

**THE ALIGARH MOVEMENT : IMPACT AND RELEVANCE TO  
THE PRESENT DAY POLITICS AND SOCIETY**

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## P R E F A C E

After the revolt of 1857, the whole structure of the Muslim society changed. In fact, the fall of Mughals and the consolidation of the British rule in India were a landmark in the modern history of India. The British brought modern education with new ideas and values which the non-Muslims gladly accepted while the Muslims because of their conservative nature were less ready to avail opportunities offered by them. The Muslims had confined themselves to their conservative shells and ignorance had closed the doors of enlightenment on them. The materialistic approach and the development of science and technology in the west had given birth to a new concept of religion as it was now tested on the touchstone of reason.

Muslim became the main target of the British after the revolt of 1857 because they thought that they were their real enemies and rivals and the British held them responsible for the revolt. To this reaction, the whole of the Muslim community was uprooted and they were reduced to the lowest ebb of degradation. They followed the policy of crushing them and deliberately adopted policies which would bring about the ruins of their society. In response to this Sir Syed launched the Aligarh Movement also known as the educational movement in the later half of the 19th century because he was aware of the fact that rigid adherence to outdated customs, usages and practices was bound to degenerate a community. He also had firm faith that Muslims would not get their due place in the altered

situation unless they learnt to adjust themselves to the new situation.

Given this background, the present study has tried to explore and find out how the Aligarh Movement has solved the problems arising out after 1857. The study has also analysed and explored its impact on and relevance to, the present day society and polity.

The thesis has been divided into eight broad chapters, covering the specific dimensions of the study. Chapter-i introduces the study with a statement of the problems that has been probed, the specific objectives, a theoretical framework, the research questions and an overview of surveyed literature on the subject of research. Chapter-ii analyses the socio-economic and political background of the 19th century to know the condition of the society. Chapter-iii deals with the impact of the First War of Independence 1857 on the Muslims that had left a deep impact in the mind of Sir Syed. Chapter-iv discusses a brief biographical sketch of Sir Syed. In Chapter-v, a detailed discussion of the Aligarh Movement has been made in its historical perspectives covering the period of Sir Syed only. Chapter-vi deals with the emergence of the Indian National Congress and Sir Syed's rationale for opposing it. Chapter-vii discusses the relations between Sir Syed, the Aligarh Movement and the non-Muslims eliciting the insight as to how far the movement was secular and stood for the Hindu-Muslim unity and finally Chapter-viii analyses and evaluates the overall impact of the Aligarh Movement and its relevance to the present day society and polity.

In the preparation of this thesis, I have received much help and assistance from various sources. First of all, I must express my profound sense of gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. M. Yasin, Reader, the Department of Political Science, University of North Bengal for his methodical and scholarly guidance in shaping my research design and imagination with systematic and logical conclusion. His keen interest in the work and continuous presence, combined with affection and love gave me the rare incentive and momentum to carry on and complete this work. The present thesis thus owes much to this ideal teacher, critical researcher and creative mentor in the way of its successful completion.

I am extremely grateful to my teacher, Professor Pradip Kumar Sengupta, Professor, Department of Political Science and Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Commerce and Law University of North Bengal, for his continuous inspiration and encouragement in my research work and throughout my academic career.

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My thanks are also due to my friends, relatives and well-wishers who directly or indirectly have helped me in this study.

I would fail my duty if I do not acknowledge the indebtedness to the well-known intellectuals and scholars of the Aligarh Muslim University specially Professor Shan Muhammad, a noted scholar and an authority on the Aligarh Movement and Muslim politics. His scholarly works on the subject mentioned above immensely helped me and changed the direction of my life and interest. I am also extremely grateful to Mrs. Shan who heartily encouraged and inspired me.

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I extend my thanks to the staff of the library of the University of North Bengal, the National Library, and the Asiatic Society, Kolkata, the Azad Library, Sir Syed Academy and the library of Centre for Advanced Study of the History Department, Aligarh for making available the needed materials with promptness and care.

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Md. Helaluddin

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## CHAPTER - I

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Aligarh Movement marks a watershed in the history of modern India. It was this movement which under the leadership of Sir Syed that brought about significant changes in social, economic and political lives of the Muslims in India in particular that may be thought to have left tremendous impact on the overall society and polity of India. A close and objective evaluation of the Aligarh Movement is thus the need of the day in order to identify and find out its impact on the contemporary socio-political conditions of India as also to measure and evaluate its relevance to the present day society and politics.

The fall of Mughal Empire actually started with the failure of Duccan Policy of the Mughals and in particular after the death of Aurangazeb in 1707. After that, there was a succession of weak rulers who ruled for a short time. The defeat of Siraj-ud-Daula at the battle of Plassey in 1757 completely weakened the Muslim political power and paved the way for the establishment of British rule in India. The last concerted effort was made by the People of India to oust the British in the First War of Independence which took place in 1857. Its failure, however, resulted in the complete downfall of the Mughal Empire in India and the emergence of the British as the ruling power in this country.

After the First War of Independence in 1857, the whole structure of the Indian relating to society-political, social, economic, educational and culture-changed.

With the establishment of the British rule in India western culture and civilization were also introduced which were viewed as harmful for all Indians without any distinction of caste and creed. The Muslims were the worst sufferers because they were the rulers and they were not willing to accept the supremacy of the west whcih could damage their language 'Urdu' in particular and cultural in general and did effect their Privileged position. Moreover, Muslims considered and viewed the western culture and civilization with suspicion. They thought that by introducing western language and culture they might be trying to convert the Muslims to Christianity. The presence of a large number of Christian Missionaries not only from England but from other parts of Europe preaching the Christianity in India also increased their suspicion particularly in the event of debates that were held between Christian Missionaries and Muslim Ulema in different parts of India specially-the north. The main controvertial points were on the following :

A new system of preaching was introduced by the missionaries and the missionary schools were started in which the principles and disciplines of the Christian

faith were taught there in the boys who attended the schools were asked various questions as to who were their God, who was their Redeemer ? And the boys had to answer as to the Christian faith. In addition to these the village schools were established to preach the doctrines of Jesus Christ<sup>1</sup>.

In addition to these, the British had introduced a new system of education emphasising European History, Western Philosophy and Natural Sciences using the English language as the only medium of instruction. Though they introduced a secular and scientific education based on reason, but the traditional scholars (Ulema) were not satisfied with it because of some religious reasons. First, the English schools did not include religious instructions and secondly, the English schools tended to produce disbelief and corrupt morals and manners. That is why, many Muslims did not send their children to these schools and remained uneducated. In this way, they entered into the modern world as a stagnant and backward community<sup>2</sup>.

After the First War of Independence in 1857, Muslims became the main target of the British who felt that the Muslims were their real enemies and most dangerous rivals. For this reason, the British followed the policy of causing harm to the Muslims and bringing an end to their political

power. They deliberately adopted policies which could bring about the ruin of Muslim community and their intellectual stagnation. All avenues to government services were closed to them. The educational policy was also responsible for the increase of unemployment among Muslims<sup>3</sup>.

In short, they lost their jobs because of the change in the administration and its policy, they lost advantage of their language, literature and culture because of the introduction of western culture and civilization in India<sup>4</sup>. The Alleopathic system of medicine introduced by the British caused great damage to the Tabib, Hakim and Jarrah and others connected with the Arab medicine. Thus affecting the economically privileged position of the Muslims and alienating them to the modern values.

In response to this challenge, Sir Syed attempted to reorient Islamic values by a liberal interpretation of the Holy Quran and he attracted some of the prominent figures who shared his views. With their vigorous support Sir Syed started the Aligarh Movement. He established an institution at Aligarh for imparting modern education to his countrymen in general and Muslims in particular.

## 2. OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

Under the circumstances, the Muslim community was constantly being relegated to the second fiddle loosing their command over the society, economy and polity of the state hitherto

almost monopolized by them. Besides the gap in perception of both the Muslims and the British about each other was found to be widening day by day in view of the British policies perceived to be subservient to their colonial interest but detrimental to the interests of the Muslims on the one hand, and the perceived role played by the Muslims in the Mutiny on the other. In order to get rid of the situation of mutual distrust and the cumulative effect of this distrust on the day to day lives of the Muslim community in particular and also to provide respite to the colonial sufferings of the Indians in general, Sir Syed launched the Aligarh Movement in the later half of the nineteenth century. Given this back ground, the present study seeks to make a modest attempt to explore and find out whether the Aligarh Movement could make any headway in solving the problems of the Muslims that cropped up in the aftermath of the War of Independence of 1857. The study also seeks to explore and diagnose as to whether the Aligarh Movement is still relevant to the present day politics and society of India or not. In fine, the study makes an attempt to make a fresh evaluation of the philosophy of Sir Syed and his Aligarh Movement in the context of the present day society and politics of India.

### 3. SURVEY OF THE EXISTING LITERATURES

Sir Syed has been one of the most controversial thinkers in India. As such, there has been a galaxy of scholars writing on Sir Syed and his Aligarh Movement taking

different approaches, perspectives and lenses thus making him and his movement more controversial. A number of books, articles, reports, periodicals, letters, magazines etc. have been published by the scholars and the founder himself. These writings contains a number of documents providing factual information on the Movement as well as achievements and failures of the Movement. Besides many other discussions through the different organisations and conferences on the Aligarh Movement came out with new insights. Many of the writings indicate the positive aspects of the Movement while others the negative.

**A. A CRITICAL SURVEY OF THE WRITINGS OF Sir Syed.**

Sir Syed in his Asar-us-Sanadid<sup>5</sup> discusses the details of the forts, tombs, mosques, minars etc. of the Delhi and round about Delhi and the people of this place. In his 'Rah-e-Sunnat Wa Radd-e-Biddat',<sup>6</sup> he gives a true spirit of Islam. It rejects the traditional customs and Un-Islamic practices prevailed in the Muslim society. 'Sharkashi-e-Zila Bijnour',<sup>7</sup> edited by Dr. Syed Moinul Haque deals with the life and work of Sir Syed and educational and social reforms. In the Original text whcih deals with the history of the Bijnour Rebellion. It contains a valuable information about the revolt of 1857. Sir Syed in his 'Asbab-e-Bagawat-e-Hind',<sup>8</sup> discusses elaborately the causes of the revolt of 1857 and made the English responsible for it. 'The Loyal Mohammadan of India',<sup>9</sup> deals with those Muslims who were in favour of the British.

and loyal to them. The main purpose of the paper was to reconcile and minimise the hostility between the Muslims and the English. In his 'Risala Taheqeeq-e-Lafz-e-Nassara'<sup>10</sup> he tries to dispel it in the light of the Quran and Hadith the misconception of the English that the word "Nasara" was used against them in terms of hartrednesss or bad intention.

In his "The Scientific Society"<sup>11</sup> contains the topics dealing with politics and education. The main objective of it was to unite the Egnlish and the Indians. The other topics deal with educational problems and solutions of the Muslims.

In his 'Risala Ahkam Tuaam Ahle-Kitab'<sup>12</sup> he discusses that the Muslims can eat with the English and there was no religious bar in it . "Series of Essays of the Life of Muhammad (PBH)"<sup>13</sup> Syed Ahmed wrote in response to the book of Sir William Muir "Life of Mohammed". He tried to refute the allegations labelled against the character of the Prophet Muhammad by Sir William Muir. In his "Tazib-ul-Akhlaq"<sup>14</sup> Sir Syed's main objective has been social and moral reforms in the light of western scientific knowledge.

B. AN OVERVIEW OF THE WORKS ON SIR SYED AND OTHER SOCIO-RELIGIOU AND POLITICAL WRITINGS.

Shan Mohammad in his 'The Aligarh Movement': Basic Documents Vol. I<sup>15</sup> and 'Writings and Speeches of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan'<sup>16</sup> provide the comprehensive documents - of the Scientific

Society, the Foundation of the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College, the Mohammedan Educational Conference, speeches, lectures etc - that shaped the Aligarh Movement. Dr. Shan refutes the notion that Aligarh Movement had been anti-national and unpatriotic and believes that it was a constructive movement, a positive venture, nationalistic in outlook and secular in approach . In his book 'Sir Syed Tarikhee Wa Siyasi Ayene Mein'<sup>17</sup> he deals with the Aligarh Movement with its historical background systematically and tries to refute the allegations labelled against Sir Syed. In his another work 'Sir Syed Ahmad Khan : A Political Biography'<sup>18</sup> he examines the two important questions - what kind of education the Muslims in particular and others in general should take and why Sir Syed prevented them to join the Congress.

Aziz Ahmad in his 'Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment'<sup>19</sup> provides an essential insight into an understanding of Pakistan or of the Muslim Minority in India. In his another work 'Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan 1857-1964'<sup>20</sup> he discusses and traces the growth of modernist and conservative religio-political thought in Indo-Pakistan Islam and compares it with similar developments in modern Islamic thinking elsewhere. In his work 'An Intellectual History of Islam in India'<sup>21</sup> Aziz Ahmad examines the effect on Indian Islam of its interaction with Hinduism.

Peter Hardy in his 'The Muslim of British India'<sup>22</sup>

shows how the interplay of memories of past Muslim supremacy, Islamic religious aspirations and modern Muslim social and economic anxieties with the political needs of the alien ruling power gradually fostered a separate Muslim politics.

Ram Gopal in his 'Indian Muslims - A Political History'<sup>23</sup> and Jayanti Maitra in her 'Muslim Politics in Bengal 1855-1906'<sup>24</sup> and Francis Robinson in his 'Separatism Among Indian Muslims'<sup>25</sup>, Amlendu De in his 'Roots of Separatism in Nineteenth Century Bengal'<sup>26</sup>, and Abdul Hamid in his 'Muslim Separatism in India : A brief Survey 1858-1947'<sup>27</sup> examine the Separatist tendency and trends among the minority community throughout the second half of the nineteenth century.

Pradip Kumar Lahiri in 'Bengali Muslims Thought 1818-1947'<sup>28</sup> he takes into consideration the role of the political intellectuals of the two major communities as well as of the British Government in the development of Muslim political thought of Bengal.

K.M. Panikkar in 'Common Sense About India'<sup>29</sup> he gives a picture of new India, against the background of the national movement and the general revival of her political and social life.

Bipan Chandra in his 'India's Struggle for Independence'<sup>30</sup> deals with the abortive revolt of 1857 to the final victory in 1947. It discusses the role of the

important leaders and analyses the role of other significant strands such as the Revolutionary Terrorists, Socialists and Communists and so on.

P.C. Joshi in his edited work 'Rebellion 1857 : A Symposium'<sup>31</sup> and Surendranath Sen in his '1857'<sup>32</sup> and Metcalf<sup>33</sup>, Nomani<sup>34</sup>, Rizvi<sup>35</sup>, and Majumdar<sup>36</sup> deal with the causes, character, and consequences of the 1857 revolt; its impact on the culture of India an analysis of the reaction abroad, both of the press and the public.

Marx-Engels in the book 'The First War of Independence 1857-1859'<sup>37</sup> present a profound scientific analysis of the conquest and enslavement of India and notes the variety of forms and methods of British colonial rule and exploitation.

Tara Chand in his 'History of Freedom Movement in India' Vol. I and II<sup>38</sup> deals with the socio-political and economic structure of the 18th Century India and the impact of the British Rule on it and the trends of Muslim political thought (1857-1905) has also been discussed.

Seikh Mohammed Ikram in 'Mauje Kausar',<sup>39</sup> he examines the important religious, educational and national movements from 1800 AD to the last quarter of the 20th century.

G. Aloysius in 'Nationalism Without a Nation in India'<sup>40</sup> he evaluates anti-caste, non-Brahmin and other

socio-religious movements in a new light and seeks to place them within mainstream history.

S. Abid Hussain in his 'Hindustani Musalman Ayene Aiyyam Mein'<sup>41</sup> examines the past history of Indian Muslims and tries to show as to how they can be useful and beneficial to the Indian society.

Ranmohan Gandhi in his 'Understanding the Muslim Mind'<sup>42</sup> provides a deeply insightful and comprehensive picture of the Muslim Community in India and Pakistan through the biographical sketches of eight prominent Muslims.

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadivi in his 'Muslims in India'<sup>43</sup> deals with the achievements of the Muslim scholars in our country and their contributions to the freedom struggle.

Altaf Hussain Hali in his 'Hayat-e-Javed'<sup>44</sup> and K.H. Qadiri & David J. Matthews<sup>45</sup> give a comprehensive study of life, work and activities of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. Abdul Haq in 'Syed Ahmad Khan : Halat Wa Afkari'<sup>46</sup> and Nizami<sup>47</sup>, Ali<sup>48</sup>, Ansari<sup>49</sup>, Haq<sup>50</sup>, Hussain<sup>51</sup>, Muhammad(ed)<sup>52</sup>, Naqwee<sup>53</sup>, Ziaurrahman<sup>54</sup>, Nizami<sup>55</sup>, Malik<sup>56</sup> and Graham<sup>57</sup> discuss about the life, work thought and achievement of Sir Syed and throws light on the impact to the society.

Nasim Qureshi in his edited work 'Aligarh Tahreek: Agaz Ta Imroj'<sup>58</sup>, Mazhar Hussain in his 'Aligarh Tehreek:

Samaj Aur Siyasi Mutala<sup>59</sup> and Ishrat Ali Qureshi in her 'The Aligarh Movement'<sup>60</sup> deal with all the aspects-social, political, educational and economic - of the Aligarh Movement.

M.S. Jain in his 'Aligarh Movement : Its Origin and Development 1858-1906'<sup>61</sup> discusses the aims and ideals of the movement and presents its negative aspect mentioning the movement as anti-national and anti-secular.

Gail Minait in her 'The Khilafat Movement'<sup>62</sup> examines the cultural and educational movements that arose among the Northern Indian Muslim elite in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and then analyses the Khilafat Movement in detail.

Bashir Ahmad Dar in his 'Religious Thought of Sayyid Ahmad Khan'<sup>63</sup> discusses the reinterpretation of religious thought of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and attempts to offer a positive contribution of him in this field.

Narhari Kaviraj in his 'Wahabi and Farazi Rebels of Bengal'<sup>64</sup> tried to prove that these were not communal outburst but they were in the nature of peasant risings under a religious flag.

B.K. Narayan in his 'Pan-Islamism : Background and Prospects'<sup>65</sup> gives a few glimpses in to the future and critically examines theological or materialistic interpretation of history of Islam.

Kenneth W. Jones in his 'Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India'<sup>66</sup> examines and discusses the division between those movements that arose without being influenced by the new colonial world and those that emerged within this world and were led by individuals influenced by western culture.

Asghar Ali Engineer in his 'Rethinking Issues in Islam'.<sup>67</sup> examines the misconceptions and stereotypes regarding Islam in the Muslim Community and the non-Muslim world and wants rethinking or reevaluating of Islam on the part of both the Muslim and the non-Muslims.

Atique Siddiquee in his 'Sir Syed Ahmad Khan: Ek Siyasi Mutala'.<sup>68</sup> throws its light on the political thought and activities of Sir Ahmad Khan and the concept of the word 'nation' has clearly been explained.

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi in his 'Islam and the World'.<sup>69</sup> examines the impact left by Islam on the world of mankind. In his another book 'Muslim Mumalik Mein Islamiyat Aur Magribiyat Ki Kashm Kash'.<sup>70</sup> he compares and examines critically the Islamic Values and Western values.

Shahid Hussain Razzaqui in his 'Afghanistan Ke Pahle Mard-e-Majahid : Syed Jamaluddin Afghani'.<sup>71</sup> discusses the life, thought and activities of Syed Jamaluddin Afghani.

Anwar Moazzam in his article 'Sir Syed : Jamaluddin Afghani Ki Nazar Mein'.<sup>72</sup> published in Aligarh Magazine,

gives a clear idea of differences between Sir Syed and Jamaluddin Afghani and also clarifies why Sir Syed did not support pan-Islamism.

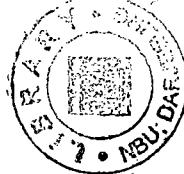
Nafis Bano in her 'Tahzibul-Akhlaq : Tahquiquee was Tanquidee Mutala',<sup>73</sup> critically examines the different topics - social, political, religious and educational-of the periodical Tahzib-ul-Akhlaque published by Sir Syed and she also includes the criticism made by its opponents.

Charles Kurzman in his edited work 'Liberal Islam',<sup>74</sup> provides a valuable introduction to thirty two significant Muslim thinkers for understanding contemporary Muslim thought.

Shan Muhammad in his recent work 'Education and Politics',<sup>75</sup> deals with the socio-political history of the Aligarh School from its inception to the present day. At the out set, education was the goal to be achieved but later it imbibed the ideals of Nationalism and led the national movement along with Mahatma Ghandhi and other nationalists.

Asghar Ali Engineer in 'Indian Muslims',<sup>76</sup> he deals with the background of revolt 1857 and its impact on the Muslims and their problems. In his another work 'Islam and Muslims',<sup>77</sup> he discusses the various aspects of Islam and the Problems of Muslims.

Jawaharlala Nehru in his 'Discovery of India',<sup>78</sup> and 'An Autobiography',<sup>79</sup> deals Indian history and about his



life respectively but he critically examined in some of the pages in both books about Sir Syed's Aligarh Movement and he supported and appreciated his movement.

Mohammad Ziauddin Ansari in 'Maulana Azad, Sir Syed Aur Aligarh Tahreek'<sup>80</sup> he deals with the comparative study between Azad and Sir Syed and shows the shortcomings in the thinking of Sir Syed. Rafiuddin Ahmad in 'The Bengal Muslims 1871-1806 : A Quest for Identity'<sup>81</sup> he shows the evolution of mass awareness among the Muslims of Bengal. Iftekhar Alam Khan in 'Sir Syed Aur Scientific Society'<sup>82</sup> he discusses the origin, development and achievement of it in details.

P.N. Chopra in 'Role of Indian Muslims'<sup>83</sup> and Ikram<sup>84</sup> and Muhammad<sup>85</sup>, they deal with the role of the Muslims in the freedom struggle of India.

Safia Amir in her 'Muslim Nationhood in India'<sup>86</sup> discusses the concept of nationhood of seven thinkers, Sir Syed is one of them who has been described as layalist.

Ram Gopal in 'How India Struggled for Freedom: A Political History'<sup>87</sup> and Mehrotra<sup>88</sup>, Wedderburn<sup>89</sup>, Andrews et al<sup>90</sup>, and Azad<sup>91</sup>, they systematically deal with the origin and development of the congress and the freedom movement of India.

Mohammad Noman in his 'Modern India'<sup>92</sup> discusses

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about how the Muslims passed through a great crisis from 1857 to 1906. Zia-ul-Hassan Faruque in his 'The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan'<sup>93</sup> systematically discusses and explains the genesis of its opposition to the demand of Indian Muslims for Pakistan and shows a consistency in its anti-British attitude.

S.K. Bhatnagar in 'History of the M A O College'<sup>94</sup> and Morison in 'The History of the M A O College'<sup>95</sup>, they deal with the history and achievements of the College.

David Lelyveld in 'Aligarh's First Generation'<sup>96</sup> and Muhammad<sup>97</sup> and Abdullah<sup>98</sup>, they deal with the role of prominent personalities in the Aligarh Movement. Rafiq Zakaria<sup>99</sup> and Shan Muhammad<sup>100</sup> in their works examine systematically about the consciousness of the Muslims and their role in the freedom movement in India.

Allama Shaqueel Arshalan in 'Asbab-e-Jawal-e-Ummat'<sup>101</sup> systematically discusses the causes for the decline of the Muslim community.

W.W. Hunter in 'Indian Musalmans'<sup>102</sup> examines the role of the Muslims in Wahabi Movement and their affitudes towards the British Government. Wilfered C. Smith<sup>103</sup> also analyses the Muslim society in details. Metcalf<sup>104</sup> Nadvi<sup>105</sup>, Baljon<sup>106</sup> and Badayauni.<sup>107</sup> in their works, they discuss about the different religious movements and Sir Syed's Aligarh Movement comprehensively. Badayauni, in particular, criticises the religious ideas of Sir Syed. K.A. Nizami in 'Secular Tradition at Aligarh Muslim University'<sup>108</sup> shows the secular approach of Sir Syed and secular practices within the campus elaborately.

Kaye<sup>109</sup>, Kaye and Malleson,<sup>110</sup> Metcalf,<sup>111</sup> Philips<sup>111A</sup> Geaves<sup>112</sup> and Gahlib<sup>113</sup> in their works, they systematically present the facts about the Revolt of 1857 and also clarify whether 1857 event is a Mutiny or a War of Independence.

Prasad.<sup>114</sup> Sharma,<sup>115</sup> and Manglori<sup>116</sup> in their writings, they discuss about the role of the Muslims in Indian Politics though Manglori's writing gives the picture of Muslim Politics before Indian Independence, 1947.

Nafish Ahmad in his article 'Some Aspects of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's Political thought',<sup>117</sup> he discusses about the political role of Sir Syed and he presents the logic why he opposed the Indian National Congress.

Spear<sup>118</sup> and Sherwani<sup>119</sup> in their works, they systematically discuss about the causes for the decline of the Mughals and Thaneshwari in his 'Islamic Tahrik Ka Mujahid'<sup>120</sup> he discusses about the role of the Mujahids in the Wahabi Movement.

Desai in his 'Social Background of Indian Nationalism',<sup>121</sup> he shows scientifically the rise of consciousness of the Indian people about nationalism.

Metcalf in his work 'the After math of Revolt',<sup>122</sup> he does not give a comprehensive history of India from 1857 to 1870. It is rather an analysis of the significance of the Mutiny for the Indian Empire and the people of India in the years that followed. Land settlement policy, social reform, education, the money lender and the position of tenant, the structure of the Government, relation with

the Indian states and the growth of racial sentiment are all examined in turn; and the impact and influence of the Mutiny on the people are assessed in detail.

#### **4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

However, the review of the literature available on the Aligarh Movement shows that most of the literature are confined to the historical description and development of the Movement. Hardly, there has been any serious research work focussing exclusively on the impact of the Movement and its relevance to the present day society and polity. In fact, most of the scholars studying Sir Syed and the Aligarh Movement appear to contribute with a biased lense and hence, ideologically prejudiced. Thus most of the studies are found to be devoid of objective evaluation of the Movement as also an assessment of the relevance of the Movement and the ideas of its founder to the present day politics and society. Thus, the present study makes an attempt to identify the gap in the chair of knowledge on the Movement and hence, seeks to fulfill that research gap by contributing and enriching the existing body of knowledge on the impact and relevance of the Aligarh Movement. In fact, the present study seeks to provide a fresh insight through an objective assessment of the Aligarh Movement in general and Sir Syed in particular.

#### **5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.**

As the review of literature suggests, there have been a large number of scholarly works on the Aligarh

Movement and the contribution of Sir Syed to liberation and rationality. But these works, in the main, occupy the extreme poles in terms of the theoretical framework. Either they eulogise Sir Syed and his movement as the most outstanding, timely and of immense contemporary relevance while others denounce the movement and Sir Syed as un-Islamic, anti-national and one that was subservient to the interests of British India. Under the circumstances both these framework seem to be adequate to provide any objective and comprehensive explanation of the Movement and its impact. Again scarcely one finds any study viewing the movement from the vintage point of the configuration of the society and its character along with dissecting the class character of the movement. As such, the proposed study seeks to undertake the aforesaid theoretical framework to make an indepth and objective assessment of the nature of the movement and its impact and relevance to the contemporary society as well as to the present day society.

#### 6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS.

Given the broad objective outlined above the present study seeks to address to the following research questions.

1. What were the long term and immediate resons that led to the launching of the Aligarh Movement ?
2. What was the relationship between Sir Syed and the Aligarh Movement on the one hand and Wahabism and pan-Islamism, Indian National Congress and the non-Muslims

on the other ?

3. What was the impact of the Aligarh Movement on the contemporary society and polity of India ?

4. What is the relevance of the Aligarh Movement and the ideas of Sir Syed on the present day society and politics in India ?

#### **7. METHODOLOGY.**

Given the broad objective of the study and the specific research questions, the present study is an exploratory type research and as such, the specific methodological design appropriate for exploratory research has been followed. As per the requirements of the exploratory research design, the informations were collected through exclusive survey of literature both primary in the form of writings and speeches of Sir Syed and secondly written by scholars on Sir Syed and the Aligarh Movement. Besides, the stay of the present researcher in Aligarh itself for a long time provided the rare opportunity to come into contact with a number of leading authorities on Sir Syed as well as a number of personalities having some informal but a valuable knowledge and experience on Sir Syed and his Aligarh Movement. The experiences of these personalities on Sir Syed were of immense help in answering the research questions and making the research more objective and exhaustive as these experiences stimulated fresh insights on both the Aligarh Movement and

Sir Syed . However, within the broad methodological design of exploratory research, the specific technique that was mostly relied upon was the content analysis. As such, apart from utilising the experiences of a number of personalities on the Aligarh Movement and Sir Syed as well as identifying some significant insight stimulating instances during the researcher's stay at Aligarh, exclusive reliance was on the analysis and interpretation of writings and documents available in various libraries, centres, academics and from personal collections, while analysing and interpreting the contents utmost care was taken to make them objective.

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## CHAPTER - II

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND OF THE FIRST WAR OF INDEPENDENCE, 1857.

The Second half of the 19th Century is very important because of the revolt of the Indian people against the British and their struggle for independence which took place in 1857. But it would not be out of place to mention some of the movements of the 18th Century which revitalised their efforts. These movements started in the second half of the 18th and the first half of the 19th Century. These were (I) Shah Waliulla's socio-religious Reform Movement (II) Fraizi Movement, (III) Wahabi Movement etc.<sup>1A</sup> The 18th century saw the beginning of the end of the Mughal Empire due to Political instability, weak central authority and growing economic poverty. This continued in the early decades of the 19th century, leading to the worst political condition. The Sikhs, the Marathas and the Muslims were not well-wishers to one another and to the English too. Though they realised that the British were their common foes, yet they could not unite together. There were mutual distrust and enmity among them. Taking advantage of this confusion the British carved out a place for themselves and they retained it for more than a century. Advanced industrial techniques and adept diplomacy further gave the British an upper hand and in collaboration with some of the indigenous states and rebellious princes they came into prominence and emerged victorious in some of the battles.

Nawab Sirajuddaula of Bengal with his patriotic sentiment tried to combat and challenge the rising forces of the British. He had the foresight to clearly realise the menace latent in British expansion and tried to check it. Moreover, the additional military fortification of Calcutta by the British 'Provoked The Nawab's Wrath'. Sirajuddaula marched to Calcutta and Fort Willium was captured by him on June 20, 1756. But it could not continue longer. One of his unfaithful General betrayed him and he was defeated in the battle of Plassey.<sup>(1)</sup> The British captured the states of Bengal, Orissa and Bihar after the battle of Palassey (1757) and Buxur (1764). Gradually the British snatched the land ownership from the Zamindars. Loot and exploitation became a common affairs feature of the day and the people escaped to Jungles to save their lives.

In the South Sultan Haider Ali, the ruler of Mysore was fully conscious of the danger that was ahead. He formed a confederacy of several powers but failed to overthrow the British. Haider Ali has left a great impression on history that he was a great fighter against the British. In 1781 when John Malcolm, a candidate for employment in the East India Company, was asked by the Director's as to what would he do if he was to meet Haider Ali ? The candidate without hesitation replied that with a sword he would cut off his head. This shows the impression Haider Ali had left on the average English boy.<sup>(2)</sup>

Tipu Sultan who succeeded his father continued his father's policy of ousting the British. He had developed a world of consciousness at a time when most of the Indian rulers were incapable of understanding the consequences of the rise of British. He followed Western techniques in his army, sent envoys to Turkeys in 1784-85 ; and to Zaman Shah of Afganistan in 1876 and in 1899 which was intercepted by the British. He did never look back, he generously borrowed both from the contemporary revolutionary ideas of the French Revolution of 1789 and from the military sciences of Napolean. His 'Ahmadi' contingent of Muslim, neoconverts was modelled on the pattern of the most modern European states sometimes resembled to the janiscaries of the Ottoman Turks rather than the army of the Mughal nobles.<sup>(3)</sup> This clearly shows his preparation to resist the British expansion and his hatred for the imperialist.<sup>(4)</sup>

Tipu Sultan symbolised the Hindu - Muslim Unity. The Mysore Government still preserves his thirty letters in its Archaeological Department written to Shankar Acharya of Srinagarmat, a great saint of his time, reverentially begging him to return to his state and pray for his success in fighting against the foreigners.<sup>(5)</sup> Tipu Sultan with his limited resources could not face a well-equipped army for long. Had he agreed to be a vassal of the English East India Company he would have saved his Kingdom. But Tipu Sultan was a patriot and defied the British even with his handful of army and fought in defence of his mother land. Paying tribute to Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan

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activities of Majnun Shah continued and in December, 1786 he assaulted an army led by Lt. Brenan in which Majnun Shah got injuries and died a few months after. Nevertheless he left behind a burning spirit of patriotism and a mission unfinished. Majnun Shah's companions Chirag Ali Shah, Musa Shah, Zahori Shah, Subban Ali Shah, Madar Bux Shah, Mutiullah Shah, Karim Shah, Umoodi Shah and other continued their resistance but they suffered defeats at the hands of the British army. (9)

From strategic point of view, Oudh was an important factor in the north and it attracted the English. The interest of the English demanded that it should be made a strong barrier of defence on the north-west boundary of Bengal. The King of Afghanistan, Zaman Khan's invasion and mal-administration of the Nawab were taken as a pretext and Oudh fell a prey to British imperialism. Ultimately, the Nawab Vazir agreed to reduce his forces and came under British control for all practical purposes increasing the number of British troops in his states. (10)

In the extreme north, the Gorkhas attacked the British and the conflict began on the question of border which ultimately led to war. The Gorkhas were defeated and the districts of Garhwal and Kumaon with a large portion of the Terai were captured by the British. (11)

The Sikhs in the Punjab began to rise with the dissolution of the Mughal Empire in the West. They were

a religious sect and formed a military confederation because of the prosecution at the hands of the Mughal rulers. They were not inferior in any respect with the Marathas or Gorkhas. When the Punjab was invaded by Zaman Shah of Kabul in 1797. Ranjit attracted his attention. When Zaman Shah had to go back to Kabul to suppress the insurrection broke out in his Kingdom he conferred upon Ranjit Singh the Governorship of Lahore for services rendered by him.<sup>(12)</sup> By 1806 Ranjit Singh had occupied all the lands of the Punjab right down to the river Sutlej. Afraid of the advance of Ranjit Singh, the Cis-Sutlej states appealed to the British for protection and this resulted in the Treaty of Amritsar (1809). Ranjit Singh conquered Kashmir in the year 1819 and in 1823 Peshwer also passed into his hands. Ranjit Singh never broke his promise with the British as agreed in the Treaty of Amritsar till his death (1839).

After the death of Ranjit Singh the whole administration had broken down, chaos and confusion reigned supreme in his mighty Kingdom. The Sikhs violated the Treaty and the British led a military expedition in reply. Ultimately after two successive wars, the Sikhs laid their arms down and the Punjab was annexed British territory.<sup>(13)</sup> The British army had been permitted by the Amirs of Sindh to pass through their country to Kabul. Since that day Sindh had gained a value as the gate-way to Western Asia. The Amirs had rendered valuable services to the British Government during the Kabul Campaign but military and political strategy needed the immediate annexation of

Sindh. With this intention Sir Charles Napier was appointed the British agent in Sindh in October, 1842. In course of time Sir Charles Napier any how concluded that some of the Amirs were ill-wishers of the British Government and he declared War against them. The poor Amirs were so weak. They could not face a well-equipped army, and Sindh was annexed to the Indian Empire.<sup>(14)</sup> In the same way, a War was declared against Burma on the Eastern frontier of the Empire and the in 1852 Lower Burma was also annexed.

The British was highly opportunist they annexed the States sometimes by War and sometimes by Peace as the situation demanded. The political history of India would be incomplete without a brief description of the territories annexed through persuasion and peaceful means and intervention. The Doctrine of Lapse', that mean the annexation of Indian States in the absence of any legal heir to the throne, was finally adopted. The states of Sambhalpur, Satara, Karauli, Jhansi, Oudh and Nagpur were annexed one after the other to the British territory either on the plea of gross misrule or the failure of natural heirs. Their unjust rule of annexation converted these friendly states into sore enemies and they demonstrated their anger and resentment during the lawful and terrible days of the First War of Independence, 1857.<sup>(15)</sup>

Indian manufactures were famous for there good qualities of products all over the world. Greeks used

Gangetika<sup>(16)</sup> which was thought to be the work of fairies rather than that of man. The muslin was so fine that it could be drawn through a ring of moderate size.<sup>(17)</sup> By far the most important item of export from the Country, says the great historian Dr. Tara Chand, was cotton piece goods. India was known for centuries all the world over for the excellence of her fine cotton products.<sup>(18)</sup> Indian sandal wood boxes, shawls, cuttery, linens calicoes, embroidery and other textile manufactures received wide acclamation in foreign markets.<sup>(19)</sup>

But British changed the flow of this prosperous commerce. Plans were made to suppress Indian manufactures. The import of Indian goods to Europe was redirected by forcing the British Free Trade on India. Heavy duties on Indian manufactures were imposed in England while the export of raw material from India, to England under special privileges was freely permitted. Some times a penalty was also imposed on those who used Indian calicoes. No attempt was made to apply the new techniques in India and every attempt was made to prevent its economic development and the growth of new industry. Machines were not exported to India. Consequently a vacuum was created which could only be filled by British goods.<sup>(20)</sup>

Mr. Montogomery Martin very frankly admitted that the Company had compelled the Indian territories to purchase their manufactures, imported

under nominal duties. He expressed his sorrow at the decay and destruction of Dacca, Murhsidabad and other flourishing centres of Indian industries.<sup>(21)</sup> They basically did not want the development and improvement of India.<sup>(22)</sup> Thus they framed the commercial policy in such a way that British only could be the beneficiaries. India only remained a source of raw-materials and it reduced the national income. Not only the industries but the agriculture also suffered from this policy.

Sir Henry Cotton says, 'The arts of spinning and weaving, which for ages afforded employment to numerous and industries population, have now become extinct. Families which were formerly in a state of affluence have been reduced to penury'.<sup>(23)</sup>

Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the child of modern Indian renaissance, advised and encouraged the Hindus to promote a more liberal and they embraced the new knowledge of Western Science and Philosophy.

On the other hand, the Muslims had no such leadership and they did not adopt the modern western education. According to Dr. Tara Chand, the Muslim mind was soaked in medievalism and it was intellectually quite unprepared to withstand the attack from the West.<sup>(27)</sup> The Muslims completely ignored Western Education by clinging to their traditional Maktabs (Private Schools and Madarasas).

At the first stage, Bismillah was introduced and then the students were made to repeat a few lines of the Holy Quran. The next stage was the frequent repetition of the Amadnamah and then some texts in Persian such as Gulistan and Bustan of Sadi; Firddausi's Shahnama and Nizami's Sikandar nameh and other works of famous Persian authours.<sup>(28)</sup> Moreover some popular romantic legends like Yusuf and Zulekha, Laila Majnun and Shirin Farahad were also taught. Maktabs were attached to mosques, supported either by the State or Private persons. Many centres of learning like Jaunpur, Khairabad and Agra had sprung up, to which students from all parts of India and even from Afganistan and Bokhara came to take lessons from brilliant and reputed specialists.<sup>29</sup> This kind of education made them well-versed in Arabic and Persian and capable of holding administrative posts under the Mughal.

Since British had started their own system of education, they were not satisfied. In the field of education, the British introduced a new system of education emphasising European history, western Philosophy and natural sciences usisng the English language as the only medium of instruction. Macaulay,<sup>24</sup> the brilliant educationist, highly advocated for the substitution of western education in India, as he was convinced 'that within a generation all respectable classes of Bengal would have ceased to be Hindu and' he wished to create a class of persons

who could be Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect'.<sup>25</sup> He was of the opinion that 'a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia'.<sup>26</sup> The Muslims thought that the English schools did not include religious instruction and the schools might tend to produce disbelief and corrupt morals and manners. They were firmly believed and were convinced that the insistence on English education would mean the conversion of their children to Christianity and would make them accept Western Literatures. Sir Willium Hunter himself affirms that our system of Public Instruction, which has awakened the Hindus from the sleep of centuries, and quickened their inert masses with some of the nobles impulses of a nation, is opposed to the traditions, unsuited to the requirements, and hateful to the religion of the Musalmans.'<sup>30</sup>

Such ideas that the people might be Christianised created a religious revivalism in India and the revival movements in Hindu and Muslim Communities started. Hindus were the first to be affected by the English impact and religious revivalism among them came first.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy<sup>31</sup> a moving spirit in the rediscovery of India's ancient heritage,<sup>32</sup> might truly be considered the pioneer of the Indian Renaissance. For the purifications of Hinduism and rejection of religious dogmas,

he founded the Brahmo Samaj in Bengal. He intelligently combined <sup>33</sup> the old and new learning. He advocated the abolition of Sati and engaged himself in religious discourse with traditional pundits. His intention was to propagate the true Hinduism based on the Upnishads and Vedanta.

He was succeeded by Devendra Nath Tagore and Keshab Chandra Sen who tried to eradicate the prevalent abuses in Hindu Society. The Arya Samaj of Radha Swami took the strongest root in U.P. and the Punjab. Dayanand Saraswati who raised the voice against social evils saved Hinduism from being engulfed by Christianity.<sup>34</sup> Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade also founded the Prarthana Samaj in Maharashtra. But infact, of all the religious movements of the 19th Century the Brahmo Samaj was most powerful and influential.<sup>35</sup>

Muslims also could not help being influenced by the Western impact and Missionary Propaganda. The slow degradation of their old system of education had convinced them of the necessity and urgency of religious revivalism.

As a matter of fact, in the 19th century Islam in India had become moribund and signs of healthy vigour had disappeared. The mosques stood, as it were, only as symbols of the glories of Islam. The majority of the Muslims just listened to pirs and faqirs and went on pilgrimage to the tombs of holy men. Superstition had engulfed them and the moral teachings of the Quran became

meaningless to them<sup>36</sup>. Such pitiable condition which became still graver due to the missionary propaganda, called for an immediate action against ensuing dangers. The slogans like 'Back to the example of the Prophet', 'Back to early Khilafat' were the call of the revivalism which occurred among the Muslims.<sup>37</sup>

Shah Waliullah (1703-1765 AD) who emerged as a great theologian in 18th century played a vital role to arrest the fall of Muslims who had gone to the lowest depth of degradation. An immediate reform was necessary in which besides Shah Walliullah Dehlvi his son Hazrat Shah Abdul Aziz Dehlvi (1750 AD - 1828 AD) also tried to purify Islam from corrupt vices and stirred the Muslim masses to abandon un-Islamic practices. Shah Walliullah translated the Quran into Persian and introduced the teaching of Hadith in India and his son Shah Abdul Aziz popularised the teachings of his father.<sup>38</sup> He formed a central body consisting of Maulana Rafiuddin, Maulana Abdul Qadir and Maulana Abdul Gani to make his movement a success and through the efforts of this body an organisation was formed with Maulana Ismail Shaheed, Maulana Mohammad Ishaq and Maulana Abdul Hai Dehlvi and he himself continued delivering bi-weekly lectures on the pattern of his father.<sup>39</sup> They considered India under British Rule as Darul-Harb (Land of War) where a true Muslim could not live peacefully and the restoration of Darul Islam (Land of Peace) was therefore an urgent necessity. Therefore

liberation of India from British control and to convert it is to Darul Islam from Darul-Harb had become their immediate goal. This ideology found its clear expression in the movement of Syed Ahmed Shaheed (1786-1831) of Rai Barailly. The Movement led by him was named by the Britishers the Wahabi Movement in order to demoralise it among its followers.<sup>40</sup> Besides the Mujahids continued their activities against the foreign power.

Besides the above, in the beginning of the 19th century the Fraizi Movement founded by Shariatullah (1781-1840) of Faridpur who preached a revolutionary doctrine against the British also emerged. Before starting the movement he had gone to Macca at the age of 18 years old and stayed there for about 20 years as a disciple of Shaikh Tahir-as-Sunbal-al-Makki, the head of the Safai sect. He began to propagate his newly framed doctrines while he returned to India in 1802. He declared that India under non-Muslim rule was Darul - Harb (Land of War) where a true Muslim should not live.<sup>40A</sup> Hence it was the Farz (duties) of the Muslims to oust the British and this justifies the name of the Movement. Dudu Mian, (1819-1859) son of Shariatullah, was much political minded and further organised the movement by dividing Bengal strategically for the expulsion of the British.<sup>41</sup> Dadu Mian became a terror to Zamindars who oppressed the cultivators by introducing reforms among the cultivators.<sup>42</sup> Meer Nihar Ali Miyan of Chandpur (Barasat) who championed the cause of Hindu-Muslim peasantry and who was in command

of the Fraizi Army had become so fearful that the Government had to send a strong contingent of armed forces in which Titu Miyan was defeated. Many of his men were captured, tried and sent to Andamans. The songs of their patriotic fervour are still well-known in Bengal. After the fall of Titu Miyan, Dadu Miyan during 1840-47 raised an army of 80,000 soldiers and fought against the British at Barasat, Jaisoor, Patna, Malda, Dhaka but could not defeat them.<sup>43</sup> Though defeated he roused the people to a higher revolutionary political level by urging them to join the freedom struggle.<sup>44</sup> He was tried and imprisoned at the Alipore Jail and died in 1859 a few days after his release.<sup>45</sup> But the movement continued in spite of his death. The evils of the existing societies of Hindus and Muslims led the religious leaders to take an immediate action against these evils which also attracted the attention of the British Government. Thus the first half of the nineteenth century can rightly be called a period of reforms in which many inhuman activities were eradicated and Sati, infanticide and Thaggee were abolished.

It would be better here to discuss the social life in India before we enter into the final phase of the First War of Independence, 1857. Having conquered India, Muslims made it their permanent abode and mutual intercourse

and mutual understanding developed among Hindus and Muslims. Muslim monarchs endowed Hindu temples and granted Jagirs to Hindus. Hindu rulers also made such endowments to the places of worship of the Muslims. The Muslim Sultans<sup>46</sup> visited the temple and Hindus also showed reverence to the tombs of Muslim Saints.<sup>47</sup> This developed among them the bond of unity and mutual understanding, along with many other, causes that inspired both the communities to reaffirm their loyalty to Bahadur Shah. This led to the catastrophe of the First War of Independence 1857.<sup>48</sup>

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abolition of Sattee; denounced caste  
system; studied Bengali, Persian,Ara-  
bic, Sanskrit, Hindi, Wrote two books  
in Persian, three in Hindi, thirty  
two in Bengali, two in Sanskrit;star-  
ted an Anglo. Hindu School for impar-  
ting English education; in 1805 he  
entered the Company's service and  
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Akbar the great also visited temples  
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## CHAPTER - III

### THE FIRST WAR OF INDEPENDENCE 1857 AND THE MUSLIMS

No survey of the 19th century would be complete without an assessment of the final catastrophe of the First War of Independence. Socio-political and economic causes created dissatisfaction and discontent in the country and also created a formidable condition. The Indian princes were humiliated and their territories were annexed and the situation was horrified. The conditions of nobles residing in different parts of the country were still more pitiable. As a matter of fact, men and women of royal family were left without means of subsistence after the annexation of Oudh. The starving nobles, in many cases, had to sell their ornaments and utensils to get rid of starvation. 'The Usurpation by the English had sunk them into the uttermost depth of humiliation and there was no one to listen to their despairing cries.<sup>1</sup> It was also observed that some of the high and respectable families had to visit the streets to beg under cover of the darkness of the night.<sup>2</sup>

A class of well-educated Indians with revolutionary ideas provoked the people to extricate~~the~~ their new masters. Rumours, propaganda and exaggerated stories of the Persian war were freely circulated and it was said that the persians were making great preparation to conquer India.<sup>3</sup> These exaggerated stories excited great sensation which was

further strengthened by the prophecy that the English rule would disappear after a hundred years of the battle of Plassey.<sup>4</sup> The topic of discussion throughout the day and night in the Mughal palace was the early arrival of the Persians. Hasan Askari, a Mohammadan priest who lived near the Royal palace, had also prophesied and convinced the king that it had been divinely revealed to him that the dominion of the King of Persia would extend to Delhi and he would bestow the crown upon the Mughal King. Thus prayers were performed for the arrival of Persians and the extrication or Oust of the British with a great rejoicing in the palace.<sup>5</sup>

These fancy talks took a solid form and the imprint which these propaganda had created in the public mind were strengthened by the sight of the declaration pasted at the main gate of Jama Masjid, Delhi. The proclamation called the Musalmans to join the army sent by the Shah of Persia to restore the Mughals. No one knew who was Mohammad Sadiq but his name was attached to it. The Greased Cartridges incident further added panic to this terrible situation. The furious Indian cavalry of Meerut made their way to Delhi shouting 'Bahadur Shah Ki Jai'.<sup>6</sup> The rumours turned into fact and led to actual revolution and every European found in the way was cut down, their houses and property were put to fire and looted.<sup>7</sup>

Later after the occupation of Delhi by the British, they turned to take revenge the wrong done to them.

They started a general massacre and almost every Ghazis, a member of religious groups was hanged.<sup>8</sup> The English commander Officer, says Trevelyan, sent his cavalry with orders to take signed vengcance on the peasants. The regiment surrounded the village, set the roofs on fire, looted the dwellings of what cloth and grains they contained stripped the women of their bungles and anklets, and put all the males to the edge of sword. This was only one among many like deeds...<sup>9</sup>

In addition to these, Muslims sewn up in pig-skin, smeared with pork fat, were burnt alive. Hindus were defiled by cow's meat being forced down their throats.<sup>10</sup>

No life in the city was safe and men who were seen were taken for rebels and shot. "The slaughter of innocent, helpless women and children was revenged in a manner that no one ever anticipated".<sup>11</sup>

Ultimately, Bahadur Shah was captured and sent to Rangoon and the East India company was abolished, India came directly under the British crown Queen Victoria being later proclaimed Empress of India.

The First War of Independence,<sup>11A</sup> 1857 was not a revolt of one community, it was a revolt joined by Hindus and Muslims alike. They wanted the restoration of the Mughals and independence of the country from the British. But for historical and ideological reasons, the Muslims were

much more anti-British than the Hindus. For this reason, Muslims became the special target of the British after the revolt of 1857, because they felt that they were their "Real enemies and their most dangerous rivals"<sup>12</sup>. The sufferings of the Muslims were tremendous.<sup>13</sup> In fact, after the first War of Independence, 1857, the whole structure of the Muslims society - Political, Economic, Cultural and Educational changed.

In the First War of Independence, 1857, those who heavily suffered and killed were Muslims. The Bazar of Delhi, roads and streets were filled with dead bodies, thousand of scholars were skilled, shot dead, burnt alive, beaten and hanged on the tree. They were punished and detained in the Andaman Island. Three thousands Muslims were imprisoned in Andaman in 1857. In the Ambala Case of 1857, 190 Muslim scholars were hunged. In 1861, 3 lakhs copies of the holy scripture were burnt. Islamic Madrasahs were closed and destroyed.<sup>14</sup>

Once Ghalib wrote to his friend Mir Mehdi about Delhi : "The city has turned into a desert, Urdu Bazar is gone, what to say of Urdu, Delhi is no more a city, it is a camp, The fort, the town, the bazar and the canals, all are gone Brother, what do you ask and what should I write. The history of Delhi is replete with revolution."<sup>15</sup>

The leading Muslim families were uprooted, many lost their lands and property and darkness descended on

the community. The Hindus were permitted to return to Delhi within a few months after the re-occupation of Delhi, but the Muslim population was not allowed to come back till 1859.<sup>15</sup>

W.W. Hunter remarks : "A hundred and seventy years ago it was almost impossible for a well born Musalman, in Bengal to become poor; at present it is almost impossible for him to continue rich."<sup>17</sup>

British followed the policy of retaliation against the Muslims and bringing an end to their political power. Mohammad Noman states : "The British people had decided that for the expansion of new power and its continuance the only course was to crush the Musalmans. It was evident that the Muslim Power had become weak and showed no signs of revival."<sup>18</sup>

Nafiz Ahmad adds : "They (Muslims) had been mercilessly persecuted for their involvement in the revolt and they were the main object of distrust and suspicion in the Government circles. All avenues of Government services were closed to them and all opportunities to make life dignified and happy were denied to them by the discriminatory policies of the Government."<sup>19</sup> A Persian Daily<sup>20</sup> of Calcutta indicates that the Government was unwilling to employ Muslims. It said :

"All sorts of employment, great and small, are being gradually snatched away from the Mohammadans and

bestowed o men of other races. The Government is bound to look upon all classes of its subjects with an equal eye, yet the time has now come when it publicly singles out the Mohammadans in its Gazette for exclusion from official posts. Recently, when several vacancies occured in the office of the Sundarbans Commissioner, that official in advertising them in the Government Gazette stated that the appointments would be given to none but Hindus. In short, the Mohammadans have now sunk so low that even when qualified for Government Notifications, nobody takes any notice of their helpless condition, and the higher authorities do not design to acknowledge thier existence".<sup>21</sup> Dealing with the condition of the Muslim land owning classes of the Eastern Bengal, Hunter wrote :

"At Murhsidabad a Mohammadan Court still plays its force of mimic state, and in every District the descendants of some line of princes sullenly and proudly eats his heart out among roofless palaces and weed-choked tanks. Of such families I have personally known several. Their houses swarm with grown-up sons and daughters, with grand children and nephews and nice, and not one of the hungry crow has a chance of doing anything for himself in life. They drag on a listless existence in patched up verandas or leaky out houses, sinking deeper and deeper into a hopless abyss of debt, till the neighbouring Hindu money-lender fixes a quarrel on them, and then in a moment a host of mortgages foreclose, and the

ancient Musalman family is suddenly swallowed up and disappears for ever".<sup>22</sup>

The devastating result was that by 1870 Muslims families in Bengal had either dis-appeared from the earth or were submerged beneath the new strata of society which the new policy of the Government had developed. Assessing the conditions of Muslims, Hunter remarks :

"If any statesman wishes to make a sensation in the House of Commons, he has only to truly narrate the history of these Mohammadan families of Bengal".<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, Hunter similarly surveyed the Professions of law and Medicine, which revealed an equally depressing position and wrote that "In one extensive Department the other day it was discovered that there was not a single employee who could read the Musalman dialect and, in fact, there is now scarcely a Government Office in Calcutta in which a Mohammadan can hope for any post above the rank of porter, messenger, filler or ink-pots and mender of pens."<sup>24</sup>

In fact, Muslims were deliberately excluded from Government services and such partial treatment compelled the Muslims of Orissa to make a petition to the Commissioner, E.W. Molony. The petition stated :

As loyal subjects of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, we have, we believe, an equal claim to all appointments in the administration of the country. Truly speaking, the Orissa Mohammadans have levelled down and down with no hope of rising again. Born of noble parentage, poor by profession and destitute of partons, we find ourselves in the position of a fish out of water... The penniless and parsimonious condition which were are reduced to, consequent on the failure of our former Government Services has thrown us into such an everlasting despondency, that we speak from the very core of our hearts, that we would travel into the remotest corner of the earth, ascend the snowy peaks of the Himalayas, wonder forlorn regions of Siberia, could we be convinced that by so travelling we would be blessed with a Government appointment of Ten Shillings a week.<sup>25</sup> Throwing light on this aspect, Anil Seal says, "Until 1851 in Calcutta there were more Muslim pleader than Hindu and Christian pleaders combined, between 1852 and 1868, however not one of the pleaders admitted to the rolls of the High Court in Calcutta was a Muslim."<sup>26</sup>

Lord Lytton, Governor General of India (1876 to 1880), wrote to the Secretary of State, Lord Salisbury how Muslims were to be excluded from public services in India.<sup>27</sup>

The Muslims had to confront many hardships with the Educational policy of the British. It was responsible

for the increase of unemployments and closing of other avenues for the Muslim. The system of education introduced by the British Raj emphasized "European History, Western Philosophy and Natural Sciences, using the English Language as the only medium of instruction.<sup>28</sup> Arabic and Parsian were no longer taught in the schools and the curriculum was so designed that its acceptance was impossible, as the Muslims considered it irreligious to learn English. The Muslims vehemently opposed the new system of education and thought it below their dignity to study English and if any one studied it he was not thought to be a gentleman.<sup>29</sup> This can easily be judged by the following incident.

"One day a Rampur Pathan got a telegram in English having recovered from the first shock of surprise, he and his family found that there was not a single man who could let him know its contents. At last somebody happened to remember that some of the boys of his family had been sent away to learn English and mentioned this to the worried recipient of the Telegraphic message. The moment he offered this solution, the Pathan not believing it burst out... Astaghfirullah (God forgive) what do you say ? My dear man, they are gentlemen".<sup>30</sup>

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had to face much difficulty in learning English even in the first decade of the twentieth century. In his book "India Wins Freedom", he describes his own position and says "This was a period of great

mental crisis for me. I was born into a family which was deeply imbued in religious traditions... and the family did not like the least deviation from orthodox ways. I could not reconcile myself with the prevailing customs and beliefs and my heart was full of a new sense of revolt".<sup>31</sup>

In fact, the new educational policy replaced the old educational system. The British Jurisprudence replaced the Islamic Law and the Qurani system, the European system of medicine was put in practice in place of Tabib, Hakim and Jarrah, secularism replaced theocracy, while English replaced Persian and so on.<sup>32</sup>

According to Mohammad Numan, "The educational policy of the Company adversely affected the Muslims, not only by indirectly increasing the number of illiterates among them but also by closing the doors of employments upon them."<sup>33</sup>

In fact, in the process of struggle they lost everything; they lost land because of the land settlement of the British; they lost jobs because of the change in the administration; they lost the privilege of their language, literature and culture.

In the field of economic, the British policy impoverished the Muslims heretoo, "The Company's policy of crushing

Indian Industries affected Muslims more adversely than the other communities because most of the artisans and weavers were Muslims.<sup>34</sup> Besides this "Muslims has suffered much more than the other two communities at the hands of the Company. In Bengal, for instance, the Permanent Settlement of 1793 had disposed Muslim landlords of their land."<sup>35</sup> and "the early nineteenth century ruined Bengal Muslims complete."<sup>36</sup>

Further, the British rulers introduced the system of Private property, New Land Revenue system and commercialisation of Agriculture. The system of private property fragmented the Indian agriculture land and the production declined. The New land Revenue system helped them in exploiting the Indian farmers and the people. As they required raw-materials for their industries, they destroyed the Pre-British Indian Agriculture system and converted it to their own benefit.<sup>37</sup>

They also destroyed the Indian industries by adopting the various measures. The Indian shipping industry was adversely affected by the decision of the Court of Directors to use only British ships and prohibited Indian ships for the purpose of Trade.<sup>38</sup>

The Indian paper industry also got setback during this period due to the policy of the British rulers to purchase only British made paper for use in India.<sup>39</sup> Further the flux of cheap British machines overthrowned

the handcraft system fo India and thus was the fundamental cause of decline of village artisan industry.<sup>40</sup>

Thus almost every Indian industry after industry collapsed during the period because of a series of measures adopted by the British government to suit their own economy.<sup>41</sup>

Further, the British occupation of India had an adverse effect on its trade and commerce in so far as they related to foreign countries. In 1492 a new route from Western Europe to the Far East was found through the Cape of Good Hope and the monopoly of trade which the Arabs enjoyed from the Mediteranian Sea to the China Sea was broken for all time. Many Indian merchants were Muslims and they suffered serious losses when the Indian Ocean and its trade were dominated by the English, Dutch French and Potugese sailors and merchants.<sup>42</sup>

Noman has rightly said, "Economic exploitation of the country, political repression, missionary propaganda and the educational policy of the English were all calculated to crush the power and undermine the influence and prestige of the Musalmans in India."<sup>43</sup>

Moreover, the British wanted the total supression of Wahabis, and they became the main concern of the Government. The Wahabis made preparation of war against the Sikhs who interfered with Islamic practices. The Government

knew their activities, but they deliberately ignornd their plans and preparation because they themselves wanted the destruction of the Sikhs. When the Magistrates and Commissioners informed the Government about the large incalculable Store of War material collected by the Mujahids,<sup>44</sup> the Government did not interfere with them, and William Frasser, Commissioner of Delhi, gave a decree for the Mujahids regarding their money misappropriated by a Mahajan of Delhi. Their money was realised and sent to the Frontier.<sup>45</sup> But now their activities were keenly watched.

When Syed Ahmad of Brailey was martyred in 1831 at Balakot, his followers established their headquarters at Sittana in the Swat Valley in the Frontier, from where the Mujahidins continued their fight, when the British annexed the Punjab, they did not curtail their activities and their followers were suspected of preaching sedition in different parts of the country against the British.

Muhamad Jafar Jhaneshwari was being one of the Wahabis was convicted of assisting the Wahabis at the Frontier and tried in Ambala. Ultimately he was sent to Andamans. Many of the Wahabis were arrested during this period. There was possibly no well-to-do Musalim or Namazi Moulvis from Peshawar to Bengal who was not harrassed by the police. They charged either money from them or got them convicted under false witness.<sup>46</sup>

The assassination of Justice Norman of the Calcutta High Court, during the course of a Wahabi trial, in the precincts of the High Court by a Wahabi, and the murder of the Viceroy, Lord Mayo in the Andamans by a Wahabi Prisoner, She Ali, made the situation worst and therefore the Government became more vindictive for the Muslims.<sup>47</sup>

From the above facts it can safely be said that the Muslims of the period before and after the First War of Independence were a wretched creatures. While they were humiliated and their property were snatched from them. The doors of services were closed to them. The facilities for their better lives had departed from them.

On the other hand, the condition of other community was altogether different. Though the Hindu and Muslim unitedly had fought to oust the Britishers during the Revolt, the British authorities held the Muslim mainly responsible for the revolt.

Moreover, the Hindus had gladly embraced western education, Persian or English made no difference to them as both were foreign languages to them. They easily received English education and the Government encouraged them. They were given special treatment and confidence that they had interviews with high officials. The very day the officials arrived.<sup>48</sup> It was at this critical juncture

of Muslim history, the non-Muslims became economically and politically strong under the long patronage of the British. While the Muslims went to the lowest ebb of misery. The very moment Sir Syed Ahmad Khan appeared as a saviours of the community.

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## CHAPTER - IV

### SIR SYED AHMAD KHAN : A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

One must have the knowledge of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's life and times and an idea of socio-Political and Cultural conditions in which he lived and worked. It is also important to study about his education and to analyse the influences working on him in order to arrive at the sources of his knowledge which will help us to understand the Aligarh Movement.

Moreover, any philosopher, thinker, reformer or leader of a nation is the product of his environment and he is bound to be influenced by the contemporary events and phenomena. These are highly interrelated. The present political, economic, social and cultural conditions are the result of a long process of development. The present is linked with the past and it will lead to some good or bad result. No leader, or thinker or reformer can escape the influences of the past.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the Principal architect of the Aligarh Movement, is one of the most dynamic and revolutionary personalities of the 19th Century. He was born on October, 17, 1817 in a noble, distinguished and respectable family of Delhi which traced its geneology to Hazrat Imam Hussain, the grandson of the Prophet Mohammad, in 36 generations.<sup>1</sup> Sir Syed's ancestors migrated to Herat because of the oppression of the Umayyads and

during the time of Shahjahan (1627-1658) his forefathers took the road to Delhi. Five generations before Sir Syed, Syed Mohammad Dost fought bravely in the Deccan under Aurangazeb (1627-1658) and earned the title of Bahadur. Syed Burhan's son, Syed Imdad had two sons - Syed Hadi and Syed Mehdi. Syed Hadi was paternal grandfather of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. He was conferred the title of Jawad Ali Khan by Alamgir II. Later when Shah Alam came to the throne he added Jawad-ud-Dowla to his former titles. Sir Syed too got these title in addition to Arif-e-Jung. Sir Syed's father, Syed Mohammad Muttaqui<sup>2</sup> who retained the rank exercised considerable influence at the Mughal Courts.<sup>3</sup> Sir Syed in his childhood stayed with his maternal grandfather, Khwaja Fariduddin mixed and played with the princes of the Royal Family and got an insight into the vanity of the last Mughals.<sup>4</sup> His father died in 1838 and mother in 1857 at Meerut.

Much of Sir Syed primary education owe to his mother and maternal grandfather. Syed himself take notes of his education and says.

"I can remember my bismillah ceremony very welll. It took place in the afternoon and many people had been invited. I was taken and seated in front of Shah Ghulam Ali who was the special guest, but when I saw such a huge gathering, I became very confused. A wooden state was placed before me and I believe it was Shah Sahib who told me to recite the opening words of the Quran-

Bismillah irrahman irrahim (in the name of Allah, the compationate, the merciful') I said nothing but just continued staring at him. He lifted me up on to his knee and said, come and sit with me and we'll recite together. We read the exordium and the first revealed verse of the Quran all the time reciting together".<sup>5</sup>

In this way, he initiated his education from the family saint, Shah Ghulam Ali and later entered into the maktab of Moulvi Hamid-ud-Din, a reputed Scholar who taught him persian text books for beginners such as Kalima, the Khaliq Bari, the Amadnama and later on he learnt Arabic, persian, Mathematics, logic Urdu from his mother, Khwaja Fareed-ud-Din, his grandfather; Nawab Zainul Abedin Khan, his maternal uncle; and so on.<sup>6</sup> He was also interested in Medicine and he learnt it with Hakim Ghulam Haider, a well-known physian. He finished his formal study at the age of eighteen. But he retained and maintained his interest in reading and had the chance of meeting the famous scholars and poets of Delhi including Sahbai, Ghalib and Azurda. He was also attending and taking part in the meetings of the learned societies of the city. He developed his studies when he returned from Fathepur Sikri to act as Munsif in Delhi in the year, 1846.<sup>7</sup>

Sir Syed was highly influenced by his mother, Aziz-un-Nisa Begum, a kind, modest, God fearing and honest lady who taught him Arabic and Persian literatures and

shaped his mental make up. It is correct to say, "A good mother is better than a thousand teachers", His mother was very strict while teaching and she kept a cane in her hands whenever he went to her to recite his lessons.<sup>8</sup>

Besides his mother he was to a great extent influenced by his maternal grandfather, Khwaja Fareed-ud-Din, who was a great scholar, well-versed in many sciences of the day, particularly mathematics. Apart from Scholarship, he combined the qualities of an administrator and a politician. The reknowned Sir Syed's biographer Hali said that most of his political qualities he must have borrowed from his maternal.<sup>9</sup>

The other significant factor that influenced Sir Syed's life and Ideas was the religious environment of his family. He was benefited by the schools of Shah Abdul Aziz (dt.....) and Shah Ghulam Ali. His father was a devotee of Shah Ghulam Ali whom Sir Syed addressed as Dada Hazrat, and it was he who had given to 'Syed Ahmed' his name and taught him the first lesson.<sup>10</sup>

Apart from these, he was influenced by the Islamic Philosophers Shah Waliullah, Ibn Rushd, Al-Ghazzali, Rumi, Ibn Khaldun, Sadi, Azurda etc and Gladstone, Lord Ripon, Mill, Addison and Steele of the west also had influenced him. The thorough reading of these helped him in formulating his ideas. They formed his political and social ideas.

the Russians in Central Asia. Before the superior military power and shrewd political strategy of the Europeans, the Muslims who had retained primitive in terms of the scientific and technological advancement of the west, were reduced to helplessness in every sector of life."<sup>11</sup>

Through the policy of colonialism and gun-boat diplomacy the Europeans destroyed the Islamic world. It was not the clash of religions but a clash of two cultures. The European were highly industrialised and politicised and militarily superior. They were attempting to find raw materials for their Industries, new markets for their finished goods, and new areas for their growing population. They also required fresh fields for the exhibition of their power and prestige. Their spirit of inquiry, love of exploration and quest for inventions and discoveries made them dominate the world and this was the out come of the steady growth of Europe since fifteen century.<sup>12</sup>

This scientific and technological advancement in Europe convinced Sir Syed who felt the Muslims should adopt the modern education and come out of the medievalism.

Sir Syed began his service career after the death of his father in 1838. His uncle, Khalilullah Sadr-e-Amin in Delhi court agreed to train Sir Syed in judicial matters and against the wishes of his family members, he entered British Service as Serishtedar in the Criminal Department in the Sadr-e-Amin's office at Delhi. In

February, 1839, he was transferred to Agra as Naib Munshi and there he mastered all rules and regulations, prepared a chart every official was to follow. In 1841, Sir Syed was promoted and appointed as a Munsif at Mainpuri and from there he was transferred to Fathepur Sikri in 1842. The same year when he came to Delhi Bahadur Shah Zafar conferred on him the title of Jawad-ud-Daula Arif Jang. On the 18th February, 1846, he was transferred from Fatehpur Sikri to Delhi.<sup>13</sup> On the 13th of January, 1855, Sir Syed was transferred from Delhi to Bijnoke as Sadre-e-Amin and he stayed till the outbreak of the First war of Independence in 1857.<sup>14</sup> This great upheaval became a turning point in his life.

Apart from his official work, he developed his literary career writing on theology and history which revealed his profound understanding of religion and Islamic Civilization. First he wrote a booklet, 'Jame-Jam' containing the geneology of forty three different kings from Timur, the first great Mughal Victor of Central Asia, down to Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last of the Mughal Emperors in India. Then Sir Syed prepared a handbook of the rules and regulations prescribed in the Civil courts Intikhab-ul-Akhwin ('the Selection of the two brothers) which was intended to help the new entrants to the Judicial services the booklet 'Jilaul Qulub bi Zikrul Mahbub' written in 1839 deals with the birth, death, miracles and other events in the life of the Holy

Prophet for maulud. This had been written in accordance with the situation and condition. The other book 'Tahfa-i-Haoan' written in 1839 concerns the Shi'a accusations of Abu Bakr and Sir Syed criticised the shias and tried to refute their accusations. The next one is "Tahsilfi Jarr-up-Saqil" written in 1844, which contains an account of the five principles of mechanics.<sup>15</sup> The most important publication was his Asar-us-Sanadeed, an archaeological history of the ruins of Delhi.

At the time of the First War of Independence (1857-58) he supported the British.<sup>16</sup> Sir Syed saved the lives of many English men and women and gave them complete shelter even at the risk of his life. For this reason, he was highly praised by the English. Sir John Strachey was of the opinion that no man ever gave noble proofs of courage and loyalty to the British Government than Syed.<sup>17</sup>

He was loyal to the British and acted as the guardian of British interests in Bijnore. He struggled hard to maintain normalcy in Bijnore, when the whole of the District was in the grip of the rebels. He stayed there for more than a month after the British officers had left.<sup>18</sup> For all these services he was awarded with an estate worth a lakh of rupees but Sir Syed declined to accept it.<sup>19</sup>

In fact, after the First war of Independence he was highly worried for the Muslim community which had suffered heavily. He became restless like that of a man a portion of whose house had caught fire and who was busy saving it.<sup>20</sup> Sir Syed expressed that his anxiety had made his hair grey and became an old prematurely.<sup>21</sup> The devastation of the Muslim families was tremendous and no area of Indian life had remained untouched. Social, political, economic, cultural, religious all institutions were subject to a radical change. The destruction of their property was so great that Sir Syed lost all hopes for their rejuvenation.

The Revolt was over and Sir Syed began to analyse the causes of the First War of Independence. He wrote a pamphlet Asbab-e-Baghavat-e-Hind (The Causes of the Indian Revolt) in which he showed the following the causes:-

- 1) The laws and regulations passed by the Government were not suited with the established practices and customs of Indian.
- 2) Ignorance and misunderstanding the intentions of the Government by the Indians.
- 3) Lack of sympathy and the racial discriminatory policy of the Government.
- 4) Ignorance of the Government in connection with the needs and grievances of people.

- 5) No good management of the army and the non-admission of Indians in the Legislative council.<sup>22</sup>

In response to the charges that it was a pre-planned conspiracy of the Muslim against the British, Sir Syed explained that the way in which the rebellion spread was itself a proof that there was no wide spread conspiracy. This was also not the correct view that the rebels in India had received any aid from Russia or Persia. He said that they had no knowledge about Rusia. Moreover, Hindustan had remained silent and inactive during the warms of Russia and Persia and she was in the war there was no visible sign of stir whatsoever. Therefore it can be easily inferred that the charge of conspiracy was false and baseless.<sup>23</sup>

Sir Syed was transferred from Bijnaur to Moradabad on the promotion to the office of Sadr-us-Sadur in April 1858. In the following year a special commission was set up and he became a Member of the Commission of Appeals to decide the cases of confiscation of property belonging to those who had been convicted of rebellious activities. He greatly helped and assisted the innocent.<sup>24</sup>.

Sir Syed wrote 'The History of the Bijnaur Revolt which contains the events from May 1857 to April 1858. He started a Persian Madarasa at Moradabad in 1859. Previously here there was no school. He gave his ideas on the medium of instruction which he thought there should be

both Urdu and English. He vehemently criticised the Government vernacular schools and advised them that the Indians should be educated in English too.<sup>25</sup>

In May 1862, Sir Syed was transferred from Moradabad to Ghazipur where he founded the Scientific Society<sup>26</sup> in 1863 to make the Western education available to Indians in their own language. The main activity of the society was to translate some selected works of the western learning into Urdu. The Society was known earlier a translating Society.<sup>27</sup>

The next job he did at Ghazipur was to lay down the foundation of a school there. Raja Haridev Narayan Singh was made its patron. In the school, instruction was given in five languages - Urdu, Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit. The School now known as Victoria School still continues in Ghazipur upto high School level.<sup>28</sup>

From Ghazipur Sir Syed was transferred to Aligarh in 1864. Here he did a number of jobs as we know that the Scientific Society could not function without him, so it was shifted from Ghazipur to Aligarh. The Sir Syed formed "The British Indian Association" to form a link between the parliament and the people of India and to inform the public grievances to the authorities in India. After that he set up Educational Committees all over North-Western provinces and Oudh to spread the modern education in every district and finally to promote the

main objectives - social, educational and political reforms - of the Scientific Society, he published 'Aligarh Institute Gazette'.<sup>29</sup>

From Aligarh Sir Syed was transferred to Benares on promotion to the office of Judge of the Small Cause Court in April, 1867. Before leaving Aligarh Raja Jai Kishan Das was given the responsibility of the Society and he finished the unfinished work of Sir Syed.<sup>30</sup> The main task he performed was his petition to the Viceroy on behalf of the British - Indian Association of the North West provinces to set up a Vernacular University where all subjects of western learning - arts and sciences - would be taught to the Indians in their own mother tongue. The University would be on the model of Calcutta University where the honours degrees were awarded to those students who knew English only. Now the degrees should also be awarded to those candidates successful in the Vernacular examination. Sir Syed added that the Scienctific Society of Aligarh would undertake the task of transalating from English into Urdu.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, he supported the homeopatchic system of medicine and the unity of the Hindus and Muslims.<sup>32</sup>

Sir Syed was highly anxious for the regeneration of the Muslim Community which was degenerated during the First War of Independence 1857. He realized that it was possible only when the Muslims would adopt the

modern education and mix with the English freely. He also thought that it could be made possible if he would have a thorough knowledge of all the principles and methods of education. The plans and objectives could be realized and materialized if he himself visited England to observe the reality of advancement of Europe. Secondly William Muir's book 'Life of Mohomet' agitated Sir Syed's mind as he levelled charges against the Prophet Mohammed. He thought it was his religious and moral duty to refute the charges.

Sir Syed started his journey for England on the 10th April, 1869 at the age of fifty two with his two sons - Syed Hamid and Syed Mahmud. There he was highly charmed and attracted by the European civilization. He wrote to his friend soon after his arrival in London."The natives of India, high and low, merchants and petty shopkeepers, educated and illiterate, when contrasted with the English in Education manners and uprightness, are as like them as a dirty animal is to an able and handsome man".<sup>33</sup>

He maintained a diary throughout the entire journey, which is very interesting. He noted anything of interests and made comments on all for the use of the future traveller. He always wrote down the ideas relating his own mission. He observed in Bombay that the rich appointed private tutors for their children at home instead of opening the public schools for all. He praised the Parsees

for their refined culture and then excellent command of Urdu highly impressed him.<sup>34</sup>

Sir Syed's visit to England and staying there for one and a half year was very significant in his life where he saw the secret of power of the British and formulated an Educational plan and Scheme for the Indians to follow in their foot steps. He also observed that almost everybody tried to do something for the Welfare of the People but in our country people looked to the Government for the fulfilment of even their small needs. There he got an idea how the educational, social, cultural and political life of the Indian Muslims should be shaped. He admitted that the people of India were really far behind those of Europe almost in all matters. There was a vast difference between the east and the west. Therefore, he made a plan how to remove the disparity. The most important job he did in London was to refute the charges levelled against Prophet Mohammad.<sup>35</sup>

While Sir Syed was in England he met a number of honourable personalities that changed and developed his insight and outlook. He met Lord Lawrance, former Governor-General of India; the Duke of Argyll, the Minister of Indian Affairs, who was patron of the Aligarh Scientific Society; Lord Stanley of Alderley, former British Ambassador to Constantinople, who had a good knowledge of Islamic Culture. He also met Thomas Carlyle with whom he talked

for a long over Heroes and Hero worship and about Prophet Muhammad.<sup>36</sup> Sir Syed was asked to attend a meeting of the Civil Engineers Society followed by dinner at Greenwich on 13th of July 1869. There he addressed a gathering of England's most famous engineers on the subject of engineering. The Daily News of 21st July 1869 reported that Sir Syed made a most competent and interesting speech and he was cheered and thanked by the whole assembly. He was made an honourary member of the Athenian Club, the most prestigious Club of literary persons.<sup>37</sup>

After staying seventeen months in London and visiting a number of educational centres and institutions, he returned to India with a number of educational plans and schemes and more enthusiastically than ever he started his educational movement known as Aligarh Movement.

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1. The following epitaph is engraved on the marble plate of Syed's grave showing his lineage from Hazrat Hussain:  
(1) Fatma Zahra, (2) Amir-ul-Momineen Ali Ibn Abu Talib,  
(3) Imam Hussain, (4) Imam Zainul  
Abedin, (5) Imam Mohammad Baqar,(6)  
Imam Zafar Sadiq, (7) Imam Musa Kazim,  
(8) Imam Ali Musa Raza, (9) Imam Moha-  
mmad Taqi, (10) Syed Musa Mir Raqi,  
(11) Syed Ali Abdullah Ahmad,(12)Syed  
Mohammad Arj, (13) Syed Mohammad Ahmad  
(14) Syed Ahmad, (15) Syed Musa,(16)  
Syed Ahmad, (17) Syed Mohammad,(18)  
Syed Ali, (19) Syed Jafar, (20)Syed  
Muhammad, (21) Syed Isa, (22) Syed  
Abdul Fateh, (23) Syed Ali, (24)Syed  
Yar Hussain, (25) Syed Kazimuddin  
Hussain, (26) Syed Jaffar, (27)Syed  
Baqar, (28) Syed Musa, (29) Syed Sher-  
fuddin Hussain, (30) Syed Ibrahim,(31)  
Syed Hafiz Ahmad, (32) Syed Aziz,(33)  
Syed Mohammad Dost, (34) Syed Burhan,  
(35) Syed Muhammad Ahmad, (36)Ssyed  
Mohammad Hadi, (37) Syed Mohammad  
Muttaqui, and (38) Syed Ahmad.

I myself have visited at the grave of Sir Syed at Aligarh and observed it several times.

2. Generally the researches and writers have mentioned

Syed Muttaqui father of Syed Ahmad but his actual name is Syed Muhammad Muttaqui as have been mentioned in Syed's Epitaph and in Sirat-e-Faridaiby Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. P.43

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## CHAPTER - V

### THE ALIGARH MOVEMENT

To know the Aligarh Movement, it is absolutely necessary to study the socio-Political conditions of the 19th Century and some references to the 18th Century as well. The 18th Century Muslim India was dominated by one person Shah Waliullah a great theologian of Delhi saw abject poverty of the Muslims and their down fall after the disintegration of the Mughal Empire. He made all attempts to uplift the Muslims through religious and social reforms. The Muslim society had gone to the lowest depth of degradation during his period and all kinds of social evils had taken deep root into the Muslim society and an immediate reform was necessary. He felt the need of this reform and worked to achieve this end through out his whole life Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had been greatly influenced by Shah Waliullah's socio-religious reforms. The second important event of the 1857 Revolt influenced him greatly. After the revolt of 1857, the whole structure of the Indian society collapsed. He found the Muslim Community, "educationally backward, politically immature, and economically insecure".<sup>1</sup> Sir Syed wanted to revive the Muslim community through Modern education. Therefore, he had two main objectives throughout his life, specially after 1857, "namely to present Islam in a rational manner and to revive the Muslim community through modern education."<sup>2</sup> The movement that Sir Syed started for the social and cultural regeneration of the Muslims is commonly known as the Alighr Movement. Why, how and when the movement

was started is as follows :-

Shan Muhammad says, "nineteenth century was a period of great mental turmoil for the Muslims of India. In all walks of life -economic, social and political - they suffered severe setbacks after the great catastrophe of 1857."<sup>3</sup> This had moulded Sir Syed's thinking.

The system of education introduced by the British was not accepted by the Muslims. They thought that it was irreligious and detrimental to their religion.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the traditional Ulema preached anti-Firangi propaganda and the Muslims clung to the out-moded ideas with great tenacity.<sup>5</sup>

The other communities of India welcomed the system provided by the government. "In 1824, the government wanted to start a Sanskrit College for the Hindus in Calcutta. They suggested through an application that they did not want Sanskrit College to be established by the Government but wanted that it should start English Colleges as far as possible. On the other hand, in 1835, after eleven years, when the Muslim came to know that the Government intended to start English teaching in all the schools, they submitted an application signed by 8000 Moulvis of Calcutta to stop it. The application started that the evident object of the Scheme was to convert them to Christianity."<sup>6</sup>

The Government thereupon announced a policy of strict religious neutrality but the propaganda of the Christian missionaries had so horrified Muslims that even government's sincere assurances of religious neutrality were interpreted as a cunning device to deprive them of their faith and, therefore, they kept strictly aloof from the new system of education. On the other hand, the Hindus received English education and got the job opportunities and thus they left the Muslims far behind educationally and economically. The Hindus had become the favourites of the foreign government because of their friendlier attitude to it, but the Muslims were without any support owing to the hostile propaganda against the rulers emanating from the conservative Muslims Circles. Any guidance they could get was possible only through the acceptance of Western Science and education which they were not willing to accept.<sup>7</sup>

In response to this challenge Sir Syed took a number of steps, policies and strategies to make the Aligarh Movement a success.

Sir Syed firmly believed that the progress of the Muslim community was impossible without the support of the British Government and in order to achieve this objective he adopted the policy of loyalism and co-operation with the British.

During the period of the revolt of 1857 Sir Syed remained strictly loyal to the British<sup>8</sup> and had saved

the lives of many English people.<sup>9</sup> To remove the British hostility towards the Muslims he wrote a number of articles and books and delivered many speeches<sup>10</sup> too for Anglo-Muhammadan friendship. First he published 'Tarikh-i-Sarkash-i-Zila Bijnour (1858) in which Sir Syed saw the Muslim problems in the context of the revolt (1857) and presented such a plan of action that might cause for the welfare and progress. Sir Syed was in Bijnour during the disastrous days of 1857 and he presented everything in his book elaborately and impartially without any hesitation whatever in reaction and whatever happened upon the English. He made his political stand clear as to why he favoured the British. He firmly believed that the British had come to stay here and the Muslims should remove their suspicion by proving their loyalty to them.<sup>11</sup> Then he wrote Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind (1859) in which the British were made equally responsible as the Indians<sup>12</sup> and to bring about a change of the British mind towards the Muslims he wrote the Loyal Mohammadans of India in which he discussed 22<sup>13</sup> loyal Mohammadans who obeyed the British sacrificing themselves.<sup>14</sup>

Sir Syed adopted a western style of living, developed friendly relations with British officials and to know the English culture and civilization he visited England in 1869-70<sup>15</sup>. From there on 15 October, 1869 Sir Syed wrote to the Secretary of the Scientific Society that he saw the major part of London, met Lords, Lord Lawrence,

Lord Stanley of Alderly and ladies at dinner, mixed middle class society and saw many prominent scholars. He also observed the customs and habits and the style of living of the English high and low. He visited many places of repute, spacious mansions, engineering works, museums, gun foundaries, ship building yards, vessels of war, ocean telegraph companies etc. All these things created an impression of western superiority over the rest part of the world. He was also convinced that all were the results of their education.<sup>16</sup>

Till 1887, Sir Syed did not oppose the Indian National Congress.<sup>17</sup> He was aware of the fact that there was disparity in education and wealth among the different groups. He believed that democracy could not succeed unless the whole population be educated. He considered that Muslims were totally unfit and could not compete with the educated Hindus. Therefore they were not fit for the democratic political process.<sup>18</sup>

Sir Syed had firm faith that only those people should join the agitation of the Congress who had full strength to oppose the Government.<sup>19</sup> Since Muslims were "numerically much smaller than the Hindu population, educationally backward, politically immature, and in economic resources and enterprise far behind the other."<sup>20</sup> They were not to open any political agitation. Therefore, Sir Syed advised them to keep aloof from the "Political

uproar" and concentrate on trade and education as the means of acquiring wealth and high government posts.<sup>21</sup>

Sir Syed was marked as an Occidentalist when he started for England in 1869-70 to know and study the culture, and civilization and institutions of Europe for the progress and development of India. He was profoundly influenced by de Lesseps with his idealism and patriotism while journeying through the mediterranean. He praised the elegance of the architecture of Versailles, and in the art galleries of Paries.<sup>22</sup>

Sir Syed was highly impressed by the English culture in London, by decoration of London hotels, by the manners and habits of the people and of British house maids. In addition to these he was also impressed by the equal opportunity for both sexes. Once he wrote to orthodox theologians in India, that 'European women were as shocked to hear that Indian women were generally illiterate as Indians would be if they saw a woman walking naked in the bazars.' He had simple satisfaction that there had been some development in female education in Turkey and Egypt.<sup>23</sup>

Besides attending parties and seeing officials, Sir Syed was made a member of Athenaeum Club and elected a fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society. He had also contacts with Chales Dickens, and Thomas Carlyle. The most signaficant

point that should be noted here is that he visited the University of Cambridge and carefully studied its structure, construction, architecture, government, and curriculum as the model of the educational institution, he was planning to establish in India.<sup>24</sup>

He had many English friends and contacts with the British ruling bureaucracy in India that changed his life style. Since 1868 he adopted Western style of living and he and some of his friends had chosen a bicultural social life for which he was satired and criticised by the brilliant conservative poet Akbar Allahabadi.<sup>25</sup>

Prof Shan Muhammad writes, "Sir Syed's liberal interpretation of the Quran, his attack on the current religious practices, his reorientation of the Islamic learning and his moderate approach to current issues like inter-dinning with the Christian issues which Musalmans would not like to discuss had created widespread opposition to the conservative circles of Muslim India against Sir Syed. Infuriated Moulvis, who would not like to budge an inch from traditionalism, issued fatwas to undo his movement. Moulvi Imdad Ali and Ali Buksh, ever started fresh papers in opposition to Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq, condemning the new approach of Sir Syed and calling him an aide to Christian missionary".<sup>26</sup>

SIR SYED AHMAD KHAN AND THE MODERN EDUCATION

There is no denying the fact that education among Muslims basically religious which was not found in those circumstances as more useful. Its aims and objects are to teach the Muslims to be good and virtuous and to prepare them for the next world ignoring the material development of the world as the concept of ilm (knowledge) was limited and confined to the Quran, the Hadith and the Fiqh. Ausaf Ali writes, "The greatest tragedy in Islamic history has been that the conception of knowledge in Islamic culture came to increasing narrowed down until ilm came to be defined and equated with the learning of the religious sciences based on the Quran, the Hadith and the fiqh. All other kinds of knowledge and learnings - philosophy, literature, science, medicine, history, geography and secular learning in any shape and form - after they had flourished for a while, declined, and disappeared in time. Muslims became mortally frightened of all new kinds of learning and hitherto unknown systems of knowledge. The method of rote learning of the Islamic religious sciences did the rest. There were probably good historical reasons for all this, but the rest of it was that there remained in the centuries to come no real chance of intellectual, scientific, and cultural progress of and, by extension, of the enhancement of the productive powers of Muslim Society on the basis of the physical and material sciences. In a thousand years, except for Ibn Khaldun, no one created any new knowledge or a better technology for peace or war. Consequently, Muslims entered with the modern world

as a truly stagnant, backward, and in the technical sense of the word, illiterate people".<sup>27</sup> Describing the reasons for the downfall of the Muslim community, Allama Shaquib Arsalaan mentioned four important points - illiteracy, lack of true scholarship, moral degradation and the decline of the Ulema and the Muslim rulers.<sup>28</sup>

Ibrahim Abu Bakar writes, "on social and economic grounds, Muslim modernists criticised Muslim mystics for spreading and reinforcing concepts such as predestination, fatalism, esotericism, asceticism, celibacy, material poverty and other worldliness, thus discouraging human endeavour for better economic and social life in this world. Muslim modernists thought that such concepts as propagated by Muslim mystics contributed to Muslim social and economic decadence and backwardness".<sup>29</sup>

After the introduction of the modern scientific education by the British, the three distinct alternatives were left to the Indians to be adopted. Professor K.A. Nizami writes "some thought that the only panacea to these ills lay in a hard-back to the old values of religion through which alone the socio-political system could be resuscitated in consonance with the traditions of early Islam. Others thought that the remedy did not lie in religious revival but in total acceptance of the western values and concepts. There was a third school of thought which struck a balance between these two extreme approaches and advocated acceptance of western education and science

while jealously guarding their religious and intellectual identity".<sup>30</sup> The third school rejects the other two arguing that neither the traditional Muslim education nor the modern or secular education could solve the problems because the traditional education lacked vocational and secular subjects and the secular education lacked Islamic religious subjects. Therefore, then wanted to combine both religious and secular education that would enable the people to participate in the development of their society and country and to maintain their religious beliefs and practices.<sup>31</sup>

Sir Syed belonged to the third school of thought who throughout his life promoted both western and Islamic education and defended the necessity of Muslims to study western modern scientific education. He "argued that western learning, and science in particular, was not immical to Islam, but actually intrinsic to it, to study them was to study Islam itself."<sup>32</sup>

Ulema's views on traditional education was the acquisition of knowledge which was purely religious. They were to follow the teachings of the Prophet which was to lead them to glory. The Shariah was all in all the adherence of which was to rectify all thier social-economic and political problems. They were to lead a simple life, free from any corruption and, such a life was to take them to salvation. They were practically confined to the traditional history of Islam, oblivious of the scientific development which was taking place around them.<sup>33</sup>

India became a colony of the British in the 19th century and the old system of education prevalent among Indian Muslims was replaced by the British educational system. In 1858, three Universities were founded in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras on the model of the London University. But for many decades the Muslims did not switch over to the new education introduced by the British. They kept themselves aloof from it. They felt that English education would weaken the belief of the young generation in Islam. They feared that they might lose their culture, and also be deprived of Arabic, Persian and religious education representing their cultural heritage, and also open the way for the propagation of Christianity among Muslims.<sup>34</sup>

On account of these views of the Muslims towards British education, it is one of the causes of the intellectual backwardness and economic poverty of the Muslims which influenced Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in formulating his ideas about education about Muslims. If we go through the life and activites of Sir Syed Ahmd Khan it would become clear that he devoted his whole life to work for the educational and economic upliftment of the Muslim community. He had fully understood that the economic poverty of the Muslim was mainly due to the fall of the Mughal empire and Muslim can regain their bygone status through modern education.

Sir Syed was not totally in favour of the existing Madarasa system. Analysing the prevailing educational system of Madrasa, Syed Ahmad Khan said : "The education

which prevails among the Muslims is not useful and in accordance with the age and requirement. This is the reason for their poverty and helplessness because the basic reason of poverty is ignorance and an Alim of such education and an illiterate both are equal. It is neither beneficial to the people nor helpful to them. The education which is not in accordance with the age and requirement is futile. There is a saying of a wiseman, people who are not trained according to the age and requirement become first poor, then helpless, then foolish, wicked and thieves and finally humiliated.<sup>35</sup>

Syed Ahmad Khan declared that knowledge shold not be for knowledge sake, but its aim and purpose should be the development of individual and society. Education must not be the means of mental satisfaction only but it should be the source of some purposeful work of the material world.<sup>36</sup>

Once he said whatever our ancestors and we have understood about education and its real connection is that it is something rational which develops in mind and memory and the human soul derives immense pleasure out of it. But in modern time education means that it should be based on observation, experiment and analysis. It should give experience and be useful for all activities of man this is because why our ancestors died in poverty and hunger and lived mainly on charity. But in modern

time the educated people of progressive and advanced countries are all rich and their people are always benefited by them.<sup>37</sup>

Sir Syed firmly believed that the old system of education had been shattered to pieces and they should establish educational institutions on the English model.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, in 1870 Sir Syed wrote to his friend : "My dear, there will be no use of such Madarasah. It is a pity that the Mahammadans of India are downing and there is no one to save them. Oh, they discard the elixir and swallow the poison... believe me, the water has come upto their lips and there is very little time left before they are drown."<sup>39</sup>

Sir Syed observed that the small and poor schools scattered in different places for the education of Muslim boys were not good in results because of the lower grade of teaching staff and education. Naturally these poor scattered institutions would fail to produce a single strong centre of Muslim education in India.<sup>40</sup> He had firm faith that the development of the Muslim community was not possible without higher education and discipline which formed an essential part in a natural life.<sup>41</sup> It would be possible only when there would be a standard institution in which the students were to be taught by European and Indian professors and the provision of a hostel for them.<sup>42</sup> Moreover he asserted that primary education was not possible if there was no higher education in the country. 'It is a natural phenomenon', he said, 'that

prosperous men. Sir Syed Ahmad's idea is perhaps based on the fact that the prophet prayed to Allah for keeping people away from poverty and helplessness.<sup>46</sup>

For the regeneration of the Muslims, from 1859 till his death 1898, Sir Syed always thought of educational problems of India and his educational programme "changed the intellectual, political and economic destiny of Indian Muslims, and formed the main bridge of intellectual transition from medievalism to modernism".<sup>47</sup>

Sir Syed talked much of male education. He is criticised as taking no interest to the female education. But this is not true. So far as the female education is concerned Sir Syed Ahmad had clear views that a female should be educated on the traditional method of education in order that she can understand Islam and her duties. He was against sending a Muslim girl to the missionary school because there she could do unIslamic practices and there were already examples found in some districts.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, he was not in favour of anglicizing the Muslim girls.

#### SIR SYED'S VIEWS ON MODERN EDUCATION :

Clarifying the views of Sir Syed on modern education Shan Muhammad writes "To him (Sir Syed) the fall of the Mughals and the succession of the British was not merely a change of masters. It brought about a multi-dimensional change all over India with English education and Western culture as its main weapons.... He was aware of the fact

that rigid adherence to out dated customs and usages was bound to degenerate a community. According to him blind emulation of custom ridden practices would do no good to a society as it would kill the very initiative. What was needed for the progress of a society was a progressive out look and the rejection of all those practices that hindered its progress.<sup>49</sup> He (Sir Syed) considered that the batterment of the Muslim community was possible under the British Government. So he asked people to reform the customs and practices of the Muslims in the light of Western Scientific and liberal knowledge. He also suggested to remove the suspicion and hatredness between the Muslims and the British.<sup>50</sup>

Sir Syed pointed out some of the causes of the educational backwardness of Muslims in the following words :-

The real reason of the backwardness of Mohammadans in English education is that from their non-acquaintance with modern learning they had no respect for it, and considered it 'mean' and 'degraded' in comparision with their own learning, which they got from the Greeks. This feeling was strengthened by false religious superstitions. And the result of it was that they did not pay the least attention towards the acquisition of modern learning, while other nations did, and have thus advanced for ahead, so that now it is very difficult for our nation to get abreast of them.<sup>51</sup> The British brought the modern Western

extent. He also felt that by acquiring modern education, the Muslim will come close to the British Raj.<sup>54</sup>

SIR SYED AHMAD KHAN'S PRACTICAL SOLUTION OF THE  
EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS OF THE MUSLIMS :

To develop freedom of thought, get rid of superstition and dogma, break away from unreasonable customs and traditions, were the chief ideals and aims of Sir Syed. To achieve these aims, he established the Scientific Society, Aligarh Institute Gazette, Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq, Muslim Educational Conferences etc. Moreover, to achieve his ideals, he delivered many Lectures, wrote a number of articles and letters, issued hundreds of Statements of religious, educational, historical and political nature.

For the propagation of the Modern education and to resolve the conflict between the religious education and Scientific and technological education, he founded the Mohammadan-Anglo Oriental College in 1877 at Aligarh, which ultimately developed to be the Aligarh Muslim University in 1920. He started to publish a Risala entitled Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq to propagate the importance of Western education and tried to make the Muslims conscious about their economic and educational problems through it. He organised a Scientific Society in 1864 to translate the outstanding works in European languages into Urdu to solve the problems of Urdu books and to get the taste of Western literature. But some days later it had to be closed as he believed that English medium of instruction will be appropriate for the education of the Muslims as English was the language of the ruler and books also

education and good section of the Hindus adopted it and availed the opportunity provided by it. They were appointed in services at lower range and state patronage was extended to them. It resulted in the economic prosperity of the Hindus. The consequence of this was that the relative positions of the Hindus and Muslims communities steadily changed the former rising in knowledge, Wealth and position and the later declining.<sup>52</sup>

For this reason, the 19th century was a period of general decline of the Muslims of India in all walks of life - economic, social, cultural and political.

It is Sir Syed who realised the importance of modern Western education and advocated its acceptance by the Muslims. Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, a modern Muslim intellectual and leader was of the same view : "It was soon after this that he first came across the writings of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan I was greatly impressed by his views on modern education. I realised that a man could not be truly educated in the modern world unless he studied modern Science, Philosophy and literature".<sup>53</sup> Sir Syed also advocated that they must acquire modern Western education and laid emphasis on English and Science. He fully believed that modern education will partly solve the economic problems of the Muslims. He also emphasised that the Muslims should acquire higher education in English. So that they can be appointed in Government Services. He believed that if the Muslims got employment under the British, their poverty will be mitigated to some

were available in English. 55

Further Sir Syed Ahmad Khan Suggested :

"Indians will progress only when they themselves, without the interference of the government and its Officers, arrange for the education of their young boys out of their voluntary contribution, and themselves administer and control it."<sup>56</sup>

Again Sir Syed Ahmad Khan expressed his opinion that national education should be in the hands of the people he said :

"My own opinion is very much at variance with public opinion on this matter. After giving a great deal of thought to every aspect of this question, I have come to the conclusion that it is impossible for people to acquire a suitable form of education until they take the entire management of education in their own hand. It follows that it would be to the country's advantage if the Government left the people to manage their own education for themselves and refrained from interfering in any way whatsoever."<sup>57</sup>

Shan Muhammad correctly assessed : "Sir Syed believed in self help and repeatedly told his community that national regeneration and stability could be gained only through its own labour. No amount of Government help could make it self-sufficient. Only persistence, self confidence, self-help and self-respect could assist it in regaining its lost image".<sup>58</sup>

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## CHAPTER - VI

### SIR SYED AHMAD KHAN'S LEADERSHIP, THE ALIGARH MOVEMENT AND THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

With the efforts of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) Hindus had received modern education and made their ground sound and a middle class emerged out of them by the end of the third Quarter of the Nineteenth Century<sup>1</sup>. But on the other hand, Muslims did not adopt modern scientific education and thus no middle class came into existence. They were highly slow to adjust themselves to the growing nationalism which the Hindus already had developed.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, Muslims were still being suspected of conspiring against the British Government. The appearance of Sir Syed after revolt of 1857 had softened British attitude by writing "The causes of Indian Revolt 1857". But still much more was needed to be done.

A number of newspapers had been increasing after the Revolt, 1857 and those papers were producing a good deal of anti-Government feelings. The period of Lord Lytton, the then Viceroy of India, was highly discontent and this was because of his economic and political policies and exploitation of the people was also accelerating.<sup>3</sup>

The economic conditions of the Indian people had been fact deteriorating and the country was boiling with discontent. At that time, two English men, Allan Octavian Hume and William Wedderburn, both officials, were closely

associated with Indian's Political awakening and aspirations. The growth of popular discontent, the spreading of underground organisations and the growing unrest in the country had been demonstrated in the Deccan by the risings of the peasants whose patience were exhausted and who were ready to commit violence on a large scale. On the basis of these information and facts, Mr. A.O.Hume apprehended that the revolt of 1857 might be repeated.<sup>4</sup> Wedderburn, in his biography of A.O. Hume, says ; About the years 1878 and 1879, economic in combination with political troubles were actively at work throughout India; the physical suffering of the many acted on by the intellectual discontent of the few, was rapidly bringing popular unrest to the danger point. For masses of the peasantry, scourged by poverty, family and pestilence, were beginning to give way to despair; they could not make their voices heard, and they saw no hope of relief. This critical condition of affairs was clearly understood by Mr. Hume.<sup>5</sup>

A.O. Hume further apprehended and realised that the Government of the day, administered by foreign officials in a mechanical manner, was out of touch with the people. No channel was existed for communication between rulers and the ruled and the British officials were almost fully ignorant of the attitudes of the people of India. "There was therefore a great gulf fixed between the foreign bureaucracy, self-centred on the hights of Simla and the millions painfully foiling in the plains below.<sup>6</sup>

Mr. Hume also realised that the poor had been in a state of desparation an hopelessness. They were convinced

that they would starve and die. Thus they began to think of doing something and that something was nothing but violence..<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, Mr. Hume understood the reality that Indians might again be involved in a rebellions affairs and so he wanted to keep the Indian National Movement within the considerable limits of constitutional agitation. With this idea in mind, he made a plan to take some definite action to conunteract the growing unrest in India towards the close of Lord Lytton's Viceroyalty.<sup>8</sup>

Mr. Hume thought that it would be better if the leading Indian politicians could be brought together once in a year to discuss political and social problems where Governors of provinces should be asked to preside over such annual discussions through which a greater cordiality would be established between the official classes and non - official Indian politicians.<sup>9</sup>

With this idea keeping in mind, he circulated an open letter to the Graduates of the Calcutta University on March, 1883 and he made an appeal to them to give their services voluntarily for the cause of nation. He also wanted Lord Dufferin's approval for his plans. Lord Dufferin himself advised and suggested that the Movement should have a political barts, on the ground that Government

needed a 'Loyal Opposition' which could function as safety-valve.<sup>10</sup>

Ram Gopal writes, "Lord Dufferin suggested that Indian leaders should meet yearly and point out to Government in what respects the administration was defective and how it could be improved, and that such an assembly should not be presided over by a Government official, for the people might not speak out their minds in his presence. Hume ws convinced and so were the leading Indians whom he apprised with Lord Dufferin's scheme.... In March 1885 a circular letter was sent round notifying that 'a conference of the Indian National Union will be held at Poona from December 25 to 31, 1885', and that the 'conference will be composed to Delegates - leading politicians well-acquainted with the English language - from all parts of Bengal, Bombay, and Madras Presidencies'. (Later on the venue was changed from Poona to Bombay). The circular said that 'indirectly, this conference will form the germ of a National Parliament, and if properly conducted, will constitute in a few years an unanswerable reply to the assertion that India is still wholly unfit for any form of representative instituions'. The projected gathering was described as 'the Conference of the Indian National Union', but a few days before the date fixed for the meeting, the name was changed, at the suggestion of Hume, to the 'Indian National Congress'. It was this Congress, which in the years to come was transformed into a revolutionary organization".<sup>11</sup>

The Plans and objects of the Congress were as follows :-

To develop and promote personal intimacy and friendship amongst the members and workers in the country; to eradicate all possible religious, racial or provincial prejudices by direct friendly discussion; to work for the interest of the people etc.<sup>12</sup>

Gradually, Indian National Congress advanced and progressed and within four years of its birth the number of delegates increased to 1248 from 72.<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, Sir Syed was highly engaged in his Aligarh College and he was not interested in any agitational activities and he kept himself away from joining the 'Indian National Congress'. He vehemently opposed its programme and ideology.

Sir Syed was busy to bringing about a better relation and understanding between the English rulers and the Musalmans and he never allowed to have any friction between them. He had full experience of the revolt of 1857 and feared that the same problem might again befall the Muslims if they entered into politics. According to Sir Syed, the salvation of the Muslim community lay in the attainment of higher English education. He wanted their abstention from any political agitation of the educated classes.<sup>14</sup>

Sir Syed's Politics is characterised by Loyalism,

whose basic para metres were five, fear, hope, appreciation, convenience and pragmatism.<sup>15</sup> Sir Syed's Leadership had to deal with three major segments of society, the Muslims, the Hindus and the English, and he had to confront with three realities of the times, the global reality, the reality of the Islamic World and the reality of the Indian-sub-continent.<sup>16</sup>

As a matter of fact, the objectives and demands of the Indian National Congress were highly appreciated by the educated Indian middle class, be they Hindus or Muslims. But Sir Syed was disturbed because of this growing nationalism and tried to prove the loyalty of the Muslims to the British. For some time he maintained strict silence after the birth of the Congress but soon opposed it. This opposition of the Muhammadan Educational Conference of 1887 at Lucknow. He said ;

"It should be borne in mind that for a respected person to sit with the Viceroy in Council the essential requisite is the respectability of that person. Well the rich of our country tolerate that the members of Lower Classes, even though they may have B.A. and M.A Degrees and may possess enough competence, should rule over them and control their property and possession ? Never, as no one would like it. The Membership of the Council is highly honourable and the Government is bound to give it to none except respected gentleman. The Viceroy can not address an ordinary person as 'my colleagues'

or 'my honourable colleagues' nor can he invite them to grand dinners and state functions in which great dignitaries like Dukes and Earls participate."<sup>17</sup>

When Sir Syed came to know in 1887 that the forthcoming session at Madras was to be presided by Badruddin Tayyabji, he could not remain silent and in order to combat the influence of the congress he set up the United Indian Patriotic Association in 1888 in which members of both communities could take part. The main object of it was to counter act the activities of the congress, to inform the British parliament of the steps being, taken all over India and moreover, to make the English understand that Muslims were not taking part in the Indian National Congress.<sup>18</sup>

On the other hand, Badruddin Tayyabji, wanted Sir Syed in the Indian National Congress. He tried to follow him and wrote a letter to him on 13th January 1888. The letter states as follows.

'I have not been able thoroughly to understand the grounds on which this abstention is sought to be justified but it does seem to me to be a great pity that on matters affecting all India as a whole, any section of the Mussalman community should keep aloof from the Hindus and thus retard the National Progress of India as a whole. I understand your objection to be that the Hindus being more advanced than ourselves would profit

more by any concessions made by Government....if any proposal is made which would subject the Mussalmans to the Hindus or would vest the exclusive power in Hindus to the detriment of the Mussalmans, I should oppose it with all my strength, but the Congress proposes to do not such things. Its aims are, and must be, for the benefit of all communities equally and any proposition that is disliked by the Mohamedans as a body must be excluded from it.<sup>19</sup>

Sir Syed was a man of deep insight and he regarded that Bengalis were dominated the congress and it seems it was their organisation. Sir Syed was not in favour of including elected representatives in the Council and its expansion. He also opposed the demand of the Congress that the competitive examination for the Indian Civil Service should be simultaneously held in India and England.<sup>20</sup> Sometime later Badruddin Tayyabji wrote another letter in 1888. He wrote :

'At the time when I wrote you I had not seen your speech at I Lucknow. But I have since had an opportunity of reading it, and it is quite clear that at the time you delivered that speech, you were under the impression that the Congress was composed of Bengali Babus alone. How you should have got this idea passes my comprehension; for surely you could not have imagined that the Hindus of the Madras and the Bombay presidencies had not taken

an active part in it, even if you were unaware of the attitude of the educated Mussalmans of these presidencies towards the Congress. Be that as it may, the facts are that so far as Hindus are concerned they unanimously and as a body support the Congress no matter what province they belong to; and as to the Mussalmans, the presidencies of Bombay and Madras strongly support it, while in Bengal and North Western Provinces to judge from your speech there seems to be very considerable opposition to it.<sup>21</sup>

Inspite of all these efforts, he could not change Sir Syed's attitude toward the Indian National Congress. Sir Syed replied to Badruddin Tayyabji and wrote a very long letter on 2nd April, 1888. A some important lines of the letter are as follows :

'I read in your paper, dated April 2nd, a ltter from my distinguished friend Mr. Badruddin Tyabji, about the National Congress. I think it fit that I should myself write a reply to it, ... On my own behalf and on behalf of very many of our mutual co-religionists I thank him for this proceeding. I also agree with him in this—"that the Congress could not be rightly termed a National Congress where any particular resolution could be carried against the unanimous portest of either the Hindu or Mussalman delegate." But I go further : I first of all object to the word "delegate". I assure my friend tht of the Mohammedans who went from the North Western Provinces and Oudh, there is not one to whom the word "delegate" can be

' I assure Mr. Hume that, even if I heard that Sir Auckland Colvin, Lord Dufferin, the Secretary of State for India and the whole House of Commons had declared in favour of the Congress I should remain as firmly opposed to it as ever, and I earnestly beg all the Mohammedans of India to be constant and determined in thier opposition, for it is my deliberate belief that should the resolution of National Congress be carried into effect, it would be impossible for British Government to preserve peace in India or control in any degree the violence of civil wars that would ensure. The resolution of the Congress on the subject of Arms Act would, of course, be of great assistance at such a crisis.'<sup>23</sup>

Tufail Ahmad writes that some people believed and claimed Sir Syed fail under the influence of Principal, Theodore Back<sup>24</sup> but Back's influence on Sir Syed regarding the Indian National Congress was not true.<sup>25</sup>

Sir Syed is now a controversial figure in modern India because of his attitude towards the Indian National Congress. From his abstention and aversion to the Indian National Congress it is argued that he was unpatriotic and hostile to Indian nationalism and finally drifted to communalism. A minute study of his speeches, writings and letters reveals that he was neither anti-national nor communalist. He was a nationalist, he considered India his home and in his opinion 'the Congress Movement

applied. I know well the condition of my own Province. Not ten Mohammedans came together to elect any one of those Mohammedans who went. In those districts from which they went there were not among the Raises and influential Mohammedans, nor among the middle classes, ten men who knew what the National Congress was, nor who had elected whom. Four days ago, a Mohammedan of liberal views, who went to Madras as a delegate, boasted that his glory lay in this : that the Hindus and not the Mohammedans, had elected him. Then how inappropriate and absurd to apply word "delegate" to Mohammedans under such circumstances ? Secondly, I object to the implication that the only condition under which the Congress cannot be termed "national" is if any resolution be carried against the unanimous protest of either the Hindu or the Mohammedan members. The fact of any resolution being carried unanimously does not make the Congress a "national" one. A Congress can only be called "national" when the ultimate aims and objects of the people of which it is composed are identical!<sup>22</sup>

Infact, Badruddin Tayyabji wanted the solution of the Muslim problems through politics while Sir Syed wanted them through education.

Sir Syed was also not agree with Mr. Hume as a letter of Sir Syed to the editor of the Pioneer dated 10th Nov. 1888 reveals the fact. The letter states :

had been started a little earlier and prematurely. Muslims were educationally and socially backward and retarded and so was the case with other communities of India.<sup>26</sup>

At the out set, the congress was not an All India organisation. Infact, the congress of 1885 was formed by some handful English educated persons from Presidency Provinces. He did not think that the whole country could be benefited.<sup>27</sup>

The basic problem was not political but economic.<sup>28</sup> The point is that a bourgeoisie class had developed in Bombay, Madras and Bengal while in northern India this class did not come into existece.<sup>29</sup> This was the reason that the Muslims living in the three provinces of port areas had joined and supported the congress. As a bourgeoisie class developed among Muslims. It was also observed that they attended the sessions of the Congress and presided over them.<sup>30</sup> But on the other hand, there was no response from the nothern part of India and it is obvious that the Muslims of that area had not developed a bourgeoisie class. They were still tiedup with feudalism and anti-democratic ideology while non-Muslim middle class of any part of the country had begun to think on the line of western liberalism. Sir Syed held the view that both the demands of the congress i.e. holding of competitive examination and elected representatives in the Council and its expansion - were not concerned with the interest of the minority people of the country.<sup>31</sup>

It should also be mentioned that Sir Syed was neither jealous of non-Muslims nor did he aim at retarding their progress, he was aware of the fact that Hindus and Muslims were the two wheels of the country's vehicle and it should maintain its balance and equilibrium.<sup>31A</sup>

Sir Syed observed that the conditions of the two communities were different. One had enjoyed prosperity and education for about a century and the other community had suffered a century of ignorance and suppression. The result was that they could not avail the situation alike. Sir Syed had firm faith that any political agitation would harm both the communities.<sup>32</sup>

Jawaherlal Nehru in his 'The Discovery of India', he rightly remarks that Syed Ahmad "was not opposed to the Indian National Congress because he considered it predominantly a Hindu organisation; he opposed it because he thought it was politically too aggressive".<sup>33</sup>

Sir Syed thought that the Muslims could progress only with the support of the British Government and the acceptance of western modern education. It is interesting to note that he not only opposed the Indian National Congress but also the National Mohammedan Association founded by Syed Ameer Ali of Calcutta in 1877 who felt the urgency of political organisation.<sup>34</sup> While Sir Syed felt that education was needed for the eradication of all kinds of evils from the Muslim Society.

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## CHAPTER - VII

### SIR SYED AHMAD KHAN, THE ALIGARH MOVEMENT AND THE NON-MUSLIMS

Sir Syed was one of the greatest educationist and social reformers. He extricated the Muslims from the meshes of medievalism and out-moded patterns of thoughts and behaviour. He was secular in approach and a nationalist. Moreover, he was a propounder of Hindu-Muslim unity. Before we go into details, we must clarify the concepts-Secularism and nationalism-in order that we may know the views Sir Syed believed and practised.

Clarifying the concept of secularism Romila Thaper writes, "Secularism was used in a specific sense arising out of the contestation of European elites through confrontation between catholicism and protestanism. But from the nineteenth century it has had a different and much wider meaning as a concept. This chage is often overlocked by those who continue to relate the concept only to the confrontation between church and state. The new meaning assumes the existence of religious pluralities, of their equal status and of the eventual emergence of a Society in which the rights of the individual as citizens take precedence over religious identities."<sup>1</sup>

At the common parlance, there are two kinds of current views of secularism. First view is that secularism is opposed to religion and the second more prevalant view is that secularism means the co-existence of the different religious. This arises again from the perspective

of projecting Indian society as consisting of religious communities, this is an Indian interpretation of the concept.<sup>2</sup>

Secularism is known to three western connotations at the popular level.

- a) Keeping man and society away from the transcendental and divine/religions and metaphysical objects;
- b) rational use in institution through a process of keeping regiosity away; and
- c) religion - a private affair of human activity.

Anyway, the above connotation are not shown to be conceptually tenable and possible empirically.<sup>3</sup>

For resolving this conceptual empirical deadlock, it may be conceptualised as pluralism of religion - where the activities of different religions would respect one another in keeping with their respect worship manners and patterns and beliefs in order that they could enter into critical and creative dialogue and they could convincingly understand one another. And ultimately they could collectively form a just and humane society.<sup>4</sup>

In the context of India, Donald Smith, defining secularism, refers to three alternatives that have been incorporated in the Indian constitution :

- 1) Individual and corporate-freedom of religion;

2) Citizenship based on equality of all individuals irrespective of religious practices;

and 3) Complete separation of religion and state.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, examined, a state which guarantees freedom of religion - individual and corporate is a secular state which deals with the individual as a citizen regardless his religion. A secular state is neither constitutionally bound to a particular religion nor seeks to promote or interfere with religion.<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, it is generally viewed that the degenerate menifestation of religion is communalism. It is regarded to be negative social force, Communalism, Smith defines, as the functioning of religious committees or organisation that claim to represent them in such a way which is regarded detrimental to the interests of other groups or communities or of the nation as a whole.<sup>7</sup> In this way, communalism incorporates an appeal to a common heritage of religion - an appeal for politicised goal. The politicisation of religious rituals and symbols are involved in it. Religion turns into a political instrument. Communalism tries to eradicate the natural heterogeneity which exists with the Muslim as well as Hindu communities, turn the community into a unified political corporate group in India.<sup>8</sup> It emphasises not simply Hindu-Muslim Unity, but the antagonism between Muslims and Hindus. W.C. Smith defined communalism in socio-economic terms as the ideology which has emphasised as the political,

social and economic Unit, the group concerns of each religion and has emphasised the distinction, even the contradiction/antagonism of such groups.<sup>9</sup>

So far as Sir Syed is concerned he believed and practised/secularism in accordance with the meaning of coexistence of the different religious and the rational use in institution through a process of keeping religiosity away.

The concept 'nationalism' also grew in Europe more than two hundred years ago and has since spread all over the world. Norman Angell, British journalist and economist, once made this statement",<sup>10</sup> "Political nationalism has become, for the European of our age, the most important thing in the world, more important than civilization, huminity, decency, kindness, pity, more important than life itself."<sup>11</sup>

He further asserted, "A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Only two things, actually constitute this soul, this spritual principle. One is in the past, the other is in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of remembrances; the other is actual consent, the desire to live together, the will to continue to values the heritage which all hold in common."<sup>12</sup> The term 'Nation' in English is used synonymously with 'state' or 'country' to mean a society united under one government and sometimes 'nation' is also used to denote an aggregation of individuals united by other, as well as political

ties - ties commonly of race, religion, language, or tradition. The individuals are possessed on common institutions and a common culture which give unity to the group and foster a spirit of sympathy between members. Therefore nationalism is a condition of mind, feeling, or sentiment of a group of people living in a well defined geographical area, speaking a common language, possessing a literature in which the aspirations of the nation have been expressed, being attached to common traditions and in some cases having a common religion.<sup>13</sup> In this way it becomes clear that "nationalism is used generally of a consciousness, on the part of individuals or groups, of membership in a nation, or of a desire to forward the strength, liberty, or prosperity of a nation, whether ones' own or another.

Safia Amir says, "The Urdu word Qawm (which has been defined as a people; tribe, race, family; sect or caste" and rarely as group"<sup>14</sup> has most often been translated as "nation". "The fact that the single word qaumiyyat may be employed for 'nationality', 'nation hood' as well as nationalism.<sup>15</sup> Millat and Ummat are Arabic words which mean nation and followers of a faith but in Urdu usages signify often 'the Muslim nation'. Ummat also connotes disciples, adherents, and brethren in faith.<sup>16</sup>

Whereas it is nearly universally agreed that a 'nation' is a large 'community' or extensive aggregate of persons so closely associated with each other by common descent language, or history, as to form a distinct race

or people"; there is much difference of opinion as to how far unity of religion territory and government constitute necessary criteria for its existence. (In case the last two conditions are fulfilled, the 'nation' would become a 'country or nation state'. A common consciousness of myth and shared experience, and also common institutions, traditions, customs, and a sense of social homogeneity and mutual interest have also been regarded as hallmarks of a nation."<sup>17</sup>

In case of Sir Syed, he used the word quaum (nation) rather loosely, to denote various shades of meaning. He, sometimes used the word to denote 'class' 'caste' or even merely a social group. He thus described kayasths, gypsies, tanners, Sayyads, Shaykhs, nawabs, muftis, and qadis as qawms.<sup>18</sup>

Sir Syed oftenly denoted the word in its common sense of 'people', race, and 'nation'. He thus referred to the English, French, Greeks, Germans, Turks, Egyptians, Arabs and Persians etc as qaums. It is also observed that he described both 'the people of Hind' collectively, as well as Hindus, Muslims, Bengalis and Parsees etc individually as Qaum.<sup>19</sup> Once he asserted that every qawm has its own particular country and language.<sup>19A</sup> Therefore, qawm may be used simultaneously for the world community of Muslims, as well as to signify their different nationalities.<sup>20</sup>

The Revolt of 1857 was the greatest event in his life which shaped and guided his personality. The main

victims of the revolt were the Muslims, their lives and property were destroyed. So he wanted to revive their social and economic conditions through modern education and for the propagation of modern education he founded the M A O College in 1877 at Aligarh. The college was both an institution and a movement. It popularised Western education amongst the Indians. The doors of the institution have been kept open to all from the very beginning irrespective of caste class, colour and creed.

From the very beginning, the M A O college has been truly representative of the country's multiracial, multi-religious and multi-lingual character. People from the different communities and from all parts of the country - from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from Gujrat to Assam - come here. Though they belong to different cultural tradition and speak different languages. It is interesting to note that they live here on the campus in the same rooms. They share together the joys and worries of residential life. They dine on the same table and play on the same grounds. This tradition of harmonious corporate living further contributed to the development of a broad, Universal, cosmopolitan and secular attitude in the institution.<sup>21</sup>

Sir Syed was a non-communal and he never discriminated between Hindus and Muslims. He appointed persons in his college from all communities, irrespective of caste, colour and creed.

Sir Syed's non-communal attitude in the college was expressed in various ways. For instance, the famous mathematician, J.C. Chakraborty, joined as Professor in 1888 and later on he acted as Registrar. Moreover, the first second Master of the school was Sri Baijnath, who was next to Siddons in authority. It is also very interesting to note here that the first graduate of the University was Sri Ishwari Prasad of Tehsil Khair, Aligarh district and the first M.A. was Amba Prasad. The classical language Sanskrit was given a place of honour from the very inception of the college.<sup>22</sup>

One of the most remarkable points to be noted here is that the Hindu College of Calcutta was confined to Hindus only while Sir Syed's M A O college was its door kept open to all.<sup>23</sup> Sir Syed's following statement will make the point clear :-

"I am glad to say that in this Institution both the brothers get the same education. All the privileges in the college which a student gets because of his being a Musalman, are without any restriction, provided to him who calls himself Hindu. There is no distinction between Hindus and Muslims. Only that man can claim a prize who deserves it by virtue of his own labour. Both Hindus and Musalmans are entitled to get scholarships and are accorded the same treatment. I consider Hindus and Musalmans as my two eyes. I don't even like to say this because people will generally differentiate one

as the right eye and the other as the left. I consider Hindus and Musalmans both as one and the same eye."<sup>24</sup>

Not only in India but even in Europe there were colleges where non-christians were not admitted. Sk. Bhatnagar says,

"It is a strange contrast to this secularism that the famous colleges of England, like Keble, Hertfor, and Magdaleve did not admit non-christian students even as late as the beginning of this century."<sup>25</sup>

Sir Syed had a cosmopolitan outlook and secular approach. He hated sectarian or communal approach in any matter whatsoever and advised people to develop secular attitude of mind.

Sir Syed in his lecture at Patna, January 27, 1883, emphatically expressed that the first and foremost duty of all well-wishers of the country should thing of striving for the welfare of all people in regardless their caste or religion. Good life and health is not possible without the fitness and soundness of all the organs of the body, in the same way, the prosperity of a nation is not possible without all round progress of the country.<sup>26</sup>

Expressing on the secular atmosphere that prevailed at the M A O College, Sk. Bhatnagar says,

"The college remained a model of secularism almost

till the end. The Hindu and Muslim students fraternized with one another, and lived in peace, devoted to their common alma mater. The Hindu competed with the Muslims for all college honours-academic, social and of sports, on terms of equality. They secured admission, received prizes and medals solely on merit. They lived as comfortably in the boarding house as Muslims and fully participated in the life of the College".<sup>27</sup>

I personally visited the Aligarh Muslim University and found that there were many Hall and Hostels named after non-Muslims like Sarojini Naidu Hall, Indira Gandhi Hall for the Girl students, Raja Jai Kishan Das Hostel, Dhyan Cahnd Hostel, Chakrabarti Hostel, Raja Mahendra Pratap Hostel, etc for boys and on.<sup>28</sup>

Apart from these, Sir Syed's secular views is reflected in the aims and objects he set and rules he framed for the Siddons Union Club (At present it is the A M U students' Union). The rules of the club specifically prohibited discussion and debates on topics of religious nature. He did not hurt the teachings of other communities throughout his life. Basically he wanted a secular attitude of mind everywhere and a spirit of religious tolerance inside the college permises. On the eve of Eid some students of the College were going to offer a cow sacrifice, when Sir Syed learnt it he strictly prohibited it. He also wrote an article on "Cow Sacrifice" in which he said;

"If prohibition of cow sacrifice can bring peace and friendship among the Hindu and Muslims it would be wrong on the part of the Muslims not to give it up."<sup>29</sup>

It can safely be said that there has been cosmopolitanism, religious tolerance and co-existing of all communities the cherished ideals of the Institution.

Sir Syed was aware of the fact that the country could not progress unless and until both the communities work together. He wanted and tried to integrated Hindus and Muslims emotionally by eradicating religious prejudices and superstitions. Unfortunately he was highly misunderstood because of misinterpretation of the word "Qawm" (Nation) his relation to the Indian National Congress prohibiteing Muslims to join it. But the facts and figures of his writings and speeches give us the different meaning.

This is the fact that he mainly worked for the uplift of Muslims but he never ignored other communities too. When he initiated his educational programme he not only invited Muslims, but non-Muslims also to join hands with him in his struggle against illiteracy. The Scientific Society which was founded by him at Ghazipur in 1864 was comprised by 109 members including both Hindus and Muslims<sup>30</sup> and Raja Jai Kishan Das was the right handman of Sir Syed in propagating the aims and objectives of the scientific society.<sup>31</sup>

Whenever, any practical step was taken to realize his educational objectives, Sir Syed associated Hindus with him :-

When Sir Syed laid the foundation stone of the Ghazipur Madarsa, he invited Maulana Muhammad Fasih and Raj Dev Narayan to perform this auspicious work. Sir Syed convened a meeting on August 1, 1882 "to consider the condition of Muslim education and place its proposals before the Education committee". Nine of its members were Hindus. The Managing Committee of the M A O College, which comprised 22 members, had the following 6 Hindu members in it :-

Thakur Gir Prasad Singh of Benaras, Raja Jai Kishan Das, Pandit Radha Kishan, Babu Jogendra Nath, Lala Lokman Das, Babu Tota Ram,<sup>32</sup>

Sir Syed treated Hindus as he treated Muslims. Not only this, from the very inception he gave higher posts to non-Muslims. Some of the distinguished non-Muslim teachers who served the college during the period of Sir Syed were ; Lala Baijnath, Babu Ram Shankar Misra, Babu Sardar Ranjan Roy, Babu Bhawani Chander Chakraborty, Babu Piyare-lal, Babu Brij Mohan Lal, Munshi Bansidhar, Babu Gobindra Prasad, Babu Binodi Lal.<sup>33</sup>

It is the matter of great regret that Sir Syed is highly misinterpreted and therefore misunderstood

while he used the word Qawm (nation). He is branded as the father of two - nation theory on the basis of the word Quawm (Nation) as he used it frequently in his speeches. One thing should be kept in mind that the words nation and community mean the same to Sir Syed. He never used nation in the modern and technical sense of the term. He did not have the perfect idea of nineteenth century western connotation of the word nation. If we analyse his different writings and speeches, we must have to conclude that he was not the propounder of two-nation theory but a multi nation theory. We find the root of the concept of pluralism applicable to the explanation of Indian society.

Sir Syed sometimes used the word 'Quawm' to denote 'caste' 'class' or simply a 'social group'. For instance, he described Tanners, Syeds, Shaykhs, Nawabs, Kayasthan, Gypsies, Muftis and Quadis as 'Quawm's.<sup>34</sup>

Sir Syed often denoted the word in its common sense of 'People', 'race', and 'nation'. He, thus, referred to the French, English, Greeks, Germans, Turks, Egyptians, Arabs and Persians etc. as Quawms (Nations). It is also observed that he described both 'the people of Hindu' collectively, as well as Hindus, Muslims, Bengalis and Parsees etc. individually, as Quawm<sup>35</sup>. Once he asserted that every Quawm has its own particular country and language.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, Quawm may be used simultaneously for the world community of Muslims, as well as to signify their different nationalities.<sup>37</sup>

Sir Syed appreciated Bengalis and regarded them as a nation in his speech at Lahore in 1883.<sup>38</sup>

In another lecture he regarded Afgani and Irani as a Quawm seperately.

"..... the word "Quwam" is used for the citizens of a country. Various peoples of Afganistan are considered a 'Quawm' (Nation), and different peoples of Iran are known as Iranis. Europeans prefers different religions and believed in different ideas, yet they are all members of a single nation. In a nutshell, since the ancient times the word 'Quwam' (nation) is used for the inhabitants of a country, even though they have characteristics of their own".<sup>39</sup>

But most of the time Sir Syed used the word 'Quwam' to denote all Indians. In one of his speeches he arrested ;

"By the word 'Quawm' I mean both Hindus and Muslims. That is the way in which I define the word nation (Quwam). In my opinion it matters not whatever be their religious belief, because we can not see anything of it, but what we see is that all of us, whether Hindus or Muslims, live on one soil, are governed by one and the same ruler, have the same souces of our benefits, and equally share the hardships of a famine. These are the various reasons why I designate both the nationalities that inhabit India by the term 'Hindu' - that is, the nation (Quwam) which lives in India."<sup>40</sup>

The same and clear concept of one nation has been expressed by Sir Syed at Gurdaspur on 27th January 1884.

"Oh Hindu and Musalmans brethren, do you inhabit any country other than India ? Do you not inhabit the same land ? Are you not burned and buried on the same soil ? Do you not treat the same ground and fire upon the same soil ? Remember that the words Hindu and Mohammadan are only mean for religious distinction - otherwise all persons, whether Hindu or Mohammadan, even the Christians who reside in this country, are all in this particular respect belonging to one and the same nation. Then all these different sects can only be described as one nation; they must all unite for the good of the country which is common to all."<sup>41</sup>

In another speech delivered at Jullundar, February 1, 1884 he said "Gentlemen, centuries have passed when God willed that Hindus and Musalmans might consume the products of this country, breath the air of this country, they may live and die on this land. From this phenomenon it appears to be the will of God that both these groups may live together in India as friends but more particularly as two brothers. They may from two eyes on the beautiful face of India. These two nations (Communities) which have mixed like rice and pulse may live in cooperation.... If Hindus and Musalmans build their buildings of two bricks and one and a - half bricks separately, nothing would be achieved. They should first of all complete

one work unitedly and when it is done they should start the other.<sup>42</sup>

One more point may be added to clarify the concept of the Quawm. In reply to the Address presented to him by Anjuman-e-Lahore, Punjab in December 20, 1883. He expressed the same idea emphatically and said,

"I have used the word nation several times in this Anjuman. By this I do not mean Muslims only. In my opinion all mean are one and I do not like religion, community or group to be identified with a nation.....I wish that all men irrespective of their religion and community may unite together for common weal. Our religions are undoubtedly different but there is no reason for enmity among us on this account."<sup>43</sup>

The above speeches and writings of Sir Syed are self explanatory and one can easily conclude that Sir Syed never used the word Quawm (Nation) in the modern sense of the term and the most significant point is that he never considered Hindus and Muslims as two nations. One does not find even a single speech which indicates that he ever thought of Muslims and Hindus as separate nations. The historians like M.S. Jain,<sup>44</sup> and L.K. Srivastava<sup>45</sup> and many others distorted the sentences out of the context and explained them in accordance with their own way of thinking. Shan Muhammad says, "The Pakistani historians out of their admiration for Sir Syed

halitism as "the first Pakistani" while the Indian historians<sup>46</sup> out of their bais call him the father of two-nation theory and thus the forerunner of the idea of Pakistan. This is too far-fetched an ideas as Sir Syed had nothing to do with all this.<sup>47</sup> Supporting Sir Syed's idea Jawaharlal Nehru in his "The Discovery of India" writes :-

"He (Sir Syed) was in no way anti Hindu or communally separatist. Repeatedly he emphasised, that religious differences should have no political or national significance." Do you not inhabit the same land" ? he said, "Remember that the words Hindu and Muhammedan are only meant for religious distinction - otherwise all persons, whether Hindu or Muhammedan, even the Christians who reside in this country are all this particular respect, belonging to one and the same direction."<sup>48</sup>

Tara Chand in his "History of the Freedom Movement in India" Writes :

Syed Ahmad Khan was a believer in Hindu-Muslim political cooperation. It is a travesty of truth to regard him as an author of the theory that the Hindus and Muslims were two seperate nation. In fact, he was a supporter of Hindu-Muslim unity. For him there was no religious barrier in the way of this Unity, no objection on the grounds of conscience."<sup>49</sup>

Sir Syed had a broad concept of nation and by the word nation he sometimes meant all the inhabitants of the country and sometimes he used it differently according to their faith. By unity and integration he did not mean that people should leave their faiths and beliefs and follow a single religion. He wished people a rational and empirical approach in the matter which could bring national integration.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was an exponent of Hindu Muslim Unity. In a speech delivered at Patna 27 January, 1883, he said :

"Just as many reputed people professing Hindu faith came to this country, so we also came here. The Hindus forgot the country from which they had come; they could not remember their migration from one land to another and came to consider India as their homeland, believing that their country lies between the Himalayas and the Vindhya. Hundreds of years have lapsed since we, in our turn, left the lands of our origin. We remember neither the climate nor the natural beauty of those lands, neither the freshness of the harvests nor the deliciousness of the fruits nor even do we remember the blessings of the holy deserts. We also came to consider India as our home land and we settled down here like the earlier immigrants. Thus India is the home of both of us. We both breathe the air of India and take the water of the holy Ganges and the Jamuna. We both consume the product of

the Indian soil. We are living and dying together. By living so long in India, the blood of both has changed. The colour of both has become similar. The faces of both, having changed, have become similar. The Muslims have acquired hundreds of customs from the Hindus and the Hindus have also learned hundreds of things from the Musalmans. We mixed with each other so much that we produced a new language - Urdu, which was neither our language nor thiers. Thus if we ignore that aspect of ours which we owe to God, both of us, on the basis of being common inhabitants of India, actually constitute one nation; and the progress of this country and that of both of us in possible through mutual co-operation, sympathy and live. We shall only destroy ourselves by mutual disunity and animosity and ill-will to each other. It is pitiable to see those who do not understand this point and create feelings of disunity among these two nations and fail to see that they themselves will be the victims of such a situation and inflict injury to themselves. My friends, I have repeatedly said and it again that India is like a bride which has got two beautiful and lustrous eyes- Hindus and Musalmans. If they quarrel against each other that beautiful bride will become ugly and if one destroys the other, she will lose one eye. Threrefore, people of Hindustan, you have now the right to make this bride either squint eyed or one-eyed.<sup>50</sup> There is no dearth of finding such speeches from Sir Syed's collection.

In another speech delivered at Gurudaspur 27 January, 1884, he said :

"By the grace of God two nations live in India at the moment and they are so placed that the house of the one adjoins that of the other. Shadow of one's wall falls in the house of the other. They share the same climate, take water from the same river or well. In death and life, as also in joys and griefs of others, every one is a participant. One can not live without the cooperation of the other. If united, we can sustain each other; if we are disunited, it would lead to the destruction and downfall of both, you might seen and heard in the old history books, and we see it today also, that the word nation (Quawm) applied to the people who live in the same country."<sup>51</sup>

Sir Syed wrote a very lengthy article on Hindu-Muslim relation in 1897 in which he expressed and felt extremely happy to have an experience of development of mutual understanding, brotherly feeling and intercourse. Sir Syed wrote. :

'I have frequently said that India is a beautiful bride and Hindus and Muslims are her two eyes. Her beauty lies in the proper safety of these two eyes. If one of them is lost, this beautiful bride will become ugly and one eyed....<sup>52</sup> 'In my opinion the difference of religion as it exists between Hindus and Muslims, can not be an obstacle in their mutual intercourse and sympathy for each other. Like - wise, the political differences also cannot be an obstacle in maintaining close relations

between the two.... 'Without any doubt, as I want freindship, Unity and love butween the two communities, inspite of religions distinction, similarly I want mutual cooperation, Love, sympathy and brotherhood specialy, without minding the political differences.'<sup>53</sup>

Sir Syed remained loyal to the British during the revolt of 1857 and he while writing "The asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind (The cuases of Indian Revolt) of 1857 in 1858 referred to the Muslims and Hindus as "mutually antagonistic nations". Any way, he felt and observed the constant intermingling of two groups in each regiment developed a friendship and brotherhood and they forgot then former divisions.<sup>54</sup>

In another work of Sir Syed, Tarikh-i-Sharkashi-i-Zila Bijnour, of the same period, he observed that there had been a fierce fighting in Bijnour between the two communities during the revolt. But before the revolt they lived and amicably, Sir Syed felt that the tree of Hindu-Muslim conflict was planted during the revolt.<sup>55</sup>

Despite Sir Syed's observation of these differences, he himself never showed the least ill feeling, prejudice, Moreover, under the East India Company in 1838-39 he joined Judicial services and was made a Munsif in 1841. But he never conducted himself with unfairness and injustice. He was well-known for his impartiality. People kept faith in him without any doubt. It is interesting to note that when he was put in charge of Bijnour, despite

hatredness there, the non-Muslims happily welcomed his judgement.<sup>56</sup>

Maulana Altaf Hussain Hali, a well-known biographer of Sir Syed, cites some significant incidents as evidence of Sir Syed's complete version for religious distinctions. Hali says that Sir Syed had intense desire to create national unity and social harmony. The main purpose in setting up the Scientific Society at Ghazipur in 1863, was to create friendship and mutual understanding between the Hindus and Muslims - British and Indians alike. Besides its organ, the bi-lingual Scientific Society Gazette later renamed as the Aligarh Institute Gazette remained completely impartially towards all communities.<sup>57</sup>

During the period of 1867, the Hindi-Urdu controversy broke out. The opponents of Urdu refused to accept it as the vernacular of India. They wanted to replace it as the official language, by Hindi in the Devanagri script. Sir Syed felt that the opponents tried to wipe out Urdu which was in fact the only as advanced form of Bhasha.<sup>58</sup>

Hali admitted that inspite of the differences Sir Syed's desire for Unity between two communities remained unchanged. It is clear from his later speeches.<sup>59</sup>

From the above discussion it can safely be said that Sir Syed had been secular and nationalist and wished unity of all communities. These are the most significant elements of permanent values and highly relevant points to the present day Indian society and politics.

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single speech, writing or statement in which he might have asked his coreligionists to be friend the Hindus' and that 'he preferred to chalk out the path of a communalist rather than that of an Indian patriot or a nationalist'. PP. 138, 178.

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## CHAPTER - VIII

### C O N C L U S I O N

In the Preceding pages we had tried to study the over all personality of Sir Syed. However, we will summarise and clarify some of the steps Sir Syed has taken in course of his Aligarh Movement. Sir Syed was a child of revolution who has seen the fall of Mughals and the emergence of British power in India. In fact, the Muslim political power had been declining from the beginning of the 18th Century and after 1857, the whole structure of the Muslim Society changed. The catastrophe of 1857 left a deep impact on the mind of Sir Syed and he began to think over the devastated condition of the Muslims and to find out the solution of it. Ultimately, Sir Syed found the panacea of all the ills of the contemporary Muslim Society in education. But the Muslims were not ready for any kind of fundamental change in their educational ideals. B. Sheik Ali writes, "He (Sir Syed) been me aware of the wretched conditions of his people and also the reasons for that position. It was their ignorance, deeprooted traditionalism, unwillingness to change, and a chronic opposition to Western learning whereas the Hindus from the time of Raja Ram Mohan Roy were reconciled to Modernism, the Muslims resisted strongly its impact. Whereas the majority was marching in the direction of progress, the Muslims were withdrawing more and more into thier own narrow shell".<sup>1</sup>

As a matter of fact, Muslims were "economically

poor, politically defeated, educationally and culturally different from their new masters, the Muslims did not surrender themselves to the new regime and even successive waves of suppression could not reconcile them to their new rulers. The Muslim stubbornness had hardened the Government's attitude towards them and the Muslims now stood in the lowest ebb of degradation after the great change.<sup>2</sup>

Aligarh Movement was the brain child of Sir Syed. They were inseparable and for that he worked hard. He gathered people of the same thought, told them to eradicate the educational backwardness of the Muslims and this led to the Aligarh Movement. No movement would have survived in the absence of finance. The handful men of Sir Syed led deputations all over India to collect money and it is because of the financial assistance from Raja and Nawabs that the movement gained strength. He founded a tiny Madarasa in 1875 and elevated it to a College in 1877 with a heavy support of the British Government.

Pan-Islamism<sup>3</sup> and Wahabism<sup>4</sup> were the two main obstacles to his plan as the British took them as enemies to their expansion. But, Sir Syed was a courageous man. Syed Jamaluddin Afgani propagated the idea of Muslim brotherhood. The idea of Pan-Islamism might have lived even before Afgani, but Afgani was the man who vigorously took it toured the whole of the Islamic countries, founded societies to oppose British imperialism which to him

was the only enemy of Islam. Jamaluddin Afgani is said to have visited India also and preached pan-Islamism. But Sir Syed's dominating personality did not accept his views. To Sir Syed the British Government was the only one under whose control Muslims of India could have lived peacefully. Sir Syed considered India Dar-ul-Islam since the Muslims enjoyed peace and had the liberty of praying according to their own faith. Similarly Wahabism was not a doctrine opposed to British. It was simply a movement for the purification of Muslim society. The British took the Moulvis as their opponents; called them Wahabis and acted against them harshly. Sir Syed took challenge of the British. Posed himself as a Wahabi and proved by his writings that Wahabism was not opposed to British.

Similarly in his educational pursuits he came in clash with the Indian National congress. Sir Syed wanted parity between Hindus and Muslims in education and commerce. He believed that any political agitation against the British administration would retard the progress of India and endanger the Aligarh Movement which was despite his best efforts in a go-cart stage. He said that the revolution of 1857 had receded the progress of India and had it not taken place, many of the Indians would have got highest offices in the British administration. Sir Syed believed that political agitation would lead to revolution and revolution in those days was injurious to Indian. Hence he sincerely felt that let all the communities be equal

in education and only then the political process would be successful. It is not correct to dub him a stoog of the British, neither he can be called communalist or opposed to Hindus. He considered Hindus and Muslims as two eyes of India and said that India would lose its glamour 'if one is lost. Democracy presupposes the educational parity among all its natives. If one community is advanced the interest of the Weaker would always suffer. Such examples are not wanting in Indian history. Sir Syed treated both Hindus and Muslims alike and one can not cite a single example when he had opposed Hindu. Congress was not a Hindu body. Muslims equally supported it. There was only a section of Hindus and Muslims which supported Sir Syed.

The impact of the Aligarh Movement on Muslims and Hindus was great. Both the communities joined Sir Syed's college and got education there. With the educational development there was a social reform among the Muslims Sir Syed through his writings in Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq told his people to shun obscurantism and encouraged him to take to modernism. Sir Syed felt that his religion would become a target of attack from the west if his people would clung to the out moded ideas. For that a reorientation of Islamic values was a crying need of the time and which he did. A great scholar of Islamic theology, he wrote massively on all subjects which contradicted science and nature. This helped much in reforming the Muslim society who started thinking on lines of modernism.

He corrected many mistakes in the historical version in his Asar-us-Sanadeed and encouraged the non-Muslims to go abroad for business.

Moreover, the people of different places were united by the movement in one rope. C.F. Andrews and Girija Mukherjee say that "The movement was by no means confined to Aligarh though that was made its centre. For in every city of the North India and in other parts of India also, the new spirit spread rapidly".<sup>5</sup> Hundreds of schools came into existence and down trodden class was brought to the level of conscious people.

Sir Syed accepted the importance of women's education and was aware of the urgency of it. But he regretted that the means at his disposal were not satisfactory. He thought that his movement would die if the women's education was taken simultaneously.<sup>6</sup>

Infact, the Aligarh Movement left its impact in almost all walks of life. P.N. Chopra writes, "Aligarh has produced all types of political figures - Rightists, Leftists, Radicals, Nationalists, Communists, Communalists, Congressists, Leagners etc reflecting all shades of public opinion in the country : Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, Khaliquzzaman, Nawab Hamidullah Khan (of Bhopal), Khwaja Nazimuddin, the Ali Brothers, Rafi Ahamd Kidwai, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, President Ayyub Khan (of Pakistan), Dr.

Syed Mahmood etc. It has similarly produced some of the most eminent figures in the field of education, journalism, literature and science : Maulana Majid Daryabadi, Maulvi Abdul Haque (Baba-i-Urdu or the Great old Man of Urdu), Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Josh Malehabadi, Rasheed Ahmad Siddiqui, Dr. Ziauddin, Zafar Ali Khan, Qazi Abdul Ghaffar, Ali Ahmad Suroor, Sadar Ganda Singh, Khawaja Ahmad Abbas, Asmat Chuglai, Professor Hadi Hassan, Mohammad Habib, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmad etc. <sup>7</sup>

The Aligarh Movement is in many respects was similar to the 15th Century Renaissance in Europe. The movement succeeded to a great extent in demolishing the foundation of medievalism, turned ignorance into intellectual awakening conservatism into enlightenment and superstition into reason. In fact, it heralded the dawn of a new era for the Indian Muslims.

The Aligarh Movement is basically an educational movement. The relevance of it has not diminished even after about a century. Sir Syed had firm faith that education was a powerful instrument for social, economic, and cultural transformation of any society.

Sir Syed's philosophy and views on education are valid today as were in his own days. His thoughts and ideas about the objectives and pattern of education are also relevant. His ideas about its new methods and techniques that developed with the emergence of modern Science

in 17th Century, are in keeping with the views of contemporary educationists and thinkers. He highly emphasised the need of scientific method - observation, experiment and analysis - to replace the old scholastic method in the altered situation and changed context.<sup>8</sup> Prof. Shan Muhammad writes, "Sir Syed's age was a time of science and reason. With the advent of the British in India everything began to be tested on the touch-stone of reason and the impact of scientific approach on every walk of life was severely felt. Even religion could not escape scrutiny and it needed a reorientation in the light of scientific development in the West. Sir Syed was conscious of the Western liberal ideas and felt that if a reorientation of Islamic values were not attempted in India, it would retard his community's progress."<sup>9</sup>

Sir Syed was right in stating the importance of national education for the progress and prosperity of people. Prof. K.A. Nizami says, "Sir Syed's educational ideas and ideals are as relevant today as they were revolutionary in his days. He stands out unique in the history of modern India as one who first propounded a national policy of education. It was firm conviction that unless a national system of education was evolved the country as a whole could not be extricated from the meshes of ignorance, inertia and obscurantism."<sup>10</sup>

Sir Syed gave a call for mass education - a call for education to all sections of the society and not the elite one and without mass education it is impossible

for a native to become civilized and honoured.<sup>11</sup> Prof. Ale Ahmad Suroor says, "Sir Syed's Movement or the Aligarh Movement continues to be relevant as long as the total transformation of mind, goal of 100% literacy, social and educational reforms, establishment of an order that has the quality of being just and which produces men and women with a sense of values and vision without distinguishing caste and creed, is not realised".<sup>12</sup> Moreover, Prof. Riazur Rahman Khan Sherwani says, "In the field of education the Muslims still need to be encouraged to acquire particularly scientific and technical knowledge and for this purpose new institutions have to be opened for them throughout India."<sup>13</sup>

One of the main purposes of the Aligarh Movement was to propagate the modern scientific education among the Muslims. At present there is no controversy over any aspect of it. Majority of the Muslims have fully changed their attitudes towards scientific education. But the religious groups particularly the Ulema still are not in favour of science and they have not completely changed. The teaching of scientific education is prohibited in thier religious institution. Not to speak of teaching the scientific education, in some of the religious institutions, still today even teaching the English language is considered Kufr (atheistic)<sup>14</sup>.

But the Ulema do not hesitate to use the things invented by the science, though they considerable change in the traditional system of education in keeping with

the views of time which is the high demand of the day and the scientific education should be made a part of the religious curriculum at any stage. Regarding this Sir Syed's advice is still useful and fruitful.<sup>15</sup>

Sir Syed was rational and practical. He understood the reality of the situation correctly but the traditional religion scholars particularly the Ulema failed to understand it. Alhaji Adeleka Dirisu Ajijola in his essay 'The problem of Ulema' writes, "Many of the Ulema who have become Muslim Leaders have themselves lost the true spirit of Islam. They do not have the ability to interpret the principles and law of Islam in the light of changing conditions."<sup>16</sup> Further he says, "They were merely interested in condemning the evils of Western civilization without appreciating the good in it."<sup>17</sup> Unless and until they realize the importance and necessity of modern secular and scientific education, no social mobility and development is possible.

Unfortunately even today by education some of the traditional Ulema mean basically religious and preparation for the next world. This is the reason that neither they send their children to secular institutions nor do they change their syllabus in their own educational system. Therefore, the very concept of education should be changed according to the educational ideas of Sir Syed and they should include both religious and secular scientific education. The Quran does not prohibit to do so.

There is a saying that there is no final or last word in politics. This is correct with Sir Syed too. His policy of loyalism is not relevant today but his policy of cooperation with the Government is still relevant.

So far as the Indian Muslims are concerned, the Aligarh Movement is still relevant in bringing about modernisation in their mode of thought and life style. They have to be reawakened with a rejuvenative process in their sociocultural and religious life.

Sir Syed was the supporter of scientific temper of mind, rational and enlightened view of life. He laid emphasis on reinterpretation of religion according to the spirit of the time without compromising on fundamental tenets. He introduced comparative study of religious and stressed supremacy of reason in all matters - spiritual and temporal. Sir Syed adopted rational and academic approach in order to defend Islam against any uncharitable criticism by the people of other faiths. He stood for religious tolerance, reviewing traditions, customs and the value system of the society with the spirit of time. He was in favour of taking good things from other developed civilizations for keeping the society progressive and dynamic. Sir Syed's enlightened views are as important today as they were in his time. Apart from these, he formed a new Ilm-ul-Kalam (Scholastic Science) for writing commentary on the Quran. He followed rationalism and scientific spirit of the 19th century and the traditions

of Mutazilite school of thought. Ibn Rushd, Imam Ghazali and Shah Waliullah were his guides for his rational writings and commentary. He also laid the foundation of comparative religious studies by writing Taibain-ul-Kalam, a commentary in Urdu on the old and new Testament, which bears testimony to his belief in the essential unity of all the revealed religions. He revived the spirit of Dara Shikoh and Alberuni in the realm of religious thought. One of the most significant points may be noted here that he wrote Khutbat-e-Ahmadya as a refutation to William Muir's derogatory book 'Life of Mohammad'. The book severally pained Sir Syed and his deep agony and anguish were reflected in the letters which he wrote to Viqarul-Mulk from London. The most striking point is that he neither launched any campaign against the book nor submitted any memorandum to the government nor even protested against it in any other way. He could have raised a storm with his mighty pen against William Muir's book. But he did nothing of this sort and silently undertook a voyage to England, stayed there and studied in the British Museum and the India Office Library. He also collected materials from the Turkish and Egyptian Libraries and then finally produced the Khutbat. For this he had to pay much but the work proved very costly. Moreover, he had to sell all of his belongings of his house and borrow heavily to meet the cost of publication. The Khutbat consists of twelve lectures based on a scientific historical study and it demolished all the charges of William Muir levelled against the Prophet Muhammad. Both the book shows the unbounded love

of Sir Syed for the Prophet (PBUH) and his religious tolerance too. Sir Syed was a brave and courageous person who wrote Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind and made the British responsible for the revolt of 1857. He wrote the book at a time when freedom of speech and expression was unthinkable. He often criticised the British for their racial arrogance and advised his countrymen not to compromise with injustice and indignity. Sir Syed had the highest sense of self-respect who left Darbar at Agra in protest against lower seats assigned to Indians. Moreover, he wrote a critical review on W.W. Hunter's book "The Indian Musalmans" and characterised the book as unhistorical and mischievous. The man who wrote his 'strictures' on the present Educational system of India' that was published for private circulation in England in 1869 and who committed a great Sin in the eyes of the British by recording his vote in favour of the Ilbert Bill which sought to invest the Indian Magistrates with the power of trying European criminals was no other than Sir Syed.<sup>18</sup>

The greatest relevance of the Aligarh Movement even today is in the field of social reform. B. Sheik Ali writes, "Social reformation (of Sir Syed) is an extension of educational programme.... The vital difference between education and social reform is, in education we pour knowledge and experience into empty buckets; children do not know anything and we teach them. Social reformation is purification of a cesspool; there is already something in the society, but it is all rotten filling empty bucket is not difficult, but the removal of bad

habits, superstition, apathy, inertia and ignorance and improvement of morals, manners, attitudes and behaviour, would perhaps require wisdom of Socrates, strength of Samson and courage of Alexander.<sup>19</sup> Sir Syed along with his associates did this great task and showed a new path to the new generation.

Sir Syed was not a dreamer but a practical man. What he believed and preached, he practised. He supported secularism and it was an ideal of his life. The MAO College established by him was open to the all communities of India and the world in respective of caste and creed. This practice has been continuing from the very beginning. No where within the campus, any kind of distinction was made between the Muslims and the non-Muslims. In order to maintain Hindu - Muslim unity, he prohibited the slaughter of cow within the premises of the MAO College. In an article on 'cow slaughter' he advised the Muslims : If the giving up of cow slaughter will establish amity and friendship between Hindus and Muslims, then please do not sacrifice cows which is a Thousand time better.<sup>20</sup> The other important event also showed his love of Hindu - Muslim unity is shown by the fact that when his grandson, Ross Masood, read the kalima at his Bismillah ceremony from the lap of Sir Syed's intimate Hindu friend, Raja Jai Kishan Das. It was undoubtedly a remarkable incident in the history of Hindu - Muslim relations. Sir Syed was so generous that he maintained a separate kitchen for Raja Jai Kishan Das in his house in order that he

could maintain his faith. Moreover, Raja Jai Kishan Das had been the secretary of the Scientific Society at Aligarh after Sir Syed. Apart from these, the most important event which occurred in North Western provinces was that a Cholera broke out there and Sir Syed worked day and night looking after Hindus and Muslims without any distinction with such dedication that members of all communities admired his humanitarian attitude and spirit. Once Sir Syed wrote a letter to Mohsinul Mulk from England on the 29th April 1870, "My temperament is such that I want the welfare of all inhabitants of India whether Hindu or Muslim". And as a member of legislative council he served all the people of India alike.

Sir Syed was one of the Indians who conceived India as a secular nation. He had the greatest respects for all religions and faiths. He also believed that the development and progress of the country could be ensured only through the united efforts of all the people of India.<sup>21</sup>

Sir Syed contributed some elements of permanent values to the Indian society like his views about secularism, nation and Hindu Muslim unity or communal harmony. These significant views are much more relevant today than in his own time. Today the country is at the brink of disaster and strife torn. Generally we observe in the mass media that the properties of crores of rupees are destroyed in the communal violence. Fascist and subversive forces are bent upon destroying the unity and integrity

of the nation. The greatest need of our time is the man like Sir Syed, a champion of Hindu-Muslim unity and his teaching would surely serve as the beacon light in this direction. Unfortunately Sir Syed was highly misunderstood by some of the critics like M.S. Jain, A.L. Srivastava<sup>22</sup> and many others. But some of the Indians like Pt. Jawaher Lal Nehru who fully appreciated and admired the predicament of Sir Syed and observed in his book 'The Discovery of India'. He writes "He was in no way anti-Hindu or communally speratist".<sup>23</sup> Supporting Sir Syed Nehru writes in his 'An Autobiography' "Sir Syed's decision to concentrate on Western education for Muslims was undoubtedly a right one".<sup>24</sup>

From the above discussion it can safely be concluded that the importance of Sir Syed has not diminished with the passage of time. Infact, his ideals, policies and teachings are much more relevant today than in his own time and his ideals are relevant not only to the Muslims of India but to the Indian society as a whole.

In line of the Aligarh Movement the present socio-political situation needs more such Movements.

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