathe clean air".

"An hour of meditation and prayer every Friday is my greatest hour", Prince Aga Khan once explained in picturesque language. He said: "Probably some would say my greatest hour is when I hear that I have won a big race.



His Serene Highness Prince
Aly S. Khan



Prince Sadruddin

"But they would be wrong.

"Those who know me as a statesman and diplomat would probably have other ideas. I have headed the Indian delegation at Geneva, and worked for years in political matters to ensure the future happiness of India. I have, I feel sure, enjoyed many great hours hearing of the success of some of my efforts in this field.

"But the people who think my chief interest lies in politics would be wrong too. My greatest hour has had no connection with the race course or with the political arena.

"My greatest hour—I have no doubt of it—occurs regularly every week. It is on a Friday, and invariably some time after noon.

"Every Friday, I, like every Muslim in the world, spend an hour in meditation and prayer. That hour is my greatest hour."

Throughout his life His Royal Highness has read a passage from the Quran every day. Often he has surprised learned theologians with the depth of his learning and his brilliant exposition of Quranic teachings.

A normal day in Prince Aga Khan's life, when he is in Europe, runs as follows as stated in his own language: "I get up at 7 o'clock and, after prayers, have breakfast at 7-30, beginning with fruit, according to the season, then toasts or crescents with butter and honey, and two large cups of tea with milk but without sugar.

"After that, if weather conditions make it possible, I go and play golf for two hours on the nearest golf course. Returning home I have a quick hot bath and then dress up.

"After about an hour, time is given to deal with correspondence and then lunch, which, three times a week, consists of either fish, eggs or meat, but never more than one of these. For the other four days of the week it consists of raw vegetables, like carrots, celery, salads and cooked vegetables, or rice, but no mixture, followed by fruit according to the season, or preserved fruit.

"The afternoon is given to writing, reading, receiving visitors, dealing with various administrative works and occasionally, some dozen times in the year, going to race meetings.

"Before sunset, prayers; and then again prayers after sunset.

"Dinner usually consists of either raw or cooked fruit and very rarely some kind of vegetables are added.

"After dinner I usually play a game of chess or backgammon with my wife, and then read for a couple of hours and then sleep.

"Occasionally after dinner (if we can so call a light vegetable or fruit meal that lasts a few minutes) we go to an opera or a big ballet, and still more rarely to some classical or important intellectual theatrical performance.

"In the East the day is more taken up with speeches, functions, etc.; but the food regime and at least one hour's exercise in the open air are allotted to the day's other occupations."

His Royal Highness lives by a meticulous schedule. His multifarious interests make it incumbent that he plan his engagements not only for days or for months in advance but for the next year. He has to know where he would be and what he would be doing after twelve months or so.

Prince Aga Khan has a stake in scores of industrial and other business concerns. The fact that practically all of them continue to pay dividends speaks highly of his shrewd sense of business and far-sightedness as an investor.

It has been stated that His Highness was at one time a sleeping partner in a well-known firm of New York stock exchange brokers. One of his biographers writes that an examination of the shareholders' names in such well-known concerns as the Tote Investors Company Limited shows that Prince Aga Khan was one of the original stockholders.

He seems to have been fascinated by the workings of Wall Street and demonstrated his own capacity for business by investing in oil shares which were later to pay handsome dividends. He was one of the first to see the possibilities of the oil deposits of Arabia and greatly multiplied his investments in both oil and real estate. Men having business dealings with him have been known to remark that it is very difficult for anyone to get the better of him in business, big or small.

His Royal Highness receives on an average one hundred begging letters a day, letters from investors, financiers, inventors without money, and from

self-styled men of genius, who promise him rich rewards if only he would receive them in audience and listen to their schemes.

Those who desire His Highness's financial support for their projects must interest him within the first five minutes of the interview. Once the visitor starts talking, Prince Aga Khan never interrupts him until he has made up his mind. If the scheme fails to interest him, he will very suavely remark that he has another somewhat urgent appointment. He who succeeds in interesting him will find himself deeply cross-examined with rapid-fire questioning and then the matter will be placed in the hands of Prince Aga Khan's specialists.

His admirers find it remarkable that Prince Aga Khan, who is a linguist talking fluently in several oriental and European languages, an international statesman who has at his fingertips the history of political and economic development of every great nation in the world, did not attend any school or college.

He talks to every man strictly within the intellectual limits of that person. He will not bore a horse-dealer by talking to him about metaphysics. Ikbal Ali Shah, one of Prince Aga Khan's biographers, recalls an occasion when His Highness engaged an old professor in conversation on the Theory of Relativity and so enthused and thrilled the scholar that the old gentleman forgot to take any notes on the back of his menu card, from which he was to speak at the conclusion of the dinner. Later, the professor said to Ikbal Ali Shah: "This Prince is a marvel. He could easily take my place as a lecturer of mathematics. Where does he get his knowledge"?

Prince Aga Khan is also conversant with subjects like astronomy—not the elementary aspects of them, but with those deep forms of which any university professor might well be proud. He never lets slip an opportunity of having himself informed regarding all scientific discoveries.

A bibliophile, who did not know Prince Aga Khan's identity, once engaged him in conversation in a Paris bookshop and was startled to hear a learned discourse on medieval literature. A group of medical men who were invited to dine with him found that they were being cross-examined on the newest methods of treating tuberculosis by a host who had made a deep study of the subject.

The net result of his enormous reading is that Prince Aga Khan can talk to you about any hobby or vocation for any length of time without exhausting himself, and without making you feel bored.

The Aga Khan's writings consist of an excellent book, "India in Transition", and a valuable booklet entitled "Glimpses of Islam". There are also a number of speeches and writings on politics and religion.

"India in Transition", published in May, 1918, is a work of remarkable logic and power and was a valuable source of reference for the drafters of the Government of India Bill. It made a strong plea for a patient attitude towards the problems confronting India and warned that in impulsive, ill-considered actions there lay danger. A reading of the book today reveals that its author had made startlingly correct forecasts about the future. The Hindu leader Lokmania Tilak called this book "The Gita of our times".

His Royal Highness is an omnivorous reader, and people who come in contact with him are astonished at his intimate knowledge of philosophy, the arts, sciences and commerce.

The bent of his mind, on the authority of those who know him, is not towards the lighter side of literature. His pet subjects are History, Biography, Philosophy and Theology, in all of which he has attained a very high standard of proficiency.

He reads newspapers from England, America, France, Pakistan and India, studying the stock market and political columns with equal interest and perception. Always a quick reader, with the knack of getting to the heart of a book in a short time, he surprises his visitors with his extraordinarily up-to-date knowledge of the best that has been written or thought in different countries.

In the choice of books, he exhibits almost an uncanny aptitude. In his every house there is a library, while a small library travels with him. There is not a single worthwhile book which he has not read—and commented upon in the margin. Those who know him intimately like to assert that he is one of the greatest students of his time. The University of Cambridge has conferred upon him the honorary degree of L.L.D.

Lloyd George, one time Prime Minister of Great Britain, said of Prince Aga Khan: "He is one of the best informed men I have ever met. His general

information is astonishing. He is extraordinarily well read and possesses an intimate knowledge of international affairs in all parts of the world. He is widely travelled and is always moving round the capitals of Europe, in all of which he has influential intimates. He seems to have touched upon all branches of literature and is well versed in science. Altogether a very extraordinary person".

His brilliant powers of conversation, his flashes of wit and humour make him always interesting and entertaining. He has met every person worth meeting in the world and has selected the best men and women as his friends.

In early middle age Prince Aga Khan wrote several articles for the British popular Press, and in later years has appeared on many occasions on the leader page of the Times, London.

When there was a Persian Art Exhibition in London a few years ago, His Royal Highness insisted that he knew more about Persian Art than The Times art critic possibly could. He convinced the then Editor of the Times that he could do the job better, and turned out some very interesting criticism.

When arrangements were afoot to celebrate in Europe the millennium of the birth of Firdausi, author of the immortal "Shahnama", His Royal Highness wrote a masterly essay on Persian poets. He said that one of the world's greatest cultural losses was due to inadequate knowledge in the West of many of the best treasures of Eastern literature and philosophy.

Of Omar Khayyam, His Royal Highness said: "He is the best known in Europe from among the poets of Persia and yet to no Persian can he ever be more than a moderate poet. The reason for his lacking higher consideration among his own countrymen is simple; his poetry gives only one aspect of human experience and emotion. The feelings so beautifully expressed by him (and admirably translated by Edward Fitzgerald) can never be more than the passing sentiments of a hopeless waster. Most men have such passing moods. But Persians expect from a great poet a far wider and fuller, a universal series of inspirations. A great poet should be able to inspire a man in any circumstances of his life. Can it be seriously maintained that an explorer attempting the conquest of Mount Everest could possibly get his inspiration from Omar Khayyam"?

He described Hafiz as the greatest of Persian poets, and regarded him as a supreme example of the genius of Muslim Persia. He said: "Provided one knows the Persian language and the implications of its words, whatever a human being's moods, emotions, and thoughts may be, he can turn to Hafiz for the highest pleasure and inspiration. Take the riddle of the universe. From the highest theism to the most realistic materialism, every point of view has been more beautifully expressed in Hafiz than anywhere else. Every mood, every human thought, is given in language of supreme lyrical beauty.

"Hafiz is understood and appreciated by the humblest as well as the highest and the most intellectual in the Muslim East. We have internal evidence as well as external historical reason for believing that even during his life-time, his poetry was generally known from the Bay of Bengal to Kashmir and from the deserts of Central Asia to Egypt and the confines of Europe. Today his empire in those regions is still supreme. In the highest religious messages we hope to find such vision as will clarify the latest speculations of scientific philosophy, without for one moment supposing that the teachers of the past knew or could have known the later developments of human thoughts. So in Hafiz one could easily find thoughts, ideas, expressions that would illuminate the fundamental conceptions of even such abstract hypotheses and speculations as those of, say Einstein, Jeans, or Whitehead. Hafiz could not know the marvellous discoveries of the disciplined application of human intelligence today; but his supreme genius enabled him to lay such splendid foundations that place can be found within his universal temple for almost any later development.

"Between the two extremes of Hafiz and Khayyam there are any number of other poets, all worthy of diligent study. It is almost beyond our conception that one man could have produced the work of Firdausi. Were he not an historical figure and were we not sure of the "Shahnama", who could have believed it? Sa'di, Jami, Nizami, Anwari, Khaqani and many others deserve careful presentation to the West. Maulana Rumi is fairly well known to some European mystics. His 'Mathnavi' is not only a fine presentation of a case, but is also narrative poetry of great beauty and force. Unlike Hafiz, however, he has only put forward the argument for mystical pantheism, while in Hafiz in a few verses all the essentials of Rumi's and indeed of every other philosophy, are given us. From the purely lyrical point of view Rumi's 'Diwan-i-Shams' is more beautiful and more splendid than his 'Mathnavi'.

"One of the greatest poets Persia has produced was Qaani. Indeed it is difficult not to place him next to Hafiz and Firdausi, and his appeal to us is all the greater because he was almost a contemporary of our day. Even so ardent an admirer as E.G. Browne has not done full justice to this mid-nineteenth century genius. His personal character had many blots. Like some recent European writers (such as D.H. Lawrence and Andre Gide), he has written on questions of sex in language of supreme lyrical beauty, but from an entirely physical and materialistic angle. The Persians, used as they were to the spiritual and sentimental interpretations of even physical love by Jami, Nizami, and others, were liable to forget the wealth of beauty and depth of thought that there is in Qaani's Qasidas (Odes). The very fact also that he chose Qasidas in praise of the kings, nobles and princes who were his contemporaries, as the vehicle for pouring out his perceptions of nature, has prevented the general public from going to him for the real gems in his books. Englishmen who are proud of their Wordsworth can well understand what joy Qaani gives to the Persian when he portrays Nature in all her aspects—the wonderful lights and shades of Iran, its landscape, its rain, thunder, lightning, draught, trees, birds and flowers. Many varieties of "Tintern Abbey" can easily be found in those Qasidas. I only wish that European Orientalists would turn to a serious study of this man of genius".

Towards the end of his essay, His Royal Highness made a suggestion to those Orientalists who know the Persian language well and have the gift of lively expression that one of them should follow the example of Fitzgerald in a far better cause and translate into one of the better known European languages "as fully and as beautifully as possible the famous Qasida about the person of God".

* * *

Prince Aga Khan has always placed the highest value on education, which, he once said, imparts ability to serve one's country and humanity and makes people fit for self-government. His annual gifts for educational purposes have for many years past exceeded the educational budgets of some of the foremost States in undivided India.

In his book, *India in Transition*, he said: "There is no running away from the need for educational diffusion, since it is a question of life and death for India. No compromise as to providing this essential groundwork of national development can be tolerated."

He told the British rulers of India that illiteracy was a danger both to the people and the Government, and began to take practical measures to improve the education of his own people.

In 1875 Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan had founded the Muslim College at Aligarh, but it was Prince Aga Khan who nourished it with money and started the campaign for funds required to translate the dream of a university into reality. He developed Aligarh into a great university to which came Muslim students from all over the world.

CHAPTER II

EARLY YOUTH

HIS Royal Highness Sir Sultan Mohammad Shah Aga Khan was born at Karachi on November 2, 1877. The mantle of Imamate fell on his tender shoulders when he was barely eight years old. At this young age he was called upon by Providence to bear the active leadership of a great religious community several million strong, but Prince Aga Khan faced the situation with a calmness that could bring credit to experienced leaders, wise with the passage of years.

As a young boy of eight years, Prince Aga Khan was an uncrowned king of a large, powerful community and enjoyed more respect and authority than many crowned heads of princely states.

At a period of life when the children of both high and low lead carefree lives, Prince Aga Khan used to sit on the throne of Imamate and administer the affairs of his followers with a surprising maturity of wisdom. There are many of the older generation among his followers who love to relate how the young leader noting the sadness in the faces of those around him at the recent death of his father had said: "Why are you sad? The Imam is sitting in your midst and doing your work".

The honorific title of "His Highness" was bestowed on Prince Aga Khan when he was only nine years of age. The conferment of this title on a nobleman of tender years was regarded as an unparalleled event in history. It was a pointer to the esteem in which Prince Aga Khan's family was held by the Government and the public. It was an acknowledgment of the great services of his grandfather and of the rank and dignity of the young prince.

The young prince was subjected to a vigorous educational training which would have exerted an unbearable strain on minds less sharp and active than his. He was a quick learner and possessed an unusually retentive memory, and even the most exacting of his tutors acknowledged his diligence and accomplishments as a pupil.

Among the books which Prince Aga Khan read under the care of experienced English tutors in his earlier years and which contributed a great

deal to moulding him into a great man were the histories of Persia, England and India, Hunter's "Rulers of India" series, "The Queen's Prime Ministers", McCarthy's "History of Our Own Times" and "Lives of Eminent Men".

The scope of the curriculum set by his tutors and his far-seeing father covered Persian, Arabic, English, French, mathematics, astronomy, chemistry and mechanics.

Within a few years he was able to read and write with perfect ease all the languages he was learning. Special attention was also given to his religious education. A learned divine was engaged to teach him Islamic theology and the history and the philosophy of Islam.

His natural intellect combined with his thirst for knowledge and painstaking nature helped him to make remarkable progress in both Western and Eastern literature as also in the knowledge of the ancient and modern history of the world. He also acquired proficiency in philosophy and theology and science. He spent much time in studying Shakespeare, Milton, Macaulay, Scott and other great writers and standard authors. He read Sa'adi, Firdausi, Omar Khayyam, Hafiz, Rumi and other eminent Persian poets and acquired great mastery over their works.

He was fascinated by machines and by horses. Keenly interested in mechanics, he was always eager to translate theory into practice and spent many happy hours tinkering with small machines in a small shed he had had built. Toy engines and watches appealed to his practical nature and this early fascination stretched into manhood, when as one of the first men in the Indian public life he welcomed the advent of the motor-car and gave cups and large money prizes out of a desire to see his country freed from the old-fashioned bullock-cart. His interest in practical mechanics was strangely fascinating in a boy born in luxury and bred for religious and intellectual leadership.

By the time he was fourteen, Prince Aga Khan had developed a great liking for biographies, a liking he has never lost. All his life he has brought and read biographies as fast as they come on sale.

From his earliest days he was taught humility and devotion to duty on the pattern of the life of the Prophet of Islam. Such principles of Islam as

"Let there be no compulsion in religion" and that "Belief can come only from God" have moulded his life and his conduct towards the people of other races. He was taught, too, that his duty as a leader would not be confined to spiritual affairs but would embrace all activities concerned with the temporal well-being of his followers.

Having mastered the tenets of his religion, he began to teach religious philosophy to his followers and won over their hearts from the commencement of his career as leader while still in his teens. He had revealed himself to be a precocious child and a genius. Of special help to him was his mastery of the aims and ideals of his religion and his imbibing of the true spirit of Islam. Under the care of his mother, he learnt that religion constituted right-doing, right-thinking, right-speaking, universal charity and equality of man in the sight of God.

Long before he was fifteen, Prince Aga Khan had proved himself an able administrator of the affairs of his vast following. He attended the *Jamat-khanas* (prayer halls of the community) regularly and decided the disputes with a legal acumen seldom found in those who are not lawyers. He reorganised the life of the community, and for the better management of the *Ishnâli jamats*, established local and supreme councils. The local councils look after the *jamats* within their jurisdiction whereas the supreme councils exercise a supervisory authority.

Under the able care of his mother and as a result of his own diligent efforts he grew up into a highly accomplished young man. At the age of eighteen he was able to speak in public on religion, education, philosophy and politics with authority and with force. He built up a private library, probably the best of its kind in Asia, with a rare collection of books on religion, philosophy, mysticism, history, literature and politics.

At an early age—he was then only sixteen—Prince Aga Khan was called upon to exercise his influence in the cause of law and order and take part in the restoration and maintenance of peace and goodwill between the Hindu and the Muslim communities of Bombay. The occasion was the Hindu-Muslim riots in that city in 1893. He showed great qualities of leadership on the occasion and threw all his weight on the side of law and order. Owing to his influence his followers not only refrained from participating in the riots but helped the authorities in restoring peace and order. They gave

shelter to a number of Hindus although two of His Royal Highness's personal servants had been killed in the riots.

His qualities of leadership and organising ability were again put to a test when he was twenty years of age. A terrible famine had fallen upon Bombay and thousands of people were in sad plight. His Royal Highness came to their rescue, and numberless people were fed because of his benevolence. He displayed no caste or racial prejudices. All who went to him in their distress, received food and money.

In Kutch and Kathiawar also the pestilential famine created untold misery. The wells and the rivers dried up, the crops failed, the cattle died, there was scarcely enough water even for humans to drink. Here also Prince Aga Khan came to the rescue of the sufferers in a practical manner. He distributed seedgrain and agricultural implements and subscribed large sums to the Famine Fund which had been set up by the Government.

In Bombay, Poona, Kutch, and Kathiawar, huge camps were opened by His Royal Highness, and they remained open for nearly six months. The hungry and the destitute in their thousands found sustenance and shelter at these centres at the expense of benevolent Prince Aga Khan.

He saved thousands of people from starvation and hunger. He recognised no distinction of caste or creed while distributing grain, money and clothes. Many of his followers in provinces of Kutch and Kathiawar were also rendered destitute. They had lost all their worldly goods and distress was acute. Prince Aga Khan supplied them with seed, cattle and agricultural tools to enable them to begin life anew.

In Bombay itself a large camp was pitched at Hasanabad to feed and clothe stricken humanity. For those who were ashamed to come out openly to seek food, His Royal Highness made arrangements that help should reach them at their door. At this stage he also undertook the building of his Yeravda Palace at Poona at a cost of nearly half a million rupees solely with a view to providing employment to thousands.

The terrible effects of the famine were felt most severely by the "untouchables", whose pitiable plight moved Prince Aga Khan's heart. He did everything in his power to provide them with means of earning a livelihood and urged other Muslim leaders to render them all help.

While the famine was devastating various parts of the country, plague, in a virulent form, broke out in Bombay and carried thousands of people to the grave. To stem the tide of this dreadful scourge, Professor Haffkine, a well-known bacteriologist, was sent to Bombay by the Government of India with his anti-plague serum, the use of which would have considerably reduced the incidence of mortality. But the people looked upon the serum with suspicion and raised a hue and cry against inoculation, condemning it as a slow but sure poison. The followers of Prince Aga Khan, a majority of whom lived in the worst affected parts of the town, were also equally opposed to the treatment of doctors.

Prince Aga Khan realised the need for allaying public suspicion and came forward to set a bold example by trying the serum on his own person and ordering his followers to do the same. He also called a meeting of his followers and explained to them the benefits of inoculation. He got himself inoculated several times. This example had the desired effect of removing suspicion from the public mind. There was a great rush now for the treatment. To meet the requirements of this rush, Prince Aga Khan lent his bungalow free to Dr. Haffkine for his laboratory.

It was in recognition of these services, rendered in a spirit of self-sacrifice and great personal inconvenience, that the British Government appreciatively conferred on him the title of the Knight Commander of the Indian Empire.

Before Prince Aga Khan had won round the people by his personal example, the Government of India had been helpless and was contemplating with growing apprehension and horror the rising death figures. The situation called for some leader of the people to take a great and courageous step and set an example. Prince Aga Khan's bold act in coming forward to submit himself to the prick of the needle several times in the presence of thousands broke the spell of fear. The foul disease was soon conquered.

His inborn virtues and the talents fostered by a careful training impressed all who came in contact with him. Public life claimed his attention at the young age of twenty, and soon he was the accepted leader of a vast public, with constant travelling as part of his life.

Prince Aga Khan's public career may be said to have begun with his appointment as a leader of the Muslim community for the purpose of present-

ing an address for the Muslims of India to Queen Victoria on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee. That address was delivered by Prince Aga Khan to Lord Elgin, then Viceroy of India, by whom it was forwarded to the Queen. The Viceroy was much impressed by the young Prince who seemed to lend an easy grace to the pomposities of a state occasion.

It was generally believed by all who came to know him from close quarters at that time that during the next half century the Aga Khan would play a great part in directing the destinies of the world of Islam, a part for which his position and abilities qualified him eminently. Events have proved that Prince Aga Khan not only served Islam better than other Muslim leaders but has been greatly instrumental in shaping the political destiny of the Indian sub-continent.

In 1898, when he was 21 years old, His Royal Highness set out on his first visit to the West. He had travelled all over India by then and now it was his great desire to see Europe and get acquainted with the civilisation and people of the continent. On the eve of his departure from Bombay he was entertained at a great party given by his friends and admirers including prominent men in public life of all communities.

In London, Prince Aga Khan, whose reputation had travelled before him, met with a hearty reception from Lord Salisbury, Prime Minister of England, Lord George Hamilton, Secretary of State for India, and other leading peers of the realm, including the Duke of Connaught.

Queen Victoria, for whom the young Aga Khan had a profound veneration and whom he likened to the renowned Persian King, Noshervan the Just, honoured him with a private audience and conferred on him the title of K.C.I.E. in recognition of his valuable services to the State during riots, famine and plague in India. A distinction of this kind at such a young age was indeed a great honour. He was later invited by Her Majesty to dine with her and stay for a day at the Windsor Castle—a distinction which speaks highly for the Aga Khan's worth when he had just begun his public life. No ruling prince from India holding great temporal power could have hoped to be treated with greater honour and respect than was shown the young Aga Khan.

Queen Victoria, then eighty years of age, received him graciously at the Windsor Castle and sat him beside her in the seat reserved for the highest religious head in the country. This signal honour occasioned great

surprise, as no foreigner had been shown so much respect before, and was given wide publicity in all the great cities of Europe. He answered many questions about the famine and plague in India and was given a respectful hearing by a distinguished company.

To the young Prince, the Queen seemed as old as Adam, but he was struck with the sharpness of her mind, which seemed to hear and grasp everything. He was also amazed to note her enormous appetite. In a long dinner with three or four main courses and two or three sweet dishes, the Queen ate everything which came along.

Prince Aga Khan's charm also captivated the Prince of Wales, who later on became King Edward VII. He was so much impressed that he at once proposed him for membership of the exclusive Marlborough Club, at that time regarded as a passport to the most intimate Royal circle. More than once he was invited to the Palace by the Prince of Wales, with whom he had many private after-dinner talks on political affairs. It is reported that they could not agree on one subject—tobacco. When the British Prince offered him a cigarette, Prince Aga Khan took one puff and then laid it aside with an apology. He never touched another cigarette.

London society extended a warm welcome to this young prince from India. At Devonshire House and Lansdowne House, lavish parties were given in his honour and he charmed everyone with the elegance of his manner and the fluent ease with which he talked on many subjects. "He wore pince-nez and twirled a neat black moustache which gave him an appearance more academic than military, but there was a sparkle in his conversation that titillated a London influenced by Wilde and Beardsley", remarks one of His Royal Highness's biographers.

Prince Aga Khan is one of the few men alive today who have been well acquainted with six British sovereigns, from Queen Victoria to her two great-grandsons, Edward VIII and George VI, and down to Queen Elizabeth II. To the old Queen Victoria he was just a boy, but an important boy. With Edward VII, he was on friendly man-of-the-world terms.

In 1903, at the age of twenty-six, Prince Aga Khan was nominated to the Imperial Legislative Council of India. In 1906 he headed the Muslim deputation to Viceroy Lord Minto. In 1907 he was elected President of the

Muslim League. He played a very prominent role in advancing the educational interests of the Muslims and helped put the University of Aligarh on very firm foundations. Shrewd politicians like Lord Cromer saw in him a potential leader destined to render great service to Islam and India.

Prince Aga Khan, ever since his early youth, has been visiting different parts of the world and studying the conditions of his followers with a view to helping them to come up as a progressive community. His efforts have succeeded to such an extent that the Ismailis of Syria, Africa, Persia, Afghanistan, Central Asia and the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent are not only happy and prosperous but are living as members of a big world community taking an active and keen interest in the welfare and progress of their brethren elsewhere.

The Ismailis are scattered far and wide on the face of the earth. The deputation under Sir Douglas Forsythe which was sent to Yarkand by Lord Mayo, the Viceroy, had discovered that there were large bodies of people living in Turkestan and Afghanistan who considered the Aga Khan as their spiritual head and acknowledged his leadership through the Imam's representative in Kashmir. Numerous followers of the Aga Khan were also found in Chitral, Hunza, Gilgit, and Pamirs, and the valleys of Kafiristan and Badakhshan.

When he went to Europe a second time, Prince Aga Khan visited Germany and was granted several interviews by the Emperor who conferred upon him titles intended only for very high personages of distinction.

Prince Aga Khan also visited Constantinople, then capital of Turkey, and was a guest of the Sultan. This meeting of the two was a matter of great satisfaction to the whole Islamic world. For, while Sultan Abdul Hamid was the Caliph of the Sunni Muslims, the Aga Khan was the Imam of a Shia sect. The Sultan honoured him with the "Star of Turkey".

Prince Aga Khan also met the Shah of Persia who bestowed on him the title of "Shamsul Humayun" or "Star of Persia". When he paid a visit to Zanzibar in East Africa, the Sultan of that area conferred on him the decoration of the "Brilliant Star of Zanzibar".

A GIFTED MOTHER

NAWAB Aaliya Shams-ul-Muluk, the loving mother of His Royal Highness, was a remarkable woman of rare attainments. She was related to the royal family of Persia through her mother and proved herself to be a woman of far-sighted vision possessed of great organising ability.

She was married to His Highness Aga Ali Shah in 1867. She was then 24 years old. While she was living at Karachi she gave birth to His Royal Highness Sir Sultan Mohammad Shah Aga Khan at a beautiful residence on the top of a hillock on the outskirts of the city. This residence originally known as "Honeymoon Lodge" is now a convalescent home for the benefit of the Ismailis.

Eight years after the birth of her son, Lady Ali Shah was stricken with grief at the death of her dear husband. Submitting to the will of God, she devoted her life to the education and up-bringing of her young son who had succeeded to a great inheritance and heavy responsibilities. She immediately took in hand his training and under the guidance of able tutors gave him a liberal education. She taught him all that was best in oriental and Western literature. She trained him in the great traditions of the family and moulded him on the pattern of the great leaders of Islam.

She went to reside in Bombay with her son and centred all her care and attention on the one thought of making him a wise and thoughtful leader of men. To her, Prince Aga Khan owes much of his education and early formation of character. This debt he acknowledges by saying that he had "the inestimable advantage of receiving the fostering care of a gifted and far-seeing mother".

Lady Ali Shah had recognised from the outset that it was necessary to give her son a sound and wholesome liberal education and she took steps to that end. At first he was taught the history of Persia and the writings of its great poets. When he showed remarkable aptitude for learning, Lady Ali Shah, who knew that knowledge of oriental literature only was not sufficient for

the requirements of modern times, very wisely placed him under an English tutor. Side by side with Persian and Arabic, a course of English reading was also begun.

She devoted great thought and attention to the upbringing of Prince Aga Khan and even up to the time of her death in January 1938 at the age of 90, she followed with keen interest the remarkable career of her son. She was pleased that he was devoting his life not only to the welfare of Muslims alone but of all the people of India. She was proud that her son believed in the gospel of universal brotherhood.

Despite the good reports of progress which his tutors passed on to her, she had ordered that he be dealt with severely at the slightest sign of childish disobedience.

In Bombay, Lady Ali Shah took charge of the management of the estates and properties and continued to administer them until 1893 when Prince Aga Khan at the age of 16 took them up, leaving the domestic portion of the management in his mother's hands. She made sound investments in more properties and augmented the wealth of her son. She is believed never to have made an error of judgment in her investments.

She was the chancellor of the exchequer and administrative controller of the great Ismaili organisation while her son was a minor and carried on the affairs of the community with the help of a council.

Well-versed in religion, Persian literature and oriental history Lady Ali Shah was respected not only in India but throughout the Muslim world. A kind-hearted and generous lady, her charitable disposition knew no distinctions. The poor and the needy who approached her never returned disappointed.

Her grasp of world affairs and the happenings around her was extraordinary for a woman born and bred to the eastern ways and with no knowledge of English, written or spoken.

She encouraged the girls of the Khoja community to take to education, and it was through her influence that social reforms were introduced in the community.

Several Indian princes placed great confidence in her profound wisdom and the soundness of her opinion. They sought her advice in moments of

doubt or difficulty. The late Begum of Bhopal was an intimate friend of Lady Ali Shah who regarded the present Nawab of Bhopal as her own son.

Lady Ali Shah was a born leader and organiser. While her son had to remain in Europe for long periods working for his country, Lady Ali Shah used to help the heads of the Ismailia community in their administrative duties by her advice and guidance. Many a time she was called upon to settle the problems of the *Jamat* and she did so to the satisfaction of all.

She was like a loving mother to the Ismailis and many people visited her daily seeking her advice on diverse domestic and communal matters. Ismailis not only from many parts of India but from distant lands such as Lebanon, Syria, Central Asia, Chinese Turkestan and Afghanistan came to seek her blessings. They were looked after at her own expense till their affairs were settled. She was keenly interested in the welfare of the Ismaili community. Whenever an Ismaili paid her a visit she never failed to inquire about the *Jamat*.

She possessed a dynamic personality which made itself felt wherever she went. She was intensely pious and spent most of her time in prayers or discussions of holy matters. Though belonging to the older generation and school of thought, she was liberal in her views and recognised the benefits of modern science. In 1896, when the plague broke out in Bombay and orthodox public opinion was opposed to the inoculation of anti-plague serum, she allowed her only darling son to submit himself to the treatment as an example to others, thus breaking down the barrier of public antipathy to medical reform.

The popularity of Lady Ali Shah was not confined only to the Ismailia community. She had among her friends and admirers peoples of different sects, creeds and communities who greatly loved and respected her. Viceroys and Governors and their wives were among her esteemed friends.

Lady Ali Shah came to be acknowledged a leader of the Muslim community. Born of a noble family of Persia and the virtual leader of a large community she could have well afforded to live a life of luxury without any public work, but being a woman of forceful personality she took a keen and active interest in the educational and political life of the Muslims. She championed the cause of India's political liberty as strongly and valiantly as her son.

She was constantly busy receiving hundreds of visits in her campaign to stir up the usually apathetic Muslim women to a standard of activity hitherto unknown to them. During the first world war she directed their activities into useful service.

In the course of a sketch of her life, the Daily Mail of London published the following description of her, only a few days before her death:

"For all the burden of her years, she is still one of the most vital personalities in India; clear-thinking, forthright, imperious—a strict warden of the Past, who sees little that is worthy or desirable in the fruits of the Present.

"I do not mingle with the world of to-day—but I am not ignorant of it," she has often said.

"Her physical vitality has been as remarkable as her strength of mind.

"In her home she wears always the silken trousers and soft draperies such as the women of Persia wore centuries ago.

"And although her home is a palace famed for its splendour, her way of life has been as simple as that of the humblest of the Prophet's followers.

"Her fare is frugal, her drink water. She fasts".

On the recommendations of Lord Willingdon, the honour of the Crown of India was bestowed upon her by King George V. On the occasion of the bestowal of this rare honour the Khoja ladies of Bombay and other places presented her with congratulatory addresses to mark their affection towards one whom they regarded as their mother.

As Prince Aga Khan's association with the West increased and he remained away from India over longer periods, the mother in her felt the pangs of this separation and she once said to her son: "Death is inevitable, but if it comes to me in your absence, it will be unendurable". Prince Aga Khan's reply brought her great solace. "Do not worry", he had said. "You will breathe your last with your head in my lap". These words were to prove prophetic.

Lady Ali Shah had travelled extensively in Iran, Arabia and Syria and had visited the various holy places of Islam. In 1932, when she visited England, large crowds of people had come to see "the mother of the great and distinguish-

ed man". She was received in audience by the late King George V and Queen Mary at the Buckingham Palace and the title of the Imperial Order of the Crown of India was bestowed on her. She was also awarded the Jubilee Medal at the time of the King's Silver Jubilee.

Lady Ali Shah was eightyfour years old when she went to England. In London she stayed with her grandson Prince Aly Khan. When interviewed about her son by a representative of a London Sunday newspaper she is reported to have said: "He always loved horses. Fate has smiled generously upon him, but in his good fortune he has always been good to others. He never forgets those less fortunate than himself".

Lady Ali Shah was taken seriously ill in November, 1937. His Royal Highness Prince Aga Khan hurried to India by air. As doctors had anticipated, his presence acted as a tonic on her and she steadily recovered from her serious illness. She left for Iraq in January 1938. She, however, felt that her end was not far off and was anxious to be buried in Najaf by the side of her husband. Special arrangements were made for her comfort. A cabin de luxe was prepared at short notice by the shipping company.

In Iraq she was taken ill again and His Royal Highness and his wife reached Baghdad by air from Cairo on February 5 at 3 p.m. Lady Ali Shah passed away peacefully at 5-15 p.m. the same day, breathing her last in the lap of her son. She was buried the next day at Najaf, next to the tomb of her late husband, His Highness Aga Ali Shah. Thousands of Muslims attended her funeral.

Her death occasioned deep grief not only among the Muslims but among all other communities in Bombay, among whom she had been very popular. References to her death were made at a meeting of the Bombay Municipal Corporation, and as a mark of respect to her memory the Corporation adjourned without transacting any business.



*Aga Hasan Ali Shah
grandfather of Prince Aga Khan*



*Aga Ali Shah,
Prince Aga Khan's Father*

The Patriotic values of Egypt left
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CHAPTER IV

HIS ANCESTORS

WITH a distinguished and splendid lineage, His Royal Highness Prince Aga Khan is a descendent of Prophet Mohammad in a direct line of succession through Hazrat Ali, who was a first cousin of the Prophet and also son-in-law, married to his daughter Fatimah. Through the marriage of Hazrat Ali's son, Imam Husain, to the daughter of the last of the Iranian Kings at the dawn of Islam, Prince Aga Khan's lineage is also linked to the renowned dynasties of Iran who for innumerable centuries radiated civilisation and culture and conferred benign rule on a large portion of mankind.

The line of His Royal Highness's ancestry later descends to the Fatimides under whose rule Egypt, after suffering oppression for centuries at the hands of Greeks and Romans, recovered not only much of her ancient prosperity but a proud sense of nationality. Full of vitality, the Fatimide dynasty was surrounded by both a halo of religious virtue and full regal splendour.

The Fatimide rulers of Egypt left behind them lasting monuments of their culture and enlightenment in the shape of universities and stately buildings. The Al Azhar University of Cairo which they founded is still known throughout the civilised world as a great seat of learning. It furnishes Egypt with her ministers of religion and exponents of Muslim law.

The great personal qualities of the Fatimide rulers of Egypt, coupled with the energy and ability of the great ministers and generals with whom they surrounded themselves, enabled them to maintain a position of power and splendour rivalling that of the Abbaside Caliphs of Baghdad. A European historian who visited Cairo in the days of the Fatimides describes the existence there of a state of magnificence which can have been equalled by few Muslim rulers. The Cairo court, according to Gibbon, surpassed in magnificence, opulence, elegance and learning, even the brilliance and culture of the Caliphs of Baghdad and was infinitely above anything which contemporary Europe could show.

After their benign and benevolent rule in Egypt for two centuries, the ancestors of His Royal Highness came down to Iran. Hasan bin Sabbah, who was

a learned missionary of the Ismailis brought the last ruler of the Fatimide dynasty, who had been imprisoned in Cairo, to Alamut in Iran. Thenceforth the ancestors of Prince Aga Khan remained in Iran as rulers in their own territories. Later under the Iranian kings they held the position of governors of various provinces. They were treated with great respect and awarded high honours by the rulers of the Zend dynasty.

The great-grandfather of Prince Aga Khan, Shah Khalilullah, was the Governor of Kerman. After his death, the King of Persia made his son Hasan Ali Shah the Governor of Qum and Mahallat and gave him his daughter in marriage. Aga Hasan Ali Shah was known in the Persian Court by the pet name of Aga Khan, which subsequently became his hereditary title, and in due course he came to be described as Aga Khan Mahallati, which means Lord of Mahallat.

His rapid promotion to a position of eminence as Commander-in-Chief of the armies roused the jealousy of some of the King's ministers. After the death of the King, Aga Hasan Ali Shah discovered that the Prime Minister was his bitter enemy and was bent upon having him removed out of his way. The attitude of the Prime Minister provoked Aga Hasan Ali Shah into open rebellion in self defence. But the odds were too heavy against him. He decided to leave the country, and crossed over to Afghanistan with a large number of his followers.

In Afghanistan, Aga Hasan Ali Shah came upon some British officers who were involved in a small war with the ruling dynasty of that country. From Afghanistan, Aga Hasan Ali Shah came down to Sind and gave the British the benefit of his experience as a soldier in their fight against some of the Mirs of Sind. His services were greatly appreciated by the British Government and a lifelong pension was bestowed upon him.

Aga Hasan Ali Shah later moved to Bombay, which he made his permanent headquarters, and settled down to a life given to organising and consolidating his followers in a progressive, well-knit community.

One of Aga Hasan Ali Shah's great passions in life was horses. He had in his stables some of the best breeds of Arabia. His fondness for horses had made him one of the prominent supporters of the turf. Many cups were won by him on the race-course and they are still preserved in the family as precious heirloom.

King Edward VII, as Prince of Wales, visited Aga Hasan Ali Shah at his residence during his visit to India. It was an honour which, with the exception of the leading ruling princes, was accorded to no other nobleman and was an acknowledgment of his princely birth and the great service he had rendered to the British Government.

Aga Hasan Ali Shah died full of years and honours in April 1881 leaving three sons—Aga Ali Shah who succeeded to the Imamate of his father, Aga Jangi Shah and Aga Akbar Shah. The last resting place of this great Persian nobleman, warrior, statesman, sportsman and spiritual leader, called Hasanabad after him, is at Mazgaon, Bombay, where his followers have erected a mausoleum which is visited to this day by thousands of Ismailis.

Aga Ali Shah, the father of the present Aga Khan, now became Aga Khan II and Imam and spiritual leader of the Ismailis. He had been carefully trained for the great position which he inherited. Under the instruction of Persian and Arab teachers, eminent for their piety and learning, he had been taught the oriental languages and he achieved a reputation as an authority on Persian and Arabic literature, as a student of metaphysics and as an exponent of religious philosophy.

He was President of the Muhammadan National Association and did much to promote and organise educational and philanthropic institutions for the benefit of the Muslims of Bombay. He was also, for some time, additional member of the Bombay Council. The nomination to the Council in those days was a rare distinction bestowed only on men of outstanding ability and high social position. He discharged his responsibilities and onerous duties in a manner which drew the admiration of all.

He spared no pains in raising the social status of his followers. Destitute members of the community received generous help at his hands. As a result of his initiative a school for Khoja children was opened in Bombay.

Aga Ali Shah was a skillful rider and a great sportsman. He was very fond of hunting but never made use of shelters in the hunt for big game. Standing exposed to danger he took a sure and steady aim at wild animals. In this way he had bagged no less than forty tigers.

Aga Ali Shah married three times. His first two wives died in Bombay. He then married Nawab Aafia Shamsul Muluk, a niece of Shah Mohammad

Aly of the Qajar dynasty of Persia and a daughter of Nizam-ud-Daulah, Prime Minister to King Fatch Ali Shah. Of this marriage was born Sir Sultan Mohammad Shah, the present Aga Khan.

Aga Ali Shah's two sons by his first wife died in his life-time. Shahabuddin Shah died at the age of 33 and his younger brother aged 30 fell from a horse while riding and sustained serious injuries which proved fatal. These two deaths, coming one after the other, were a great blow to Aga Ali Shah and about nine months later he died at Poona in 1885.

His remains were taken to the holy city of Kerbala and buried at Najaf with great honours.

While other communities were advancing in every field of activity, the Muslims were lagging behind everywhere. Prince Aga Khan, who was fully alive to the changing conditions of the times, foresaw the rash that would come from Muslim backwardness and their aloofness from politics. He proved himself destined to take a constructive part in the country's political and general life and thus rendered great service to the country as a whole, for without Muslim co-operation there would have been no progress and no stability in the struggle for freedom.

The root cause of Muslim political poverty lay in educational backwardness. Unless an attempt was made to remove this defect, economic progress could not be visualized. No one appreciated this fact more than Prince Aga Khan, and education, in consequence, became to him the most important part of his mission. But misplaced content and prejudice had taken possession of the Muslim community after their political downfall and was conflicting with their progress and enlightenment. If Muslims have now realized that Islam is not opposed to modern learning and that science and knowledge are necessary factors for advancement, they have to be grateful to Prince Aga Khan to a very large measure for this enlightenment.

He worked hard to change the old attitude, brought about a political awakening among the Muslims and welded them into an effective organization.

MUSLIM INDIA OF PRE-PARTITION DAYS

A study group of some serious-minded young Muslims was sitting one day in Karachi trying to imagine the fate of Muslim India without men like Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Sir Syed Ahmad, Prince Aga Khan and Sir Mohammad Iqbal. They took up these great names one by one and went over how Indian Muslims would have fared in the stormy seas of Indian politics without the benefit of the guidance of these personalities.

The discussion took an interesting turn when it centred on the personality of Prince Aga Khan. The discussionists recalled his prominent role in successfully establishing a separate individuality for Indian Muslims when he led a deputation of Muslims to Viceroy Lord Minto as back as 1906; his unparalleled services in bringing the Aligarh Muslim University into being, the university which acted as the mainspring of Muslim renaissance in India; his munificent grants and princely donations for the educational and economic uplift of Muslims; his powerful influence and prestige among the British, which proved a very great asset in the cause of Muslim standpoint being understood and appreciated by the rulers of the sub-continent; and his statesmanlike advocacy of the Indian Muslim opinion at the Round Table Conference in London.

As the picture of his unstinted, selfless services to Muslims unfolded itself before their view, the study group was forced to conclude that without the Aga Khan, Muslim India would have been like a rudderless ship sadly at the mercy of mountainous waves threatening to engulf it from all sides. Members of the group agreed that the late Dr. Shafa'at Ahmed Khan was right when he said in 1932: "The Aga Khan is the greatest Muslim leader in Asia."

Whereas Hindu India was blessed with first-rate leadership in every sphere of life, the world of Islam in the sub-continent lacked zealous and selfless leaders. After Sir Syed Ahmed and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, there were few leaders of the right type and fewer still of the calibre of the departed builders of the Aligarh College save and except His Royal Highness Prince Aga Khan. After them the mantle of true leadership fell on him and he guided admirably the political destinies of Indian Muslims.

He was in the field of active politics since 1902, when he was barely twenty-five years old. His penetrating genius soon discovered that the Muslims of India were not a mere community but a nation in a special sense. Looking at the Muslims in this light he sensed their needs and their interests with an urgency and force not found in others. His acute awareness of the problems of Muslim India and his anxiety to help them overcome their handicaps was evident from the eloquent case he submitted before the Viceroy in 1906 for separate electorates for his people.

His thorough awareness of the handicaps suffered by Indian Muslims and the measures initiated by him to raise his community have been largely responsible for the political growth of Muslim India. Since the downfall of the Moghal Empire, the Muslims had held back from modern education and refrained from taking part in politics and had, therefore, not fitted themselves for public life and office.

While other communities were advancing in every field of activity, the Muslims were lagging behind everywhere. Prince Aga Khan, who was fully alive to the changing conditions of the times, foresaw the result that would follow from Muslim backwardness and their aloofness from politics. He pressed the Muslims to take a constructive part in the country's political and economic life and thus rendered great service to the country as a whole, for without Muslim co-operation there would have been no progress and no stimulus to the struggle for freedom.

The root cause of Muslim political poverty lay in educational backwardness. Unless an attempt was made to remove this defect, economic poverty could not be eradicated. No one appreciated this fact more than Prince Aga Khan, and education, in consequence, became to him the most important part of his mission. But misplaced conceit and prejudice had taken possession of the Muslim community after their political downfall and was interfering with their progress and enlightenment. If Muslims have now realised that Islam is not opposed to modern learning and that science and knowledge are necessary factors for advancement, they have to be grateful to Prince Aga Khan to a very large measure for this enlightenment.

He worked hard to change the old attitude, brought about a political consciousness among the Muslims and welded them into an effective organisa-

tion for the protection of their rights. It was mainly due to his efforts that in 1906 the All-India Muslim League came into existence. Before that in the same year, as already noted he had led a deputation of Indian Muslims to the Viceroy Lord Minto and pressed for adequate representation for the Muslim community on local bodies and on the legislative councils.

It is now acknowledged on all hands that had Muslims not enjoyed the right of separate and communal representation, their progress would have been negligent. Without safeguards they would have stood little chance of progress as compared with the other more progressive communities.

Enlightened liberal opinion confessed at the time that there was great force in the argument stressed by the Muslim leaders that to make Muslim seats dependent on Hindu votes, far from tending to make both communities conscious of a common citizenship, would embitter the existing antagonism.

The deputation to the Viceroy consisted of the most influential and the most representative body of the Muslims which had yet taken up the cause of the community. With His Royal Highness Prince Aga Khan as the leader, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Hakim Ajmal Khan, (Sir) Ali Imam, (Sir) Muzammil Ullah Khan, (Sir) Rafiqud-din Ahmed, (Sir) Mohammad Shafi, (Sir) Abdul Rahim, (Sir) Salim Ullah, Mr. (Justice) Shah Din and a number of other distinguished Muslims formed the deputation.

The memorandum submitted to the Viceroy said in part: "The Mohammedans of India number, according to the census taken in the year 1901, over sixty-two millions, or between one-fifth and one-fourth of the total population of His Majesty's Indian Dominions; and if a reduction be made for the uncivilised portions of the community enumerated under the heads of Animists and other minor religions, as well as for those classes who are ordinarily classified as Hindus, but, properly speaking, are not Hindus at all, the proportion of Mohammedans to the Hindu majority becomes much larger. We therefore desire to submit that, under any system of representation, extended or limited, a community in itself more numerous than the entire population of any first class European Power, except Russia, may justly lay claim to adequate recognition as an important factor in the State. We venture, indeed, with Your Excellency's permission, to go a step further and urge that the position accorded to the Mohammedan community in any kind of representation, direct or indirect, and all other ways affecting their status, should be commensurate

not merely with their numerical strength, but also with their political importance. We also hope that Your Excellency will, in this connection, be pleased to give due consideration to the position which they occupied in India a little more than a hundred years ago, and of which the traditions have naturally not faded from their minds.

"It cannot be denied that we Mohammedans are a distinct community, with additional interests of our own which are not shared by other communities, and these have hitherto suffered from the fact that they have not been adequately represented. Even in the Provinces in which the Mohammedans constitute a distinct majority of the population, they have too often been treated as though they were inappreciably small political factors that might without unfairness be neglected. This has been the case, to some extent, in the Punjab; but in a more marked degree in Sind and in Eastern Bengal.

"If, as is unfortunately the case with the Mohammedans, they are not adequately represented in the affairs of Government they will lose in prestige and influence which are justly their due. We, therefore, pray that Government will be graciously pleased to provide that, both in the Gazetted and the Subordinate and Ministerial services of all Indian Provinces, a due proportion of Mohammedans shall always find place".

In due course the Muslims found some of their demands conceded in the Act of 1909 and the regulations made under it. They were given what was later to be known as "weightage", i.e. more seats than they were entitled to by numbers only, and, while voting also in "general" constituencies side by side with Hindus, they were to vote for their own members in separate and wholly Muslim constituencies.

The country was not lacking in critics of separate electorates, but they could not suggest any effective alternative by which the interests of the minorities could be safeguarded in a country where the Hindus and the Muslims voted for their co-religionists only. In fact, the Muslim representation to the Viceroy by suggesting a procedure, under which the Muslims could secure genuine representation, facilitated the introduction of the system of elections in India. Liberal leaders like Gokhale did not object to its basic proposals.

After the work of the deputation was over, Prince Aga Khan and Nawab Moshin-ul-Mulk got busy with the organisation of a Muslim political organisation. The success of the deputation inspired new hopes, and it became

essential to have a permanent organisation. After some correspondence between the two, a meeting of Muslim leaders was held on the 30th December, 1906, at Dacca, and it was decided to organize the All-India Muslim League. His Highness the Aga Khan was voted permanent President. He occupied this post for seven years. It was realised by all that by securing separate electorates for the Muslims, he had achieved something of a fundamental and far-reaching importance.

The Muslim League had little funds for the propagation of its ideals and for office work. Prince Aga Khan not only promised an annual grant but made a handsome donation for immediate expenses.

Charming and handsome Prince Aga Khan captivated the heart of every Muslim he met. Sir Mohammad Yaqub once wrote of him in the following words: "I happened to see His Highness for the first time in 1896, when the young Khoja leader started his public career by making a pilgrimage to the M.A.O. College Aligarh, the great symbol of Muslim renaissance, and made his acquaintance with the founder of the institution, the late Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan, who was then the foremost Muslim leader of the day. It was perhaps this inspiring inauguration of the Aga Khan's public life which kindled in his heart an unabating fire for the service of his community. The late Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who arranged this historic meeting, had already perceived the germs of great talent in His Highness, and brought him closer to the Aligarh movement, and the Aga Khan soon appeared on the horizon."

His Royal Highness favoured co-operation with the British rulers, and saw in that co-operation the seeds of self-government for the people of India. At the session of the Muslim League at Delhi in 1910, he exhorted his co-religionists for co-operation in these words:

"Now that the Reforms Scheme has been finally settled and is actually in active operation, we must accept it in an appreciative spirit and try to make the best of it. It is to the interests of Indians—Hindus and Muslims, Christians and Parsis alike—to accept the Reforms in a spirit of cordial appreciation, and it now lies with us to do our utmost as enlightened citizens to co-operate with the Government and our representatives in the Councils in working these for the common welfare of the people, remembering that if we make a

practical and beneficent use of this opportunity, we shall surely in time to come get a further advance towards constitutional Government. In fact, self-government has come to our very doors. On the other hand, if we view the Reform Scheme and the Regulations under it in a spirit of obstructive patriotism, instead of using the powers placed in our hands for the development of those forces which are the dynamic factors in national progress all the world over, then as surely as night follows day we shall divert the slant of the fair wind which ought to drive us far on towards the realisation of many of our cherished ambitions".

The Ajman-i-Islam Hall, Bombay, on January 10, 1910, was the scene of an enthusiastic gathering in honour of His Royal Highness who was presented with an address from both the Shiah and the Sunni sects in appreciation of his services in the cause of Muslim India. The address stated that by his deep and unflinching interest in the affairs of the Muslims he had endeared himself to every Muslim heart in India and they were proud to own and acknowledge him as their leader.

His Royal Highness also gave great support to the cause of Urdu in those days of Muslim political regeneration. The greatest part of his famous speech on the well-known Education Bill of Gokhale was confined to the importance of Urdu for the Muslims of India. In addition to this he delivered several public speeches on the religious and cultural influence of Urdu over the Muslims of India. He looked upon the agitation for the preservation of Urdu as a golden opportunity for creating a political awakening among the Muslims. He also gave monetary support to the Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu. Now that Muslim India has achieved separate nationhood and has a much closer link with the world of Islam, His Royal Highness advocates that Arabic should be adopted as the state language of Pakistan.

The energy and ardour with which Prince Aga Khan threw himself into the mission of organising the Muslims of India and raising them to higher levels of education and of economic wellbeing made his name a household word among his co-religionists. On crucial occasions he used to render very valuable service to his people. After the Muslim League had split into two sections on the issue of the Simon Commission and a rot had set in Muslim politics, it was he who arrested the rot. When he presided over the All-Parties Muslim Conference, he brought together in heartiest co-operation

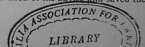
elements as heterogeneous as those represented by Sir Mohammad Shafi and Maulana Mohammad Ali. His absolute sincerity made him the central figure in Indian Muslim politics and achieved for him immense popularity among all classes of Muslims.

At every available opportunity he strove to advance the interests of the Muslim community. Aside from political rights he demanded from the British rulers safeguards for the protection and promotion of Muslim education, languages, religion, personal law and charitable institutions.

It is only by comparing the position of the Indian Muslims in the recent past to that in the year of King Edward's coronation in 1902, the year in which Prince Aga Khan for the first time roused the Muslim peoples to a sense of their responsibilities in his historic speech at Delhi, that one can measure to some extent the tremendous impression the personality of His Royal Highness had made upon Muslim India.

Always an intelligent observer of political events, he warned the Muslims against pitfalls, and brought them to the path of sanity during the tumultuous period of resurgent India's struggle against foreign domination. When the Khalifat movement was gripping the imagination of the people, he told the Muslims that the campaign could only lead to more misery for them. He exhorted the duped emigrants to stick to their homes and did his best to counter the ill-conceived appeal which was driving so many into a terrible exodus. Many saved their lives and property by heeding his advice. Others set out in blazing heat on dusty roads and paid a devastating price for their overzealousness. On their trek back from Afghanistan they found themselves half-crazed and sick and homeless. Prince Aga Khan rendered unstinting help in re-housing the survivors of this misguided journey. From his own pocket he provided funds to buy back land where this was possible, and spent great sums to furnish new homes and provide farming implements to those who needed them.

Under Gandhi's campaign of passive resistance numerous Muslim undergraduates were walking out of Aligarh, announcing that they would not resume their studies until India gained her full independence. Prince Aga Khan, to whom the Muslim University owed much of its existence, appealed to the young men to think twice before sacrificing their careers for a slogan. Many took heed of his advice and saved themselves from ruin.



With the passage of time, the voice of Prince Aga Khan became very effective and decisive in the Muslim political world of India. In 1928, when a crisis had occurred in the political fortunes of the Muslim community and it had come to be divided into two camps with a great controversy between the two rival political organisations, the Muslim League and the All-India Muslim Conference, it was His Royal Highness who by the magic of his personality and because of his popularity based on great achievements could evolve a feeling of unity and a sentiment of common national will among the Muslims.

The Muslim community had split into two sections on the question of boycotting or co-operating with the Simon Commission. The labours of the Commission, however, opened the eyes of both the sections to the dangers ahead. The climax was reached when, during the session of the Legislative Assembly at Simla, Pandit Moti Lal Nehru started canvassing support for his constitutional scheme with the object of having a resolution passed by the Assembly approving the principles embodied in the Nehru Report.

The Muslim members of the Central Legislature scented in this manoeuvre an imminent danger to the political existence of the Muslim community. They issued a manifesto from Simla on the 10th of September, 1928, which said: "We want to make it quite clear that no constitution will be acceptable to the Mussalmans unless it provides effective and adequate protection of their interests. The Conference at Lucknow has not only set at naught the demands embodied at the annual session of the All-India Muslim League held at Aligarh in 1925 and in Delhi 1926, but even the proposals of some Muslim leaders formulated at Delhi on the 20th of March 1926 which were adopted by the Indian National Congress at Madras".

When Hindu India took a firm stand on the Nehru Report, the immediate effect of it was to unite the Muslims in opposition to it. The two wings into which the Muslim League had been divided for some time past, began to draw together under the guidance of Prince Aga Khan. An All-Parties Muslim Conference met at Delhi toward the end of 1928 and in it representatives of all shades of Muslim opinion from the farthest 'left' to the farthest 'right' assembled under the presidency of Prince Aga Khan.

On January 1, 1929, this Conference adopted a full-scale manifesto of Muslim claims. Its principal points were as follows:

"In view of India's vast extent and its ethnological, linguistic, administrative and geographical or territorial divisions, the only form of government suitable to Indian conditions is a federal system with complete autonomy and residuary powers vested in the constituent States.

"The right of Muslims to elect their representatives on the various Indian legislatures through separate electorates is now the law of the land, and Muslims cannot be deprived of that right without their consent.

"In the Provinces in which Mussalmans constitute a minority they shall have a representation in no case less than that enjoyed by them under the existing law.

"It is essential that Mussalmans should have their due share in the Central and Provincial cabinets."

Mr. Jinnah's efforts for Hindu-Muslim unity had not received the response which they deserved, but he had persevered. The appointment of the Simon Commission gave him an opportunity for making another bid for the success of his mission. He joined hands with the Congress in boycotting the Commission, but developments at a Congress meeting in Calcutta forced both him and Maulana Mohammad Ali to give up all hope of receiving justice for Muslims at the hands of Congress. Later Maulana Mohammed Ali participated in the All-Parties Muslim Conference at Delhi under the presidency of His Royal Highness.

This was probably the most representative Muslim gathering since the Simla Deputation in 1906, and included the representatives of the Khilafat Conference, the Jamait-ul-Ulema, and the All-India Muslim League (both Jinnah and Shafi sections).

By travelling over a long and devious route, Maulana Mohammad Ali had come to the view so consistently expressed for years by Prince Aga Khan. He came at last to denounce the policy of the Congress, and declared that he disliked domination either by the British or by the Hindus. "We refuse to join Mr. Gandhi", he was forced to say, "because his movement is not a movement for the complete independence of India but for making the seventy millions of Indian Mussalmans dependents of the Hindu Mahasabha".

Maulana Mohammad Ali also acknowledged that the eminent leadership of Prince Aga Khan had united the Muslims, and he expressed great admiration for him. Prince Aga Khan also looked upon Maulana Mohammad Ali as one of the foremost exponents of the rights of Muslims.

Stressing the need for unity in Muslim ranks, His Royal Highness said in his Presidential address at the Conference: "The great lesson of modern history is that only those nations succeed and only those policies lead to national greatness which are based not on ideas or ideals but on the general consensus of views and opinions of the people".

Amplifying the term "communal", he remarked: "The Muslims of India are not a community but in a special sense a nation composed of many communities with a population outnumbering in the aggregate the total even of the pre-war German Empire. India as a whole cannot be prosperous or a self-governing country if such a large and important section of the community as the Muslims remains in doubt as to whether their cultural entity is safe or not".

In conclusion he said: "The Muslims will fight shoulder to shoulder with their Hindu brothers for a constitution which will give India a stable Government of the people, by the people, for the equal good and advancement of all—and not for the advantage of any particular caste or creed, which would hold the other in its grip".

Maulana Abdul Majid Salik, a veteran Punjab journalist and Editor of the daily "Inqilab", in a recent article described the Conference as "an unprecedented event in the history of Indian Muslims."

Describing the proceedings of the Conference, Maulana Salik wrote in his article: "Sir Aga Khan, who was staying in Delhi as the Viceroy's guest, arrived at the Conference amidst scenes of great splendour. He made very far-sighted and convincing observations on the political situation. He pointed out that it was wrong to call the Muslims a community. 'You could call the Sunnies or the Shias a community', he remarked, 'but it is not right to address the whole world of Islam in India as a community. Muslims of India are a nation'. It would seem the principles of the two nation theory were at the back of his mind much before any one else had begun to think on these lines."

The Simon Commission did not accept the Muslim resolution as a whole. Its report which was published in May 1930, declared that the future Government of India could not be of a unitary type. It must be federal, not merely in response to the growth of provincial loyalties but primarily because it must embrace all India, and it was only in a federation that the States could be expected, in course of time, to unite with British India. The dyarchy should lapse and the whole field of provincial administration be entrusted to Ministers responsible to their legislatures. Provincial Ministers, to be appointed by the Governor, should constitute a single collective cabinet, and the Governor should not interfere in their decisions except for stated reasons such as the safety of the province or the protection of minorities. The creation of Sind and Orissa should be further examined and the North West Frontier Province should be given a Legislative Council.

The Commission declared that the Hindu-Muslim tension had not been lessened but had been increased by the operation of the Act of 1919. It, however, desired the continuance of separate electorates for Muslims.

Meantime, the Congress which met in Lucknow in 1929, authorised a civil disobedience movement which was started in April 1930 under Mahatma Gandhi's personal command. The movement was quickly denounced by the Mussalmans.

In the light of the events that followed the political activities in the country, the Simon Report was put on the shelf and the British Government convened a Round Table Conference, which met in three sessions on three different occasions.

At the Round Table Conference, leadership of Muslims passed to His Royal Highness Prince Aga Khan, who was better suited than any other Muslim leader for the negotiations that were to ensue. He played his cards remarkably well, and with his inimitable tact and general attitude of helpfulness kept the Muslim team solidly together. He tried to come to an understanding with Mahatma Gandhi on the Hindu-Muslim question, but when these talks proved unfruitful, he negotiated a Minorities Pact, under which all sections of the Indian political life, except the caste Hindus, joined hands with the Muslims.

Under the wise leadership of His Royal Highness, the Indian Muslims came out with flying colours from the Round Table Conference. He had

...ed the ship with skill and courage and brought it safely and comfortably into harbour. The Muslim community was saved, and its political future was assured. It had entered the political arena as a divided, disorganised and humiliated group, but now it had become a powerful and strong factor in national affairs.

Two events stand out very prominently in the life of the Indian Muslims as a result of the powerful advocacy of their rights by his Royal Highness : (1) it was mainly through his efforts that Sind was made a separate province ; (2) the elevation of the status of the North-West Frontier Province to that of a Governor's Province with a constitution analogous to that of other provinces. Prince Aga Khan was very happy at the separation of Sind from Bombay Province and had informed Sind Muslims telegraphically about the happy event.

While it is undoubtedly true that all the Muslim demands were not met, but some of the main claims of the community were satisfied. They were given legitimate protection in the future constitution with their cultural, religious and political interests sufficiently safeguarded and their great importance as a community adequately secured. This satisfactory state of affairs was the result of the wisdom and skill of His Royal Highness as a negotiator of Muslim claims.

Mr. M. A. Aziz, author of "The Crescent in the Land of the Rising Sun", expressed himself on His Royal Highness thus : "The Round Table Conference in London has happily shown us the way how to deal with problems which appear at first sight to be insoluble, and, in this connection, I desire—I am sure every Muslim in India desires with me—to pay a tribute to the great services which His Highness the Aga Khan has rendered during the deliberations of the Round Table Conference and the sessions of the Joint Parliamentary Committee to the cause of Muslims in India".

The Muslims were deeply alarmed by the attitude of the congress after the Round Table Conference. Mahatma Gandhi had asked that if the Hindu-Muslim problem could not be settled, the work of constitution-making should proceed. The implications of this attitude were not lost upon the Muslims, but the situation became grave owing to a division among Muslim ranks. A section, headed by Nawab Ismail Khan, had resigned from the Muslim Conference.

Some responsible Muslim leaders like Seth Abdulla Haroon sought the advice of His Royal Highness, who was in France, on the course that Muslims should pursue in the troubled times that were ahead.

Prince Aga Khan's cabled reply was characteristic of the man and was in keeping with his deep yearning for Muslim unity. He said : "Muslims should remain united. Inform me Ismail's address. Will appeal to him. We minority if also disunited, future hopeless. Community can get freedom for India quickly safely through Round Table means than risky Congress methods. From patriotic point of view safer quicker take constitutional line but for Muslim demands you must take united action and absolutely essential now without delay Muslim leaders deputation to Viceroy. Finally insist connection four demands Bengal Punjab Sind and immediate promise residuary powers autonomy provinces. For question separate or joint electorates ask plebiscite of Muslim voters to decide. Work on these lines. Keep me informed".

Sir Abdulla Haroon, who was a well-known Muslim politician and leader of Sind Muslims, regarded His Royal Highness as "the real saviour of the Muslims of India". He believed that Prince Aga Khan was a great Muslim leader who had always actively assisted Indian Muslims on all occasions. Whenever in difficulty, Sir Abdulla would always seek the guidance and advice of His Royal Highness.

Prince Aga Khan was also approached by several other leaders of Muslim opinion in India from time to time, singly or collectively, for guidance and advice. Sir Fazl-e-Hussain, a veteran Punjab leader, had asked for His Royal Highness's views in 1935 about the political future of the Mussalmans in India.

His Royal Highness sent him a scheme. As modified by Sir Fazl-e-Hussain, it went as follows :

"What should be the future policy of the Muslims of India? This is a very difficult question indeed. We are in India in a minority (not even one fourth of the population) and for all the time we have to live in India, and for all time we have the Hindu majority by our sides. This position would, indeed, have been an extremely difficult one, if the Muslims were 25 per cent all over the country, and Hindus everywhere in a majority. But as things are, fortunately, it is not so bad, for in one part, however small, we are a positive major-

city in a frontier province touching independent Muslim states, and another touching the sea. Again in Bengal, which is a frontier and maritime province, we have a majority, though a small and weak one.

"Our position is this—Where we are small minorities (as in the South and the Centre) we must frankly accept the position. The kind of safeguards we have looked for in the past were natural to our transitional stage. Separate electorates, weightages, etc., are all artificial and only a means to an end. Reservation of seats with joint electorates is much worse. The British will more and more have to look after their own commercial interests, and I doubt very much if they can, or care to give us props to keep up the sort of temporary alliance advantageous to both.

"Absolute reliance on the Hindus, and following them like sheep, would mean eventually that we would descend to the position of the untouchables and accept mere subordination leading to absorption or degradation.

"These being the circumstances, what are we to do? To this there is only one answer: that we should take advantage of our position in the North, and in Bengal and get all the natural advantages we can out of it. What are those natural advantages? First, in All-India affairs we should be federalists, using all our influence so that our provinces at least should have such autonomy as the Indian Princes will enjoy under Federation. Secondly, gradually by changing the character of the army from a professional force to a territorial one, and having for each province the kind of advantage that Bavaria had in the old German Empire (which great princes will have in the new India Federation) by using all our strength for the legitimate end, make India what she really is, i.e., a United States of Southern Asia rather than something of the model of present day Italy or Germany. Thirdly, we must strengthen our numbers by child welfare, by hygienic home life, by intensive education and by the upkeep of our national individuality. There must be keenest religious and secular education and we must open our arms as wide as possible to adopt members of the depressed classes.

"All this will need money and we are economically weaker than our neighbours. Here is the crux of our policy: How are these things to be carried out? In self-interest, if for no other reason, our attitude should be the hardest possible political work on the lines of moderate State socialism, a policy that will get for us the sympathy of many depressed and poor Hindus, as well as bring us in touch with world movements—even in such countries as

Germany and Italy. Our members in all the provinces (and especially in Bengal) should always be on the side of putting as many taxation burdens as possible on the upper middle classes and reducing, as much as they can, indirect taxes, which fall generally on the poor. With this, constant help not only for education and social work, but for hygiene, child welfare, proper nursing schemes, etc., etc., all should be carried on by the state. If the taxation gets too heavy put it on the shoulders of the upper and middle classes, saving the poor.

"But this alone will not satisfy. The problem of indebtedness will have to be faced, and will be a big plank politically, of our programme.

"Our people are in debt. The whole world has taken this up. Italy and Germany have practically clean-swept the burdens from the debtor. France has removed four-fifths of it. In America 40 per cent of it has been knocked off and practically all the State Legislation has been to free the debtor (which is the majority) from the grasp of the capitalist and money-lending minority. This being the case, we have to start a real economic party with a semi-socialist programme throughout each province—purely Federalist programme for the Centre.

"In India there are two alternatives by which to improve the position of the Muslims and remove their indebtedness. The simplest would be one shilling in the rupee (say twenty to the pound sterling). This would go a long way, without unduly worrying the capitalist, to remove Muslim indebtedness. The other alternative is the intensive wiping off of contracts. Of the two I much prefer the cheap rupee as it will help our industries and will get the Hindu's support too. But we will be up against the British who want an expensive rupee for their own commerce. Whether we should make it our national policy to fight for a cheap rupee (and its result of building up our industries) or go for the law of contract and revision of debts, is a question of practical politics.

"In Bengal we should make it our national policy to go for abolition of the permanent settlement which, once done away with, will enormously help the position of the Muslim labouring classes in the country.

"To sum up: the only safe Muslim policy is intensively to keep our individuality and improve our economic position—not by foolish and vague appeals to the non-existent wealthy, but by intensive State socialism and

nation-building, making the State pay for it through taxation of the upper and middle classes. So much the worse for them if they are brought to the level of the poor in a few generations, for that is what is happening in all highly civilised countries.

"Imperial policy: intensive co-operation with such elements as work for the United States of India rather than an imperial and unitary India.

"The Indian Army to be territorialised and placed under the control of the provinces gradually, and its professional character done away with and made into a national protective force.

"Cheap rupee or revision of debts, doing away with the permanent settlement in Bengal and high taxation of landlords—in the provinces specially.

"Intensive teaching of child welfare and conversion of such members of depressed classes as are willing to come and work under our religious leaders.

"After nearly 45 years of study and mixing with every kind of politician all over the West, I am driven to offer this programme as the only one that can save the Muslims of India in the long run.

"Our patriotism, of course, should never leave any doubt, and our Hindu countrymen must realise that the welfare of India as a whole—though we are a minority—is as dear to us as to them. We yield to no one in our desire (which happens to be also our own interest) to raise the economic position of the poor throughout the country, and by industries which are dependent on cheap rupee in terms of sterling to making the country as a whole self-supporting".

Paying tributes to His Royal Highness for his selfless service in the cause of Indian Muslims, Sir Syed Wazir Hassan said in his presidential address at the All-India Muslim League Bombay session in 1936: "There is no other person in India except His Highness the Aga Khan who can make all the parties unite on one platform. He is the gardener who first sowed the seeds of separate electorates, which helped safeguard the interests of Muslims".

Presiding over a communal harmony meeting at Dacca in 1931, in which Prince Aga Khan gave a speech, Nawab Habibullah Bahadur referred to his great services and said: "The movement for separate electorates which

you started in 1906 brought about the national awakening of Muslims. The dream of Pakistan would have been shattered and would never have been realised had you not fought for a separate electorate for Muslims".

In 1928, when His Royal Highness had an occasion to broadcast a talk to the United States of America on the claims and aspirations of Indian Muslims, Prince Aga Khan had said: "Indian Muslims want something that will save them and their ideals from being submerged. They ask for an adequate share in the Federal Legislature, and also in the Federal administration of India, and they claim self-determination, as well as fully autonomous administrations, for all racial and linguistic areas—and particularly for those areas which have a majority Muslim population".

Prince Aga Khan has always deplored the neglect by Muslims of the fields of industry and commerce, holding that if they had developed properly their opportunities they might have acquired both power and prosperity and thus stimulated in the most effective manner progress among themselves.

He always impressed upon his co-religionists the need for developing a spirit of self-sacrifice, giving them the example of Western countries. In a speech he said once: "The material superiority of the West has not impressed me so much as the great number of people who sacrifice every personal advantage for the advancement of some ideal. This is so not only in England but in the so-called materialist France and Germany. Vast numbers in every village, in every district, give up their lives to the service of mankind, and of knowledge. Nor is this spirit of self-sacrifice confined to the rank of believing Christians and Jews. Amongst the so-called Agnostics and Atheists I have seen a wealth of true spiritual devotion. If only a little of it we could infuse into the hearts of Musalmans of India, we should be very different from what we are today".

CHAPTER VI

THE MUSLIM UNIVERSITY THAT PRINCE AGA KHAN BUILT

THE Aligarh Muslim University owes much of its astounding progress to the unbounded enthusiasm and munificent donations of His Royal Highness Prince Aga Khan. It was his profound personal interest in the M.A.O. College at Aligarh and his great efforts and sacrifices in the cause of Muslim education that raised the College to the status of a University and planted it on firm foundations.

The Aligarh University will remain a living monument of Prince Aga Khan's educational activities in the interests of Islam. One may very well assert that without him, the M.A.O. College at Aligarh would never have evolved into a Muslim University and there would have been no adequate means of maintaining Islamic culture intact in India. His Royal Highness earned the gratitude of the entire world of Islam by fulfilling a great want of the Indian Muslim nation, and today he may feel justly proud that if Muslim India has been able to carve out a separate nationhood for itself, it is mainly and principally because of the Aligarh University. In other words, as Prince Aga Khan himself put it, had there been no Aligarh, there would have been no Pakistan.

Sir Syed Ahmed founded the Aligarh College, but it was Prince Aga Khan who translated the dream of the Muslim University into a reality. In the words of Maulana Shibli: "That which could not be achieved by six crore Muslims was accomplished by Prince Aga Khan".

The work done by Prince Aga Khan in founding the Muslim University at Aligarh has been universally acknowledged as great not only because of its intrinsic importance and its effect on the Muslims of India, but because it led to a regeneration of Islam and caused the Muslim world to waken to the realities of life.

His first visit to the M.A.O. College at Aligarh was in November 1896 when he was barely nineteen years old. Sir Syed Ahmed, the founder of the C. lege, read out an address in Persian and expressed great joy at his visit



Prince Aga Khan, with the Nawab of Rampur on his right, proceeding to deliver the Convocation Address at the Aligarh Muslim University

"We propose to establish an institution capable of dealing with the numerous interests involved; we want to be able to give our Muslim youth not merely the best education that can be given in India, but a training which will enable them to take their place in any country in the world. We want to give our youth such a course of learning as to command the same respect of all nations as that which is given at the University of London or at the University of Paris."



A rousing reception was accorded to His Royal Highness when he arrived in Delhi in 1928 to preside over the All-Parties Muslim Conference

and looked upon it as a sign of great hope for the future of the institution. The young Prince's reply to the address was so full of substance, so packed with meaning and with hope for the future that it attracted the notice of entire Muslim India.

In 1902 when elaborate arrangements were being made for the holding of the Delhi Durbar the Indian Muslims organised the Mohammedan Educational Conference and His Royal Highness was voted the first President of this first conference of its type. In his presidential address, His Highness surveyed the problem of Muslim education in all its aspects and made valuable suggestions which subsequently guided the steps to further progress of this premier Muslim educational institution.

He said that the splendid concept of Aligarh must be encouraged. In eloquent pleading he drew a picture of a great university for Muslim youths developed on the lines of Oxford and Cambridge.

"If we really deplore the fallen condition of our people", he said, "we must unite for their redemption and make an effort for the foundation of a university where Muslim youths can get, in addition to modern sciences, a knowledge of their glorious past and religion and where the whole atmosphere of the place, it being a residential university, may, like Oxford, give more attention to character than to mere examinations".

He added : "Muslims of India have a legitimate interest in the intellectual development of their co-religionists in other lands, and the best way of helping them is by making Aligarh a Muslim Oxford, where they can all send their best students not only to learn modern sciences, but to develop that honesty and sense of self-sacrifice which distinguished the Muslims of the first century. Such a university would restore the faded glories of our people. By founding this university we can arrest the decadence of Islam, and if we are not willing to make sacrifices for such an end, must I not conclude that we do not really care whether the faith of Islam is dead or not?"

"We propose to establish an institution capable of dealing with the enormous interests involved; we want to be able to give our Muslim youths not merely the finest education that can be given in India, but a training equal to that which can be given in any country in the World. We want Aligarh to be such a home of learning as to command the same respect of scholars as Berlin or Oxford, Leipzig or Paris".

He pointed out forcefully that one of the clearest ways by which the decay of political power of the Muslims might be arrested was to set up a great central Muslim University. He traced the causes of the intellectual and moral degeneration of Muslims and showed that what was needed was an educational centre, a model seat of learning, to which Muslims all over the world should turn for light and guidance.

"We want," he said, "to create for our people an intellectual capital—a city that shall be a home of elevated ideas and high ideals, a centre from which light and guidance shall be diffused amongst the Muslims of India and out of India too and shall hold up to the world a noble standard of justice and virtue and purity of our beloved faith."

He was aware that a crisis had come over the fortunes of Islam and that unless the Muslims paid attention to the education of the rising generation, the very existence of Islam would be at stake.

When Prince Aga Khan visited the Aligarh College in 1910, the College trustees presented him an address in which they spoke of his services to the institution in glowing terms. His Royal Highness replied that what he had done for the College had been for him a labour of love, and that amongst the various interests and pursuits that occupied his time, none was so dear to him as the service he could render the M.A.O. College.

He then referred to the dream of "our mighty university worthy of Islam in India" and said that every Muslim should wake up under the influence of true religion and love of Islam and come forward to raise the College to the status of a great university.

Speaking of the need to have high ideals for the College, he said: "The College should not be a mere cramming house to turn out employees for government service but to produce men morally and intellectually well equipped for developing the resources of the country by becoming captains of commerce and industry, leaders of men, and moral teachers of their people".

He announced with great pleasure that he was raising his annual grant and hoped that it was but a step towards a still larger annual grant later on.

For the proper growth of this premier Muslim institution of learning, it was essential that it should be staffed by Muslim professors instead of foreigners. With this aim in view Prince Aga Khan instituted a scheme of scholar-

ships under which promising young Muslims were sent abroad for higher education and training. The college authorities named it "Aga Khan Foreign Scholarship".

In 1911, when the plans for the starting of the Muslim University were ready, His Royal Highness was invited to Aligarh, and under his able guidance the scheme was pushed through and put into execution. A committee for the collection of funds was formed with Prince Aga Khan as the Chairman.

Prince Aga Khan set out on his fund-collecting campaign with the words: "As a mendicant I am now going out to beg from house to house and from street to street for the children of Muslim India". Those who heard these touching words were moved to tears of delight. The younger members of the audience, rich and poor alike, ran to lift him up from the chair, and carried him to his carriage on their shoulders. Among the foremost, giving vent to their adoration were young men whose names later became famous in Muslim India, men like the great poet Iqbal and Dr. Ziauddin.

Unparalleled welcome awaited His Highness when he visited Lahore in his drive for funds. The horses which were to drive his carriage were unharnessed and the carriage was drawn for miles by his enthusiastic admirers who had flocked in their thousands to receive him at the railway station.

With the late Maulana Shaukat Ali acting as his secretary, Prince Aga Khan led the committee to Allahabad, Lucknow and other important cities. They were given warm welcome everywhere and there was a rich response to his appeal for funds. His own contribution was rupees one lakh.

Prince Aga Khan collected thirty lakhs of rupees—a stupendous sum in those days—for the foundation of the Aligarh Muslim University. This act was a great piece of constructive service and will remain a historical reminder of the continuity that Prince Aga Khan gave to the traditions of his ancestors who were pioneers of education in Egypt, traditions associated with the foundation of Al Azhar, which to this day attracts students from all parts of the globe and is one of the most influential seats of Islamic learning.

The spirit in which His Royal Highness undertook the task of collecting funds was exemplified not only by his own princely munificence at that time and in the succeeding years, but by his house-to-house collections in many places.

When out to collect funds in Bombay for the University, one day His Royal Highness suddenly stopped his car at the office of a person who was known as his bitterest enemy. His Royal Highness went straight to where he was sitting. The man was not only extremely surprised but was overawed. He stood up in bewilderment and asked: "Whom do you want, sir?"

"I have come for your contribution to the Muslim University Fund", said His Highness.

The man at once drew up a cheque for Rs. 5,000. His Royal Highness pocketed the cheque and then took off his hat and said: "Now as a beggar I beg from you something for the children of Islam. Put something in the bowl of this mendicant".

This request from the great man overwhelmed the "enemy", and with moist eyes and shaking hands he wrote another cheque for Rs. 15,000. When His Highness was about to leave, he said: "Your Highness, now it is my turn to beg. I beg of you in the name of the most merciful God to forgive me for anything that I may have said against you. I never knew you were so great".

"Don't worry", said His Royal Highness; "it is my nature to forgive and forget in the cause of Islam and Muslims".

Prince Aga Khan kept a paternal eye on the progress and welfare of Aligarh even when he was away in Europe. When it was rumoured that the Governor of the province was unduly interfering in the affairs of the institution and had plans to turn it into a Government educational centre, His Royal Highness wrote him a letter advising him not to do anything which might be misunderstood by the Muslim public. Thereafter his attitude changed and he was very mild in his dealings with the Board of Trustees.

The Muslim College which the great Sir Syed Ahmed founded at Aligarh and which His Royal Highness Prince Aga Khan developed into a university was destined to play a very important role in promoting the interests of Muslim India and in raising the standard of education of the Muslims to a level high enough to enable them to compete with the more fortunately placed Hindus.

The negligibly low percentage of Muslims in Government service as compared to the Hindus in those days is a matter of common knowledge, but an account given by an Englishman of the sad plight of Muslims in this respect

makes shockingly painful reading and jolts one into realising that but for Sir Syed Ahmad and the subsequent realisation of his dream through the zealous efforts of Prince Aga Khan, the Muslims of India may not have been able to shake off the lethargy and sense of frustration which had gripped them after the fall of the Mughal Empire.

Dr. Sir William Hunter wrote as follows in his book on Indian Muslims:

"In 1869, some departments were filled thus: In the three grades of Assistant Government Engineers, there were fourteen Hindus and not one Musalman; among the apprentices, there were four Hindus and two Englishmen, and not one Musalman. Among the sub-Engineers, there were 24 Hindus to 1 Musalman; among the Overseers 2 Musalmans to 63 Hindus. In the Office of Accounts, there were 50 names of Hindus and not one Musalman and in the Upper Subordinate Department, there were 22 Hindus and, again, not one Musalman.

"In one extensive Department, the other day, it was discovered that there was not a single employee who could read the Musalman dialect; and in fact, there is now scarcely a Government office in Calcutta in which a Muhammadan can hope for any post above the rank of a porter, messenger, filler of inkpots and mender of pens.

"As a matter of fact, the truth is that when the country passed under our rule, the Musalmans were the superior race, and superior not only in stoutness of heart and strength of arm, but in power of political organization and the science of political Government. Muslims held their own even in the intellectual sphere. Before the country passed to us, they were not only the political but the intellectual power in India".

Muslim backwardness was, therefore, not due to any inherent inferiority of the community but could be traced to historical causes, which had blocked their progress. Hunter also described the neglect of modern education by Muslims. "Some years ago", he wrote, "out of three hundred boys in the English College (Calcutta), not one per cent were Muslims."

Hunter's facts and figures were mainly for Bengal, but the position in other parts of the country was similar.

The foundation of the College at Aligarh marked the turning of the tide for the Muslims and the end of their decline. When that college blossomed into a university, there began the period of recovery for Muslims, a recovery

which ultimately led them to a position where they could safeguard their interests against the clever machinations of the better educated and more advanced majority community. The great role played by the Aligarh University in the renaissance of Muslim India may be judged from the fact that a very large number of Muslims who rose to prominence in the political, economic or educational life of India were the products of the Muslim University at Aligarh.

The founder of the College had departed this life before he could put his many ambitious ideas into shape, but luckily for the Muslims there was Prince Aga Khan to throw himself heart and soul into the cause of Muslim regeneration and educational upliftment.

Despite the ceaseless efforts of Prince Aga Khan to bring the University into existence at the earliest possible date the matter had to be postponed, and it was much later that the University came into being. His Royal Highness was elected the first Pro-Chancellor of this first Muslim University in India.

Prince Aga Khan was much pleased to see the realization of his hopes in the educational sphere. Aligarh was now a great Muslim centre of learning, closely approximating to those very high standards and ideals enunciated by him in the Coronation Year of King Edward VII. Other Muslim schools and colleges were springing up all over India; the Muslim community had begun to shed their antipathy to commerce and industry and had come to occupy a place of honour in the national life of the country.

In 1936, the Vice-Chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University welcomed His Royal Highness "as the most respected, the most accomplished and the most trusted leader of the Muslim community, owing to whose patriotic efforts our alma mater has established a position among the universities of the world".

The Vice-Chancellor said: "Your Highness led the movement for the Muslim University and you alone can complete the task you have begun. The self-sacrifice and enthusiasm with which the community responded to Your Highness's appeal for converting the M.A.O. College into a Muslim University will be always remembered by those who had the privilege of working under Your Highness's command".

The Vice-Chancellor then spoke of the need for a fully equipped poly-technic to train the students in technical subjects so that they may contribute their share in the industrial renaissance of the country.

He said: "It must be a matter of real satisfaction to Your Highness that most of the expansion and development of the University are in large measure due to Your Highness's patronage and active support. The great founder of this institution, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, expressed the hope that this institution would develop into a University. But the realisation of the founder's dream is primarily due to Your Highness who worked for it with the zeal of a missionary. Your Highness infused a new life into the Aligarh movement by touring the whole of India to collect funds for the establishment of the Muslim University. It was mainly due to Your Highness's stupendous efforts that we have since been able to realize a sum of seventy lakhs from various sources and by carefully husbanding this amount we have been able to build up several important departments of our University."

Aligarh was jubilant at the election of His Royal Highness as President of the Assembly of the League of Nations. Vice-Chancellor Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed remarked that it was a great honour to the Aligarh Muslim University, which owed much of its development and extension to the zealous efforts of Prince Aga Khan. He said that towards making Aligarh the greatest Islamic centre of learning in the world, His Royal Highness had made a magnificent contribution.

It is worth mentioning here that Dr. Ziauddin was one of the students of His Highness in the sense that Prince Aga Khan paid for his years of study at Cambridge. Among the other great Muslim scholars who benefited from the munificent help of Prince Aga Khan were Dr. L. K. Haider, the well-known economist; Mr. Wali Mohammad, a great physicist; Dr. Zafarul Hasan, a learned theologian; and Dr. Zaki.

In 1938, Prince Aga Khan presided at the Convocation and once again appealed to the Muslim public for funds. A provision was made for the technical education of Muslims and the contribution of His Royal Highness was the highest of the collections that were made on the spot.

After the Convocation, His Royal Highness resigned his Pro-Chancellorship in favour of the Nawab of Rampur. The University authorities, who

were keen to have him continue his active association with them, elected him Rector of the University.

His Royal Highness made a strong plea for the establishment of a scientific, industrial and technical research institute when members of the Court of the University presented him an address of welcome on the occasion of his Diamond Jubilee. He said that it would require a crore of rupees. They should collect Rs. 90,00,000 while he would contribute Rs. 10,00,000.

"The world of the future", stated Prince Aga Khan, "depends upon science. There is no limit to the possibilities of science. I remember having been told in London that with atomic energy there is no reason why the other planets should not be new Americas. Muslims, who were once forward in science, are now backward. What they need, is a great research institute".

He said he would prefer the institute to be located in Karachi, as this city would have closer contacts with Muslim countries. The location of such an institute at Karachi, he believed, would be particularly advantageous to the people of Iran, East Africa, Afghanistan and North-Western parts of India. The natural resources of these areas would also be an asset to the institute.

Though the main body of the Muslims of the sub-continent cannot now exercise any influence on the affairs of the Aligarh University because of Partition, Prince Aga Khan still continues to take active interest in this premier seat of Muslim learning. When he visited Aligarh in 1950 he donated Rs. 25,000 for the advancement of technical education at the University.

His unbounded love for this Muslim university takes in its sweep all organisations directly or indirectly connected with it. During his recent visit to Pakistan, Prince Aga Khan gave Rs. 10,000 to the Aligarh Old Boys Association in Karachi.

CHAPTER VII

LAND OF HIS BIRTH

THE sub-continent which gave birth to this great world personality, the land where this illustrious descendent of Iranian nobles flowered into a maturity of all-embracing wisdom, today stands divided into two separate States, independent of each other and also independent of the foreigner who ruled over them for more than one and a half century. In the comity of nations each occupies a place of honour as a free and progressive country. Each represents a set of people capable of not only looking after themselves but able to render moral and material assistance to those who may benefit from it.

Prince Aga Khan's role in the restoration of dignity and self-respect to the land of his birth is a proud landmark in the history of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. His efforts in the attainment of political independence for these two countries are in many respects unparalleled and unrivalled. His strong, passionate appeals before the British rulers for the economic, educational and political advancement of his countrymen played a very significant part in paving the way for the attainment of the right of self-determination which the two countries are enjoying today.

In the opinion of the late Sir Naoroji Dumasia, one of Prince Aga Khan's biographers, "no Indian nationalist, not even Mr. Gandhi, argued India's case for justice and liberty with such cogency and independence as the Aga Khan."

His selfless services to the cause of his country are now part of history, but His Royal Highness may well look back with joy and pride at the various roles he played and the innumerable contributions he made for the realisation of the goal of self-government for the people of his country. Even his efforts to advance the interests of Indian Muslims helped the advancement of India as a whole.

His Royal Highness was not willing to cross swords with the British on the question of his country's independence, for he has always abhorred aggressive violence, no matter how worthy the goal that may be achieved thereby. But he yielded place to none in devotion to the cause of the coun-

try's freedom. His services to his nation are characterised more by a dignified, cool-headed approach to the problem than by vociferous clamour and loud protestations.

His Highness's book—*India in Transition*—which was published some thirty-five years ago is an eloquent testimony to his sacred sentiments on the subject of his country's aspirations. The book is a passion-charged document devoted to the cause of his country. It pulsates with life, throbs with emotions, in its appeal for the restoration of self-respect to the land of his birth. It is unsparring in drawing the rulers' attention to the deplorable condition of the masses, their poverty, their ignorance, their disease-ridden bodies.

Said Prince Aga Khan in *India in Transition*: "British rule in India has been criticised, and rightly criticised, for having allowed the twentieth century to dawn and grow without having grappled fully and successfully with the ill-eracy general in India, and with the insanitary environment of the masses; so bad that avoidable deaths are counted by the million every year, while the standard of the physique of the masses is deplorably low. The various modern departments of State that lead towards social betterment and social welfare in the West have still to be organised. The Indian public conscience unanimously demands that British rule should come into line with progressive modern ideas and tackle illiteracy and other social problems left far too long unsolved."

At another place in this book, His Royal Highness wrote: "Such impartial writers as the late Sir William Hunter have estimated, on the basis of statistical and other material, that at least 60,000,000 Indians, a number equal to all the white races of the Empire, can afford but a single meal a day, and suffer the pangs of inadequate nourishment from birth to death. Has this mass of poverty even been an outstanding problem at any British general election? Has it been so much as touched upon in the electoral manifestos of party leaders, or even in the addresses of Ministers from the India Office appealing to their constituents?"

"The leaders of India unanimously expect from their Government the steady provision of agencies which in Europe and America have brought about the fusion of culture between the masses and the classes. It is for the Government to take steps necessary to find the means for carrying out this policy, and this can be done with the co-operation of the representatives of the people.

"The certain way of once and for all securing India to progressive civilisation and order, to method and discipline, lies in setting up trusted local authorities natural to the soil, corresponding to the communal life evolved in a past millennium, and placing side by side with them the best British and Indian officials available to carry out, with the consent of the governed, those measures, from universal education to military service and political enfranchisement, which have been instrumental in the evolution of all the great law-abiding nations.

"Is it right that in this age of severe economic competition the vast majority of Indian children should be brought up without possessing even the rudiments of learning?"

His Royal Highness believed that poverty in India would not be overcome by charity, however well meant. It could be rooted out only by the development of agriculture and by setting up agricultural colleges for the diffusion of modern knowledge.

At the time of the Coronation of King George V in 1911, His Royal Highness had urged for the taking of immediate steps to overcome mass illiteracy in India, and also to reform and extend secondary and higher education. He dealt with the question from the standpoint of the Empire as a whole. He claimed that the great problem of educational diffusion should not be attacked piecemeal; that in the long run it would be best and cheapest to face the situation boldly at once and to lay out a sufficient sum to meet the main requirements. He went so far as to say that the salvation of India under British rule rested upon the enlightenment of the masses.

He warned the British Government that a step-motherly attitude towards Indians was dangerous. He urged upon all Britons whom he met, from the Viceroy downwards, not to follow the mentality of the men who had lost England the American colonies.

Times without number Prince Aga Khan asked the Government to remember that India's poverty and diseases were the inescapable legacy of mass ignorance. In a communication to the Viceroy, he asked bluntly:

"My Lord, has not the time come for the commencement of some system of universal primary education, such as has been adopted by almost every responsible government? The extreme poverty of this country has recently

been much discussed both here and in England, and all sorts of causes have been found and given to explain this undoubted fact. But, my Lord, in my humble opinion, the fundamental cause of this extreme poverty is the ignorance of the great majority of the people. Has not the time come for taking a bold and generous step towards some system of universal education suited to the conditions of the various provinces of the country?"

His Royal Highness studied with great zeal and earnestness the economic condition and prospects of India. He came to be recognised as an authority on the country's trade, commerce, industry and resources, and one of his pet ideals was to find means of raising the prosperity of the people of India and their standards of living by the development of the country's internal resources, its commerce and its industry. He was an ardent champion of the cotton and shipping industries in India and a stout advocate of protection generally as a means of fostering and building up national progress and prosperity by affording direct encouragement to indigenous activity and enterprise.

A passage in *India In Transition* reads: "The Government of India needs radical change. Time has come when it should be an essentially modern State based on the co-operation of every community and of the Government. It should give to the people themselves the right to direct policy. Such a metamorphosis will not only lead to the happiness and contentment of India, but to the strengthening of the British Empire as a whole and to drawing India nearer to England and the Dominions. The time has come for India to be organised on national lines. We want to see the creation of an association of free Indian States within the framework of the British Empire, but an association that will be equal to the other units of the British Empire as it exists at present."

At another point the book pointed out: "The majority of the Indian people wholeheartedly desire the change I have outlined, but there is a certain amount of inertia in India which will have to be overcome. The present trouble in India between the Muslims and the Hindus will eventually disappear if they, as well as other Indian nationals, are organised as nationalistic States on historical and linguistic foundations."

Prince Aga Khan was deeply pained to see the insane strife between the two principal communities in India. He could understand and appreciate

the genuine grievances of one against the other but it distressed him profoundly to witness religion being made a tool in the continuance of that strife. On the subject of cow-killing he said: "It has unfortunately been a perpetual source of bitter feeling between Muslims and Hindus. It is incumbent on us all to find a remedy. It may help us to do this if we trace the origin of sacrificial rites. We are all agreed that the Muslims celebrate the historical sacrifice by Ibrahim. But it must be remembered that Ibrahim, one of our great Prophets, did not sacrifice a cow, nor is the sacrifice of a bovine especially enjoined in our religious books. On the contrary, the camel or the sheep is more frequently mentioned in connection with sacrificial rites. How many of our Hajjis have sacrificed cows in Arabia, the home of Islam, and, if they have not done so, have they disregarded any injunction of their religion? Why should we then view the question from a different angle in India?"

His Royal Highness desired not only Hindu-Muslim co-operation, but co-operation between Hindus, Muslims, Parsees, Christians and Aghorians. He used to stress that the Russian empire collapsed despite its orthodoxy, autocracy and single nationality. He said: "India is like the Maharastra divinity, which has one big body but many hands of varying lengths and proportions. Her varying cultures and civilisations have a rich unity. This variety does not mean disunion, but a greater splendour in things of the spirit and in toleration."

Prince Aga Khan was the foremost Indian delegate at the successive sessions of the Disarmament Conference of the League of Nations. A speech which he made at the fourteenth plenary session of the Conference in 1932 made a great impression by reason of the practical suggestions he had made for international action. He was looked up to as one of the ablest statesmen that India had produced after British supremacy in the East. His broad-mindedness, sagacity and unquestioned influence were recognised on all hands.

Far-sighted Hindus trusted and admired him and placed full confidence in his ability to fight for India's rights with her rulers. Hindu leaders like Gokhale valued his friendship and sought his counsel in intricate affairs.

The misery-ridden life of the depressed classes in India touched very deep chords in the sensitive soul of His Royal Highness. The following passage is characteristic of the man who has spent his whole life in bettering the lot of humanity: "In early life I thought that the noblest ideal for an Indian

Mohammedan of means or influence was to work for the education of his Islamic brethren. For many years now I have held the view that a still greater and nobler work awaits the Indian Muslim. That is the organisation throughout the country—I will not say of "Missions", because of the mainly proselytising associations of the world—but of mutual help associations on a national scale, for improving the condition of the depressed classes, irrespective of their religious beliefs. Everyone with influence among them should earnestly pray that the Muslims may have the grace to recognise the need for this labour of love".

Prince Aga Khan was among the first to plead for acceleration of the pace of Indianisation of the army. It was his firm opinion that there could be no national Government without a national army. This was a radical demand, coming as it did at a time when Britain's hold over India was based mainly on the strength and character of the army she maintained in this sub-continent.

Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola, a veteran Bombay Muslim leader, supported Prince Aga Khan's scheme for the Indianisation of the army. His plea, published in the Times of India in January 1918, attracted great attention. He agreed with His Highness's contention that most of the difficulties with which Britain had to contend during the war, would never have arisen if full confidence had been reposed in the loyalty of India, and if a large Indian army had been trained for the defence of the Empire.

Prince Aga Khan also put forward an urgent plea for the recruitment and training of Indians for the navy. His project was more thorough-going than that which was adopted as a result of the recommendations of the Committee which sat under Lord Rawlinson's chairmanship in 1925. England, suggested His Royal Highness, should loan to India the services of a number of naval officers to instruct young Indians in a professional college established at Bombay, Karachi or Madras. Concurrently, he urged, steps should be taken to provide the rank and file of the future Indian Navy from amongst the seafaring population of the coast which for generations had been supplying the British mercantile marine with excellent sailors. The existing small naval yards in India could be enlarged, he pointed out, and others provided to undertake, at first, the constructions of small vessels and ultimately the larger ships needed for a proper Indian Navy.

The logic and force behind these suggestions compelled Britain to pursue a policy of gradual Indianisation of the army, which in turn made India's claim to independence more worthy of consideration and brought the goal of national freedom much nearer to realisation than it would have been if India's sons had not learnt to manage armies and to look after defence affairs.

The great Hindu liberal Gokhale and His Royal Highness were great friends. They met often and discussed for long hours the scheme for establishing federation in India as a step towards self-government. They argued about the problem of protecting the Muslims and other minorities and went over the hopes and fears that had racked India since the Mutiny. Gokhale completed his last political testament on his death-bed and addressed it to Prince Aga Khan, with the request that he should make it public after the war when his country would be in a healthy mood to work out her destiny.

When he published Gokhale's political testament, Prince Aga Khan—looking forward to the task of post-war reconstruction—made a strong plea for the reservation of East Africa for colonisation by Indians as a reward for the loyal services rendered by India in the War. He considered it a natural outlet across the Indian Ocean.

He submitted that British East Africa ought in all fairness to be transferred to the Government of India. He recognised that there were some dominions, such as Canada and the temperate regions of South Africa and Australia, that had been won to civilisation by the white races, and were more congenial to their expansion, and where the view was taken that the structure of society should be predominantly and in some cases almost wholly, of Western type and composition. But no such claim, he urged, could be made in regard to East Africa, whether British or hitherto German. Those regions had provided a field for Indian immigration and enterprise from times immemorial, and Indians had played a conspicuous part in their development before the white man had come on the scene as a settler.

Prince Aga Khan built up a strong case for the immigration of Indians into East Africa. Said he: "To the Indian conversant with public affairs there is something singularly revolting in the desire of a mere handful of his white fellow-subjects to keep East Africa as a preserve for themselves. There are but some 65,000,000 whites in the British Empire, and they have for their almost exclusive enterprise not only the United Kingdom but the

immense tracts of Canada, Australia and South Africa proper. Yet a small section desires to bar the 350,000,000 Indian subjects of the King to the lands of East Africa, to which their labour and enterprise for centuries have given them an unanswerable claim. That claim is strongly reinforced by considerations of Imperial duty to promote the interests of the country most directly concerned."

Pointing out that East Africa was the most appropriate field for Indian colonisation and settlement, His Royal Highness said: "Nations and peoples instinctively gravitate towards certain lands, and that semi-conscious trend is founded on reasons. Were East Africa to become a real Indian colony, Indian commerce and enterprise would play a great part in the development of the undeveloped African areas. India would put all her pride and patriotism into the development of those great regions, and by the measure of her success she would be largely judged. Indian men of science would go out to tackle the diseases of men and cattle; Indian geologists, foresters and engineers would transform the place into a land of modern living."

During 1922 feeling among Indians was most keenly excited by their treatment in Kenya. The late Lord Delamere had published a memorandum calling the attention of the British public to "the menace to their national and economic existence if equal status was granted to the Indian residents in the Colony." His Royal Highness Prince Aga Khan fought for the Indian case with the help of Mr. Sastri and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. The result was that the Secretary of State for the Colonies enunciated the doctrine that "all British subjects are to be equal in His Majesty's dominion and that neither race, colour or creed shall be a bar to the attainment of the very highest position."

The leadership of Prince Aga Khan in this affair proved of the greatest service to India. He explained the gravity of the situation in a letter to The Times of India in January 1923 and made it plain that better relations between the European settlers and Indians in East Africa were in the best interests of all concerned.

The indignities suffered by Indian settlers in South Africa also greatly disturbed Prince Aga Khan. He felt that British Government was not looking facts in the face and was injuring her long-term interests by playing into the hands of extremists who only thought of immediate gains.

He set to work very diligently and was able to do for the Indians in South Africa what the British Government of India had been unable to do. He had some of the worst aspects of the South African Government's disabilities against Indians eradicated.

His Royal Highness has had a special affection for Sind. One thing, he was the principal architect in carving it out of the Bombay Province. Secondly, he was born in the then capital of this part of the sub-continent. He was, therefore, profoundly interested when Sind's politicians sought his guidance in 1939 in regard to the Sukkur Barrage debt.

The occasion was a tea party given in honour of His Royal Highness by Syed Miran Mohammed Shah, Speaker of the Sind Assembly. The question of payment of the Sukkur Barrage debt was the principal subject of talk at the function.

Mr. Nichaldas Vazirani, a Minister in the Sind Government, said to His Highness: "You gave birth to the Sind Province. We look to you to take care of us and use your influence with the high-ups in England, including the Secretary of State, so that Sind may be relieved of the burden of the Barrage debt."

His Highness was impressed with the justness of this demand of the Sindhis and is said to have suggested that a regular campaign be launched asking the Government of India to wipe off the Barrage debt completely as had been done in the case of the debts of certain other Provinces.

He further suggested that the Press in Sind should help the "No Barrage Debt" movement by educating public opinion on the inequitableness of the basis on which the repayment of the Barrage debt had been calculated.

He said that all parties should make it a national question, that the whole of Sind should back it up with one voice. The Ministry should stake everything on the successful solution of the problem and resign if their voice should be unheard, and nobody should come forward to take up the Ministry's place.

"Sind", His Highness observed, "is the gateway of India, and the whole of India should see that Sindhis get all opportunities of healthy growth to manhood and not be crippled in their infancy with a heavy debt burden, which is totally impossible for them to pay off".

The just demand of the Sindhis in this respect was later very largely met by British Government owing to the efforts and influence of His Royal Highness.

CHAPTER VIII

ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

THE Round Table Conference in London which considered the future of India and her political destiny was very considerably marked by the genius, the personality and the influence of His Royal Highness Prince Aga Khan. From the very outset the whole British Indian Delegation comprising veteran Hindu, Parsi, Sikh and Muslim leaders elected him as their spokesman.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and all the other liberal leaders were much impressed by his wise approach to the various problems and by his attitude of quiet moderation in serving the interests of all communities and of India as a whole, and they paid open and willing tributes to his genius.

At the various committees over which he presided, he was so tactful and considerate that one of the Hindu delegates remarked that "the best thing to do would be to make him Viceroy of India with unlimited powers". By the magic of his personality and the glamour of his past achievements he evolved a feeling of unity and a sentiment of common national will at the Conference.

In the post-World War I period, to explain the background of the Conference, the movement for the independence of India from foreign yoke had gathered great momentum. The whole country was in the grip of the feeling that unless strenuous efforts were made, Britain would never give up its hold over India.

Under the leadership of the late Mr. Gandhi, gigantic civil disobedience movements were conducted throughout the length and breadth of the country, but deep-rooted fears of Hindu domination kept the Muslims from joining whole-heartedly with the Hindus in the nation-wide struggle for independence. Not that the Muslims did not passionately desire to be free from the slavery of the foreign rule, but they did not want to drop from the frying pan into the fire. Their hearts revolted against the British, but their minds were equally fearful of what would befall them under Hindu domination.



Prince Aga Khan, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and other Indian leaders at the Round Table Conference in London in 1931

His Royal Highness presiding at a meeting in Bombay held to protest against the treatment of Indians in South Africa. The Quaid-i-Azam and many other leaders attended the meeting.





Picture shows Governor-General Ghulam Muhammad, Prince Aga Khan, Raja Ghazalpur Ali Khan, Mr. Tawazuln Khan and Mr. Dasgupta at the wedding ceremony of the daughter of Mr. Zaidi Hussain, Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan

The Muslims did not go all-out to throw over the British rule, but there could be no mistaking their sentiments on the question. The British rulers feared that a popular wave of anti-British feeling may carry the Muslims off their feet; they may fall victims to the Hindu propaganda that the Hindu-Muslim differences were the creation of the British rule. Britain was, therefore, anxious to arrive at a settlement with resurgent India. Various efforts were made from both sides to resolve the issue and arrive at some workable solution whereby Britain and the Indian nationalists could work together for the greater prosperity of the country, but these efforts proved of no avail.

The greatest hitch in the way of arriving at a workable solution was the question of minorities. What would be the fate of the Muslims, the Christians, the Parsis and other minorities if all power was entrusted to the hands of Congress, which was manifestly a Hindu organisation?

The question exercised the mind of His Royal Highness with as much force as it did the mind of every friend of India. He set himself to produce a scheme which would safeguard the legitimate interests of the Muslims and other minorities. He worked ceaselessly to evolve an all-embracing scheme but the problem defied a solution. Hindu nationalists would not understand that the minorities could have any legitimate fears. These fears, they said, were a creation of the British and that the only way to solve them was to force Britain to stop exercising its authority over the country.

The Congress, at its session at Lucknow at the end of 1929, authorised its Working Committee to start another civil disobedience movement. The campaign was launched in April 1930 under Mr. Gandhi's personal command. There were wide-spread and varied attempts to defy authority.

With this agitation in the background and sensing that grave consequences may result if no determined action was taken to resolve the issue of India's independence and of safeguards for the minorities, Britain decided to hold a Round Table Conference in London.

The Conference opened on November 12, 1930, but the Congress did not co-operate. There were fifty-seven members of the British Indian delegation representing all the Indian parties and interests except the Congress. The Muslims were represented by Prince Aga Khan, (Quaid-i-Azam) Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Sir Mohammad Shafi, Mr. Mohammad Ali and Mr. Fazl-ul-Huq.

All the Indian members of the Conference wanted a more concrete and immediate response to the claim for Dominion Status. The first speech in the five-days' general discussion with which the proceedings began was made by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. Leaving the Nehru Report behind him, he declared himself decisively for a federal, not a unitary, system, and invited the Indian Princes to agree forthwith to the creation of an all-India federation.

The Muslims gave full support to India's claim for an equal status with other dominions but they repeatedly insisted that their claims must be met. Both Mr. Jinnah and Sir Mohammed Shafi made that a condition for their active co-operation in the demand for Dominion Status. Mr. Fazl-ul-Huq declared that democracy meant government by all the people and cited the well-known passage in which John Stuaart Mill had asserted that "unless the minority is as fully represented as the majority, there is no equal government but a government of inequality and privilege". And he warned the Hindus not to disregard the rights of the Muslim community.

In the deliberations of the Conference, His Royal Highness Prince Aga Khan played a great and dominating role. He did not make many speeches nor did he ask many questions, but he was behind the scenes directing with his wise judgment the efforts of all the participants towards an honourable settlement between England and India in the matter of the future governance of the country and between the various communities. The fact that the idea of federation was accepted was mainly due to the personal efforts of Prince Aga Khan.

Before the Conference closed, the Muslim delegation as a whole made a formal statement of its position. The Muslims, the statement declared, had taken part in the work of the sub-committees in a spirit of compromise and in the hope of settling the Hindu-Muslim problem; but no settlement had been achieved.

"In these circumstances we feel", the statement read, "that the only course that is consistent alike with the position of our community and its peculiar needs and the smooth working of the new constitution is to reiterate our claim that no advance is possible or practicable, whether in the Provinces or in the Central Government, without adequate safeguards for the Muslims of India, and that no constitution will be acceptable to the Muslims of India without such safeguards".

Throughout the first session of the Conference, the Congress had been in revolt against British authority. The civil disobedience movement had been in full swing, though it had been partly suppressed. In the spring of 1931, however, a truce was called. The Viceroy's direct negotiations with Mr. Gandhi resulted in the conclusion of the 'Irwin-Gandhi Pact', under which the British Government agreed to release political prisoners and the Congress to suspend the civil disobedience movement.

When the Congress met shortly afterwards at Karachi, it appointed Mr. Gandhi to represent it at the second session of the Conference.

The second session of the Conference opened on September 7, 1931. The distinguished group of newcomers included Mr. Gandhi; Sir Mohammad Iqbal; Dr. S. K. Datta, a leading Indian Christian; Mr. G. A. Birla, a wealthy businessman; Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya; Mrs. Naidu; and Sir Ali Imam.

The main work of the Conference was done by two large committees on Federal Structure and Minorities which re-examined and amplified the reports presented by the corresponding sub-committees at the first session.

Mr. Gandhi was a member of both committees. He claimed to represent all India "because the Congress is a national, not merely a party, organisation."

Mr. Gandhi devoted most of his time and energy to the communal problem rather than to the wider constitutional questions. At an early stage of the discussion in the Minorities Committee he obtained, with general approval, an adjournment for a week, during which he himself convened and presided over a series of informal meetings. But at the end of the week he reported utter failure to secure an agreed solution of the communal question.

The liberals and the Muslims firmly adhered to the decision of the first session of the Conference as to dyarchy at the Centre during a period of transition. But Mr. Gandhi was not prepared to acquiesce in dyarchy or in a period of transition. He insisted upon responsible Government at the Centre and in the Provinces to be established at once.

On the question of the distribution of powers between the Centre and the Provinces, the divergence between Hindu and Muslim opinion as to the character of the federation was reflected in their disagreement on the control of any

subjects not expressly allocated to the Centre or the Provinces or to the concurrent jurisdiction of both. The Hindus wanted them to go to the Centre, the Muslims to the Provinces.

WORLD MUSLIMS

The leading representatives of the Muslims, the Depressed Classes, the Indian Christians, the Anglo-Indians and the resident British community at this stage took counsel together under the presidency of His Royal Highness and produced a joint statement of their claims, which, they declared, must stand or fall as a connected whole. Its chief purport was to identify the case for the other minorities as far as possible with the case so often stated before by the Muslims. Its main demand was for the retention of separate electorates.

Prior to this statement, a settlement plan had been drafted with brilliant skill by Prince Aga Khan and laid before Mr. Gandhi and the other members of the Committee. He had worked day and night on this settlement plan which was designed to satisfy the special claims of each class. It was signed by himself, representing the Muslims, Dr. Ambedkar (Depressed Classes), Rao Selvam (Christians), Sir Henry Gidney (Anglo Indians) and Sir Hubert Carr (Europeans). In this statement, Prince Aga Khan had proposed that the North-West Frontier Province should be given the status of a Governor's Province, like the others, and that Sind should be separated from the Bombay Presidency and put on the same footing as the other Provinces in British India. The Depressed Classes, whose cause he had so often pleaded, and all the other minorities were also to be given generous privileges. In view of the tall claim of the Congress to represent everybody, the brilliant plan of His Royal Highness was not acceptable to Mr. Gandhi.

After the Conference was over, British Parliament took its turn to consider the question of the future Government of India. A powerful Parliamentary Committee was set up to go over the matter. The Committee was in almost unbroken session for eighteen months, holding 159 meetings and examining 120 witnesses.

A singular feature of this Committee was the presence in it of some of the delegates from India whom the Committee had been authorised to call into consultation. These delegates took part in the examination of all the witnesses and in the Committee's private discussions.

His Royal Highness Prince Aga Khan headed the list of the 21 key-men whom the Committee consulted at every step. The others included Sir Akber Hydari, Sir Mirza Ismail, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. Jayakar, Dr. Ambedkar and Sir Hubert Carr. It was the deliberations of this Committee which paved the way for the 1935 Act.

The influence and prestige of His Royal Highness with the British public also proved an invaluable asset to the cause of India and contributed a great deal to the success of the deliberations of the Conference and the acceptance by Britain of India's main demands.

The attitude and behaviour of the West towards their ignorance and want of respect for the faith and culture of Islam, of which the reference to their faith in your leading article is a typical and good example.

"If the West wants better relationship with the Muslims, the solution lies in their own hands, and this can be done only if they change their mental attitude and cultivate better understanding of the Muslim national needs and loyal recognition of the high quality of their national culture and the purity of their faith."

In a remarkable article contributed much earlier to the *Colonial Review*, October 1929, His Royal Highness had urged on Europeans the need for more cordial relations and better understanding between Muslim countries and western powers. He had pointed out that the persistent ignorance of the modern world of Islam as toward the upholding of independent national states, not dangerous to other people from a military or racial point of view, but free from foreign intrusions, and working toward the cultural and intellectual improvement necessary to bring Islam into line with the great progressive industries of the world.

His Royal Highness is the patron of the Western Islamic Society, London, whose aims and objects are to look after the interests of the Indian converts to Islam in Britain and those poor Muslims who are employed as seasonal labourers at the various ports in England. This Society also arranges for the religious and secular education of the children of these Muslims. Mosques have been built at various centres and there is a regular programme for the burial of Muslims. For all these activities, Prince Aga Khan offers generous help. The Society is an organized body of Muslim communities throughout Great Britain, of which the status in the Imperial Register of His Royal Highness. The contribution of Prince Aga Khan for the building and maintenance