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WELCOME ADDRESS

YOUR EXCELLENCY, MR. PRESIDENT,
DELEGATES AND MEMBERS OF THE
ALL-INDIA ORIENTAL CONFERENCE,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I CONSIDER it a great honour to welcome the delegates and members of the All-India Oriental Conference on behalf of the Government of His Exalted Highness the Nizam, the University, and the people of the Dominions. We deeply appreciate the courtesy of your Executive Committee in accepting our invitation, and assure you that in selecting Hyderabad, as the venue of the present session of your Conference, you have assembled at a centre, the intellectual life of which has been nurtured by the traditions and ideals of various cultures for over two thousand years.

When I see around me a galaxy of scholars, hailing from the most distant parts of India, all filled with the common desire to enlighten the world with the results of their latest researches, I can make bold to say that the future of Eastern learning is hopeful; while from the Appeal which your President has recently issued regarding the establishment of a permanent office in order to carry out the aims of your Conference in the fullest measure, an Indian renaissance seems to be near at hand.

We are all of us conscious of the fact that during the last two decades of the existence of your Conference you have rendered yeoman service by widening the scope of

your studies in the fields of Indian Linguistics, History, Archæology, Philosophy and other important subjects. The ten volumes of your Proceedings are a good testimonial to the success of your mission, and the high reputation which the Conference enjoys can be judged from the fact that when in 1938, before the declaration of war, we issued invitations for the 10th session of the Conference, the response showing readiness to send delegates and literary contributions, came not only from the important institutions of India but also from scores of European and American Academies and Universities of international standing.

I need not emphasise the importance of Oriental learning and its benefits to humanity as a source of inner joy, peace of mind, and love of mankind. The recent events of the world point out clearly that the materialistic ideals of the West are destroying the culture and freedom of nations and that the spiritual fountains of life are being dried up to the eternal despair of man. It is therefore all the more necessary that we should cherish a deep love for the study of Eastern Philosophy, Religion and Literature and thus hold up the torch of learning to the other nations of the world.

We deeply regret that owing to difficulties of communication and the most critical international situation, we are for the present cut off from contact with Western scholars, but we highly appreciate their cordial response to our invitation in the past, and hope that when normal conditions are restored, mutual contributions to Oriental learning will bring about a new era, widening the horizon of human thought.

As regards the share of Hyderabad in the intellec-

tual progress of India, you are already aware that there are few movements which do not receive moral and financial support from His Exalted Highness the Nizam's Government. The Osmania University which is still young, has shown the power of an Indian language as the medium of instruction. The experiment has succeeded beyond expectation.

The contribution of these Dominions to Oriental learning has been by no means small. There has been a continuity of Sanskritic studies from the earliest times down to the present day. Thus the *Apastamba* and the *Hiranyakesi* subdivisions of the *Yajurveda* have been traced as far back as the fourth century A.D., while the *Ranayaniya* school of the *Sama Veda* still survives in the Eastern parts of the Dominions. The small state of Anegundi, on the banks of the river Tungabhadra in the Raichur District, was once the capital of Kishkindha ruled by Sugriva, mentioned in the *Ramayana*. Some of the most enchanting scenes in the *Mahabharata* are laid in the forest of the Deccan in which Damayanti, princess of Vidharbha (Berar) wandered in search of Nala, prince of Nishada. Again Gunadhya, the author of the famous *Brhatkatha* was a native of Paithan in the District of Aurangabad. One of the greatest dramatists in Sanskrit, namely Bavabhuti, hails from Vidharba or the modern Berars. Vishvanatha and Agastya are two other figures of great fame in poetry that are connected with Warangal. The study of Sanskrit in the traditional fashion is still being continued throughout the Dominions and we have amongst us great Pandits and profound scholars. There is a strong Sanskrit Faculty in the Osmania University.

Much can be said about the development of the other languages of the Dominions, like Telugu, Marathi and Kannada. The earliest known writer in Marathi literature, the author of *Viveksindhu*, a philosophical poem, Mukundraj was a native of Ambajogai, the modern Mominabad. The author of *Nathpanth* and *Warkari* and *Sampradai*, Jnaneswar was born at Paithan. The names of Desopanth, a contemporary of Eknath, Ramdas, Waman, Keshavaswamy are still ringing in our ears. Similarly great writers and poets of Kannada like Ponna, Pampa, Ranna, Brahmasiva, Vijayaraya, Jagannathadasa who belong to this soil have rendered meritorious service to the cause of Kannada language and literature. The patronage of the various dynasties of the Deccan, has left a priceless heritage in the form of Telugu literature. Warangal was the Andhra Nagari of the Telugu poet Vidyanaatha. The ancient Andhra capital of Paithan has been the scene of great activities and now the discovery of Kondapur which I hope you are going to visit, will reveal to you the legacy of the Andhras.

The advent of the Muslims in the Deccan introduced fresh ideals of fraternity and tolerance and spread two most important classical languages in the Deccan, the Arabic and the Persian. Although the contact of Malabar with Arab culture dates from the earliest times, yet visible signs of Muslim sway in the Deccan begin from the time of Alauddin Khalji and his general Malik Kafur. In the *Fatawa-i-Tatar-i-Khaniyya* of Alim Ibn Alauddin, we have a monumental work on Islamic Law in Arabic. The Bahmanids and their illustrious Wazir Mahmud Gawan on whom a critical mono-

graph has recently been published, made Bidar a literary centre of great fame. The first and foremost poet of the Deccan 'Isami, who wrote his *Futuhus-Salatin* lived at the Bahmanid court. The *Fatawa-i-Alamgiri*, a monumental work on Muslim Jurisprudence, was written in the Deccan and Shaikh Ahmad known as Mulla Jiwan flourished under the Emperor Aurangzeb. Shaikh Azari Isfaraini wrote his *Bahman Nama* in the Persian language under the patronage of the Bahmanids, who were great scholars themselves. Several histories that were written in Persian are directly connected with the authors who flourished in the Deccan, for example the *Sirajut-Tawarikh*, the '*Uyunut-Tawarikh*, the *Tuhfat-us-Salatin*, the *Burhan-i-Ma'athir*, the *Tazkiratul-Muluk*, the *Nawras Nama*, the *Tarikh-i-Qutb Shahi*, the *Hadiqatus-Salatin*, the *Muntakhabul-Lubab* and the *Tarikh-i-Firishta*. The several courts of the Deccan were haunts of hosts of poets from Persia. The great Hafiz of Shiraz just missed a visit to the Deccan, but Ni'mat Khan-i-'Ali was pinned to this soil and his grave is situated outside the Daira of Mir M'umin. Thus you will find that Hyderabad combines in itself the essence of various cultures, and zealously guards that splendid heritage.

During your stay here I hope you will have opportunities of visiting various Institutions of Oriental learning in the State and that your personal contact and expert knowledge will leave permanent results in the history of Oriental studies. In this connection I would draw your special attention to the Dairatul Ma'arif, the Asafiyya Library, the Daftar-i-Diwani wa Mal (State Archives) and the Hyderabad Museum. The first of

these was established by my revered father, the late Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk, with whose real name and official position, Syed Husain Bilgrami, Member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India, you may perhaps be more familiar. The Daira was established with a view to publishing rare Arabic texts, which work it is carrying out successfully for the last 30 years. The Asafiyya Library has a vast and priceless collection of Oriental MSS. and a considerable number of them are absolutely unique, being either authors' copies, or bearing the autographs of illustrious kings to whose libraries they originally belonged. The Daftar-i-Diwani-wa-Mal also is rich in historical documents, particularly of the Asaf Jahi rulers, and those who are carrying out research in the history of the present ruling dynasty are sure to find new material there. The Hyderabad Museum, although quite young, has the largest collections in India of old arms, Celadon ware, Old China, Bidri ware and Quranic texts. Some of the Quranic texts are beautifully written, showing calligraphy of the highest order. Those of you who are interested in Indian art should not miss this institution during their short stay in Hyderabad.

I do not wish to stand long between you and the President, in whom you have one of our best scholars who has devoted his whole life to the subject of Archæology and rendered meritorious service by conserving ancient national monuments and objects of common pride.

Ladies and gentlemen, the pursuit of knowledge is a noble calling, and I wish you all a happy sojourn in our

cultural environments, and earnestly hope and pray that your deliberations will revive the glory of the past, open up new avenues of thought and thus fulfil your sacred mission.

In the end please allow me to express our deep gratitude to the maker of modern Hyderabad and the reviver of Oriental studies, the Patron of this Conference, His Exalted Highness Mir Osman Ali Khan, Sultan-ul-Ulum, Asaf Jah VII, the Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar.

