

The Memoirs
of
AGA
KHAN

Foreword by
W. Somerset Maugham

Cassell

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SEVENTY YEARS AGO, the Aga Khan succeeded at the age of eight, to the responsibilities, spiritual and temporal, of the Imam of the Ismaili Muslims and to the wealth of his grandfather, a Persian nobleman closely related to the reigning dynasty in Persia, but also, in his own right, of the most princely blood in the Islamic world. For the family claims direct descent from the Prophet Mohammed through his daughter Fatima and his beloved son-in-law, Ali.

The Aga Khan's estate in Bombay, where he grew to manhood, covered a large area of what is now a densely populated district of that industrialised city, a single enclosed estate with magnificent palaces and numerous less pretentious houses, beautiful gardens, a small zoo and stables built to house a hundred horses. Here he lived, surrounded by nearly a thousand relations, dependants and supporters, the only surviving heir. For ten years he was subjected to a system of intensive education designed to prepare him for the sacred charge to which he was born.

Then he travelled to Europe and joined the social life of the pre-1914 years, when the aristocracy and plutocracy revolved round the royal families in the capital cities of Europe and in Monte Carlo, Cannes, Nice and St. Moritz. He grew up under the paternal eye of the British Government, was received by Queen Victoria, became a companion of King Edward VII, a friend for over fifty years of Queen Mary, and a constant visitor to King George V. He first met Winston Churchill in Poona in 1896 and has been his friend ever since. In the long years between that night when he dined with Queen Victoria and the afternoon last year when he took tea with Queen Elizabeth, he has been acquainted with most of the great figures, royal, political and cultural, of half a century.

For years he played a leading part in public affairs. His wide knowledge of the world, his extensive travels, his personal prestige and

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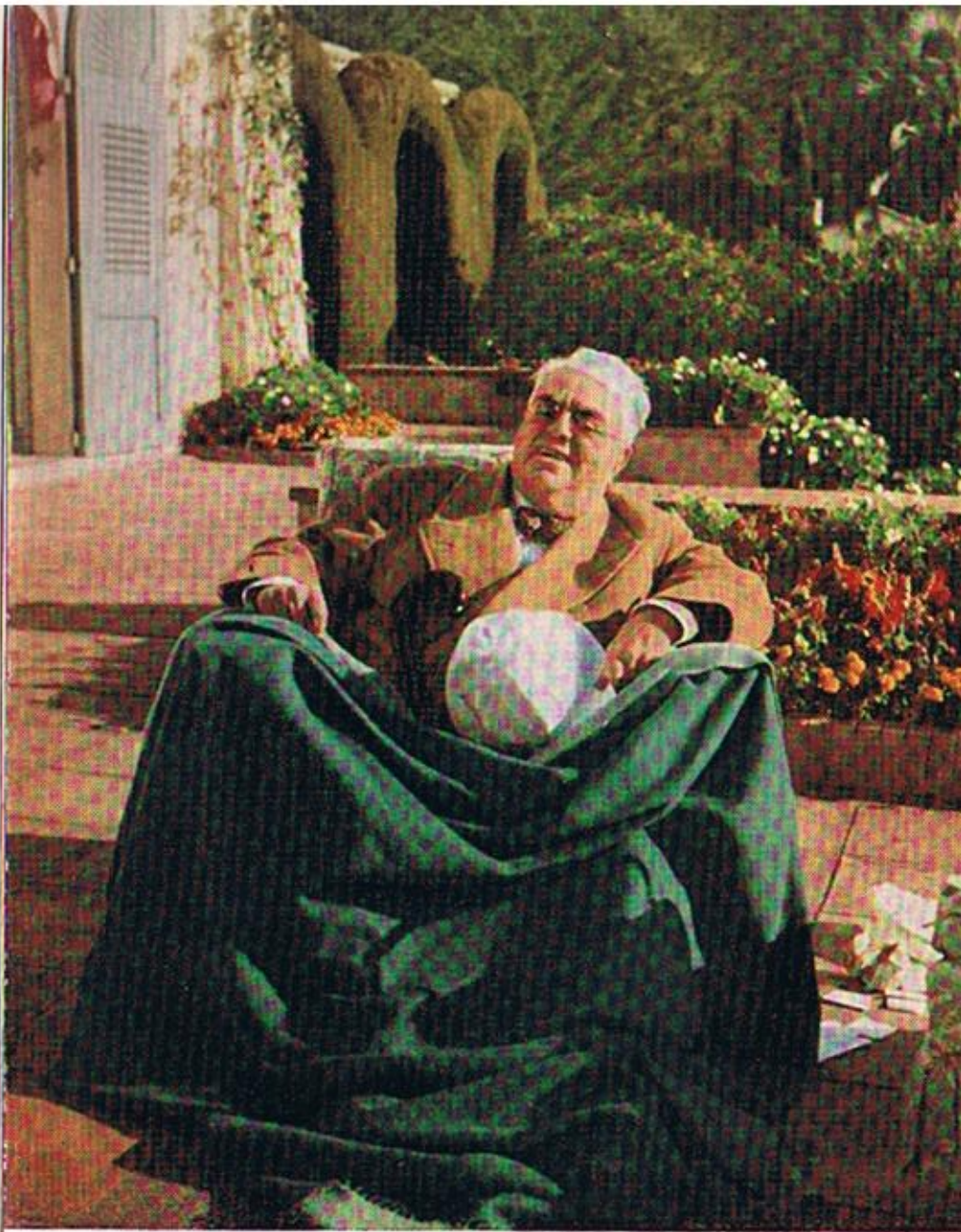
With a Foreword by
W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

*With colour frontispiece
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Villa Yakymour, near Cannes.

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"Life is a great and noble calling, not a mean and
grovelling thing to be shuffled through as best we can
but a lofty and exalted destiny."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I MUST record my deep and warm gratitude to my old friend, Mr. Somerset Maugham, for the Foreword which he has been kind enough to write for this book, and for the agreeable and gracious observations that he has made. To Miss Merioneth Whitaker go my thanks for her invaluable skill and patience in the preparation of the manuscript, without which it would have been a far more arduous labour.

FOREWORD

by

W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

I HAVE known the Aga Khan for many years. He has been a kind and helpful friend. The introductions he gave me when I spent a winter in India enabled me to profit by the rich experience of my sojourn in that wonderful country as otherwise I could never have done, so that when he paid me the compliment of asking me to write a preface to his autobiography I was glad to be given the opportunity to do him this small, and really unnecessary, service. For the book speaks for itself. It was not till I had read it that it was borne upon me how difficult a task I was undertaking. The Aga Khan has led a full life. He has been a great traveller and there are few parts of the world that he has not visited either for pleasure or because his political and religious interests made it necessary. He has been a great theatregoer; he has loved the opera and the ballet. He is an assiduous reader. He has been occupied in affairs in which the fate of nations was involved. He has bred horses and raced them. He has been on terms of close friendship with kings and princes of the blood royal, maharajahs, viceroys, field-marshal, actors and actresses, trainers, golf professionals, society beauties and society entertainers. He has founded a university. As head of a widely diffused sect, the Ismailis, he has throughout his life sedulously endeavoured to further the welfare, spiritual and material, of his countless followers. Towards the end of this autobiography he remarks that he has never once been bored. That alone is enough to mark the Aga Khan out as a remarkable man.

I must tell the reader at once that I am incompetent to deal with some of his multifarious activities. I know nothing of racing. I am so little interested in it that one day when I was lunching with the Aga Khan just before Tulyar won the Derby we talked only of India and I never thought of asking him whether his

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horse had a chance of winning. I know no more of politics than does the ordinary newspaper reader. For long years the Aga Khan was intimately concerned with them. His advice was constantly sought, and it was generally sound. He believed in moderation: "Of one fact," he writes, "my years in public life have convinced me; that the value of a compromise is that it can supply a bridge across a difficult period, and later having employed that bridge it is often possible to bring into effect the full-scale measures of reform which, originally, would have been rejected out of hand." He knew well the statesmen on whose decisions during the last fifty years great events depended. It is seldom he passes a harsh judgment on them. He pays generous tribute to their integrity, intelligence, patriotism, wide knowledge and experience. It seems strange that with these valuable qualities they should have landed us all in the sorry mess in which we now find ourselves.

The Aga Khan is a charitable man, and it goes against his grain to speak ill of others. The only occasion in this book of his on which he betrays bitterness is when he animadverts on the behaviour of our countrymen in their dealings with the inhabitants of the countries in which in one way and another they held a predominant position, in Egypt and India and in the treaty ports of China. During the eighties relations between British and Indians were in general easy, amiable and without strain, and had they continued to be as they were then, "I greatly doubt," he writes, "whether political bitterness would have developed to the extent it did, and possibly something far less total than the severance of the Republic of India from the Imperial connection would have been feasible." It is a disquieting thought. He goes on as follows: "What happened to the Englishman has been to me all my life a source of wonder and astonishment. Suddenly it seemed that his prestige as a member of an imperial, governing race would be lost if he accepted those of a different colour as fundamentally his equals. The colour bar was no longer thought of as a physical difference, but far more dangerously—in the end disastrously—as an intellectual and spiritual difference . . . The pernicious theory spread that all Asiatics were a second-class race, and 'white men' possessed some intrinsic and unchallengeable superiority." According to the Aga Khan the root-cause of the attitude adopted by the ruling class was fear and a lack of

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self-confidence. Another was the presence in increasing numbers of British wives with no knowledge or interest in the customs and outlook of Indians. They were no less narrow and provincial when, forty years after the time of which the Aga Khan writes, I myself went to India. These women, who for the most part came from modest homes in the country and since taxation was already high had at the most a maid of all work to do the household chores, found themselves in spacious quarters, with a number of servants to do their bidding. It went to their heads. I remember having tea one day with the wife of a not very important official. In England she might have been a manicurist or a stenographer. She asked me about my travels and when I told her that I had spent most of my time in the Indian States, she said: "You know, we don't have anything more to do with Indians than we can help. One has to keep them at arm's length."

The rest of the company agreed with her.

The clubs were barred to Indians till by the influence of Lord Willingdon some were persuaded to admit them, but so far as I could see it made little difference since even in them white and coloured kept conspicuously apart.

When I was in Hyderabad the Crown Prince asked me to lunch. I had spent some time in Bombay and was then on my way to Calcutta.

"I suppose you were made an honorary member of the Club when you were in Bombay," he said, and when I told him I was, he added: "And I suppose you'll be made an honorary member of the Club at Calcutta?"

"I hope so," I answered.

"Do you know the difference between the Club at Bombay and the Club at Calcutta?" he asked me. I shook my head. "In one they don't allow either dogs or Indians; in the other they do allow dogs."

I couldn't for the life of me think what to say to that.

But it was not only in India that these unhappy conditions prevailed. In the foreign concessions in China there was the same arrogant and hidebound colonialism and the general attitude towards the Chinese was little short of outrageous. "All the best hotels refused entry to Chinese, except in wings specially set aside for them. It was the same in restaurants. From European

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clubs they were totally excluded. Even in shops a Chinese customer would have to stand aside and wait to be served when a European or an American came in after him and demanded attention." Lord Cromer was the British Resident when the Aga Khan went to Egypt. He found the British were not merely in political control of the country, but assumed a social superiority which the Egyptians appeared humbly to accept. "There was no common ground of social intercourse. Therefore inevitably behind the façade of humility there developed a sullen and brooding, almost personal, resentment which later on needlessly, bitterly, poisoned the clash of Egyptian nationalism with Britain's interests as the occupying power." Now that the foreign concessions in China exist no more, now that the last British soldiers are leaving Egypt, now that, as the Aga Khan puts it, British rule in India has dissolved and passed away like early morning mist before strong sunlight, the British have left behind them a legacy of hatred. We too may ask ourselves what happened to Englishmen that caused them so to act as to arouse an antagonism which was bound in the end to have such untoward consequences. I am not satisfied with the explanation which the Aga Khan gives. I think it is to be sought rather in that hackneyed, but consistently disregarded aphorism of Lord Acton's: Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

It is no good crying over spilt milk, so the determinists tell us, and if I have dwelt on this subject it is with intention. In the world of today the Americans occupy the position which the British so long, and for all their failings not ingloriously, held. Perhaps it would be to their advantage to profit by our example and avoid making the errors that have cost us so dear. A brown man can fire a sten gun and shoot as straight as a white man; a yellow man can drop an atom bomb as efficiently. What does this mean but that the colour bar is now a crass absurdity? The British wanted to be loved and were convinced that they were; the Americans want to be loved too, but are uneasily, distressingly, conscious that they are not. They find it hard to understand. With their boundless generosity they have poured money into the countries which two disastrous wars have reduced to poverty, and it is natural that they should wish to see it spent as they think fit and not always as the recipients would like to spend it. It is true enough that the

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man who pays the piper calls the tune, but if it is a tune the company finds it hard to dance to, perhaps he is well-advised to do his best so to modify it that they may find it easy. Doubtless it is more blessed to give than to receive, but it is also more hazardous, for you put the recipient of your bounty under an obligation and that is a condition that only the very magnanimous can accept with good will. Gratitude is not a virtue that comes easily to the human race. I do not think it can be denied that the British conferred great benefits on the peoples over which they ruled; but they humiliated them and so earned their hatred. The Americans would do well to remember it.

But enough of that. The Aga Khan is descended from the Prophet Mohammed through his daughter Fatima and is descended also from the Fatimite Caliphs of Egypt. He is justifiably proud of his illustrious ancestry. His grandfather, also known as Aga Khan, by inheritance spiritual head of the Ismailis, was a Persian nobleman, son-in-law of the powerful monarch, Fatch Ali Shah and hereditary chieftain of Kerman. Smarting under the insult that had been put upon him, he took up arms against a later Shah, Mohammed by name, was worsted and forced to make his escape, attended by a few horsemen, through the deserts of Baluchistan to Sind. There he raised a troop of light horse and after various vicissitudes eventually reached Bombay with his two hundred horsemen, his relations, clients and supporters. He acquired a vast estate upon which he built palaces, innumerable smaller houses for his dependants and outbuildings, gardens and fountains. He lived in feudal state and never had less than a hundred horses in his stables. He died when the author of this book was a child and was succeeded by his son who, however, only survived him a short time; upon which the Aga Khan whom we know, at the age of eight inherited his titles, wealth and responsibilities, spiritual and temporal. His education was conducted to prepare him for the sacred charge to which he was born. He was taught English, French, Arabic and Persian. Religious instruction was imparted to him by a renowned teacher of Islamic lore. No holidays were allowed him. The only relief from work was on Saturdays and feast days when he received his followers who came to offer gifts and do him homage.

The Aga Khan, raised to such eminence at so early an age, was

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fortunate in that his mother was a highly cultivated woman. She was deeply versed in Persian and Arabic poetry, as were several of her ladies in waiting, and at meal times at her table "our conversation was of literature, of poetry; or perhaps one of the elderly ladies who travelled to and from Teheran a great deal would talk about her experiences at the Court of the Shah." The Begum was a mystic and habitually spent long hours in prayer for spiritual enlightenment and union with God. "I have, in something like ecstasy," he writes, "heard her read perhaps some verses by Roumi or Hafiz, with their exquisite analogies between man's beatific vision of the Divine and the temporal beauty and colours of flowers, the music and magic of the night, and the transient splendours of the Persian dawn." The Aga Khan is a deeply religious man. One of the most interesting chapters in this book is that in which after telling of his personal beliefs, he gives a concise exposition of Islam as it is understood and practised today. It is there for the reader to read and I will say no more about it than that it is sympathetic and persuasive. It may be that it will occur to him that the duties of man as he may learn them from the verses of the Koran and the Traditions of the Prophet are not very different from those he may learn from the Sermon on the Mount. But man is an imperfect creature, at the mercy of his passions, and it should surprise no one that too often these duties are no more practised by Muslim than by Christian.

The general public knows the Aga Khan chiefly as a racing man and it is not unlikely that the reader of the book, remembering the pages in which he narrates his experiences as a breeder of bloodstock and the happy winner of many classical events, will be a trifle taken aback by this moving, thoughtful and sincere chapter. There is no reason why he should be. The chase was the main occupation of the Iranian nobles from whom he is descended. It is part of the tradition he inherited and the environment in which he was brought up. His grandfather, his father, had hounds, hawks and horses, the swiftest and finest money could buy or they could breed. On the death of his father only twenty or thirty of the ninety racehorses he had possessed were kept and they, through the Aga Khan's minority, were raced under his colours all over Western India. Racing is in his blood. But first and foremost he is the spiritual head of a sect of Islam which counts its adherents

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by the million. He has a secure belief in the faith which was the faith of his great ancestors and he is ever mindful of the sacred charge, with the great responsibilities it entails, which is his by right of birth. We are none of us all of a piece. The Aga Khan says somewhere that we are all composed of diverse and conflicting elements: of few men could this be more truly said than of himself. But he is fortunate in that the elements in him only superficially conflict; they are resolved by the strength and consistency of his character.

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PROLOGUE

THE truth about a man, as much as about a country or an institution, is better than legend, myth, and falsehood. I am someone about whom a whole fabric of legend has been woven in my own lifetime. Of recent years I have often been urged by editors and publishers to write my memoirs, my own account of my life and experiences, of my beliefs and opinions, and the way in which they have been moulded. Friends have advised me that it is my duty to my own reputation, now and in the future, to tell the truth about myself as I see it, and to refute the falsehoods that have gained credence. Flattering this persuasion may have been, kind in intention certainly.

There are certain obvious and gross fictions which need to be corrected—the grandiose estimates, for example, of my own and my family's wealth. I have seen estimates both of my capital and my income so inaccurate that not one but two noughts at the end should be knocked off. Not long ago an alleged biography was published; in the matter of dates the margin of error in it was anything from one to ten years. If there is this amount of misinformation on simple, easily discoverable fact, what sort of veracity is likely in wider, more profound and more intangible matters?

My life in many ways has been a bridge across vastly differing epochs. Looking at it for the moment simply from the Western point of view—I had a full life in the Victorian era, and I am leading now an equally full life in this new Elizabethan era. When I was a young man I sat next to Queen Victoria at a dinner party, and talked to her throughout it; the other day I sat next to Queen Elizabeth II at a tea party and talked to her throughout it. In my youth the internal combustion engine was in its early, experimental phase, and the first motor-cars were objects of ridicule; now we all take supersonic jet propulsion for granted, and interplanetary travel is far more seriously discussed today than was even the smallest flying venture at a time when I was quite grown up and

had already lived a full and active life. I had the great honour of knowing Lord Kelvin, in his time the greatest physicist in the world; he assured me solemnly and deliberately that flying was a physical impossibility for human beings and quite unattainable. Even H. G. Wells in his early book, *Anticipations*, put off the conquest of the air and the discovery of atomic power for two or three centuries. Yet these and much more have come to pass in a brief half-century.

During this period I have been not only an onlooker but, by the accident of birth, an active participant in affairs. The extent of the revolution which I have witnessed is not yet to be measured, but we can see manifestations of it at many levels of human experience. Throughout the Western world the whole way of life has undergone fundamental and far-reaching changes, perhaps the greatest of which is that the expectation of life has been increased by nearly twenty years. Old age begins for men and women in the West at anything from ten to twenty years later than it did in my youth, and in India and East generally a similar, though at present smaller, extension of the span can be noted. In Europe and America it is most marked. There are far, far more old men and women alive and active. In a walk along a busy street like Piccadilly or any part of the Paris boulevards, I assure you that a man of my age would see the difference. In Europe there has been a widespread restriction of families among the upper and middle classes; the family of the nineties, with seven or eight children, has almost completely disappeared. In no European country is divorce looked upon as anything unusual; when I was young, men of the stature of Charles Dilke and Charles Stewart Parnell were driven out of public life through association with divorce cases. Today all over Europe men to whom the strictly legal term "guilty party" is applicable are to be found in the highest, most responsible positions in the State. Indeed, the only penalty to which they are subject seems to be non-admission to the Royal Enclosure at Ascot—a privilege which, I daresay, few of them care about anyway.

The changes in the status of women, economic and social, have been enormous; fifty or sixty years ago almost the only career open to them was marriage or indirect dependence on man's protection, and today they possess the avenues of countless honourable

and profitable callings, and they carry themselves with self-confidence and self-assurance. Homosexuality was looked upon very much like leprosy. Today in most European countries there is either Freudian pity, or there are excuses, and by men like André Gide and others open justification if not glorification.

I was a grown-up man in that old world. I hope that I am not yet in my second childhood in the new world. I feel that it is therefore my duty to give an account in some detail of my experience over this long, momentous epoch, and to record my personal acquaintance—often, indeed, my real and deep friendship—with some of those who have had their share in bringing about its vast political, social, and economic changes.

England—we still talked naturally of England when I was young—dwelt then in "splendid isolation", a state of affairs which stimulated a far deeper, stronger pride than did the more extreme American isolationism of the twenties and the early thirties. To that England, France was the traditional enemy and Germany the only potential friend in Europe. Only a handful of men whose thoughts converged from very different origins—Sir Charles Dilke, imperialists like Admiral Maxse, and a few radical "Little Englanders"—championed friendship with France and distrust of Germany.

In vast regions of the East, England's hegemony was virtually undisputed, and her Indian Empire seemed among the most solidly based and most durable of contemporary political organizations. A man like Lord Curzon—and indeed I should say ninety-nine per cent of the British ruling class—would have been horror-struck at the thought of the formation of an Indian Republic, or its inevitable corollary, and even more appalled by the prospect, inconceivable as it would have seemed to him, of the partition of the enormous Indian Empire and the emergence of two healthy national States each with its own historic personality. Even as late as the 1930s when the promise of eventual Dominion Status had been made, this same British ruling class permitted itself to be obsessed with the childish delusion that the Indian Empire which their predecessors had built up could be handed on—like an estate after the owner's death—to successors who would preserve the artificial unity of the structure as if it were a true unity rooted in spiritual and intellectual foundations.

Even in the 1940s men like Lord Wavell and others hoped and believed that even after the British quitted India it would be possible to maintain a united Indian Army. Other European colonial Powers nourished delusions no less futile. Less than a decade ago it was seriously held in France that the three Indo-Chinese States would join, humbly and as junior partners, in a French Union of which Paris must be the head and heart.

I have seen the long revolution of Asia against European rule. In the nineties it was a cloud no bigger than a man's hand. What did it seem to amount to then? The mild little hope of a few jobs, and a few honorific titles. Today in Asia the revolution is accomplished, everywhere east of the Middle East there has been an end of European rule in fact and in name, and I have lived long enough to see the same process begin in Africa. But fortunately the Western European governing classes have learned the lesson of Asia. The British in West Africa, the Belgians in the Congo, and the French in their Equatorial African possessions are preparing and planning that transfer of power for which in Asia they were never prepared.

I have had my share in these changes. I must, however, stress that whatever part I may have played in public affairs and in political developments in India and elsewhere, none of it has been my main task or duty. Since my childhood my chief concern, my chief responsibility, has been the great charge which I have inherited as Imam of the Ismaili branch of the Shia sect of Muslims. Elsewhere in this book I shall give a detailed account of what I mean by this statement. Here, however, I can only affirm that my duties in this task have always been my prime concern; in all aspects—in a vast and varied correspondence, in the maintenance of countless links of personal and religious loyalty and affection—they have occupied a large part of every day of my life. Everything else that I have done or striven to do, enjoyed or suffered, has been of necessity secondary. With this important reservation clearly stated, I think I can give an account of many of the other events and experiences of my life.

As I look back, there is one memory, one piece of self-knowledge, which gives me the utmost satisfaction. I was myself personally responsible for the conversion to Islam of some 30,000 to 40,000 caste Hindus, many of them of the upper and professional

classes. They had been people without a faith, and they found a faith. Neither my father nor my grandfather had attempted a religious task of this magnitude. Its fulfilment has had one important and interesting effect: the great majority of these converts lived in what is now Pakistan; had they remained Hindu they would in all probability have been involved in, and have suffered by, the mass displacement and all the other terrible and horrible happenings that accompanied Partition in 1947.

I have tried all the years I spent in public life to do my best so far as I could. It is not possible for me to assess the success or failure of what I have tried to do; final judgment lies elsewhere.

But since I have witnessed this rapid and all-enveloping process of change in every domain of human interest and experience—the technical and mechanical revolution of our time, man's developing mastery of natural forces, the recognition of the importance of the subconscious, the vast increase in longevity, the rise of new moral standards and the corresponding profound changes in outlook, and great political changes undreamed of in my youth—I hope in these coming chapters to give some picture of each epoch as it unfolded before the eyes and in the mind and heart of one who was usually an onlooker but sometimes and actively a participant.

CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

MY first conscious memory is of something that happened when I was a child of three and a half. I have a clear recollection of an old man, almost blind, seated on a grey Arab horse, peering to watch a line of other horses galloping in training. The scene was Bombay; the time February or March 1881; the old man was my grandfather, the Aga Khan, whose name, title, privileges, and responsibilities I was to inherit. I, too, was on a pony, standing near my grandfather, and held up in the saddle by a man either side of me.

My grandfather was, as I am and have been for close on seventy years, the hereditary Imam or spiritual chief of the Ismaili sect of the Shia Muslims. He was a Persian nobleman, closely related to the then reigning dynasty in Persia, but also in his own right of the most princely blood in the Islamic world, for our family claims direct descent from the Prophet Mohammed through his daughter Fatima and his beloved son-in-law Ali; and we are also descended from the Fatimite Caliphs of Egypt.

Elsewhere in this book I shall expound in fuller detail my general conception of Islam, its principles and practice, with some account of the way in which it has evolved throughout history, and in particular the outlook of the Imami Ismailis whose spiritual head I am. For the present let me say that Persia had for centuries been a stronghold of a Shia branch or sect of Islam, as distinct from the Sunni; my ancestors, prominent from the earliest times in the propagation of Shia doctrine and practice, had long been established there, maintaining territorial and feudatory chieftainship in addition to their spiritual leadership of the Ismailis.

During the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries of the Christian era, Persia sometimes declined into something nearing administrative and social chaos. The periods of decline were apt

to follow the death of a big Shah. Violent internecine strife broke out not only between the Shah's heirs but also between important chieftains. As a consequence of these bitter, protracted, and often bloodstained disputes, my grandfather, having earlier sent most of his family and a considerable retinue ahead of him, emigrated from Persia, and after some years of wandering and various vicissitudes, settled in Bombay and Poona.

I was born in Karachi on 2nd November, 1877, but in Bombay and Poona I spent the whole of my boyhood and youth. It was a Bombay in countless respects inconceivably different from the huge, glittering, commercial, and industrial city that is present-day Bombay. It is true that it was a large and prosperous port, the capital of the Bombay Presidency, one of the leading provinces of British India, the seat of a Governor and his Administration, and of an impressive judicature, and the headquarters of a not inconsiderable army. The outstanding difference between that Bombay and Bombay today lies, of course, in the two words, "British India". If the capital and focus of the British Raj in India lay, in those days, many hundreds of miles to the north-east, in Calcutta (and, in the summer, in the hill town of Simla), there was in Bombay a long and close tradition of association with Britain; had not, indeed, Bombay first been joined to the possessions of the British Crown as part of the dowry of Mary of Modena, the wife of Charles II?

The Bombay of the mid-nineteenth century in which my grandfather settled was a much smaller, more compact city than its present-day descendant. And the home—or homes—of my family covered a great deal of some of the more densely populous and prosperous parts of contemporary Bombay. Even in my childhood in the eighties it was a huge rambling place, taking in most of two divisions of the present city, Mazagaon and Byculla, stretching from Nesbit Road to Hassanarbad, my grandfather's tomb. This would be as if a large part of the West End of London or down-town Manhattan were a single enclosed estate; or, to put it in terms of Paris, as if it were an enclosure in length from, say, the Madeleine to well beyond the Opéra, and in breadth from the Madeleine to the Pont d'Iéna. Within this great area there were several big palaces, and innumerable smaller houses and outbuildings; there were gardens, and fountains, and there

was also a small zoo. And there were stables, for the equine population of the estate—evidence of my grandfather's inherited and persistent interest in and love for horse racing and horse breeding—never numbered less than a hundred.

The human population, of course, was far more numerous, and with endless ramifications, divisions, and sub-divisions. It was the household of a political pretender (in the proper sense of that word) of accepted standing. My grandfather in his migration from Persia had brought with him more than a thousand relations, dependants, clients, associates, personal and political supporters, ranging from the humblest groom or servant to a man of princely stature, a direct near-descendant of Nadirshah of Delhi fame, who had taken my grandfather's side in the disputes and troubles in Persia and with him had gone into exile.

With the passage of years, however, it had become no longer exile. My grandfather had been confirmed in his rights and titles by a judgment of the Bombay High Court in 1866.¹ He was an accepted and honoured leader of the community, accorded princely status by the British Raj and its representatives in India. Aga Hall, our Bombay home, was his chief seat, but he had another palace, or group of palaces, in Poona, whither we all made seasonal migrations. His life and his world, the life and world into which I was born, were feudal in a fashion far removed from, and indeed not understood by, people of the present day. He was the head and centre of a loose but clearly comprehended system of allegiance and adherence; wherever he went, his home, even if only temporary, was a focus of loyalty and homage—in the Ismaili word, a *durkhana*, a place of pilgrimage to be visited from time to time by as many of his associates and supporters as possible. This necessitated the maintenance of an impressive establishment—a need reinforced by the circumstances of my grandfather's departure from Persia and by the number of dependants whom he brought with him.

His family and his dependants, his sons and their wives, his officials, servants, and followers, were disposed in a series of houses and palaces around him, both in Bombay and in Poona.

¹ The judgment, delivered on 12th November, 1866 by Mr. Justice Arnold, contains a classic fully-detailed account of the origins of Ismailism and of the beginnings of my family (see Chap. VIII).

In course of time many of his Persian followers married Indian wives, many of them of Ismaili families. They and their children remained under my grandfather's protection, and after his death under my father's, and then under mine. When my grandfather died there was a rough-and-ready and unofficial division of property, though not of leadership and responsibility, between my father—his sole rightful heir as Imam—and my various uncles and aunts. I was my father's sole and unique heir in accordance with Muslim law—unlike my father in relation to my grandfather.

From my earliest childhood I was trained to be conscious of my inheritance, and of the magnitude of its responsibilities. My early years were in many ways difficult, even harsh. I was the only surviving heir, for my two full brothers both died in infancy, and my two half-brothers in their young manhood. I was known to be delicate—a succession of English doctors had prophesied, with sombre unanimity, that I would not live to be twenty-five—and I was therefore watched over by my mother with extreme vigilance and trepidation. I was petted and spoiled by nurses and foster-mothers and by a group of my mother's ladies-in-waiting, many of whom were already elderly, in whose eyes I was the "petit prince chéri". My childhood was saddened—and complicated—by my father's sudden death from pneumonia, only a little over four years after my grandfather. My father had inherited to the full my grandfather's sporting interests, not only in horse breeding and racing, but as a shot and hunter of big game. In this latter pastime he was extremely skilled and utterly fearless, for his bag over years consisted not only of thousands of deer of every kind and every sort of game bird, but of a great many tigers. In tiger shooting his courage was as great as his skill. When the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) paid his State visit to India, he was entertained at Aga Hall by my grandfather, and commented with interest on the number of tiger skins displayed. How, he asked, did my father get them? Perhaps I should explain that ordinarily a tiger-shoot in India is conducted either (in the North) from the back of a specially trained elephant or (elsewhere) from a platform constructed in a tree overlooking a tiger's known or suspected haunt or lay.

"Do you go up trees?" asked the Prince of Wales, who—being stout—had doubtless recent and rueful memories of being

pushed and pulled up trees in this most exciting and aristocratic of all varieties of big-game shooting.

"No," said my father, whose girth, though considerable, was not as great as his guest's, "I am too fat for tree work. I can't climb up. I stand and shoot."

My father's death was occasioned not by any mishap when he was out after tiger, but by a long day's water-fowling near Poona in August 1885. There were several hours' heavy rain, the going underfoot was heavy and wet, and my father was soaked to the skin. He caught a severe chill which turned swiftly and fatally to pneumonia. He was dead eight days later.

This was, I can see now, the first big emotional and spiritual crisis of my life. It ended the only carefree period I had ever known. There was at once a forlorn and kindly attempt to prevent me from missing my father or being allowed to feel unhappy. But the prevalent sense of deep mourning and sadness enveloped the eight-year-old boy that I was. I as his heir was in a sense the immediate focus of a great new and pressing sense of responsibility. Our family, our émigré dependants, our Ismaili supporters all over the Islamic world, deeply mourned my father's death, but they also turned to me, child as I was, now and for the rest of my life henceforth entrusted with the sacred charge to which I had been born. The change in my circumstances came home to me early and insistently. My father's body was embalmed and brought from Poona to Bombay and thence sent to be buried at Nejaf on the west bank of the Euphrates, near Cufa and the tomb of our ancestor the Imam Ali—one of the holiest places on earth for the Shias. No sooner were these rites accomplished than a new régime was immediately instituted for me.

It was, of course, a direct consequence of my new station, but to this day I cannot understand why I did not die or turn into an utter dunce under the treatment which I was given. My education for the responsibilities and tasks which I had inherited was serious and strenuous and it had to be fitted into a regular system of seasonal family migration. From November to April during the cold weather of each year we were in Bombay; in April and May we were at Mahabaleshwar; from June to October we were in Poona and in October we went for a short spell to one of the

smaller hill stations, and thence back to Bombay. For ten years—from 1885 to 1895—this system continued unchanged; and in it there was no room for a holiday for me, a month, a fortnight, even a week off the chain; at the most a rare day. And relentlessly was I held on the chain.

This was the typical and unchanging pattern of my days: I was called between six and half-past, and had my breakfast—a weak tea, bread, butter, jam, and a Persian sweet. At seven, whether I wanted to or not, I had an hour's riding—a canter or sometimes a gallop on one of the Poona rides or on the racecourse, or at Bombay along the sands. From eight to half-past eleven I had lessons with my English and French teachers. Then I had luncheon and I was free until two o'clock. Thereafter I had three hours' instruction in Arabic. A drive or some tennis in the garden, or some sort of relaxation, was then permitted until dinner at seven o'clock. After dinner came the horror of horrors. I was set down to two hours of calligraphy of the dreariest and most soul-destroying kind. My mother had been impressed by the advice—the foolish advice as it turned out—of Arabic and Persian scholars and pedants, who had assured her that calligraphy in the classical Persian and Arabic scripts was of the highest importance, and they pointed out to her that my two half-brothers who had died had both had beautiful handwriting. My mother, my uncles, and everyone else in our household united in compelling me to this horrible calligraphy. It was in fact a very real martyrdom for me because no one had realized that I was from birth so short-sighted that to read or write I had to hold a book or paper an inch or two from my nose, and in my vision of the world farther than those few inches from my nose there was no definition and no delight, for everything I saw—gardens, hills, sea, or jungle—was a haze. The simplicity and the sadness of my affliction were for years unnoticed, and how in the end it came to be rectified I shall describe a little later.

The discipline to which I was subjected was rigid, and even the little free time that I was allowed was subject to invasion. For it was my duty, young as I was, to receive those of my followers who came to our home to offer their loyal respects. Saturdays and feast days were the usual occasions of the receptions, and my guests would sit in the garden, bowing and paying compli-

ments, bringing gifts and receiving thanks, blessings, and benedictions. My part in these ceremonies was august and ordained by tradition—but a child resented the fact that they were in the small amount of free time allowed by the curriculum and never, never in lesson time.

Such was the régime to which, at eight, I was subjected. Perhaps it might be appropriate to give here a brief account of my way of life in later years. While I have not changed my basic principles in outlook there have obviously been certain marked modifications in my pattern of existence. The Aga Khan who dined with Queen Victoria in 1898 was not quite the same person as the Aga Khan who had tea with Queen Elizabeth in 1953. But throughout this long period I snatched hours out of my daily routine as even now I snatch them for reading poetry, fiction, newspapers, and literary and critical periodicals. This has been a persistent trait in my character for sixty years. In the same way I have daily given a certain amount of time to physical exercise. Until I was about fifty, the time that I gave to physical exercise was devoted to boxing, Sandow's exercises, Indian clubs, long walks, and in the early years of the century long cycling tours through France, Italy, Germany, and other European countries. After I was fifty I had to substitute tennis and golf for these more violent forms of exercise. And since I was sixty I have had to confine myself to golf and walking.

My social life also has naturally varied—not only because I myself have grown older but because the economic conditions of the world before 1914 were totally different from those of today. In the spheres in which I lived forty years ago and more social activity was intense. If not daily, certainly four or five days a week there were either dinner parties or luncheon parties wherever I happened to find myself, and there was the same round of theatre and opera parties. Between the two wars this part of life very much decreased and I might say that social engagements dropped in the ratio of 20 to 100. After the Second World War these social engagements have withered away—except when my wife and I ask a few friends wherever I may be to lunch or opera or theatre parties. The great social epoch was between 1898 and the opening of the 1914 war. I knew most of the members of the Royal Families of Europe whom I met over and over again,

with the aristocracy and plutocracy that were like satellites revolving about major planets whether in London or Paris, Rome, Berlin, Monte Carlo or Cannes, Nice or St. Moritz. That social life is a thing of the past for me. Really it came to an end with the outbreak of the 1914 war because the society I met between the two wars was fundamentally a different one.

To give an idea of the social change I might say that between 1898 and 1914 I was a guest ninety-nine times out of a hundred and only one per cent a host—between the two wars it became about fifty-fifty and gradually it came down to be less and less; and since the last war I find that it is I who am the host nine times out of ten.

Now with the changes in my own life and the society in which I move thus briefly assessed against the background of nearly sixty years, how do I live now, when I am at home in my villa at Cannes, when we are in our house in Bombay, or when we are in hotels in London or Paris, in Venice, Geneva or Evian—some eight months in every year?

The day begins for me—as it has begun since my early youth—at four a.m. I wake up automatically about that time and spend the first hour—between four and five—at intense prayer. There are no statues in my bedroom and a special prayer carpet is always prepared and my tasbeeh, my rosary, is always with me. At five I go back again to sleep and wake up some time between eight and nine when I have immediately a breakfast of toast, tea, honey—but no butter. By ten I have looked at the newspapers, had a wash, am dressed, and usually go out for a walk of anything between one and two miles, or I play nine holes of golf. If there is rain I do not go out. Until about one o'clock I am at work with my secretaries, dealing with my correspondence, writings, and various business matters. I rarely leave anything undone from one day to another and usually have very little left-overs. At one or one-thirty I lunch, when at Cannes, in our own house, but when anywhere else at some restaurant or other—rarely in the hotel restaurant. Lunch is my main meal of the day and consists of fish, eggs, or meat, but only one of the three and never a combination of the three—rice regularly, two vegetables and cooked fruit, ice cream or sometimes pudding.

When in Paris or London, sometimes in the afternoon I may

The Aga Khan's grandfather,
Aga Khan I



The Aga Khan's father,
Aly Shah

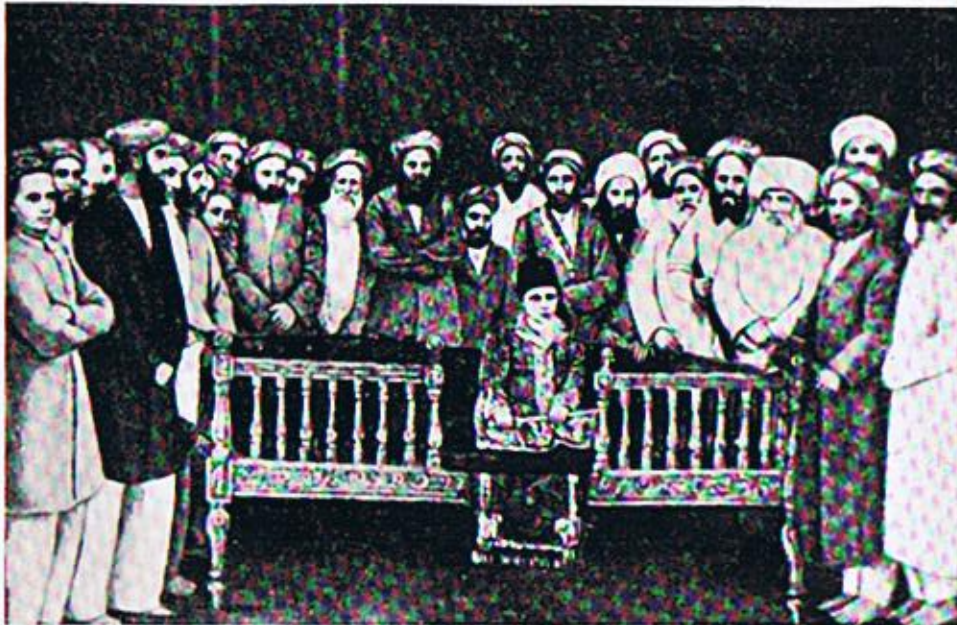
go to a race meeting, or I may catch up with activities such as my correspondence, or my reading. About five or six a cup of tea, and then until seven or eight I usually try and read again, poetry, works of fiction, magazines of literary criticism, and I read thoroughly the morning and evening newspapers. Dinner consists only of fresh fruit. I never take anything cooked or salty at night. If the fruit is not good, then a salad. When on rare occasions I am asked to dinner I usually ask the host to give me salad and fruit or such raw vegetables as celery, tomatoes, etc.

Both my wife and I are devoted to the theatre, the opera, and the ballet. In towns like London and Paris we go to one or the other four or five times a week and usually take a few friends with us. In places like Cannes we occasionally go to the local theatre during the season—sometimes to the Nice opera or to Monte Carlo or similar places. I usually go to bed quickly after the theatre. My life-long experience has taught me that sleep is like walking—you can derive from four or five hours of sleep as much benefit as you can from eight or nine hours, just as in twenty minutes' brisk walk you can get as much benefit as from two hours of loitering about the streets and looking in shop windows. In a word, you can either sleep slow or sleep fast. I am a firm believer in brisk sleeping. I am happy to say while I sleep I sleep—when I go to bed I have no time to lose—even if they wake me up for anything I immediately fall back; and practically all my life I have never had dreams. I think that is due to the fact that I have rationalized my sleep as I have rationalized my exercise. Those who suffer from dreams may find a measure of peace and may overcome physical and moral strain if they can so arrange their habits as to concentrate on the business at hand.

But, to return to my youth: I had three British tutors—a Mr. Gallagher, who was Irish, a Mr. Lawrence, and another Irishman, Mr. Kenny. All three were found for me by the Jesuits in Bombay. It may seem strange that my family turned to the Jesuits for my education in Western matters, but both in Bombay and in Poona there are big and important Jesuit schools, and both quite near where we lived—St. Mary's in Bombay and St. Vincent's in Poona. All the children of our considerable household—the ever-multiplying descendants of my grandfather's hangers-on, pensioners, relatives, and old soldiers—went to these Jesuit schools.



The Aga Khan as a young boy



At his installation as Imam, the Aga Khan ascends the Gadi in Bombay in 1885

The whole household knew the Jesuit fathers well, and nothing was easier than to get their advice and help.

There was never a hint, by the by, of their attempting to convert any of our Muslim children to their own creed. They respected Islam and never by open argument, by suggestion, or insinuation did they seek to weaken a Muslim's faith. This is one of the clearest recollections of my childhood; and I have seen the same phenomenon repeated in contemporary Egypt and Pakistan. One day a few years ago I discussed it with an eminent Jesuit, a Spaniard, and cross-examined him about it.

"What the devil do you want to come and waste your time for?" I said. "You're a missionary, and you've got all these opportunities to do your missionary work, but you never try to convert a single boy! What are you here for? What do you get out of all these huge sums you're spending on teachers and building? What's it all about?"

The Jesuit, who was an old friend of mine, smiled his sidelong smile and said: "Don't you see what we're getting out of it?"

"No."

"You are paying us. To every Muslim and non-Christian boy we give the best education we can. But we make them pay through the nose for it. For those who pay, our school fees are enormous, but our poor Catholic children get their education free. So indirectly you're paying for it, and our poor get a first-class education at your expense."

So far as I was concerned, the three teachers the Jesuits found for me were all excellent men. The schooling which they gave me was not in the least narrow or restricted. They lifted my mind to wide horizons, they opened my eyes to the outside world. They were wise, broadminded men, with a stimulating zest for knowledge and the ability to impart it—whether in science, history, or politics. Most important of all perhaps, they encouraged me to read for myself, and from the time I was ten or thereabouts, I burrowed freely into our vast library of books in English, French, Persian, and Arabic. My three tutors gave me the key to knowledge, and for that I have always been profoundly grateful to Mr. Gallagher, Mr. Lawrence, and Mr. Kenny.

Of them I can say nothing but good. But, alas, of the man responsible for my education in Arabic and Persian and in all

matters Islamic I have nothing but bad to say. He was extremely learned, a profound scholar, with a deep and extensive knowledge of Arabic literature and of Islamic history, but all his learning had not widened his mind or warmed his heart. He was a bigoted sectarian, and in spite of his vast reading his mind was one of the darkest and narrowest that I have ever encountered. If Islam had indeed been the thing he taught then surely God had sent Mohammed not to be a blessing for all mankind but a curse.

It was saddening and in a sense frightening to listen to him talk. He gave one the feeling that God had created men solely to send them to hell and eternal damnation. However deep and precise his knowledge—and I admit that in both these respects it was almost unique—it had withered into bitterness and hate. In later years he returned to Tehran where he became a great and renowned teacher of Islamic lore and acquired the reputation of being one of the most learned scholars in all Iran, yet to the end, I think, he must have remained the bigoted mullah whom I knew.

Perhaps it was this early experience which for the rest of my life has given me a certain prejudice against professional men of religion—be they mullahs or maulvis, curates, vicars, or bishops. Many of them I admit are exemplary people. Simple religious people—village curés in France, the humbler priesthood in rural Italy, humble, pious and gentle sisters in hospitals all over the world—I have known, admired, and revered. In England I have had many friends all my life among the Quakers, and I am aware of a tranquil sense of mental and spiritual communion with them, for our mutual respect for each other's beliefs—mine for their Quakerism, theirs for my Islamic faith—is absolute. The vast majority of Muslim believers all over the world are charitable and gently disposed to those who hold other faiths, and they pray for divine forgiveness and compassion for all. There developed, however, in Iran and Iraq a school of doctors of religious law whose outlook and temper—intolerance, bigotry, and spiritual aggressiveness—resembled my old teacher's, and in my travels about the world I have met too many of their kind—Christian, Muslim, and Jew—who ardently and ostentatiously sing the praises of the Lord, and yet are eager to send to hell and eternal damnation all except those who hold precisely their own set of opinions. For

many years, I must confess, this is a sort of person I have sought to avoid.

It was strange and it was out of place that a boy, whose home and upbringing were such as mine in India, should have been submitted in adolescence to a course of this narrow and formalist Islamic indoctrination. For my early environment was one of the widest tolerance; there was in our home never any prejudice against Hindus or Hinduism, and a great many of our attendants and servants—our gardeners, messengers, sepoy, and guards, and many of those whose work was connected with buying and selling, marketing and rent collection—were Hindus.

In addition, my mother was herself a genuine mystic in the Muslim tradition (as were most of her closest companions); and she habitually spent a great deal of time in prayer for spiritual enlightenment and for union with God. In such a spirit there was no room for bigotry. Like many other mystics my mother had a profound poetic understanding. I have in something near ecstasy heard her read perhaps some verses by Roumi or Hafiz, with their exquisite analogies between man's beatific vision of the Divine and the temporal beauty and colours of flowers, the music and the magic of the night, and the transient splendours of the Persian dawn. Then I would have to go back to my gloomy treadmill and hear my tutor cursing and railing as was his habit. Since he was a Shia of the narrowest outlook he concentrated his most ferocious hatred not on non-Muslims, not even on those who persecuted the Prophet, but on the caliphs and companions of the Prophet, his daughter and two grandchildren, his son-in-law Ali, and about four or five of the closest companions of Hazrat Ali; all others were enemies of God and of His Prophet, who had striven to encompass the Prophet's death and after his death had brutally murdered Ali—his adopted son and natural successor—and Ali's sons, his beloved grandchildren. This form of Shiaism attains its climax during the month of Moharram with its lamentations and its dreadful cursings. Reaction against its hatred, intolerance, and bigotry has, I know, coloured my whole life, and I have found my answer in the simple prayer that God in His infinite mercy will forgive the sins of all Muslims, the slayer and the slain, and that all may be reconciled in Heaven in a final total absolution. And I further pray that all who truly and sincerely believe in God,

be they Christian, Jew, Buddhist, or Brahmin, who strive to do good and avoid evil, who are gentle and kind, will be joined in Heaven and be granted final pardon and peace. I could wish that all of other creeds would have this same charity towards Muslims; but—with those honourable, humble exceptions whom I have mentioned—this is not an attitude that I have encountered among Christian divines. It is a sad and harsh thing to say, but I believe it to be true that, in general, the higher a man's position in any of the various churches, the more severe and the less charitable is his attitude to Muslims and to Islam.

The home in which I was brought up was, as you can see, a literary one. I have referred to my mother's poetic sense. She was deeply versed in Persian and Arabic literature, as were several of her ladies-in-waiting and closest women friends. My mother knew a great deal of poetry by heart and she had a flair for the appropriate classical quotation—a flair which, I may say, she never lost throughout her long life. Even when she was nearly ninety she was never at a loss for the right and apt quotation, not merely from one of the great poets such as Hafiz and Firdausi or Roumi, but from many a minor or little-known writer.

One little anecdote may illustrate this. Shortly before she died a cousin of mine quoted one night at dinner a verse of Persian poetry which is rarely heard. In order not to bother my mother or worry her, I attributed it to Hafiz. Not at all, said my mother, that is not by Hafiz, and she gave the name of the line and the name of the rather obscure poet who wrote it.

A consequence of this characteristic was that at mealtimes at my mother's table there were no occasions of idle gossip or tittle-tattle. Our conversation was of literature, of poetry; or perhaps one of the elderly ladies, who travelled to and from Tehran a great deal, would talk about her experiences at the Court of the Shah.

A clear light shines on this phase of my boyhood. Was I happy or unhappy? I was solitary, in the sense that I had no companions of my own age, except my beloved cousin Aga Shamsuddin and his brother Abbas who were of the same age and the same outlook and were the closest and dearest friends of my youth, but I had so few holidays and so little free time, what could I have done with a host of friends? One fact stands out extremely clearly—I worked hard, a great deal harder than most young schoolboys.

By the time I was thirteen I could read and write English, tolerable French, perfect Persian, and fair Arabic; I had a sound knowledge of Roman history as well as of Islamic history. I was well grounded in at least the elements of science—chemistry and physics, botany, biology, and zoology. Nor was my scientific education merely theoretical; in each of our houses I had a small laboratory and I had a set period of practical, experimental laboratory work every day.

As I have remarked, I early acquired an insatiable taste for reading. It developed rapidly from the time that I was ten or so and when I had, temporarily at any rate, plumbed the resources of our library, I looked elsewhere. I wanted to buy books for myself. But there was one small impediment: my mother allowed me no pocket money. My cousin and I organized for ourselves a brilliant way around this difficulty. Each of us put on an *abba* (a wide, all-enveloping cloak which is, or used to be, a universal piece of clothing in Persia and the Arab countries). Thus garbed we made our way to a well-known Bombay bookshop. One of us engaged the shopkeeper in eager conversation, and the other slid some books into the folds of his *abba*. Our little device was pretty soon spotted, and the proprietor of the shop told my uncle and my mother. Naturally our bill was promptly settled, but the family decided that we should be taught a lesson. Nothing was said to us and we continued our naughty little game. We were at it one day when into the shop walked my uncle.

"Take off your *abbas!*" he ordered sternly.

As we did so the books which we had stolen tumbled to the floor. Our shame and our mortification were immediate and complete, and from that day to this I don't think I have ever so much as picked a flower in anyone else's garden without telling them.

I continued my reading—but not with stolen books. And a year or two later my reading and indeed my whole outlook on life, were profoundly and permanently transformed by a small, wise decision; much that had hitherto been pain and hardship became pleasure and delight; my health was immediately improved, and I am sure I was saved much trouble and misfortune in later life. Mr. Kenny, the third and last of my European tutors, had at one time been employed by a firm of opticians. As soon as he saw me settle down to work he realized how terrible—and how

dangerous—was the torture to which, through my congenital shortsight and the ignorance on these matters of those by whom I was surrounded, I was being daily and hourly submitted.

It is strange and sad to recall that already, more than once before Mr. Kenny's arrival, I had in fun picked up and put on a pair of glasses left lying about by one of our family or friends. The moment I put them on I discovered the joy of a new and exciting world; a world of human beings of definite and different shapes, a world of green trees and brightly coloured flowers, and of sharp, strong light, instead of the perpetual haze and fog, the world blurred at the edges, which was all that an extremely myopic little boy could see. But those minutes of joy were of short duration, and were indeed forbidden, for the servants had orders to take the glasses away from me, since my family could not believe that a child could be shortsighted and thought that I was being self-indulgent and silly. Mr. Kenny immediately recognized my present plight and its implications for my future. He insisted on taking me to the firm of opticians whose employee he had been; he had my eyes tested and had me fitted with proper glasses both for reading and for distance. My uncles strove to interfere, but Mr. Kenny was adamant, he carried with him the prestige of the West, and he won the day. This sensible and kindly action saved me infinite pain and worry, and gave me a new world in which to live.

* * * * *

What sort of a world was it to which my boyish eyes were thus opened? What sort of a life was it to which I was being educated? First and most important, I was by inheritance the spiritual head and leader of a far-flung, extremely diverse community of far from negligible significance in the Islamic world. As soon as I was capable of so doing, I had to assume responsibility and take decisions. I was installed on the Gadi of Imams in 1885, when I was eight years old, and there is a photograph in existence of this ceremony, which vividly recalls a vanished epoch. A few years later I found myself exercising my influence and authority in a matter of considerable importance in the life of Bombay—a security matter as we should say nowadays. In the early nineties there was an outburst of savage communal rioting in Bombay. I

issued strict orders to all my followers that they were to avoid participation in the disturbance. The effect of my order was not merely negative; it helped to abate anger and re-establish peace in Bombay between Muslims and Hindus. This—my first independent political action—earned the thanks of the Governor and the Commissioner of Police in Bombay, and boy though I still was it did much to win for me the regard of political leaders of all communities.

For by this time my household, followers, supporters, relatives, and hangers-on made up an important element in the population of Bombay, and (as I shall have to relate shortly) they ultimately created a security problem of their own. My grandfather, conscious that he was an exile from Persia, and conscious perhaps that the greater part of his adventurous and exciting career was over when he settled in Bombay, took no part in Indian politics. My father, during the Governorship of Sir James Fergusson, accepted a seat on the Bombay Legislative Council. In my maturity my political interests and ideals were to take me far further afield, but the domain to which in the late eighties and early nineties I was growing up was not without its own political, administrative, social, and economic problems and perplexities.

My grandfather, both in Poona and Bombay, had been able to lead a largely insulated life of his own, almost medieval in its style and pattern, the like of which has long since passed away. He brought with him from Persia the pastimes of Persian noblemen of that era, and the splendid and feudal manner of organizing those pastimes. Field sports were a major passion in the society in which he grew up; lavish racing stables were maintained; packs of hounds were bred, and there was continual searching for the best hawks to be found in Iran and Iraq. All these interests he brought with him into exile—and a great retinue of followers who were identified with them. As soon as he settled in Bombay he bought and raced horses—Arab, English, Australian, even Turkoman; he collected hawks and hounds anew; and the pattern of his life was arranged round these diversions. His day began at six in the morning either with a deer hunt or after birds, or—in the racing season—a visit to the training grounds to watch his horses being put through their paces. By nine o'clock he would be home. He would have a substantial breakfast, and then go to bed. In the

middle of the afternoon he would get up, go to a race meeting or more hunting until dusk. Then he would come home and spend the night on his tasks as the leader of his community—receiving his followers, conducting his correspondence, looking into matters of finance and the like. He would break for a fairly big meal at about nine o'clock, and then work on until five in the morning, when he would have a light meal before beginning the day's round again. These were habits familiar to him and many others of the ruling class of his time in Iran and Afghanistan, and he saw no reason not to maintain them in the surroundings of his later life.

I may say, incidentally, that my grandfather had a run of success as an owner on the Indian turf, in the fifties, sixties, and seventies of the last century, very similar to my own in England and France from the twenties to the fifties of this century.

My father during his brief reign, continued in much the same way this manner of living, widening and increasing the stud and organizing his hawks and his hounds in a fashion and on a scale that evoked the admiration of everyone who understood these matters, travellers from Europe, for example, and members of the British ruling class who held high official positions in India. It was to fall to me to adapt and modify this outlook and way of life to changing times.

It was inevitable that during my minority the British Raj and its representatives in Bombay should take a close interest in my welfare and my upbringing. My boyhood coincided with what was no doubt the heyday of British paternalism in India. The Raj seemed effortlessly secure and unshakable; its representatives and officials—most of whom were enlightened and liberal men whose minds were in tune with the temper of the high Victorian age in which they had matured—were serenely self-confident. Their actions and their decisions found their source in a mental and spiritual strength which their successors were to lose. The mutiny was a far-off memory, and indeed its effect had seemed to be almost totally confined to Northern India. Nationalism was only just beginning to stir in the womb of time. Congress existed, having been brought into being in the early eighties by the energy and effort of a British member of the I.C.S., a Mr. Hume. A similar Muslim organization was established a little later, and my

eldest half-brother was one of its founders. But few would have believed that these were the first portents of all the stress and upheaval of later years.

Relations between British and Indian were in general easy, amiable, and without strain. The then Governor of Bombay, Lord Reay, was a Gladstonian Liberal, high-principled, benevolent, and affable, and sustained in his duty by a charming and talented wife. And the Bombay Army Commander was no other than H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, Queen Victoria's youngest son, who made soldiering his career, as befitted a godson and namesake of Arthur, first Duke of Wellington. From the first it was my particular good fortune that the Duke and Duchess of Connaught took in me a close, affectionate, and continuing interest. They would come to tea at our house several times a year, and I as a child was more frequently asked to their home and there agreeably spoiled and given perhaps more toffee and chocolate than was altogether good for me. These visits back and forth were red-letter days for me. At Poona and at Mahabaleshwar the Duke was a very near neighbour; every day, and often several times a day, we would encounter him out riding, and we would stop and the Duke would have a talk with me. Thus in a fashion I was brought up close to the British Royal Family and in later years, when I met Queen Victoria, she said at once, I remember, that she had heard all about me and my home from her son.

Similar frequent and informal visits were exchanged between my family and the Governor; and as a boy in the Reays' time I was often taken to tea at Government House. There was in these relationships at this period no sense of tension, no standoffishness, and no condescension; they were cordial and confident—very different from those that developed in later years. The narrow, intolerant "imperialistic" outlook associated with Kipling's name, and with some of his more unfortunate observations (of the order of "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet", for example), had not then emerged. Had social life and relations between British and Indians continued to be as they were in the eighties, I greatly doubt whether political bitterness would have developed to the extent it did, and possibly something far less total than the severance of the Republic of India from the Imperial connection would have been feasible.

Queen Victoria herself was, of course, sharply conscious of the responsibilities, not only political but personal and social, which she had assumed with the splendid title of Empress of India. She insisted that Indian princes and Indian gentlefolk should receive the respect and the dignified status accorded in those days to European princes and gentlefolk. The Duke of Connaught faithfully practised her principles during his time in India. The Viceroy and Vicereine, Lord and Lady Dufferin, were, like Lord and Lady Reay, people of kind and gentle sensibility, warm hearts, and graceful manners. A tone thus set could not be ignored, and Indo-British relationships in general were of this pattern. There was agreeable and unstrained social mixing at receptions, on the race course, or on the polo ground.

There is an outstanding example that I recall: Sir Jamsetje Jeejeebhoy, a notable figure in the Parsee community in Bombay, gave a reception for the Viceroy and Vicereine, Lord and Lady Dufferin, for the Governor of Bombay and his wife, Lord and Lady Reay, and for the Duke and Duchess of Connaught. All the leading representatives of all the communities in Bombay were present, and just as would have happened in England or any other country, Sir Jeejeebhoy, as host, offered his arm to Lady Dufferin and went into the supper room, and the Viceroy followed with his hostess, Lady Jeejeebhoy, and everyone else went after in turn. A few years later—and thereafter, until the end of the Indian Empire—it would have been inconceivable that the Viceroy, a prince of the British Royal House and the Governor of a great province of British India, would have gone to a reception at the house of a Parsee gentleman, however distinguished, and allowed him to lead the Vicereine in first and then have followed with his hostess. Rigid protocol replaced easy good manners—to the grave detriment not only of social life but of something, in the end, much more important. But in those happy days Empire did not mean "imperialism"—social vulgarity, and worse, social aggressiveness and high-handedness. It is true that the clubs were closed to Indians but that fact had none of the neurotic significance which it took on subsequently; nobody minded Europeans having a small enclave of their own, and social relations outside were on a basis of free equality.

A curious fact not without a tinge of irony in it, is that in the