

THE AGA KHAN AND HIS ANCESTORS

A BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL
SKETCH

By

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AND
A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE AGA KHAN

With a Foreword

by

GENERAL HIS HIGHNESS MAHARAJADHIRAJ SHRI
GANGA SINGHJI BAHADUR OF BIKANER,

G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., G.B.E., K.C.B., A.-D.-C.
TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING-EMPEROR, LL.D.



HIS HIGHNESS THE AGA KHAN
In ceremonial dress with his orders and decorations.

▼
BOMBAY:
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1939.

To
The Illustrious Representative of the
Most Ancient and Renowned House
of Sisodia Rajputs

HIS HIGHNESS MAHARAJADHIRAJ MAHARANA
SHRI SIR BHUPAL SINHJI BAHADUR,
G.C.S.I.,

Ruler of Mewar

Who has nobly upheld the great traditions of that magnificent
race of Rajputs,

Dedicating his life to the service of his people,

And under whose liberal rule Hindus and Muslims live in
peace, unity and the enjoyment of equal blessings.

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED



Foreword

IT affords me great pleasure to write this Foreword to the Biography of my old and valued friend, His Highness the Aga Khan.

For over thirty years now, His Highness has been recognised as one of the leading personalities of the British Empire. His achievements 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.

The honours and dignities that have come to him during the last quarter of a century bear witness to the high appreciation of the Crown and the Imperial Government of the manifold activities of His Highness. Given the rank and dignity of a first class Prince of the Bombay Presidency, created a Privy Councillor to His Imperial Majesty, elected President of the League of Nations, it may justly be claimed for the Aga Khan that through his own efforts he has attained a position which is not only unique, but unprecedented for a British Indian to attain. 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 of Nations.

It is not for me to speak of his services to India and to his community. An accredited leader of the Muslims of India to whom his co-religionists have turned time after time for guidance and inspiration, he has also been the most consistent champion of Hindu-Muslim unity.

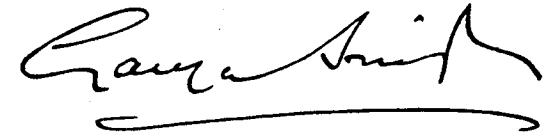
His spirit of toleration, adherence to principles and freedom from narrow prejudices whether of race or religion, mark out His Highness as one of the few in India who could bring about that unity when the time is ripe for it.

As becomes one of his descent and affiliations, His Highness, though a genuine patriot, is 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.

With his religious following spread over many countries, His Highness' approach to national and international problems is different from that of a sectarian or partisan. No one is less moved by slogans and set formulæ. In fact, his approach to the consideration of all important problems, whether affecting his community, country or Empire, is that of an idealist who tempers his views by the realities of practical politics. His personality, experience and wisdom have been, it is now generally acknowledged, assets of inestimable value to India and the Empire.

My own friendship with him extends now over many decades. During all the years I have known him and valued his friendship, I have had occasion to admire his many gifts, his unflinching charm of manner, his deep insight into national and international politics, his cosmopolitan outlook, his wide humanity which does not recognise the limitations of race or creed, and his unique gift of friendship. But what has struck me most in one whose life has been so rich and many-sided is his unaffected simplicity, which is a characteristic of true greatness.

Mr. Naoroji Dumasia has rendered a notable public service in writing this interesting Biography of His Highness. Mr. Dumasia has all the qualifications necessary for a biographer. He is intimately acquainted with every aspect of his subject's life and is moved by a genuine admiration for his character and achievements. Besides, as an experienced journalist, Mr. Dumasia writes with grace and persuasiveness and has been able to sustain the interest of the reader in the narrative he unfolds. In the result, "The Aga Khan and His Ancestors" is not only a book of great political importance, but one which it is a genuine pleasure to read.



Maharajah of Bikaner.

LALLGARH, BIKANER,
The 4th May 1939.

Preface

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's singular patriotism embraces Indian interests only and aims at securing the substance of political independence for the 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. He considers no calamity greater to a country than the precipitation of a cataclysmic change which bodes nothing but disaster to the healthy growth of a national Government. Believing that a sudden revolutionary change is transient and leaves a bitter trail behind, he prefers to work for peaceful progress through evolution. Both have one thing in common,—the ideal of service and sacrifice—for the regeneration of their motherland. Both men have given innumerable proofs of their conviction and their desire to do their duty towards millions of their fellow countrymen. But their ways have differed. The Aga Khan is averse to a subversive movement to promote political power and insists upon laying firm foundations of an enduring, political and economic future. Mr. Gandhi has in the past taught defiance of law and order and the challenging of

constituted authority. The Aga Khan works within the four corners of law and order. While Mr. Gandhi's philosophy of life is based on visionary ideas, the Aga Khan believes in taking a realistic view. The Aga Khan's fame as a statesman and realist has spread throughout the world and made his name respected far beyond the frontiers of Asia. His writings, speeches, ideals and achievements have attracted the attention of the world. There is no sphere of human activity and benevolence which he has left untouched. Except Mr. Gandhi there is no other figure of his or any other age which has moved the hearts and minds of Indians as the Aga Khan has done. His life has been spent in thinking out and initiating projects for the benefit of humanity. His record of many-sided work and the far-sightedness which has governed his efforts are remarkable. He sees beyond his time and his predictions have always come true. His forecast of the world war, Germany's defeat, the Russian revolution, the undoing of the treaty of Versailles and his prediction, made soon after the defeat of Germany, that she would become a great power within 20 years have all come true. He long foresaw the annexation of Austria by Germany and the invasion and over-running of China by Japan. On Islam he has conferred solid benefits. His efforts to promote the well-being of Indians in various spheres of life and his bold fight for achieving India's political freedom and economic prosperity have won for him their affectionate gratitude. His services to the Empire have won for him universal admiration and established his hold on Englishmen. A study of his inspiring and ennobling life provides lessons for the guidance of present and future generations of his countrymen, and indeed for every nation in the world. In this age of conflict between totalitarian and the democratic States, and especially at the present moment when the world is gravitating towards a crisis threatening to engulf and sweep away civilization, the teachings of the Aga

Khan and his passionate plea for preservation of world peace have a special value and provide an object lesson against another world conflagration. A study of his life's work, especially his lifelong peaceful mission, must prove helpful to every nation.

BOMBAY,
May 5th, 1939.

N. M. D.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
<i>Chapter One.</i>	INTRODUCTORY 1
<i>Chapter Two.</i>	THE AGA KHAN AS THE WORLD SEES HIM 5
<i>Chapter Three.</i>	ANCESTRY 16
<i>Chapter Four.</i>	AGA KHAN I. 25
<i>Chapter Five.</i>	PERSIAN GOVERNMENT'S ACTION.. 43
<i>Chapter Six.</i>	CLOSING YEARS OF A GREAT LIFE. 54
<i>Chapter Seven.</i>	AGA KHAN II. & LADY ALY SHAH 60
<i>Chapter Eight.</i>	AGA KHAN III. 72
<i>Chapter Nine.</i>	THE WORLD WAR OF 1914 .. 125
<i>Chapter Ten.</i>	A MAN OF PEACE 140
<i>Chapter Eleven.</i>	CHAMPION OF ISLAM 151
<i>Chapter Twelve.</i>	NOBEL PRIZE FOR PEACE .. 167
<i>Chapter Thirteen.</i>	LEADER AND GUIDE OF MUSLIMS. 172
<i>Chapter Fourteen.</i>	KING GEORGE V AT ALIGARH .. 179
<i>Chapter Fifteen.</i>	INDIAN EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS.. 198
<i>Chapter Sixteen.</i>	AGA KHAN ON INDIANS' RIGHTS.. 205
<i>Chapter Seventeen.</i>	INDIANS OVERSEAS 217
<i>Chapter Eighteen.</i>	DEFENCE OF INDIA 232
<i>Chapter Nineteen.</i>	DEMOCRATIC INDIA 238
<i>Chapter Twenty.</i>	THE AGA KHAN AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS 264
<i>Chapter Twenty-one.</i>	GOLDEN JUBILEE 281
<i>Chapter Twenty-two.</i>	AGA KHAN IN EAST AFRICA .. 295
<i>Chapter Twenty-three.</i>	FOUNDATION OF WORLD PEACE .. 299
<i>Chapter Twenty-four.</i>	THE FUTURE OF INDIA 304
<i>Chapter Twenty-five.</i>	AGA KHAN'S FAMILY AND HEIR .. 312
<i>Chapter Twenty-six.</i>	AGA KHAN—SPORTSMAN .. 324
	EPILOGUE 334

CONTENTS

APPENDICES

	PAGE
APPENDIX A—INDIAN STATES: AGA KHAN'S PLEA FOR THEIR PRESERVATION	341
APPENDIX B—AN EMPIRE BUILDER: HIS HIGHNESS THE AGA KHAN	363
APPENDIX C—THE AGA KHAN HONOURED: INDIAN TRIBUTES AT RECEPTION	367
APPENDIX D—LEADER OF BRITISH INDIAN DELEGATES: TRIBUTES TO AGA KHAN'S SERVICES	370
INDEX	371

ILLUSTRATIONS

His Highness The Aga Khan	<i>Frontispiece</i>
The Aga Khan leading in Blenheim after his first Derby victory	<i>Facing page 10</i>
Aga Hussain Aly Shah, Aga Khan I	" " 25
Aga Aly Shah, Aga Khan II	" " 60
Lady Aly Shah	" " 66
Aga Khan installed on Gadi of Imams	" " 74
Aga Khan with Princess Theresa and Prince Aly Khan	" " 92
Prince Aly Khan, Aga Khan's eldest son & heir	" " 108
The Begum Aga Khan	" " 130
Group taken at Wedding of Prince Aly Khan	" " 148
Aga Khan with the Begum and their son	" " 156
Prince Sadrudin	" " 168
Princess Aly Khan	" " 190
Prince & Princess Aly Khan with their two sons	" " 230
Aga Khan with Mr. Gandhi in London	" " 252
Aga Khan weighed in gold	" " 281
Aga Khan with Princess Theresa and their first son	" " 312
Prince & Princess Aly Khan	" " 316
Snapshots of Prince Aly Khan's sons	" " 320
Aga Khan playing golf	" " 325
Aga Khan leading in Bahram	" " 328
Aga Khan leading in Mahmoud	" " 330
Aga Khan with the Jam Saheb	" " 342
Aga Khan and the Begum with Maharaja of Gwalior	" " 350

Chapter One

INTRODUCTORY

HISTORY can appropriately say of His Highness the Aga Khan :—

“ Much had he read,

“ Much more had seen ; he studied from the life

“ And in th' original perused mankind.”

He has been described by an eminent English statesman as a “ citizen of the world.” The phrase is apt, for his sustained efforts in the cause of world peace command the admiration of the Empire and have given his voice force in the councils of the nations. No higher compliment could have been paid to any man. Citizenship of the world is the personification of the great ideal which was born of the agonies of the Great War, but statesmanship sincerely aspiring to that end has remained too rare.

The life story of the Aga Khan makes as strange and interesting a chronicle as one may expect to read in modern times. In recent years the legend of His Highness has grown with extraordinary rapidity. More than one writer in the popular press has invested him with the most fantastic attributes of heroes in the Arabian Nights, and as the story is passed on, in shortened form, it loses nothing of the essentially bizarre in the telling. The mere appearance of His Highness in public, even on the golf links or on the race-course, is sufficient to bring forth a new crop of fables, almost to represent him as capable of invoking the help of the Slave of the Lamp, until at last the view of the general public in England and on the Continent has become almost as confused as that of the lady whose impressions of a tour in India became so mixed that

at the end of it she declared that the finest sight she had seen in India was the Aga Khan by moonlight.

The plentiful invention with which the history and achievements of His Highness have been described may be taken, however, to indicate something more than ignorance. It reflects in shadowy fashion something of the interest taken in a character that is little understood and in a long career distinguished by fine achievement in many fields. The purpose of this book is to show how well justified is that interest, to explain something of what the Aga Khan has done and said, and, so far as is possible, to narrate in his own words what he has thought and why he has taken certain lines of action. To attempt that task is no easy matter. It means exploring many activities and going back to the almost forgotten history of old controversies in order to discover why and how it is that the Aga Khan has achieved a position for himself which has been rivalled by none of his contemporaries. The result will be, it is hoped, to present an accurate and illuminating portrait of a man who—to quote Sir Samuel Hoare, the ex-Secretary of State for India—is “*par excellence* a citizen of the world, 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 on that occasion that the Aga Khan had found “the secret of the art of life.” It is a significant phrase. Some may thoughtlessly interpret it as meaning no more than that the Aga Khan has found how to get the most out of life. There could be no more cruel parody of his life. Those who know him best can attest that for the Aga Khan the art of life has been anything but selfish or personal. His life has been one of service—service not only to Islam and his own far-scattered community but to his Sovereign and to the highest ideals of humanity.

No man who has lived so long and so continuously in the public eye as the Aga Khan has done can hope

to escape misrepresentation. But he may reasonably hope to escape that peculiarly silly form of misrepresentation which shows him as being noticeable chiefly for his wealth. One recent writer was not only guilty of that stupidity but described the Aga Khan as owning “millions and millions of pounds in bullion and precious stones” and said that “beneath the headquarters of the Ismailians there lies a treasure greater than all the wealth stored in the Bank of England.” It is odd that deficiency in invention should be exposed in such fairy tales; there are far better tales in “The Thousand and One Nights.” Nor, indeed, are such fanciful embellishments to the life history of the Aga Khan necessary: it is distinctive enough in itself. It has been told in part before now. The author of this book, for instance, wrote over thirty-five years ago “A Brief History of the Aga Khan,” which was published in India. But although that book gave some account of the Ismailian Princes through whom His Highness traces his descent from the Prophet, it was not possible to tell in any adequate manner the romantic history of that “Persian Prince” who, on going to India, formed the first link in the chain that was to bind the dynasty to India and the Empire. Diligent research in the records of the India Office has brought to light many incidents in the career of the first Aga Khan, the Lord of Mahallat, and son-in-law of the Shah of Persia, incidents which are not only of importance in the history of the family but which throw a new light on the chequered story of the British in India.

The strange adventures of that fine old Persian soldier carry one back to a world that today seems very remote. But some account of them and of his protracted negotiations with the Government of India must be considered if one is to form a correct appreciation of how the status of the Aga Khan has come to be accepted in India. A flood

of recent books about India and the proceedings of the Round Table Conference have more or less familiarised the people of England with some idea of the position of the Indian States ; but, despite the important part played by the Aga Khan in that Conference, there is widespread ignorance about the nature of the position occupied by His Highness in India and how it has come about that he should be a Prince without territory but with followers in many parts of India and other countries, who regard his word as law. The key to that puzzle is to be found in the history of the first Aga Khan as well as in that of his grandson, the present Aga Khan. They present an interesting contrast, and students of heredity may be puzzled to account for some of the more marked characteristics of the descendant of the old Persian administrator and soldier. Yet it is not by any means fanciful to detect things common to both, although time and chance and fate have heavily overlaid points of resemblance. That, however, is a matter on which the reader may later form his own judgment after consideration of the facts and, more particularly, after studying the character of His Highness.

Chapter Two

THE AGA KHAN AS THE WORLD SEES HIM

DIRECT descendant of the Prophet Muhammad and spiritual head of millions of Ismailians, political leader of eighty millions of Indian Muslims, statesman with an international reputation, prince of men, prince of sportsmen, and prince by hereditary right, few men wield a greater influence in the world than His Highness the Aga Khan, Sir Sultan Muhammed Shah, and few men have made a greater contribution to peaceful, ordered progress. The profound respect which he enjoys in the world of Islam has a twofold basis, for it is grounded on the position held by His Highness as the acknowledged leader of an illustrious race and on his character as a man. Thus it may be said that this pillar of Islam enjoys tributes of respect which are his due by long tradition and inheritance and which are his personal acquisition gained by fulfilment of his high destiny.

Bluest of blue blood flows in his veins. His line goes back to the Caliphs of Egypt, and as Freya Stark, in her book, "The Valley of the Assassins", has pointed out as a result of recent research after travels and adventure in unknown Persia, perhaps no one now living, and perhaps no one among the ruling families of the world can boast so romantic and unusual an ancestry. He is a Prince descended from the Arab family of Hasham and the tribe of Koreish, much older than the Bourbons and the Brunswicks in Europe. He embodies the spirit of those who made famous in history and in legend Toledo, Cairo, Cordova and Baghdad.

But there are reasons other than those of birth to account for the Aga Khan's unique position among the world's greatest potentates. He is a man with a genius for leadership, with great culture, profound knowledge,

a creative mind, and a spirit that is never daunted by difficulties. The British Empire found in him during its time of trial its greatest bulwark in the East; it still finds in him a firm friend. His influence for peace is incalculable.

It is impossible not to "feel" his presence directly he enters a room, and that is not because the Aga Khan was born great, but because he *is* great. He seems to have the faculty of living half a dozen lives, each as complete and well-rounded as the life of an ordinary individual; and within the range of each, his knowledge, experience and shrewdness are outstanding. His greatness lies not in what he has; but in what he is. His deep sympathy for his less fortunate brethren, his child-like simplicity, his great dignity, and his very simple way of living, though surrounded by wealth, appeal to everyone who comes in contact with him. Whatever the sphere of his activity, he finds the secret of success. He is one of those rare men who combine theory with practice. He turns hatred and enmity into love and brotherhood, replaces ignorance and darkness with knowledge and light, and the sum total of his far-flung activities has been a vast addition to human happiness.

Yet there is nothing self-assertive about the Aga Khan. His voice is quiet, his speech deliberate. As a speaker he has no mannerisms; he relies solely on argument—and convinces. And with these gifts goes a unique insight into the minds of others. Swift in thought and action, he can formulate or change his plans on the spur of the moment. Not only has he inspired confidence and affection from his early days but he seems to have retained them to this day. His early association with British administrators in India and his contact with statesmen, diplomats and ambassadors whom he met in Europe had a profound influence upon his character and career. His magnetism, his varied gifts and his position in society, his initiative and indomitable spirit have made him a vital force on occasions of great

emergency, his actions corresponding to his great character. So, quite apart from the position he holds by reason of his lineage, he has firmly established his claim to leadership in Europe, Asia and Africa.

He has not confined himself to the narrow outlook of nationalism. He has recognised that these are days of internationalism, and this has broadened his sphere of activities, gaining him a reputation as a remarkable international personality of note such as no Asiatic has so far achieved or has even aspired to achieve.

His name will go down to posterity as a nation-builder who has found it possible to reconcile Imperial interests with those of Indian nationalism through his statesmanship, practical ideas and constructive genius. He is an Imperialist where the interests of the Empire are concerned, and in the attainment of India's inherent rights, political and economic, he is a nationalist. He combines in himself the attributes of a Prince, a Councillor and a Statesman.

It is said of the Prophet of Islam that he was not only above his surroundings but above his age, and not one age but all time. But in the world of today one human life proves too short to perfect and execute one great idea. The Aga Khan, who recognises his own limitations, has, however, conceived great ideas and has had the satisfaction of seeing some of his work fulfilled, some yet incomplete, but full of promise. In course of time some of his ideals may be superseded but his achievements will lose none of their value. Bearing in mind that no creed is more in conformity with the progressive demand of humanity than the faith of the Prophet, the whole outlook of his career has been inspired by the one basic thought, saturated with the one cardinal doctrine of unity and peace, for which he has striven incessantly.

One little instance. When India was wildly excited over the lamentable happenings of Amritsar, Mr. Gandhi asked the Aga Khan for a subscription for

a Jallianwala Bagh massacre memorial. The Aga Khan's reply was that if the subscription was intended to relieve the misery and suffering of the people he would gladly meet Mr. Gandhi's wishes, 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 one penny.

Though his range of reading is wide, the Aga Khan's impressions of men and things are practical, not theoretical: his judgments are based not upon what he has read but upon what he has seen and heard. And since his opportunities for seeing and hearing the things which really matter are far greater than those of the average statesman in any one country, his influence upon politicians and administrators is, when he considers its exercise desirable, of the first magnitude. For there are few living men who can be compared with him in precise knowledge of the political situation in the Western and in the Eastern world at any given moment, or in capacity to express that knowledge in a terse, impartial and illuminating summary. That is the secret of his influence on men in all walks of life. There is remarkable evidence of this in Lord Riddell's "Intimate Diary of the Peace Conference and After" in which he narrates the effect which the Aga Khan had upon Mr. Lloyd George. He writes:—

"L. G. said that the Aga Khan was one of the best informed men he had ever met. His general information was astonishing. He was extraordinarily well read and possessed an intimate acquaintance with international affairs in all parts of the world. He was widely travelled and was always moving round the capitals of Europe, in all of which he had influential intimates. His means of securing information were remarkable. He seemed to have touched upon all branches of literature and to be well versed in science. Altogether a very extraordinary person."

There were men in the old days of whom it was said that they had taken all knowledge to be their province. Of His Highness the Aga Khan it may be said that he has taken education—the fountain

of all knowledge and power—as an object of his life-work and politics as his study. His educational ideal is not to make boys and girls read and write, but to inculcate into their minds a love of their country and a sense of duty in its service. His educational efforts have been directed to produce a better type of men imbued with the idea of serving humanity. His political ideal is to raise India to the full stature and dignity of a self-governing member of the British Empire and thus to strengthen the very bond of the Empire. India cannot be expected to continue to work for the Empire if her position is not lifted from that of an inferior to an equal—from dependency to dominion.

Towards the realisation of this ideal—in which he sees the safety of Great Britain—the Aga Khan has moved and for its achievement he has worked with singular devotion neither sparing himself nor grudging the cost in time, energy and money. His dream is to make Great Britain greater by alliance with Muslim countries, guaranteeing them their independence; and in this profound alliance with independent Muslim States and in the contentment of India, he sees such a source of strength to Great Britain as would make a war against Great Britain by any other Power or combination of Powers an impossibility. First and foremost, he is an Indian patriot, whose services to his homeland are unquestioned even by those whose ideas do not run parallel with his own. Next, he is an Imperial statesman, who sees in the British Commonwealth of Nations an ideal to the realisation of which he has unflinchingly devoted his energies throughout long years. Finally, his religious leadership makes of him a world-figure, to whom the *arcana* of international politics are "Common form." It is appropriate to speak of the Aga Khan in the words of Livy (as applied to Portius Cato) "in this man there was so much force of mind and character that in whatever country he had been born, he would have been bound to have carved his fortune for himself."

Most men may think of the Aga Khan as most Englishmen thought of "Ranji", as a sportsman and as a popular idol. But in the one case as much as in the other, the conception is incomplete, for sportsmanship, though recognised by each as a political asset, has never filled more than a subordinate place in the totality of either life. There is, indeed, a curious parallel between the two men, despite all the differences in personality and environment: and it is not without significance that they were the closest of friends.

As a sportsman he will be remembered for what he has done, and is still doing, for breeding and horse racing in England. He has ever shewn shrewdness in employing the best available talents to further his interests, in his stud manager, in his trainer, and in the early days in the one on whose judgment of conformation in the yearling he relied. We saw him exalted when, a proud and happy man, he led in his first Derby winner, Blenheim, but his pride was greater when, with Firdaussi, he won the St. Leger, while three others in his ownership were second, fourth and fifth. The second, Dastur, was at a shorter price in the betting than the winner, just as Blenheim was at longer odds for his Derby than its stable companion Rustom Pasha. Blenheim had been bought by the Aga Khan as a yearling, but he was the breeder of Firdaussi. He has won every important race worth winning and since 1924 he has won more stake money than any other owner.

The Aga Khan's unbeaten Behram gained a spectacular success in the Derby at Epsom in 1935 and thus gained for India the blue riband of the Turf for the second year in succession, His Highness the Maharaja of Rajpipla having won it in the previous year. The starting price was 5 to 4 against Behram. Thunderous cheering for Behram, who carried the supposed unlucky number 13, continued from before the winning post was reached until the beaming Aga Khan led in the winner. After he had led in the winner, he was



HIS HIGHNESS THE AGA KHAN'S BLENHEIM, RIDDEN BY H. WRAGG, WON THE DERBY AT 18 TO 1, With Iliad second, and Diolite (favourite) third. Photo: The Aga Khan being cheered as he leads Blenheim along the course to the unsaddling enclosure.

personally congratulated by the King. Special honour was in store for the Aga Khan. His Highness was the guest of His Majesty the King at a dinner at Buckingham Palace at which 58 members of the Jockey Club were present. The table decorations were in green and chocolate which are the Aga Khan's racing colours. His Majesty the King proposed the health of the Aga Khan. The next day the Aga Khan and Begum were the guests of the Prime Minister at lunch at No. 10, Downing Street. The other guests included Their Highnesses the Maharaja and Maharani of Dewas (Junior), the Maharaja and Maharani of Porbandar, Mr. and Mrs. Coates and Lord and Lady Hailsham.

The following year (1936) brought the third and most pleasing Derby success to the Aga Khan, Mahmood winning by three lengths, another of his horses, Taj Akbar, coming in second. Half a million people were present at Epsom to see the great race. Mahmood was the stable's second string, quoted at 100 to 8. The Aga Khan's other candidate, Taj Akbar, was quoted at 6 to 1 and Mahmood was the first grey to win the Derby since Togalie won in 1912. It was also the third grey to win the race since it was started.

On the Turf the Aga Khan can be regarded as nothing but an "extremist". He has touched the extremes in every phase of his career as a racehorse owner and breeder. His purchases, his sales, his successes, his failures, his luck and ill-luck; all have risen to the dizzy heights, crashed to the blackest depths. Only a man of his determined character could have learned the lesson of each failure, then cast the bitterness aside. Only a very level-headed man could have enjoyed the rich rewards which the Turf has brought him without allowing his ambitions to run away with him. His peculiar characteristics have helped to make the Aga Khan one of the most popular figures of the British racing world.

Long ago the Aga Khan learnt to appreciate and

understand the British character, and the British people came to understand him, and through him to recognise the great variety of ways in which the Englishman and the Indian can be linked together in sport, in commerce, in scholarship and in administration for the mutual progress and welfare of their respective parts of the British Empire. This comprehensive spirit was shown when in the summer of 1933 he unfolded his views as to the best means of promoting commerce and trade between England and the Muslim States at a meeting held in the rooms of the House of Commons under the chairmanship of Lord Derby. But he has a wider object in view. He believes that if it were possible for the people of the British Isles to know the people of India as he knows the English people and as he thinks the English people know him, the problem of British unemployment would be to a great extent solved. His firm conviction is that if each individual of the 350 millions of India bought from England additional goods to the value of a single rupee, a great deal would be done to get rid of this unemployment. He thinks and very rightly that it is worth while for Englishmen to know more about Indians, their ways and their thought and to come to a better understanding commercially, politically and socially, in order that the two countries could progress in the way they all desired.

In social life, the Aga Khan has acquired a pre-eminent position such as has fallen to few of his countrymen. He is a popular figure in society both in England and on the Continent.

During his long residence in Europe, he has become familiar in distinguished social circles both in England and France. Himself a most charming and generous host, he has done his best to remove social barriers between Englishmen and Indians. He was one of the promoters of the Willingdon Sports Club founded in Bombay for that purpose.

As one of the distinguished and privileged guests on the occasion of the coronation of King Edward VII, he was a prominent figure in official and ceremonial functions. It had been from no mere conventional obligations of political expediency that he was frequently invited to York House, and before King Edward's illness, to Buckingham Palace. Handsome, young and highly gifted, he was welcome in both great houses as a personal friend. Not being a ruling prince he was free from the attendance of "a political officer in charge," but on ceremonial and other occasions, a Government A.D.C. was placed at his disposal. Alone among the Eastern visitors to London, his name was included in the Coronation List with the conferment of a K.C.S.I.

The unique social position of the Aga Khan's family among noblemen in India was acknowledged by King Edward, by paying a visit to the first Aga Khan during the first Royal visit to India, he being the only recipient of this high honour outside the most eminent Ruling Princes. The Royal friendship that was then formed has continued to this day. The election of the present Aga Khan to the Marlborough Club, at that time a preserve of the King's own circle, was proposed by His late Majesty King Edward. This signal honour showed how highly the Aga Khan stood in the King's esteem.

The Aga Khan's reception by the ex-Emperor William of Germany, the late Tsar of Russia, Sultan Abdul Hamid of Turkey and the Emperor of Japan was a recognition of his great qualities and pre-eminent position in society. To achieve such a position was obviously not without dangers of a peculiar kind. It says much for the Aga Khan's character that he avoided them in his youth and that by reason of his essential simplicity of nature and goodness of heart, he has continued to avoid them. The great position to which he was born would have availed him little if he had

not proved himself worthy of it and used it for the benefit of his countrymen and of the Empire. There is none among his less fortunate brethren, it may safely be affirmed, who does not recognise that his sympathy with them has always been as practical as his means have permitted. In the sincerity of his concern for them lies the secret of his influence with the masses. His position has in fact been a weapon in his hands, not for his own aggrandisement but for the welfare of many, a weapon used with singleness of heart and with a hand that has never faltered in a just cause.

The Aga Khan's linguistic attainments have enabled him to derive the fullest benefit from his travels. His brilliant powers of conversation, his flashes of wit and humour make him always interesting and entertaining.

In India and other Asiatic countries, the Aga Khan's name will endure as a bulwark of Islam, and one of the greatest Asiatic leaders of international fame, and a stalwart Indian patriot. In Europe he will be best remembered as a statesman and sportsman. A man of exceptional personality, possessed of special gifts as linguist and scholar and a true friend of England, he has used his great ability and knowledge to serve his King and the Empire.

Transcending all his many public activities has been his fervent devotion to peace. Recent events have only emphasised the bent of his whole life towards the establishment of amity and good will in the international field. It is an ideal difficult to achieve, but the Aga Khan is essentially that type of healthy optimist who bends all his energies to the object he has at heart, no matter the obstacles. His efforts in the cause of peace found recognition and due reward in his election as the President of the Assembly of the League of Nations in July 1937. It was an honour not only to a personality but to India which can rejoice in the knowledge that this singular distinction was conferred upon one of her greatest sons.

Whether in sports or politics, or in the sphere of

international work, the Aga Khan has always adopted a fearless line of action after studying his subject in every detail; and his success has been due more to his own exertions than to chance, and it is his singular character which has made his name resound throughout the world. In a biography it is difficult to determine where one should introduce a description of the character of his sketch, and we have preferred to give this brief outline of the Aga Khan's character in this chapter with a view to illustrating its many facets in the narrative.

Chapter Three

ANCESTRY

BRILLIANT PERIOD IN EGYPT'S HISTORY

THE Aga Khan's lineage is as ancient as it is splendid. He traces his descent—and the lineage is proved—from the Prophet of Islam. He is descended in direct line from Ali who married Fatimah, the only daughter of the Prophet Muhammad by his first wife Khadijah; and through the marriage of Fatimah's son Hosain, to the daughter of the last of the Iranian Kings at the dawn of Islam, he goes back to the oldest and most renowned dynasties in the world, which for innumerable centuries were the centres from which radiated chivalry and civilisation.

Western readers of this biography, unfamiliar with the history of Islam, may not realise that this statement connotes much more than lineage. To help them to understand how it has come about that the Aga Khan is the deeply venerated spiritual chief of some hundreds of thousands of the world's inhabitants, it is necessary to give a brief account of the disputes over a successor to Muhammad which arose at his death and persisting to the present time are the main cause of the many divisions among his followers.

On the death of the Prophet in the year 632 A.D., disputes arose over the choice of his successor which soon resulted in the main cleavage of Muhammadans into Sunnis (traditionalists) and Shiahs (followers). The Shiahs regard only those as the rightful successors to Muhammad who were descended from Ali and his wife Fatimah and whom they style Imams, while the Sunnis recognise another stream of successors whom they call Khalifahs, that is Caliphs. The last Arab Caliph was put to death by Hulagu, the

Mongol, in Baghdad in A.D. 1258; but some forty years later the Caliphate was revived in the person of the Turkish Sultan 'Uthman in whose family the office remained until abolished by the Angora Government in 1924. The Shiah order of succession has been of a more esoteric nature. It went unquestioned up to the death of Ja'far al Sadiq, the sixth Imam, when the majority of the Shiahs accepted as seventh Imam his younger son Musa al Kazim, but the remainder stood out for his elder son Ism'il. The main body, distinguished when necessary as "The Sect of the Twelve," maintains that there were twelve lawful Imams and that though the twelfth has withdrawn for a time he is still alive and will appear again before the end of the world as Mahdi or Guide. The others, called sometimes "The Sect of the Seven," confine the number of the Imams to that figure and maintain that until the time when 'Ali as an incarnation of God shall come to judge the world, the office of Imam shall be held by a hereditary, true, but unrevealed Imam descended from 'Ali through Ismail the Seventh and last revealed Imam. It is the adherence to this doctrine that has given the name Ismailiyyah, the Ismailis, to this sect which, as will now be related, split still further into two branches over yet another matter of pontifical succession. Early in the 10th century A.D. one 'Ubaidu'llah, a sayyid or descendant of 'Ali and Fatimah, who claimed to be the great grandson of Ismail, incurred the displeasure of the reigning Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad, al Muktafi, and fled to North Africa where, after extreme vicissitudes of fortune, he acquired sovereign power and founded the dynasty of the Fatimite Caliphs of Egypt and ushered in one of the most brilliant periods in the history of that country.

His successors included several rulers of great power and fame, amongst them al Mu'izz, who annexed Sicily and then conquering Egypt founded the city of Cairo; al Hakim, a zealot whose persecution of

his Christian subjects was one of the causes of the Crusades and who was the founder of those interesting mystics, the Druzes,—whom the English reader remembering their traditional reputation for hospitality will probably connect with the exploits in Syria of Lady Hector Stanhope or of Disraeli's Tancred—who still worship him as an incarnation of God in their retreats in the Lebanon; al Mustansir of whose splendour, justice and wise administration Nazir-i-Khusrau, the famous poet, traveller and Ismaili propagandist, has left a glowing account in his "Safarnama"; and lastly al 'Azid at whose death his minister submitted to the 'Abbasid Caliph.

To trace his ancestry to the Fatimites (*) is no small source of pride to the Aga Khan for it was under their rule that Egypt after suffering oppression for centuries at the hands of Greeks, Romans and Arabs recovered not only much of her ancient prosperity but a sense of nationality. For the first time she had, says Becker, a dynasty full of vitality founded on a religious basis. The first Caliph Mu'izz came to Cairo with all the prestige of a ruler of North Africa and surrounded by the halo of religion and the regal splendour of an Imam. The kingdom was organised on old Persian prototypes from which we are told by Graefe there were evolved a punctiliously regulated ceremonial and carefully graded categories of state officers accompanied by an unwontedly luxurious way of living and an extraordinary splendour at court. The personal qualities of the Fatimites and their generally mild rule coupled with the energy and ability of the great ministers and generals with whom they surrounded themselves enabled them long to maintain a position of power and splendour rivalling that of the Abbasid Caliphs of Baghdad, though the latter are better known to Western readers through the medium of the "Arabian

(*) The Fatimites were noted for favouring the "People of the Book," especially Christians.

Nights." A Christian witness, William of Tyre, who visited Cairo in the days of 'Azid, describes 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 Abbasid Caliphs of Baghdad, and was infinitely above anything which contemporary Europe could show.

There are still to be seen in Cairo some of the famous buildings erected by the Fatimites, mainly city gates and masjids or mosques. Among the latter is the mosque of Aqmar with its charming stone facade so important in the history of Art. More famous again is Al Ahzar known throughout the civilised world as the University which supplies Egypt with her ministers of religion and her exponents of Muslim law. The Fatimite founder of this institution could hardly have foreseen the benefit that would result therefrom to all Islam, for when the waves of the Mongol invasion had engulfed all the East and North-East countries of Islam on the very borders of Egypt, while in the West Arab civilisation was in course of being expelled from Spain, the Mameluke ruler of Egypt checked once and for ever the Mongol advance and Cairo remained unscathed to form a centre and a rallying point for Islamic culture and learning. The Aga Khan, following in the steps of his great ancestor of nearly 1000 years ago, is in his turn a great patron and benefactor of the famous Muslim University of Aligarh. It is indeed a far cry from Al Ahzar in A.D. 971 to Aligarh in A.D. 1939, from the oldest existing Muslim University to one of the newest and, it may safely be asserted, one of the most influential seats of Islamic learning in the world.

The rise of the Fatimite Caliphate in Egypt and its opposition to the Abbasid Caliphate of Baghdad was helped by the activities of a highly organised band of Ismaili missionaries of whom one of the best known

was the Nazir-i-Khusrau already mentioned. Inspired by him there came on the scene Hassan-bin-Saba, first Grand Master of the Assassins of Alamut, known to the Arabs as "Shaikhu'l Jabal" and to the Crusaders as "The Old Man of the Mountain." After the Ismaili system had been elaborately completed at Cairo under the Fatimite Caliphs, receiving there a superstructure of Egyptian Hierophantism upon the basis of Magian and Indian dogma, which it had derived from its Persian founders, there came on the scene, a little after the middle of the 11th century of the Christian era—about the time that William the Norman was winning the battle of Hastings—a very accomplished young Persian of Arabian descent and of Shiah faith, who had already given promise of a brilliant career. He was Hassan-bin-Saba, the son of a learned Shiah doctor of the city of Rhai in Persia.

Hassan-bin-Saba had been carefully trained in all the learning of his time, his great friend and fellow-student being Nizam-ul-Mulk, afterwards the renowned minister of Togrul Beg and of Malek Shah, the two first of the Toorki Beg or Seljukian Sultans of Irak, whose seats of Empire were Nisaphur and Rhai. In his early manhood Hassan-bin-Saba met with, and had been deeply impressed by the teachings of, a Dai or missionary of the Fatimite Ismailies. An adventurous life of action had weakened, but not effaced, these earlier impressions when, being checked in his career of ambition by the superior fortunes of his rival Nizam-ul-Mulk, he resolved to repair to Egypt in order to be instructed at the fountain head in the more esoteric doctrines of the Ismailis.

The history of this remarkable man has often been recorded, and legend has not spared him. There is, for instance, a well-known, but not very well founded story of him told by Fitzgerald in his introduction to the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.

More authentic details of his career and teaching

are to be found in E. C. Browne's "Literary History of Persia." That writer shows how Hassan, who originally belonged to the Sect of the Twelve, fell under the influence of heterodox teachers and went to Cairo about the year 1078. Being compelled to leave Egypt, he seized Alamut and a number of other strongholds and thereby established a political power in the Near East which proved to be of no small account in the two succeeding centuries, and which, because of the terrorism practised by its followers, became notorious even in Europe. On the death of Al Mustansir, the Fatimite Caliph, the followers of Hassan, became definitely separated from the dynasty of Egypt and hence, says Mr. E. G. Browne, Persian histories generally assign separate sections to the Ismailis of Egypt and the West and the Ismailis of Persia—Nizaris or Assassins. During the reign of Al Mustansir, Hassan espoused the cause of Nizar, the Caliph's elder son, against al-Musta'li, the second son and actual successor, and seizing Alamut and numerous other strongholds in Persia, carried on an active propaganda which was emphasised through the murder by his followers of Caliphs, Kings, Ministers of State and many other prominent opponents of the Ismaili doctrines. Hassan's rank and file became known to the world as *al Hashishiyyum*, being addicted to *hashish* or *blang*, the well-known drug produced from the plant *cannabis indica* and from this nickname is derived the European word "assassin." Al Mustansir's death completed the breach between the Ismailis of Egypt and the West who adhered to al-Musta'li, their new Caliph, and the Ismailis of Persia who espoused the cause of the superseded Nizar. The Assassins continued their activities and became a formidable power. The stern Hassan had found himself obliged to put to death his two sons who had committed some deadly sin, and so at his death the Grand Mastership passed to his lieutenant, Kiya Buzurg-ummid, after whom six more Grand Masters ruled at Alamut. Of

these, the second, Hassan, announced himself to be a descendant of Nizar and it is from him through the eighth and last Grand Master Ruknu'd Din Khurshah that the Aga Khan is descended. In the Aga Khan accordingly we see the present day hereditary representative of the Imam Ismail, acknowledged as such with reverent acclamation by many thousands of followers in India, East and South Africa and in fact all over the world, especially in the seaports of the tropics.

The power of the Assassins, their independence and their contempt for all those outside their own communion attracted the special attention of the Mongol Emperor in far distant Qaraqoram, and the *Quriltay*, or Grand Mongol Council which assembled in 1251, determined that they should be extirpated. In 1256 Hulagu advanced into Quhistan and, reducing the Assassin stronghold, in turn captured Alamut in November of that year and put Ruknu'd Din to death at Qaraqorum. Vast numbers of Ismailis were killed by the Mongols who passed on to deal in similar fashion with their enemy the Caliph of Baghdad and his unfortunate subjects, of whom 80,000 were killed in Baghdad alone. Those who wish to learn more of the early history of the Ismailis and more particularly of the Assassins will find most interesting accounts of them in Vols. I and II of the late Professor E. G. Browne's "Literary History of Persia," and in Miss Stark's "The Valley of the Assassins."

After the political power of the Assassins had been crushed, little is recorded of the ancestors of the Aga Khan for some generations. Their connection, however, with Persia is traced several centuries down to modern days. Not only during the Middle Ages did they own and rule that part of Persia of which Alamoth was the capital but, under modern dynasties as that of Nadir Shah and the Zend Princes, they were governors of various provinces and were treated with great respect and awarded high honours by the rulers

of the Zend dynasty. In the latter part of the 18th century more than one of them rose to positions of great honour and held high administrative office under the rulers of Persia in which country the active persecution of the Ismailis had long since ceased.

Since the fall of Alamut, they first lived in Babek, and then settled in Anjudan in Kashan. One of them, Shah Nizar Ali Shah, surnamed Ataullah, founded a village near Kun Bandi, which still goes by the name of Kuhak-i-Aga Nizar, and which was called Darkhana by Indian Khoja followers of the Imam visiting the place.

In his days some inhabitants of Gurkistan and India settled in the village and formed themselves into a tribe known as Eel-i-Ataullahi. His successor, Shah Abdul Hasan Shah, was appointed Governor of Kirman by Sultan Hasan Safawi. The position became hereditary and several of his successors held the office of Viceroy of Kirman. In the time of Nadir Shah, Shah Muhammad Hasan Shah distinguished himself for valour and wisdom. He was appointed Governor of Kiab and then Viceroy of Kirman. He was also appointed one of the commanders of the army and is supposed to have come to India with Nadir Shah. His grandson, Shah Baqir Ali Shah, was also Governor of Kerman. He lived in Babek, Mahallat and Kirman. After the fall of Kirman into the hands of Aga Muhammad Khan Qajar, he was blinded by the order of the Monarch for having helped and given quarters to Lutf Ali Khan, son of Karim Khan of Zend.

In accordance with the wishes of the Shah of Persia, Shah Baqir Ali with all his family and followers left Kerman and settled in Mahallat from whence he went to Musqat to meet his followers. He died there and is buried in Shah Najaf. Then came Shah Khalilu'llah, the great grandfather of the present Aga Khan, who was Governor of Kerman and to him at his "darkhana" or principal residence, Ismailis of India were

wont to pay their religious dues. It is on record that whenever they were unable to make the pilgrimage to see their Imam or to remit the dues they had collected, they were accustomed to throw the money into the sea. For some time Shah Khalilu'llah lived in the city of Yezd, but his justifiably great reputation for piety and unworldliness, which had given him a remarkable hold on his people, led to his being murdered at the instigation of a fanatical mullah whose jealousy had been aroused. That dastardly deed had a profound effect throughout Persia, not only among the Ismailis but among the ministers of Fatch Ali Shah, the reigning Monarch, and at the Shah's command the mullah was put to death with no small indignity and torture. Not content with this retribution, the Shah summoned Muhammad Hasan, the son of Khalilu'llah, proclaimed him Imam in the place of his murdered father, conferred great possessions on him, and in due course gave him his daughter in marriage. Appointed Governor of Qum and Mahallat, the young man further gained the approval of his royal master and, as was not unnatural, his rapid preferment roused the jealousy of the Shah's ministers. He was known in the Persian Court by the pet name of Aga Khan which subsequently became his hereditary title and in due course he and his descendents came to be described as Aga Khan Mahallati, Lords of Mahallat.



HIS HIGHNESS AGA MUSSAIN ALY SHAH, AGA KHAN I

Chapter Four

AGA KHAN I

A BRAVE SOLDIER AND SAGACIOUS STATESMAN: HIS SERVICES TO THE BRITISH EMPIRE

ON the death of Shah Fatch Ali, after a long reign extending from 1798 to 1834, civil war broke out in Persia. In this war of succession the first Aga Khan took up arms on behalf of the old Shah's grandson, Muhammad, son of Abbas, who was eventually able to secure the crown in spite of a powerful faction favouring the cause of Zill-es-Sultan, the eldest son, whom Fatch Ali Shah had ignored when designating his heir.

The new Shah was duly grateful to his supporters and bestowed many favours on them. The Aga Khan, appointed to be Commander-in-Chief, was sent to conquer the province of Kerman—which had declared in favour of another claimant to the Persian throne—and acquitted himself with the greatest distinction in the campaign. Thus established in royal favour, the Aga Khan appeared likely to end his days in Persia in the enjoyment of his vast possessions and power. For about twenty years there is no record of him, and his continued prosperity is to be presumed until 1838, when Muhammad Ali Shah retreated from the disastrous siege of Herat. In that year, insulted by Haji Mirza Aghasi, the Prime Minister, the Aga Khan raised the standard of rebellion and seized the government of Kerman where his forefathers had ruled, and where he himself was remembered for his exploits in the field.

The actual insult lay in the Prime Minister supporting one of his minions, a man of lowly origin, who demanded in marriage for his son a daughter of the

Aga Khan, grand-daughter of Fateh Ali Shah. A further demand by the Prime Minister was as unjust as it was provocative. When the Aga Khan had undertaken the conquest of Kerman for his royal master he had paid half the expenses of the undertaking on the strength of the promise of the Prime Minister of that day that he might recoup himself from the revenues of that province. A refund of that revenue was now demanded by Haji Mirza Aghasi. The reply to that attempt at extortion was war.

When the hostilities were in progress a promise reached the Aga Khan from the Prime Minister, strengthened by the accompaniment of the Koran, that he would be allowed, if hostilities ceased at once, to enjoy perfect liberty in his own province. The Aga Khan was ready to lay down his arms on these honourable terms, but scarcely had he done so when he was surprised and made a prisoner at the instigation of the Minister and taken to Teheran. The Aga Khan was incensed at the treachery of Mirza Aghasi, but he was helpless and saw no chance of escape. Thanks, however, to his wife, the brave princess, he was not doomed to eternal imprisonment. She happened at that time to be in the Persian Court, and knowing that the Shah was an ardent Suffee, dressed her son (father of the present Aga Khan) as a *darvish*, and made the young man appear before the King daily and read and recite poems in praise of forgiveness. The young prince played his part so well that it produced the desired effect. The Shah was deeply moved and set the Aga Khan at liberty.

This, however, incensed his implacable enemy Mirza Aghasi. Assured of his safety, the Aga Khan was returning to Kerman, after his release, when he found a regular boycott established by the Minister's order, and having to fight even for his food, was once more driven into open rebellion. An army was sent to recapture him and he was nearly taken again, but

keeping courage, he forced his way through the cordon and reached a place of safety and after fighting several skirmishes with varying fortune, ultimately left Persia and arrived in Afghanistan at a time when the British were engaged in war with that country. With his departure from Persia the first period of romance closed, and the second began with his arrival in Afghanistan. The stirring incidents that followed show that in his case facts are stranger than fiction; indeed, his life reads more like a romance than a biography.

His ascendancy in the Court of the Shah of Persia, his fall from his high position as a result of intrigue, his imprisonment and dramatic release, and his bold bid for the throne of Persia, his failure to seize the Crown and his exile from the country, his subsequent constant aim to invade Persia and regain his lost possessions through the help of the British, and his failures and successes in later life, are thrilling episodes in his romantic career. His failures were redeemed by his brilliant services to the British Government on the battlefield. His exile from Persia was a loss to that country, but Persia's loss was the gain of the British Empire, and his comradeship in arms with the British army cemented the ties of friendship formed between him and the British Government when he was fighting for his life in Persia. He made the enemies of the British his own and the British cause his own cause.

The British aim at that time was to prevent Russian influence penetrating to the borders of India, for that would threaten the very existence of the British Empire. The first Afghan War, which called for heavy sacrifices and untold hardship and suffering, was undertaken partly to counter the Russian advance in Central Asia and partly to place on the throne at Kabul the dethroned ruler, Shah Shuja, in place of Dost Muhammed.

The latter object was attained, and for two years Afghanistan remained in the military occupation of the British. Disraeli could well write in 1859 that

he found the official papers setting forth the antecedents of the Afghan War were "the most amusing thing I have met with since the Arabian Nights." But the amusement was soon to vanish with the murder of two illustrious Englishmen in Kabul—both personal friends of the Aga Khan—and the disastrous retreat from Kabul to Jallalabad, which only one survivor of the army of occupation was able to reach.

The part which the Aga Khan played as an ally of the British in that disastrous war was in every way worthy of the heroic deeds of the great martyrs of Islam whose blood flowed in his veins. But before relating the events of his active participation in the cause of the British, at the risk of his life and the lives of his stout adherents, it is appropriate to recall his deep devotion to the cause of the British long before he met them in Kandahar.

At the time the Aga Khan was fighting against the Shah of Persia, the British Government were at variance with the Persian Government over the possession of Herat. The Shah had formed a league with Russia and was favouring the advance of Russian influence in Khorasan and Afghanistan. It now appears from the correspondence of the Aga Khan, found in the archives of the India Office, that taking advantage of his differences with the Shah of Persia, Sir John McNeil, the British Envoy in Persia, entered into negotiations with the Aga Khan and secured his services to frustrate the Russian intrigues in Central Asia. The Aga Khan proved his attachment to the British Government by interrupting and diverting the Shah of Persia from designs on Herat and preventing Khorasan and Afghanistan from falling under the influence of Russia, for which the Shah was intriguing. The Aga Khan had from the first done his best to bring Muslim States into contact with British influence. This alone would have been regarded as a diplomatic service of incalculable value at any time, but it was particularly

so in those days when Muslim States were used as a pawn in the game of Russian chess for penetration into India. The Aga Khan bent all his energy and influence to frustrate the aim of Russia and to advance the cause of the British and how well he succeeded in his purpose is seen by the result.

But his services to the British Empire were not merely diplomatic. When the time came, he fought valiantly for the British flag.

It was at a critical time in the history of Afghanistan that the Aga Khan entered that country as an exile from Persia. His reputation as a soldier-statesman had preceded him and he so distinguished himself by his bravery and loyal services to the British Government that it was proposed by the British Envoy in Afghanistan to place him on the throne of Herat, and eventually to help him to regain his territory in Persia. This was more than once under the serious contemplation of the British authorities, but the execution of the plan was abandoned owing to peace being made by England with Persia. He was, however, made Chieftain of a territory conquered by the British from the Afghans, but when the British evacuated Afghanistan, he found it unsafe as a friend and ally of the British to stay there. He went to Sind, determined to conquer Persia with the aid of the British, but his dream was shattered with the termination of hostilities between England and Persia.

After great sacrifices in blood and treasure the British succeeded in placing on the throne at Kabul the dethroned ruler, Shah Shuja, in place of Dost Muhammad, and for two years Afghanistan remained in the military occupation of the British. During that period of occupation and constant warfare, the Aga Khan shared all the risks, discomfort and distress with his British allies and comrades-in-arms.

His open association with the cause of the British when the Muslim States were in open enmity with

England had a great moral value, for, as is pointed out in the Parliamentary papers relating to the Afghan War, the fact that the British could command the services of an important class of the Muslim population under an esteemed leader like the Aga Khan discouraged the enemy and gave confidence to the Shiah party which was favourably inclined to the British. This was not the first occasion on which the Aga Khan had entered Afghanistan. As Persian Commander-in-Chief he had invaded the country through Seistan and in later years spent millions of pounds on a campaign which ended in the annexation of three Persian provinces—Seistan, Baluchistan and Kuman.

More than one account of his exploits in Afghanistan and subsequently in Sind appear in the various memorials and letters which he addressed to the Government of India and other officials. The record of this courageous veteran—which has never yet been adequately recounted—is well worth attention. Here is the story of the help he rendered to the British forces, told in his own words.

“The day previous to the action of Kheliskh, I received a message from Major Rawlinson to the purport that although General Nott had declared that as a guest of the British I would not be called (upon) to serve, yet if not causing me any inconvenience, it was requested that I should proceed with the General on his march, accompanied by my detachment of Sowars. To this I replied that it would afford me much pleasure to avail myself of the opportunity offered, as I considered all persons hostile to Government as my enemies and would therefore gladly oppose them.

“On the day of the battle, the enemy, through the grace of God, was defeated, and many Afghans were taken prisoners by my dependants and brought to Major Rawlinson.

“On the occasion of Captain Goulding being killed and Lieutenant Pattinson severely wounded by the men

under their command, not a single trooper had the courage to leave the city for the purpose of patrolling during the night, at which time it was customary for the enemy to collect and plunder the suburbs. At last Major Rawlinson enquired whether I would undertake this duty. I willingly promised to do so. Three nights afterwards, when I was stationed near the garden of the Mehr Dil Khan, a cossid (messenger) despatched by Akrun from a distance of two coss (miles) arrived for the purpose of informing me that the city would be attacked by the Afghan forces either on that night or the next. I communicated this intelligence to Major Rawlinson without delay. The necessary precautionary measures were accordingly adopted. The following morning the General moved out his army and we advanced towards the rebels. On that day merely some skirmishing occurred, but during the next the troops were in action nearly from daybreak till past noon, when the infantry became fatigued from heat and thirst and consequently unable to act, although the insurgents still surrounded the camp. Colonel Malcolm was then deputed by the General to ascertain whether my Sowars would drive them off. I answered that with the blessing of God I would not fail to exert myself to the utmost of my power. I and my followers immediately mounted and with the Divine assistance and the Company's auspicious fortune, we fought in such a manner that the whole of the officers and men in camp were struck with astonishment, and upon our return in the morning welcomed us with shouts of applause.

“On the succeeding night information reached Tillookam of the movement made by the Afghans in Kandahar under the impression that it had been left destitute of troops. The next morning, therefore, the force counter-marched. Whilst en route, during the whole day, we were closely followed by the Afghan horsemen who made several attacks upon my

detachment. About midday, my brother Sirdar Muhammed Bakur Khan shot one of the Afghan leaders dead. His men collected round the body of their chief and in the meantime the main body of the British continued their march at the distance of about half a furlong; but the skirmishing did not cease until morning. After our return to Kandahar, as a reward for my services the General gave me presents; also rewarded my two brothers. He further assigned me the territory of Moolla Rusheed yielding an income of 40,000 rupees per annum.

"All the officers who were present at the engagement near cantonments are well aware that when the Afghan troops were broken by the fire of the artillery and the infantry, I and my Sowars pursued them for about four coss beyond Baba Wallee, securing many captives and heads, which were sent to the General. On the following day I marched out with two regiments which proceeded to Baba Wallee (Bala Wali), under the command of Colonel Stacy. The troops encamped at that place, but I accompanied Major Rawlinson to Maranjan, a distance of about four coss. When the Afghans perceived that they were not supported by the infantry they advanced in pursuit. The whole of the Afghan and Persian cavalry in British employ, under the orders of Nukkee Khan, dispersed and fled. I alone, with my followers, remained and showed front to the enemy, although they numbered about a thousand sabres. They had completely intercepted our retreat. We then cut our way through them to a hill called Kotub Moorcha. In this affair the Afghans behaved with great intrepidity and our horses were completely knocked up, in fact we were all on the point of either being killed or taken prisoners when I, together with my brother, Sirdar Muhammed Bakur Khan, and one of my Sowars named Bakur, dismounted about half way up the mountain and I shot the foremost of the pursuers dead. Whilst his comrades crowded round the body, my troops

descended the hill, and upon being informed of their having reached the foot in safety, I and my two companions followed and joined the Major."

This gives a vivid impression of his feats in the field, but he had also rendered valuable secret and diplomatic services to the Government.

These old India Office records tell us of numerous diplomatic channels which the first Aga Khan opened up and which proved to be of great value to the British officers. It is not possible from the dry bones of official records to substantiate every fact in the Aga Khan's narrative of his services to the British during the First Afghan War and subsequently in Sind, but there is sufficient confirmation in the terse despatches of Major Rawlinson and General Nott to show what valuable assistance he and his followers rendered to the forces in both the campaigns.

Of the murder of Lieutenant G. Webb Golding (2nd European Bengal Regiment), the wounding of Lieutenant T. F. Pattinson (2nd Regiment, Bengal Native Infantry) and the subsequent action near Ghirishk (the 'Khelishk' of the Aga Khan's narrative) we have Major Rawlinson's account in a despatch from Kandahar, dated 6th March, 1842, detailing occurrences of the previous December.

"My attention was chiefly directed to the disposition of the Jaunbaz (Janbaz, native troops). I judged it best to endeavour to station (them) upon the Helmund, as well with a view to the protection of the fort of Ghirishk as to place them in a situation where they would be cut off from communication with Cabook, and surrounded with their blood enemies. They were to have started from Ghirishk accordingly upon the 27th of December; but on the previous night, supposing from a mere accident that their intention to desert had been discovered, they broke into open mutiny, murdered Lieutenant Golding, wounded Lieutenant Pattinson so severely that he now lies in danger

of his life, and took the field, hoping to raise the country . . . Captain Leeson's cavalry and a party of the Parsewan Jaunbaz, who remained firm under Lieutenant Wilson, although in the same camp with the mutineers, were immediately detached in pursuit, and coming up with the Jaunbaz in the afternoon, at a village about twelve miles distant from Kandahar, they attacked and dispersed them, killing the ring-leaders of the mutiny, and inflicting a severe loss on the whole body."

Sir John Kaye, who had access to Major Rawlinson's *MS. Journal*, clothes the history in more glowing colours (*History of War in Afghanistan III, 133*):—

"Before daybreak on the 27th of December the men of the Jaunbaz regiments were to have commenced their march to Ghirishk. There were 250 men of the 1st Regiment under Lieutenant Golding, and 150 of the 2nd under Lieutenant Wilson. Lieutenant Pattinson was to accompany them in political charge. The object of the movement was twofold—to escort treasure and ammunition to Ghirishk and to remove from Kandahar a body of men whose fidelity was more than suspected. Two hours after midnight the party was to have moved and made a double march, for the purpose of clearing the villages on the Urghundab, which had been greatly excited during the two preceding days. Golding was ready at the appointed hour; but through some misconception of orders, Wilson's men were not prepared to march. So the movement was countermanded, Golding and Pattinson, therefore, returned to the tent of the former, and laid themselves again to sleep. The 1st Jaunbaz regiment had been drawn up ready for the march with their cattle loaded, and the postponement of the movement now took them by surprise. They had laid a plot to mutiny and desert upon the march, and they believed that the conspiracy had been detected. After waiting for half an hour, drawn up in the chill air of early morning, they determined at once to throw off the mask; so they streamed into Golding's tent with their drawn swords, and attacked the two officers in their beds. When they thought that their bloody work was completed, they rushed confusedly out of the tent, mounted their horses and fled. The treasure was plundered and some horses belonging to Golding and Pattinson were carried off; but nothing else was touched by the assassins. Pattinson was stunned by a blow on the head, but recovering his senses, he made his way out of the tent, wounded as he was in

seven places, mounted a horse. . . . and effected his escape. He died after much suffering, in March. Golding was less fortunate. He rushed out of his tent and fled on foot towards the Cantonments; but the Jaunbaz followed and cut him down within a short distance of our Camp."

It was on account of the assistance rendered by the Aga Khan on the occasion of the mutiny of the Jaunbaz regiment that his further help was requisitioned, for in a despatch to Major Rawlinson, dated 6th March 1842, describing the events of the early part of the year, the following passage occurs:—

"The Persian Prince Aga Khan is still at Kandahar, and General Nott, in consideration of our deficiency of cavalry, has expressed a wish that this chief who is possessed of much military experience, and whose attachment to our interests is certain, should be entrusted with the temporary direction of such Parsewan horses as have remained true to us since the disorganization of the Jaunbaz. Aga Khan has at present a fast cavalry under his orders, and will accompany General Nott in his projected attack upon the enemy. Were we not threatened with a deficiency of funds for our necessary expenses, I should venture to recommend that the Parsewan horse be considerably increased as well with a view of relieving our own cavalry of the harassing duty of patrolling as to give further confidence to the Shiah party, and to show that we can still command the services of a not unimportant class of the Muslim population."

Of the action of 7-10 March, in which the Aga Khan played a prominent part, there are several accounts. The following is an extract of General Nott's report of the engagement:—

"In the beginning of the present month (March 1842) the enemy approached close to the city of Kandahar; I made the necessary arrangements for the safety of the city, and leaving a garrison of about 2,600 men in it, I, on the 7th instant, moved with the remainder of my force against the enemy; they retired as I advanced; they were driven first across the Turmuch (Turnuk), and then across the Arghundeb. They could not allow the infantry to come in contact with them. On the 9th I got near enough to open our guns upon them with great effect. They were soon broken and fled; my want of good cavalry saved them from being totally destroyed. They were dispersed in every direction. During a march of five days opposed to 12,000

of the enemy, who had upwards of 6,000 well mounted cavalry, not a camel was taken or a particle of baggage lost. The troops marched without tents, both officers and men, and the conduct of my artillery and infantry was excellent. . . . During my absence a strong detachment of the enemy made an attempt on the city, and succeeded in burning one of the gates, but they were repulsed with great loss by the gallantry of the troops in garrison, under the command of Major Lane, of the 2nd Regiment of Native Infantry."

It is certain that the envoy Macnaghten was anxious to mark the appreciation of the Aga Khan's services and to make a suitable provision for him and the support of the gallant ally's followers, for among the papers brought by the Aga Khan from Afghanistan there was a letter of recommendation from the envoy to Sir Charles Napier, who, in consequence of that recommendation, utilised the services of the Aga Khan in the conquest and consolidation of Sind. That recommendation was given to the Aga Khan by the envoy before he was treacherously done to death by the Afghans, just when he was contemplating leaving Afghanistan to take up his new duties as the Governor of Bombay. The tragic occurrence made a great difference to the fortunes of the Aga Khan, for had the envoy lived to take up the Governorship of Bombay, the Aga Khan would have found a strong supporter of his claims for the recognition of his services and he would have probably been saved the trouble which befell him in consequence of the continued hostile feelings of the Prime Minister of Persia towards him.

In his account of the action of Baba Wali the Aga Khan is apparently referring to the events of 25th March 1842, when, as he states, the enemy twice endeavoured to cut off the retreat of the British force, but the troops on that occasion were under the command of Lt.-Col. G. P. Wymer and not of Col. Stacey.

Of the political services mentioned in the Aga Khan's narrative there is little doubt that they were rendered at the risk of his own life and that few Asiatics, if any,

would have been found to stand so steadfast and loyal in difficulties and dangers as the Aga Khan did by the side of the British Government in a country the atmosphere of which was full of treachery and deception and a population seized with implacable hatred and hostility towards the British.

The services of the Aga Khan's followers for the transmission of letters to the unfortunate officers Col. Charles Stoddart and Captain Arthur Conolly, treacherously imprisoned at Bokhara in December 1841 and executed there in the following June, must have been of great value, as no European could have safely undertaken such a task. The Aga Khan was known in the East as a person of great consequence and even Yar Mahomed Khan, the "all-powerful" vizier of Kamram Mirza of Herat and the virtual ruler of that place, and Kohundil-Khan of Kandahar wrote to him asking for his intercession and requesting that arrangements may be made so that they might also become allies of the British Government. These letters were forwarded by the Aga Khan to the Governor-General. In 1837, after the retirement of the Persian army, the British Government proclaimed the independence of Herat under the same Shah Kamram Mirza and a treaty was concluded with him in 1839. Yar Mahomed objected to the terms of the treaty and intrigued with Persia. Early in the year 1842 he murdered his master and usurped the Government of Herat. If Herat had fallen to Persia, it would have come under the influence of Russia, threatening the British Empire in India. The Aga Khan left no stone unturned to drive away Persian and Russian influence from Herat.

On the withdrawal of General Nott's force from Kandahar at the close of the year 1842, the Aga Khan, with great difficulty reached Sind, and, as he tells us, again placed himself and his followers at the disposal of the British, his relations now being with Sir Charles Napier, the Political Agent. Of his intervention with

the Baluchi Chiefs before the battle of Meeanee on 17th February 1843 (which he alludes to as "the action of Hyderabad") there is no record, but on the 25th of that month Sir Charles reported to the Governor-General that he had accepted the offer of "the Persian Prince to secure the communication from Jarrack to Karachi," and in his *Diary* of the 29th is the entry:—

"I have sent the Persian Prince Aga Khan to Jarrack, on the right bank of the Indus. His influence is great, and he will with his own followers secure our communication with Karachi. He is the lineal chief of the Ismailians, who still exist as a sect and are spread over all the interior of Asia. They have great influence, though no longer dreaded as in the days of yore. He will protect our line along which many of our people have been murdered by the Baloochis."

The services rendered by the Aga Khan in Sind were politically speaking of no less importance than those he rendered at Kandahar, since Sind is regarded as the gateway to India and through it foreign conquerors have from time immemorial poured into India. As the late Sir William Lee-Warner has pointed out in his book on "The Protected Princes of India," if Sind had not fallen to the Company it must have been either annexed by Afghanistan or absorbed with Lahore by Ranjit Singh. Just as Akbar had found it necessary to annex Sind to the Empire in 1581, three years before he recovered Kandahar, so again imperial interests required effective control of Sind, when Shah Shuja was escorted in 1839 by the British army through the Bolan Pass, and still more when the disastrous retreat from Kabul in 1841 was about to be avenged.

The Aga Khan not only rendered services during the actual hostilities, but after the conquest toured through the troubled province to pacify the Mirs and win them over to the British side. Sir Charles Napier found in the Aga Khan "a good and brave soldier" and entertained a very high opinion of his political sagacity and chivalry as a leader and soldier. There is an allusion to his "secret but great power" in

Sir William Napier's history of Sir Charles Napier's administration of Sind. As the General has stated in the book, "His (the Aga Khan's) people spread over Asia from the Indus to the Mediterranean, supplied him with a revenue and with information sure and varied. He had come to Sind with a train of horsemen before the conquest, knew of the Ameer's design to assail the Residency, had remonstrated against it, and afterwards gave such information on that subject as to render Outram's imbecile vanity on that occasion most painfully prominent. He and his horsemen had acted on the side of the British during the war, and he received a pension from the Supreme Government; but his position and proceedings were suspicious, and he was watched and even prevented from quitting Sind, when he designed to make some intriguing religious excursion to Baghdad. Nevertheless, he was on friendly terms with the General and now told him the Afghans of Kandahar and the Baloochees of Khelat were in close amity with the lion (Ranjit Singh), that all the Sindi chiefs west of the Indus had secretly assured the Ameer that they were ready to raise a religious cry against the British and restore him to his throne—that Ali Moorad had written to the same effect saying that eight thousand of the troops were then prostrate with fever, the remainder tottering from debility, and if the Afghans would only send two thousand men down the Bolan Pass they could destroy all the Feringhees."

The suspicious proceedings referred to by Sir William Napier, related to the Aga Khan's design on Persia. The Aga Khan had made no secret of it, and he had not only made his designs known to the British Government, but had more than once asked for their help in prosecuting his designs which were prevented by peace with Persia. When the Persian Government, dreading the presence of the Aga Khan in Sind, appealed to the British Government for his removal from

the Province, the Aga Khan in one of his letters to Sir Charles Napier said:—

“It is well known I sought assistance from the British Government to enable me to conquer Persia, as at that time there was no friendship between the British and Persia, I have always expressed my wishes to General Nott and you to assist me with forces or money.” (A number of wealthy Khoja merchants of Bombay were willing to stand guarantee if Government gave a loan to the Aga Khan to prosecute his design on Persia.) “If the Shah has complained about me I must also complain to the Governor-General. He is my enemy. It is contrary to British justice that I should do such good service and lose all my property in Persia and now leave Sind, where I have plenty of property and revenue.”

Even in Kabul he had informed Macnaghten and Rawlinson of his designs on Persia. Macnaghten and even Napier were conscious of the fact that “we must have a friendly ruler in Persia,” and they were convinced that the Aga Khan had given ample proofs of his devotion and attachment to the British Government and were ready to help him in any way they could. This was evident from the fact that even the Persian Government had complained on more than one occasion that the British were supporting the Aga Khan in his designs on Persia and in support of this statement cited the fact that the arms seized from the Aga Khan's followers bore British marks.

Through the year 1843 the Aga Khan remained in Sind in close correspondence with Sir Charles Napier, who lost no time in bringing his services to the notice of the Governor-General. A report was forwarded to England and a pension of Rs.3,000 per month was sanctioned as a mark of appreciation of the assistance rendered.

Even at this time the Aga Khan was hopeful of military aid to enable him to regain his possessions in Persia. In a letter to the Governor-General (read at a Consultation at Fort William on 21st June 1843), he begged for assistance “to make an opening through

Baloochistan to invade Persia . . . and whatever conquests I make shall be in alliance with the British Government.” Unfortunately for the Aga Khan's hopes the breach between Britain and Persia, occasioned by the siege of Herat, was healed on its abandonment by Muhammad Shah and the agreement by the Persian monarch to all the British demands. Peace being restored and a commercial treaty between the two countries agreed on, the enemies of the Aga Khan, who justly feared his return, took advantage of the reconciliation with Britain to urge the enforcement of the Definitive Treaty made in 1814. According to article X of that agreement:

“Should any Persian subject of distinction showing signs of hostility and rebellion take refuge in the British Dominions, the English Government shall, on intimation from the Persian Government, turn him out of their country, or, if he refuses to leave it, shall seize and send him to Persia.

Previously to the arrival of such fugitive in the English territory, should the Governor of the district to which he may direct his flight receive intelligence of the wishes of the Persian Government respecting him, he shall refuse his admission. After such prohibition, should such person persist, cause him to be seized and sent to Persia, it being understood that the aforesaid obligations are reciprocal between the contracting parties.”

The Government of India were therefore placed in a dilemma. On the one hand, they could not desert a faithful ally, who had rendered valuable services, regardless of personal losses; on the other, it was most desirable at that juncture to resume and maintain freindly relations with Persia.

Major Rawlinson, who had knowledge of the worth of the Aga Khan's services, was now Political Agent in Turkish Arabia. It is evident that he had a warm regard for the old warrior. In forwarding the correspondence of his family in Baghdad to Bombay, he remarked “that the pertinacity with which the Persian Government insisted on the Aga Khan's extradition has naturally excited much anxiety among his family

now stationed at this place." In the end, by means of the intervention of the British Envoy, a compromise was effected, and it was agreed that the Aga Khan should be allowed to remain in India, provided he stayed at Calcutta, where his presence could be no incentive for a descent on the Persian Frontier. Though extradition was refused, the Government of India were helpless in softening the indignity involved in their action at the behest of the Persian Government.

Until the order for proceeding to Calcutta, dated July 1844, reached Sind, the Aga Khan remained there with Sir Charles Napier, who, in a private letter, dated 4th August 1844, wrote thus of him:—

"The old Persian Prince is my great crony here living, not under my care but paid by me £2,000 a year. He is a god, his income immense....He is a clever, brave man. I speak truly when saying that his followers do not and dare not refuse him any favour he asks.... He could kill me if he pleased; he has only to say the word and one of his people can do the job in a twinkling and go straight to heaven for the same. He is too shrewd a man for that, however."

He was held in similar high esteem by all British officers and they were all anxious and ready to stand by this veteran soldier whom they regarded as their true friend, but there was more trouble ahead for the Aga Khan and the way in which he encountered a most difficult situation affords testimony to his patience and courage, which subsequently enabled him to win over his enemies and turn them into his friends.

Chapter Five

PERSIAN GOVERNMENT'S ACTION

BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN A DILEMMA

THE first Aga Khan was naturally reluctant to go to Calcutta. By the end of 1844 his enemies had become fearful of his continued stay so near the borders of Persia and, through the British Resident at Teheran, urged his immediate departure to Calcutta. This was a great cause of suffering to the Aga Khan who was made a victim of circumstances. The following is typical of the numerous letters of protest by the Prince to the Governor-General against so distasteful a procedure:—

"On the 18th of Jilkuchur (Zilquda) I heard from Persia that the Shah had made a complaint against me to the English Resident that I was disturbing his country and that the Resident had promised to have me turned out of Sind. It is known I sought aid from the Government to help me to conquer Persia. Four years ago all the inhabitants of Persia promised to assist me. The letters of the Moolahs and principal Leaders I showed to Macnaghten and Major Rawlinson. I remained at Kandahar hoping that when the Hon'ble Company's forces marched there I might be of service to them; this has most likely been reported to you. In Sind I have done good service. I lost nearly 150 men; I was also plundered of a large amount of property. His Excellency the Governor of Sind told me he could not employ the fast cavalry I had, so I sent them all with Muhammad Bakur Khan to Makran which is quite independent of Muhammad Shah; moreover, how can you trust the accusation of any one enemy against the other? The Shah knows that as long as I am with your Government, he cannot be inimical to you or attack Herat, or dismiss the British Agent. What he wants is to get me away from here and then do just as he likes. I lost all my property in Persia. My expenses are twenty thousand rupees monthly and I manage to live, being near my followers. I have many houses in Sind and I trust you will not ruin my family, who count their ancestors for 900 years. If you will allow me to remain in Sind, well and good. If not, give me a letter of recommendation to Meer Nusseer Khan of Kehlat and continue my pay as

at present, to allow me to remain in Cutch, where I shall be close to my followers till such time as you will assist me to recover my country (Persia)."

In reply to this communication the Governor of Sind was desired to inform the Aga Khan "the local Government are in this matter only carrying out the positive orders that have been sent them from England by the Secret Committee in communication with the Queen's Government." Further representations from Persia complaining of the non-fulfilment of the agreement for the Aga Khan's removal convinced the Prince that his departure from Sind was inevitable and, accordingly, on 7th October 1844, he set out for Bombay to settle up his affairs there.

Although the departure of the Aga Khan from Sind relieved the Governor of that Province of considerable anxiety, it was found that the presence of his brother and followers at Karachi was also considered as a source of irritation to Persia, and they also were included in the departure.

On his arrival in Bombay the Aga Khan lost no time in giving reasons against the order for proceeding immediately to Calcutta. He informed the Governor-General, in July 1845, that it was his "desire to conform" to his wishes "in all respects", but that he was "prevented by unavoidable circumstances." These were the necessity of making provision for his followers and for his family.

His position was in no way enviable. He had lost property worth about nine lakhs of rupees—at that time a considerable fortune—of which he was robbed by the Baloochis. On the other hand, he was to be separated from his followers and his family and to go to Calcutta where he had no friends. Moreover, he calculated that it would entail a monthly loss of Rs. 20,000 and he looked to the Government for indemnity for that sacrifice but without success. In the alternative he asked the Government's mediation

between himself and the Shah with the help of the British representatives in Persia and requested that arrangements should be made for him to proceed to Persia under a guarantee of British protection. But all his efforts proved futile.

For obvious reasons the Aga Khan was unwilling to proceed to Calcutta and the Government of Bombay were more sympathetic to him than the Supreme Government who had not come in personal contact with him. Sir G. Clark, the Governor of Bombay, wrote a letter to the Government of India his colleagues the Hon'ble L. R. Reid and the Hon'ble P. Willoughby concurring, in which he said: "I am very desirous of avoiding any appearance of harshly ejecting one who is commonly regarded, and I believe, with justice, to have bravely served our cause in the war."

In another letter, dated 23rd May, 1847, the Governor of Bombay spoke of his reluctance to appear harsh "towards one who has evinced signal zeal and bravery in the cause of the British Government in the field and one who from his hereditary position is held in so much reverence by a considerable portion of the native community throughout India."

After great reluctance, and under promise of improvement of his prospects and inducement for utilisation of his services for military operations, the Aga Khan agreed to proceed to Calcutta.

The Government of India, thereupon, wrote to the Superintendent of Mysore Princes and ex-Ameers of Sind, the following letter of the 24th July 1847:—

"It having been determined upon political considerations that the Persian nobleman Aga Khan Mahallati, shall be required to reside for the present in Bengal, I am directed to inform you that the President in Council considers that it will be expedient to fix the Aga's residence in the vicinity of Calcutta and to place him under your care.

"Aga Khan of Mehlati is a nobleman of high rank and allied to the royal family of Persia. He is in the receipt of an allowance

of Rs. 3,000 per mensem from the British Government for services rendered in Afghanistan and in Sind.

"The Treaty between the British and the Persian Governments requires that persons in the circumstances of this nobleman shall either be given up unconditionally to the Persian Government or be expelled from the British territories. In consideration, however, of Aga Khan's services, the British Government obtained the assent of the Persian Government to the alternative of being obliged to reside in Bengal.

"The President in Council requests that you engage provisionally a suitable house for the use of the Aga Khan and make other necessary arrangements for his reception. The position in which he stands at present as regards the Persian Government makes it inexpedient to show him any marked distinction but it is the wish of the Government that he should be treated with the utmost courtesy and consideration and his comfort consulted as much as possible."

The provocation which the Aga Khan felt in being called upon to undertake the journey and the worry, annoyance, trouble and the risk to his health in travelling long distances in horse carriages can better be imagined than described. But under the most discouraging and heart-breaking and provocative conditions, and in spite of ill-health and an operation on his eyes in the course of the journey, which took more than two months to accomplish, he preserved a most dignified attitude which won the admiration of those who had forced him to undertake the avoidable risk to his life, by sacrificing him on the altar of political expediency. To add to his difficulties, his followers were seized with illness, and his own health was seriously undermined. In the meanwhile, a reconciliation was effected with the Shah, who invited the Aga Khan to Persia promising to return him his hereditary possessions but, suspecting treachery, the Aga Khan abandoned the idea of returning to Persia for the time being. By an irony of fate the old Aga's troubles began when they should have ended.

There is no doubt that he must have felt his changed surroundings keenly. From the first there seems to

have been little sympathy between him and Captain Cavanagh, and it must have been galling to the loyal old soldier to be classed with the ex-Ameers of Sind, who had been accused of conspiring against the British Flag. He, however, was not inclined to accept his position and his depleted exchequer without protest and he lost no time in bombarding Captain Cavanagh and the Governor-General with petitions and appeals. In a long Memorial, dated 22nd March 1848, he gave Lord Dalhousie, who had just succeeded Lord Hardinge as Governor-General, an account of his family history, his reasons for seeking British protection and the services he had rendered to his protectors. He went on to say that he should have accepted the overtures made to him from Persia and have returned to that country, had he not been advised by the Governor of Bombay to go to Calcutta "as by adopting this course I should obtain many advantages."

It is not necessary to recapitulate the long and weary tales of his woes: the refusal of the Government to allow him to proceed to Bombay or to Egypt, the threat of the stoppage of his pension, the anxiety about his family all weighed on him.

Three months later an event occurred which seemed likely to make a material difference in the relations between the Aga Khan and the British Government. In November 1848, news was received in Calcutta of the death of Muhammad Shah and with his demise the reason for enforcing the stay of the late ruler of Kerman in Calcutta was at an end. In consequence, the Aga Khan at once addressed the Governor-General and desired to be furnished with facilities to return to Bombay and thence to Persia.

The Government of Calcutta were only too anxious to accede to the request of their guest, as they found that "the presence of a personage of high rank" in that city proved "very embarrassing." They, therefore, willingly consented to provide a passage for him, his

wife and a suite of forty persons in the Peninsular and Oriental Steamer *Lady Mary Wood*, which sailed from Calcutta on 6th December and reached Bombay on the last day of the year 1848. The Aga Khan can have had no regret in severing his connection with the Bengal Presidency nor with the city where he had sojourned as a stranger in a strange land. The Bombay newspapers (acting probably under the instructions of Government) devoted a bare couple of lines to the announcement of the arrival of the august passenger in the *Lady Mary Wood* and thus the splendid reception accorded to their spiritual head by his followers in Bombay, and by his own immediate relations can be left to the imagination.

The Aga Khan proposed to make only a brief stay in Bombay, and, as soon as he had settled his affairs there he intended to proceed to Persia, but many obstacles occurred to prevent the carrying out of his design and once again he became a pawn on the political chessboard. He desired, as before, to return to Persia *via* Baluchistan and Kerman and the Bombay Government were equally determined that the wishes of the Persian Ministers would be respected and that he should travel by the route prescribed, namely, by Bushire and Shiraz or by Baghdad and Kermanshah. While the matter was being debated at length, letters were received from Major Rawlinson, the British Agent in Turkish Arabia and from Lt.-Col. Farrant, the British Charge d'Affaires in Persia, reporting the disturbed state of the Province of Khorasan owing to the rebellion of a young Kajar Khan known as Salar, and stating that in their opinion it would be very unwise for the Aga Khan to revisit Persia at that juncture. The Government of Bombay concurred in this opinion as they realised that "the Aga Khan's influence and authority in certain parts of Persia were great, and thrown into the scale against the Government which has been recently established in

Persia by the combined influence of England and Russia, great embarrassment might ensue." It was therefore decided that as no compulsion could be placed on the Aga Khan, preparations for his departure should be delayed pending orders from the Supreme Government at Calcutta. These arrived on 31st January 1849, their purport being that the Aga Khan was free to return to Persia, but that he must do so by the prescribed route or forfeit any claim to consideration by the Government of India.

This decision was conveyed to the Persian Prince who on February 2, 1849, expressed his willingness to start for Bushire, begging only that Government will allow him to remain on his way for fifteen or twenty days at Muscat where he had many Mureeds. This proposal was negatived on account of disturbances in those regions. The Aga Khan did not press the point, but still delayed his departure. On March 31st, by instructions from the Governor-General, he was informed that a passage to Persia would be provided for him and the portion of his family and dependents who accompanied him from Calcutta and that therefore he could make immediate arrangements to leave Bombay. To this he replied, on 1st April, begging that the British Envoy at Teheran might "obtain a 'Uhud Nama' for me that I may return to Persia with security," since "it is necessary that wherever I go I should be supported by Government." On being informed that, in no circumstances, would his pension be paid to him in Persia, the Aga Khan addressed a long letter to the Secretary to the Government of India, stating that, as he had gone to Calcutta in conformity with the wishes of Government—so, if it were advisable "for State purposes," he would go to Persia, "but not of my own accord." He added:—"I shall never give up the pension which I received from Government in consideration of my services." This last point was the crux of the whole

question. The Aga Khan declined to renounce his pension and the Government were firm in their refusal to continue it during his residence outside British territory. So matters dragged on. The steamer *Sir Charles Forbes*, on which the Aga Khan and his party should have embarked, was delayed as long as possible but as he continued to represent his inability "to proceed without funds or to procure them" at Bombay "without Government aid," the vessel sailed without him.

One reason, apart from financial considerations, for the continued efforts of the Aga Khan to delay his departure from Bombay was undoubtedly fear of his personal safety in his native land. That such fear was well grounded was proved by two letters from Muscat received by him in May 1849, the purport of both being the same, namely, that directions had been received by the Persian Agent at Bandar Abbas to seize the Aga Khan and his followers by command of the Shah.

In June, 1849, the Aga Khan addressed a long memorial to Lord Dalhousie in which, after repeating his previous history and connection with the British Government, he complained, not without reason, that:

"When it was possible to go, I was directed to proceed thither (Persia) intimating to me at the same time that my pension would be stopped whether I went or not. It would, however, be seen that, leaving the question of the continuation of my pension for the consideration of Government, I was willing, nay, almost prepared, to meet the wishes of the Government. What I wanted was a moderate advance to meet pressing emergencies, which was refused, and just at this time I received advice from Persia that misrepresentations having reached the ears of the present Shah that I was about to return there with no friendly object, His Majesty was exasperated against me, and issued instructions to seize and imprison me and my men the moment we would land in any part of Persia; and in fact some of my people being already made prisoners of, the Shah left it entirely out of my power to do otherwise than to postpone my intended departure to Persia, and my pension has consequently been again stopped".

As to his services to the British Government he added some details not given in his previous memorials:

"At the time I arrived in Candahar I was not altogether a stranger to the British Government. I was specially brought to the notice of the British Generals in Candahar by Sir John McNeil and others for espousing in Persia the cause of the British Government, for which my services were specially, though indirectly, engaged. These are topics delicate for me to touch and which it would ill become me to dilate upon, but the Indian Government cannot be ignorant of the same; otherwise they might, if they think proper, refer to the records of the British Residency in Persia, and to Sir John McNeil, Colonel Shell and Major Rawlinson. Your Lordship will be pleased to bear in mind that when I arrived at Candahar I was a free agent, and might have joined either the standard of the British Government or its enemies, although I had but a small force with me my name and influence were by no means small in a country as strange as it was hostile to the British.

At the time I undertook to serve the British Government at Candahar they too well knew I was on no friendly footing with the Shah of Persia; nor was the British Government friendly to the Shah; my services on that account were more valuable to the British Government. My name and position in that country imparted not a little terror into the heart of the enemies. I had posts of no inconsiderable importance confided in me by the British Generals. It was I, with my personal escort, who protected the property of the British army, and I displayed no lack of courage, sword in hand, by the side of the British officers, in fighting the common enemy of the British Government.

I heard it said by several of the British officers then there that they believed my aid to have been as distinguished as any of their great officers. These were not mere complimentary speeches to please Asiatics, but I had been officially assured by the then distinguished General, my late brave and lamented friend Nott, and others, that my great services had been prominently brought to the notice of the Supreme Government; nay, in proof thereof I had territory conferred on me by the Government of a part of the conquered provinces, in addition to settling upon me large stipends. But for the unfortunate Cabul massacre and the sequel, too heart-rending even now to think of, I should have continued as ruler of the province of Moola Rasheed allotted to me by the British Government."

The letter concluded with arguments for the continuance of his pension:

"Honour and good faith, therefore, require that the pension should be continued to me, reside wherever I may. I intend to

return to my native country as soon as I receive an answer from the Shah of Persia to a representation I have already addressed to His Majesty with a view to dispelling misrepresentation and regaining myself into his royal favour. In the meantime, justice which I have sought at your Lordship's hands, will not be denied to me and your Lordship will cause the continuation of the pension."

But all his arguments fell on deaf ears, for though his representation was duly forwarded to the Governor-General, the Aga Khan was informed "that the decisions we have already come to on the points noticed in his letter are final." However, a different and sympathetic attitude adopted by Lord Palmerston, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who had been in communication with Lt.-Colonel Farrant, H. M. Charge d'Affaires in Persia, effected a change in the situation. Lord Palmerston was of opinion that the return of the Aga Khan to Persia was inexpedient, but at the same time, in view of the distinguished services of the Aga Khan, he recognised that the British Government had no power to coerce his movements. The consequence of the most firm and strong attitude taken by the Secretary for Foreign Affairs was the restoration of the Aga Khan's pension.

But Lord Palmerston did not allow the matter to drop, and in 1851 he instructed Lt.-Col. Justice Shiel, H.M. Representative at Teheran, to ascertain whether there were valid reasons for keeping the Aga Khan out of Persia. The reply received showed that the Prince was still regarded as a formidable rival and that if he returned to his native land he could only do so as a fugitive. The knowledge that under British protection alone his life was secure induced the Aga Khan to abandon his intention of leaving Bombay. In March, 1851, the conditions of his residence under the British Flag were definitely stated in a letter from the Government of India to Bombay:

"The Aga Khan cannot be given up to the Persian Government unless he voluntarily quits India. The pension which was granted to him for his services to our Government should be

continued. We are not desirous that he should be required to return to Bengal unless the Persian Government, on being further consulted should renew its objections to his residing in Bombay.

On receipt of this communication the Aga Khan replied that he "Never intended to be wanting in his duty towards the Persian State," and that with the exception of praying for its perpetual existence, he "would not do any other thing which might lead to intrigues or conspiracies."

Chapter Six

CLOSING YEARS OF A GREAT LIFE

CONFERMENT OF ROYAL HONOURS

THE first Aga Khan's services to British rule did not end with his peaceful settlement in Bombay. For three decades—to the end of his long life—he remained unflinchingly loyal to the British Raj. Whenever he heard of unrest on the Frontier he offered to the Government his own services and all the resources at his command, and by his vast and unquestioned influence among the Frontier tribes he assisted very greatly in curbing the passions of the wild men of the Border. During the Mutiny he was a pillar of strength to the Government. Among his followers his word was law, and if communal rioting broke out in Bombay or elsewhere his was always an influence on the side of peace.

To the people of Bombay, his was a familiar figure, and he consoled himself for the loss of the Persian throne by becoming one of the leading supporters of the Turf. In the present Aga Khan's family house are many cups won by his grandfather on the Bombay racecourse. The stud of the first Aga Khan was one of the foremost in India: some of the best blood of Arabia was to be found in his stables. On his racers he spared no expense, and no prejudice of race or religion prevented him from availing himself of the skill of English trainers and jockeys. English lads who learned to ride on Epsom Downs carried his colours to victory, mounted on horses bred in the starry valleys of Nedj. And almost to the end of his life this Prince took as keen an interest in a horse race as forty years previously he would have watched with a critical and appreciative eye a horse charge on the plains of Kandahar or Khorassan. A curious relic of his

attachment to racing is to be found to this day in the compound of Bombay's eldest club, the Byculla, where there remains an old structure of brick and plaster which is known as "The Aga Khan's Stand." It was from this stand that he watched the finish of the races.

Except at the races, the Aga Khan was seldom seen in public, but when King Edward VII, as Prince of Wales, visited India, he was entertained by the warrior Prince. The Aga Khan, having heard of the Prince of Wales' intention to visit India, sent a commission to invite the Prince to honour him with a visit. The Aga reminded the authorities of the visit with which he had been honoured by the Duke of Edinburgh and requested that the Prince of Wales should be pleased to do him a similar honour. When the Prince of Wales arrived in Bombay the Aga called to pay his respects, and in person repeated his invitation, which was graciously accepted. When the Prince of Wales delighted him by returning the visit, the two sat in front of a portrait of Fateh Ali Shah, the King of Persia, whose daughter the Aga had married, inspected the Aga's cups won on the Indian turf and his son's trophies of the Indian chase, and talked over some of the events of a life as varied and adventurous as that of the Aga's ancestor, the Ismailian leader who seven centuries previously wrote to Leopold, Duke of Austria, urging the release of Richard Cœur de Lion, then a prisoner in the hands of Leopold at the time of the Holy War between the Saracens and the Crusaders. Except leading Ruling Princes of India, the Aga Khan was the only nobleman in India to be given the honour of a Royal visit. It was an acknowledgment of his princely status and a recognition of his eminent services to the British Government.

Writing on the historic visit, Sir Bartle said:

"There can be little doubt that the visit has been described and discussed in many a meeting of the Aga's followers—in India, Persia, and Arabia—on remote shores of Eastern Africa, and in still

more inaccessible valleys of Central Asia, and it will doubtless find a place in the annals of this singular sect for many generations to come.

"Few, perhaps, at the time, thought of the historical memories which the visit recalled, and the objections which some authorities on Oriental matters expressed on hearing of the Prince's intention to visit the Aga would have been lessened had they reflected on the width and depth of the gulfs which separate the various sects of Islam."

The personal friendship formed then with the Royal House of England has not only continued but strengthened and the present Aga Khan's steadfast loyalty and attachment to the Throne of England has won for him the high regard of the Sovereigns of England.

In the eyes of the Aga Khan and his followers the British Government stood as the one really tolerant power they knew, securing to them freedom in religion and justice in law such as they might seek in vain in those days in most parts of Islam, and the Royal visit was to the Aga Khan the emblem of a tolerant and powerful rule under which he passed in affluence and tranquillity the evening of a life the early years of which had been spent in an atmosphere of revolution and bloodshed.

Simple in his own life, he recognised that to the Oriental mind pomp indicates authority. He acted accordingly. Like his ancestor in the days of Marco Polo, he kept court in magnificent style, the influence of which it is difficult for the western mind to appreciate. A British Mission to Yarkhand discovered that considerable communities of Shiahs who acknowledge the Aga Khan as their spiritual head and send tributes regularly through agents in Srinagar and other towns in Northern India, are still to be found far north, surrounded by the implacable Sunnis of Turkestan and Afghanistan. These Imami Ismailian Shiahs form the whole of the sparse population in many of the valleys leading from the Pamirs, the "Roof of the World," on the banks of the higher Oxus and its confluents, in

Chitral, Gilgit, and in remoter valleys between Kaffristan and Badakshan unknown to the world generally. In Persia, Khorassan, and Western Afghanistan and also in Syria, there appear to be considerable numbers of the Aga Khan's disciples. Indeed, it is probable that to this day, if a traveller wishes to visit the central lakes of Africa, or the ruby or jade mines of Badakshan, in Central Asia, he could not do better than secure introductions from the Ismailian chief to his people in those parts.

This account of His Highness will not be deemed complete without a reference to what Sir Bartle Frere, a former Governor of Bombay designated 'a master trial' which absorbed, for months together, the attention of the public, as well as of the Bench and the Bar of the High Court of Bombay. When the Aga Khan came to Bombay and asserted himself as the hereditary head of the Ismailis by virtue of his descent, a certain party representing a numerical minority of the community resisted the claim and challenged the rights of those who could claim a numerical majority. All the best local counsel were briefed on one side or the other and no expense was spared in procuring and marshalling the evidence by both parties. The result was the collection and judicial sifting of a vast body of evidence of great interest to the historian, the antiquary, the theologian and the student of moral and political philosophy. Sir Joseph Arnold, a very eminent Judge, tried the case, in which the plaintiffs contended that Pir Sudrudin who originally converted the Khojas from Hinduism was a Sunni; that the Khoja community has ever since its first conversion been Sunni; and that no persons calling themselves Shiahs were entitled to be considered members of the Khoja community, or to have any share or interest in the public property of the Khoja community or any voice in the management thereof. The defence maintained that Pir Sudrudin was not a Sunni, but a Shiah of the Imamee Ismaili

persuasion, that he was a missionary of one of the direct lineal ancestors of the Aga Khan, the Imam or spiritual chief of the sect; that from the time of their first conversion the Khojas, with the exception of a few seceders, were of Shiah Imamee Ismaili persuasion. The property at stake was of the value of £10,000 per annum in Bombay alone.

Sir Joseph Arnold delivered a learned judgment setting out prominent facts established in the Court.

One of the first questions was to which of the sects of the Muhammadans the Khojas belonged. Sir Joseph Arnold came to the conclusion that the Khoja community is "a sect of people whose ancestors were Hindu in original, which was converted to, and has throughout abided in, the faith of the Shiah Imamee Ismailies, which has always been and still is bound by ties of spiritual allegiance to the hereditary Imams of the Ismailies."

The final result of this remarkable suit was to establish the rights of the Aga Khan to all the customary dues which he was entitled by his position as spiritual head of the Khoja community, and to the possession of the formidable powers of mediating sentences of excommunication to be subsequently carried out by the consent of a body of disciples. We share Sir Bartle Frere's regret that Sir Joseph Arnold did not employ his brilliant pen to write a history of the salient points which he had studied on the great trial, about the origin of the sect and the romantic and the political interest attached to it.

In Sir Bartle's opinion the strange changes of fortune by which the history of the sect and its professions came to be tested, and the rights of those holding them to be weighed by English judges in the 19th century acting under authority delegated by a successor of Cœur de Lion;—all these features apart from the romance of the story have much to tempt the historian and philosopher.

After the trial, the Aga Khan secured by the decision

of the English Court in the peaceable enjoyment of his large income and hereditary honours, lived quietly at Poona, Bombay or Bangalore.

While on visits to Bangalore he formed a friendship with the then Ruler of Travancore, and subsequently represented that important State in Bombay.

So Hasan Ali Shah left his mark as a warrior, statesman, sportsman and religious leader of eminence, the ally of the British Government, ever since the days when he first became Viceroy of the great province of Kerman. Full of years and honour, he passed away in peace in April, 1881, leaving three sons—Aga Ali Shah, Aga Jangi Shah and Aga Akbar Shah.

He was buried in a specially erected mausoleum, "Husnabad" at Mazagon, Bombay.

Chapter Seven

AGA KHAN II AND LADY ALY SHAH

A RECORD OF PUBLIC AND PHILANTHROPIC
SERVICES

THE first Aga Khan was succeeded on his death, in 1881, by his eldest son, Aga Aly Shah, who during his father's second rebellion had spent some time with his mother, the Persian Princess, at Baghdad and Kerbala and in hunting expeditions between those places in company with the Zill-es-Sultan, who ruled for forty days in Persia.

Before the death of the first Aga Khan there had been a reconciliation between him and the ruling family of Persia, and on his death Shah Nasrudin sent a message of condolence and sympathy to Aga Aly Shah on the occasion of the death of his father. Among Persian Princes a ceremony is performed to mark the end of mourning of their deceased relations, and that ceremony was performed by Shah Nasrudin to end the mourning consequent upon the death of Hassan Aly Shah. A robe of honour and the emblem of the Persian Crown studded with diamonds were sent by the Shah to Aga Aly Shah as a mark of his recognition of the Imam of Ismailis and his relationship with the Aga Khan's family. This emblem of the royal favour is still preserved as an heirloom in the family. Similar marks of honour by the Persian monarch were repeated when the present Aga Khan succeeded his father, and his rank as a Prince of the Royal family of Persia was thereby recognised.

Aga Aly Shah had been carefully trained for the great position which he inherited but which he occupied for a short time only. Under the instruction of Persian and Arab Mullahs, eminent for their piety and learning, he made such progress in oriental languages as to achieve



HIS HIGHNESS AGA ALY SHAH, AGA KHAN II

a reputation as an authority on Persian and Arabic literature, as a student of metaphysics, and an exponent of the religious views of his sect. He was President of the Muhammadan National Association and, in co-operation with the late Mr. R. M. Sayani, a most enlightened member of the Khoja community, he promoted and organised educational and philanthropic institutions for the Muslims of Bombay. With the position and needs of his own followers he was peculiarly well-acquainted, for his father had assigned to him the duty of visiting them, particularly in Sind and Kathiawar, and of organising their Jamatkhanas (guilds).

He discharged his responsible and onerous duties in a manner which drew the admiration and approbation of the community. He sat for some time as an additional member of the Bombay Council for making Laws and Regulations during the Governorship of Sir James Fergusson. The nomination to the Council in those days was a rare distinction bestowed only on men of outstanding ability and high social position. Still earlier he had been appointed, in 1874, a member of a Commission which was constituted to submit proposals for amendment of the law relating to his community. The Khojas were governed partly by Muhammedan and partly by Hindu law and from that circumstance much confusion had arisen.

As a sportsman Aga Aly Shah had the reputation of a mighty hunter, addicted to the dangerous pursuit of shooting tigers on foot. He would not shoot from a *machan*, and, if he did not succeed in setting a fashion, he justified his theory and bagged forty tigers when shooting from the ground.

Aga Aly Shah married three times. His first two wives died in Bombay. He then married a granddaughter of Shah Fateh Aly Shah and a niece of Shah Muhammad Aly of the Kajjar dynasty of Persia and a daughter of Nizam-ud-Daulah, a nobleman of great influence in the Persian Court, who ended his days

living a life of devotion in retirement. Aga Aly Shah died in 1885, his untimely end casting a gloom on the community. His remains were taken to the holy city of Kerballa and buried there with great honours. After her marriage, Lady Aly Shah and her husband lived for some time at Baghdad. Afterwards they came to Karachi, where the present Aga Khan was born. On the death of the first Aga Khan she came to Bombay with her only son. She proved herself to be a most remarkable lady of rare attainments and great organizing power, and was well-known throughout the Muslim world. All her happiness and business was concentrated in the one thought of making her son a wise leader of men and how far she succeeded can be judged from the position the Aga Khan enjoys among notable men of the world. To her the Aga Khan owes his education and early formation of character. During the minority of the Aga Khan she carried on the administration of the affairs of the Khoja community through a council. She consulted Lord Reay, the then Governor of Bombay, in regard to the future of her son. The kindly interest Lord and Lady Reay took in the young Aga Khan relieved her of a great deal of anxiety. After the death of Aly Shah the Government sanctioned the continuance of the pension of Rs.1,000 per month to the young Aga Khan for his life.

Lady Aly Shah did not apply for it; she first learnt from Lady Reay the recommendation which Lord Reay had made to continue the title of His Highness and the pension which his grandfather and father had enjoyed. She told the writer of this narrative that one morning Mr. Balaram, a clerk in the Bank of Bombay, now the Imperial Bank, called on her and informed her that the Bank had received an order for the payment of the pension to the young Aga Khan for his life. This was followed by an announcement of the bestowal of the honorific title of "His Highness," when the Aga Khan

was only nine years of age. The conferment of this title on a nobleman of nine years of age is unparalleled in history. It shows the esteem in which the 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 Aga Khan.

Lady Aly Shah took charge of the management of the estates and properties and continued to administer them until 1893 when the Aga Khan at the age of 16 took them up, leaving, however, the domestic portion of the management in his mother's hands to a certain extent. Lady Aly Shah bought a number of properties and made sound investments which augmented the Aga Khan's wealth which she passed on to her son when he came of age. The first Aga Khan had maintained his family and a large number of retainers who had accompanied him from Persia. When he acquired immovable properties in Bombay and elsewhere he permitted the members of his family and some of his retainers to reside in his various houses. He also acquired property in Poona where he followed the same practice. As the family multiplied the requirements of the family increased. He generously supplied them. In addition to that he fed from a common kitchen all the persons living on his property. Allowances were granted in cash to some of the members of his family out of which they provided themselves, or perhaps some were provided by him, with horses, carriages and servants. The same system was continued in the time of Aga Aly Shah and after his death by Lady Aly Shah on behalf of her son. These allowances, in cash, food and residence proceeded from nothing but grace and favour of the Aga Khan. Unfortunately this generosity of the Aga Khan and of Lady Aly Shah involved her and her son in a costly lawsuit which, however, had this advantage that it settled once for all the Aga Khan's rights to the offerings made to him in his capacity as the Pope of the Ismailians.

Lady Aly Shah gave evidence in the High Court in

the suit and Justice Russell, who tried the case, was greatly struck by her evidence. As he observed in his judgment, she "displayed an extraordinary memory."

She had been entirely responsible for the upbringing of the Aga Khan and even upto the time of her death in January 1938 at the age of 90, she followed with keen interest the remarkable career of her son and her one great satisfaction was that he was devoting his life not only to the welfare of Muslims only but of Indians as a whole. She was proud to think that her son believed in the gospel of universal brotherhood. That was the one object of her education to him and which was one of the tenets of Islam she inculcated in him from his childhood. The Aga Khan could well be proud of his mother; one writer applied to her the lines of Tennyson—

"The world hath not another
(Tho' all her fairest forms are types of thee,
And thou of God in thy great charity)
Of such a finished chasten'd purity."

Her great organising capacities and her extraordinary driving power were utilised with great advantage during the war. She placed her services at the disposal of Lord and Lady Willingdon and under her direction the Khoja and Persian ladies rendered great service to the wounded soldiers brought to Bombay from Mesopotamia and other theatres of war. Under her inspiring leadership the community was able to collect large funds and procure necessary supplies. Even when Turkey joined the war her enthusiasm for the cause of His Majesty and the Allies never abated or wavered. She made frequent appeals not only to Muslims, but to the whole population of Bombay for the cause of justice and liberty which had driven His Majesty's Government in the war. What appealed to her was the ethical code involved in the struggle—whether might or right was to prevail. She invited prominent Indian and Muslim purdah ladies to meetings at her bungalow and pointed out to them that they lived in peace and happiness under the British

rule, which guaranteed to them freedom of religion. If Great Britain were defeated in the war, the result would be terrible for India. The British Government were forced into the war by Germany and she was sure that England and her Allies would be ultimately victorious and their victory would be the triumph of justice and civilisation. She emphasised that this was not a war between the Cross and the Crescent and that it was proved by the fact that the safety of their holy places was guaranteed by the British Government. At her instance prayers were offered in the Jamatkhana (Council Hall) for the speedy and complete victory of the British arms. She kept in constant correspondence with the ruler of Hunza on the border of Gilgit who and his subjects are the followers of the Aga Khan and also with influential Persians, advising them to help His Majesty's cause, which was the cause of righteousness. Her own nephews and relations fought on the side of the allies in Mesopotamia and rendered valuable services in diplomatic sphere as well. One of them Aga Hamid Khan was made a C.I.E.

In 1917, His Majesty the King was graciously pleased to confer on Lady Willingdon the distinguished order of the Crown of India. On that occasion, the historic house of the Aga Khan at Nesbit Road, where His Majesty the King Emperor Edward VII paid a visit to the first Aga Khan when he came out to India as Prince of Wales, was the scene of a very influential and picturesque gathering of Muslim ladies, when an address of congratulation was presented to Lady Willingdon under the leadership of Lady Aly Shah, as resolved upon at an influential meeting of Muslim ladies held at Her Highness's bungalow at Malabar Hill. It was a unique gathering of a large number of purdah ladies including Moguls, Memons, Khojas, Arabs and others which testified to the great respect in which Lady Willingdon was held by all classes of Indian womanhood. Lady Aly Shah read the address to Lady Willingdon in

Persian, in which it was stated that this was the first occasion on which the Muslim ladies had ventured to present an address, but they felt that the occasion demanded the united expression of their feelings of pride and gratitude as Lady Willingdon was to them very much more than the wife of their beloved Governor. She had proved herself to be a true friend of the purdah ladies and a source of inspiration and encouragement to them. They were rejoiced on account of His Majesty setting the seal of approval by the bestowal of the high honour in appreciation of her noble and selfless work.

A great Persian scholar well-versed in oriental history, Lady Aly Shah was a woman of great piety and daily recited her prayers according to the injunctions of the prophet. She was universally respected, throughout the Muslim world and her fame had spread far and wide not only in India but throughout the entire world. She had travelled in Europe, Arabia, Syria and visited the various holy places of Islam. Five years ago she again visited Syria and other places with her grandson, Prince Aly, the Aga Khan's heir to the Imamate. When she visited Persia, Riza Shah Pahlevi was the vizier and Commander-in-Chief. By his order she was received everywhere with honour befitting a grand-daughter of His Majesty Fateh Aly Shah, and from Baghdad to Teheran she was given a royal reception. Riza Shah Pahlevi paid her a visit which she duly returned. She was also invited to take tea with him. Riza Shah sent her two beautiful Persian carpets which she presented to His Highness of Dharampur, who has preserved them in a museum in his capital. She took a great interest in Persia and Persian affairs and was a great admirer of Riza Ali Shah who more than once invited her to visit Persia again.

On the recommendation of Lord Willingdon the honour of the Crown of India was bestowed upon her by His Majesty the King-Emperor seven years ago. On the occasion of the bestowal of this rare honour the Khoja



HER HIGHNESS LADY ALY SHAH, C.I.,
Wife of the second Aga Khan and mother of His Highness the present
Aga Khan.

ladies of Bombay and other places presented her with congratulatory addresses, and valuable jewels to mark their affection towards one whom they regarded as their mother. She followed not only Indian but world politics. She championed the cause of India for political liberty as strongly and valiantly as her son does. Once she told the present writer that though she belonged to the Royal family of Persia, she had no hesitation in saying that her relations had brought about their own downfall and ruin of Persia and she expressed her satisfaction at the fact that Iran was regaining her position under Riza Shah as a powerful Islamic State. During her visit to Europe in 1932 she had the honour of being received by Their Majesties King George and Queen Mary and other members of the Royal family. She was also received by the Secretary of State, Sir Samuel Hoare. She was greatly impressed by the kind reception given to her by Their Majesties and she referred to the occasion of her visit to Their Majesties as one of the proudest moments in her life. It was in recognition of her noble birth and magnificent services which she had been able to render to the Empire during the Great War. In the absence of the Aga Khan, until the time of her death, at the age of 90, she remained in close touch with the administration of the affairs of the community. Her influence was not confined to but was felt beyond her community. She came in close contact with Lord Reay and other Governors of Bombay and their wives and also with the Earl of Dufferin and the Countess of Dufferin who entertained a very high opinion of her. The late Mr. Montagu's diary refers to a visit which he and Lady Willingdon paid to her at her bungalow in Malabar Hill. In his diary Mr. Montagu writes :—

“Lady Willingdon drove with me to see Lady Aly Shah, mother of the Aga Khan. She lives in a very nice house on the sea, and she has the most beautiful Persian China I have ever seen in my life. I am the first male that she has seen socially except Lord Willingdon. She sat very nervously holding Lady Willingdon

by both hands, but she is a dear old lady, and she and Lady Willingdon seem to be the greatest friends, kissing one another at intervals.....At the outbreak of the war she rode down from Baghdad through Persia taking with her, as a condition of the permission to come, bundles of leaflets which she promised to distribute, but which she burnt. Of course she is a great figure in Mesopotamia, and related to the ruling people of Persia. Her courage is extraordinary. She was really most delightful to me; presented me with a large basket of flowers and one of those decorative necklaces of tinsel—all the old courtesies, and I enjoyed my twenty minutes there very much.”

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. She combined in her person—

“ The reason firm, the temperate will
Endurance, foresight, strength and skill ;
A perfect woman nobly planned,
To warm, to comfort and command.
And yet spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light.”

So profound was her wisdom and so great the confidence in the soundness of her opinion that several Indian princes sought her advice in moments of doubt or difficulty. The late Begum of Bhopal was an intimate friend of Lady Aly Shah who regarded the present Nawab Saheb of Bhopal as her own son.

She had intended to visit Persia in 1934 after meeting Lord and Lady Willingdon at Karachi, but her sudden illness prevented her from carrying out her intention and under medical advice this Grand Old Lady undertook a second visit to Europe.

Lady Aly Shah was again taken seriously ill in November 1937. His Highness the Aga Khan hurried to India by air and landed at Jodhpur and after greeting H. H. Maharaja Umedsinhji left for Bombay by a special train. As doctors had anticipated, his presence acted as a tonic on Lady Aly Shah and she steadily recovered from her serious illness. She left for Iraq in January

1938. She believed that her end was not far off. Her anxiety was to be buried in Najaf by the side of her husband; and it was with that idea that she proceeded to Baghdad *via* Karachi and Basra by the s.s. “Vasna” which sailed from Bombay on January 27. Special arrangements were made for her comfort. A cabin de luxe was prepared at short notice by the shipping company.

Her Highness was accompanied by a staff consisting of an experienced doctor, two English nurses and ten other attendants. Lady Aly Shah realising that her end was near, told Khan Bahadur Kamadia : “Send my love to all the members of the Ismaili community. I may not return to India, but wherever my spirit be I will eternally watch their peaceful progress and prosperity, as I have done all my life.” She was visibly touched when she bade farewell to Khan Bahadur Kamadia.

His Highness the Aga Khan had made every arrangement for his mother's comfort at Baghdad, and for that reason he took with him Khan Bahadur Kamadia's son, Hooseinalli, by air to Basra, where, under His Highness's instructions, he made all possible arrangements for a quiet and peaceful landing. A saloon car was ready to convey Her Highness from Basra to Baghdad, where a bungalow, belonging to her nephew, Aga Hamid Khan, was placed at her disposal. Her Highness arrived at Baghdad on February 4 at 1 p.m.

The Aga Khan and his wife reached Baghdad by air from Cairo on February 5 at 3 p.m. and Lady Aly Shah passed away peacefully at 5-15 p.m. the same day.

Her Highness was buried on the evening of February 6 at Najaf next to the tomb of her late husband His Highness Aga Aly Shah, thousands of Muslims attending her funeral.

Her death occasioned deep grief not only among the Muslims but in all other communities in Bombay among whom she was very popular. References to her death were made at the meeting of the Bombay Municipal

Corporation on Monday, February 7. As a mark of respect to her memory the House adjourned, without transacting any business.

Lady Aly Shah was an acknowledged leader of the Muslim community, said the Mayor, Dr. E. Moses. She was born of a noble family in Persia, and she could have well afforded to live a life of luxury without any public work, but being a lady of very dynamic personality, she took a keen and active interest in the educational, political and administrative spheres.

Mr. Meyer Nissim, a senior member of the Corporation, moved a resolution that "the Corporation had learnt with deep regret of the sad death of Lady Aly Shah, who was a lady of great piety, possessing extraordinary intellectual talent and vast organising capacities. She took a keen interest in the educational welfare and social uplift not only of Muslims but of all communities in the country. In her death the country mourned the loss of a highly respected lady of outstanding sagacity and ability."

It was also resolved that a copy of the resolution be forwarded to the Aga Khan with an expression of the Corporation's sympathy in his sad bereavement.

Mr. Sultan Chinoy, Chairman of the Standing Committee, seconded and Sir Byramji Jeejeebhoy and several other members of different communities supported the resolution which was carried, all members standing.

The Aga Khan was deeply affected by the death of his dear mother. "In this difficult and saddest moment of my life," wrote the Aga Khan to a friend, "the consolation I have is that the sadness and sorrow is tempered by the fact that she lived to be, at least, 90 years of age. She had a large and happy family and very happy grandchildren whom she always wanted. She died where she wanted to die. She had the satisfaction of seeing her grandchildren happy and prosperous in days when prosperity is getting rare. But all this does not reconcile me to losing her. She had been to me more than

father and mother combined, since I lost my father at the age of 8. No loss, not even that of my son who died in infancy which was a terrible blow to me as a father, has been quite so terrible as this." Such was the deep affection between the mother and the son that not a week passed without telegrams and letters from each other. To mark his devotion, he had dedicated his book "India in Transition" to his mother. Her death has created a void which will be difficult to fill.

Chapter Eight

AGA KHAN III

EARLY TRAINING

His Ideals, Activities and Achievements.

*Kind hearts are the garden,
Kind thoughts are the roots,
Kind words are the blossoms,
Kind deeds are the fruits.*

"I AM hopeful that during the next half century the Aga Khan will play that part in directing the destinies of the world of Islam for which his position and abilities so eminently qualify him." Thus wrote Sir Theodore Morison thirty-five years ago. The Aga Khan has not only succeeded in directing the destinies of Islam but he has been instrumental in shaping the political destinies of India. He was only eight years of age when his father died and as described in the previous chapter the duty of bringing up the boy and fitting him for his great responsibilities in life fell on his mother, Lady Aly Shah, to whom the Aga Khan owes a great deal of his moral and material success in life.

The Right Honourable Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah was born at Karachi, in Sind, on November 2, 1877. He is, as it were, the uncrowned king of a powerful race wielding complete influence over it and enjoying more respect, authority and eminence than many crowned heads. The great Ruling Princes, exercising independent jurisdiction in their States, in some cases with populations of millions, have an important share in the evolution of Indian life, but they are not concerned with foreign affairs, except as partners in the responsibility of Empire conservation. It has

fallen to the lot of the Aga Khan to work in a wider sphere for the welfare of India and the Empire. He has done his best—and with no little success—to bring East and West together.

It was the Marchioness of Dufferin who detected in the Aga Khan when he was yet a child of eight years of age the making of a great leader and predicted future eminence for him. That prediction has been more than fulfilled.

From his earliest days the boy was taught the humility and devotion to duty which inspired the Prophet of Islam and 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. It was, one imagines, a stern education for a little boy, yet not without its attractive side, as will be shewn later on.

At the outset Lady Aly Shah recognised 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 under the care of his father, who had engendered in the child a love for oriental literature. He showed remarkable aptitude for learning. Lady Aly Shah saw that knowledge of oriental literature only was not sufficient for the stern requirements of the time and she very wisely carried out her husband's desire by placing her son under an English tutor, so that while Persian and Arabic were by no means neglected, a course of English reading was begun. With naturally high talents it was easy for him to acquire proficiency in English. He studied the history of England and India, read the series of Hunter's "Rulers of India," "The Queen's Prime Ministers," McCarthy's "History of Our Own Times" and studied the lives of eminent men. His natural intellect, his painstaking nature, and his thirst for knowledge helped him to make remarkable progress in Western literature as

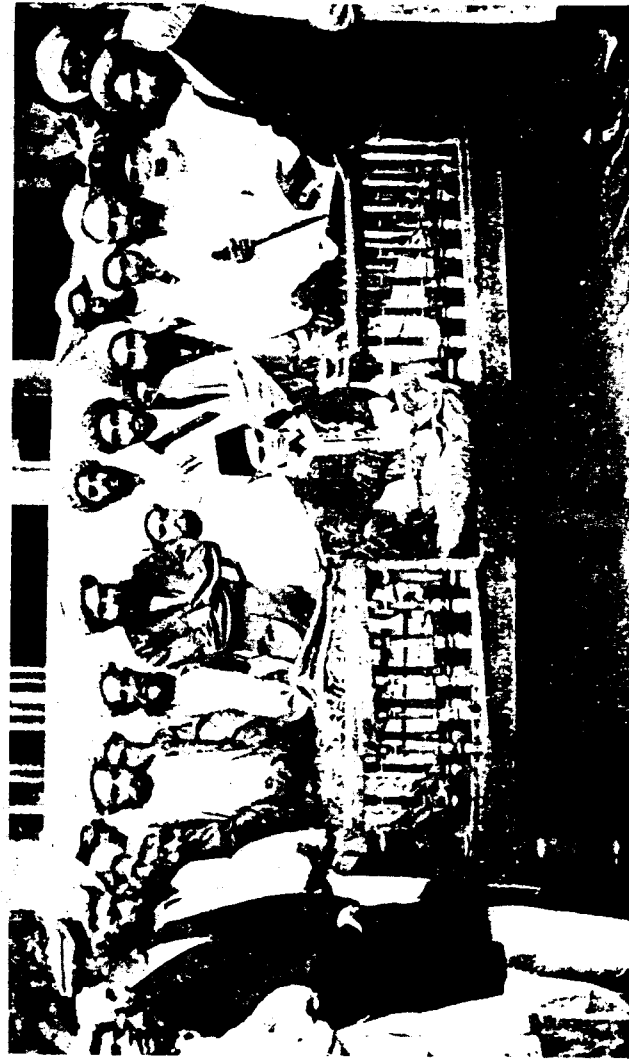
also in knowledge of the ancient and modern history of the world.

He showed a great predilection for history and biography, and also acquired proficiency in philosophy and theology and science. Much time was spent in studying Shakespeare, Milton, Macaulay, Scott and other poets and he devoted his spare time to the works of standard authors. He read Sadi, Firdausi, Omar Khayyam, Hafiz, Moulana Roumi and other eminent Persian poets and developed a genuine love for them. Omar Khayyam was a contemporary of Hasan-bin Sabha. He is a favourite poet of the Aga Khan, who wrote about him as follows :—

“In the halcyon days of Persia’s intellectual renaissance after the Arab conquest, the Middle East is said to have produced more poets than the whole of mediæval Europe, but the works of no Oriental author have aroused the same degree of interest in the European mind as the modest “Ruba’iat” of Omar Khayyam. The secret of this phenomenon may be traced to Omar’s thoughts on the inscrutable problems of Life and Death being, to some extent, in harmony with the rational tendencies produced by the collision of modern science with the unquestioning beliefs of a bygone age.

The charm of the “Ruba’iat,” which lies in the intensely human spirit pervading them, is enhanced by the poet’s inimitable directness of expression, his terse and incisive phrases and a simple grace of style, with that unrivalled and untranslatable music of words to which the sonorous language of Persia peculiarly lends itself.”

With his study of English and oriental literature, other studies also received attention, algebra, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, chemistry and mechanics forming a part of his scholastic acquisitions. The Aga Khan, when in reminiscent mood, acknowledges that he is indebted to his English teacher for developing in him a great taste for reading, which has been of great value to him in life. Brought up as he was with all the advantages of the best ancient and modern education, so as to fit him for his exacting duties, his studies were yet apt to be interrupted. It was hardly possible for him to devote as much time as he wished to learning



HIS HIGHNESS THE AGA KHAN

When such a minor was installed in the year 1885 upon the Gadi of Imams in Bombay. The picture above was taken immediately after he had been proclaimed as the Hazur Imam of Ismailis.

when the duty of looking after the spiritual and material well-being of his followers devolved upon him at a tender age.

Having mastered the tenets of his religion, he began to teach them to his followers and he thus won their hearts from the commencement of his career while still in his teens. He revealed himself to be a precocious genius, and of special help to him at the outset was his mastery of the aims and ideals of Islam and his imbibing of the true spirit of Islam as distinct from the ceremonial accretions of later days. Under the care of his mother, who gave him several tutors, he had grasped the fundamental principles of his religion which ordain right-doing, right-thinking and right-speaking, universal charity and equality of man in the sight of God. Good thoughts, good words and good deeds enjoined by the Prophet Zoroaster are paralleled in the religion of Islam. The principle of toleration and charity inculcated in the teachings of the Prophet, which lays down "Let there be no compulsion in religion" and that "Belief can come only from God," has moulded his life and his conduct towards the people of other races.

Possessed of a wonderful memory the Aga Khan can recall the events of his childhood as if they had occurred but yesterday. His father used to go on tour in patriarchal style, and the conditions of travel in the more remote parts of India in the early 'eighties are still recalled by His Highness.

"My first recollection," he says, "is of camping in tents and of travelling with my father. We went through Cutch, Kathiawar and Sind, and I can never forget the memories of those days when we had to halt every two or three hours in order not to tire the horses and mules and the donkeys and camels that carried our luggage. Now, looking back, it seems to me that we led the life of gipsies; we were almost a gipsy family. We carried our food about, as very often we could not get it at the places through which

we passed. Even water for drinking was brought, sometimes from Bombay or Karachi, in the form of soda water.

"My next memory is of my father, on the day he heard of the death of my eldest half-brother, Aga Shah Abdin Shah. My father was terribly shaken and, though he tried to hold his own, as a man in his position would do, so great was his grief that I think it led to his early death a few weeks later. I honestly believe that it was the death of my two half-brothers that brought about my father's end when he was apparently in good health. After that my life was very much changed, as my days and nights were taken up with study and the discharge of my duties. They were hard years, and I do not think I have yet quite got over them."

"As a child I was very much interested," continues His Highness, in a rare moment of reminiscence, "in philosophy and poetry, because anyone who knows Persian literature is naturally inclined to those subjects by the wonderful power, charm and grace of our Persian poets. I came under the influence of Hafiz, Maulana Rumi and others at an early and impressionable age, and they opened my eyes to the wonders of the universe and to the need of constantly keeping abreast of scientific and philosophic speculation and discovery. I have never since lost my interest in these subjects and have tried, as far as one can in the midst of a busy life, to read all the most recent theories and the arguments on which they are founded.

"My eye-sight being bad, I never played cricket, which was then the rage amongst boys of my age in Bombay and Western India, especially from 1890 onwards, when Lord Harris, the great cricketer, was the Governor. Football and hockey, however, I played and that led me, later in life, to found the Aga Khan Hockey Tournaments, which have made the game popular throughout India. I remember laughing at people who used to go about wearing red coats and

playing a funny old Scottish game that was then hardly known. Little did I think then that I should become an enthusiastic golfer myself. The half-a-dozen people who then played the game were looked upon as half-wits by the general public. It was then hardly imagined that the game would become the most popular game throughout the world; indeed, the first game in America and in Great Britain. It is now starting the conquest of the Continent. Few who were not in India in those days can realise what golf was in Bombay, Poona and Mahableshwar in the 'eighties. Indeed, it was a sight such as to bring pity, rather than admiration, on the game and its players."

Bombay and its problems have always appealed to the Aga Khan. His attachment to the greatest city in the East has been in proportion to its incomparable splendour and beauty which are only equalled by the public spirit of its citizens. No city in the Empire possesses the historic interest and importance of Bombay which was ceded by Portugal to England in 1661 as part of the dowry of the Infanta Catherine on her marriage to Charles II. The Aga Khan's contrast of Bombay old and new will be read with interest.

Sitting in an armchair in the verandah of his bungalow at Malabar Hill overlooking the sea, the Aga Khan, speaking of the beauty of the city and its problems and the new ideals of civic administration, emphasised the lesson of co-operation between the Government and leaders of different communities in the following words:—

"Bombay has always been a city of problems. Its finest inheritance is the sea. Favoured by fortune with a wonderful natural harbour on the sea side and with a palm-fringed bay which sweeps in a majestic arc on the other, it is swept the whole year round by cooling breezes, and through its docks there flow unceasingly the products of India and the goods which India wants from the other countries of the earth. But it has suffered as well as profited by its geographical position. Situated as it is on a narrow island shaped like a bottle, it has had no room to expand. Even in the

days when its population numbered but a couple of hundred thousand it was described as 'a city of amazing populousness', and now that its residents number nearly a million and a quarter, is it any wonder that the problems of those early days have become intensified beyond comparison?

"In many respects it is an amazing city. There can be few cities in the world which present such vivid contrasts. Drive over Malabar Hill on a moonlight night and watch the moonbeams playing on the placid waters of the bay beneath, with tall palms and fine Gothic buildings silhouetted against the sky and a scimitar of twinkling lights marking its glorious curve. You hold your breath in wonder. But plunge into the narrow streets of the bazar slums, enter some of those vile one-room tenements which still abound and may house a family in each corner amidst darkness and despair. You hold your breath in amazement. Visit one of those Malabar Hill bungalows set in a charming garden. You are charmed. Watch one of the mills to the North pour out its thousands of human beings, follow them to their homes, find out how they live and how they spend their leisure. You are appalled. Watch the traffic—thousands of costly motor cars and thousands of vehicles such as might have been used a thousand years ago, all in a hopeless jumble. You are lost in bewilderment.

"An amazing city indeed! One of the most beautiful in the world, and yet one of the ugliest; one of the wealthiest, yet one of the poorest; a city of sunshine, and a city of sorrow. Instinctively you ask, who planned it, and who built it?

"Well, we have to go back a very long time to trace the origin of Bombay. When man first made his home in the City of the Seven Isles, he was still in the Stone Age and the only direct descendants of the original settlers of Bombay are to be found in the inhabitants of the quaint little Koli fishing village on the Worli sea-shore. It was never planned—the greater part of it—those parts which mar its beauty. It simply 'happened'—it grew in the same way that so many of the other great cities of the world have grown. When it was leased to the East India Company at an annual rental of £10, the Island was beggarly and ruined, but fertile; Bombay itself was a city of dreadful night in which crime and disease and immorality abounded and in which the life of a European was reckoned as being two monsoons.

"The foundations of Bombay were badly laid. The old town was ill-built, ill-drained, very unhealthy. Yet Bombay has flourished—it has flourished almost in spite of itself. If there is any one thing which has contributed more to its problems than another, it is the fact that in modern times it completely outgrew the provision made for its inhabitants. Bombay grew up on cotton. The

American War is estimated to have added a hundred millions sterling to the wealth of the city, and in 34 years the population of the city was quadrupled. True, it declined in the days of the financial crisis which shook Bombay to its foundations, and another three decades passed before the leeway was made up again, but since the 'seventies of last century the increase in the population has been steady and continuous. A century ago its population was a few thousands—today it is well over a million and a quarter; a decade hence it may well be that it will be nearer two millions than one. Its trade has increased in even greater proportion.

"It follows naturally that Bombay has changed greatly in this period of prosperity. The war hastened the development of the port and poured money into the city which had to find an outlet. Glancing back over the past generation, it is impossible not to feel amazed at the progress which the city has made.

"Bombay has greatly grown during the war, in trade, in port facilities, in population. But as in all the other great cities of the world, building had been almost stagnant. Bombay was faced with the same multitude of problems as her sister cities, and the greatest of them all was the housing of its people. The housing problem in Bombay had long been acute; the growth of population due to its war time prosperity made it more acute than ever. To provide for the needs of the present and the potential needs of the future in one of the greatest cities in the world—that, so far as Bombay is concerned, and perhaps so far as the whole of the Presidency is concerned, has been the greatest task with which the Government and the representatives of the people are faced. The growth of Bombay points to a great moral. It is the result of the healthy civic spirit and the co-operation of the public-spirited citizens with the Government in making Bombay what it is today.

"The Englishman in India, in those days," he said "had not learned to dress according to the climate of the country, and one rarely saw high officials and judges go out in the morning, except with white stand-up collars and starched shirts. The idea of a high official or an officer of the Crown going about in the day time without a coat and in shorts would have then appeared as a preparation for a lunatic asylum. More importance was then attached to receptions, parties and social functions than today, and not only at Government house, but at other places as well, one always met the same people. Society was very small then. On the other hand, in the 'eighties and the very early 'nineties of the last century prosperity was general, people were never better off and money was plentiful."

Those personal reminiscences of the early years of the Aga Khan can be supplemented. The Aga Khan

can recall the early days when life without motor cars was a different story and he can draw a picture of society as existing half a century ago.

"It is impossible to penetrate the veil which hides the future of the city but I do hope that when Provincial autonomy is in full working under the initiative and guidance of ministers elected from various Indian communities, we shall see a far, far comelier city than we see today; a better city in every respect; a city which at least approaches the civic ideal. We should see fine boulevards sweeping the whole coast from Colaba to Andheri, providing the opportunity for many thousands to take the cool sea air, dotted with bandstands from which Municipal bands play. We should see handsome buildings and fine open spaces where formerly there was but a muddy foreshore; we should find seaside suburbs at Worli, at Santa Cruz, at Juhu, at Versova, and even further North, together with miniature garden cities—all reached by electric railways and electric tramways. We should find that many of the slum areas have disappeared with the removal of some of the mills from the island of Bombay. We should find more dwellings and better dwellings; broader roads and better roads; more people and healthier and happier people.

"These are some of the things which the Bombay of the future will have to look to the activities of the Indian ministers to supply.

"To those who have watched the progress of Bombay, one thing will be quite clear. It is that it owes much of its present position to the public spirit, philanthropy and co-operation of its citizens, like Jeejeebhoy, the Petits, Readymoneys, Wadias, Tatas and others, and I am proud to say my community has played its part and given its full share in its development."

Bombay is so essentially the concern of the Aga Khan that his views about its future are of peculiar importance. At the present time Bombay and the

textile mill industry, which is the basis of its greatness, are threatened both by competition, external and internal, and by communist agitators working amongst the labouring population. To this dual menace the Aga Khan has devoted much thought. Like His Highness the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda, the Aga Khan has repeatedly emphasised the importance of developing India's industries to make her independent of foreign competitors and to increase the wealth of the country. For the textile industry of Bombay he has consistently advocated protection. His gloomy prognostications about the future of the mill industry, expressed on the occasion of a lecture by Sir Stanley Reed before the East India Association in 1928, have unhappily come true. The Aga Khan had promised to preside at the lecture but was prevented from doing so and sent a message in which he said that he did not doubt that Bombay, as a beautiful city built on the sea, would hold its own for all time with Naples, Rio de Janeiro, Sydney and Melbourne, the only other cities which could claim comparison with what Kipling had rightly described as "The Queen of All."

To the Aga Khan's work in strengthening the links between India and England, in trade and commerce, a notable tribute was paid by Lord Derby at a meeting of members of both Houses of Parliament that was arranged in 1933 by the National League to Promote Friendly Relations with Islamic Countries. Speaking at that meeting on the idea that "trade follows friendship," the Aga Khan said that this friendship could hardly grow as quickly as the economic needs of the world required today, nor can it be built without a full and complete understanding of each other's mentality.

"I desire," he said, "to place some practical suggestions before you as my British fellow-subjects for expediting the process which we should all welcome. It is urgent because it will go far towards the economic regeneration of Muslim countries on the one hand and

the improvement of export trade and employment in this country on the other. To give but one example of the possibilities: there is the insurance business which at present is virtually non-existent in these Islamic countries and which thus opens up a great field for British and Indian business.

"Some years ago it was usual to hear fathers of families of nearly all classes in this country say that they would like their children to learn Spanish and Portuguese so as to be prepared to take advantage of the economic development of South America then in sight. But the Muslim countries to which I refer have potential wealth and trade possibilities which can favourably compare with those vast regions of South America which are already developed but have proved insufficient for the productive energies of the people of this country. Might it not be possible for at least some of the younger English people to learn Persian or Arabic or Urdu? In addition to the stimulus knowledge of these languages would give to the mental and spiritual understanding between East and West, the practical and commercial advantage would be great.

"Another thing which has so far been neglected in Muslim lands (perhaps through the want of cheap and easy communications hitherto) is the supply of commercial travellers suited to the conditions of today. Such men ought to be able to sell the goods that are required and for which markets are needed and, on the other hand, to buy the local goods for this country.

"Many of you know the regular commercial traveller on the Continent. I have seen him in wayside inns all over Europe. A great many not only sell, but also buy, and a number bring back news as to the kind of material needed and the kind of manufacture required. The same methods applied to Muslim countries by an efficient corps of commercial travellers would, I am sure, give most satisfactory results. In this great work the Muslims of India can become co-adjutors and partners,

they can become the helpmates of their British fellow-subjects of the King as well as of their co-religionists throughout the rest of the Middle and Near East.

"There is no wish for exclusiveness, no jealousy, but an intuitive yearning after an understanding and co-operation for our mutual benefit."

In his early life he was privileged to move in the best English society; but, as he acknowledges today, his contact with eminent and patriotic Parsi and Hindu leaders of the time, like Sorabji Shapurji Bengalee, Naoroji Fardunji and Framji Nusserwanji Patel, Nowroji Wadia, Jamshedji Tata, and Byramji Jeejeebhoy, Bhau Daji, Premchand Roychand, Mahomedali Rogay, V. N. Mandlik, Vijbhukhandas Atmaram, Varjiramdas Madhavdas, Mangaldas Nathubhai and K. N. Kabraji showed him that the British idea of justice was the foundation and inspiration of the loyalty of the different communities to the Crown. Ever since his contact with those liberal minded men he has had a robust faith in British justice which has never forsaken him.

As the Aga Khan remarked at a reception given in his honour at Delhi by the Hon'ble Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy, President of the Council of State, Bombay owes its present position to the Parsis, who included the Jeejeebhoys, Petits, Tatas, Wadias and Readymoneys. But it is a matter of no small satisfaction and pride to the Aga Khan that, just as the Parsi community is rightly styled the leading Indian community of Western India, so the Khoja community may well be regarded as the foremost section of the Muslims of the Bombay Presidency. The reasons for the position attained by his community are similar to those that raised the Parsi community to its present position, namely, energy and enterprise, education and a spirit of charity and brotherly good-will towards the sister communities—qualities instilled in them by the Aga Khans. The community has produced men like the late Mr. Rahimtulla Muhammad Sayani, a prominent leader of his time; the late

Mr. Abdulla Dharamsi, a brilliant lawyer; Sir Ibrahim Rahimtulla, a great and forceful Indian leader; the late Mr. Jairajbhoy Peerbhoy, an enterprising merchant and philanthropist; the late Sir Currimbhoy Ebrahim, who was created a Baronet in recognition of his public spirit and munificent charities amounting to nearly a quarter of a crore of rupees; Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy and the late Sir Muhammedbhoy Currimbhoy, who followed in the footsteps of their eminent father; Mr. M. A. Jinnah, a leading member of the Bombay Bar and an eminent publicist; the late Mr. Fazalbhoy M. Chinoy, who rose to a high position in the mercantile and public life of Bombay; the late Mr. Jaffer Rahimtulla; Mr. Hussenally Rahimtulla, the first Muslim Mayor of Bombay; Mr. Cassamaly Jairajbhoy who during the war was a valued supporter of the Allied side and who gave Rs. 1,25,000 to found chairs of Philosophy and Science in the Aligarh College in memory of his father; Mr. Dostmahomed Allana, a textile magnate; Sir Rahimtulla Chinoy, a promoter of the Indian Radio Company and a Director of the Imperial Bank of India and at one time a representative of Bombay Muslims in the Indian Legislative Assembly; Mr. Muhammed Ibrahim Rowji, one of the richest and most promising men of his community and the first Sheriff to be appointed under the Congress Government; Mr. Fazul Ibrahim Rahimtulla, President, of the Indian Tariff Board, Mr. Cassamaly Manji Nathoo, a scion of an ancient family of merchant princes; Mr. Sultan Chinoy, Chairman of the Indian Radio Company and a Director of the Reserve Bank of India; the late Khan Bahadur Hassam Premji, an enterprising merchant, and his son Mr. Muhammed who has inherited the enterprising spirit of his father. Such a galaxy of talent, benevolence, enterprise and patriotism is proof of the important position that the Khoja community occupies in the public and commercial life of India.

The 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 presenting a public address from the Muslims of Western India to Queen Victoria on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee. That address was delivered by the Aga Khan to Lord Elgin, then Viceroy of India, by whom it was forwarded to Her Majesty. Another address was presented by the Aga Khan to Her Majesty on behalf of and as the head of the great Ismailia community. It eulogized the beneficent reign of Her Majesty, referred to her solicitude for her Indian children, and compared her magnificent rule with that of Nashirwan Adul, an ancient King of Iran, whose name has been handed down in history for his dispensation of even-handed justice. On behalf of his followers, the Aga Khan assured Her Majesty of their deep loyalty, devotion and attachment to the English throne and offered to repeat the services which his grandfather had rendered on the battlefields of Afghanistan and Sind to Her Majesty's Government. It conveyed the gratitude of the community for the uninterrupted peace and sense of security enjoyed by his community in common with millions of other British subjects in India and assured Her Majesty that her name was enshrined in their hearts for her love of justice and solicitude for the welfare of her subjects. The address was encased in a casket of solid gold representing an elephant, a piece of superb workmanship, by a famous Indian artist.

Just before the end of the last century he found himself called upon to take a leading part in famine relief work. That was in 1897, when 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 Cutch and Kathiawar were rendered destitute, as the crops had failed and wells and rivers dried up. Before the next rainy season came on they had lost all their worldly goods and distress was acute.

The 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 Husanabad, where thousands of people were daily fed at his expense; and to those who were ashamed openly to participate in this hospitality grain was privately sent. At Poona also a large camp was erected and numerous persons were fed for nearly six months, and the building of his Yeravda Palace, at a cost of nearly half a million rupees, was undertaken solely with a view to providing employment.

After the famine came plague, first in Bombay City and then in other parts of India. At this time of panic and distress, Professor Haffkine, the eminent bacteriologist, was sent to Bombay by the Government of India. He prepared anti-plague serum, but at first met with practically no encouragement. The terrified people were slow to take advantage of it and raised a hue and cry against inoculation. The bulk of Khojas in Bombay who reside in Mandvi, the worst affected part of the town, shut their ears against the voice of wisdom. It was reserved to His Highness to set an example to his followers and to the people of Bombay. The Aga Khan did a great service, not only to humanity but to science, and Professor Haffkine cordially acknowledged the generous gift of the use of his large bungalow for establishing a laboratory and his co-operation which helped him to remove the popular prejudice against his serum. His Highness called a meeting of the Khojas and explained to them the benefits of inoculation, and by being personally inoculated in their presence several times, stimulated them to follow his example; and to this may be traced the general immunity of the community from the ravages of plague.

It was about this time, when the Bombay Presidency was suffering from the effects of famine and from the first onslaught of plague, that the Aga Khan first felt touched by the pitiable plight of the "untouchables."

Some of them were converted to Islam and steps were taken to educate and provide them with occupation. Mr. Gandhi is now actively engaged in removing the curse of untouchability in India: the Aga Khan, in his own way, more than a generation ago began what Mr. Gandhi is doing today. The Aga Khan, however, does not believe that the removal of "untouchability" is sufficient in itself. He goes further and insists upon the improvement of their economic condition and standard of living; and his practical sympathy with the poorer classes, his measures to feed and clothe them in days of dire misfortune, and his interest in their habits, their education and their general welfare are all part of his life's work.

In view of his various services, it was proposed to give a public dinner to the Aga Khan in Bombay, and when he was informed of it, he wrote to the Secretary of the Reception Committee a letter which showed his innermost feeling evoked by the distress of the poor people. He wrote: "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 sufferers by famine instead of wasting it on entertainments."

It was not until the late 'nineties that the Aga Khan began to travel in Europe. In England honours and marks of favour came to him which might well have upset the balance of a less stable character. If they affected him at all, they served to impress upon him the importance, not of himself, but of the position to which he had been born. It is unfortunate that keeping a diary has not been one of his accomplishments; but an excellent memory serves him well, and, though an autobiography is far from his intention, he has confided to the writer of this book some brief reminiscences of rulers whom he met as a young man.

"I first had the honour of going to Windsor Castle," he said, "while Queen Victoria was on the throne. The Queen was then nearly 80 years of age and near the end of her long reign. But when I had the honour of being there she was as queenly, as magnificent, and as imperious as could be imagined. She decorated me with the K.C.I.E. I stayed the night at Windsor and left next morning. At dinner the great Queen was most gracious. I had the honour of sitting on her right and she spoke to me throughout the dinner. Her interest in India and the Hindus and Muslims of India was remarkably keen and real. Her love of her Indian subjects was genuine and she was really desirous to learn about their welfare and anxious for equality of their rights with the members of the ruling race. She impressed me immensely. I still have a vivid recollection of that memorable visit just as if it had happened yesterday. I well remember her earnest desire for the advancement of the Muslims of India.

"I first met King Edward at Epsom races in the spring of 1898. I was greatly struck by his charming manners and his kindness to me from the first day of my meeting him. He immediately proposed me for membership of the Marlborough Club, which, in those days, meant entering the King's own exclusive set. Whenever I was in England and sometimes on the Continent, I had the honour of meeting him both as Prince of Wales and later as King. Sometimes, after he became King, he used to send for me and speak to me for an hour or so in private at Buckingham Palace without this fact appearing in the Court Circular. Throughout the Reforms scheme of 1908, when the Turkish revolution broke out, and at other times I had the great honour of being consulted for a long time by His Imperial Majesty in great confidence. King Edward wanted everybody to tell him the truth as he saw it, without fear or favour, and, even if the views expressed were not similar to those which His Majesty himself

held, he listened to them with great patience and courtesy. To understand all this it must be borne in mind that I was then between 30 and 38 and the King was 67 or 68 years of age. Yet, such was his gracious manner, that I was always at ease with him and felt always capable of answering his questions with absolute frankness and sincerity. I doubt if a greater constitutional sovereign ever existed. I remember well how he impressed on me the meaning and the limitation of a constitutional monarchy. Once I had the honour of attending a large dinner party in Buckingham Palace, and after dinner we talked a long time. His Majesty talked about India with extraordinary sympathy and, considering how busy he must have been at the time with European politics and home affairs, with extraordinary knowledge. I was deeply touched by the confidence which His Majesty placed in me and was still more struck by his solicitude for the promotion of the moral, material and social weal of his Indian subjects. His Majesty showed a deep interest in the social and cultural developments of Indians."

On the Continent, the Aga Khan met the Arch-Duke Francis Ferdinand, whom he had previously met in Bombay when he was touring the world. "Already," he says, "he impressed me as a figure cut from granite. Later, when I again came across him on the Riviera, he remembered me although he had seen me in India when he was only a boy. He was most kind to me and treated me not only with consideration but with confidence. I little thought then that his tragic death would be the cause of the World War and of the overthrow of many dynasties, empires and dominions. When I got to know him in later life he impressed me, firstly, as a great gentleman, secondly as a man whose word was his bond and a man who if he once gave his confidence gave it whole-heartedly.

"I met the Kaiser only once, at an audience at the new Palace at Potsdam in the winter of 1900. He spoke

to me for nearly half an hour and impressed me greatly by his charm, his affability, his general knowledge and his sympathy.

"I had the honour of meeting the late Emperor of Japan during my visit to that country. I was struck with his deep patriotism—a great characteristic of the Japanese. The Emperor's family is a most ancient one and the proud traditions of his ancestry were more than fully maintained by the Emperor. The rapid progress of this wonderful nation has been a marvel to the world; this has been achieved by their progress in science and enterprise and by the deep patriotism which has animated that nation."

The Aga Khan's reminiscences of his visit to the late Sultan Abdul Hamid carry us back to historical events which, had they been shaped otherwise, would have brought Turkey into permanent alliance with England.

The Aga Khan is of the opinion that the disastrous reign of Abdul Hamid in Turkey might have been one of revivifying forces, had that astute but misguided sovereign devoted the same period to the work of gradual association of the people with the Government on the one hand, and to social and cultural development of the masses on the other. It is now believed by many critics that when Lord Salisbury talked about backing the wrong horse in the Crimean War, he himself was wrong; that the policy of Canning, of Palmerston and of Beaconsfield was right, and that if England had put her money on the Ottoman instead of the Muscovite horse she would have done better alike for herself and for mankind.

Then at the outbreak of the Great War, these critics maintained, the Porte should have remained under British influence and Germany's way to the East would have been blocked from the start. It is urged that Russian inefficiency was an open book and that her internal racial differences were historical facts to which

our statesmen closed their eyes. This criticism could be justified on the assumption that the Liberal Government had a free and open choice in the selection of a favourite starter in the diplomatic race. No such choice was open to Viscount Grey of Fallodon. We can well believe that the Asquith Government desired to be the friends and protectors of Turkey, and to retain the position they acquired after the first Young Turk Revolution. It was not unfriendliness, but fear of opposition from both Russia and Germany which prevented the loan of British and Anglo-Indian officers to Turkey to recognise her Asiatic provinces. Nor was it a matter of mere lighthearted choice that led to the British loss of commanding influence at Constantinople. Speaking about his visit to Russia the Aga Khan said: "I had the honour of seeing the late Tsar in India as a boy, but I was then too young to form a judgment about him. After he had ascended the throne I saw him once in Russia. His Majesty was gracious and kind but seemed to me extremely irritable and short-tempered with his staff. I also once watched him at a parade and once went into his box at the Imperial Theatre. On both occasions it seemed to me that he was abrupt and irritable. I afterwards came to know that on the occasion when he went to the Theatre he had just heard some bad political news and hence his rather irritable manner."

Travel in Europe, in those days that seem so far away from the present, must have been a great pleasure to a young man eager to see the world. The Aga Khan made the most of his opportunities and, since he had an inherited love for the Turf, it is not surprising that he took the first chance of seeing the Derby. That was in 1898. "We all knew," he says, "that it was an open race and that it was a bad year, because everybody said, as it turned out afterwards, correctly, that the three-year olds were not much good. Still, we never for one moment expected Jeddah to win at a hundred

to one, and to win as easily as he actually did. I was in the Members' Stand watching, when everybody began to shout 'Jeddah! Jeddah! Jeddah!' and I saw a huge horse, a real giant among horses, reach the field in the straight. I remember, as if it were today, how I held on to the rails. There was a hushed silence when it came to be known that a 100 to 1 horse had won the Derby."

"London in those days was a very different city from the London of today," says the Aga Khan. "The buildings and the way of life had hardly changed since the Regency. There was nothing continental or American about the place. It all seemed to be entirely English. The big apartment houses of today were unknown and flats had hardly begun. Here and there service flats in a place like Queen Anne's Mansion had been started, but they were looked at askance. Horse traffic alone existed and the wonderful four-in-hands, the top hats and frock coats of the men, the elaborate dresses of the women, gave the whole of society an air of permanence such as we can hardly conceive today. There were the great houses where the whole of society always met at immense balls and at receptions of great magnificence. Today all that has changed."

It is not only changes in English society and in the general appearance of London and its life that the Aga Khan can recall. Few if any of his contemporaries have travelled so widely, and none can have become so literally a citizen of the world and have seen so bewildering a number of changes as he has seen. The English reader may think of him as being equally at home in Bombay, Paris or London. But that gives a very faint idea of the man who, though he has no territory subject to him, is yet the master of many houses which serve him as a temporary home when he visits his followers. He has residences all over the East and in many Western countries and of these Aga Hall, Bombay, alone is entitled to be termed the principal



THE AGA KHAN AND PRINCESS THERESA,
With their son, Prince Aly Khan.

because it may be regarded as the official headquarters of the Khoja sect. It is not, however, his residence in Bombay, but only the place where he grants audience to his followers. It is a remarkable place, lying in that part of Bombay known as Mazagon. It is surrounded by a high wall which effectually screens the interior, and it is only the privileged visitor who finds that it encloses a large and beautiful garden and many smaller buildings in which are stored the muniments of the sect, a large library with valuable manuscripts and other belongings, and quarters for secretaries and their staff.

It used to be the custom of the Aga Khan when in Bombay to go there every morning, from his residence on Malabar Hill, to despatch more important work which generally occupied his time from 10 to 4 o'clock; but very often he arrived an hour or so earlier to play a round or two of golf on the short course he had laid out in his garden. Before he made his second home in Europe he used to go in the season to Poona, or to the cooler atmosphere of Mahableshtar. The care of these numerous residences demanded a large staff, and the Aga Khan had over a thousand servants constantly in employment.

Owing to his position in life and his charming manners, the Aga Khan was invited among, and freely mixed in English society and his movement in the best society in Bombay had a great deal to do with the formation of his character. Realising that it is character which counts in the life of a man, he has made most constant efforts for the formation of character among young men of his community, instilling into them the high principles and high ideals of service and sacrifice which he has himself practised.

The universal and deep influence exercised by Islam on the life and civilisation of three continents has appealed to him strongly and, recognising that it was Muslim civilisation that carried the torch of knowledge to the West, the Aga Khan has felt impelled to spread

the mission of the Prophet as a means of welding the different communities in India into one.

The inspiration for his ideals has come from communion with the heroic souls which abound in the history of Islam and by the study of which he broadened and ripened his mind.

It is a truism to say that in his efforts to advance the great Muslim people, there lay the purpose of advancement of India as a whole.

Islam has always been reproached with fanaticism and immobility, but the Aga Khan put new life and new meaning into the Islamic movement to prove that Islam is essentially a progressive and tolerant faith.

From a leader in educational movement he did not take long to develop into a political leader; while his work in education has been most enduring and fraught with far-reaching consequences in moulding India's future destiny, his political work has brought India nearer to her dream of Home Rule.

The echo of the praise for the magnificent lead he gave to the Muslims in the field of education and social reform had scarcely subsided, when an announcement was made that Lord Curzon had nominated him as a member of the Imperial Legislative Council. This announcement came as a most agreeable surprise to the public for, while his fitness to fill the position was unquestioned, he was the youngest member of the Council of the Viceroy, Lord Curzon. In the Council he formed lasting friendships with Lord Kitchener and Mr. Gokhale. To the former he rendered great service by using his influence to introduce or augment the Indian States Imperial Service Troops. In the Council his work was not of a sectarian, but of national character. His speeches in the Council breathed a spirit of patriotism, bore the stamp of originality in ideas and were marked by moderation and sobriety of judgment. He was offered nomination to the Council a second time but declined to accept it.

We see him next turning his attention to equipping Muslims for political and public life and prevailing upon them to take an increasing part in India's affairs. "Onward" and "Forward" summed up his advice to Muslims, who were not always inclined to take kindly to politics. While other communities were advancing politically the Muslims were lagging behind. But the Aga Khan, who was alive to the changing conditions of the times, foresaw the result that would follow from their aloofness. In pressing Muslims to take a constructive part in India's affairs he once more rendered great service to the country, for without Muslim co-operation there would have been no progress and no stimulus to the activity of the Congress and the Muslim League.

At the session of the Muslim League at Delhi in 1910, he exhorted his co-religionists to co-operation in these words:—

"Now that the Reform Scheme has been finally settled and is actually in active operation, we must accept it in an appreciative spirit, worthy of our traditions, and try to make the best of it as loyal subjects of our beloved Sovereign, the King-Emperor and as citizens of India. 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 them 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 particularism, instead of using the whole powers placed in our hands for the conservation and 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 fair wind which ought to drive us far on towards the realisation of many of our cherished ambitions."

The fact that the Aga Khan is against any sectarian movement can be gleaned from his own words and

deeds. Talking of Hindu-Muslim unity he said :—

“ While we hold fast to our own religious, social and ethical ideals, whilst we hold equally fast to the separate organisation and separate representation which are essential for their maintenance and to secure for our Community its due influence in the body-politics, it must be the desire of our Rulers, no less than of ourselves, to pursue these ideals, to work out our constructive programme, in harmonious co-operation with all other Indians who accept the cardinal principles of our political faith—*the ordered development of this country under the aegis of the Imperial Crown*. Time, the opportunities for co-operation in stimulating the social and economic progress of this country, and the diffusion of education will also, I believe, remove the acerbities attaching to the religious difficulties and caste disabilities which sap the foundation of Indian Society so that they will become, in the distant future, the minor forces that they are now in Western Europe and America. If we extend hearty and sincere co-operation in each other's transactions and interests and pursue higher ideals and act with moderation and judicious calm, then I have no apprehension for the future of India.”

He has ever enjoined on his co-religionists in India to try their best to understand their Hindu brethren and in his scheme for a Muslim University, he advocated that :—

“ In order to enable us to come in touch with what is best in the ancient Hindu civilisation and better to enable us to understand the origin and structure of Hindu thought and religion in its widest sense as well as inculcate in us a feeling of respect and affection for our fellow-subjects and to teach us to consider impartially their custom and prejudices.”

The Aga Khan strongly believes that sooner or later Hindus and Muslims will have to forget their differences and whole-heartedly work together for the common good. He would have unity in India, not merely in name, but a real unity based on sound and proper understanding and recognition of the rights of the Muslims to their proper place in the State. In holding fast to this principle, he has certainly incurred the displeasure of some Hindu leaders. But, in spite of his advocacy of vital Muslim interests with rare tenacity and singleness of purpose, he has never been a stiff-necked

one-sided politician. He sincerely believes that his community's demands are quite just, and he is confident that ultimately Hindus will realise this. He has ever exhorted his co-religionists not to do anything that might injure the sentiments and susceptibilities of their countrymen. The Partition of Bengal, according to Lord Curzon, was aimed at restoring the Muslim population of Eastern Bengal to their natural and legitimate place of importance in the administration of this part of India. But it was argued by the Bengalis, with all vehemence and passion, that this step of Lord Curzon had grievously injured the sentiment of the Bengali Hindu population, and a strong well-organised agitation was set in motion. The result was that in spite of the “ settled facts ” everything was unsettled and the Partition was annulled in 1912. What Lord Morley termed a settled fact was unsettled on the recommendation of Lord Hardinge on the occasion of the historic visit of His Majesty King George V for his coronation in India. Muslim sentiment was acute. Still there was no outburst. The Muslims observed a remarkable self-restraint in order not to hurl their Hindu brethren into any more agitation.

This commendable attitude on the part of the Muslims was the result of the large-hearted toleration of their leaders, who enjoined on their co-religionists willingly to acquiesce in the change that they might thereby show their practical sympathy with Hindu sentiment in Bengal. Said the Aga Khan :—

“ Then comes the undoing of the Partition. No doubt the Mussalmans were in a distinct majority in the province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, and this unique position is now lost. But looking at the position of Islam in India as a whole, I doubt if it will be found that it was a good thing to be in a clear majority in one province and in a minority in almost every other. The disadvantages of such a situation are obvious. Islam in India is one and indivisible. It is the duty of a Muslim to look not only to the immediate interest of his own locality but to those of his co-religionists as a whole. But if we look upon it from a still wider point of view as Indians, we shall find that the old Partition

had deeply wounded, and not unnaturally, the sentiments of the great Bengali-speaking millions of India. Anything that permanently alienates and offends the sentiments or interests of millions of Indians, be they Muslim or Hindu, is undoubtedly in itself an undesirable thing and should not only be avoided by the Government but also opposed by all the communities in India. Viewed in this light, the undoing of the Partition which has satisfied the great Bengali-speaking people, ought to be in itself a cause of congratulation for all Indians, whether Hindus or Mussalmans, and we should all be deeply grateful to His Excellency Lord Hardinge for this great act of statesmanship which has removed a grievance from one important section of His Majesty's Indian subjects."

The Aga Khan has not only thus exerted himself to draw the two communities together in all possible ways but he has also given practical proof of his active interest in the welfare of the Hindu community. He is a regular subscriber to several Hindu institutions, and has contributed donations to the Deccan Education Society and the Hindu University at Benares. He is a strong advocate of denominational universities. His view is that without the development of those wholesome national traits and virtues which go to make a good Hindu and a good Muslim, without that sense of national dignity and self-respect born of a true knowledge of what was best in their past, neither the Hindus nor the Muslims will be able to contribute anything substantial to the formation of a healthy Indian nationhood so essential for the future advancement of India.

In Bombay the Aga Khan first came in political contact with the late Mr. Badruddin Tyebji and through his influence he fell under the spell of Sir Pheroza Shah Mehta and subsequently of Mr. Gokhale. When Sir Pheroza Shah Mehta died in December 1915, the Aga Khan said: "Nothing finer or better could be imagined for a young Indian than to take to heart and carefully study the lifelong principles and practice of three of India's greatest and soundest sons, each an example of inspiration to all his countrymen and to his community as well—Mehta, Gokhale and Badruddin."

One instance of his loyalty to Sir Pheroza Shah Mehta may be cited. Sir Pheroza Shah was responsible for framing the Bombay Municipal Act. The Bombay Corporation is considered to be a model institution of its kind. He was, as it were, the father of the Corporation and served that body with conspicuous ability for half a century. In 1906 a caucus was formed to oust him from the Bombay Municipal Corporation on which he represented the Justices of the Peace for the town and island of Bombay. The late Mr. Lovat Fraser, a talented and versatile Editor of *The Times of India* who afterwards made a mark in journalism in England, was a great friend of the Aga Khan, at that time in New York. Mr. Lovat Fraser wired to him asking him to issue a mandate to his followers to vote for the caucus candidates.

Mr. (now Sir) H. P. Mody in his life of Sir Pheroza Shah Mehta has said that the contents of the telegram to the Aga Khan and his reply have remained a mystery. That mystery may now be cleared. Mr. Lovat Fraser's telegram and the Aga Khan's reply were seen by this writer. In his reply the Aga Khan declined to issue a mandate to his followers in civic matters in which they were free to follow the dictates of their own conscience and vote for the best man. He added he only issued a mandate to his followers when great Imperial questions were at issue but he regarded the movement for ousting a great patriot from the Municipal Corporation as disastrous to the best civic interests and left his followers to vote for the best man.

On the one hand the Aga Khan was against violent measures which might destroy the ideal of nationhood and the development of free institutions, while on the other, he condemned the constant flattery of every official measure—a cringing attitude which, in his opinion, made superficial observers believe that Indians were incapable of anything except self-humiliation or violent vituperation. Addressing a meeting held in

London in memory of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, he observed :—

“ Too often, I hear Indian youths educated in Europe return to the Motherland filled with ambition to shine in the political firmament, to figure quickly in the Legislature, to be known the country over as ‘ leaders.’ But as necessarily only a few can reach the top, a large number gradually lose all connection with public life, and devote themselves entirely to their personal and professional affairs. They wish to begin where the most successful men in public life gained a footing only after years of apprenticeship in local affairs or other apparently undistinguished service of the people. Only in rare cases can these premature ambitions be realised, and even in them they are liable to engender an arrogant self-satisfaction standing in the way of true service of India. As to the disappointed majority, the opportunities that lie close at hand are despised and neglected. Hence much fine material for the advancement of India runs to waste, and progress in local self-government has been much less marked than would have been the case had it been more generally recognised that local patriotism and seemingly minor service are the seed of larger opportunities, besides being in themselves worthy objects of ambition for promoting communal good. This is constantly seen by those who look below the surface of English life, with its manifold local and unpaid civic activities. The lesson is writ large in the life of Gokhale as well as that of Mehta, for we can never forget the long years of professional drudgery or merely nominal pay, the former passed in the Ferguson College, nor the fact that he prized the later office or honour more than his helpful membership of Poona Municipality. It is by attention to local affairs, by the exercise of local patriotism and effort, in the constructive spirit shown by these two great sons of India, that our country will advance most assuredly and most steadfastly to the realisation of her great destiny, and that our dreams of progress under the British Crown within the Empire will best be realised.”

The Aga Khan sees a great future for India. He does not for a moment doubt that in the fullness of time, India will become a self-governing part of the Great Empire. But there is no swift and ready method by which this can be attained. The path of progress is by no means easy. Years of patient toil and preparation are necessary before anything substantial can be gained. Speaking at the fiftieth annual meeting of the London branch of the All-India Muslim League, in July 1913, the Aga

Khan draws pointed attention to the ideal of Self-Government adopted by the parent League and says :—

“ The ideal, whether on Colonial lines, as has been suggested by so many of our compatriots, or in some form ‘ suitable to India ’ the conditions of which we do not at present conceive and therefore do not attempt to define, must commend itself to thoughtful opinion, if it means, as I take it to mean, an ideal involving many decades of effort towards self-improvement, towards social reform, towards educational diffusion, and towards complete amity between various communities. Given personal and national self-sacrifice for generations to come, some form of Self-Government worthy of the British Empire and worthy of the people of India will be evolved, and Indians will have won a proud place for their nation in the world under the British Crown. But if it means a mere hasty impulse to jump at the apple when only the blossoming stage is over, then the day that witnessed the formulation of the ideal will be a very unfortunate one in our country’s annals. We have a long way to travel before this distant goal can be reached, and the voice of wisdom calls us to proceed step by step. The fact that the Central Committee confined itself to favouring some system ‘ suitable to India ’ shows that at present it is difficult even to define the plan which may be evolved as Indian life develops and expands. Such development, I need hardly say, must be social, material and moral as well as political if a goal worthy of the self-sacrifice involved and of India’s place in the Empire is to be reached.”

The war gave a great impetus to the political movement in India and persistent demands were made for the enlargement of political liberties. It was soon found necessary to formulate a scheme embodying the just and reasonable demands of India.

The late Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, acknowledged as a political leader of India, desired that two cosmopolitan leaders should draft a scheme of reforms. The Aga Khan and Gokhale were selected. There were several meetings between Gokhale and the Aga Khan, and Gokhale prepared a draft to be presented to the authorities by the joint leaders. The Aga Khan suggested improvement in the status and dignity of the Indian Princes and urged that East Africa should be handed over to the Indian Government for colonisation by the Indian people. Both the suggestions were incorporated

in Mr. Gokhale's draft, which was handed over to the Aga Khan shortly before the eminent Brahmin Pandit's death.

The Aga Khan urged upon the authorities the necessity for giving immediate effect to the reforms suggested by Gokhale. He travelled to Delhi and was fortunate enough to win the support of the Viceroy, then Lord Hardinge, and of Lord Willingdon, then Governor of Bombay. They both strongly urged the Imperial Government to consider the claim of India sympathetically, as urged in the Aga Khan-Gokhale memorandum. Lord Willingdon wrote more than one personal letter to Mr. Lloyd George, then the Prime Minister of England, emphasising the necessity of introducing liberal reforms in India without delay, thus showing his deep sympathy for Indians. The great announcement of August 20th, 1917, and the visit to India of the Under-Secretary of State, the late Mr. Edwin Montagu, followed and paved the way for the passing of the Government of India Act in 1919, and the inauguration of the new Councils by H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught. By an irony, the very reforms which were intended to bring peace to India threw the country into a political cauldron. In advocating the political rights of India, the Aga Khan acted in the best interests of the Empire, which he thought would be strengthened by a contented India living in its orbit. In his letter forwarding the memorandum to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State he said that he saw no disaster greater to the Empire than a discontented India, and his loyalty to the King-Emperor led him to place before the authorities the true feelings of the people. He added that if he did not bring the true state of things to the notice of the rulers, he would be guilty of neglecting his duty towards his master, His Majesty the King-Emperor. Because of his loyalty and anxiety to keep India contented and loyal he described the unrest then only beginning but full of foreboding if the reforms were delayed and the

aspirations of new India were not satisfied. This powerful advocacy bore fruit, but the Aga Khan's modesty has prevented him from giving any indication of the important part he played in the signal transaction.

His Highness has been long recognised as a forceful leader of Indian political power and no one in the public life of India has held quite the unique position he holds. But the position which he achieved among the Delegation of the Round Table Conference which considered the future and political destiny of India was unique inasmuch as the whole British Indian Delegation, composed of veteran Hindu, Parsi, Sikh, Muslim and other communities elected him as their leader.

In the Muslim political world of India the Aga Khan's voice is effective and decisive. The exercise of this influence has been the more important, since the course of political events has placed many obstacles in the path of promoting and confirming good relations between conflicting political ideals.

The Aga Khan has saved his community more than once from political disaster as the result of grave political blunders. One instance of his great influence and his burning desire for peace and unity in the community may be cited.

In 1928, a crisis occurred in the political fortunes of the Muslim community, which was divided into two camps, and there was a great controversy between the two rival political organisations, the Muslim League and the All-India Muslim Conference. The split in the community was most regrettable, for had it continued it would have most adversely affected the political progress of the Muslims. They stood at the parting of the ways, and it was feared that one of the organisations might be captured by political extremists. Their co-operation in Gandhi's Civil Disobedience Movement would have doomed the future of India and the embarrassment it would have caused to the Government would have been indeed great.

The one man who could save the situation was the Aga Khan, and frantic messages were sent asking him to hasten to India to solve the crisis. The Aga Khan was ill and his medical advisers were against his visit to India, but to his mind the call of duty was paramount over everything and he started for India in December, 1928. The issue was decided at the All-India Muslim Conference on New Year's Day, 1929, and his remarkable success as the President of the movement came as a test of his leadership. He was able to unite all the conflicting forces. A memorable meeting which was held at Delhi lasted for three days. One day the Aga Khan went out to lunch when an S.O.S. was sent to him by Sir Muhammad Yakub and others saying that unless he returned soon to the meeting it would be captured by Muhammad Aly, a strong supporter of Mr. Gandhi. The Aga Khan immediately responded to the call. He hurried to the meeting and addressed a few stern words of rebuke urging conciliation and unity. This had a magic effect upon his audience. Instead of disunity and dissension, perfect agreement was reached among the warring parties and a constructive programme formulating the Muslims' demand was agreed upon. Muhammad Aly was not slow to acknowledge that the situation was saved by the eminent leadership of the Aga Khan, whom he held in profound respect. In the same way the Aga Khan looked upon Muhammad Aly as one of foremost exponents of Islamic rights and always expressed great admiration for him.

It was an epoch-making Conference and the thoughtful speech which His Highness delivered could be read with profit today even after the lapse of over a decade. It was remarkable for its soundness of views and breadth of vision. In explaining the position and the interests of the Muslims in the body politic of India, His Highness said :—

“The great lesson of modern history, to my mind, 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. I will give one or two examples in support of this argument. The policy of Imperial Germany was shaped by the leaders of that nation as a class. The pre-war policy of Russia, as men like Tolstoy, Witte and Rosen kept on explaining to the world, was not that of the Russian people, but inspired by the Pan Slavists, Kat Kof and his disciples. The policies of England and France were indeed based on the desires of the English and the French people. Similar examples are to be found on every page of recent history. When in my manifesto last year I appealed to the Muslims of India to replace the old self-constituted political bodies that had served their day and purpose by an organization of all Muslim members in touch with their electorates, I wished to place the guidance of our people in their own hands. The time has come when the leaders should keep their ears to the ground and ascertain the views and wishes of the masses. Gentlemen, make no mistake. The changes that must come over India profoundly affecting our future, will not come in a day. They will not come as in Russia like a thief in the night. Had the result of the war been different we might have suddenly found ourselves in that position but the attitude of the overwhelming mass of the Indian public during the war showed to the world that they were not in favour of such a hurried solution. Whatever our wishes may be, this conference is but the first of many more that will have to evolve a truly representative body to look after and further the desires of Muslims of India. The greatest service you can render to your people would be to organise all the Muslim members of each and every assembly into a body where exchange of views and ideas and communication of the same to the electors as well as the reception of the general desires of the masses, would remain the main purpose and object. In politically successful countries, from the Premier or the President to the humblest voter, it is but one succession of nerve lines of communication. If we had such a body I for one should sleep in peace, for I would know that many political mistakes would be made by them and not by anybody else for them. From now onwards we must ever remember, even in this conference, not what are our own political preferences but what are the aspirations of the rising Muslim generations as represented by the masses.

“Then there are certain obvious truisms which are necessary forms of thought for political activity just as certain mental truisms are the basis of natural science and intellectual life. In this connection I may give you several examples of those obvious facts that may be forgotten at times. Here is one. It is impossible for Muslims to live happily and peacefully in India if friction and

suspicion are to prevail between them and the Hindus. Another vivid instance. India as a whole cannot be a prosperous or self-governing country if such a large and important section of the community as the Muslims remain in doubt as to whether their cultural entity is safe or not. Here is a third and most important one. As long as we are dependent for protection against external aggression and internal security and for peace upon Great Britain and the British garrison occupies the land and the air and naval forces survey us from above and watch the coasts, Great Britain will naturally claim a predominant share and voice in the governance of India. It is essential that these and similar other truisms should not be lost sight of. The Muslim masses are, I am sure, sufficient realists to know and appreciate them.

“Another point to be kept before us is that our desires must not be mere ideas and ideals. You are part of them. It is your duty to interpret as far as you can their wishes, their aspirations and their ideals, till such time as our political organization is sufficiently advanced to let the people carry out their own wishes. Another point to be kept in view is that our wishes or ideals are not necessarily realities.

“You must avoid forcing your own preferences when they clash with what we believe to be the real wishes of the mass of the people. The policy to be pursued during the immediate years, I would once more emphasise, must not be based on our personal views and predilections, but on what you know to be the general desires of the people to whom you belong. What are the desires of the Indian Muslims? I can safely say that the overwhelming majority of Muslims are determined to maintain their cultural unity and remain culturally interrelated with the Muslims of the world. How that can best be accomplished it is for you to think out.

“But that does not mean that the general welfare of the whole commonwealth is to be ignored by us. It does not mean that the Muslim representatives’ activities are to be confined to their own sectional interest. That would be wrong. The Muslim members should consider it their duty to look after the interests of India as a whole or of a Province as a whole and advocate the promotion of general interests at every opportunity. I will illustrate what I mean by giving a concrete example. Now, take the question of education: primary, secondary and higher. For more than a generation I have urged that a national educational policy for India is impossible unless financed by large educational grants raised by the State as loans and not from current revenue. Such loans should be as much a legitimate object as any public work as they will through improvement in intelligence add to the economic welfare of the country. In regard to Muslim education especially, one

striking fact is that there exists a sort of break of gauge between primary and higher education in the universities and technological and other institutions. It is incumbent on us all to find a solution of this most important problem. Our secondary educational institutions specially need further support from the State.

“Another great difficulty which has been ineffectually tackled in the past is the question of language as the medium for instruction. We must bear in mind that the acquisition of knowledge is quite a different thing from the medium of acquiring it. Our linguistic traditions are mainly based on Persian and Urdu. Urdu is one of the most important and widespread languages in the world. It serves as a medium of communication between Muslims of different parts of India as well as between Muslims and other communities of a district. The foundation of the Osmania University, which owes its existence to the magnificent generosity of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad, is bound to give a great impetus to the educational activities of our people. It is adapted to higher culture. But both Urdu and Persian scripts present serious difficulties in the primary stages of education and it is a matter for deliberation how we can improve and simplify the change or script.

“Now, whether in education or in politics, I would beg of you to consider the realities and not to throw away the substance for the shadow. Whether in education or in politics build on a solid foundation. Do not be carried away by catchwords; nor hanker after ideals that may not be within your grasp but concentrate your minds on what is practicable and useful under pressing economic and political needs of the country and strive after actualities to promote the higher happiness of mankind by greater and greater development of the productive resources of India.

“In recent times no question seems to have aroused so much controversy as the question of separate electorates for the protection of the rights of minorities.

“The merits and demerits of separate or so-called communal electorates have been discussed so often that it is unnecessary to re-examine them here in detail. In regard to the implications of the term ‘communal’ I may remark in passing that the Muslims of India are not a community, but in a special sense a nation composed of many communities and population outnumbering in the aggregate the total even of the pre-war German Empire.”

The Aga Khan then referred to the desirability of not offending the Hindus on the subject of cow-killing. He said:—

“I cannot allow my speech to close without making a passing reference to a subject of constant friction between the two sister communities and making a fervent appeal with all the earnestness

that I command, to remove that friction as far as possible so that Muslims may live in amity with their Hindu brethren. While referring to the cause of friction, I take the opportunity of expressing profound admiration and gratitude of Indians to His Excellency the Viceroy (Lord Irwin) for his earnest endeavour to bring about harmonious relations between the Hindus and Muhammedans."

Cow-killing in India has been responsible for acute trouble between Hindus and Muslims. The Aga Khan takes a sensible view in the matter with a view to avoid the trouble, and his views expressed at the Conference, if acted upon by his co-religionists, will remove a great source of irritation and unpleasantness between the two communities. His Highness said :—

"Cow-killing 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 we 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. How many of our Hajis have sacrificed cows in Arabia, the home of Islam, and, if they have not done so, have they disregarded any injunction of their religion? All of you, I am sure, will give an emphatically negative answer to this query. Then why do we view the question from a different angle in India?

"The Emperor Baber, who was the greatest monarch, of his age, enjoined his son Humayun to respect the religious sentiments and even the prejudices of the Hindus and he specifically mentioned the cow as an animal venerated in India. The Ameer Habibullah Khan, who was a good Muslim, discountenanced the sacrifice of cows. If other Muslim leaders share their views they will certainly not be acting against any Islamic injunction.

"The Kashmiri Muslim adheres tenaciously to the injunctions of Islam and he knows that killing is not one of the tenets of our religion. You no doubt know our religious dictum that 'the flesh and blood of animals do not reach God.' This is a humanitarian view entirely in accord with our conception of the Deity and His creation.



PRINCE ALY KHAN,
Eldest son and heir to His Highness the Aga Khan.

"I am open to be enlightened on this point by our Ulemas, but I am certain that not one of them will countenance the parade of sacrificial rites in public places. There are many other communities who eat beef but they do not hurt the susceptibilities of their neighbours by parading the sacred and adored animals for slaughter.

"In the light of these facts, which I have mentioned, it is a matter for your serious consideration whether we should re-examine our views on this particular form of sacrifice and test its true significance. If, by doing so, we can readjust our relations with our Hindu friends, we shall indirectly render a service of incalculable value and importance to the cause of peace and prosperity and even perhaps satisfactory political readjustment."

While the Aga Khan has emphasised the blessing of the British rule in India, he has, as a friend, always considered it a duty to point out its weak points. More than once he has sounded a note of warning, pointing to the great Empires of the past that have crumpled and to the course of Russian history in our own times as a reminder to those who are responsible for the future of India that their duty is to make India contented and powerful by granting her the natural status of an equal partner in the Empire. If that is not done, he does not hesitate to say that India will go the way of Russia and China, proving a great danger instead of a source of strength to the Empire. He believes that there are no greater enemies to the Empire than those who trample upon the legitimate aspirations of Indians.

In his preface to the life of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta by Mr. H. P. Mody, ex-President of the Bombay Corporation, the Aga Khan with unerring instinct laid his finger on the weak point of the British administration when he pointed out that if Sir Pherozeshah Mehta's political doctrines had been followed earlier, we might have been spared the dark and cloudy atmosphere in which the country found itself enveloped. Had the

principles and the hopes with which, in the 'eighties, Sir Pherozeshah took his stand on Indian aspirations, been even gradually realised, had they received fair and unprejudiced consideration, the later and final estrangement of Tilak and Gandhi would probably have never taken place.

But unfortunately in the history of British relations with India, the fatal words "too late" have had the effect of undermining Indians' faith in the intentions of their rulers, and the Aga Khan believes that the mistrust and suspicions thus engendered have had a great deal to do with the political troubles in the country.

The Aga Khan belongs to no party and to no community. He stands for the whole country and the Empire. His deliberate opinion is that England should take warning from her whole history and from the history of other countries.

"Look at the Russian portent," he says. "Had the policy of Boris Milikoff been carried out in 1881, had the last twenty years of the nineteenth century been occupied with construction and education, with uniting the people with the Government in the various provinces, how different and how happy and healthy Russian history would have been! Take another instance. In China had the late Dowager-Empress initiated her death-bed scheme of gradual reform twenty-five years sooner, would that countless and intelligent nation have been today a danger to herself and her neighbours and a real source of weakness to humanity at large! Conversely there are examples of countries where a wise and patriotic aristocracy, in association with an intelligent monarchy belonging to the soil has worked wonders and has so interwoven the interests of every class that even the Socialists are today the pillars of the State. Japan is a case in point, and Prussia, whatever its severity and remorselessness towards outside peoples, provides an instance of successful consolidation of all classes through gradual steps of greater association of the people with the Government. England herself supplies the outstanding clear-cut example of this healthy development, though she differs from the other two instances by her work having been almost unconscious. Instead of taking place in two centuries, as in Prussia, and in two generations as in Japan, it has gone on from the dawn of English history. If the British, on whom historical causes have thrown the ultimate responsibility for the future of India and of surrounding States and

nations, were to fail in this their greatest task, Southern Asia would become the theatre of one of the heaviest disasters humanity has faced. So sooner or later, an ignorant and innumerable proletariat extending over nearly the whole length of Asia from the Red Sea to the Pacific, divided by religion and race and language, would be faced with the problem of self-government and self-development. The course of Russian history in our times provides a tragic warning to those who are responsible for the future of India of the dangers of leaving them apparently well alone, and of not working for the development of the masses in rights and duties alike and in all responsibility towards society. It has been well said that the British tenure in India must be one of continuous amelioration. But, apart from these lessons of modern history, we have to recognise the existence of internal forces in India proper, and in the neighbouring states and principalities, that render a policy of standing still or of merely nominal concession a practical impossibility since it would work disaster in the long run, alike for Britain and India. These forces may not individually be powerful enough to compel renunciation of existing forms of government; but, taken together and in connection with other world forces which react even in remote portions of Southern Asia they are so enormous in their effect that a radical change of outlook is necessary."

In spite of his fearless criticism, the Aga Khan is respected by the ruling classes for his sincerity and for the moral and spiritual force by which he reinforces his arguments. The Aga Khan is of the opinion that even those who by tradition, sentiment and interest were attached to the British Raj, may sooner or later have to choose between their loyalty to their Government or their duty to their country and race; and there is the distinct danger that a day might come when the two duties might become irreconcilable.

The Aga Khan's effort is directed to see that the words "too late," with which the policy of England in regard to political relations with India is unfortunately punctuated, resulting in mutual harm and mutual misunderstanding, will not be allowed to mar the early prospect of the establishment of a federal constitution in India for the sake of the safety of Great Britain, peace of the world and contentment and happiness of India.

A chorus of disapproval marked the publication of the

report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Indian Reforms in December 1934. It threw the country into a state of turmoil and accusations were hurled against the British Cabinet of a breach of faith. Indian extremists described the Report as an insult to India.

The Aga Khan shared the disappointment of his countrymen at the Report but he exhorted them not to allow their disappointment to get the better of their judgment and pleaded for the restoration of the happy atmosphere that prevailed during the deliberations of the first Round Table Conference.

A greater friend of England than the Aga Khan it would be difficult to find but no one can speak with greater authority than he as to India's just demands and sooner or later the political ideals advocated by the Aga Khan will emerge triumphant.

Though not satisfied with the Report the Aga Khan has lost no opportunity to point out the direction in which it could be made operative for the peaceful progress and the lasting benefit to India and the preservation of satisfactory relations between Great Britain and India. As he has admirably said: "Indian public spirit is cultivated on Western lines; the intellectual expansion has quickened in a marvellous degree owing to the teaching of English history; and new hopes and new ambitions have been created as a natural sequence of the War, in the winning of which India played a great part. India's services in the War created a great impression, not only in England but in the Allied countries. The smaller nations of Europe for the independence of which Indian soldiers shed their blood, and princes and people of India made handsome contributions were now free to work out their own political salvation and it would be against the British traditions of justice and fairplay to deny political liberty to India, which the peace settlement brought even to enemy countries in Europe after the war."

The Aga Khan has always pleaded for two things: first

not to delay the Reforms and second, that the Reforms should be real and not illusory and must give Indians a real voice in the governance of their country according to Britain's deliberate policy of developing Parliamentary Government. The basis of safety and friendship of the two countries depended upon co-operation. It is his firm conviction that the denial of justice to India would destroy the spirit of co-operation and inflict more harm than good to Great Britain. But in His Majesty's constant care for India and in reference to his Christmas message to Indians in December 1934 more fully realising and valuing their own unity in one family with him as head of the family, the Aga Khan found cause for hope and encouragement.

As the Aga Khan pointed out, in his London broadcast address, "If I were a Dictator" there is no standing still in human affairs and both science and economic policy must serve the ends of progress. He suggested:—"The best results can be achieved, I am confident, by providing the fullest means for investigation to men of proved power and achievement. I would give a Faraday, a Ross, or an Einstein adequate resources and let him choose his own assistants. In this way scientific research and progress would be revitalised with the fire of individual genius.

"Higher prizes would be offered—not only from the material but from the social and honorific points of view—for scientific discoveries.

"Those who showed natural inclinations and promise by original thought and work would be placed in positions where they could carry forward their researches, not only in all the inductive sciences, but in history, literature and economic studies.

"From all that has been said it might appear that the necessity for man to face danger and adversity, to develop his mental resources for sudden decisions in the face of unforeseen events, for constant and hard effort, for preparation and foresight might be weakened.

Peace, a higher development of contemplation and reflective education and more general possession and variety of goods might, one would think, in the long run sap the foundations from which progress comes.

"But I maintain, on the contrary, that the twenty years of my dictatorship would go a long way to strengthen these qualities and change their direction."

To a man like the Aga Khan who believes that the spiritual crisis through which the world is passing is far more serious than the economic crisis, it is evident that if Islam is true to itself, it may prove to be a great bulwark against Bolshevism.

The persecution to which religion has been subjected in Russia, under the atheist government of the Soviets, has affected Muslims as well as Greek Orthodox Church, Roman Catholics and Lutherans and the spread of Bolshevism in all directions, especially in Central Asia and China, is a menace which is felt throughout the Islamic world. It is a danger that can best be met by Islamic countries acting together in unity, not the artificial unity of Pan-Islam engineered for political purposes, but the natural unity which comes from appreciation of common ideals and aims inspired by religion, and from the strengthening of ties of mutual interest and good will. These ties already exist, and it is a favourite thesis of the Aga Khan that there is genuine affinity between India and neighbouring Islamic states, an affinity often obscured and sometimes misunderstood, but of a kind capable of immense development, so that India may become the nucleus of a group of nations standing out against the surge of atheism and communism which threaten to engulf the world. Such a knitting together of the forces of Islam, and their alliance with Great Britain for purposes of common defence and promotion of mutual interests, would be a mighty factor in the cause of peace. That consideration can never have been far distant from the thoughts of the Aga Khan during the session of the

Disarmament Conference and his work at Geneva which culminated in his appointment as the leader of the Indian delegation to the League Assembly in the autumn of 1934 is still happily being continued. The work of the peace-maker knows no end.

The Aga Khan has always held in esteem those Indian nationalists who have worked or are working for the industrial progress of India. He had great admiration for the late Mr. F. E. Dinshaw, legal luminary, nationalist, patriot and leading industrialist and financier of Bombay, who had done his best—and with no little success—for the reconstruction of industries which were faced with post-war difficulties. In 1936, when His Highness the Aga Khan was on his way to Bombay, he heard the news of the death of Mr. Dinshaw at Aden. The Aga Khan wired his regret at the passing away of a great leader in whose premature death the country had suffered a grievous loss. At a public meeting convened by the Sheriff, Mr. C. B. Mehta, at which Sir Naoroji Saklatwala of Messrs. Tata Sons presided, the Aga Khan moved a resolution placing on record the sense of loss which the country in general and the City of Bombay in particular had sustained by the sad and untimely death of Mr. Dinshaw. The resolution stated: "A leading industrialist and financier, actuated by the highest spirit of nationalism, he rendered meritorious service to the cause of Indian commerce, industry and finance for over a quarter of a century, thus helping the country."

His Highness, in commending the resolution, said that he had known the late Mr. Dinshaw for over 40 years and, although he was not associated with him in his great work as a leader of finance, he had learnt to respect Mr. Dinshaw as one who was a seeker after culture. In his younger days he got the greatest satisfaction in life from purely literary and intellectual pursuits. Even later on in life, when his time was so fully taken up, he devoted two or three hours every day for study.

As regards the late Mr. Dinshaw's legal acumen, the Aga Khan said he had been recognised as possessing a unique brain and an almost incredible knowledge. A former Chief Justice had once remarked to His Highness that the late Mr. Dinshaw had succeeded in the most difficult cases which other lawyers had felt nervous about taking up. "He did not succeed by any means other than his infinite capacity for taking pains," added His Highness. Power to do work many people possessed, but Mr. Dinshaw had, besides, the power of benefitting others by every second that he devoted to work.

Concluding, the Aga Khan remarked: "The late Mr. Dinshaw would have come to the top in any walk of life he chose. Had he been a General, the war would not have lasted nearly as long as it did—he would have found out ways and means of success."

The Aga Khan has been a strong advocate of the claims of women for equality of treatment with men, and has always urged the expediency of raising their status. He considers that biologically woman is more important to the race than man. In his writings and speeches he has pointed out how experience shows "the strong probability that the active influence of women in society, under free and equal conditions, is calculated not only to bring about practical improvement in the domestic realm, but also a higher and nobler idealism into the life of the State. Those who know Muslim society from within readily admit that its higher spiritual life owes a great debt to the example and influence of women. . . . Time has come for a full recognition that the happiness and welfare of the women themselves must be the end and purpose of all efforts of the Government and society towards improvement."

The position of Indian women is unsatisfactory and where they are debarred by artificial barriers from taking their rightful position as full citizens, the Aga Khan condemns cruel customs which prejudice and entail ignorance upon women. The enforcement of

Suttee (burning of a Hindu widow on the pyre of her husband) could never have been enjoined by religion as the earliest and purest of the sacred writings of Hinduism strictly enforce respect and honour for women by protecting the persons of the bearers of the race from risks and violence. Child marriage, enforced widowhood, and the enervating restrictions of the *Purdah*—those and other social evils had so handicapped India that it was impossible for her to take a proper place among free nations until the broad principle of equality between the sexes had been generally accepted in India. As the Aga Khan has pointed out "the best mind and thought of the country has long seen the need for improvement in the position of women. Their emancipation has figured, from the first, in the teaching and practice of the Brahma Samaj, and was long since effected by the small but progressive Parsi community." He considers it a happy augury for the future of the country that the need for educational facilities for women is fully recognised in India and aspirations in this direction which have been stirring throughout the world are making themselves felt in India. "Thoughts have gone forth whose power can sleep no more." His conception that progressive modernisation in India would be impossible unless women were permitted to play their legitimate part in the great work of national regeneration on a basis of political equality was fully demonstrated during the period of Mr. Gandhi's movement for political freedom for India, in which educated women took an active part and helped the furtherance of India's cause. When the Southborough Committee's report was published in 1917, the Aga Khan strongly protested against what he called the attitude of casual negation on the question of women's suffrage adopted by the Committee. His condemnation of the Committee's obsolete views, which were endorsed by the Government of India, was fully justified as Lord Southborough himself admitted that he was very much

astonished at the volume of evidence in favour of female enfranchisement ; but he brushed aside so much political idealism. The Aga Khan reminded Lord Southborough that he had forgotten how the world was governed by ideas, and that true progress was rooted in idealism.

One member of the Franchise Committee, Mr. Malcolm Hogg, was in favour of the removal of sex disqualification, but not of making special arrangements for recording women's votes. The Aga Khan entirely dissented from Lord Southborough's opinion that the reservation "robbed the gift of all its merit." The Aga Khan argued that "we are not setting up the public hustings and open voting of a past age in England ; nor is the number of male electors—some five million for the whole of British India—large enough for the jostle of the ballot station to be so serious as Lord Southborough and Sir James Meston suggested. The great majority of Indian women of the well-to-do classes, *e.g.*, the better class of cultivators, are not in real seclusion. The official witnesses who hold that very few women will go to the polling booth forget that purdah ladies go into the law and registration courts all over the country, and give evidence in relation to the transfer of property, etc.

"Sir James Meston's statement that female enfranchisement would present many difficulties, practical and social, is an instance of the regrettable fact that while many conscientious British officials spend their working lives in administrative duties in India, they never enter into a real understanding of the life or aspirations of the people—national, social, or religious. Only one man in a hundred, a Woodroffe in Calcutta, a Pollen or a Beaman in Bombay, gains such real understanding of the people he serves. It is painful to Indian readers that men who have attained high distinction in the Civil Service should have to be seriously asked if they would be shocked at the inclusion of women in the electorates. No Indian, not even the most conservative, will be

shocked by the proposal that, now that the sacred right of enfranchisement is to be given on a substantial scale to men, women should share it, just as they share the sacred rights of property.

"I feel it my duty to the hundreds of venerable and sensible purdah ladies of position I know in India to register this protest against the obsolete views of men who have attained to place and power in India, but who have never taken the trouble to know the people among whom they do office work."

Since then much water has passed under the bridge ; women have been qualified for membership of Councils and Assemblies, and under the new Constitution doors have been opened to members of gentle sex for minister-ship. In one province a daughter of the late Mr. Pandit Motilal Nehru has become a minister. The Aga Khan notes this fact with pleasure and his dream of Indian ladies exercising their voice in the political sphere is coming true.

The Aga Khan's love of Iran is deep-rooted and he watches over its destiny with a keen interest. In his opinion the late rulers of Persia to whom he is connected by ties of blood, brought about their own downfall by their lethargy and their failure to introduce reforms demanded by the spirit of the age. He, therefore, thinks that Reza Shah's ascendancy is a god-send. Speaking about this ruler of Iran, the Aga Khan has said :—

"In his book on Heroes, Carlyle has described the hero as God, Prophet, Poet, Soldier. Here we must describe the Dictator as King. The great Sovereign who today wears the oldest crown on earth, the successor of the longest continued monarchy in existence (for I believe that the monarchy of Persia goes back by tradition far beyond the dawn of history) did not seek throne and sceptre. The service of his country, the desire to save what could still be saved of her independence, of her territory, of her rights, first brought this remarkable man beyond his immediate professional sphere, the Army. Having risen by his merit to the highest rank possible for a Persian soldier, the War Ministry, he found that

the anarchy and the incompetence of the higher civil authorities rendered the discharge of his immediate duties an impossibility. He was compelled to add the Prime Minister's office to his own. Gradually the incompetence and weakness of the then rulers made the change of regime a necessity. Reza Shah would have preferred a Republic or a Dictatorship, but the voice of the nation called him to the throne. But the Sovereign has made it clear that the nation has not lost the services of its soldier-statesman. From that day to this, His Majesty has had but one ambition, to place Persia's independence on a sure basis, an ambition which he has to a great extent achieved.

"It must be remembered that in the early years of the 20th century up to the collapse of Russia in the Great War, Persia was fast going down, and with the definition of spheres of influence by Great Britain and Russia, her sovereignty might have easily degenerated into a nominal one. Even after the end of the war, thanks to world events, the great dangers were over, but even then the weakness and incompetence, the absence of a sturdy backbone in her governing classes, made it inevitable that sooner or later internal decomposition would lead to foreign intervention.

"At this critical stage Reza Shah took the government over, and with the help of men having his confidence and responsible to him, started the tremendous task of reform and reorganisation. The army was modernised and made more efficient than it had ever been since Nadir Shah's time. The power of the tribal chiefs so dangerous for the Empire's stability was gradually but surely broken. Motor roads, airways, hotels for travellers, security on the highways, and equilibrium of the budget were established. Once more, law and order became the first object of the government. Iran's relations with foreign powers now happily normal were secured by treaties of friendship and non-aggression with some of her neighbours, and by reliance on general international law and courtesy with others. Extraterritoriality and all its disastrous effects have been reduced to a minimum. Never in our time has that gifted people's position in the comity of nations been so high as today.

"May His Imperial Majesty Reza Shah of Persia be long spared by Providence to rule his country, to lift it from the economic depression and finally to achieve her full and permanent liberty and national independence."

The Aga Khan is the Admirable Crichton of this twentieth century. He has been the cynosure of every eye owing to the versatility of his genius, his love of truth and his zeal for human improvement. He has

given to Islam not only his undying affection but all his intellectual resources and extraordinary physical and moral energies. He presents a pleasant contrast to other religious leaders in oriental countries.

While most of them waste their time and exhaust their energy in unprofitable religiosity which they consider necessary to invest them with the dignity of saints, the Aga Khan alone, discarding such false notions of the duties of ministers of religion, has engaged himself in devising plans and measures for the amelioration of the condition of his followers, and their educational advancement. Such a high conception of duty and determination to follow it out is, indeed, rarely found among Oriental Priests, who thrive on the ignorance of their people, and who for the most part seem to labour under the delusion that it is incompatible with their dignity and entails the loss of the sanctity of their calling if they do any kind of work save and except the reciting of prayers, undertaking costly pilgrimages or playing the part of a dervish. But "the wise and modest dervish, who in Sadi's poems tells the greatest Sultan the truth as to the hollowness of his royal state, has degenerated into the half mad and insolvent hanger on, who thrusts himself into audience-chambers and claims the seat of honour beside the grandees." It is obvious that this self-styled orthodox class of people do not count the untold evil produced by their idle and superstitious life, not to speak of the ill-effects of its example on the lives of their followers. They live in blissful ignorance of their duties to their people, and are, of course, at the same time quite unconscious of the harm they are doing to posterity.

When the vigorous Spanish Sultan, Mansur Abi Amir, proposed to confiscate a religious foundation, and the assembled Ulema refused to approve of the act, and were threatened by the Vizier, one of them replied:—"all the evil you say of us applies to yourself; you seek unjust gains and support your injustice

by threats; you take bribes and practise ungodliness in the world. But we are guides in the path of righteousness; lights in the darkness, and bulwarks of Islam; we decide what is just or unjust and declare the right; through us the precepts of religion are maintained. We know that the Sultan will soon think better of the matter; but, if he persists, every act of his government will be null, for every treaty of peace and war, every act of sale and purchase, is only valid through our testimony." With this answer they left the assembly and the Sultan's apology overtook them. The same consciousness of arrogant authority and strength still survives among the Ulema in Muhammedan countries. Yet with the example of toleration and good will set by the Aga Khan, the future of Islam is very hopeful and in British India such presumptuous authority is not only on the wane but we find more mutual toleration between Sunni and Shiah and a desire to leave the narrow groines of Al-Alshari's scholasticism and approach the ideas of the old rationalistic Mostagelites.

The present state of things in the Muslim world reminds us of Lord Bacon, who thought that man's sovereignty over nature, which is founded on knowledge alone, had been lost, and instead of the free relation between things and human mind, there was nothing but vain notions and blind experiments. . . . Philosophy is not the science of things divine and human; it is not the search after truth; "I find that even those who have sought knowledge for itself, and not for benefit or ostentation or any practical embellishment in the course of their life, have, nevertheless, propounded to themselves a wrong mark, namely, satisfaction (which men call truth) and not operation. Is there any such happiness as for a man's mind to be raised above the confusion of things where he may have the prospect of the order of nature and error of man? But is this a view of delight and not of discovery? Of contentment and not benefit?"

That no such charge can for a moment be laid at the door of the Aga Khan must be the unhesitating verdict of all thinking persons. It is due alike to the high ideal he has set before himself and to the unflinching zeal with which he has pursued his task, that he is able to command in an enviable degree the gratitude and devotion of his race, to whom he is leaving a rich heritage, the beneficent fruits of which will be reaped by them from generation to generation.

Well may it be said of His Highness that he has, like Bacon, seen the futility of the so-called philosophy which concerns itself with disputations and 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 and advancement of those who acknowledge him as their head. Well, may we imagine him saying with Bacon—"shall he not as well discern the riches of Nature's warehouse as the beauty of her shop? Is truth ever barred? Shall he not be able thereby to produce worthy effects and to endow the life of man with infinite commodities? The true aim of all science is to endow the condition of life of man with new powers or works or to extend more widely the limits of the power and greatness of man. Nevertheless it is not to be imagined that by this being proposed as the great object of search, there is hereby excluded all that has hitherto been looked upon as the higher aims of human life, such as the contemplation of truth. Not so, but by following the new aim we shall also arrive at a true knowledge of the universe in which we are; for without knowledge there is no power; truth and utility are in ultimate aspect the same, works themselves are of greater value as pledges of truth than as contributing to the comforts of life." Such was the conception of philosophy with which Bacon started in life, and in which he felt himself to be thoroughly original. Utility is the watch-word no less of the Socratic than of the

Baconian induction; and with his far-seeing and acute intellect the Aga Khan having perceived the force of its truth took the first step into the world with such high aims for the production of good to the human race; we have the clearest indications of how he shaped the course of his life and how far his action corresponded to the noble end he placed before him.

With that practical bent of mind which has characterised his life, the Aga Khan conceived a gigantic scheme for establishing an agricultural colony in Africa where he proposed to settle a great number of his followers in need of employment. This scheme, while finding them a future field for employment and providing them with means of livelihood, was calculated to give an investment to capitalists and to increase the prosperity of the country, its waste land being cultivated by an industrious and thrifty class of people. This scheme was abandoned because the Aga Khan did not agree to the proposal of the ex-German Emperor to make his followers in East Africa German subjects. This was many years before the war broke out and at that time the relations between England and Germany were most cordial: yet the Aga Khan rejected the proposal to make his followers subjects of the Kaiser.

This scheme of the Aga Khan showed that he has not only imbibed the spirit of the times but that in fact he was working in advance of the spirit of the age. The idea occurred to his mind while he had hardly passed out of his teens. It gained strength with time until its realisation became one of the main purposes of his life and would have been realised but for the fictitious opposition put forward by the ex-German Emperor. That was indeed his brightest vision and it is clear that that which lay deep within him was not any speculative interest in utility but the generous enthusiasm of a practical worker. The scheme bore the stamp of an original and benevolent mind determined to prevent decay and deterioration in the community.

Chapter Nine

THE WORLD WAR OF 1914

ATTEMPT ON THE AGA KHAN'S LIFE

INDIA'S SHARE IN THE WAR

THE glorious tradition established by the first Aga Khan in the early 'forties of the last century to be of the utmost assistance to the British Empire, even at the risk of his life, was fully and triumphantly tested at every point in the case of the present Aga Khan in the Great War. As a shrewd student of contemporary politics with a keen perception and knowledge of the ambitions that stirred the hearts of various European potentates, the Aga Khan had long foreseen the Titanic struggle that came over Europe like a thief in the night in August, 1914, and had predicted it three years before in an article contributed by him to the *National Review* in 1911. He had studied the conflicting interests and political ambitions of various Powers; and he had foreseen that the Islamic Powers would also be drawn into the vortex of the armed conflict when it broke out in Europe. He had, however, hoped that the great Islamic Power, Turkey, would cast in her lot with the British for she had nothing to gain and everything to lose by siding with Germany. In an interview given to a representative of *The Times of India* some months before the War broke out, he had pointed out the policy which Great Britain should pursue towards Turkey in relation to its Asiatic dominions and he had suggested the advisability of strengthening Persia; of removing it from the dominating influence of Russia and protecting it from the peaceful penetration of Germany. In that

interview he epitomised the situation. His frank and out-spoken criticisms, justified in the light of after-events, showed his mastery of the great problems, which concerned the peace of the world and the interests of Great Britain. During the Turko-Italian and the two Balkan Wars which preceded the outbreak of the great conflagration in 1914, the Aga Khan exerted all his influence towards securing peace and restoring the prestige of the Ottoman Empire. He helped the families of soldiers killed or wounded with liberality from his purse. His heart bled at the sorrows and grief of widows and orphans of fallen soldiers and he directed his efforts towards helping them and ministering to their wants. But he had to exert his best efforts towards soothing the grave disquietitude of Indian Muslims whose hearts were lacerated by the intrigue of European diplomats anxious to cause the Ottoman star in Europe to wane.

When the great War broke out the Aga Khan was on a visit in East Africa among his followers who had established a flourishing colony there several generations before. As soon as he heard the news of the outbreak of war he returned the insignia of the First class Prussian order of the Royal Crown conferred upon him by the Kaiser and telegraphed exhorting his followers within and on the borders of British territories to render every possible help to the British Authorities. He offered his personal services to the British Resident in Zanzibar, and lost no time in organizing East African Indians who, under his personal direction, formed a transport corps for rapid communication between various parts of the coast and the interior. He had intended to proceed to Mombassa, but there were risks of his capture by a German cruiser, and he was instructed to proceed to Durban. In South Africa he was the guest of the Union Government and there he settled the details of his programme to ensure the co-operation of his followers with England. When he reached England in

the middle of September he wrote to Lord Crewe, then Secretary of State for India, repeating the offer made by cablegram from Zanzibar to place not only his resources but himself at the unreserved disposal of the authorities. He then called on Lord Kitchener with whom he had formed a close friendship in India, and begged to be allowed to serve as a private in the Indian contingent which was then on its way to France. There had been no Imperial Cadet Corps in existence in India in his youth, and he had therefore had no opportunity for military training; but he keenly desired to stand with his fellow countrymen in any regiment to which he might be posted for service. But the King-Emperor and his advisers felt that the Aga Khan's life was too valuable and his political influence too great to permit of the acceptance of his offer. Lord Kitchener reserved him for services which no one else could render. This reservation of His Highness for other service as remarked in a narrative of the War in "Loyal Rulers and Leaders of the East" was abundantly justified by the course of events; but the moral effect of his declared readiness for any work in the field was great.

One of the first steps the Aga Khan took was to rally young Indians in England to volunteer for the Indian Field Ambulance Corps, and his generosity was exemplified by a gift to inaugurate a fund to provide extra comforts for them. He offered to serve with the Ambulance Corps as an interpreter, and on the occasion of the enrolment of that Corps he made a stirring speech in which he said that the Indians in England had shown the spirit of true patriotism by placing their services unconditionally at the disposal of the authorities—an earnest of India's desire to share the responsibilities no less than the privileges of membership of the British Empire. After all, they did no more than mirror in a different environment the wave of loyal enthusiasm which had swept through their motherland. In that supreme hour differences of race and creed counted for

nothing among the King-Emperor's Indian subjects. They were absolutely united in the common purpose of taking their full share in the trials and sorrows of the Empire, and in contributing to the sacrifices entailed by her unconquerable determination and that of her Allies, to win through. All Indians knew that if Britain was ever weakened, India's aspirations, India's whole future would go to pieces. On the other hand, India was an inexhaustible source of man-power and wealth in natural resources for the British Empire: she asked no more in return than that the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 should be observed in the letter and in the spirit.

The loyal and helpful attitude of the Aga Khan and of Indian Muslims shattered the confident hope of Germany. The Aga Khan tried his utmost to keep Turkey out of the fray, but when she disappointed her own supporters, and finally decided to join Germany, the Aga Khan issued an inspiring manifesto to rally the Muslims of the Empire to the Allied cause. He pointed out that the Ottoman Government would become a mere pawn on the political chess-board of Germany, that in declaring war on England and her Allies it was acting under the orders of its German masters, and he declared that the action was not the result of true and free will of the Sultan, but of German officers and other non-Muslims who had forced him to do their bidding. He impressed upon the Muslim world that neither Turkey nor Islam was in peril from the defensive action of the Allies "for the British and Russian Empires and the French Republic had offered to guarantee Turkey all her territories in complete independence if she remained neutral. Turkey was the trustee of Islam, and the whole world was content to let her hold the holy cities in her keeping. All men must see that Turkey's position was not imperilled in any way and that she had not gone to war for the cause of Islam or for defence of her independence which was vouchsafed to her by the Allies." * * * "Thus our only duty as Muslims," he

said, "is to remain loyal, faithful and obedient to our temporal and secular allegiance."

This sincere appeal coming straight from a defender of Islam created a great impression not only among the Muslims of the Empire, but also among those under Russian and French rule: The *Novoe Vremya* gave a long catalogue of Muslim contingents flocking to the Allied standards and spurning the efforts of the Kaiser to instigate a Jihad or Holy War and added as a climax that the President of the All-India Muslim League had addressed to his co-religionists an appeal which must have disenchanted Berlin diplomacy. As has been emphasised in an authentic narrative, it is impossible to over-estimate the value of the Aga Khan's stirring call in rallying to a firm stand his vast following of adherents both in Africa and Asia. They formed a solid phalanx in whole-hearted support of the Allied cause and had a most steadying effect in sterilizing the headstrong elements ready and eager to place their religious affinities before the manifest duties arising from the crisis. The extremists saw that if they gave trouble Muslim unity would be broken and they would not achieve their objects. Subsequent developments on the Eastern front, such as the failure in Gallipoli and the breakdown in Mesopotamia, caused no wavering among his followers. This was because, alike in public and private, the Aga held out "the lamp of faith in Allied victory" and steadily encouraged the efforts required to secure it.

The important part the Aga Khan played during those critical years has, perhaps, not been fully realised; nor has its significance been thoroughly grasped. He was quick to perceive that the challenge of German militarism was not only a danger to the Empire but a menace to the world. Loyalty to the King-Emperor was a sacred article of faith with him, as with his father and grandfather; but, over and above that feeling of loyalty, it was the ethical principle involved in the

challenge that Germany threw out to the world which most strongly appealed to him. The appeal which the King-Emperor had made deeply touched Indian Princes and Noblemen: "Had I stood aside when in defiance of the pledges to which my Government was a party, the soil of Belgium was violated and her cities laid desolate, when the very life of the French nation was threatened with extinction, I should have sacrificed my honour and given to destruction the liberties of my Empire and of mankind." Throughout the War the Aga Khan emphasised the words of His Majesty, that the destinies of Great Britain and India were indissolubly linked: his authority and influence were wholeheartedly and without reserve on the side of the Allies. More than one member of his family went on active service. One of his cousins, Aga Farrokh Shah, was the first of princely blood to give his life in the service of the King-Emperor: he was killed in Mesopotamia. The Aga Khan sent several of his relations to Persia and Mesopotamia to obtain secret information which was of great help to the Allies.

Secret missions of great diplomatic importance in Egypt, Switzerland and elsewhere, were entrusted to the Aga Khan, and were proof of the confidence placed in his fidelity as well as in his capacity to carry out diplomatic work of great moment to the Empire. There were bitter newspaper attacks on him in the enemy countries, and he was fiercely denounced as a powerful influence in the Islamic world antagonistic to the Central Powers. While in Switzerland he was warned by the Secret Service Department of plans for his assassination. In fact a plot was matured to kill him, his wife and his son by bombing the house in which they were living at Zurich. The plot was discovered in time. The culprits guilty of the dastardly attempt were arrested, tried and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment by the Swiss Court. During the enquiry into the conspiracy, the police also discovered an attempt on his life

by means of poison. By the grace of Providence the Aga Khan and his family were saved by the timely discovery of the conspiracy and the punishment of the culprits.

Certain fiery zealots in India also made him the butt of their criticism: he did not flinch before their onslaughts but patiently performed his duty to the Empire and thereby earned the highest claim on its gratitude. In April, 1916, it was announced that the King-Emperor, in appreciation of his loyal co-operation in the War, had been pleased to sanction the grant of a salute of 11 guns and the rank of a First Class Prince of the Bombay Presidency to His Highness. The only previous instance of the grant of a salute—regarded in India as far more important than any other form of honour—outside the territorial ruling families, was that to the first Sir Salar Jung, the famous and gifted Prime Minister of Hyderabad, who was largely instrumental in the dark days of 1857 in keeping Central India and the Deccan loyal to British authority.

When the announcement of the Aga Khan being raised to the rank and status of a Ruling Prince was made, *The Times* wrote: "That the precedent of the grant of Sir Salar Jung of 11 guns should now be followed with the supplement of the rank and status of a First Class Prince of the Bombay Presidency, is singularly appropriate. It has fallen to the Aga Khan to serve in vastly wider fields than Sir Salar and to exert much more than local or provincial influence in a crisis of British rule even greater than that of the Mutiny." *The Times* added that there was eminent fitness in the Aga Khan being rewarded for his War activities with an honour which, while supporting and confirming the unique position he occupies in the Muslim world, led to his receiving from the local authorities when visiting his followers in various parts of the world, as a matter of right those marks of superior honour which had been accorded him in the past only as a matter of courtesy.

Though the Aga Khan would readily have laid down his life for the British Empire and its Allies in the War, he was not slow in condemning the lack of courtesy on the part of the men in power, whose action in regard to the contribution of £100,000,000 towards the cost of the War offered by the Government of India to Britain, His Highness has always held it to be entirely inconsistent with the relationship of guardian to ward subsisting between Britain and India, though of course there is no doubt whatever in his mind and for that matter in the mind of anybody else, that the step taken was excellent in itself and thoroughly approved of by Indian opinion.

In September 1914, the Imperial Legislature, at non-official instance, adopted a resolution expressing the determination and wish of the people of India to share, not only in the actual military effort, but also "in the heavy financial burden" imposed by the War on the United Kingdom. But the amount and the form of contribution made some two and a half years later was decided by executive authority without reference to the Legislature, though, of course, sanction was obtained to the taxation rendered necessary in order to meet the obligation—only, however, after the offer had been made and accepted.

While making it clear that it must not be supposed for one moment that Indian opinion, despite the fact that it was not consulted in any recognised way beforehand, was out of sympathy with the decision, the Aga Khan pointed out that a guardian had no right, whatever his own difficulties might be, to take from his ward any substantial help, however cheerfully the benevolence might be viewed. The fact that, partly to meet the new obligation, the wealthy classes in India were assessed at a higher and graded income tax and a super-tax far beyond the dreams of the late Lord Cromer and his school showed, declared His Highness, that in practice the Government of India went "beyond the narrow line which should mark the relationship of trustee and ward."

The Aga Khan has been misrepresented by his opponents. He has been described as an Imperialist. If that means that he has fought stoutly for the rights, dignity and self-respect of Indians as citizens of the greatest Empire the world has ever known, the Aga Khan may indeed be dubbed an Imperialist. But he is an Indian patriot to the very core. Describing the part which India played during the War and emphasising the magnitude and generosity of the assistance which such a poor country as India furnished to Britain in that crisis, the Aga Khan has frequently stressed in the most feeling terms and language the patriotism by which that generosity was inspired. "Who were the thousands of people," he asked, "who eagerly came forward and subscribed to the War Loan, which brought in nearly two-fifths of the total liability assumed while the Finance Member had not felt it safe to estimate a larger quota than one-tenth? Who are the people who in a poor country where even such national institutions as the Hindu and Muslim universities cannot raise a crore of rupees in the course of a decade, came forward and gave that amount in a single day, to war charities? Who are the people that have crowded every charitable bazaar and fill every list of subscriptions for the war? The reports of such organisations as the Bombay Presidency Branch of the Imperial Indian Relief Fund show that in little hamlets to be numbered by the thousand throughout the province substantial sums have been raised. There is more starvation and grinding poverty in a typical Indian division any day of the year than there has been in Belgium during the German occupation; yet, a real beggar's mite, Indian subscriptions to Belgian relief funds have come not only from the great cities, but from the smallest provincial towns. No one can maintain that all this has been done, or could have been done, without the general support of the people.

"If we look at India's contribution to man-power

in the war we find that recruitment has reached dimensions such as would not have been dreamed of in days of peace. The stream has not flagged with the long continuance of the war, and it has been announced that the recruiting figures during January 1918, including nearly 20,000 combatants from the Punjab and the United Provinces alone, were larger than in any previous month of the protracted struggle. To these results the Indian princes have enthusiastically contributed, and some of them—the rulers of Hyderabad, Gwalior, Bikanir, Kolapore, Kapurthala, Patiala, and Jind to mention only a few—have brought recruits by the thousand. Moreover, in the later phases of the war the Indian Empire has sent out labour battalions, totalling to scores of thousands, to all the battle fronts, and particularly to France and to Mesopotamia. Had India earnestly set out years ago with favouring breezes on the voyage to greater political liberty and the extension of economic prosperity for the masses, the contribution, actual and potential, to the manpower of the war would have been enormously greater. You cannot make the average landless labourer, who has starved since childhood, and is little more than skin and bones, fit to go to war or to carry arms. Should recruiting officers be so ignorant of their work as to accept such a man, his wretched physique would expose him to disease and render him utterly unfitted to cope with the fatigues and hardships of campaigning.

“Much has been made in quarters unsympathetic to India’s legitimate aspirations within the Empire of the small numbers of Indians joining the Indian Defence Force under the measure passed in the spring of 1917, open only to the classes from which the Indian Army is not ordinarily recruited. Here it must be remembered that there was considerable dissatisfaction with the decision that these territorial forces could not be officered by Indians. The training was to be under the command of selected British officers, and the only indication the

official communication gave of any possibility of advancement was that the soldiers of the force, when qualified, would be eligible for promotion, and a non-commissioned officer showing special qualifications would be eligible for further advancement, *i.e.* to the subordinate commissions to which Indians were restricted on racial grounds upto, and a few months after, that time. It is not to be wondered at that Indians, who had urged for fully a quarter of a century before the war the removal of the bar to their countrymen reaching the higher commissioned ranks should have felt no more than a pained and lukewarm sympathy with the movement. The fact that the numbers of the six territorial units were to be limited to 1000 each, officially attributed to “the exigencies of the war,” was regarded by the organs of public opinion as indicating that Government did not want a great national force, but, on applying compulsion to European residents, were impelled to make a slight sentimental concession to the Indians who had asked to be enrolled as volunteers. There is an excessiveness of caution which takes away with one hand what is professedly given with the other, without the openness and manliness of a direct negative. A double company of Bengalis was voluntarily raised as a combatant unit under special authority granted in response to the insistent wishes of the people of the province. Its success is generally admitted. The recruits came from a better class of society than those who ordinarily accept the conditions of service in the regular Indian Army. Many of these Bengalis must have felt the injustice of a system which, from the start, barred their way to higher commissioned ranks, and their enlistment illustrates the inborn loyalty of their race and class to the Empire.

“It can at least be said that, in addition to being a most important reservoir of essential supplies for Allied armies and countries, India, to the full measure of her restricted opportunities, has shared in the travail and desolation brought to the homes of the King-Emperor’s

subjects throughout His far-flung dominions. Indians sleep in unknown graves, and Indian bones are exposed to the wind and rain in France and China, in Mesopotamia and East Africa, on hundreds of battlefields, from the great encounters of Flanders to the small skirmishes of the African jungle. Though scattered to the dust these are in the spiritual sense enduring monuments to the good faith and trust-worthiness of India.

“Yet there is a school of Imperialistic thought in England ready to trust Japan and accept her as a full equal, exhibiting a strange lack of confidence in the King’s Indian subjects, for which there is no single justifying fact in history. Many thousands of Indians fought and died for the British Empire before the present war. We are often reminded of the Mutiny, but seldom of the fact that during that cataclysm more Indian blood was shed for the cause of the maintenance of British rule than for its overthrow. Looked at in proper perspective, and allowing for the crude conceptions and superstitions of the uneducated revolting sepoys, the Mutiny was of the nature of a civil war between two different parties of Indians, with two different ideals of government—one purely Asiatic, the other relying on the new light that had risen in the West. Such civil wars are recorded in the histories of most countries, and when the excesses of Cawnpore are insisted upon, those of Paris and Moscow, of Petrogard and Belgrade, should not be forgotten.

“When the meaning of British rule in India is thoroughly explored, we are confronted by two antagonistic theories. Thus one school employs a good many windy phrases such as “taking up the white man’s burden”—phrases which came into use during the period after the downfall of Gladstone over Irish Home Rule, when Britain was most influenced by German ideas, those of Bismarck and William II, Trietschke, and Nietzsche. It consciously or unconsciously desires the perpetuation of racial supremacy in India. The rise of



HER HIGHNESS THE BEGUM AGA KHAN,
Formerly Mademoiselle Andree Carton, whom the Aga Khan married in 1929.

Japan to a position of equality with the great European Powers has but served to concentrate upon the Indian dependency these ideals of race supremacy. To this school that vast Empire at the very best, though held in trust, is a plantation from which the English owners are entitled to derive material benefit, direct and indirect, since they have provided the country with the externals of modern civilisation, with judicial systems on the basis of equality of all races before the law, and sincerely desire to assure to the people, if and when possible, a living and decent wage. The poetic significance and romance of the death of the Indian soldier in foreign climes for the Empire is not understood by this "Imperialistic" school. It entertains a subconscious feeling that the loyal Asiatic can be happy only when his racial limitations are accepted beyond discussions. It regards his loyalty as nearer that of a faithful and noble dog to a just and loving master than to that of an equal partner in sacrifice, with the same flesh and blood.

"The other school, of which Elphinstone and Malcolm, Ripon, Minto, and Hardinge have been the never-to-be-forgotten representatives in successive generations, and of which Macaulay was the brilliant Parliamentary exponent and prophet, have a nobler and ultimately more beneficial idea for England in her relation to India. It is to raise the hundreds of millions of Asiatics that the will of Providence and the play of historic forces have brought within the orbit of Great Britain to a self-respecting independent position within her dominions; it is to gladly recognise that the Indian subjects of the King-Emperor are morally and physically at least the potential equals of any other Asiatic race, including the Japanese; it is to place in their hands with joy and affection the means, through education, liberty, and trust, by which they can raise their position to be comparable with that of the subjects of the Mikado.

"Under this noble ideal the British Empire of the future can confer full self-government on the peoples

she has trained for the responsibility, and then take back to her bosom as the greatest and best-beloved of her foster-children the free myriads of India. Happily the Imperial Crown provides the venerated centre round which the great States of the Empire can unite. Their glory and power will be enormously stronger in a free empire than in one in which the white minority would become the embarrassed jailers of the Asiatic majority. In spite of the teaching of a handful of advocates, some of them bluntly outspoken, of white ascendancy, who usurp the name of Imperialism, we Indians maintain our faith in the true and sane Imperialism of Britain's masses, and in the conscience of those aristocratic and upper middle classes which have produced the many true and far-sighted friends India has found in England. Hence we believe the meaning and ultimate goal of British rule to be the free and living union of our great peninsula, and, as we hope, of the still greater South Asiatic federation of to-morrow, with the central mother State of Great Britain and with the strong, far-spread daughter Dominions.

"During his Viceroyalty Lord Curzon spoke of the ruling princes as "colleagues and partners" in the work of Empire. To-day when we are fighting for democracy, when war has brought out the real equality in heroism of our fighting men with those of other parts of the Empire, when we proudly look at our Indian peasant V.C.'s, we feel that such a limitation of Imperial partnership is far too narrow and out of keeping with British traditions. The time has come to establish a real partnership of Viceroy, Government, princes and people through federal autonomy and representative institutions including all classes of the community. Thus will there be permanent fulfilment of the King-Emperor's expectation that the War Conference, held at Delhi, in pursuing the immediate and essential purpose in view, would "promote a spirit of unity, a concentration of purpose and activity, and a cheerful

acceptance of sacrifice without which no high object, no lasting victory can be achieved."

The foregoing pages afford ample proof that His Highness the Aga Khan is a passionate champion of Indian rights, one moreover who has never minced his words in that championship or lost any opportunity of pushing them forward in public and in the most open and vigorous manner. Indeed, the burden of his speeches dealing with Indo-British relations and the position of Indians in the Empire has invariably been that this country's legitimate aspirations must be satisfied, that India has received at the hands of Britain less than justice in view of the willing and generous assistance she rendered to the Mother Country in the latter's hour of need and that this grievous wrong must be righted, that the colour bar as tacitly enforced against Indians in the United Kingdom and openly in the Dominions must be removed, and that finally India must be elevated to the status of a free and self-governing dominion, on terms of perfect equality with the other Dominions so that she may prove to be a strong and helpful partner in the great Commonwealth of British peoples constituted by the Empire. These are themes upon which he is perpetually enlarging both in this country and in Britain, and it must be a source of pride as well as gratification to him that slowly but surely his powerful advocacy is beginning to bear fruit.

Chapter Ten

A MAN OF PEACE

ARDUOUS and unremitting as were the services of the Aga Khan to the Allied cause throughout the War, they became of even greater importance after the Armistice had been signed. But, before referring to the circumstances in which he devoted himself to obtaining more just treatment for Turkey than was contemplated in the Treaty of Sevres, in 1920, it is necessary to consider how, by the exercise of his gifts of diplomacy and leadership, he had established for himself an unrivalled position in India as a peace-maker.

The specific services of His Highness to the cause of peace go back to the pre-war days. His work after the Armistice was but the sequel to years of unstinted effort. Note should be taken of the labours of His Highness before the Great War in soothing Indian Muslim sentiment in regard to Ottoman losses in the Turko-Italian and the two Balkan Wars. At the risk of incurring personal unpopularity, he pleaded for a sense of proportion and a realisation of hard facts on the part of his fellow Muslims.

The unrest caused by the successive losses of Turkish territory was in danger of being intensified when the World War broke out and Turkey was drawn into the struggle on the side of Germany. Had the Muslims of India taken a different road, or even had they been divided in their choice, the vast area of the war in those four years would have been infinitely widened, and humanity would have received a still greater shock. The Aga Khan saw the need for Indian Muslim support to the Allied cause on these wide grounds.

His whole public career has indeed been spent as a peace-maker and as an advocate of peaceful and constitutional methods in securing the political advancement of

India. Few Indians have been as outspoken in denouncing political terrorism. His public condemnation of that phase of life in India goes as far back as the notorious murders in Poona in 1897 of two British officers, Mr. Rand and Lt. Ayeres and of the popular Collector Mr. Jackson at Nasik some years later. He presided at the meeting of Indians held in London after the murder of Sir Curzon Wylie in 1909, and, denouncing the crime, said it was their duty to efface the foul stain which had been cast upon their beloved country. Similarly in Bombay, after the attempt on the life of Lord Hardinge, he was the principal speaker at a public meeting where he not only condemned the outrage but called upon the public to root out anarchism and help the Government in tracing the criminals. This attitude has repeatedly been exhibited by the Aga Khan. A Western reader, unfamiliar with the modern history of India, might take it for granted. But when one recalls the excuses with which some popular leaders have sought to condone terrorism, and the half-hearted condemnation voiced by others, the importance of the uncompromising position taken up and never abandoned by the Aga Khan becomes obvious. In this matter he has been a tower of strength and an example of inestimable value to all India.

It was the Aga Khan's destiny to begin his public life at a time when India was being steadily if vaguely stirred by a desire to take an increasing part in framing her own destiny, when the Nationalist movement was gaining impetus, and when the rivalry and dissension between the Hindu and Muslim communities were making themselves apparent as the chief obstacles to the progress of the country. It is true that it was not until after the Great War that the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, described Hindu-Muhammedan antagonism as "the dominant issue in Indian life;" but long before then, certainly in the early years of the century, that issue was becoming clear-cut. Examining the nature of the

antagonism which the rival communities of Hindus and Muhammedans tend to develop, the Simon Commission noted in its Report (published in 1930) that

"It unfortunately happens that on Indian soil the opposition of these two faiths is sharply intensified by religious practices which are only too likely to provoke mutual ill-feeling. The devout Hindu regards the cow as an object of great veneration, while the ceremonial sacrifice of cows or other animals is a feature of the annual Muhammedan festival known as the Baq'Id. Hindu music played through the streets on the occasion of the procession of an idol, or in connection with a marriage celebration, may take place at a time when the Muhammedans of the town are at worship in an adjoining mosque, and hence arises an outbreak of resentment which is apt to degenerate into a serious quarrel. The religious anniversaries observed by Muslims are fixed by reference to a lunar year which does not correspond with the adjusted Hindu calendar, and consequently it occasionally happens that dates of special importance in the two religions coincide—as, for instance, when an anniversary of Muslim mourning synchronises with a day of Hindu rejoicing—and the authorities responsible for the maintenance of law and order are then faced with a time of special anxiety. In spite of the constant watchfulness of the police authorities, and of the earnest efforts of leaders in both communities to reach a *modus vivendi*, the immediate occasion of communal disorder is nearly always the religious issue. On the other hand, when communal feeling is roused on some matter of secular interest, religious zeal is always present to stimulate conflict, and partisans are not slow to exploit the opportunity."

Outbreaks of communal feeling, arising from such conditions as those summarised by the Simon Commission have frequently tested the Aga Khan's powers of leadership and have called into exercise his desire to conciliate the opposing forces. There is no need to enumerate all those melancholy occasions, though they form in the aggregate a terrible chapter in the modern history of India. Looking back on those events, however, it can be shown that time and time again the figure of the Aga Khan in the role of peace-maker stands out against the murky background of fierce fighting in the spasmodic communal warfare that spread from one end of India to the other. Nor has his role been merely

that of one trying to control murderous passion. Differing in this respect from many prominent Indians of his time, he has not infrequently made constructive proposals for the peace of the country. An early instance of that rare quality can be found in the records of 1908. By that time the rise of extremism in India was giving the greatest anxiety. Fostered in Bengal by the movement against the partition of the Province, in 1905, and in Western India by the movement against foreigners, both Muhammedan and British, which had been initiated by B. G. Tilak, a nationalist leader of great force, it had spread throughout India: attempts were made to corrupt the loyalty of the Indian Army, and the seeds of sedition were sown even so far away as among the hills of the frontier tribes. In the National Congress the extremist movement was boldly stemmed by such staunch moderates as G. K. Gokhale and Phirozeshah Mehta with the result that, after a tumultuous scene at Surat, the Congress broke away from the party of revolution. Tilak, whose articles had spoken of bombs and murders with approval, was convicted and transported and by that act a definite set-back to extremism was temporarily effected. The Aga Khan, however, deplored that a patriot should Court imprisonment in serving his country and that Government should find it necessary to adopt coercive measures instead of conciliation. At the end of the year Lord Morley, the Secretary of State for India, announced his scheme of constitutional reforms, which was supported by the Moderates. It was at such a time of difficulty that the Aga Khan gave a clear call to the Muhammedan community to stand by Government, and the instance is here cited as typical of the way in which he has repeatedly advocated the cause of sanity and honourable peace.

What was known as the Deccan Provincial Muslim League had been formed to work in affiliation with the All-India Muslim League. At its first meeting a letter from the Aga Khan took the form of an inaugural

address. In such times, he said, no true Indian patriot could remain silent. Amid much that was good they saw a growing indiscipline and contempt for authority, a striving after change without perceiving whither that change would lead, and the setting up of false and impracticable constitutional ideals. No man who loved his country, as the Indian Muslims did, could stand idly by and see India drift into courses leading irrevocably to disaster. Prosperity and contentment could only be reached by the processes of development and evolution working on natural lines. These processes of evolution and development required the existence of a strong, just, and stable Government, a Government securing justice and equality of opportunity for all minorities as well as majorities. What is known as Swaraj, or Self-Government, seemed to him at that time a distant goal. India's hope lay solely in Great Britain. While supporting the Government, he lost no opportunity of impressing upon the authorities, the necessity of giving wider powers to the people of India in the administration. He, however, condemned every form of terrorism.

"English rule," he wrote, "not only a titular supremacy, but a vigorous force permeating every branch of the administration, is an absolute necessity at the present time. Therefore I put it to you that it is the duty of all true Indian patriots to make that rule strong—I do not mean strong in the physical sense. That is the duty of Great Britain which she is perfectly able to discharge. Moreover, Great Britain's mission in the East is not and never has been one of force, but of the peace and liberality which have brought to tens of millions in Asia the comfort, the prosperity and opportunities of intellectual advancement which they now enjoy. No. I mean strong in its hold on the mind, the affection, the imagination of the peoples of India. This is a duty which lies not only upon Muhammedans, but equally upon Hindus, Parsees and Sikhs, upon all who are convinced of the benevolence of British rule. If there are any among the less thoughtful members of the Hindu community who think they can snatch temporary advantage by racial supremacy, let them pause upon all they would lose by the withdrawal of that British control under which has been effected the amazing progress of the past century. These are the

patriotic ideals which, I think, should animate the Muhammedan community at the present juncture.... Ours must be no lukewarm patriotism, no passive unemotional acquiescence in the established order. It must be a living, controlling, vitalizing force, guiding all our actions, shaping all our ideals. Here in the Deccan we should pursue these ideals and combat the disruptive, retrograde forces at work in no sectarian spirit. Rather should it be our task to persuade by precept and example those who had strayed from the path of true progress to return to it."

At an early age—he was then only sixteen years of age—the 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-Muhammedan riots in Bombay in 1893. On that occasion he threw all his weight on the side of law and order and 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, who were in danger of being attacked by the Muhammedans. Ever since that time he has exerted his authority to promote the cause of peace.

In December 1910, the late Sir William Wedderburn came to India to preside over the session of the Indian National Congress. He preached the gospel of conciliation and co-operation. On that occasion it was proposed to invite a Hindu-Muslim Conference at Allahabad. The Aga Khan, who took a prominent part in the Conference, in giving to the writer his views on the burning subject of the day—the union and unity of the two races—welcomed the movement most sincerely, for he considered no catastrophe so great as disunion and rupture between the two great communities. He had been feeling most strongly and had long urged vigorously that the chief need for India at the moment was a healthy national unity. He had been insisting for many years on the necessity of establishing harmonious relations between the different communities, by

relegating to the background racial and religious questions. They were all partners in the mightiest and most glorious Empire the world had ever seen, they were component parts of the body politic and creatures of one God. To his mind Hindus and Muhammedans were like the two arms of a nation; they could not sacrifice nor injure one without weakening the other. Their united efforts were necessary for the good of the country for its peaceful and orderly development under the aegis of the Crown, and it was a sacred duty on both sides to work whole-heartedly and with single devotion for the promotion of measures that would secure the lasting welfare of the country. He considered no sacrifice too great, no efforts too arduous with a view to secure friendliness between the sister communities. This was a momentous period of great awakening in both races; and this was a grand opportunity for bringing the two races into closer and more friendly union. They require each other's co-operation and goodwill and practical help in promoting social and industrial measures. The proposed conference for the discussion of their differences must be made a permanent annual institution. They must establish "vigilance committees" in different centres, and establish a common meeting ground for representatives of both communities. They must work to find out the causes of irritation and take prompt measures to remove them as soon as the least signs of unpleasantness manifested themselves. He believed that the riots at Calcutta could easily have been prevented if the leaders on both sides had taken up in advance the questions between them and taken steps to remove any misunderstanding. Such deplorable occurrences did good to nobody; they retarded peaceful progress and added to the difficulties of their rulers.

The sphere of work of the Muslim League, he said was not confined to the narrow limits of political activity, nor to the attainment of merely selfish ends; it embraced Catholic interests, in the broadest sense of the

term. There were numerous problems of great moment and common interest to which combined and sustained effort could be directed with great advantage to the State and the public. He was very anxious to see Sir William Wedderburn succeed in his noble mission.

The Aga Khan then proceeded to assure the interviewer that if that mission did not succeed as it ought to, it would be through no lack of support or sympathy from himself or his Muslim friends. He would do what lay in his power to advance the movement for conciliation, for India could not develop to its full, legitimate and natural dimensions until all forces worked harmoniously as a whole and until the warring elements were set at rest once for all. Difficult as the problem seemed, he thought that if it were tackled in serious earnest and in a business-like manner they would go a great way towards its solution. He felt most strongly that the one vital condition towards attaining the goal required serious and persistent effort. They should spare no pains till the desired end was reached. He was hopeful of the future and he was sure that the lustrum of the Viceroy of India (Lord Hardinge) would make for a vast and rapid advance in social and material welfare, to promote which was a solemn duty laid on all patriotic citizens.

The Aga Khan was laid up at Nagpur where he had gone to attend the Muslim Educational Conference. From Nagpur he went to Allahabad in a special train which was arranged at his expense. He took with him a number of leading Muhammedans from different parts of India to participate in the Conference for the success of which he worked whole-heartedly as he has done throughout his life for unity and peace in India.

The achievement of Hindu-Muslim unity, in spite of the persistent and sustained efforts made in that direction by His Highness the Aga Khan for nearly a generation appears to be as far-off today as it has ever been. Indeed, at present it would seem even further off, if the trend

of feeling, particularly in the Muslim community, is correctly indicated in recent speeches made by Mr. Jinnah, Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, Premier of the Punjab, Mr. Fazlul Huq, Premier of Bengal, Sir A. M. K. Dehlavi, a former Minister of the Government of Bombay, Mr. Abdul Matin Choudhury, a former Minister of Assam, and Maulana Zafar Ali Khan. The most important of these utterances were delivered at the session of the Muslim League held at Patna in Christmas week of 1938, and everyone of them indicated in the most powerful manner that feeling was running high among Muslims against the Congress Governments in certain of the Provinces of India. It is not necessary to pursue the causes of this state of affairs any further than remarking that it lies in age old prejudices which have no foundation in fact and no justification in reality but which are more often than not sedulously fostered and made use of by agitators for the furtherance of their own private or political ends. However that may be, the Aga Khan's dream and ideal of unity of national outlook in India as vital to the success of self-government in this country is by no means impossible of attainment though it may appear so in actual fact and experience. It is in truth easily attainable if only the spirit of toleration were striven after consciously and preserved by leaders of the two communities and in particular by those who guide the policies of the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League. As has been pointed out by *The Times*, in spite of great differences in religion, language, social organisation and race, the British successors of the Moghuls in India brought to the country an uniformity of administration and to a certain extent an uniformity of outlook which has never before been paralleled in all the past history of India, even under the Great Akbar and Asoka themselves. This uniformity of administrative policy, and the consequential uniformity of outlook resulting therefrom, engendered in the people tendencies which must



A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE WEDDING OF PRINCE ALY KHAN TO MRS. LOEL GUINNESS,

Formerly the Hon. Joan Yarde-Buller, eldest daughter of Lord and Lady Churston. The wedding took place in the Town Hall at Paris and was followed by a religious ceremony in the Paris Mosque. In the photograph (from left) are His Highness the Aga Khan, Prince Aly Khan, his bride, her mother and the Begum Aga Khan.

inevitably crystallize into a national consciousness which must be the seed of a new Indian nation. The achievement of this future development is retarded, however, in the most grave degree by what has come to be known as the communal problem and it is one of the chief titles to fame and gratitude attaching to the British in India that they have in a certain measure reduced the acuter aspects of that problem and by compelling mutual tolerance have provided conditions and an atmosphere in which unity may be achieved. It would be a disaster if the transfer of power that has taken place as the result of political evolution in this country from British to Indian hands were to lead to disintegration of that atmosphere and assist in reviving old visions and ambitions to the detriment of Hindu-Muslim relations. His Highness the Aga Khan sees, as innumerable other observers and leaders have seen, a great and even limitless future for India if its people can be united into one national unit by the cultivation of goodwill and mutual regard among the component parts of the population. In the present conditions, marked as they are by an atmosphere of disunity, suspicion and hostility, he sees as anybody must see, nothing but disaster. On innumerable occasions His Highness has expressed the earnest hope that India would profit by the lessons of the past and achieve national unity which must inevitably convert it into a strong, healthy and powerful nation. During his recent visit to India (1938-39) His Highness sought the opportunity for a meeting with Mr. Gandhi and had a full, free and friendly talk with that leader in company with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Moulvi Abul Kalam Azad. The meeting took place at Bardoli, the historic village of Gujerat whence Mr. Gandhi blazed the trail of revolt less than a decade ago, and there was a vast amount of speculation in the All-India Muslim League and Indian National Congress circles as to what formed the subject of the Aga Khan's

interview with these three leaders of the Indian National Congress. Did it presage the achievement of unity and peace between the two communities? Time alone can provide the answer. It is the earnest hope of every right thinking individual that after the return of His Highness the Aga Khan to Europe, His Highness the Nawab of Bhopal and prominent Indian Muslim leaders will continue the efforts for the achievement of Hindu-Muslim unity. The consciousness appears to be growing that with goodwill such efforts can be extended beyond mere gestures into the substantial ideal which is the vision of every true Indian leader, Hindu or Muslim.

Meanwhile a generous gesture has come from His Exalted Highness the Nizam whose donation of the magnificent sum of a lakh of rupees to the Hindu University of Benares was widely appreciated in both communities. Coming as it did from the premier Muslim ruler in India this gift to the leading Hindu University of India was expressive in the most substantial and spectacular manner of real goodwill. The cause of Hindu-Muslim unity has always been close to the heart of the ruler of the Hyderabad State and it was a fitting expression of a cherished ambition that his gift should have been made for the purpose of endowing a chair of Indian Culture in the Hindu University with the object of promoting better understanding between the Hindus and Muslims and thus bringing near the realisation of Hindu-Muslim unity. The Nizam's donation was further signalled by a remarkable coincidence in the conferment of a doctorate by the Osmania University on the veteran Hindu Prince, His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner. Under such auspices and with such circumstances to mark it, the hope should be justified that the Nizam's gift will bear good fruit in promoting the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity which the Aga Khan has made his own.

Chapter Eleven

CHAMPION OF ISLAM

BRIEF as is the survey of the Aga Khan's activities as a peace-maker in India contained in the preceding chapter, it is sufficient to indicate how well fitted he was to be of similar service in the difficult days which followed the signing of the Armistice in 1918. With the disintegration of Turkey imminent as a consequence of the War other Islamic States found themselves in danger of dismemberment, and the Aga Khan realising the threat to Islam, organised and launched a strenuous campaign to avert it, striving for their preservation to the best of his power. He threw his full weight on the side of peace and happily succeeded in averting a second war with Turkey. The part he played at this most critical juncture in the history of Europe as a champion of peace and of the Islamic States drew by his great courage and independence the admiration of right thinking men.

After the entry of Turkey into the War on the side of Germany, Muslim opinion in India, at first but slightly stirred, gradually under the direction of the late Maulana Muhammad Ali became violently inflamed. With the truculent attitude and operations of the Khilafat Committee the Aga Khan would have nothing to do. That Committee came into existence towards the end of the War at a time when Indian Muslims were experiencing grave anxiety in regard to the safety of the Holy Places of Islam and for the future of the Caliphate. These feelings were shared by the leaders of the Indian National Congress and developed an anti-British complex as powerful as were the pro-Turkish loyalties by which they were inspired. Those who led the movement found in the "Punjab wrongs" an effective instrument of propaganda against British rule in India. At such a

time and in such an atmosphere it was only to be expected that the Aga Khan could do nothing to bring the leaders of the Khilafat movement in India to listen to counsels of sanity or to adopt more reasonable lines of agitation. The Turkish people themselves, however, quashed the Indian agitation in the most effective manner possible in 1924 by abolishing at one stroke the Ottoman Caliphate and expelling the Sultan Abdul Majid Effendi and the other members of the Imperial Turkish family from the country. Islam has suffered no more cruel blow, and in India it was felt with peculiar force because, whether they approved the methods of Mr. Muhammad Ali and his associates or not, all Indian Muslims were united in desiring the preservation of the historic office of the Caliphate. The sincerity of conviction which animated the Muslims in India on this one issue does not appear to have been properly appreciated at the time and even today it is apt to be misrepresented as, for instance, in Mr. Harold Nicholson's "*Curzon: the Last Phase*." Mr. Nicholson thinks that both Lord Curzon and Mr. Montagu misinterpreted the true nature of the Khilafat agitation; his own interpretation of events at that time is in part fantastic, for he maintains that "what the Indian Muslims desired was not so much to rescue the Sultan as to demonstrate their own influence in London on behalf of the soldiers of Islam." So far as the Aga Khan is concerned, we know, of course, that nothing could be further from the truth; whether it was true of any Indian Muslim is another matter, and one certainly not to be decided upon the assertion of a writer who shows no insight whatever into Indian psychology—although he writes glibly enough of the "subservience of Oriental psychology to an accomplished fact." The attitude of the Aga Khan, as may be seen from his own records, was clear and understandable.

In the anxious days that preceded the drafting of the Peace Treaty the Aga Khan and the late Mr. Ameer Ali organised in England movements of protest against the

dismemberment of Turkey, and a letter from them, published in *The Times*, explains their point of view.

"At this critical moment," they wrote, "we regard it our duty, as citizens of the British Empire, to plead once more for a considerate hearing at the Peace Conference of the Muslim case on behalf of Turkey.

"The tranquil development of Asia, and especially of India, closely concerns England. We venture to submit that in the light of the anguish and pain which the threatened dismemberment of Turkey has created among Muslims, it is for England to stand by the Prime Minister's solemn pledge which will always remain memorable in the annals of the world as the statement of a far-sighted and just policy, which had the desired effect of calming the anxiety of Muslims and enlisting their co-operation in the War against German ambitions. His words, already quoted by prominent public men with a knowledge of the Muslim mind, will not lose force by repetition. After stating some of the objects of the burden of war that had been undertaken, he said as follows:—

"Nor are we fighting to deprive Turkey of its capital or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace."

And he proceeded to clinch his assurance in the following words:—

"While we do not challenge the maintenance of the Turkish Empire in the homelands of the Turkish race with its capital at Constantinople, the passage between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea being internationalised and neutralised, Arabia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine are in our judgment entitled to a recognition of their separate national condition."

"Nothing could be more explicit nor more emphatic," continued the letter, "than the Prime Minister's pronouncement made in the name of England. It remains, therefore, for England to satisfy the Associated Powers that the wholesale destruction of Turkey is not compatible with the interest of her Empire or her good faith towards the vast millions of her Muslim subjects. The

Minister for India, responsible for her peace and good government, did not overrate by one word the extreme gravity of the situation, or the dissatisfaction and resentment to which the attempt to throw over the Prime Minister's pledge has given rise in India and elsewhere.

"At this moment a great scheme of constitutional reform in India is on foot; its complete success must, to a great extent, depend on the whole-hearted and loyal co-operation of all His Majesty's Indian subjects. It would, in our opinion, prove a real calamity if the Muslim community, numbering over 80 millions, were to stand aloof in sullen bitterness.

"We believe that no statesman is more alive to the dangers of the situation than the Secretary of State for India. What do the Muslims want; what do we plead for? Neither they nor we ask for any new status for Turkey. We consider it, however, our duty to urge, for the fair name of England, nay of the British Empire, that the pledge the Prime Minister in the name of England gave to the world, and in particular to the world of Islam, should be maintained; and that the Turkish Sovereign, as the Caliph of the vast Sunni congregation, should be left in absolute possession of Constantinople, Thrace and Asia Minor stretching from the north of Syria proper along the Aegean coast to the Black Sea—a region 'predominantly Turkish in race.' It would, in our opinion, be a cruel act of injustice to wrench any portion of this tract from Turkish sovereignty to satisfy the ambitions of any other people. Instead of bringing peace to Western Asia, such a settlement will sow the seeds of constant wars, the effect of which cannot be expected to remain confined to the country where they happen to be waged.

"For the defection of the adventurers who dragged their stricken people, who had already undergone great misery, into the world war, Turkey has been sufficiently punished by the secular expropriation of some of her

richest provinces. But we submit that the maintenance of the Ottoman Sovereign's spiritual suzerainty in these countries, whilst maintaining his prestige and thus conciliating Muslim feeling, would be the means of making the position of the Mussalman rulers or governors of those countries unimpugnable. But so far as Thrace, Constantinople, and the homelands of the Turkish race are concerned, Muslim feeling is absolutely opposed to any interference under any shape with the Sultan's sovereignty.

"We ask your permission to add one more remark. The Afghan outbreak which we deplore should not be used, as seems to be suggested in some quarters, for the purpose of avoiding the fulfilment of the Prime Minister's pledge or the due consideration to the feelings and sentiments of the Muslim people. The outbreak in India did not deter Mr. Montagu from carrying out his promise to His Majesty's Indian subjects, nor should outbreaks like those of the Afghans or Kurds deter the fulfilment of the Prime Minister's assurance or from doing what is an act of simple justice dictated by both policy and humanity."

At this juncture Lord Sinha and His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner also came forward to support the cause of Turkey and protested strongly against its partition. A memorial, too, was sent to the Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George, by influential Muslims, including the late Sir Abbas Ali Baig, at one time member of the India Council and Dewan of an important Muslim State in India.

Meanwhile the feeling aroused by the impending fate of Turkey ran high among all classes and communities in India and in another joint letter to *The Times*, dated August 2, 1919, the Aga Khan and Mr. Ameer Ali, protesting against the proposed disintegration of Turkey, said:—

"A fresh memorial, to which we also are signatories, extensively signed by Muslims, Hindus and Englishmen, has just been

submitted to the Prime Minister, strongly protesting against the new design attributed to the Peace Conference for the dismemberment of Turkey and the disintegration of the Turkish nation. It is a reasoned document, and we trust it will receive due consideration from Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues who have the settlement of this momentous matter in their hands.

"But we beg leave to trespass on the hospitality of your columns to call the attention of the British public, who are deeply concerned in winding up the war business, to the fact that the designs of despoiling Turkey of Constantinople and Thrace, of giving her seaports to other nations, of shutting her off from all access to the sea and to the markets of the world, and penning up six or seven millions of Muslims on the plateau of Anatolia, placing the rest under subjection to alien races, will be no 'settlement' at all; it will, in our opinion, be a real tragedy and the gravest blunder. The British public, we hope, will realise what this design, if carried into effect, would in truth mean. It would shut off the "penned up" nation from all communication with their co-religionists in other parts of the globe; it would debar them from intercourse with other nations; it would deprive them of all chances of progress and development; it would sow the seeds of constant and cruel racial wars and feuds, and would be the cause of perpetual unrest in the whole of Asia, not to speak of the unquenchable bitterness it would create in the hearts of the Muslims all over the world.

"Ever since the grant of the Dewanny in 1765 to the East India Company by the Emperor of Delhi and Lord Lake's treaty in 1802, the Muslim elements have been among the most steadfast to the British Crown. And now to appease the ambitions of 'earth-hunger' of certain nationalities whose help in this war can hardly be compared with the sacrifices the Muslim soldiers brought to the cause of England, we have turned their devotion, to put it mildly, to something akin to embitterment. Whether the feeling of the Muslims of India in regard to Turkey and the Ottoman Sovereign is old or new is immaterial. It is a living and universal sentiment and must be counted as a factor in practical politics. Is it wise, is it statesmanlike, to treat this living sentiment in the way, we are told, the Peace Conference propose to do?"

Again, at a dinner given in honour of the late Mr. Edwin Montagu in December 1919, the Aga Khan reverted to the future of Turkey and said:—

"The day has passed and will never return when Indians were content to shut their eyes to, and have no influence upon, Asiatic foreign policy. To Muslims the problems I have named, touching as they do religious and social sentiments, are so near that they cannot



THE AGA KHAN AND THE BEGUM AGA KHAN
With their young son, Prince Sadrudin, at London Zoo.

be called in reality foreign questions. In a multitude of ways our Hindu fellow-countrymen have shown that they so deeply sympathise with us and so join us in asking for a generous peace with Turkey that will not punish the unborn members of that remarkable and historic race for the errors of a handful of men who allowed themselves to be dominated by the cajolery and threats of Germany, that we can honestly call this a national Indian question. The prayer is the more insistent because it is based on grounds so reasonable that they could not be better stated than in the famous speech of the Prime Minister two years ago, which did so much to calm the Muslims of the British Empire and to encourage their continued co-operation in the war against Prussian militarist ambitions. . . . We may reasonably claim that the policy of freedom and self-determination of nationalities which was then placed in the forefront of Allied aims should be applied to Muslim as well as to Christian lands—to Daghestan and Azerbaijan born out of Russian chaos, as fully as to Finland and Georgia.”

Failing to influence those who had the territorial future of Turkey in their hands, but foreseeing the intentions of the Turkish Nationalists much more clearly than English statesmen had done, the Aga Khan and Mr. Ameer Ali wrote to Ghazi Ismet Pasha, then Prime Minister of Turkey, emphasising how Indian Muslims had supported the cause of Turkey and pleading that “the religious headship of the Sunni world should be maintained intact in accordance with the Shariyyet.”

This intervention did not succeed and a last attempt to save the Caliphate, made by the Indian *Jamiyat-ul-Ulama*, met with no better fate.

The Aga Khan's book *India in Transition* published in June 1918, had a marked effect on public opinion. The chapters on Indian foreign policy and the future of Mesopotamia and Arabia, written when Germany was rapidly advancing on the Western Front, were entirely consistent with the author's post-war strictures on British policy in Mesopotamia and Arabia. At a time when lavish expenditures were being lightly regarded in expectation, soon to be falsified, of evanescent post-Armistice prosperity, His Highness criticised in a series of special articles contributed to *The Times* and other

publications, the delay in entrusting the Government of Mesopotamia to Arab hands in accordance with the spirit of the mandate which Britain had undertaken, and drew attention to the heavy cost of the over-elaborate administration which had been set up for the governance of that country.

On the wider issue of the long delayed settlement with Turkey, His Highness took every opportunity to urge upon Allied statesmen the importance, from the standpoint of lasting peace and goodwill, of fulfilling the pledge made during the war and upon which Indian and other Muslims had relied. How far short the Treaty of Sevres (August 1920) fell in this respect is a matter of history. His Highness joined in many representations, oral and printed, public and private, as to the clamant need for revision of the Treaty both in respect of the large areas in Europe and Asia Minor handed over to Greece, and to the virtual destruction of Turkish sovereignty in the areas remaining nominally under its rule.

When the Treaty was under reconsideration at the London Conference in the early spring of 1921, the Aga Khan at the request of the Viceroy left India to assist in placing the Indian Muslim standpoint before the Conference. The sittings proved abortive, and Greece began military operations in Asia Minor against the provisional Turkish Government set up in Angora. There was a threat of serious conflict owing to the demand made by the British Government for the release of certain British prisoners in Turkey. His Highness intervened and by inducing the Angora authorities to obtain the release of these prisoners, relieved a critical situation.

A still more critical situation arose when Mustapha Kemal Pasha turned the Greek Army to flight in Asia Minor. The destruction of Smyrna by fire and the advance of the Kemalists towards the Dardanelles led to a bellicose pronouncement by the Lloyd George Government (September 1922) in which the aid of the

Dominions in another war against the Turk was requested. The prospect of such a commitment was unpalatable to the British public, and strong protests were raised against further fighting in support of the Greek claims. The only strong argument of the pro-Hellenic party was that the Angora forces were almost within touch of the British Army of Occupation off the Straits and Constantinople. Those least inclined to further war were compelled to recognise that if the British forces were attacked, defensive and possibly offensive action, however, deplorable, might be imperative. The Aga Khan was requested by Lord Derby, then Secretary for War, to represent to the Angora authorities the grave peril of an attack on the British forces, and to give assurances that, pending a provisional settlement, the strategic position of the Kemalists should not be prejudiced by abstention from any hostile action. These considerations, pressed with much insistence by His Highness, prevailed; public opinion in England had time for expression, and the great menace of yet another war in the East was averted.

The first Lausanne Conference on the question of treaty revision was abortive.

The Aga Khan felt strongly that for the safety of the Indian Empire, a real and not a fictitious peace in the East was absolutely necessary. He was present at the second Lausanne Conference, and as friend of both parties contributed substantially, though entirely unofficially, to the ultimate success of negotiations which were repeatedly on the verge of a breakdown. His zealous efforts and conciliatory methods and unflinching fight for obtaining justice were largely responsible for obtaining the final peace terms.

The events of those memorable days have been narrated by Lord Beaverbrook in a book entitled *Politicians and the Press*. Lord Beaverbrook visited the Aga Khan at Deauville when he discussed with him the disastrous character of the relationship of the English

Government with the *de facto* Turkish Government. Lord Beaverbrook made arrangements through the medium of the Aga Khan for a meeting with Mustapha Kemal. When he reached Constantinople in the first week of September, the whole situation had been transformed. The Greeks were in full flight for Smyrna and the coast—the Turks were taking on an altogether dominant air. Lord Beaverbrook's conviction was that "for Britain to fight Turkey in pursuance of the exploded policy of supporting Greek Imperialism was a monstrous error, which must be avoided at all costs."

On his return he tried the power of private persuasion in the interests of Anglo-Turkish peace. He had long interviews with Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Birkenhead, and Mr. Winston Churchill, who then completely dominated the councils of the Coalition Ministry. He advised that they should at all costs abate the rigour of their anti-Turkish attitude and that they would not find it difficult to come to some honourable arrangement with the Turkish Government. All was in vain as Lord Beaverbrook points out—and Chanak loomed in the background. When three or four days' discussions had proved unavailing he saw Bonar Law and told him that "these men mean war," and as he points out, this sentence epitomising the situation was the signal for the overthrow of the Coalition Government.

Lord Beaverbrook continued his campaign against the Coalition Ministry for their pro-Greek tendency and for encouraging the Greeks in their invasion of Asia Minor which ended so disastrously when the routed Greek armies fell back on Smyrna.

On Saturday, December 16, the day after the House of Commons had risen for the Christmas recess, the *Daily Express* published a sensational statement. It declared that within ten days of the fall of Smyrna, when the Greek rout had already begun and the Greek Government themselves recognised that their military position in Asia Minor was hopeless, Mr. Lloyd George

had encouraged the Greek army to persevere in their resistance. It revealed the fact that Mr. Lloyd George took this action after he had made enquiries, only a few days before, through Sir Edward Grigg, then one of his Private Secretaries, of a person attached to the Greek Legation in London, and had been told that the Greek army could not possibly hold out without active British assistance in money credit or munitions. *The Daily Express* further stated that on September 2 when the Greek army was already in flight, the Government of Athens appealed to Mr. Lloyd George to arrange an armistice and that another of the Premier's Private Secretaries telephoned back to the Greek Legation that "their Government should be very careful to avoid the mistake made by the Germans in 1918 and not conclude an abject armistice in a moment of panic."

The Chanak disaster clearly indicated the deep-seated antagonism against Turkey on the part of certain politicians in England and in proportion to the influence of those politicians the Aga Khan's difficulties for avoiding another war and bringing about a settlement between England and Turkey increased. Here was a design to drive out Turkey from Europe, to destroy its sovereignty in its remaining territory, and there was an insidious, subtle and powerful movement set on foot to accomplish this end. The years 1918 to 1922 were therefore a period of strenuous, persistent and sustained efforts for restoring peace between England and Turkey. The Aga Khan's indignation found expression in his strong but dignified appeals on behalf of Turkey.

But his greatest triumph was when, with the help of eminent Englishmen, he succeeded in preventing another war with Turkey. That was the greatest service he rendered to the Empire, to the sacred cause of peace and to humanity at large.

Had a second war with Turkey broken out, it would have antagonised the Muslim States, the vast number

of His Majesty's Muslim subjects, and the whole of India against Great Britain.

When at last the Lausanne Treaty was signed (July 1923) the Aga Khan issued a pacific message to the Muslims throughout the world.

"I am sending this message," he said, "from Lausanne where, for the first time in recent history, a Treaty has been signed by the Muslim nation upon equal terms with the Great Powers of the West. This Treaty reflects credit upon the steadfast leadership of Mustapha Kemal Pasha and Ismet Pasha. It also reveals the earnest desire of Great Britain, France and other Western Powers to be friends of Turkey and Islam. Under this excellent Treaty Turkey becomes for the first time in two hundred years an independent and compact national state. Its sovereign powers will no longer be impaired by privileges enjoyed by foreigners. No foreign troops will remain on her soil and her independence is complete. The Turks recover Constantinople, Adrianople and Thrace. Islam owes this highly satisfactory settlement to the great and heroic Turkish sacrifices and Turkish courage and fortitude, but also to the good will and sincere pacific desires of the masses in Great Britain and France and Italy. Also we owe a great debt of gratitude to H. E. the Viceroy (Lord Reading) and the Government of India for their constant support. This peace signifies that past quarrels are finished and forgotten. It means that the Turkish national State which is now free should be able to make lasting friendship on equal terms with Europe and America. To Indian Muslims I wish to say that, in my belief, Turkish statesmen sincerely desire friendship with England and I feel sure they will welcome the extension of commerce and trade with England. I also appeal to my friends in India to do nothing that may mar the new relations or embitter the restored friendship between England and Turkey. Instead of displaying activity that is out of date and which can do no good to Turkey,

Indian Muslims should help Turkey to recover her prosperity. Indian Muslims should be informed that the treaty has the support of His Majesty the King-Emperor's advisers and that the best advice I can give my Indian Muslim brethren is to do the utmost to help this national Muslim State in her hour of need. This can best be done by taking practical steps. Turkey has suffered terrible losses and her people require direct aid. We should send from India special missions to restore sanitation, combat disease, restore health, encourage children's welfare, and promote social well-being. It is to the youth of Turkey that we must look for her salvation and we can only do it by helping the children. I have handed through Turkish delegates here one thousand pounds for orphans in Turkey. I recognise the Treaty leaves Arab people in an unsatisfactory position and does not bring free unity to Arabs, but I think the Arab problem is not hopeless. If we work with effort and goodwill a satisfactory solution will yet be found. Friends of Arabia are numerous in Great Britain and I earnestly commend to Muslims this Treaty which gives Turkey a new place in history of which I am sure she will prove more than worthy. We in India cannot help her by politics, but can help her by undertaking the task of recovering health, restoring peace and prosperity and thus enabling her to become the brightest jewel in the diadem of Islam."

This message bespeaks the Aga Khan's love for Islam, his admiration for Turkish courage and his hope for an independent powerful Turkey which has by now been fully realised.

In a remarkable article contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* for October 1923, he urged on European readers the need for more cordial relations and better understanding as between Muslim countries and Western Powers. He pointed out that the persistent aspirations of the modern world of Islam are toward the upbuilding of independent national states, not dangerous to other

peoples from a military or naval point of view, but free from foreign tutelage, and working toward the cultural and intellectual improvement necessary to bring Islam into line with the great progressive countries of the world of to-day.

The leaders of serious thought in Turkey or in Persia, in Afghanistan or in Egypt, he declared are not, aspiring to curtail, under the banner and ideal of pan-Islamism, the independence or individuality of any non-Muslim state. They seek only to develop their own independence and individuality to the utmost along national and state lines. It is impossible to appreciate or even to understand their policies unless one realises this.

The Aga Khan has always been a staunch champion of the independence of the Arabs. He has been a consistent and valiant supporter of the rights of Arabia. In strongly urging their claims he wrote not long ago:—

“If the statesmen of Europe, and especially the guides and teachers of the British Empire, recognize their own permanent interests, they will encourage to the utmost this wholesome and desirable Islamic movement. They will give their moral support to the upbuilding of a truly independent Turkey, Persia, Egypt and Afghanistan, each working out its own national salvation by peaceful and cultural methods and improving not only its own civilisation, but ultimately that of the world in general by contributing to the common stock those virtues which have been associated through the centuries with Islamic culture.

“The one great cloud in this horizon is the case of Arabia and other portions of the former Turkish Empire. The Arab race is divided into minor sovereignties and principalities. The history of Arabia for at least five hundred years and even during the Turkish occupation of the main centres demonstrates the enormous influence in Arabian life of tribal pride and polity. It is in these regions of our survey of Islamic States that we find those vague and uncertain conditions, those inner divisions, and those possibilities of sudden upheavals that encourage European domination and European occupation. On the other hand, we must bear in mind this important factor in the problem: that the Arabs have never forgotten their racial unity, nor lost their active desire to achieve it politically.

“In my humble judgment the right solution of the Arab

question will call for a greater application of statesmanship and breadth of outlook from the leaders of Great Britain and France than is required for any other international problem of the East. In spite of passing and temporary difficulties, the public opinion of Western Europe, and especially of England, should insist on working for a real and free Arabia, a federation of small States with Mecca or Medina as its cultural centre, and including Syria and Palestine. Thereby a great act of international justice would be achieved, and a dangerous focus of infection and trouble in the East would be transformed into another healthy and thriving Muslim State, to take its place by the side of the four others—not, indeed, as an ally of any one of them, but as a member of the League of Nations.

“Will the man-in-the-street, who insisted a year ago on justice and fair dealing with Turkey, insist before it is too late that the Arabs, who rendered such immense service to the cause of the Allies throughout the war, should also attain the national independence, free from intervention and control, which Turkey and Afghanistan have secured? In this case, of course, a quality will be needed for which the French have an excellent expression—*doigté*. That quality is rare, but it is not beyond the best statesmanship of Great Britain.

“It must be recognised that there can be no dominant Central Power in the Arab countries, and that dynasties, and in fact thrones and constitutions, will have to be of an elastic nature. For though the Arabs, unlike the Turks and the Afghans, are of one race and religion, they are rooted deeply in local and tribal patriotism. Arabian history has shewn that as far as forms of Government and the personality of rulers are concerned, the Arabs are inclined to be fickle and changeable. But these difficulties should not be insoluble, at any rate if Western Powers are not continually intervening to impose their will in these matters.

“If the public opinion of England insisted that its governing classes should seek to bring about, by whatever means at their disposal, a truly free Arabia from the frontiers of Turkey to the Indian Ocean, and from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf, I am convinced that agents could be found in Great Britain with such intimate knowledge of the conditions in the countries concerned as to render possible the discharge of this difficult task. Such a solution of the Arab question would, once for all, remove all likelihood of friction in the Near East between Great Britain and France on the one side, and on the other between the British people and the five independent Muslim nations, as also between them and their Muslim fellow-subjects and fellow-citizens of the British Empire.”

In a remarkable article contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* for October 1923, he urged on European readers the need for more cordial relations and better understanding as between Muslim countries and Western Powers.

The Aga Khan's firm stand for the rights and independence of the Islamic States has been responsible to a great extent for the amelioration of the conditions in those States.

Chapter Twelve

NOBEL PRIZE FOR PEACE

INDIAN LEGISLATURE'S RESOLUTION

IN view of the Aga Khan's strenuous and persistent efforts to prevent a second war with Turkey, the feeling was widespread in India that they should be adequately rewarded. A resolution was therefore moved in the Council of State on February 5, 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., LL.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 remarkable, not only as a tribute to His Highness from the Upper House of the Indian Legislature but as 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 came in the first place from some Norwegian and Swiss papers, which had advocated the right of the Aga Khan to be considered a worthy candidate for this distinction, and, as soon as it became known in India, it met with enthusiastic support from Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, the late Mr. V. J. Patel and others including several Congressmen. No Asiatic had been awarded the Nobel Prize for peace, though the prize for literature had been awarded to one of the greatest of modern Indian poets, Rabindranath Tagore; and since it was felt that the Aga Khan had deserved it for services to mankind that were truly extraordinary

since they have averted a second war at a time when such an outbreak would have destroyed civilisation already shattered by the world war, it was no wonder that Parsis, Hindus and Muhammedans should unite in the Council of State in calling attention to his merit and the Government of India under Lord Reading supporting the same.

The resolution was moved in the Upper House of the Indian Legislature by the Hon'ble Sir Maneckji Dadabhai, an industrial magnate of Central India and now the President of the Council of State. In moving his resolution, Sir Maneckji said that he was re-echoing in the Council what had been indicated in other parts of the world. He pointed out that the Aga Khan occupied a prominent place in the social and political life of India. He had acquired an international fame and reputation and his name was a household word in India as an eminent citizen who had worked with singleness of purpose for the welfare of India generally. Sir Maneckji recounted the Aga Khan's activities for the progress of peace since the day of Armistice, his successful efforts in obtaining release of British prisoners in Angora, and the part he had played at the Lausanne Conference.

The Hon'ble Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan testified to the fact that the Aga Khan had, at all critical moments in the history of the Muslim world come forward with his own personal efforts, personal influence and even his money to establish peace conditions and especially to promote good understanding between Islamic nations and the British Government.

The Hon'ble Sir Phiroze C. Sethna, an eminent leader of the Parsi community of Bombay, whose sudden death in September 1938 evoked universal regret in India, said that the Aga Khan had distinguished himself by rendering valuable service in promoting peace between warring nations. The Aga Khan, he declared was recognised as one of the greatest living



PRINCE SADRU DIN,
Second son of His Highness the Aga Khan, born to the Begum (formerly
Mlle. Andree Carron) in January 1933.

personages in the Muslim world. He wielded great influence and great power, and it was most gratifying that he had used that influence and that power to considerable advantage and for the benefit of mankind in bringing about a better understanding between the contending parties.

The Aga Khan's labours, continued Sir Phiroze it would not be wrong to say, perhaps prevented hasty action at the time and thereby averted what might have proved a conflagration between the East and the West. In the autumn of 1922, as the House would remember, Turkey drove the Greek forces from Asia and that victory greatly agitated Western nations—so much so that the then Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George, nearly drove Great Britain to the verge of a new war just when the entire Muslim world had awakened to the need of supporting Turkey at any cost. The services rendered at that time by His Highness and from that time right up to the time when the two Conferences were held in Lausanne, were certainly conspicuous. That the Aga Khan exercised a strong influence against suggestions for the despatch of Allied support to Greece under the restored King Constantine in the war with the Angora Government, and in bringing public opinion to bear in England to recognise the necessity for a complete readjustment of British policy in the Near Eastern policy, has been acknowledged on all hands.

The exceptional significance of the resolution arose from the fact that while the Nobel Peace Prize had been given to eminent European and American workers in the cause of peace, it had not yet been conferred on an Asiatic. The opinion was held that the time was ripe for its award to a representative of Asia—a continent which contains within its borders five-ninths of the total population of the world, as compared with Europe's quota of little more than one-fourth.

The problem of securing and maintaining peace between the myriad peoples of Asia and the races of

the West has engaged the earnest attention of historians and thinkers for generations. Since the defeat of Tsarist Russia by Japan early in the century one prophet after another has drawn sombre pictures of the Yellow Peril, and of the possibilities of the subjugation of Western lands by Asiatic irruptions. However fanciful these dreams may seem, it is undeniable that this century has witnessed a remarkable quickening of both Asiatic nationhood and Asiatic solidarity in facing the traditional dominance of the white races. In Europe there is a new realisation of the potentialities of the overwhelming manpower of Asia, now reinforced incalculably by the rapid absorption of Western ideas, and the use of the material instruments forged by the science and enterprise of Western peoples. Current literature and discussion show that these have led to a remarkable change of outlook towards Asia by European thinkers and statesmen. A new attitude of mind has been found essential to the peace of the world, and has been particularly marked in the case of the Great Powers with large commitments in the East.

The process of a new orientation has still to be completed, and in this day of transition immense service is rendered to mankind by efforts to promote mutual understanding and good-will between the West and the East. It may be said without hesitation that no Asiatic has equalled His Highness the Aga Khan in efforts, both general and specific, to secure this end. He has pursued it with unwavering consistency through a public career now extending over forty years.

The dominating influence of His Highness on his widely scattered followers has always been exerted in the cause of peace, or in time of war, as the best road to peace, of loyalty to the Empire to which the great majority belong. He also has the great importance attaching to the position of the foremost Indian Muslim of our day.

There are potentates of influence in Eastern lands who

lack the knowledge and experience to relate the problems with which they have to deal to European standards and conditions. Happily, the unique influence of the Aga Khan is broad based. By culture and by frequent residence in Europe, he is quite as much at home in the West as in the East, and his intimate knowledge of European affairs and European public men is not approached by any contemporary Indian, whether Prince, publicist or politician. As 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 strengthening and confirming a new and better angle of vision between Europe and Asia has been of incalculable value.

Chapter Thirteen

LEADER AND GUIDE OF THE MUSLIMS

GOKHALE and Ranade, Dadabhoy Naoroji and Phirozeshah Mehta, Budroodin Tyabjee, Telang and Bannerjee, were all great personalities and Indian leaders of their day. One wonders, if they still lived, where they would be in the political conditions of to-day—in the lead or on the back benches? And really if you think of it, that question is not so easily answered. In the case of the Aga Khan the staggering political changes of the past three decades have left him precisely where he was before they had begun; he remains, as he was, undisputed leader of his people, respected alike by the Indians and the British, a man whose opinion counts wherever and to whomsoever it is uttered. A born leader of men, he is not merely abreast but invariably ahead of the times in which he lives and he works hard and constantly to keep himself in touch with men and affairs in a world where everything is in a state of flux all the time and nothing seems to be settled. Nearly a generation ago, the Muslim community paid him the unusual tribute of publicly appointing him its leader. His attainments in the political, economical and social sphere, his activities in India and the widespread influence and esteem he commands all over the world have helped him to the position of a great Indian leader and enabled him to hold it. Innumerable addresses presented to him by his own as well as other communities continually emphasise the remarkable supremacy unanimously accorded to him wherever he is, but in the most special degree, of course, among his own people.

The Anjuman-i-Islam Hall, Bombay, on January 10, 1910, was the scene of an enthusiastic and influential

Muslim gathering in honour of the Aga Khan, who was presented with a complimentary address from both the Shiah and the Sunni sects in appreciation of his services in the cause of the country in connection with the Morley-Minto Reforms. The address in the name of both the sects referred to His Highness as their leader, a testimony of influence that is remarkable enough to warrant more than passing notice. The late Sir Currimbhoy Ebrahim, Bart., read the address, in which it was stated among other things that by his learning and courtesy and the deep and unflinching interest he had always taken in the welfare of the community he had endeared himself to every Muslim heart in India and they were proud to own and acknowledge him their leader.

The address then referred to his single-hearted devotion to the cause of Muslim progress, social and political, and claimed that his efforts had met with such success as to justify the hope that the future of the Muslims of India had been secured. Recalling his various services the address pointed out that in getting the principle accepted by the Government of India that the position and status of the Muslims should be estimated, not merely on their numerical strength, but with due regard to the political importance of the community and the services it had rendered to the Empire, His Highness had rendered lasting and truly inestimable service to the entire Muslim community of India. The address continued:—

“Nor have you worked only for the advancement of the Muslim community but also for the improvement of the condition of the Indians in general. When the first public meeting of protest of the citizens of Bombay against the great hardships and sufferings of the Indians in South Africa was organised, it was to Your Highness that the eyes of everyone turned as the fittest person to preside at such a meeting. Your Highness did preside at the meeting and you have since continued to take the keenest interest in the struggle of the Indians against the unjust rules and laws that unfortunately obtain in South Africa.”

"Your munificence and liberality in the cause of Muslim education have justly won for Your Highness the love and esteem of every true Muslim. Our Prophet of blessed memory prided himself on being the "city of knowledge" and called his son-in-law Ali "its gate," "Acquire knowledge," said he, "for whoso acquireth it in the way of the Lord performeth an act of charity." We need scarcely refer further to the many exhortations to acquire knowledge which our Prophet had made to his followers. Your Highness has inherited that love of knowledge and its encouragement which has characterised Your Highness's life from its very childhood. We acknowledge with thankfulness and gratitude your munificent donations and grants to this institution and to the great Muslim institution of India, the Aligarh College."

His Highness in reply delivered a thoughtful speech. He began by saying he was very proud, indeed, that the Muslims of India should so magnificently appreciate the humble services that he had found it possible to render to them. What he had done however, was no more than his duty. His Highness added :—

"As you know, it was a hard and difficult constitutional struggle and your representatives had no light task to perform in overcoming prejudices and preconceived notions in some quarters, but I am glad to say that the justice of our cause has prevailed, thanks to the high statesmanship of our rulers and their innate sense of fairplay and to the very powerful support of English and Anglo-Indian journals of exceptional weight, especially of *The Times* and other leading organs of public opinion. Among our staunch advocates were men of great talents and patriotism, with high notions of justice."

"You have been kind enough to refer to me as the leader of the Muslims. It is the greatest honour that any individual can aspire to and that a community can confer, but the mighty responsibility upon any Muslim leader cannot be ignored or lightly treated. Any man in the world can well be proud of being termed a leader of the Muslims, who have made fascinating and romantic history in many countries. But now, what are the duties of a leader? True leadership consists in thinking out a practicable programme of constructive policy consistent with principles of truth and harmony, worthy of the past traditions, and the historical and political situation in the Empire of which Indian Muslims form such an important part, and in steering them on the right path by persuasion and advice. A leader's function is to restrain any dangerous extremism and to enlighten the people as to what the good of the country requires and to instil in the minds of the public the influence

and feelings of humanity and brotherhood. But to construe any such policy for the Muslims of India involves an immense difficulty. The political task of a patriot in European countries like England, Germany and France, with their comparatively united peoples and their healthy and more or less simple past is comparatively easy. Whether he be a Socialist, an Imperialist or a Conservative, a patriot in European countries can concentrate and focus his energies and thoughts and follow certain well-defined principles of policy clearly marked out by the interests of his people according to the lights of his party. But it is not so in India, where the historical past traditions and differences in religion and social customs make the task peculiarly difficult. It is difficult for any Indian patriot to lay the line clearly but it is more so for a Muslim leader, owing to a combination of superficially and apparently conflicting ideals and interests. The task of an Indian Muslim patriot who takes upon himself the thinking out of a policy that is best for his people is peculiarly difficult, for he has to think of seventy to eighty millions of people with internal differences of race, language and colour, and with peculiar institutions in a country which has passed through various vicissitudes and in the midst of a vast Hindu population upon whose welfare the future of Indian Muslims depends.

"Then there is another fact, which makes the Muslim position more complicated. For all time to come Muslim interest is bound up with the progress of the sister communities and it is our duty and privilege to continue on the most cordial and fraternal terms with the vast Hindu population and also with so many other small minorities, each sub-divided into castes and creeds, yet the welfare of every one depending upon the welfare of its neighbours. Again sentiment and love would always attach the Muslims of India to the welfare of their co-religionists outside India, whether they are independent or self-governing communities like those in Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan and Morocco, or whether they are subjects of non-Muslim sovereigns as in China, Russia or France. All these duties, interests and sentiments must have a legitimate place in the ideal life and in the moral and intellectual outlook of Muslims. This presents a formidable difficulty.

"Now to co-ordinate all these interests and to harmonise conflicting elements and to reduce some of those sentiments to their legitimate places and to concentrate more and more on the fundamental duties and interests without interfering in the legitimate sphere of the secondary ones is not an easy matter. And first of all you have to find a practical line of action that will legitimately help forward each one of those ideals. Such are the inevitable difficulties and complications that face anyone who pretends even

for a moment to lead the Muslims of India. Of course on this occasion I cannot say much about the practical and constructive policy that may meet all the requirements of the Muslims.

"The duty, sentiments, honour and interest of the people we represent should be all focussed and a course should be determined—one that will satisfy each legitimate aspiration while preventing any from overlapping into another sphere. That course should be laid down with mature consideration, deep thought and consultations with eminent Muslims and non-Muslim English and Indian compatriots of the Muslims. Fortunately, there is one object in front of us to which we can give whole-hearted devotion, being perfectly sure that whatever happens the result of that object will do credit and give satisfaction to all concerned.

"That one object is the improvement of education. The Muslims should enlarge the sphere of education where it exists already and must create it where it is absent. Scientific and technical education in all its various branches such as commercial, industrial and agricultural instruction must be the main practical objects of our energy and ambitions. At the same time the literary side so beautifully known as the Humanities should not be neglected and our interests as well as sentiments make it necessary that a knowledge, not only of English, Arabic and Persian, but also of Sanskrit literature should exist amongst us so that we may come in contact with the sources of Hindu civilisation and the roots of Hindu society.

"I am glad you have quoted with approval and reverence the example of our beloved Prophet for giving encouragement to learning and science. He encouraged his followers especially recommending them to go to various centres of learning in Rome and China that they might get knowledge and learn to respect the conventions of foreign thought and society.

"The great need of the country is development of its resources amongst which I give the first place to the development of its intelligence by education. But it is impossible that the country should develop if we live in a state of endemic anarchy that destroys the confidence between the rulers and the ruled and which eventually recoils on Society at large. We must not forget that for the first time in the history of India the rulers have made endeavours to share with the people the responsibility of Government. The Government is quite competent to deal with disorders and physical anarchy. It is true the whole of India has protested against the senseless crimes that have recently made a big blot on the fair name of India. But protests and repression are ineffectual and unavailing so long as Society as a whole does not stir itself and take active and vigorous measures to restore healthy conditions and root out the anarchical

spirit on its intellectual side. What we want is not protests after the foul deed is done; but we must go deeper and think out a policy to prevent the state of mind that produces evil-doers. We should send out earnest missionaries to preach sanity, to bring misguided zealots to see, through reason and righteousness, the sacred nature of the ties that unite Indian Society and the Government. We must consider ourselves as members of a common brotherhood and we must exert ourselves to prevent the violation of laws of society and humanity in the spirit of the words of the Persian poet Sa'adi: *Bani Adam Aza'i Yakbi Garand*.

"One immediate and sacred duty rests upon us all and that is that this institution must be made a permanent living force in the Muslim life of this beautiful city and worthy of the renowned race to which we belong. We must equip it with the latest machinery of education. We should remember that the rights we have obtained are not an end in themselves but are a means to an end in new and economical conditions of the people. Now that we have won certain forms of rights, our objects should be to make good use of the forms with moderation and wisdom and sincerity and to strive to turn out energy to improve the condition of the people and to advance the progress of the country."

His Highness concluded by saying that he would cherish the most pleasant recollections of that day and he assured them that if ever he was called upon to serve the interests of the community or to further its material prosperity, he would not be found wanting and would consider it a happy privilege to serve them to the best of his power.

His Highness has more than fulfilled the obligation assumed by him and to-day the Muslims have come into their own through his unceasing exertions to advance their political progress and material prosperity.

Indefatigable and enthusiastic champion of Islam though he is, nevertheless he is a hater of communalism and sectarian prejudices and has always set his face against such influences and advised the Muslims against harbouring desires for a monopoly of political power in India. At the historic Muslim gathering over which he presided in Delhi in December 1902, he said:—

"In Muslim society we too often hear futile laments over the loss of political power, but we must remember that in the modern

world a monopoly of political power such as Muslims once had in India is neither possible, not even desirable. Now that general liberty is given to all, the monopoly, or even the desire for a monopoly of political power is both immoral and of no benefit. The just man does not even wish to possess privileges to the necessary exclusion of others and on the other hand a desire for industrial and financial pre-eminence is perfectly legitimate, because it is obtained by that full competition of the energies of individuals without which rapid progress is, perhaps impossible."

The Aga Khan has always deplored the neglect by Muslims of the rich and important 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. This has been his main advice to the community and his own pet ambition for its welfare and development from the very earliest days of his leadership.

Chapter Fourteen

KING GEORGE V AT ALIGARH—RENAISSANCE OF INDIAN MUSLIMS—SPIRITUAL UNITY OF ISLAM

"Most of the ills of India can be ascribed to the general want of knowledge."—H. H. the Aga Khan in *India in Transition*.

IN the history of India during the present century there has been scarcely any development so important as the awakening of the Muslim community to the need of protecting and advancing its own interests. The Aga Khan's influence and the measures initiated by him have been largely responsible for the political growth of Muslim India. Since the downfall of the Moghul Empire, the Muslims had held back from the study of English and refrained from taking part in politics and had, therefore, not fitted themselves for public life and office. In the early years of the twentieth century that attitude was changed and when in the latter part of 1906 it became known that organic changes were contemplated, the Muslim deputation led by the Aga Khan asked the Viceroy Lord Minto to press for adequate representation for the community both on local bodies and on the legislative councils.

The Morley-Minto reforms, which were first discussed in 1906 and were embodied in the Indian Councils Act of 1907, afforded an opportunity for adopting the principle of separate representation. This principle, however, was not accepted without considerable opposition and it may confidently be said that ultimate success would not have been achieved if the Aga Khan and his community—including such famous men as Nawab Syed Hussain Bilgrami and Nawab Moisin-ul-Mulk—had not pursued their claim with unusual

persistence. It must be acknowledged that were it not for the encouragement received by the Muslims on account of separate and communal representation, their progress would have been negligent. In politics, as they were situated, they would, unless safeguarded, have stood little chance of progress as compared with the more adaptable members of other communities.

Lord Minto's sympathetic assurance that the political rights and interests of the community would be duly safeguarded in any change in administration that might take place gave great satisfaction in every Muslim centre. It was in fact the first official acknowledgment of the Muslim right to political advancement. A deputation led by the Aga Khan had been successful in obtaining recognition of a great political principle; as such it marked a turning point in the modern political history of Indian Muslims. In the Bombay Presidency the community over which the Aga Khan presided with such distinction possessed such eminent leaders as Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola who, like his revered leader, valiantly pressed Muslim claims. Having thus awakened political consciousness, it was natural for the Muslims to wish to form some kind of effective organisation to awaken their co-religionists and protect their communal rights; in 1906 the All-India Muslim League came into existence, mainly due to the influence of the Aga Khan. It has played a most important part in Muslim awakening. A few years later at the inauguration of the 1910 session of the League the Aga Khan claimed legitimate pride for his political child.

One of the ideals to which he looked forward was that of an united people of one nationality among whom religious differences, then so acute, would have minor significance as they have in the social and political life of, for instance, the United States as between Christians and Jews.

The root of Muslim political poverty lay in educational backwardness, to attack the latter was to ameliorate the

former. No one appreciated this fact more than the Aga Khan and education in consequence became to him the most important part of his mission.

The subject has been consistently in his thoughts and by precept and practice he has endeavoured to rouse not only his co-religionists, but the whole of India to the need of a better and a more widely diffused standard of education than had yet been attempted in the country. His ideals have been expressed in many of his speeches and writings over a period covering more than thirty-five years, and, though he is fortunate in having lived to see some of them, which were once regarded as revolutionary, accepted almost as commonplaces, he has not ceased to urge them upon his country.

Looking back to 1902, when the Aga Khan made his debut as an educational reformer, is, for one who knows the modern history of India, almost like looking back to the dark ages. There were at that time five universities in India, all of the affiliating type. They consisted of groups of widely separated colleges, which continued to multiply exceedingly until, in 1913, the Government of India recognised the impossibility of continuing the system and admitted the necessity of creating new local teaching and residential universities. Long before the Government took that step, the Aga Khan and other influential leaders of opinion had stressed the need for reform. To the Aga Khan the advance seemed to be most imperative, especially for the Muslim community. In the nineteenth century they had made little progress and the reproach could with justice be made against them at the beginning of this century. No observer can have been more conscious of the fact than the Aga Khan. In his youthful zeal he saw his people in India firmly entrenched in indifference and ignorance. Their attitude, which he set himself to change, was due in a large measure to antipathy to Western culture arising partly from a belief in the all-sufficiency of the Sacred Writings to meet their intellectual