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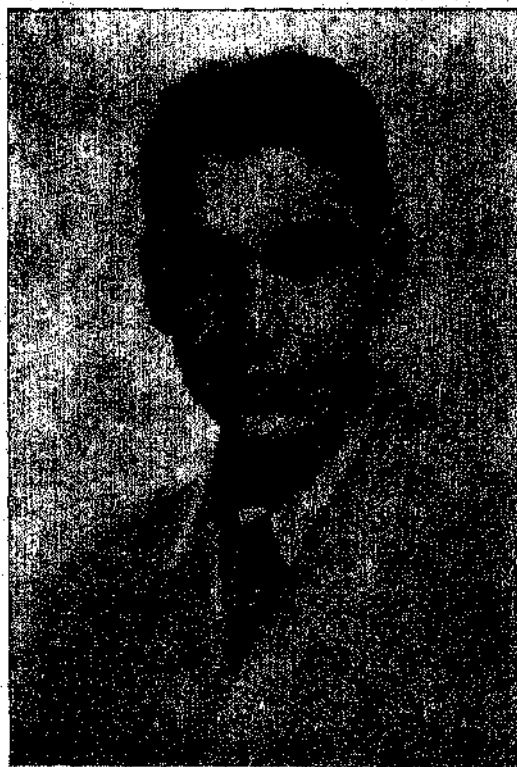
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اعلیحضرت همایون رضاشاه پهلوی شاهنشاه ایران
H. I. M. REZA SHAH PAHLAVI, SHAHENS SHAH IRAN.



والا حضرت هما یوں شاہپور محمد رضا ولیعهد ایران

H. H. SHAHPUR MOHAMED REZA, CROWN PRINCE OF IRAN



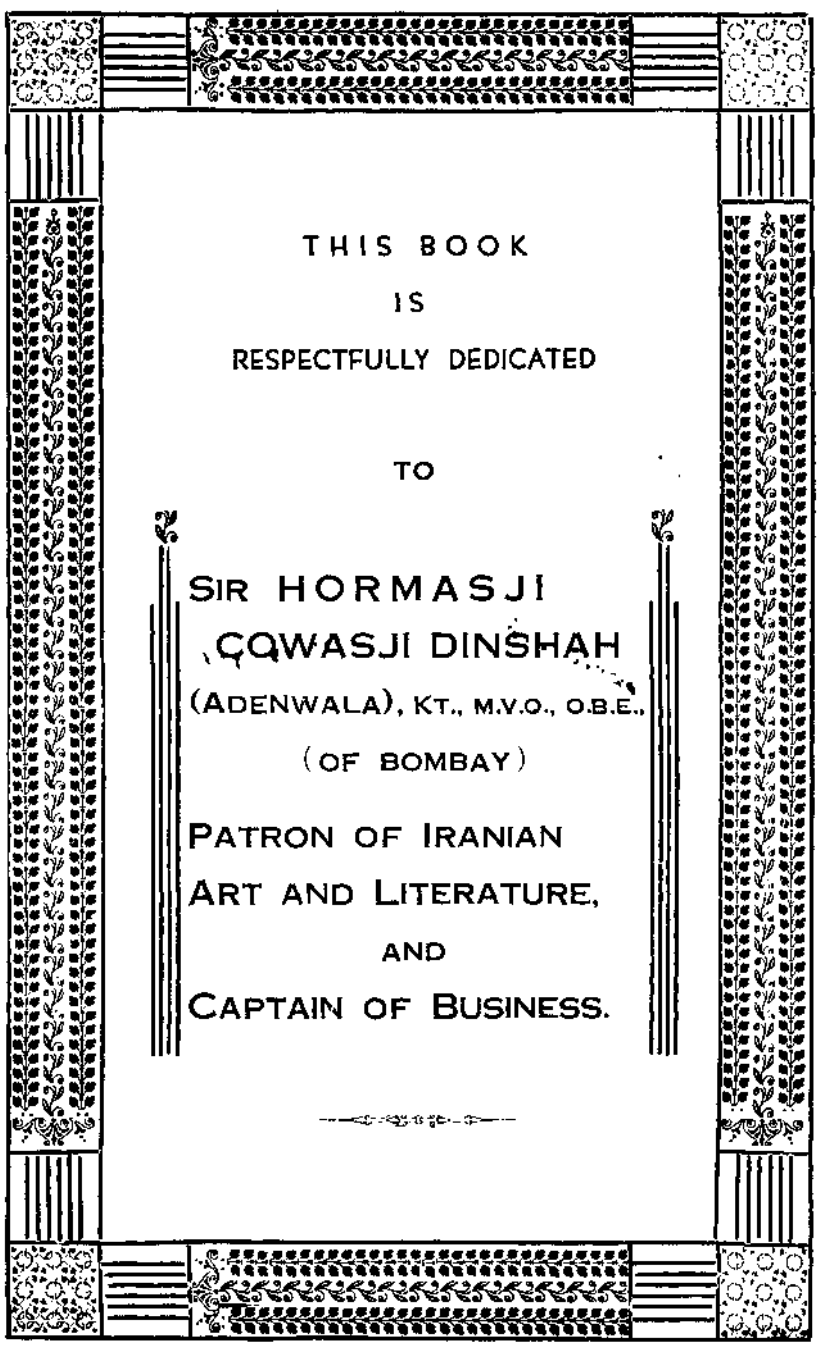
MODERN IRAN

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PROF. A. M. MOULVI, M. A.

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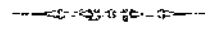


THIS BOOK
IS
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

TO

SIR HORMASJI
QWASJI DINSHAH
(ADENWALA), KT., M.V.O., O.B.E.,
(OF BOMBAY)

PATRON OF IRANIAN
ART AND LITERATURE,
AND
CAPTAIN OF BUSINESS.



FOREWORD.

It is a great pleasure to me to write a foreword to Professor Moulvi's book on Modern Iran.

Few, if any, can have any doubt as to the fascinating interest which this subject has aroused in recent times. This interest has been manifested in a marked degree by the publication of many articles and books on the New Iran.

Modern Iran is the creation of a single man, His Imperial Majesty Reza Shah Pahlavi, and the work has been accomplished in an incredibly short space of time. Iranian art, Iranian literature, Iranian landscape and Iranian character have always held an irresistible fascination for the art-lover, the scholar and the traveller; to add to them the story of Reza Shah's dramatic rise to power, and the remarkable transformation that has come over Iranian national life to-day under his galvanic rule constitute an intensely interesting phase of contemporary history.

Professor Moulvi has given a vivid account of the Shah's rise to power. The reader is told how Reza Khan, a common soldier, prevented Iran from "marching down the broad road that leads to destruction"; and how from the Throne of Cyrus the Great, to which he was subsequently raised by the unanimous wish of the people, the Shah has given abundant evidence of his mastery in the "arts of peace" no less than in the "arts of war".

Like Modern Turkey, Iran is to-day in the throes of a great industrial revolution and spiritual renaissance. The social emancipation of women, the spread of education, the extension of medical aid, the introductions of this great national revival, of the new spirit that is abroad in Iran. Not the least remarkable features of this revival are the gradual disappearance of religious obscurantism, the new-found appreciation of the glories of Iran's past and the feeling of the nationalism following in the wake of the break-up of the tribal organization. Iranian nationalism has now become a vital and constructive force. The portrayal of this new life in Iran in Professor Moulvi's book forms an appropriate back-ground for a narrative of the Shah's personal achievements.

Let us, however, hope that, unlike Turkey, Iran will not altogether abandon her old moorings, her ancient culture, and indulge in a vain and ludicrous attempt to ape European manners and customs, or slavishly copy their dress. Let Modern Iran stick to her great heritage, and build on her own foundations, and not discard them as worthless, for they are not.

I congratulate Professor Moulvi upon the lucid and interesting account of the history of the New Iran that he has been, able to present in his book, although I do not agree with many of the things that he has said or share the views that he has expressed on several matters. For instance, his criticism of "Shiaism" is to my mind unreasonably harsh. He leaves the unfortunate impression on the reader's mind that whatever ills Iran has been suffering from until the advent of Reza Shah and for some time thereafter were due to the Mulla, and I believe that the author could as well have achieved his purpose by drawing a less lurid picture of "Shiaism". The greatness of Reza Shah as the saviour of Iran, lies not so much in his efforts to curb the Mulla, as in freeing his country from the interference, if not the domination, of foreign Powers, and restoring it to its old status as an independent Sovereign State. This is an aspect of His Majesty's reign to which the author might appropriately have referred in his book.

MIRZA M. ISMAIL

FERNHILL, NILGIRIS.

1st May 1937.

INTRODUCTION.

I have been teaching the Iranian language and literature in a first grade Government College of the Bombay University for the last 20 years from the First Year Arts right up to the M. A. which is the highest Examination of our University.

During this long period of 20 years I had never felt that my knowledge of that great country whose language I was teaching was inadequate. I always believed that I knew, as much as, if not more, as a Professor of Iranian in an Indian University is expected to know. For, I had learnt Professor Brown's Literary History of Iran in 4 volumes almost by heart. I had read Syces' History of Iran more than once. I had taught the translation of Sir John Malcolm's History of Iran for years. Besides I had read a large number of books of travel in Iran by European Authors. This much knowledge I presumed was almost encyclopaedic for a professor of Iranian.

¹ Three years ago during the summer holidays I came across an Iranian Scholar of Iranian at Bangalore who had freshly arrived from Iran. I took a liking for this great man and I often spent my evenings in his company. One evening, in the course of our discussion on the character of the Iranies, contrary to my expectations he bluntly shouted that I was dreadfully ill-informed about the people of Iran. Barring Professor Brown's Literary History of Iran, all other Histories of Iran, in his opinion were not only imperfect but untrue to a very large extent. About the books of travel in Iran he remarked, "Some of the foreign travellers seem to record the length of their slumbers, the time of their arrival at Manzil, the sickness of their horse or their own personal discomforts as more important than the life of the people about them."

This was the first time in my life that it was revealed to me by this great man that our knowledge of Iran and her people derived from the books written by Europeans which are the only sources of information available to us, is defective to an alarming extent.

Being struck with his ability and scholarship, I persuaded Mirza Farrukh to stay with me at Dharwar, where I promised to teach him English in the course of one year. He did yield to my persuasion but within the first 2 months of his stay with me, he gave me such a dazzling account of modern Iran that before I could fulfil my contract with him to teach him English in the course of one year, I made up my mind to leave for Iran with the utmost promptness. He left for Bangalore and I set sail from Bombay with great expectation.

On landing in Iran I immediately found that the reality was much more interesting than my anticipations. This tempted me to write a short book of my travel in Iran or to use a more modest expression, my trip to Iran.

With this object in view I mixed with all sorts of people everyone of whom helped me to the best of his ability in supplying me the information I needed. The important places I visited are Shiraz, Isphahan, Tehran and Hamadan. I could not get time to visit Tabrez and Mazenderan the birth place of His Majesty Reza Shah Pahlavi, and particularly Yezd where I am told Mr. Peshotanji Dosabhai Marker of Bombay has opened an orphanage and a high school for boys.

If I were to mention everyone who deserves my thanks the list would be unmanageable; the hospitality of the Iranees is proverbial and I can only thank my numerous hosts and helpers collectively. I must however specifically mention, Agha Hikmat, the Minister of Education for providing me with facilities for the use of the libraries, Agha Itisam-ul-Mulk the head of the Parliament library, Doctor Sadeek and Doctor Shaffak of the Danish Sarai Alifor their unstinted help and guidance, the members of staff of the American College Tehran, particularly Mr. William Nauris Wysham who has gone through my manuscript and given me valuable advice and Khanam Daulatabadi the inspectress of girls' schools for supplying me in detail information about the movements of the emancipation of women in Iran.

Nor must I forget to thank Mr. Madani who has played a great roll in the agitation for the constitutional Government for his entertaining me at his house for more than a fortnight and for showing me many things I should never otherwise have seen; and last but by no means least Shah Zada Agha Afsar the head of the literary academy, Agha Aurang the life and soul of this academy and my intimate friends Saeed, Parsa and Firat and the poet Laurate, Bahar Malaki, the Editor of Sitara-i-Jahan and Mr. Khalat-bari Adil, the Editor of Aindah Iran and a Military Officer Shamsheer who did all that they possibly could to make my stay in Tehran comfortable.

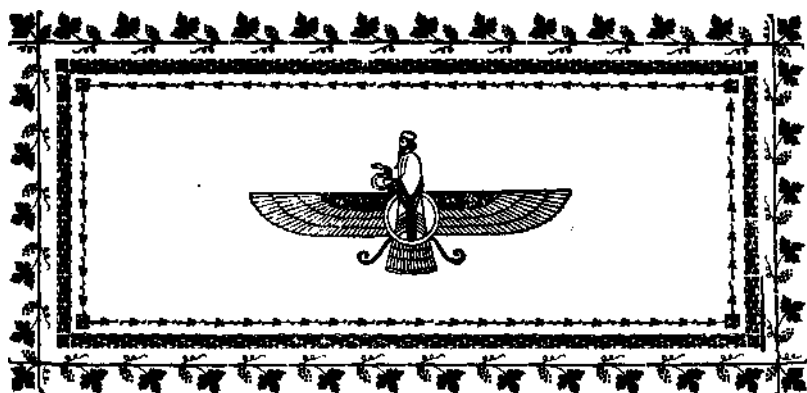
I am under a special debt of gratitude to Principal Jathar of the Indian Educational Service of Bombay, Mr. Rajadhyaksha the Legal Remembrancer and Professor Correia Alfanzo whom I am proud to claim as an old class-mate for going through my manuscript and making some valuable suggestions.

This book does not pretend to give an exhaustive account of Modern Iran but it is certainly more than a personal impression of what happens to strike a single traveller.

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Chapter I ARRIVAL AT BUSHIRE

I left Bombay on Saturday the 2nd of May, on the 'Varsova'. On board the ship I met a large number of Iranian Moslems from Bombay. They were going on a pilgrimage to the holy land of Kerbela. Most of them I knew well and those whom I did not know were introduced to me by our mutual friends. We talked on all sorts of subjects and when the topic turned on the marvellous progress of Iran, they became extraordinarily eloquent. "A few years ago", said one "we had to hang our heads low, and acknowledge with a great sense of shame, our inferiority to the rest of the world, in matters, social, religious and political. To-day, we have every right to hold our heads high because we are the true descendants of Kaikhosroos and Kaikobads. We are once again coming to the forefront. We have made wonderful progress in our country. What we have achieved in this direction, in the course of the last twelve years of the benign rule of His Imperial Majesty Reza Shah Pahlavi, other countries in **our position**, would probably have taken two hundred years **todo**."

The doctor on board the ship understood Urdu well and was listening to our conversation with interest. At the close of the exuberant remarks of the Iranian, the doctor took me to his room and said "Look at the spirit of the present Iranians.

The Iranians of to-day are quite different from the **Iranians of yesterday**. There is an extraordinary awakening among them. **They have** begun to think too much of themselves now. Recently we **had** great trouble with the Iranians at Bushire. An **Iranian coolie** was excessively rude to one of our subordinate officers of **the ship**. The officer lost his temper and struck the coolie on the **head**. There was nothing extraordinary in this. The coolie deserved the blow. To our great amazement, this trivial incident **all** of a sudden took a serious turn. The coolie complained to **the** Iranian police and brought with him a police officer, who insisted on the offender being handed over to him. We refused to hand over our officer and no amount of argument on our **part** could dissuade the police officer from his purpose. He **brought the** head of the department, who threatened to take away **the** offender by force. He detained the ship for over six hours **and** would not allow us to start unless the culprit was handed **over to him."**

"Ultimately we settled the matter by a compromise according to which the offender was forced to pay compensation to the coolie and apologise to him for his misconduct. Be careful in your dealings with the Iranians. Give them- no cause of offence. They are supersensitive as to their present exalted position in life. The term 'coolies' has disappeared from the vocabulary of the Iranians. The coolies are now called 'Hamals' **which** is a 'more dignified term than the old one."

The next day I met a Mashhedi gentleman who attracted my notice as a particularly pious specimen of Mussulman, offering his prayers five times daily with precise regularity. I asked **him** what he thought of the new Iran with her tendency to **the** wholesale westernisation of the country. He said, "**On your way** back to India come to Mashhed, stay with me as my distinguished guest and see with your own eyes how **a typical oriental city** with no security of life and **property, with no settled form of Government, with dirty, dingy streets, with no sanitation**

a city of the Mullas who made people believe that one went to Heaven or Hell according as he grew a beard or not a city half of whose inhabitants did nothing and depended on the charities offered by the pilgrims to the tomb of Imam Reza-see how under the rule of His Imperial Majesty (Reza Shah Pahlavi) the old Mashhed has been transformed in only ten years' time into a modern city with all the modern conveniences of life. We are living an orderly life now. Undaunted by fear we no longer bury our wealth underground. We put our money into the banks where not only is it safe but it lays eggs. You can move about with absolute safety by day or by night with your pockets jingling with coins.

Chapter II.

On the 7th of May, I landed at Bushire at 4 p.m.. I was treated by the Customs Department with unexpected courtesy and kindness. I had some new clothes, collars and ties for my personal use but the authorities did not worry me. • • •

One Haji Mohmed Mahadi Dalai Isfahani who was my fellow traveller from Bombay to Bushire, expressed regret at his inability to offer me his hospitality at Bushire where he was himself going to be the guest of a Busheri friend of his. He advised me to stay at the Armenian Hotel, the proprietor of which happened to be standing at the Customs office. • • •

Mr. Haji gave me his Shiraz address and left me with a request that I should call on him on my arrival at Shiraz and the proprietor of the Armenian Hotel led me to his hotel.

The wife of the proprietor brought me a cooling Sharbat **and** gave me a comfortable room. The floor of the room was covered with Iranian carpets of artistic designs and the furniture consisted of a writing table, a chair, a tea-table and a clean and **comfortable bed**. The **charges** were 25 *kiram* a day, i.e. about

Rs. 3/- in Indian money. There are very few hotels which give so much for so little in India. The food, the service and the personal attention paid to the guests were all that could be desired. The proprietor visited me at my room every second hour to see if he could be of any service to me.

Next morning I went out for a walk. I remembered an old Busheri friend of mine who at one time used to stay in Bombay and started making inquiries about him to see if I could trace him. I admired the patience of the passer-by and the policemen as they listened to my description of the gentleman whom I wanted. They vied with one another in trying to find him and ultimately took me to my friend's house. Mr. Abdul Karim gave me a very warm welcome. He introduced me to his father and a large number of his English-speaking friends who made my short stay at Bushire very interesting. Throughout my conversation with these gentlemen and the* strangers who had helped me in finding the house of Mr. Abdul Karim, what particularly struck me was their polished manners, their perfect sense of propriety and their refined habits. Such expressions as "Marhamat Ziyad, Lutf Shuma Payindah, Saya Shuma Kam-Nashavad" which are the conventional modes of expressing their gratitude to one another speak of courtesy which is inborn in every Iranian of good blood. He is rightly called the Frenchman of the East.

Another thing that struck me more and to which I have already referred is the absolute security of life and property in modern Iran. The Bushire heat being unbearable, I slept in my room in the hotel with doors and windows wide open and my belongings scattered here and there. I moved about in the town and left my trunk unlocked and the doors of the room wide open. I was told that if I were to throw away my things in a street they would be brought back to me safe by the Police. It may be an exaggeration, but there is no doubt that great advance has been made in making life and property secure.

Extraordinary neatness and excellent arrangements for the lighting distinguish Bushire as other towns in modern Iran. The houses are made of bricks or *kaocha* stones plastered with mud. A few public buildings in the modern style add to the beauty of the town. One of the peculiar characteristics of Iranian houses is the apparent lack of a compound; but this is more than made up by an open space in the centre which is called *Hayat' which invariably means a well laid out garden.

The position regarding the water supply of the town must be pronounced as unsatisfactory. Every individual houseowner has to store rain water in a clean storeroom called 'Ab-Ambar'. Although the Health Department of the Municipality has appointed qualified doctors to inspect these Ab-Ambars once a week and suggest means of keeping them clean and uncontaminated, still a better system is desirable. I was glad to learn that a new water supply scheme was under contemplation. Judging from the marvellous speed with which Iran is moving onward, I am sure it will not take long before this scheme is put into execution. I am told that it is a part of the general gigantic plan of supplying all the big cities in Iran with pipe-water which is engaging the serious attention of the Government.

Although Bushire does not strike one as an ultramodern city, still it does possess some modern features. For instance, in addition to the old school Debestan-i-Sadat which has now been put on a sound basis, a new up-to-date boys' school and a girls' school have been opened which are full to their utmost capacity. Besides, there is a fully equipped hospital which treats both out and in-patients free. It has thirty-seven beds, and it treats nearly three hundred out-patients per day. The doctors being all of Iranian blood have been working with a patriotic spirit.

Chapter III.

SHIRAZ

On the 10th of May I left Bushire for Shiraz. The road from Bushire to Shiraz, which in pre-Pahlavi times was nothing more than a wild tract, passable for carriages in some places but unfit for regular wheeled traffic, has now been made suitable for motor traffic. Road construction which was nobody's work before, is one of the outstanding features of the Pahlavi rule. A Public Works Department never heard of before, has been started under the Vaziri Turk which in addition to the improvement of old roads has by this time constructed seven-thousand miles of new roads fit for motor traffic.

The capital, Teheran, is now connected with almost all the important cities of Iran by motor roads, constant care being taken to maintain them in a proper condition. Two of the most important of these are the one connecting Teheran with the Caspian Sea through the Alburz Mountains, and the other connecting the capital with the Iranian Gulf through the endless range of the Luristan chain. Owing to the mountainous nature of the Iran Plateau most of the roads run in a zig-zag course with ascents of dizzy heights and descents leading to the nether regions. - They run through gigantic passes some of which are counted among the highest in the world. The road from Bushire to Shiraz has four such passes which still subject the chauffeurs to a severe test. While passing through the Kutual Pirazan and Eutal Dukhtar, two passes of enormous altitude, my chauffeur asked me to look out and admire the natural scenery. When I peeped out I nearly lost courage. Thousands of Ford, Dodge and Chevrolet cars, buses and trucks are running on these roads day and night. None but Iranian chauffeurs who seem to be made of steel frames can drive on these passes.

After a tiresome journey of thirty-six hours by bus, I arrived at Shiraz in the early hours of the morning on the 12th of

May. My **chauffeur** took me to the hotel 'Kani' **which suited** me well.

This sweet spot, the land of Hafiz and Sadi, whose **valuable** works have been translated into almost all the civilised languages of the world, has still retained its ancient oriental splendour. Its gardens are rich in colours, smells and sounds. The night-ingales that used to throw Hafiz and Sadi into ecstasy and rapture are still warbling their sweet notes among the roses. The stream "Ruknabad" is still running smoothly with the serenity of **an** oriental poet. The Gulgasht of Mnssala is still there. These **are** the things which are calculated to move poets like Eabindranath Tagore to the depth of their being. What usually catches the eye of an ordinary visitor like me is not the oriental splendour but the enormous influence of the Pahlavi Eule which is distinctly visible everywhere.

Shiraz like every other important city in Iran is gradually changing into a modern town. The old town is circumscribed by a new Shiraz which is interlaced with avenues much wider than the Queen's Eoad of Bombay with small streams of water running on each side, with a thick gorgeous row of green plane trees standing on each side of the stream and a well paved foot-path on both sides of the avenue. On both sides of the *khiyabans*, one sees new buildings mostly one-storeyed and of great beauty. They are either public buildings or • private ones let out to shop-keepers who maintain show rooms in the European style. New shops, new offices, new hotels, hair-cutting saloons, cafes and restaurants are springing up on these *Khiyabans*. The main business has shifted from the old town of dingy appearance to the new town of *Khiyabans*. These *Khiyaban** are swept morning and evening and in summer at 4 O'clock **in** the afternoon water is sprinkled on them to keep them **cool**. Penetrating into the interior of the town one still sees **narrow** streets eight to ten feet wide and *darbands* or valleys **only half** **that** width; **one** still sees the repulsive wall of houses **covered with**

mud plaster, but there are also buildings whose splendid domes and grand arches tell of former magnificence.

One of the most striking buildings of this type is the *Ziyaratgah of Shahchragh*, the resting place of Imam Zadah, a descendant of one of the twelve Imams of the Shias. The accumulated romance of the ages presents to the mind of a weary traveller a picturesque asylum of sanctity, a stupendous structure of oriental magnificence and splendour with lofty domes and minarets with splendid courtyards, with brilliance, light and beauty. It is an imposing structure of Iranian workmanship. Prom outside, the dome is coated with thick plates of gold and inside there is glass work of gorgeous glory. In short, it is a building of indescribable beauty a building the like of which is probably to be seen nowhere else.

The two famous shrines of Sadi and Hafiz known as "Sadiyah" and "Hafiziyah" are as unimposing as the mystic inmates themselves. But they have both well laid out gardens round about that serve as excellent recreation-grounds for visitors. Besides, there are comfortable free quarters at these shrines for those who combine picnic parties with religion in visiting these holy places.

What struck me as a sign of modernism are the chairs placed inside the mausoleum of Sadi for visitors of the new generation who with their trousers and boots on cannot squat on the ground with ease. In India such an innovation would be looked upon as heresy. Should any modern Musalman attempt to enter the shrine of a saint with boots on or bare headed, his life would not be safe. Fanatics would kill him outright, and when hanged for murder they would be looked upon by the public as martyrs to Islam.

The civilised Muslim world should be eternally thankful to Baza Shah Fahlavi through whose magnetic influence, the long and bitter struggle between the fundamentally opposed

tendencies of traditionalism and rationalism in Islam has once for all come to an end in Iran. Fanaticism has suffered a **signal defeat.** Public opinion is in favour of modernism. **The militant mullas are as mild as sheep.** Some have changed with the times and others who are probably still obstinate, knowing very well their loss of influence, have retired from **their** so-called religious activities. They are at liberty to hold **any** opinion they like but they are not to preach against the trend of the times.

Coming back to the new Shiraz with *khiyabans*, one sees the springing up of an altogether new life here. The tall *kula* or rimless hat of lambskin has made way for a flat hat. Frock-coats have driven out the long flowing robes and multifold girdles. The long beards of the former generation which followed the fashion set by Fateh-Ali Shah are gone. Liberty of thought and liberty of action being encouraged, even the moustaches are undergoing various modifications. Some are overtrimmed, some are undertrimmed and some are clean shaven. The only place where the beard is still prominent is on the chin of an old fashioned mulla. In the case of women skirts have superseded their long full indoor costumes and hats have taken the place of *chadars*. Men and women move about in cars, in carriages and on foot without any reserve.

Khan Bahadur Abdul Ahad, an Afghan gentleman from Peshawar, the pro-consul at Shiraz said, "Had you visited **Iran ten** years ago, you would have been in the best position to realise what Iran was and what it is now ". An Iranian gentleman remarked, "Agha the dissolute, disorganised **Iran** was dying. She **needed** a **regenerator** and luckily she has **found** one in His **Imperial Majesty**. We **needed** a powerful King, a good soldier, a **good commander**, a **lawgiver**, an **administrator**, a **priest**, a **reformer** and a **public man**. God has listened to our prayers and has given us one who is in full possession of all these qualifications and who makes use of his powers for the good of his country."

One day when I was talking to an Iranian gentleman in my hotel about the important places I intended to visit in Iran, to my great surprise, a telephone message came from Haji Muhomed Mahdi Dalai Isfahani asking me to lunch. This genial and obliging old gentleman had not forgotten me. I went to his house from where he took me in a carriage to his garden where he had invited a large number of his friends in my honour. It was a most interesting party. We took our lunch in the garden. After the lunch was over every one seemed to be talking with obvious pride about their country. Since most of these gentlemen were of advanced age, every one of them had a pitiable tale to tell of his experience in the old Iran. Haji Muhomod remarked "Agha, twelve years ago we could not visit our own garden in the evening. We could not keep carpets in the garden. Nothing was safe here. We could not eat the fruits of our own garden. We were looking for better days, and better days have come". Another remarked, "Agha, there were no *khiyabans*. Our narrow streets were never swept. There were no lights in the town. There was a Municipality but it was one only in name. There was no supervision. The President of the Municipality was a District Governor who, being transferred from province to province without any notice, took little interest in the town. The members of the Municipality were hereditary chiefs, men of means and staunch supporters of the throne. They held their positions for life and transmitted them to their descendants. They held courts in their own houses, decided cases and punished the criminals with fines or imprisonment in chains. The Shah was unknown to us. Now things are quite different. There is law and order in the country, Every citizen, rich or poor, young or old, male or female knows his beloved King. We see his photo everywhere and read about his activities in the papers."

With this appreciative spirit and these progressive thoughts, naturally I expected to see their women-folk at the party with them*. The absence of their wives at the party disappointed me.

They would willingly bring them out they said. But the women had not apparently got rid of their old-world ideas and thought it was a sin to come out. Especially was this the case with the older of the women. Many of the younger women, however, are entirely modern in their ways. At 6 p. M. we took tea and dispersed. My host seated me by his side in a carriage and brought me back to my hotel.

The next day I telephoned Agha Ali Eiyazi, the Eais Marif, whose official position corresponds to that of the Director of Public Instruction in our province, asking for an interview. On knowing who I was, he asked me to see him at his house at 4-15, where I found him ready to receive me. He introduced me to his wife and one of his daughters who is studying in a secondary school. His second daughter, he said, was in France studying Archaeology. Another young lady, one Khanam Hikmat, a cousin of the Minister of Education, was introduced to me as a gifted lady who was a teacher in the secondary school as well as Inspectress of girls' schools. Mrs. Ali Eiyazi offered us tea, not a light tea but a heavy, elaborate oriental tea, which consists of cakes, biscuits, home-made sweets, fresh fruit, dried fruit, preserved fruit, sharbat and ice-cream and which usually takes more than two hours to consume. Khanam Hikmat who had probably come to see Agha Ali Eiyazi on official matters began to discuss with him her school affairs while Mrs. Ali Eiyazi looked after me. She is a highly cultured lady. Besides being thoroughly conversant with French, Turkish and Iranian like the usual modern Iranian lady, she has travelled much and seen much of European life. She is a brilliant conversationalist. While talking of the position of women in Society she remarked, "Women in Iran have all come to know their position in life." They highly appreciate the changes. But still fifty per cent of them are not willing to come out not because of any lack of appreciation but solely or mostly because of their conservative habits which have become a second nature to them. "My own mother-in-law," she said, "is a pious conservate lady. Although

she herself takes no interest in the cinemas she advises her grand-daughters to go out and see the world and not to rot by keeping at home." Mrs. Ali Eiyazi at first did not like to put on shoes with high heels. But now she finds them quite comfortable.

Mrs. Eiyazi wanted to know why we Indians were still behind the times. Why was Mr. Gandhi quiet? What was he doing now? Why could'nt we address ourselves energetically to social reform which was after all a preliminary step to political advancement? How long were the Musalmans of India going to keep their women in the dark? Why could'nt they keep pace with their Hindu neighbours in this matter? Why could'nt Hindus and Musalmans settle their differences? If cow-slaughter was the only cause of annoyance to the Hindus, why could'nt Musalmans give it up?

"You have" she said, " enough goats and sheep and fowls in India to live on. We, the high class Iranian?, never eat beef though there is nothing to prevent us from eating it. Music before mosques that seems to be causing trouble to the Musalmans in India, is not such a serious thing as to necessitate State intervention? The solution lies in the cultivation of neighbourly feelings and a mutual regard for one another and not in insisting on one's right. Are there no sensible men in both the communities in India to settle this question once for all?" Politics being outside my province, I said "I am not in a position to answer these questions. Put these questions to the Indian politicians or to our Mahatmas and Moulanas who appear to be final authorities in India for the solution of such a problem.

At 7 P.M. before I could take leave of my host I asked him **whether** he could make it convenient for me to visit some of **the** schools at Shiraz. He asked me to see him at his office **the next day, at 9 A.M.** when he promised to make **arrangements for my visit the schools. I bid farewell to my host and hostess with thanks which evoked in return an outburst of short, sweet**

expressions in Iranian embracing every feeling of satisfaction and pleasure at my visit.

The next day being still under the impression that unpunctuality was a virtue in oriental countries, I went to Mr. Biyazi's office at 9-30 instead of the appointed time 9 A.M. TO my great humiliation I learnt that he had been expecting me every minute. I saw Mr. Eiyazi with an apology for being late. He did not mind my being late, but at the same time he could not help remarking that the first thing that was being taught at schools was punctuality and that so much emphasis was laid on the observance of this rule that once his own daughter was turned away from the school for being ten minutes late. He asked one of his Inspectors to take me to some of the boys' and girls' schools.

The first school I visited was Madressah Shahpur, a Secondary school. It has a huge building with a beautiful hall in the centre which can accommodate about two thousand persons with ease. The hall is generally used for holding public meetings of an academic character. I went round the classes and I was agreeably surprised to find that from the 1st standard to the 6th, all the boys were in uniform and marvellously neat and tidy. On inquiring of the Inspector whether the boys were all sons of aristocrats I was told that three fourths of them were sons of paupers. According to the rules of admission, no boy could be admitted unless his parents undertook to provide him with four uniforms per year. If the parents could not afford to pay for the uniforms they were supplied by the school authorities and the parents were held responsible for their proper washing and care. The fees charged at a Secondary school are twelve *Kiram*-equivalent to Rs. 2/- of our country for the first three standards **and** fifteen *Kirans* equivalent to Rs. 2/8/- for the fourth, fifth and sixth standards. The fees of poor boys are paid from the *Wakf* Fund which is generally being taken away from **the hands of mullas by the Director of Public Instruction,**

The handling of the Wakf property is a problem which needs thorough investigation in Iran, and the authorities are dealing with it very carefully. In the pre-Pahlavi period, when the mullas were the sole custodians of the conscience of the people, when they were the only persons whose conduct was above reproach in people's eyes. If a wealthy person died his descendants frequently according to the will of the deceased set apart a portion of landed property for a philanthropic purpose and made their family priest the trustee. If a man of means died heirless his property automatically fell into the hands of his family priest who was expected to spend the proceeds of this property on the orphans of his locality. Some wealthy people gave away in their lifetime valuable gardens and agricultural lands to their priests with a view to maintaining *maktabs* which were the only institutions for imparting education in the pre-Pahlavi period.

The opening of Idarah- Sabt-i-Isnad, i. e. the department for the registration of claims to immovable property and a systematic elimination of the mullas, a subject which will be discussed fully later on, brought to the notice of the authorities that Wakf property worth millions of toman is in the hands of the mullas who have hitherto been using it as their private property. The Director of Public Instruction in every province is the ex-officio President of the local Wakf Committees the members of which are original trustees and a few influential local members nominated by the President. The accounts are regularly kept and a major part of the proceeds is devoted to the education of deserving youths and the publication of useful books. Within a few years I believe the Wakf will be entirely taken away from the hands of the mullas and left at the disposal of **the** Ministry of Education.

When I was taken to the higher classes of the madressah, **I asked the** students to write down each what they would like **to do** after they completed their education. Some **wrote that** they **wanted to become doctors in order to heal the sick and**

teach their countrymen hygienic ways of living. Others said they wanted to become engineers, soldiers or statesmen to contribute their quota to the wealth and prosperity of their country. A large number of them wrote that they wanted to become teachers in order to put new life into the rising generation. In short their various answers showed that they were inspired with a burning devotion to their country. The old system of education has been revised in such a way as to make the students feel that they are the descendants of great men and that their present function in life is to revive the past glory of their ancestors.

At the end of the school term every school organises a 'Jashn' at which an important scene from the Shahnamah is acted. I happened to be present at one of the theatrical performances given by a group of students. The heroic deeds described by Firdousi in his Shahnamah were sung to the accompaniment of Iranian musical instruments in such an animated tone that the audience was made to realise that they were the descendants of a great nation although it had now sunk into insignificance. This kind of education can not but produce its desired effect.

The next day I visited the girls' school. This time I was punctual to the minute. The Inspector remarked with a smile "Instead of your teaching us punctuality, we have taught it to you." I appreciated his remarks and we went to visit 'Dabeeristan-i-Shah-i-Dukht' which is under the management of Miss Bila Gerrard, the daughter of an English father and a Iranian-mother. This highly talented lady talks Iranian wonderfully well. She is such a sweet talker that she is known among the teachers as 'Bulbul-i-Shiraz'. The department is proud of her. She intended to go on one years' leave to England and the department did not know how to fill her place in her absence without detriment to the school.

While going round the classes with Miss Gerrard I enquired of the inspector whether the girls were privileged to eat in class.

Miss Gerrard said " Certainly not ". I said " I saw one girl eating some thing ". She said, " If it is so the girl will admit her fault and apologise ". She took to me to the class and asked " Which girl was eating in class ? " The girl concerned without any hesitation stood up and said "I was eating a chocolate and I am very sorry to have done it". Miss- Ella said "I feel proud of your frankness. I can say with a certain amount of satisfaction and pride to our visitor that my pupils never tell lies".

After being entertained with music for a while I was taken to the kitchen where the girls were being taught the art of cooking. A few girls brought to us cakes, biscuits and sweets which they had made fresh that day. The sweets in point of shape, flavour and taste were in no way inferior to the factory-made sweets of Monjini Brothers of Bombay.

During the recess, while taking a short walk in the garden, I saw a group of grown up girls moving about in the school compound. I asked them what they thought about the oriental system of marriage according to which the parents settled the marriage without giving the least chance to the bride and the bridegroom to know or even look at each other. One of them said "We detest such marriages. We are modern girls. If we were concerned, we would tell our parents that they should mind their own business. We can never submit to the decision of our parents in matters on which depends the future of our lives. We have the sole right of selecting our husbands for ourselves. Where is the good of our coming out of *pardah* and acquiring modern education, if even the right of selecting our **partners in life is denied to us.**"

The next day, I was taken to the " Danish-sara" the training college for teachers. The building is an imposing structure of oriental beauty. It has a beautifully laid out garden of about twenty acres. I was told that this building originally belonged to a tribal chief who used to harbour thieves.

He has been removed to Teheran where he has been given an ample compensation for his properties in Shiraz that have been taken away from him by force. Thus being cut off from his followers he has been living a peaceful life in Teheran. Turbulent characters have been changed into peaceful and useful citizens. His followers too being like a ship without a rudder and being constantly under the vigilance of the city police and the post guards outside the city, whose number is every day on the increase, have become as harmless as lambs.

Thus the tribesmen who never lived a settled life, who were always a terror to the Caravans, and whose occasional raids on neighbouring cities frightened the inhabitants out of their wits, have been driven away from their frightful fortresses and are made to live peacefully in settlements. They have been given waste lands with tool*, seeds and iacilities for water and money for building houses.

It is said that the first king of Iran who took interest in agriculture by advancing to the needy cultivators money for buying seeds and tools was Noshirawan the Just and the second Iranian king who has realised the need of encouraging agriculture which is the mainstay of Iran is H. M. Baza Shah Pahlavi.

One often sees these tribesmen with their terrifying faces—their physiognomy being still the same, travelling submissively in buses. Their looks always betray their criminal tendencies. This is one of the greatest wonders that the great King of Iran has worked in his country.

It is said "If one were to tell you that such and such a mountain has changed its place and has taken its seat some where else you may believe him, but if one were to tell you that such and such a man has changed his nature, do not balieve him."

Yet here is one who has changed the nature of not one man but of troops of men and has thus worked out an unbelievable miracle.

At Ispahan, of which I shall speak fully later on, while visiting the English College maintained by English Missionaries, I came across a Lurish boy who struck me as one of the most intelligent in his class. He told me that he belonged to a tribe in Tabrez among whom it was a confirmed belief that if one did not die by being wounded or killed outright in a fight but died a natural death his body was as unclean as the flesh of a sheep that was not killed according to Muslim rites, and as repugnant as the carcass of a dog. "Now" he says "We are quite a different people. My father who is the hereditary priest of this tribe has sent me all the way from Tabrez to study in the English school and stay in the hostel in the company and under the care of those very Christians whose sight in the past was a bad omen to us. He could not understand how his family all of a sudden had changed their centuries old ways of living and had become the greatest admirers of the Western civilisation which at one time they abhorred the most. "The suit, the boots, the collar and the hat I wear" said he "they like immensely and call me a smart boy."

To return to my visit to the normal college in Shiraz when I entered this romantic former stronghold of an arch thief, all the students stood up and each one started reciting a welcome poem he had composed on the spot in my honour. All of a sudden I found myself a great man. After listening to a few poems I requested them to stop but the Principal of the College insisted on their recitation of the poems from the first to the last and said "For two reasons I am anxious that you should listen to them. First because I want them to extend to our guest their hospitality which is the proud privilege of the Iranians and secondly because I want to show to you that every one of my students can versify with ease".

After partaking fully of this sort of hospitality I expressed my gratitude to them in a few words and bid them good-bye. The Principal took me to his room and gave me tea which according to the Iranian custom can be served to the guests at any time of the day. I took leave of him and left the college with a feeling of great satisfaction.

My visit to these schools did me a double good. First it gave me a great pleasure to see that my co-religionists who at one time were paralysed by the pernicious preaching of a set of fatalists were once again growing robust, full of life and full of enlightenment. Secondly it brought to me every day a flood of visitors from the teachers who made my short stay at Shiraz pleasant.

After staying in Shiraz for a fortnight I made up mind to leave for Ispahan. On the day of departure the hotel-keeper Mr. Ishki invited me to tea in his office where a printed notice framed and suspended in a prominent place attracted my attention. As the notice was meant both for the hotel-keeper as well as the guests he asked me to read it carefully and put my remarks in the visitors' book.

The following translation of the notice will show to the readers to what extent the progressive movement of Iran is being carried:—

Notice.

- (i) The hotel-keepers shall keep the premises clean. The toilets must be washed constantly and a large quantity of disinfectants should be used to drive away the flies.

- (2) The dining tables and tea tables shall always be covered with clean cloths. The bed-sheets and pillow covers must be changed every alternate day. The doors and windows of the rooms should be kept open to allow the Sun's rays to get in.
- (3) The cooking pots shall be washed well before they are used. If they are of copper they shall be properly tinned.
- (4) The food stuff used must be fresh and good and drinking water must be boiled.
- (5) The table-boys must put on a clean white dress according to the prescribed uniform.
- (6) Every hotel must maintain a nice flower garden in the central court.
- (7) Plates, forks and spoons after being washed clean must be dipped in boiling water before they are used again.
- (8) Every hotel-keeper shall maintain a register bearing the weekly reports of the Inspecting Officers of the Health Department of the Municipality.
- (9) A breach of one of these rules will result in the cancelling of the license and the closing of the hotel at a moment's notice.
- (10) Visitors are requested to remark in the visitors' book any breach of the rules they notice.
- (ii) No hotel-keeper is permitted to charge the travellers more than the scheduled price fixed by the Municipality for the dishes supplied by the hotel.

On reading these rules I applauded the Municipal authorities for making them and complimented the hotel-keeper for putting them into practice.

After an exchange of a few complimentary expressions I left Shiraz on the 24th of May 2-30 P.M. Within a couple of hours I was at Persepolis, the vast remains of the palace of the ancient

kings of Iran. The numerous travellers who have visited Persepolis from time to time have given such ample descriptions of the ruins that nothing can be added to what has already been written.

Among the Iranians it is generally known as **Chehl Minar**, the forty pillars, or **Takht-Jamshid**, the throne of Jamshid, **who** is supposed to have lived for many centuries and **among other** great deeds is said to have built this stately palace **which bears** his name and whose magnificent ruins and mysterious inscriptions are an object of great interest in archaeology. **Modern** science has however succeeded in deciphering these **inscriptions** and little doubt is entertained that the construction **of the great** platforms as well as the three palaces standing on it was **begun** by Darius and completed by his son Xerxes.

The ascent to the platform from the plain below is by **two** magnificent flights of stairs which are considered to be unrivalled in point of beauty and grandeur. They rise very gradually, the height of each step being only three inches and a half and the width twenty-two feet. On reaching a landing place at about half the height of the platform, they turn towards **the** interior and approach each other as they ascend to the top.

On gaining the level of the platform the visitor first **notices** two colossal statues of bulls standing together looking **forth upon** the plain, the space between them being little more **than four** paces. They form thus a gateway to a great building. On **the** walls above these bulls, are inscriptions in cuneiform **characters** detailing the titles of the builder of this edifice, as clearly **and** sharply cut as if executed only yesterday.

Behind these monsters stand two gigantic **human headed winged bulls facing in** the opposite direction, **measuring nineteen feet from head to foot. Their colossal sight gives them a**

peculiar air of power and dignity suitable to the guardian of a gorgeous palace.

At a distance of about forty-five paces south of this noble entrance is an elevated terrace where stand the columns from which the ruins have derived their present name Chehl Minar. The terrace is nine feet high and its length is said to be two hundred and twelve feet.

The entire wall of the terrace in front is covered with sculptures representing a procession bearing offerings of various descriptions as presents for the King. It is said that these sculptures are intended to represent the annual feast of the ⁶ Naoruz ' or vernal equinox the great festival of Iran when the sovereign received the principal personages of the state and received their offerings.

Another staircase leads to a second terrace which is said to be seventy feet long and ninety-five feet wide. The principal apartment is entered by six doorways on the sides of which are sculptured bas-reliefs of the king followed by attendants one bearing a fly-flapper and another an umbrella. The walls of this apartment are full of bas-reliefs representing single combats between a man and a lion, man and a monster with the body and head of a lion, the feet or claws of an eagle, its back, neck and breast covered with feathers and a large horn growing out of its head. The man who is clothed in long robes which leave his arms bare, grasps with one hand the horn of the monster and with the other he thrusts his sword into the belly of the formidable animal which has seized the arm and the breast of his antagonist with his claws.

Whether these extraordinary sculptures have any hidden meaning is a mere matter for conjecture. However, it is generally believed that the figure represents the pontiff King or religion and secular authority conquering infidelity.

Similarly there are three more palaces of equally exciting interest. Underneath the building are subterranean channels by which water was conveyed from the great cistern or reservoir excavated from the rock.

This mighty work serves to perpetuate the memory of the power and magnificence of the proudest monarch of ancient times. The beauty of its architecture and the delicacy of the ornaments of the dwelling of the great King have shown to the world to what excellence these arts had arrived in Iran in those long past ages of which history possesses nothing but some such dim and hazy ideas.

Unfortunately Ancient Iran has been misunderstood by the West and is commonly represented as a barbarian threat to Western Civilisation. Little attention has been given to the contribution of Iran itself to civilisation. Iran has created and improved much of the best in the science and art of the ancient world.

The primary consideration for which the present Iranian system of education stands being national pride, the Iranian Government is taking an extraordinarily lively interest in further excavations and has arranged for the services of outstanding archaeologists from the West to carry on this work. One report of these excavations with numerous photographs is already printed in German, French and Iranian and a fresh report is expected shortly.



Chapter IV

On the 25th of May at 8-30, I arrived at Isphahan, the capital city of the Safavis. On the advice of a Sikh gentleman who is dealing in motor accessories in Isphahan and whose shop happened to be near the garage where I was dropped, I went to 'Mihman-Khana Firdos' which is one of the three upto-date and leading hotels in Isphahan. There was no trace of the lack of cleanliness which was formerly complained of by Western travellers. The hotel-keeper with his usual Iranian politeness received me well, gave me a comfortable room and brought me a glass of invigorating cool sharbat. Being tired from the bus journey for thirty-six hours, on the first day I did not go out.

On the second day I went out alone to see this great town of historical importance. I was very anxious to see the filthy lanes lined by mud walls and donkeys loaded with two mountains of straw ready to hit an unwary passer-by on the shins, characteristics which, according to former European travellers, were typical of a Iranian town.

I saw none of these but to my great surprise and satisfaction I saw Khiyabans, big paved roads twenty feet wide bordered by tall shady evergreen trees with a decent ten feet side walk on each side and a small stream of water about two feet wide separating the main road from the side walks. This* is a sight for the Gods. I have never seen such avenues in India or Europe. "With the exception of a few old avenues made by Shah Abbas the Great who is still remembered as a great builder, the rest is the work of H. M. Baza Shah Pahlavi. His aim is to beautify and modernise the Iranian towns. Every where old mud-walled houses are giving way to modern brick and stone houses.

People who in the past were reluctant to build houses for fear of attracting thieves and State Officials who in all days were them-

selves worse than thieves, are in these days of perfect security of life and property, encouraged to build good houses. Moreover house building societies have been formed to advance money to house-builders on easy terms. Foreigners who have now become the Iranian subject knowing instinctively that owing to the modern facilities for transportation the towns are bound to grow in size and importance are readily investing money in buildings. They are building very decent shops and residential quarters on new Khiyabans.

As soon as a new Khiyaban is taken in hand by the State the public come forward to erect buildings on each side of it.

The establishment of factories and cheap quick and easy transport by buses, trucks and motor cars are restoring Isphahan to the original position of importance she enjoyed in the days of Shah Abbas the Great. Although I was more interested in modern than in ancient Iran, I could not resist the temptation of entering the Charbagh Madressa which was built by Shah Abbas for the teaching of Theology. It is a beautiful building of oriental splendour with a charming garden in the centre and a perpetual stream of water running through the garden. Some of the plane trees standing in the garden are said to have been planted by Shah Abbas himself. Inside there are about two hundred double rooms for students and a highly decorated study hall as well as a grand mosque with a dome. This Madressa which was lying useless for years has been taken over by the Education Department and after a few alterations will be used for a modern school. I came out of this Charbagh Madressa and then next proceeded to the Jumma Mosque. On my way I requested a policeman to direct me there. On learning that I was a stranger he volunteered to accompany me and show me all the old buildings of historical interest, if I would wait for **ten** minutes until he could go to the Police Station and get **formal** leave from his superior officer.

After ten minutes the officer himself came, salamed me and asked me if I was the same gentleman whose arrival in Ispahan was announced in the local papers. I knew nothing of this announcement and I told him that I was Professor Moulvi from India. He identified me and very politely volunteered to accompany me. He took me by a public conveyance to the Jumma Mosque where I was pleased to meet Dr. Moor, an American gentleman who is a Professor in the American College in Istambol.

One of the peculiarities of the ancient mosques in Iran is this that they are generally double mosques. A mosque below for winter use with fireplaces here and there and a mosque above for summer use. The whole building is a proof of the highly developed architecture of which Iranians appear to have been pioneers in the world. Within the compound walls of this mosque stands a segregated dome which is fifteen hundred years old and which is said to have been a worshipping place of Zoroastrians. The dome is made entirely of clay.

An European writer has remarked, "The houses in the cities of Iran without a single exception are made of clay and present a dingy appearance". If a dome made of clay could remain intact for fifteen hundred years, then a house made of clay would last for ever. If it is so, I would any day prefer such a house to a house made of stone or bricks the life of which cannot be guaranteed even for a couple of hundred years. The fact is that even in old days there did exist magnificent houses made of bricks and stone. But the owners for want of safety and for fear of attracting robbers surrounded them with mud-walls. From outside it is true they presented a dingy appearance but inside they were palaces of exquisite beauty.

At Teheran I was invited to dinner by Mirza Mohmed Hashim Ispahani, a rich merchant. His house from outside

looked nothing more than a hut. I could hardly believe that this was the house to which I was invited. The moment I entered, I noticed a beautiful garden running into acres with highly ornamented pools of water and a double storied building with summer and winter quarters providing all the necessary comforts of modern life. Mirza Ispahani who is seventy years old said that the house was built by his father about sixty years ago. In big cities in Iran which have a net work of Khiyabans now, old houses are situated behind the Khiyabans. A peep into the interior of such houses will reveal the fact that the Iranians have had a centuries old taste for artistic buildings. I can say with authority that there is no house in Iran, howsoever humble it may be, that has not got a garden in the centre.

From the Jumma Mosque we went to the Mosque of Shah Abbas. Here I saw two things of amazing interest. The one was a big bowl placed on a stand in front of the mosque, as big as the head of an elephant, evidently made from one piece of stone with verses of the Koran carved on its outside. With a slight touch it rings like a bell. Until now no one has been able to ascertain from what the bowl is made. The second is the peculiar construction of the dome which echoes exactly seven times for every step that you strike against the ground under the dome. No European traveller has made mention of these unique things because until very recently no Non-Muslim was permitted to enter Iranian Mosques.

From here we drove to the shaking minarets. We went up one of these minarets and we shook it as if it was a branch of a tree. The other minaret which is at a distance of about twenty feet shook exactly like the one we shook. This, one of the Englishmen I met in Ispahan said, "Is very simple". But what looks simple to explain to-day could not have been so simple three hundred years ago. Then we went to see the celebrated bridge of Atiwardikhan called after its builder. It has thirty

three arches. A pathway for foot-passengers on either side of the roadway is covered in by smaller arches forming an arcade. On passing over the bridge we entered a long and broad avenue formed by double rows of plane trees which in olden days led to the Hasht-Behisht, i.e. eight paradises, of which there is no trace left now. After we visited the palace of Shah Abbas the officer took me to his office where he served me with tea and instructed the driver to drop me at the Firdos Hotel. I was very much pleased with his conduct and what surprised me the most was his anxiety to pay the conveyance charges from his pocket. I insisted on my paying the charges but he would not allow me to pay. He said, "You are our guest and it is our duty to entertain you and help you in every possible way. If you want any other help, ring me up and I will be at your service".

The police of Iran from the beginning of my journey to the end, from the Police Commissioner down to a Constable have struck me as an embodiment of courtesy, kindness and polish.

I left Isphahan at 7-30 P.M. in the evening of the 8th June and on the 9th of June early morning I reached Kum, which contains the holy shrine of Fatmah Masumah. Here I noticed more than a hundred men dressed in 'Abba*' and 'Ammama' the peculiar dress of the Mujtahids whose presence convinced me that the rumour started in India to the effect that all the Mujtahids in Iran had been wiped out was without foundation.

Chapter V.

ARRIVAL AT TEHERAN.

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On the 10th of June I arrived at Teheran which looks in every possible respect a modern city. Eter wide well paved streets with innumerable modern shops with attractive showrooms

standing on each side, hundreds of two horse-carriages driven by smart coachmen wearing a decent uniform, scores of motor cars running one after another and obeying the signals of smart policemen standing in the middle of the streets, throngs of men and women dressed in European style bustling to and fro all these and numerous other things that one notices in Teheran give it the appearance and reality of a modern city in Europe.

To those visitors of Iran who visited her some fifteen years ago, the present rise of Iran looks the most amazing event in the history of mankind. It is true that people usually move with the times. If they do not move by themselves the times move them by force. Every nation has risen from a small beginning. Iran was bound to rise. It is not her rise that has puzzled her visitors. It is the rapidity with which she has risen. For every other country in the world has risen step by step, while Iran has risen by leaps and bounds. The out-side world knows very little of the steps that marked her progress.

Twenty years ago, she was said to have no hope of solvency, prosperity and progress. Today, she is a perfectly solvent country, prosperous, progressive and independent. She has a representative government which is a respectable and efficient instrument of economic and social progress. Iran is on her onward march. She is moving with miraculous ease. The Iranians are a people of remarkable potentialities. They are seeking self-realisation and are instinctively yearning for better things. They are building up a capacity to adjust themselves to conditions ampler and more complex than those in which they have lived for centuries.

The seething ferment of mind and spirit in Iran and her amazingly rapid success have frightened some of the pessimistically minded Iranians and speculative outsiders who apprehend a sudden fall after a sudden rise. It is human nature to stoik to

the past. They cannot understand how Iran could manage to break away from her time honoured traditions and take to new ways of life. Forty-five years ago when Nassiruddin Shah sold the right of buying and selling all tobacco raised in Iran to an English company, the Muslim clergy in protest of this monopoly, proclaimed the prohibition of the use of tobacco. This edict was immediately obeyed by the people. Tobacco shops were closed. Iranian men and women, ninety per cent of whom are hereditary smokers, stopped smoking for days and days together. No tobacco could be had in the country. Nassiruddin Shah himself could not get tobacco for his water-pipe. The Shah was forced to cancel the contract and pay a heavy indemnity to the company.

On another occasion he invited Swedish experts to drill his soldiers. The clergy proclaimed that it was unlawful for Muslims to work under Non-muslims. The Shah was forced to send back the Swedish officers.

Once a Moslem fell from the train that runs between Teheran and Shah Abdulazim. The clergy order the public to smash the train. Their order was immediately obeyed. The Russian engineer was killed and the whole line was destroyed in retaliation for the loss of a Moslem life which did not involve the least possible negligence on the part of the railway authorities. The Iranian government had to pay heavy damages to the Russian and Belgians for this rash decision of the clergy.

At the time of the coronation of H. M. Raza Shah Pahlavi on the 25th of April 1925, festivities continued for ten days before and after the coronation. Music was conspicuous by its absence from these festivities evidently for no other reason than fear of offending the clergy who in the days of the Kajars were the de-facto rulers of the country.

Twelve years ago the American Vice-Consul Eobert W. Imbrie was killed by a mob for attempting to take a photograph of Iranian Women with *chaddars* who had gathered round a shrine in one of the streets of Teheran.

Before the beginning of 1936 no Moslem woman could be seen in the streets of Teheran without a veil and no veiled woman could move about together with her husband, father or her grown up son. A husband and wife could not sit together in a carriage.

To-day the veil is off. It is not to be seen anywhere. Men and women are freely moving about in the streets. Women are serving as saleswomen in shops and clerks in private and public offices. Eestaurants and cinemas are flooded with young women who are behaving in every way like women in the West. The present Iranian life looks like a staged drama. Outsiders cannot easily understand whether the people are acting this new life at the dictation of some stage manager or are actually living a new life.

What has become of the host of powerful Muslim divines who once formed nearly one-tenth of the population? Have they shaken off their centuries old conservatism and become perfect rationalists interpreting the Prophet's message according to the tendencies of the times or are they simply observing "Takiya" i.e. pretending to be what they are not, a principle permissible in Shiaism as a matter of exigency? Is the public sufficiently enlightened to appreciate the drastic changes in their social life? Was the country prepared for the reforms or have they been forced on her without her consent? We know that Iranians are on their march to Westernism. Are they moving by themselves or is some outside force driving them? Is there no fear of a fall in their precipitate march? When once they fall **will they have** the vitality left in them **to** recuperate **and** rise **again**?

This is the only topic that usually turns up for discussion at dinners and drawing room meetings. I have frequently listened to these discussions and at times I have taken an active part in them. Ordinarily it is beyond the scope of a casual visitor like me to understand such highly complicated local problems. But my anxiety to improve my knowledge of colloquial Iranian prompted me to mix freely with all sorts of people who gave me a warm welcome. There grew a close intimacy between me and hundreds of Iranians of various shapes of opinion and this gave me ample opportunities of knowing things which have thrown a flood of light on matters which appear to be incomprehensible.

The real explanation of the present phenomenal rise of Iran lies in a thorough understanding of the national character of the Iranians which has remained unchanged with them. An Iranian is one of the most adaptable persons on the face of earth. He has an enormous power of endurance. His power of recuperation is beyond one's imagination. He readily yields when he cannot oppose with advantage. But the moment he gets an opportunity to assert himself, he does so with a resuscitated energy. It is said that magnanimity does not lie in never falling but in rising after every fall. The three thousand years history of the Iranians is a marvellous episode of such rises and falls. No outsider can understand the present Westernisation of Iran which looks unbelievable to many, unless he is well grounded in the history of Iran.

Chapter VI

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE HISTORY OF IRAN.

The history of Iran is a well staged drama in six acts. The first act begins with the glory of the Iranians during the days of Darius, when Iran was a world empire which often defied and defeated the Western armies. The ruins of Persepolis which testify the brilliance of this period are visited by Iranians with interest and pride. Cyrus and Darius and Xerxes are familiar names to every school boy who has passed the first year examination of the High School. Their glory ended with the sudden appearance on the scene of Alexander the Macedonian, who undid their works of Arts and Literature by burning their books and destroying their buildings.

The second act begins with the rise of Iranians under the Sassanian Dynasty. After five hundred years of foreign rule the Iranians once again raise their heads and revive their native arts, literature and the Zoroastrian religion. After four hundred years' supremacy of the Sassanians, the Arabs appear on the scene. During their two hundred years' of power and prestige, the Arabs wiped off everything that could be called Iranian. They forced on the conquered people their language, their religion and their civilisation. The Iranians instinctively respond more readily than other races to a change of environment. They accept heat and cold, hunger and thirst, pain, sickness and death as a necessary part of life, not things to avoid but to face with patience. Thus they rapidly adapted themselves to their surroundings under Arab domination and conquered the conquerors by showing to them that they had better brains and by holding offices of importance under them. They wrote better Arabic than the Arabs themselves. They interpreted the Koran for the Arabs by writing commentaries on it. They systematised the Arabic grammar. They wrote the Arabio lexicons. **They**

.translated the Greek philosophy and the Greek system of medicine into Arabic. The **Iranians** were the first **to** write books **on history and geography.** In short, **their** contributions **to the general culture** of the world during this period testify to the **superior** ability and intelligence of this gifted race who when **left to** themselves have always worked wonders. If to-day education stands for building up a capacity to fit into life and adapt oneself to one's surroundings, then we cannot but admire the **Iranians for** understanding the principles of education five **hundred** years ahead of us.

The third act begins with the decentralisation of the Arab Government and the re-appearance of the Iranians on the stage not as Arabicised but real Iranians. They carve out new kingdoms under Taherides, Saffarides, Samanides Daylamites, Ghaznavides, Saljukides and Khor Zamshahis and revive their language, literature and art. The Iranians have an instinct for drawing upon others without losing their own integrity. It is said that in the days of Harn-ul-Bashid not a single Iranian could be traced who knew a word of Iranian. In the days of Mamum an Iranian who knew a few lines of Iranian poetry was instantly put to death for fear of his communicating them to others.

Yet, it is a mystery how and by what means after a long period of three hundred years during which not a word of Iranian **was** spoken or written, the Iranian patriots revived* their language and wrote so well and so profusely that the post-Islamic literature of this period is considered to be the richest and the **most** prolific that Iran has ever produced.

With all this, some foreigners are of the **opinion that the Iranians** are lacking in patriotism. If this is not patriotism, **then what is patriotism ?**

The fourth act begins with the invasion of the Mongols and the rise of the Safavis. In the middle of the 13th century

when the Iranians by their exceptional vitality and their extraordinary power of recuperation had very nearly rejuvenated themselves, the Mongols invaded their country.

Jovayni in his *Tarikh-i-Jahan-i-Kusha* describes the Mongol invasion in the following words: "They came, they uprooted, they burned, they slew, they carried off, they departed ". They changed towns into deserts by setting everything on fire and swept off nearly one-third of the population by cutting the throats in cold blood of every woman and child they came across.

None could dream that after this catastrophe, the Iranians would rise again and rebuild the Iranian empire out of the ruins. Under the Safavis they again play an important role in history. With a resuscitated energy, they set their affairs right and by unifying the country once again they built up an empire which under Shah Abbas the Great reached the Zenith of its power and prestige. The domes and lofty minarets of the monumental mosques and mausoleums that were built in the days of this great builder, his Chehlsitoun palace, his Charbag Madressa, his two gigantic bridges at Ispahan and a host of other buildings have won the admiration of the architectural experts of the world.

But partly due to the peculiar geographical position of Iran, which has exposed her on all sides to the attacks of her powerful neighbours and mostly due to the weakness of the successors of Shah Abbas who unlike their great father were brought up in the "anderoon" and had thus acquired effeminate habits of living, the Safavi rule ended in a tragedy.

The fifth act begins with the invasion of the Afghans and the rise of Nadir Shah. The Russians, the Turks and the Afghans had very nearly devoured the country piece by piece when the

Iranians once again rose under a trihal hero Nadir Shah. This **great** soldier and commander of soldiers whose frown was dreaded by his men more fchan the sword of the enemy was gifted **with** marvellous powers. The exigencies of a military profession, **strategy**, drill, duty and discipline were instinctively developed **in** him. With one sweeping march he drove away the Afghans on one side and the Turks and the Russians on the other. Being elated with his success against these formidable foes he carried his conquests as far as Lahore and Delhi. On his return to Iran with priceless jewels which are still the proud possession of the Iranian Government, he suspected his son of an intrigue against him. He put out his son's eyes but repenting of his rash act took his courtiers to task for not preventing him from doing this atrocious deed and made up his mind to put out their eyes also. His intention being known to his courtiers they killed him before he could do anything to them. His tragic end opened the way for the Quajars.

The sixth act begins with the Qua jar Dynasty and the gradual developement of the revolutionary movement and ends in the rise of the Pahlavi Dynasty which is responsible for the present Westernisation of Iran.



Chapter VII

THE QUAJAR KINGS AND THE RISE OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

The immediate causes of the revolutionary movement in Iran being the atrocities which characterised the Quajar rule, a detailed account of this dynasty will not be without interest.

The death of Nadir Shah was followed by the short rule of the noble family of Zand which ruled with justice, wisdom and humanity and thus preserved the peace and prosperity of Iran for a period of twenty years. Aqua Mohmed, the chief of a Turkish tribe called *kajars*, besieged Kirman with a large army. Lutf Ali Khan Zand, seeing that all hope was gone, opened the gates and spurred his faithful horse against the ranks of the enemy. With only three followers he fought his way throughout the Kajar host and escaped to Narmsir, the most Eastern district of the province of Kirman.

Enraged at the escape of his rival, the savage conqueror ordered a general massacre. About two thousand women and children were sold into slavery and he ordered seventy thousand eyes of the inhabitants of Kirman to be put out and brought to him on plates. The monster counted them with the point of his dagger and turning to his minister exclaimed "Had the number fallen short of one I would have made it up with one of your own eyes".

Lutf Ali's movements were watched. He was caught at Bam where as a mark of his triumph Aqua Mohmed ordered a pyramid to be made of the skulls of the most faithful of the followers of his victim. The most hideous indignities and atrocities were committed on the person of Lutf Ali and he was finally murdered at Teheran where every member of his family was ordered to be massacred.

Raza Kulli Khan Hidayat says in the last chapters of his appendix to *Bauzatusafa* which cover the period of Kajars: "on one occasion Aqua Mohmed in the course of a conversation with Fateh Ali Shah being fascinated by the charming ways in which his nephew had expressed his ideas said " My dear nephew, your conversation is delightful. I shall be pleased to give you whatever you want". The young prince said in reply "I want nothing more than what you have already given me. If you are really anxious to please me, the only way in which you can do so is to order your subordinates to treat the subjects with courtesy and kindness and thus earn their blessings "; " Silly fool" he said " You are lacking in experience. Subjects must be dealt with harshly. The key to your successful rule lies in this. My idea is that no ten houses should be allowed to have more than one cooking-pot among them, so that they may not find it easy to cook their broth. Otherwise they will grow fat and do all sorts of mischief against you ".

This was the ideal of the Kajar rule. The guilty miscreant founded his dynasty at the price of all the best and noblest blood of Iran.

His first endeavour was to cement his power by the blood of his enemies. The noble family of Zand and all those who supported it were exterminated. His next move was to murder his own relations. To clear the way for his nephew Fateh Ali Shah he managed to kill everyone else that was related to him. His wickedness did not stop here. He dug up in Mashhed the bones of Nadir Shah, a great patriot whose name has always been remembered by the Iranians as one who had freed them from a foreign yoke, carried them to Teheran and buried them at the entrance of his palace. He similarly desecrated the bones of Karim Khan Zand.

By his aggressive policy he incurred the displeasure of the Russians whose hostility resulted in a protracted war the effects of which proved disastrous for Iran.

In 1797 a dispute arose between his two bodyguards. Being enraged at the noise, the Shah ordered them to be put to death on the following morning but allowed them to continue their duty in the interval. Knowing well that there was no chance of mercy from this monster they waited till he was asleep and killed him with their daggers. Such was the ignominious end of this inhuman monster. "He waded to the throne through a sea of blood". He created a gulf between the ruler and the ruled which could not be bridged over. He invited for more than one hundred years trouble from the Russians who by playing the game of wolf and lamb swallowed a good bit of the North of Iran.

Fateh Ali Shah

Aqua Mohamed was succeeded by his nephew Fateh Ali Shah. He ascended the throne at the age of thirty the prime of his life. Aqua Mohamed had murdered every relation who was likely to dispute the throne. But there was one uncle left named Sadik Khan who rose in rebellion and Fateh Ali Shah who was lacking in personal courage was obliged to take the field. At the sound of a few gun shots he fell from his horse in a swoon of terror. But his clever minister Haji Ibrahim to conceal the true state of the case exclaimed "What a terrible passion the Shah has fallen into?" Trusting that through the intervention of Haji Ibrahim no violence would be used against him, Sadik Khan surrendered himself and the Shah imitating the meanness of his predecessor shut him up in a room and left him to die of starvation. A few weeks afterwards, when the doors were opened, he was found to have dug deep into the earth with his hands and swallowed the clay to satisfy his hunger. Thus very much like his predecessor, Fateh Ali Shah commenced his rule with a treacherous inhuman treatment of his own uncle. He had no ability to rule and want of courage made him play into the hands of his Minister who was the real ruler of the country. With all this he could not give up his despotism. Some of the highest nobles were robbed, beaten and put to death by his whimsical orders,

It is said that one day he composed a few verses and asked his Poet Laureate to read them and say what he thought of them, "My soul be sacrificed over you" said the Poet Laureate "the verses are worthless". The Shah was enraged and exclaimed, "He is an ass. Take him to the stables". The order was literally obeyed and the wretched poet had to live with asses on fodder. After a few days the Shah sent for him again and read some more of his verses to him. The poet walked off without a word. "Where are you going?" cried the Shah, "Back again to the stables" answered the poet. Pateh Ali pleased with his frankness, called him back and ordered his mouth to be filled with sugar candy, a high mark of favour.

He had innumerable wives. Raza Kulli Khan Hidayat, the author of the additional chapters of Euzatussafa, says "Fateh Ali Shah had four hundred wives, five hundred eunuchs to attend on them and two hundred and sixty children of whom one hundred and fifty were males. The women in his days were taught to spin and embroider and sometime even to read and write but they were degraded to be the play-things of their lords".

With a family of nearly twelve hundred members Pateh Ali Shah was always in need of money. Treating Iran as a conquered country he extorted as much money from the people as he possibly could and his sons, most of whom were Governors of Provinces followed the example of their father. In consequence all ranks in Iran had a violent hatred for the Kajar Dynasty whose name was identical with all that is cruel, tyrannical and unjust.

His predecessor's follies coupled with his own imbecility forced him to enter into diplomatic relations with European nations. Being unable to understand the diplomacy of foreigners he often played into their hands and ultimately ruined the Iranian nation for which the Kajars had no consideration.

Through Haji Ibrahim he entered **into a treaty with** the British Government according to which the British were expected to help him against an aggressor. Later on he killed this very Minister Haji Ibrahim who negotiated the treaty, by putting out his eyes and tearing out his tongue. Nothing but jealousy of his power and greed for his riches prompted the Shah to perpetrate this act of meanness.

Seven years afterwards the Shah entered into another treaty with the French against the Russians who continued their policy of encroachment. The French officers were invited to drill the Iranian soldiers and the French influence at the court of the Shah excited the jealousy of the English who sent another embassy to Iran to renew the treaty.

Fortunately for the British in 1808 when the British embassy arrived in Iran the French had made peace with Russia and were no longer able to promise aid against her. The French Officers were driven away and a fresh offensive and defensive treaty was signed between England and Iran. British Officers were engaged to discipline the Iranian soldiers; but for want of proper food and clothing they could not fight against the well-equipped army of the Russians.

The protracted Russian War caused by the short sighted policy of the Kajars had to be brought to a conclusion by a treaty according to which the Russians succeeded in securing to themselves the provinces of Georgia, Mingrelia, Immeritia, Ganja, Karbagh, Sheki Sirman and Talish on the Caspian. The Iranians were excluded from the navigation of the Caspian in ships of war and the boundaries to their conquests were ill-defined in order that there should be a ready excuse for further encroachments. This great loss of territory was a death blow to the Iranians who lost all respect in the eyes of the world.

In 1811 Reverend Henry Martyn arrived in Shiraz and with the assistance of a learned Irani named Mir Sayyid Ali

completed the translation of a part of the Bible into Iranian, The Shah publicly expressed his approbation of the work and thus indirectly offended the Moslem Clergy who were already exasperated with him.

In 1814 he entered into another treaty with the British according to which a British envoy was always to reside at the Court of the Shah. The Bussians also insisted on keeping an envoy in Iran and the Shah welcoming both the Missions gave a village in the Alburz foot hills to the British for their Summer residence and another nearby to the Bussians.

The British Mission village called Gulhak has a large number of Bangalows, offices and avenues which give it the appearance of an English village. It is seven miles away from Teheran and thirty-eight hundred feet above the sea level.

The unsettled boundary question afforded a pretext for constant disputes and Eussia lost no opportunity for further encroachments.

During a long disastrous reign of thirty-seven years Fafceh Ali Shah had misgoverned the country to such an extent and put the people to such an irreparable loss that the Kajars became an object of universal hatred and the relations between the ruler and the ruled became strained for ever.

The highly cultured and refined Iranian nobles were without reason suspected and treated as slaves. Want of trust and proper treatment turned them into despicable insolent menials, cunning, selfish, cowardly and avaricious. The merchants and craftsmen had no peace of mind to develop their trade and improve their craftsmanship. The farmers and cultivators lived under an oppressive system of extortion and injustice.

The Mujtahids and Mullas were ignored and losing their influence at the Court became disgusted with the Kajars. The

Maktabas and Madressas for want of royal patronage were ruined. The Ilyats or wandering tribes who formerly supplied the sovereign with a splendid army had lost all sympathy for the Kajars. Fateh Ali's besetting sin was avarice, yet the treasury was always empty, his hoards being torn from him by the Russians who wrung money as well as land from the conquered Iranians.

The seed of sedition was first sewn in the latter days of Fateh Ali Shah; it sprouted in the days of Nasiruddin, and in the days of Mohmed Ali Shah it grew into a huge tree spreading its branches in all directions.

A short time before the death of Fateh Ali Shah, which took place in 1835, a detachment of British Officers including men like Sheil and Rawlinson had arrived in Iran to discipline the Iranian troops. The English have never shown the aggressiveness of the Eussians. Their sole intention in helping Iran was to save India from the probable invasion of Russia whose gradual encroachment on Iran had caused alarm in the minds of the British diplomatists. Their alliance with Iran and Afghanistan was of strategical importance to them. They wanted and they still want to see Iran a powerful independent country to serve as a strong buffer state in the interest of India.

Sir Henry Bethune took command of the Iranian army. But Mohmed Shah's treasury was empty and he could not commence his march from Tabrez to the Capital without paying the troops and procuring the necessary supplies. Sir John Campbell the English Minister in Teheran, with the subsequent sanction of his Government, advanced him a large sum of money and thus enabled him to secure the throne.

No atrocities strained his reign. But he had no ability to rule. He was fond of military display and was easily fooled by flattery. It was due to his silly vanity that at the instigation

of the Russian intriguers he was led into aggressions against Herat and thus incurred the displeasure of the English who were his real benefactors.

Refusing all offers of negotiation the Shah advanced to invade Herat. England had always advised Iran to direct her attention to the amelioration of her internal condition and not to dream of foreign conquests. But Russia had another game to play. She knew well that if the Shah was defeated he would be weakened and be at the mercy of his Northern neighbours and if successful he would be embroiled with England. In either case Russia would be the gainer. Her agents were instructed accordingly but the British could not allow Herat, the key of India, to be occupied by a power that traditionally played into the hands of Russia.

The Shah did not listen to the sound advice of England. The Russians seized upon the small island of Ashurda, about twelve miles from the coast of the Caspian Sea near Astrabad, and the remonstrance of Iran was answered by an accusation of ingratitude.

The futile invasion of Herat brought the Shah to his senses and after settling his differences with the British he turned his attention to the Turkish frontiers where a deplorable state of affairs had existed for a long time. Here too the British helped him by deciding peacefully the question of the Turkish boundary and thus they saved him from entering into unnecessary conflict with his Moslem neighbours.

During the last days of the reign of Mohmed Shah an unfortunate incident occurred at Kerbela which gave a great shock to the Iranians. The inhabitants of Kerbela who are mostly Iranians had for years thrown off the authority of the Sultan. Nawak Pash the Governor of Baghdad in order to enforce

obedience to the Sultan sent a force against the town. Kerbela was taken by storm and about three thousand Iranians were massacred.

This shocking news produced no effect on the Shah who spent his last days sitting at a window and shooting at sparrows with a pistol. The country was practically in the hands of his half-crazy Minister Haji Mirza who openly declared himself a Russian subject. Every talented man with feelings of patriotism was either killed by him or driven into exile. The Governorships were sold to the highest bidder who oppressed the people in a fearful manner.

Mohmed Shah died in 1848 and was succeeded by Nasiruddin Shah whose reign marks the culminating point of the Eussian intrigues.



Chapter VIII

NASIRUDDIN AND THE RISE OF BABEISM

At the very beginning of his reign he was disturbed by the rise of a new fanatical sect. One Sayyid Ali Mohmed who took the name of 'Bab', which means "gate", originated a new doctrine alleging that he had discovered some chapters of the Koran which the Iranians believe to have been lost. On the strength of these newly found chapters, which according to him contradicted in many respects the other portions of the sacred volume, he established new dogmas which preached Pantheism and the wildest socialistic principles. Without making enquiries to ascertain what kind of stuff he had discovered educated men in all parts of Iran joined this wild sect.

The Mullas being exasperated and alarmed at this sudden departure from the established form of religion applied to the Shah to suppress the further spread of these pernicious doctrines. The Shah too being terrified by the increasing numbers and influence of the believers in the heretical doctrines commenced a savage persecution of all those who were suspected of having embraced the tenets of the Bab. Hundreds of such suspects were put to death and a big reward was offered for the capture or assassination of the leader who was known as Bab or Gate, the door through which one could arrive at the true belief. The Babees rose in rebellion but their efforts were fruitless. Their small and detached parties were cut off and after some time their Prophet was shot to death. The Babees resolved to avenge their wrongs by assassination and accordingly they made an attempt on the life of the Shah which proved unsuccessful. The culprits were arrested and executed with the most horrible tortures. Ropes steeped in oil were inserted between their ribs and shoulder blades, the ends of the ropes were lighted and the **unhappy** victims were led as long as **they could walk through the**

principal streets of Teheran reviling and cursing their tormentors and foretelling the fall of the Shah and the Mullas.

A frightful scene followed this tragedy. Anyone who was suspected of Babeeism was instantly put to death. No time was lost between suspicion and execution. Headless bodies lay in the streets for days and days together and the dogs fought and grambled over the corpses in the deserted thoroughfares. The European Mission remonstrated and the reign of terror ceased.

A few years later a regiment of ill-paid, ill-fed and ill-clothed soldiers, driven to desperation by the embezzlements of their officers and unable to obtain redress from the Shah, threatened to march off to Mashhed and hold the town in pledge until their grievances had been redressed. The most solemn promises of pardon and future better treatment were made to them. Trusting in these promises they returned to their barracks and submitted to their officers. But as soon as they fell into the clutches of the Government, oaths and pledges were forgotten. Instead of their grievances being redressed, fifty of them who took a prominent part in the revolt were tortured to death. One mode of torture was to pull out the teeth and hammer them one by one into the crown of the head. Another way of torture was to bleed the victims to death. The Shah's own brother-in-law and Minister Ameer Mirza Takee was ordered to be bled to death in the bath.

There was another disturbance which was also suppressed in a similarly monstrous manner. Crops failed and there was scarcity of bread throughout the country. At Teheran the calamity was aggravated by the inhuman conduct of speculators who bought up the corn and stored it with a view to selling it later on at an exorbitant price. The result was that people **with** money in their hands were literally starving, while there

was **plenty** of **food** around **them**. Bakers' shops were besieged the whole day by crowds of women fighting, shouldering and pushing each other to get near to the doors to buy the bread as fast as it was made. The quantity of corn sold in the market was quite insufficient to feed the inhabitants.

A large number of women surrounded the Shah on his return from one of his daily rides and entreated him either to protect them from the great men who by monopolising the grain had brought them to the verge of starvation or to relinquish the throne. The Shah being roused to fury by these reproaches sent for the Mayor and asked him to explain why he could not maintain order in the streets. The poor wretch who could scarcely open his mouth was grossly insulted by the Shah and was ordered to be strangled in his presence. The body was dragged through the bazars by hooks fastened to the heels and was suspended in the square of the city for three days from the execution pole. His property was confiscated and his family was reduced in one day from affluence to penury. This incident created a panic. But still the hungry people could not keep quiet. A large number of old women went sobbing and wailing to the British legation and asked for an interview with the English Ambassador Mr. Alison, and requested him to write to the Minister of the Interior to take pity on the starving public and have the stores of grain opened by force and sold to those who were ready to pay for it. Mr Alison did so and the Minister wrote back to say that he would consult the Shah on the matter.

Crowds of men had gathered in the streets and were waiting **for** the results of the intervention of the British legation. In a short time the crowds dispersed and it looked as if their grievances were redressed; but the means used to disperse the **crowds** were most monstrous.

Ferrukh the Minister on showing Mr. Alison's letter to **the King said with a smile that he would set the matter right in**

half an hour. Calling at once a number of Farrashes he asked them to bring half a dozen ears out of the crowd. **They** immediately rushed forth, seized every well-dressed man whom they met in the streets and gave him the choice of having his ears cut off or paying them a ransom. Payment was prompt and in a very short space of time the streets were deserted. As it was necessary however to produce the ears for the Minister they seized a few beggars, cut off their ears and took them to Farrukh. "Has the crowd disappeared?" asked Farrukh. "There is no one left in the streets" said the Farrashes. On hearing this, the Shah remarked, "Mirza, you know how to govern the Iranians". Fortunately for the people, corn arrived from the villages and they were saved from starvation.

Farrukh kept his place by clever and assiduous flattery of the Shah who never heard the truth and was kept profoundly ignorant of the real state of the country. He followed the policy of his predecessor Haji Mirza by driving away or degrading every talented man in the State and filling up offices with his worthless relations.

In spite of his incapacity and the perpetration of hideous deeds, incidentally certain things took place in his reign which paved the way for the future progress and prosperity of Iran.

From time immemorial Iran has had elastic limits and uncertain frontiers which led to continued disputes. By the end of his reign most of the disputes were settled and fixed boundaries were guaranteed by trustees. This saved the country from unnecessary conflicts. In 1863 a Telegraphic Treaty was signed between England and Iran. Accordingly in 1870 **the Indo** European Telegraph Company carried a telegraph line **from Teheran** to London.

In 1873 the Shah made an expensive journey **to Europe and he and an enormous** number of Courtiers, relations **and immediate**

followers whom he took along enlarged their views by their wide travels and brought back with them to Iran the ideas of the advanced people of the West.

Chapter IX

SAYYID JAMALUDDIN'S ARRIVAL IN IRAN AND THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT.

In 1889 on his return from his third trip to Europe Nassiruddin Shah brought with him a French Physician Dr. Eennrier from Paris and Sayyid Jamaluddin a revolutionary pan-Islamist from Munich.

Sayyid Jamaluddin was a man of great force of character, prodigious learning, untiring activity, dauntless courage and extraordinary eloquence. He was a philosopher, writer, orator, journalist and politician of no mean order. In the eyes of his admirers he was a great patriot, but his antagonists looked upon him as a great agitator. He had visited most of the lands of Islam and European countries where he had come into close relations with many of the leading men of his time both in the East and the West. At first Nassiruddin Shah treated him well. He admired him for his ability; but within a very short time the Shah found out that he was a great nationalist with revolutionary ideas. A few months after the arrival of the Sayyid, Nassiruddin Shah sold to a British Company the sole right of growing and selling tobacco in Iran for a period of fifty years. In return for this Iran was to receive an annual sum of £ 15,000 and one-fourth of the net profit of the Company. This was a great blow to the country. It stirred up the whole nation against the Shah. Calculations were made and it was pointed out to the public **that the concession meant a net profit to the Company of five hundred thousand Sterling per year.**

Sayyid Jamaluddin got excited and in addition to the revolutionary speeches he made here and there in Iran, he wrote a letter to Hujjatul-Islam Haji Mirza Hasan Shirazi the head of the Mujtahids at Samara in the following terms:—

"The King has no character. He is corrupt to the core. He is incapable of governing the country. He has left it into the hands of his wicked Minister Amin-ul-Saltaneh who is a tyrant, a free-thinker and a usurper. He reviles the prophet and defies the religious, authorities. He drinks wine and abuses the Sayyids. He is a friend of unbelievers and terror to the Musalmans. He is in league with the Shah who is determined to sell bit by bit the whole of Iran to foreigners. He has sold the right of buying and selling tobacco in Iran to a foreign Company. Millions of men and women who smoke tobacco will hereafter be at the mercy of foreigners. Lastly there is the new foreign Bank. It means the complete handing over of the reins of Government to the enemy of Islam. The Shah desires to pacify the people by saying that the tobacco contract is for a limited period. The limited period is, he says, fifty years. This is adding insult to injury. Eussia is not satisfied with his small offers in the North and is bent upon the annexation of Khurasan. The interests of our country are mortgaged to the foreigners from whom he has borrowed money. From his tendency to borrow it looks as if he has made up his mind to auction our provinces to foreigners. Rise, Rise, Rise to the occasion. Oh you dignitaries of Islam join the popular party. Lead them in the right direction. If you fail to do your duty to Islam on this occasion, the land of Islam will fall into the hands of her enemies. All the Ulama are awaiting your decision".

The Sayyid's letter had the desired effect on Mirza Hasan Shirazi who issued an edict forbidding the use and cultivation of tobacco. The Ulama published his *Fattva* and obedience to this divine, decree was so prompt that tobacco was destroyed

wherever it was found. The *hukkas* were broken in the streets and tobacco shops were closed. Even the Shah could not get tobacco for his water-pipe. The Shah was forced to rescind the contract and pay the Company an indemnity of half a million pounds which was advanced to him by the Imperial Bank of Iran.

This naturally brought about a change in the attitude of the Shah towards the Sayyid who did not find it desirable to prolong his stay in Iran and asked permission to return to Europe. The Shah refused it with a certain amount of discourtesy which enraged the Sayyid who then took shelter in the shrine of Shah Abdulazim where he remained for seven months. According to the custom of the country the Shah could not lay hands on him in the shrine. The Sayyid declared his open hostility to the Shah and denounced him in public by his speeches and his writings. He advocated his deposition and gathered round him a large number of followers, prominent among whom were Sheikh Ali of Quazvin, the Kazi of Adliyah, Mirza Aga Khan who fled to Constantinople where he edited a seditious paper 'Akhtar' and sent it for circulation to Iran, and Mirza Eeza of Kirman who ultimately shot Nassiruddin to death.

Nassiruddin being afraid of the anti-Shah propaganda of the Sayyid, in utter violation of the sanctity of the shrine sent a body of five hundred horsemen to drag him out. The Sayyid was confined to bed by illness but in spite of this he was removed by force and conveyed under escort to the Turkish frontier. The inhuman treatment to a learned man of Sayyid **Jamaluddin's type** caused much indignation both among the Mullahs and the admirers of the Sayyid and was one of the immediate causes of the death of the Shah.

The Sayyid went to London where he gave addresses on "The reign of terror in Iran" and wrote violently seditious articles which ultimately found their way into Iran. After a

two-years' stay in London he went to Constantinople where he carried on an effective agitation against the Shah for a period of four years. In 1896 he died of cancer of the lip.

Sayyid Jamaluddin's exile made matters worse. Malcontents voluntarily left the land and attacked the Shah in their speeches and writings from foreign countries.

For instance, Prince Malkam Khan who could not agree with the Shah and his Minister Amin-ul-Saltana ran away to London where he started an Iranian paper 'Quanun' for secret circulation in Iran. In one of the issues he wrote, "The country is in the hands of a few mean and worthless persons. The rights of the State are bartered away to foreigners. The titles and offices are the playthings of a handful of successful knaves. Our army is the laughing stock of the world. Our Princes deserve the pity of beggars. Our Mullas instead of leading the Shah are led by the nose by him. Our towns, each one is a metropolis of dirt. Our roads are worse than animal tracks. Of the laws of the country there is none recorded anywhere".

In another he wrote, "By what law does the Shah sell the rights of our State to foreigners? Are the people of Iran really dead? Have the men of Iran become women? If so, then let women give their husbands a few lessons on manhood".

These writings together with the people's success in their agitation against the Shah's tobacco contract with the British Company made the people bold who began to look upon **the** King as a traitor to their country.

In the year 1896 Nassiruddin Shah was shot dead by Mirza **of** Kirman, one of the staunch followers of Sayyid Jamaluddin.

Unlike his predecessors Nassiruddin was not an out and **out** a monster. In spite of his colossal political blunders which **landed Iran into enormous** difficulties **and** cost **him his** lift,

it cannot be denied that he was a man of good intentions. His foundation of the State College * Darulf unun' at Teheran is a standing monument to his credit. He brought dozens of educational experts from Europe to teach at this College important foreign languages such as English, French, Eussian and German as well as several useful crafts along scientific lines. These experts not only modernised hundreds of their pupils by their successful methods of teaching but they also wrote several important books to suit the needs of the times and got them translated into Iranian.

In more than one way Nassiruddin Shah awakened Iran from her sleep. He had a healthy curiosity about the world. By his travels in Europe he got enamoured of the European civilisation and welcomed European ideas into his country. But in his later life he regretted his progressive tendencies and dissuaded wealthy persons from travelling abroad. He gave as his definition of the ideal Iranian "One who does not know whether Brussels is a city or a cabbage". But his repentance was too late. American and British Missionaries were already teaching in schools open to Iranians of the middle and upper classes. The British and Russians were in possession of economic privileges which brought into the country a flood of Europeans and European ideas.

Muzuffaruddin Shah

Nassiruddin Shah's successor Muzuffaruddin Shah was a constant invalid. His ill health had a depressing influence on him and, lacking in self-reliance, he was reluctant to use the repressive measures of his predecessor to keep in check the growing manifestations of discontent,

, Immediately after his ascension to the throne he was advised by his doctors to visit Europe to try the effects of mineral **waters**. Money was needed for the journey and attempts were **made** to float a loan of ten million pounds for him in London, **bailing to get money from London he negotiated the first**

Russian loan of twenty-two and half million Roubles. This huge sum was lent at the rate of 5 per cent, and was guaranteed by all the Custom receipts with the exception of Farse and the Iranian Gulf. It was repayable in seventy-five years. Moreover, Russia was asked to pay to the Imperial Bank of Irati the sum of half a million pounds which it had advanced to Nassiruddin Shah to pay off the indemnity to the Tobacco Company.

Thus Russia became the sole creditor of Iran and all the Custom houses of Iran were handed over to Belgian Officers who were to run the Customs Department in the interest of Russia for a period of seventy-five years till the loans were paid back with interest. The tariff was revised by the Belgian Officers and a heavy tax was imposed even on necessary articles of food such as meat, bread and butter.

On his return from Europe the Shah thought of another similar trip to Europe and wanted money again. In 1901 he contracted a second loan and as soon as he got the money he set off again for another expensive tour to Europe.

Chapter X

THE YEAR 1901, THE STARTING POINT OF THE ORGANISED REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

The year 1901 marks the starting point of Iran's misery and disaster which led to a wide-spread revolutionary movement in the country. From this period upto the present day the history of Iranians is a record of progress in the face of extraordinary difficulties. Iranians possess an enormous power of endurance. They take a stoic view of life. They face things as they find them. They accept pain and pleasure as a necessary part of life. They suffer with patience; but they always wait and watch. One should not be deceived by their apparent attitude of indifference to life which is usually mistaken for

foolish fatalism. Their endurance is always **accompanied with a** subconscious determination to recover lost ground **when the time comes.** They are great opportunists. They have a **great belief in** their potential vitality and an extraordinary power **of recuperation.** They are usually slow; but their slowness is more **due** to their extreme caution than to their intrinsic lethargy. **They** are slow but sure. Once sure of their ground, they move **at full speed.**

Their success in their attempts to get rid of their unpopular King Nassiruddin Shah held out to them great expectations in their future enterprise. Men were wanted to lead them. When a great movement is taken in hand great men always come forward to lead it.

The Belgian Custom Officers revised the tariff and imposed heavy duties on all imported goods of Iran. This gave a fresh cause of offence to the people. There was a general discontent against the new tariff. The merchants made up their minds to defy the Custom Authorities. They refused to clear their goods at Bushire and telegraphed India to stop the shipment of further goods. The Mujtahids of Kerbela and Najaf wrote a threatening letter to the Shah. They reproached him for handing over his country to foreigners. They made clear to him that his succession to the throne was intolerable.

From the year 1901 to 1906 there was no peace in the country. Big eruptions and mighty changes were in store **for Iran.** Kevolutionary pamphlets and placards were distributed all over the country. Secret societies like Masonic Lodges came into existence. A new impulse moved the people forward. **They were** out for radical changes. The Mullas and **Mujtahids** threw in their lot with the public. National papers condemning **the** conduct of the Shah and his methods of Government **and** clamouring for Self-Government were printed outside **Iran and** **freely** circulated among the people. **The Akhtar in London, the Hablul Matin in Calcutta and Hikmat from Cairo** awakened the people and created a great stir,

Repressive measures were used by the Shah and his favourites which made matters worse and provoked the revolters beyond their restraint. Merchants and Mullahs were monstrously maltreated. They were bastinadoed in public. * Dignitaries, ecclesiastics and men of education in possession of revolutionary writings were arrested and sent to jail. This brought matters to a head and sent a thrill of indignation throughout the country. The cup of the sufferings of the Iranians was full to the brim. But there was no attempt on their part to indulge in any methods of violence. Some of the greatest of their leaders, the foremost and most popular men, were in chains. Yet the people continued the struggle in a cool-headed manner. They suffered and were ready to suffer still more in response to the trumpet call of the country. Their plans were matured. Their goal was fixed. Nothing short of a Constitutional Government could satisfy them.

In the year 1906, some sixteen thousand people of Teheran took refuge or 'bast' as the Iranians call it, in the compound of the British Legation. They refused to move unless the King yielded to their two demands, the granting of a constitution and the dismissal of Ainuddoulah. This method of defying and fighting with the weapon of non-violence is something similar to the Satyagraha of Mr. Gandhi. According to the laws of the country if one takes shelter in a Mosque or a shrine or the house of some important person in the State, as long as he is inside the holy precincts his security is guaranteed. This sort of shelter is called, "bast" in Iranian. The Shah being unable to touch these refugees in the compound of the British Legation, partly through the humiliation which the adoption of this course had caused him and mostly through fear of being further involved into a serious trouble, granted the constitution and dismissed Ainuddoulah.

Chapter XI

THE YEAR 1906 AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT IN IRAN.

By an almost bloodless revolution conducted by non-violence, the constitution was obtained and the centuries old absolutism of the Iranian Monarchs was modified by law. The people learnt the importance of an organised non-violent resistance. They were more determined than ever to set their house in order. They lost no time in framing the rules for elections. In October 1906 Deputies were elected from all the provinces and opened the first Majlis at Teheran. A speech was read from the throne and the powers of the constitution were announced in public. One of the remarkable results of this announcement was the rapid development of journalism.

In 1907 the total number of newspapers printed and published in Iran rose to ninety. Suri-Israfil (the trumpet call), Musavat (the equality), Majlis (the assembly), Fidai-Watan (sacrifice for the country) and Tamaddun (civilisation) were the most important of the national papers of this period. These important organs of different political groups in the country with their vituperative criticisms of the past and suggestive measures for the future kept in check not only the denationalising tendencies of the Shah but also the conduct of the Assembly itself. The constitution was wrung out of Muzufarruddin Shah by a painful struggle. The people were anxious to know how the members of the Majlis were going to work it. The public eye was directed towards the Deputies.- Secret societies still continued to hold their meetings. A noticeable feature of this period was a thorough change in the social out-look of the people. Western ideas began to pour into the country through those patriots who for fear of being arrested in Iran had started national papers, in foreign countries where their movements were free. The 'Akhtar of Prince Malkam in London and Kava of Sayyid Hasan Takizadah were typical advocates of Western[^]tei.

The following translation of a leading article in **Kava** is an example of the general tendency of the young men of **Iran** in favour of Western civilisation.

" Above all else our object will be to¹ promote European civilisation in Iran. To combat fanaticism and to preserve the national feeling and unity of Iran will be our next care. Our language and literature must be purified and safeguarded against the disorders and dangers that threaten them. Freedom, internal and external is our goal. This can be done in three ways:— First, by the adoption and promotion of European civilisation and absolute submission to Europe by assimilating her culture, customs, practices, organisations and arts and sciences without any reservation. Secondly, by a sedulous attention to the preservation and development of the Iranian language and literature. Thirdly, by founding Colleges for the general diffusion of European sciences ".

" Inwardly and outwardly, in body and in spirit, Iran must be Europeanised. The best way in which one can render this sort of service to the country is by the publication in plain Iranian of translations of some of the most important books of the West".

The last suggestion was immediately taken up and under the guidance of Haji Mohmed Hasan Khan Itimadul Saltanah, a society of literary men was formed and a large number of important European books were translated into Iranian.

Among the important newspapers that sprang up in Iran itself may be mentioned Hubulwatan-Minal-Iman, Ihtiyaji and Talkin Nama which more or less harped on the same tune. The whole country was in a state of ferment. Root-and-branch change was the cry of the day.

Literary men changed their course of activities. Poets and prose writers of this period instead of writing verses in praise of State dignitaries or prose works on ethics wrote stirring **national** poems and political pamphlets of a violently **revolutionary nature**.

Chapter XII

SPECIMEN WRITINGS OF THE LITERARY MEN OF THIS PERIOD

Ishki a patriot from Hamadan wrote a political drama which is said to be the first of its kind in the Iranian language. It was twice staged at Teheran. It moved the audience to tears. Ishki was shot to death by some irresponsible reactionaries but his drama exercised a powerful influence in moulding the destiny of his countrymen. Its immediate result was the rapid growth of the youth movement.

The title of the drama is the " Dream of Ishki " or " Strange music of the day of resurrection ". Its principle characters are Khusru-dukht, the daughter of Naoshirawan, Darius, Cyrus, Naoshirawan, Khusru-Perviz, Shirin the Queen of Iran, Zoroaster and Ishki himself. The scene of action is, Madain an important town in ancient Iran which is now in ruins. The play begins with the dream of Ishki who finds himself at Madain. Looking at the frightful condition of Madain which was at one time the great centre of the Sasanian civilisation, Ishki bursts into tears and says:—

" What do the broken doors, the lonely walls and the stately pillars mean ? Is this the great place of the historical glory of Iran ? Is this the cradle of the Sasanian art and civilisation ? It was the pomp, power and great learning of the Iranians that brought this city into importance and it is the weakness, vanity, and ignorance of the Iranians that are responsible for its ruins. O, the tattered palace of Madain, you remind us of **our** past **glory** and put us to shame now. Hold me, my comrades. My heart is failing. My eyes are shedding tears of blood. **What a contrast between** our past **glory and** our present **degraded condition**"

Being overcome by a sense of profound humiliation Ishki falls down on the ground and a girl of stately appearance slowly rises from the grave and speaks in the following strain:—

"This deserted place is not our Iran. This wretched place is not Iran. Where is Iran? Oh! dumb dead creatures of Iran, I am the daughter of Naoshirawan. Your unmanly conduct has made me restless in my grave and brought me out of it. In *my* days this piece of land looked like a paradise. I swear by God our country was not in this pitiable condition. What is wrong with Iran? What are the young men of Iran doing? Oh! crown wearers of Iran where are you? Come and have a look at it. Father, Father, rise from your resting place and look at your country. Men of Iran are all dead. They have no life in them. Iran has become a huge grave-yard. Oh! you unworthy sons of the soil of Iran, Oh! you dreadful specimens of ignorance and stupidity, think of your forefathers. Think of us the women of Iran. Do not bring disgrace upon us".

Here rises Cyrus who adds:—"I cannot raise my head out of shame. I am ashamed to show my face to those kings whom I had taken prisoners in my days. They are making fun of me now. They say, "Oh! you before whom we once stood in chains look at your countrymen. They are all in chains". "

Darius is disturbed in his sleep and he remarks:—"On my death I left half of the world to my descendants. Now it is swallowed up by others. Of my world-conquering men not one is left in a hundred."

Naoshirawan rises from the grave and says:—"Ah! my country which the world used to dread as the land of swordsmen is now the land of cowards."

Here comes Khosrao who says:—"I cannot say whether you are dead or alive. I cannot say whether you are masters or slaves, Oh! my countrymen is this the life that you are living?

Death is better than this life. Your ancestors are ashamed of you. You have become the laughing stock of the world. Our heads were always up in the past. Now, your heads are down. The country is on her death bed. Still you are indifferent."

All of a sudden Shirin appears in mournful costume. She says "Oh the holy land of Iran, the cradle place of Shirin, where is the throne? Where is the crown? Where is the rich jewellery, the proud possession of my husband? Where are our brave soldiers? Where are our world-conquering kings and their wise ministers? I am Shirin the Queen of Iran. You dull-headed descendants of great men. You have lost the prestige of your fore-fathers. You have no sense of shame in you. You have allowed my bones to be trampled upon by our enemies. Kise, Oh ancient kings of Iran, rise. Our country is going out of our hands. Our men have lost interest in their motherland. Let us all make a joint appeal to Zoroaster for help ",

At this suggestion, all the ancient kings of Iran rise from their graves and pray to Zoroaster for help. They all sing in chorus as follows : " O holy Zoroaster, our boat is sinking, come to our help. In our doys not even one span of land was deserted. Now the whole country is in ruins. The land of our glory which we conquered by our swords and built up by our hands, is sunk into insignificance."

In response to their joint appeal, Zoroaster appeals in a white garb with silvery hair hanging loose and touching his waist. He speaks thus:—"I spoke to you on subjects of vital importance I pointed out to you the road leading to righteousness. I told you that good words, good deeds and good thoughts would lead you to happiness. You paid no heed to me. Now you are on the road to ruin. You have disturbed your world-conquering ancestors in their graves. They have every reason to be disgusted with you. You are responsible for the fall of your

country and **the** disgrace you have **brought upon your forefathers**. You* cowards, without drawing the sword, you **fall down** at the sight of your enemies. A serious dispute is going on **in** the West about the possession of Iran. One power says "Iran belongs to me." The other one says "No it is mine." O, holy men of the East, the West is fighting for your countries. Europe has taken Asia to be a morsel that can be swallowed with ease. They have forks and spoons in hand to eat it. They forget that their throats are too small to swallow a mountain mistaken by them for a morsel of food. This mountain cannot go down their throats. Remember those days when the West used to receive its inspiration from the East. The sun rose and rises still from the East. The West is awake because the East is asleep. You cannot be asleep for ever. The East must rise. But when she rises she will be determined to help mankind. Unlike the West she will not rise to drive away men from their native homes and make them miserable ".

His speech is interrupted by the fall from Heaven of an ornamented cradle with a baby waving an Iranian flag in its hands. Pointing out this cradle to the people, Zoroaster remarks "In this cradle lie the future makers of Iran. They shall be the true representatives of these dead men that are ashamed of their present progeny. From this cradle shall arise a few young men who will make the old decrepit Iran, young again. Iran shall never fall and the glories of the land of Cyrus will never fade. The oppressive Ahriman has been overcome. Yazdan will look after you. Trust in him and hope for the best. My blessings are with you. Now I go back to my abode of eternity ".

Ishki rises from his sleep and says "Did I see what I saw, **in a dream**, or was I awake? Our forefathers are depressed and **are** ashamed of us. O, God, come to our help. Fulfill the **promise that** Zoroaster has held out to us. Ishki saw a dream. **Let us realise it through you** ".

Arif Kazwini was another important poet of this period whose works have recently been printed in BerKn. He also wrote in the strain of Ishki. His patriotic poems and speeches which are reported to have produced a marvellous effect on the people of his times, are still read with avid interest.

Dr. Shafak is another literary giant of this period whose attempts at the westernisation of the country although sporadic cannot be ignored. He is at present a Professor of Philosophy at the Danish Sarai Ali Teheran. He is one of the most unassuming workers in the country. I have met him many times and he always talked to me of what his colleagues had done for the cause of his country, but never did he say a word of what he himself has done. While going through the works of Arif Kazwini I came across a striking speech of Dr. Shafak which he had delivered some twenty-five years ago at the Darul-Fanun at Teheran which enabled me to realise the important part he must have played in influencing the attitude of his people towards westernism.

The following is the literal translation of the speech I am referring to:—

" Bear in mind that we are living in the age of advancement. The whole world is going ahead of us. We the Iranians alone are lagging behind. The caravan is gone. We are lost in the desert. Look at the Western people. At what speed are they marching forward. They travel by railway trains and motor cars. They have invented aeroplanes to fly in the sky like eagles. We are contented with our donkeys, mules, camels and horses. It was very good of Professor Brown to have complimented us on the possession of good mules which carried him safe from one part of Iran to the other. It does not mean that we need no railways and no motor cars. We cannot but move with the times. In the West, thought is free. It is circulating freely in all departments of life. Our minds are fettered. We are

where we were five hundred years ago. The West has worked wonders. Their's is the age of discoveries and inventions. They are working day and night to find out new things in the **world**. We are not in a position even to use the new things which they have invented for our good. We are suffering from social ill-health."

"We cannot afford to remain stationary in this state of affairs. We must take measures to improve the condition of our society. There is only one way of doing this. We must break away from the past and accept the European civilisation. I do not mean that we should give up our Orientalism once for all. Let us take what we can from the West without losing our integrity. We must eat food with forks and spoons, but let us not touch pork. Let us change our surroundings and readjust ourselves to altered conditions. We need a change, a change in every walk of our life. In politics we have progressed from an absolute monarchy to the constitutional form of Government. This is not enough. Social and political changes are inseparable. Our social life also needs a thorough change."

"We literary men also need a change in our taste. These are not the days for writing lyric or didactic poetry. We cannot afford to waste our energy in writing poems in praise of Kings and State-dignitaries. Hafiz, Sadi and Omarkhayam were the creatures of their times. They are not wanted in these days. They were great men in their own days. So far as the enrichment of the language is concerned we acknowledge them as our masters. But from the point of view of subject matter we want better things that are urgently needed for the uplift of our society. Yussif Zuleikha of Jami and Khosrao Shirin of Nizami had their days. We must put a stop to this type of literature. We must imitate the West by writing books in prose and poetry on the burning topics of the day. Society is on the move. We must move with the people. Nay, we must go ahead of the times. If I were to write down the names of the authors in

Europe who have written books on modern life, their list would fill volumes. What have we done in this direction? We are still writing poems on the 'Gol' and the 'Bolbol\'"

" There are lots of new things on which one can write profitably. No one has written as yet on the position of woman in society. This is the burning problem of the day. We cannot look with indifference at this lifelong prisoner. We are building up a new Iran. We are going to make it a paradise on Earth. What is the good of this paradise if it has no Huries to move about gracefully? Ghilmans alone will not do. A paradise without Huries is no paradise."

" Service to the country is another topic which modern literary men should take in hand. Look at the number of books that have been written in the West on patriotism. What is our contribution to this new sort of literature that we find in the world? The answer is none. "

In conclusion we should devise means not only to clarify our thoughts but also to change the form of their expression. The language must be simplified. The dignity of the language lies in its simplicity. Verbosity is a waste of time and energy."

These writings show that westernisation in Iran has been going on for the last thirty years unnoticed by the outside world.



Chapter XIII

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF EVENTS LEADING TO MODERNISATION.

In 1907 Muzaffaruddin died and was succeeded by Mohmed Ali Shah. Mohmed Ali Shah was an embodiment of all the vices for which the Kajar Dynasty was notorious. From the very beginning of his career he showed signs of his bitter hatred of the people. Being under the influence of his Eussian Tutor he became the tool of the Russian Government and their agent to destroy the rights of his own people.

He ignored the Majlis; but the masses were burning with indignation and they were bent upon asserting their rights through their representatives. This meant a sort of a Civil War between the King and the people. The Majlis proposed to exercise some of the powers which it had acquired by law, while the Shah and his reactionary Ministers and Courtiers were determined to maintain the prestige of the King by curtailing the powers of the Majlis and reviving the old arbitrary oppressive Kajar ways of Government. He intrigued with Russian Emissaries against his people and was waiting for an opportunity to blow up the national movement. The Deputies of the Majlis were not unaware of his underhand anti-national activities. They were convinced that the Shah looked upon them as his open enemies. But they cared little for what he thought of them. They knew well that the whole country was with them. They asserted their power by introducing the reforms that were urgently needed. They stopped the further loans from Russia and England which they thought were a positive source of danger to the independence and safety of Iran. They discussed ways and means by which they could keep in check the growing extravagance of the Shah and the provoking policy of his favourites. They resolved to raise money in Iran and to start a National Bank in order that their dependence on foreign capital might be lessened.

In 1907 they made the first manifestation of their power by compelling the Shah to dismiss Mons-Naus, a notorious Belgian Custom Officer. The Shah stood in need of money. He appointed Atabic Azam, a mischievous intriguer, as his Prime Minister and deputed him to arrange for a loan from Eussia. The Minister did arrange for a loan but before he could get the money he was shot dead by a young man, Abbas Aqua, of Tabriz, who committed suicide immediately after.

This youtji was a member of the numerous secret societies in Iran and the motive of his heroic deed was to save his country from being betrayed by a clever intriguer who was in his opinion a traitor. The murder of this powerful intriguer was a positive evidence of the fact that there was a large body of men who had sworn to uphold the Constitution at the cost of their lives.

On the 31st of August, 1907, the Anglo-Russian convention had been signed between England and Russia. In September it was made public in Teheran where it created great stir. According to the terms of this convention, the Russians were to confine their activities in the North of Iran, to the region lying to the north of a line passing from Kasr-e-Shirin to Kakh, the point where the Russian, the Iranian and the Afghan frontiers meet; and the British were to stick to the territory south of a line running from Quazik on ^Fthe Iran-Afghan frontier through Birjand and Kerman to Bandar Abbas on the Iranian Gulf. The tract between these two spheres was to be regarded as neutral ground. The independence of Iran was guaranteed by both the powers and no more concessions were to be sought from Iran by either party.

The Iranians did not take a favourable view of this convention. So long as Iran's two mighty neighbours were at loggerheads, it was easy for her to obtain favour from one party or the

other. She could check the advance of one by appealing to **the** other for protection. In theory, Iran's independence was guaranteed by both the powers. But in reality, she was independent only so far and so long as the other powers cared to permit. This was the point of view of the Iranians. No assurance on the part of the British that England was a friend of Iran could make the Iranians forget the wrong, the two powers had done to them by this alliance.

Iran stood in constant fear of the encroachment of her neighbour in the North. The presence of a British army in Khusistan was mistaken by her as an indication of evil intentions. She misunderstood the motives of the British. She thought that England and Russia had made up their differences in order to divide Iran between the two.

A cartoon was published in Teheran depicting an Iranian cat sitting uneasily between a Russian bear and a British lion. "I will pat its head" says the bear to the lion. "I shall strike its tail" says the lion. "I have not been consulted" pleads the cat. This cartoon disseminated fear in the mind of the masses. Their passions were roused. Thousands of people took a solemn oath to die for their country. So menacing was the attitude of the people against the foreigners and the Shah who was supposed to be their agent that the Shah did not know what to do. The press attacked him in the bitterest and the most scornful language. Mahomed Ali Shah lost his nerve, visited the Majlis in State and swore on the Koran to be faithful to the Assembly. But he never meant to keep his pledge. He was determined to destroy the Majlis. A Civil War was the result. The Shah's forces consisted of the Cossack Brigade—a body of about 1200 Iranians commanded by Russian Officers—and an undisciplined organisation made up of his servants, grooms and muleteers. They started an agitation against the Majlis. But the Shah's army had fallen into such disrepute that nobody took **notice** of

its presence in the centre of Teheran. The Majlis held its sessions as usual. The approaches and entrances were guarded by armed volunteers. People from all classes rushed to the spot to defend their constitutional representatives against the threatened attack of the Shah.

The inevitable happened. The Cossacks surrounded the Parliament House from all sides. After a few hours' serious fight a truce was made according to which the Shah sent to the Majlis a sealed oath to obey the Constitution. The public had no faith in his oaths. A serious attempt was made to assassinate him, but he escaped injury from the bomb which was thrown at him. In 1909 he was formally deposed and his son Sultan Ahmed Shah was proclaimed his successor. Sultan Ahmed being a minor, Azadulmulk the venerable head of the Kajir family was declared Eegent.

In 1909, the Majlis started its work with an empty treasury, a large foreign debt and a rapidly growing deficit. The general administration was rotten from top to bottom. Iran had no credit either abroad or with her own people. Extraordinary courage was needed to extricate the country from the baneful effect of misadministration. The Majlis devised a new plan to set matters right. In 1911 they invited Mr. Morgan Shuster, a finance expert from America, to set their finances in order. Mr. Shuster was appointed the General Treasurer of Iran with full control over the financial operations and fiscal affairs of the country.

When he took charge he noticed that Iran had no budget. She was divided into a number of provinces each having its capital city. At each of these cities there was supposed to be a Financial Agent or a Tax Collector. He collected taxes and after deducting the expenses incident to collection and his **own** remuneration he remitted them to the Minister of Finance.

He kept the accounts in such a clumsy way that he alone could understand what he had written. The Minister of Finance used to draw drafts on these Tax Collectors whenever he stood in need of money. Salaries to Government servants were paid in the form of these drafts which were sold in the market at half or even one-fourth of their face value.

Mr. Shuster introduced modern methods of budgeting and auditing the accounts. He put a stop to the corrupt practices of the officials. He revised the taxes and used strict measures to recover them particularly from those magnates who were in the habit of evading them. But before he could present to the Majlis a balanced budget, the Russians whose commercial interests were affected by Shuster's revision of taxation sent an ultimatum to the Majlis, demanding the dismissal of Shuster and a promise not to engage a foreigner in the Iranian State Service without the previous consent of the Russians and the British Legations. The Majlis disregarded the ultimatum. This irritated the Russians who obstructed the activities of the Majlis at every step. The Deputies of the Majlis were not allowed even to carry on non-political educational reforms in the country without the consent of these powers.

Every appointment, every change of Government, every step in politics was subject to the consent of the Russian Legation. This attitude of the foreigners was intolerable. The Iranians looked upon this undue interference in their State affairs as a menace to their independence which was repeatedly guaranteed by foreigners. They could not make up their mind to dismiss Shuster **who** they felt was indispensable to the country. They treated Russia's threat in this matter with indifference. Russia took a serious view of this defiance and moved an army into the helpless **country** to show to the Iranians that she was determined **to carry out her point at** any cost. The Majlis had no choice. **The country was not prepared for a war. Shuster was peremptorily**

dismissed. Moreover, Iranians had to submit to the humiliating conditions of the Anglo-Russian demand according to which they were not allowed to appoint any foreigner in State Service without the consent of Russia and England.

This humiliation was the first of a series of blows which the foreigners have struck at the independence of Iran. The Regent was a tool in their hands. Liberal leaders were imprisoned or exiled. Political clubs were dissolved. The result was that the politicians who ruled in Teheran during this interval lost all self-respect and feeling of independence.

In 1914 a few days after the coronation of Ahmed Shah the World War broke out. In 1915 the Majlis had a heated discussion over the situation, They had very nearly decided to throw in their lot with Germany and Austria. But before they came to a definite conclusion, the Russian army had already advanced to Teheran. This sudden move bewildered the Iranians and the Majlis regime came to a standstill. The British and the Russians were free to move and Iran, without taking part in the War, became a manoeuvring ground for the conflicting powers. The defenceless Iran was occupied by Russian, English and Turkish troops. The North-west became a theatre of war between the Russians and Turks, the North-east was in Russian hands and the South was occupied by the English. The Russians organised the Russo-Iranian Cossack Brigade in the North and Sir Percy Sykes organised the South Iranian Rifles in the South.

In 1918 when the Russian army collapsed, the English took occasion to occupy Northern Iran as well, in order to drive back the German army towards the Caucasus. A patriotic Iranian Fraternity called 'Ittihadul-Islam' was organised by Kuchik Khan, a tribal Chief. With the watchword ⁱ Iran for Iranians • they resisted the British in the North and drove them to the South,

The South Iranian Rifles which were tolerated during the war-time as a matter of necessity were now looked upon as a menace to Iranian independence. A note was despatched to the authorities expressing the hope that the British would withdraw their troops from the South. But this had no effect.

In 1919 Sir Percy Cox came to Teheran as British Minister. He negotiated the Anglo-Iranian convention for the tutelage of Iran by the British. According to the terms of this convention, England was to obtain full control of Iran and administer the country for her. Though the independence and integrity of the country were guaranteed, the Iranians looked upon this as a dangerous instrument to convert Iran into a semi-autonomous part of the British Empire. Popular feeling was intensely against it and Vossuqul-Daulah the Prime Minister and the principal negotiator of the convention being afraid of presenting the instrument to the Majlis for rectification, put off the evil day by governing without a Parliament as long as he possibly could.

In 1920 his treacherous deed was exposed. To escape the fury of the Majlis he resigned his post and fled to Europe for safety. The Majlis repudiated the convention and dismissed the British Military Officers and Financial Advisers. The British prestige was at stake. The suspicions regarding the attitude of the British towards the Iranians that were created by the Anglo-Russian Alliance of 1907 were confirmed. Their growing influence in the country was looked upon as an imminent danger to Iran.

In 1920 Sipahdar Azam, a prototype of Vossuqul-Daulah, took up the premiership and entered into protracted negotiation with the Soviet Government. The purpose of his negotiation was to substitute Russian for the British for the control of the country. The Soviet Government was to run the administration

of Iran on behalf of Iran and in return for this privilege the Russians had to give up the prewar concessions including the Russian Bank.

Such a convention evidently could not be rectified by the Majlis, the members of which had a greater sense of responsibility than the corrupt Ministers.

These dignitaries of State who were always ready to sell their country to satisfy their greed for money did not enjoy the confidence of the Majlis. Their corruption called for strong reactionary measures. Ever since the reign of Nassiruddin Shah when Iran had entered into diplomatic relations with the out-side world for the first time, the Iranian Ministers had been retaining their offices by intrigues. They had grown into a professional class of unscrupulous officers who were used by foreigners as instruments for carrying out their aggressive policy in Iran. The Constitution of 1906 was meant to be a check on their anti-national activities. But they did not change their habits. Instead of facilitating the smooth working of the constitution they put every possible obstacle in its way. One Minister was dismissed and another was appointed in his place. But the second one always proved to be more dangerous than the first one.. If Vossuqul-Daulah's fault was to sell country to Englishmen, his successor did everything in his power to sell it to the Russians.

But what was usually lost sight of in the past was watched with care now. The press had grown powerful. The public had begun to take interest in politics. There was a large body of selfless workers who were ready to sacrifice their time, money and energy for the good of their country. The whole country was astir.

Chapter XIV

THE YEAR 1921 AND THE APPEARANCE OF REZA SHAH ON THE SCENE.

In the year 1921 race pride, patriotism and the spread of the nationalistic ideas stirred the Iranians to their very souls. 'Iran for Iranians' became the watchword of the people. Discontent and unrest were rampant. The country was ablaze. Even the officers of the army were not satisfied with their lot.

There was a great dynamic force of nationalism in the country. An honest straightforward leader was wanted to use it in the right direction. Bayyid Ziyauddin, editor of Teheran news paper 'Bad' supplied the need. A prototype of Bayyid Jamaluddin, an out and out patriot untouched by foreign intrigues and unconnected with the rotten aristocracy which had misgoverned the country for years, Ziyauddin was the best fitted man for the task.

We gathered round him a group of enthusiasts who were determined to reform and reinvigorate the country at any cost. They put their heads together and come to the conclusion that the only way in which they could help their country was to take the Government of the country into their own hands. This was not an easy matter. But where there is a will there is a way. An unforeseen event turned the tide in their favour.

The Bolsheviks started a disturbance in Azerbaijan. The Cossack division, the only regular force of about twenty-five hundred men that Iran could boast of, was despatched against them. The Cossacks were badly defeated. Their sudden collapse brought discredit upon their officers. Reza Khan Kulli, an army officer stationed at Kazvin, with the help of his colleagues Masaud khan and Kasim **Khan**, expelled all Russian **Officers who were suspected of partiality to the Bolsheviks and**

reorganised the division as a pure Iranian force. The absence of Russian Officers from the army gave Ziyaaddin an opportunity to carry on a detailed communication with Reza Khan Kulli and his colleagues and discuss the possibilities of their marching to Teheran and taking over the Government of the country by force. Reza Khan and his colleagues seeing every chance of success, welcomed the offer and immediately marched on Teheran.

On the night of February 20 of 1921 they entered the city by the Kazvin Gate and before dawn they occupied the Government Offices without any opposition from the Shah who was absolutely helpless. Sayyid Ziyaaddin became Prime Minister, Masaud Khan the War Minister, Kasim Khan the Governor of Teheran and Reza Khan the Commander of the army.

This dramatic change of Government was the turning point in the history of Iran. The year 1921 marked the triumph of the people. It was the people's reign in the real sense of the word. The Prime Minister, the Governor of Teheran and the Commander of the army were patriots of the first order. They commanded the full confidence of the people.

Reza Khan's original home was in Mazenderan. He started his career as a well disciplined soldier. By industry, ability and enterprise rose to the rank of a Military Officer. He loved his soldiers and they loved him in return. An Iranian soldier is not a fighting machine. He has got his likes and dislikes. He is hardy, active, brave and amenable to discipline and always ready to follow his officers if he can only trust them. In the case of Reza Khan, his men had implicit faith in him. He could easily foresee that with a welltrained army of twenty-five hundred men of the type he possessed, he could work wonders. He saw that there was no order in the country. There was respect for authority, for Mullas and for money but

none whatsoever for law. No reforms could be carried out without maintaining law. No law could be established without a powerful army; and no army could be kept together without food, clothing and equipment.

He had built up a well-drilled army. But it was not paid regularly and adequately. The army was his personal creation. He looked upon it with affection and pride. He considered it the first essential instrument in the unification, nationalisation and reconstruction of the country. His first care therefore was to find money for his army. But the Treasury was empty. This did not discourage him in the least. A tall man with a powerful physique and gifted with a strong will and robust common sense, with unusual powers of decision and leadership, Reza Khan had certain definite ideas of his powers. In addition to his duties as the Commander of the Army, he made himself an Ex-officio Member of the Cabinet.

With an empty treasury and no chances of borrowing money either from Russia or England Ziyaaddin did not know how to meet the urgent demands of Reza Khan who wanted money not only for the proper equipment of his standing army but also for the recruitment of fresh men. In the immediate emergency Reza Khan urged Ziyaaddin to order the arrest of some of the important property holders in Iran and confiscate their property. At first he hesitated but ultimately he issued the necessary orders and Reza Khan proceeded to execute them. A large number of wealthy men were arrested and sent to jail. Even the direct cousins of the Shah were not spared. Their properties were seized and money was obtained in one way or the other.

This was a purely socialistic move. But since the object of getting money was to maintain peace and order in the country, the end justified the means. Besides, the victims were

mostly those who had made money during the world-wide war by intriguing with the foreigners against the interests of their country. This was a case of retributive justice.

This dramatic demonstration of power made the task of tax collection extremely easy and Reza Khan was put in charge of it. Thus with funds made available for the immediate equipment of the army and the power to raise more money when needed, Reza Khan began the reorganisation of the army which in the words of a patriotic poet had been "The laughing stock of the world".

Ziyaaddin was no less anxious to launch his scheme of reforms. He overhauled the Government machinery by getting rid of the corrupt men and replacing them by honest ones. This was not enough. The machinery did not run smoothly. It had a serious defect in its mechanism. He honestly believed that foreign experts alone could set it right. He appealed to the British for help. But they had built their policy upon the rock of the convention and nothing short of the full ratification of the Anglo-Iranian Treaty could induce them to interfere.

The Russians he could not approach. For, they had their own axe to grind. He cast his eyes elsewhere. But his career as Prime Minister came to an abrupt end and he could not settle anything. He had incurred the displeasure of the young Shah by arresting his cousins and confiscating their property. The aristocrats had lost all their power and prestige under his regime **and** were waiting for an opportunity to strike blow for blow. He had not the driving force of Reza Khan. He became nervous and could not carry on the bold policy with which he had started his career as a Minister. Reza Khan forced him to resign. He constituted a new Cabinet with himself as the **Minister** of War **and** Quiwanul-Saltaneh as Prime Minister.

Chapter XV

REZA KHAN'S DICTATORSHIP.

A Military Dictator with a magnetic personality, undaunted courage and dynamic energy, Keza Khan now became a tower of strength. He was the uncrowned king of the country. He could appoint and dismiss Minister at will. He increased his fighting force from twenty-five hundred to forty thousand well-disciplined troops. With a formidable force at his disposal he could do what he liked. No one could defy him. The way **for** his activities was open.

His first care was to reconstruct his country, to make it prosperous, powerful and independent of foreign intervention. He had a well-equipped army. But he could not depend for ever on socialistic methods to obtain money for its maintenance. The finances of the country were in disorder. An expert was needed to set everything right. Mr. A. C. Millspaugh, an American Finance, expert was appointed to reorganise the fiscal system of Iran.

In September 1922 Mr. Millspaugh took charge as the Administrator General of the Finances of Iran. His powers were unrestricted. On his arrival in Iran, one of the newspapers wrote " You are the last doctor called to the death-bed of a sick person. If you fail, the patient will die. If you succeed the patient will live. I do not applaud your arrival. I shall applaud if you succeed."

According to the diagnosis of this last doctor, the patient enjoyed a fair prospect of life. It was a case of arrested development with complications. " The complications" he said "**are** many and some of them are of a serious **nature**; but **they** **do not** indicate **any** necessity **for** a **major operation** or a

diplomatic message. Iran seems likely not merely to live but to grow healthy and vigorous if left alone on a simple nourishing financial diet with active economic exercise in the open air."

When Mr. Millspaugh asked for the old budget, he was told that there was no regular budget in the country. Shuster had tried but before he could conclude his investigations, his dismissal was forced on Iran.

The Iranian Government was almost ignorant of what was going on in the country. Belgians were running the Customs and the Postal Departments. The Anglo-Indian Company was running the telegraphs. Swedes were directing the police. French doctors were in charge of the Pasteur Institute. French professors were installed in the Ministry of Justice to codify laws and run the Law School. The Treasury was empty as usual. The salaries of Government servants were in arrears from one to eight months. School teachers were unpaid and were threatening to strike. About fifty thousand pensioners who had remained unpaid for months were anxiously awaiting payment.

To meet the demands which called for immediate action, Mr. Millspaugh borrowed four million Tumans from the Imperial Bank of Iran and set to work. But his task was not an easy one. The country was still undeveloped. The social and economic conditions were in many respects primitive. Might was right. The poor paid the taxes and the rich invariably evaded payment. There was no order in the country anywhere. There was no justification for foreign interference. The Iranians, in his opinion, were quite capable of running the administration by themselves. But as long as Government was incapable of maintaining Law and Order according to modern standards, there was no hope, in his opinion, for the solvency, prosperity and progress of Iran.

Mr. Millspaugh explained the situation to Reza Shah, **who** assured Millspaugh of his support and full co-operation and asked him to carry on with his work in right earnest. Reza Shah concentrated his attention on the maintenance of law and order in the country and Millspaugh took to the overhauling of the administrative machinery.

His first care was to stop the visible leaks. He dismissed outright all those superfluous and corrupt officials in the State who had either bought their positions in the open market or got them by virtue of being the relatives or friends of some powerful personage. This was not the only sort of evil. A majority of the employees were underpaid. Tax Collectors and Inspectors were paid as low as six Tumans a month, which in Indian money is equivalent to nine Rupees. They could not possibly live on these miserably low salaries and honesty could not be expected of them. They made money by bribes and other illegitimate practices and swindling became an art.

Corruption in Iran, in the opinion of Millspaugh, was more due to the political and administrative immaturity of the country than to any inherent defects in the Iranian character.^{si} When laws were not enforced or did not exist; when Ministers and Governors were compelled to buy in the open market their tenure of office with administrative powers; when the salaries of employees handling public money were below a living wage; when Government had been thrown into chaos by war, it was not surprising that corruption should have appeared in Iran."

He doubled and in certain cases trebled the salaries of employees according to efficiency. He introduced methods **of** control in the administration which were sadly lacking before. This improved the general tone of the administrative machinery which now began to run smoothly and Mr. Millspaugh **could make the following** remarks about it:—

"The condition of Iranian Finances does not constitute any *ipso facto* condemnation of Iranian capacity. There is abundant financial ability among the Iranians. There were and are still numerous Iranians who not only know as well as we do what reform measures should be adopted, but also have the requisite energy, courage and will to undertake the task. Financial disorders appear in all countries. Finance as I see it, is not an exact science. Western nations have all had their financial troubles and have learned by experience. Iran has had no time to establish an administratively efficient political organisation. The war and the subsequent economic depression have aggravated the natural effects of maladministration. When the country was just getting on its feet and taking breath preparatory to a slow economic recovery, evidences of business depression were everywhere. Some of the most famous of the pre-war banking firms and merchants were bankrupt. Once wealthy land-owners were insolvent. Once flourishing industries had languished. There was lack of confidence everywhere. Hardly a city, town or village in the country showed any evidence of growth. Under such circumstances it was surprising that the system of responsible Government was working as well as it did and the absence of revolutionary or Bolshevistic tendencies at such a time constitutes a tribute to the inherent stability of the Iranian."

After stopping the leakage in the administration, Mr. Millspaugh began to effect improvement in the system of Taxation. The taxes were, most of them, inelastic. A large part of the direct taxes was paid not in cash but in kind. For want of transport facilities, wheat, barley, straw, rice or other products collected as taxes could not easily be converted into cash. Besides, they were never collected in full. Exemptions and reductions were made on the strength of the *farmaria* of the Shah in favour of his friends or relatives. The Collectors frequently gave personal receipts to the tax-payers and the revenue instead

of being remitted to the centre Government went into their pockets. The Treasury being always empty salaries or pensions were generally paid in kind and by means of orders issued directly against the Tax Collectors.

When Mr. Shuster was appointed the financial adviser to Iran a ludicrous requisition was made by the Minister of the Court for the purchase of oil for the Royal camels and straw **for** His Majesty's automobile service. "This was too much for my official gravity" said Mr. Shuster, "Only in Iran one would see the Government furnishing oil for camels and straw for automobiles." The demands were however found to be perfectly serious, for, a certain kind of oil is rubbed on the camels to keep their skins soft and the employees of the Royal garage received pensions payable in straw.

Mr. Millspaugh brought about the necessary changes in **the** system and the methods of collection and Reza Khan contributed the necessary authority and force for the carrying **out of this** new economic programme.

Thus in 1925, in spite of the growing demands of **the** Military Department which was receiving the personal attention of Reza Khan and the general increase in the salaries of the employees, Mr. Millspaugh was able to show a balanced **budget for** the first time in the history of Iran.

The Earl of Balfour in the House of Lords is reported to have said on May 19, 1925; "The information that I have, indicates that Iranian Finances are in a more favourable condition than were those of many more powerful States. **Iran has practically made her budget meet.** The position is in no small measure due to the efforts of the American Financial Advisers whom Iran has called into her Councils. Some American critics seem to think that England was behaving

or desired to behave in a manner towards Iran which would interfere with the independence of that country. The critics are ill-informed on the subject of Iran and on the subject of British intentions in regard to that country. The British Government has had one policy in view. " We desired to see Iran which was independent, which was free and which we could treat as a neighbour on equal terms and whose efficiency, civilisation and power we justly regarded as security for the general position in the East so far as our interests were concerned. That view is still maintained. We desired the independence of Iran. We desired the prosperity of Iran and we rejoice that its independence is secured and its prosperity is increasing."

It is true that the credit of putting the Finances of Iran on a sound basis goes solely to the American Financial Mission but one cannot ignore the anxiety and ability of Iranians themselves to co-operate with the Mission in lightening their hard task. " One of the most encouraging factors" says Millspaugh, " was that the Iranians clearly recognised the existing evils as evils and wanted these evils to be removed ".

"The Iranians " says he, "are by character neither lazy nor sluggish. When circumstances permit, they are not only intelligent but also quick, energetic and industrious. When an Iranian labourer is once put on a job, he works hard. The Iranian employees in the Financial Administration compare favourably in faithfulness, devotion to duty and steady application to their tasks with the best Government employees in any Western country. They have much to learn of method but of industriousness and ambition they show no lack. They willingly work overtime and forfeit their leaves of absence."

The American Mission came to sell their ideas. It is to the standing credit of the Iranians that they adopted the new Western methods and made them their own. To-day there is

not a single foreigner in the Finance Department. Yet, it is working wonderfully well. The late Mr. Daver, the Minister of Finance, was acknowledged by almost all the members of foreign legations in Iran as a financial genius. The present progress in Iran cannot be said to be wholly imported. All the words of Mr. Millspaugh, "It is not an exotic product fed by imitateness and passing whims". Iran has always invited foreigners to give her their expert advice. This does not indicate a confession of political insubordination or incapacity for independent work. It is a mere matter of receiving a friendly advice in a way in which one University in Europe invites for lectures the Professors of another University.

Chapter XVI

REZA SHAH'S RECONSTRUCTION WORK FROM 1921 TO 1925.

Mr. Millspaugh's four years of strenuous work in the field of financial reforms coincided with the great years of Reza Shah's activities in bringing about the unification of Iran. .

The defensive forces at his command consisted of the army, the police and the *Amnieh* or road guard. The *Amnieh* was inefficient and corrupt to the core. Instead of making the communication safe they usually made common cause with the robbers and rendered travelling difficult and commerce insecure. Things were so bad that motor lorries carrying goods were stopped on the road by force. Goods were removed and duly signed receipts acknowledging the goods robbed, were passed on to the chauffeurs in order to assure the owners of the goods that their loss was not due to the dishonesty of the chauffeurs.

The police force which was still under Swedish Officers was **not bad** but was not up to the modern standard. Reza Shah's **first care** was **to** remodel these two forces on modern lines.

Within the space of two years he **thoroughly overhauled them** and they acquired a discipline and effectiveness which Iran had not seen for centuries. One can walk in the country now **through** the loneliest passes with money jingling in one's pockets **without** the least fear of being robbed on the road. In the cities one seldom hears of theft or even pilfering.

With regard to the army, by 1923 it had grown into a powerful force. It was divided into five armies and one independent brigade and distributed in the country in the following mannner:—The central army was stationed in Teheran. It consisted of two brigades of infantry, one brigade of cavalry and one brigade of artillery. The North-west army had its head-quarters in Tabriz. It consisted of one brigade of infantry, one brigade of cavalry, one regiment of artillery and one company of engineers. The Western army had its head-quarters in Kermanshah. Its strength was more or less the same. The Southern army had its head-quarters in Shiraz and was composed of four mixed brigades stationed in Shiraz, Ispahan, Kerman and Khusistan and one independent battalion stationed **at** Bushire. The Eastern army had its head-quarters in Masnahad and was composed of several brigades in different parts of the province of Khurasan. The independent brigade of the North was stationed in Gilan.

With this formidable force spread all over the country with its head-quarters at strategical points and an additional force at the Capital under his pergonal care, he took up the unification of the country which was a preliminary step to the consolidation of his power.

His first achievement in this direction was the restoration of authority and order in the North. He subdued Kuchak Khan **who** had grown much too powerful and brought the **Iranian Azerbaijan under the control of the Central Government.** His

Military operations in this campaign involved no fighting. His generalship was enough to overawe the turbulent people of the North who acclaimed him as a conqueror.

He proceeded next to the disarming of the militant tribe residing on the border lines of Iran. The Kurds, the Lurs, the Bakhtiaris, the Quashkaees and other warlike people nomadic or semi-nomadic had long enjoyed an almost undisputed independence under their own chiefs. They paid taxes only in name. What little was paid usually went to their hereditary leaders. It never reached Teheran. Within one year with little or no fighting he brought about the complete disarmament of them all and converted the lawless people into law abiding citizens.

In October 1923, the Government of Musherul-Dawleh fell. No strong-willed leader was coming forward to take up his place. The task of the Prime Minister was not an easy one. No Prime Minister could stand the strain of the office for more than a year. When no one was ready to take up this responsible job fraught with danger, Reza Shah volunteered to become the Prime Minister. His appointment was welcomed by everybody, for he possessed, not only the devotion of his army but also the confidence of the people. He was the natural rallying point of nationalism, a logical leader and the best hope of the country.

Immediately after his acceptance of the Premiership, in addition to his holding the two important offices of War Minister and Commander of the Army, the unsettled state of affairs in Khusistan attracted his attention. The Arabs of Khusistan had enjoyed independence for decades. The old practice of appointing Governors from Teheran to rule this province had somehow or other been given up by the Central Government. The discovery of oil-fields and the working of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company had made the province tremendously

rich. In all Arabia, Mesopotemia **and Iran, from the Bed Sea to the** Caspian, there was no Sovereign or Prince so rich as the Sheikh Quazal of Mohammerah. He had been watching Reza Khan's climb to power with apprehension. The disarmament of **the** powerful Lurs and Bakhtiaris had alarmed him. Throughout the year 1923 and the beginning of 1924 he was restless. He tried to bribe some of the influential members of the Majlis to work against Reza Khan, but he did not succeed. He instigated the neighbouring tribes to fight for their freedom. He supplied the Bakhtiaris and the Quashkaees with men, money and arms, and ammunition. The Bakhtiaris did not relish Reza Khan's plans of wholesale disarmament of the tribes and by the end of the year 1924, a serious revolt from the South was expected.

Some of the Iranians are inclined to believe that the Sheikh was incited to revolt by the British. Nothing could be more absurd than this. Throughout Reza Khan's steady climb to power the British have maintained the most friendly relations with the rising man. Their policy has always been to see Iran prosperous and independent. Besides if the British had a desire to turn Khusistan into a British protected state they could have done so much earlier. They had several opportunities. The British made no attempt to detach Khusistan from Iran at the time when the Iranians were not in a position to resist. It looks least likely that they should have thought of doing so, by setting up the Sheik against the powerful Reza Khan under much more difficult conditions.

It is very likely that being on friendly terms with the British, the Sheikh may have expected British protection in the hour of need. This may have been the foundation for the rumours that the British were likely to oppose Reza Khan's interference with the Sheikh. He paid no heed to these rumours, issued orders for a general mobilisation at the Khusistan frontier **and** he himself left for Shiraz from where he proposed to **advance in** the Sheikh's country.

The report of the Shah's march to Shiraz struck the Sheikh with terror. Without any thought of provocation he despatched a telegram to Beza Shah apologising for his misconduct and acknowledging the authority of the Central Government.

Keza Khan telegraphed him in return that his surrender by telegram could not be accepted. He left for Bushire from where he embarked on the gunboat Pahlavi and proceeded to the Sheikh's country. When he arrived at Nasery, he was surprised to find that the terror-stricken followers of the Sheikh, instead of offering opposition had illuminated the town in his honour. The Sheikh and his sons and a large number of Bakhtiari rebel chiefs came in person and submitted to his authority. Their surrender was accepted, a Provincial Governor was appointed for Khusistan and a permanent force was kept to maintain order. Moreover instructions were issued to the American Financial Mission not only to collect the current taxes but also to recover from the Sheikh the arrears which amounted to half a million Tomans.

The subjugation of the powerful Sheikh of MohmmERAH without the least possible resistance from him was a great triumph in the military career of Keza Shah. It was a great victory and had a great effect all over the country.

On his return to Teheran by way of Bagdad Beza Khan halted at Kerbela and made a pilgrimage to the holy Shrines of the Martyrs. It is said that on this memorable occasion of his visit to Kerbela, the Iranian residents of Iraq in their excess of enthusiasm to give him the warmest welcome brought a large number of sheep and slaughtered them one by one at every step Reza Khan took from his entrance into the town to the holy Shrines of the Imams. One of the most astonishing features of this dramatic reception was the queer behaviour of an Iranian who with a knife in hand had brought his two sons to be slaughtered along with the sheep in honour of the guest. "Stop,

Stop", said **Reza Khan**, "**Do** not sacrifice **your** sons **for** me. Reserve them for a greater sacrifice. Let them grow with a resolve to serve their country. This is what is expected of everyone of you."

Such was the height to which Reza Khan had risen in the estimation of his people. His extraordinary talent, his great organising capacity*, his enthusiasm to see his country prosperous and independent and his uninterrupted success in his attempts in this direction had made him the dominant figure in the Iranian Cabinet. His word had become law.

On his return from Kerbela, it is said crowds of people used to wait at the gate of his residence in order to catch a glimpse of their national hero who had saved their country from ruin. In December 1924; he was the only man to whom the country looked up for guidance. He had overshadowed every other personality in public life.

In addition to his being a great Military genius he was a shrewd and profound statesman. He was not unaware of the colossal changes that were gradually europeanising Turkey, the neighbouring country of his co-religionists. He was watching with interest and was probably making notes of the eventful steps of Turkey towards westernisation. His goal was very much the same. He was the prototype of Mustafa Kamal but his methods were different from his. He did not believe in haste and liked to move with caution. Unlike Mustafa Kamal he did not want to take long but rather short and well-measured steps. He was equally keen on the renaissance movement. But he did not want it to begin from the top. He stirred up the nationalistic sentiments of the people and waited for the things to take their own course. His views on Europeanisation were slightly different. He was not **in** favour of the wholesale Europeanisation of his country. His ambition was **to graft**

westernism on the old Iranian culture. He wanted his people to keep fully abreast of the times but he did not want them to lose their integrity and forget their past.

In 1924 there was a popular movement in Iran for the establishment of a Republic. This is exactly what Reza Khan was anxiously looking for. The remarkable progress that the resurgent nationalistic movement had made in Turkey was not unknown to him. The prospects of his being the President of the Republic were certain.

Yet with the astuteness of a statesman of high order he waited and watched. He declined to express his own views on the point. The press of Teheran became vociferously anti-monarchical. The national, the revolutionary, the liberal, the progressive and the anti-dynastic groups all clamoured for a Republic. Telegrams advocating a Republic poured in from the provinces. Demonstrations were made by the closing of Government Offices and the refusal of the employees to go to work. Addresses were presented to Reza Shah urging him to expedite the movement. But still Reza Khan was reluctant to take the lead.

He knew that the time was not ripe for it. With all the public demonstrations that were made in favour of a Republic he still foresaw the danger. The Mullahs or religious chiefs in Iran still exercised a large measure of power in the country. In matters of social and political reforms they were hopelessly reactionary. Mudarres, their leader in the Majlis was a strong advocate of their cause. As long as this powerful reactionary element was present in the country, the chances for the success of the revolutionary scheme were practically nil.

However, the movement gathered momentum. A day or two after the assembly of the Majlis an urgent meeting of the Ministers and Ex-Ministers was called to discuss the **matter in**

right earnest. They decided in favour of the Republic and requested the Prime Minister to declare it. Reza Khan still hesitated to take the necessary action.

In the same year the Turkish Parliament had taken the revolutionary action of abolishing the Ottoman Caliphate and of disestablishing the orthodox Islamic faith in Turkey. Although Turkey represented the Sunnie sect of Islam and Iran the Shia, and there were many important points of difference between the two, still Muslim divines in Iran were alarmed at the news. They took the sweeping changes in Turkey as a danger signal and apprehended a similar attack on Islam by an Iranian Republic. Consequently they summoned all the forces at their command and carried on a systematic campaign against the movement. Almost all the Mullahs of Iran met together at the holy city of Kum and made vigorous efforts to influence the mobs to bring pressure on the Majlis.

This was not a new thing to Reza Khan. He had foreseen it long long ago and had already decided what to do in the matter. He moved with caution and displayed a great pliancy by visiting the holy city of Kum to consult the dignitaries of the Shia 'faith in the matter. He tried to bring them round but they could not be won over. Reza Khan yielded to their demand and on his return to Teheran issued a proclamation declaring that the establishment of a Republic was contrary to Islamic faith.

The extraordinary latitude given to the Mullahs on this occasion was not an acknowledgement of defeat. It was a clever stroke of statesmanship. Prudence is a striking feature in the career of Reza Khan. It is a national characteristic of the Iranians in general. They always look before they leap. Their motto is 'wait and watch'. When they know for certain that opposition is of no avail they immediately yield. But when

they yield, they do not yield for ever. They are always on the look out for an opportunity to recuperate their energies, and put up a fight with a redoubled vigour.

To all appearance the clergy won the victory. But their triumph was temporary. It was a truce between the forces of reaction and the inevitable forces of progress. Reza Khan was not unaware of the blighting influence the reactionary Mullahs had exercised on the country for years. He knew very well that they were a persistent stumbling block in the path of reform. But exigency required of him to keep quiet and leave them where they were.

A few months after this incident, a report was received in Teheran that the Turkomans of Astrabad had invaded Mazendran and Khorasan. This gave him another opportunity to exhibit his valour. He rushed with his high spirited army against the invaders. With a very little resistance he arrested the ring-leaders. He disarmed them all and subjected them to the Central Authority. The remaking of Iran into a centralised orderly state was now complete. There was no fear of any more uprisings of the tribes.

In the beginning of 1925 Reza Khan returned to Teheran with triumph. His popularity was at its zenith. He was applauded everywhere and all the representatives of the various political groups that had sprung up by this time looked upon him as the only leader that the country needed. By using all the available means and the resources in his power to bring about the unification of Iran, Reza Khan had shown to the people that he had a greater sense of responsibility than the legitimate heir of a century and a half rule of the Kajar Dynasty. Throughout this epic period of Reza Khan, Ahmed Shah was mostly out of Iran and the authority of the Crown was represented by his younger brother the Crown Prince, a youth of great personal charm but no administrative ability.

By* the end of 1925 the question of the monarchy, particularly the question of the position of Reza Khan Pahlavi, became acute. The Majlis did not think much of Ahmed Shah or the Crown Prince. The Kajar Dynasty was abolished and Reza Khan was invested with the Headship of the State. The Crown Prince was escorted with his family to the frontier and from there he was sent with a petty allowance to meet his brother **in** France.

On December 14, impressed more than ever by Reza Khan's constructive genius and his extraordinary anxiety to remodel his country on modern lines, the Majlis proclaimed him Sovereign of Iran, as the first of the Dynasty of Pahlavi with the right of succession in the male line.

This is a short summary of the events that have conspired to bring into prominence the versatile abilities of Reza Khan which promoted his climb to power from the rank of a soldier to the exalted position of the King of Iran. There is a small section of people in Iran who are inclined to believe that Reza Khan's coming to power is the work of some outside agency. They think that he owes his present position to the British. They fail to understand how the old established Dynasty of one century and a half could be abolished by an act of Parliament without the least resistance from the ruling power. They are **at** a loss to know how the awe-inspiring titles and prerogatives •such as "The King of Kings", 'The Shadow of God', 'The Vicegerent of God * and 'The Centre of the Universe', could be transferred by a stroke of pen to a man who had no hereditary claim to throne. The whole thing looks to them a mystery **and** **to** them the hypothesis of British complicity affords the only solution to this mystery.

This **theory however** is absolutely baseless. The Russians **are reported to have started this rumour and the credulous section of the country seems to have been influenced by it.** In the

face of solid facts nothing could be more absurd than to entertain such a view. From the time when the British entered into diplomatic relations with Iran upto the present day they have made no secret of their attitude to her. Their policy has always been to see Iran in full independence and integrity, as a friendly neighbour on the flanks of India and Iraq. The British interest in Iran is the interest of law and order. To this Reza Khan devoted his whole-hearted attention. They welcomed his efforts to centralise Iran and make her independent of foreign interference. They appreciated his programme of remodelling Iran on modern lines and the ingenious way in which he carried it through. Beyond this, they did nothing that can be suspected of being direct or indirect interference in the political affairs of Iran.

When the Sheikh of Mahmmarah who was supposed to be a protegee' of the British was brought under the yoke, deprived of his liberty of movement and compelled to remain in Teheran, the British did not make even the semblance of a protest. Upto this day the British do not seem to have received concessions or privileges of any sort from the new Government. The terms of the revised Treaty of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company appear to be more in favour of the Iranians than the British.

At the time of the coronation of Reza Shah the amount of excitement and interest displayed by Iran or practically the whole of Central Asia and the demonstration of the festivities of a nature that were unheard of in the history of Iran, running continuously for ten days before the event and an equal number of days afterward, these were the striking evidence of the fact that the movement of abolishing the Kajar Dynasty and establishing the Pahlavi Dynasty instead was from within and was not engendered by any outside influence.

In conclusion on April 24, 1926 Beza Khan with the will of the people, was crowned with a new crown of gold and

emerald specially made for him and was seated on the Naderi Throne with all the ceremonies that were prescribed by usage for this great occasion.

On his accession to the throne, according to the laws of the Constitution, he handed over the offices of Prime Minister and Minister of War to the new Cabinet and severed his connection with the army. In theory he surrendered his active participation in Government but in practice from that time onwards he has proved to be, by far the most active and energetic element in the Government of his country.

He still continues to take active interest in his thoroughly modernised army. He supervises the functions of every Ministry in the Government, the members of which in response to the example of energy and hard work he sets before them, are revealing what is best in them. He is in close touch with the working of the Parliament. During the days of the sessions of the Majlis he invites the members by groups once or twice a week and discusses with them the important Bills before they are taken to the house for a formal discussion. He pays surprise visits to the important Institutions of the country. Like a touring officer, throughout the year he tours in the country to inspect the new industries that have been growing in the country. He gives interviews to the representatives of the people and tries to get first-hand information of the condition of his people.

The Queen too takes great interest in the uplift of her sex. She pays surprise visits to the female hospitals and all other similar Institutions for the benefit of women. Her eldest daughter Shah-Dukht Pahlavi is the head of the Girl-Guides. The heir-apparent, a well-disciplined young man of dominating personality who has received his education mostly in Europe is the head of the Boy Scouts' Association. The whole Royal family is taking interest in the welfare of the country and is in more than one way connected with the various activities of the State.

After his coronation in 1926, the Shah drew up an elaborate programme of social reforms. His first aim in this connection, was to clip the wings of the reactionary Mullahs who were a great stumbling block in his way. He dealt with them with great caution and foresight. He did not resort to physical force. He avoided direct blows and used measures which to all appearance did not concern the Mullahs but indirectly broke their back.

Before giving a detailed account of his tactics in this direction which speak volumes as to his prudence and unerring perspicacity, I think it proper to give a short history of the Mullahs in Iran.

Chapter XVII

THE MULLAS OF IRAN.

The Mullahs of Iran are quite different from the Mullahs of the rest of the Islamic World. Their Institution which has played an important part in the political history of Iran is the only one of its kind in Islam.

Mulla means a Muslim divine, one well-versed in the Islamic Law which draws its inspiration from the Kuran and the Hadis. This is the generally accepted meaning of the term. But the Iranian Mulla or Mujtahid is very much more than this. He is the Deputy Imam on Earth. He is the final authority in matters religious, social and even political

The Shias believe that the Kuran consists of two types of verses:—the 'Muhakkamat' which have one clear meaning and the 'Mutashabihat'—verses which are capable of more than one interpretation.

The verses of the first type evidently need no interpretation. Every one who knows Arabic can understand them with ease. But the verses of the second type are said to be mysterious and the only persons who could explain them correctly were the Prophet and the Twelve Imams. The Twelfth Imam before his sudden disappearance from this world of vanities is reported to have said "After me look for guidance to those learned divines who derive their authority from us the Imams, provided they live stainless lives". According to this saying of the last Imam, every Mulla or Mujtahid drew his inspiration direct from the hidden Imam and claimed or pretended to be his Deputy during the period of his mysterious absence until his reappearance which is to precede the day of resurrection.

Contrary to the Sunni doctrine of *Ijma* which gives the consensus or agreed opinion of the Muslim divines of a particular period the validity of Law next to the Kuran and the earliest traditions, the Shias have developed a doctrine of *Ijtihad* according to which every Mulla can express his opinion on Islamic matters with indisputable authority. This strange doctrine gave every Mulla in Iran a free hand in the interpretation of Kuran according to the spirit of the times or his own personal whim. All that was needed in his case was to acquire a certificate of Mullaship from a recognised religious institution which was not a great thing for him.

From the tragedy of Kerbela which brought about the split of Islam into two rival sects down to the pre-Pahlavi period, the Mullas have continued to exercise a considerable influence over the people. In the beginning they confined their activities to their legitimate sphere of religion but later on they began to interfere in every thing and became a nuisance.

The Safavis made much of these Mullas and they assumed the air of dignity and importance which gradually received the official

recognition of the State. The Safavis* accession to the throne of Iran was more due to Mullaism or their religious fervour than to anything else. Naturally they favoured the Mullahs and Mullaism became a paying concern. Apart from this natural sympathy for the learned divines the Safavis had other graver reasons for bringing the Mullahs into importance. There was no regular army in Iran competent to defend the country against the recurring raids of the Sunnie Afghans on one side and the Sunnie Turks on the other. The only way in which the country could be secured against this unavoidable evil was to organise a mass movement against the Sunnies.

Both the Afghans and the Turks were as good Muslims as the Iranians. They were bound together by a certain unity of thought, sentiment and expression. As long as these bonds of Islamic fraternity were intact, there was no chance of setting up the Iranians against the Afghans and the Turks their brothers in Islam. Some way had to be found out to break these bonds asunder. The Safavis took the Mullahs into their confidence and invested them with powers which they had never enjoyed before.

The Mullahs put their heads together and invested Shiaism with symbols and ceremonies that were likely to engender feelings of hatred and bitterness against the Sunnies. They laid great stress on the yearly commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Husein in an intensified form with ceremonies that were adopted to excite fanaticism among the ignorant masses. Some say that the *Moharum* celebrations owe their origin to the Abbasides. The Caliph Almuktadir and his son are reported to have set aside ten days for general mourning over the fate of Imam Husein. Others believe that the celebrations were established by the Delamites.

This much seems to be certain that the elaborate acting of the 'Tazia' or passion play at State expense was **the work of the Safavis.**

From the first of *Moharum*, the season of mourning for Imam Husein began. All over Iran, in cities, towns and villages carpets were spread on some prominent streets and men and women clothed in black were seated on them. A Mulla or Marseyakhan told with pathos and art the tragic tales of the martyrs till the audience was worked up to an intense pitch of excitement and the crowd suddenly burst into tears. Processions of men and women marched through streets and bazars in an irregular mass. Some of these men bore national banners and religious emblems; some carried in their hands large chains, cat-o-nine-tails of iron or straps tipped with steel with which they lacerated their backs; some beat themselves with large clubs and their fists until their breasts and backs were black and blue. Lastly came women weeping and wailing and boys shouting 'Ya Husein I' 'Ya Ali!' and 'Ya Imam Husein I'.

It was a terrible sight. For eight days these and similar scenes were seen everywhere. The ninth and the tenth of the *Moharum* presented the most inhuman and brutal spectacle. On the ninth, men anointed their faces and beards with some black filthy stuff and walked through the streets with swords and knives inflicting serious injuries on their clean shaved heads. They were followed by a mounted company of children strapped to the horses. Their heads bled profusely and their garments were red with blood from the sword cuts. Every now and then the heads of these helpless children were pricked by sharp swords.

On the tenth day professional actors were paid by the State to stage the tragedy of Kerbela. Armenians were hired to play the part of Yazid and his followers and all sorts of railings and curses were showered on them.

Since, these scenes were enacted all over Iran, Mullas were in great demand to lead the processions and recite mourning verses that were composed for the occasion, to fan the flames

of the fanaticism of the ignorant masses. Thus according to the laws of demand and supply Mullaism became a flourishing profession and a large number of unreal Mullas appeared in the market whose only qualifications to Mullaism were a beard, a turban with a tassel and an easily acquired ability to recite the *Marseyas* or mourning verses.

After the *Moharum* season was over the Mullas particularly the *Marseyakhans* were no longer in demand. They knew no other profession on which they could depend for their livelihood. They found out new ways for their employment. They advised the people to set apart one day in a week or a fortnight throughout the year, for weeping for the martyrs. They played on the credulity of the ignorant masses by quoting to them the traditions such as "The tears for the martyrs have great merit. An Angel comes from above to collect them and preserve them till the day of judgment as an evidence of the weepers, respect for the memory of Imam Husein".

Their advice was followed with zeal and fortnightly or weekly commemoration meetings were held throughout the year. Mullas were invited to recite descriptions of some of the exciting events from the tragedy of Kerbela to move the audience to tears. A friend of mine told me at Shiraz that before the beginning of the Pahlavi Rule, the Iranians had become a weeping nation. They used to weep all the year round and had lost all initiative and interest in life.

It is said that in the days of the Kajars some of the sensible Mullas had condemned this wild method of expressing one's sympathy for the martyrs. Serious attempts were made to stop this unnatural and debilitating demonstration of grief. But false Mullas whose number had grown overwhelming did not allow this wise counsel to reach the masses.

One of the greatest social reforms that stands to the credit of H. I. M. Beza Shah Pahlavi is the stopping of this ostentatious

and sickly manifestation of grief which was mistaken by the masses for an essential part of Shiaism.

Eeturning to the story of the Mullas as in the days of Safavis, Shah Abbas the Great organised them into a papal system. He appointed a Sheikh-Ul-Islam, a Head priest in every important city in Iran. The Shah invested him with powers to supervise the religious activities of the local Mullas who were expected to keep alive the enmity between the Sunnies and Shias by encouraging the celebration of the births and deaths of Imams particularly the tragedy of Kerbela and the comedy of the death of the Caliph Omar. On the latter occasion I was told, a large public platfrom was erected and a disfigured and deformed image of the Caliph was placed on it. People were invited to revile him and when their vocabulary of vituperation was exhausted they attacked the image with sticks and stones until they broke it and scattered it in pieces. Iran has got rid of these silly practices but I am ashamed to admit that similar practices still prevail in some parts of India. I have seen still wilder manifestations of a brutal revengefulness here.

In the days of Shah Husein who was himself a great theologian, the Mullas whose religious Headship was recognised by the State grew still more powerful. They became the *de facto* rulers. Everything in the country was sacrificed to them. Large estates in the form of '*aukaf*' were placed at their disposal. Instead of improving his army to defend the country against foreign invaders, Sultan Husein merely added to the status of the Mullas. The absence of a well-equipped army cost him his own life as well as that of his dynasty.

Nadir Shah had no particular liking for the Mullas. fie did not like the idea of their widening the gulf between the Sunnies and Shias. He was for peace. He did not want to prolong the trouble between Iran and Turkey. He called a meeting of the

Mullas at Maghan a small town in Azerbaijan and advised them to do away with ¹ *Tabarra*—a systematised way of reviling the first three Caliphs, which had involved Iran in unnecessary hostility with her Sunnie neighbours. The Head of the Mullas defied him in public and made a strong protest against his suggestion. The Mulla was immediately ordered to be hanged and his property was confiscated. Still the Mullas in general took no warning and persisted in having their own way in matters which they said, were outside the province of the King.

To avoid further trouble, Nadir Shah reversed his policy and appealed to the Ottoman power to reconcile the Shias by allowing them a separate Musalla, a prayer place in the Kaba just as they had done in the case of the Hanfis, Malikis, Sahafais and Hambalis. He received a provoking reply to his appeal and his pious attempts in bringing about a reconciliation between the two rival sects in Islam came to nothing. All the same he did as much as lay in his power to keep the Mullas in check by diminishing the sphere of their activities.

In the days of Kajars they again came into power and began to dabble in politics. In the earlier part of the reign of Fateh Ali Shah the Iranian subjects of the newly conquered territories of Russia complained to the Iranian King that they were not properly treated by the Russians. Fateh Ali Shah paid no heed to their complaint. The Mullas took up the matter and at the rash suggestion of Sayyid Mohmed Ali, a well known Mujtahid of Najaf, made a declaration of *Jihad* which plunged Iran into a disastrous War with Russia. Fateh Ali Shah took no notice of the serious loss the country had suffered at the hands of these officious Mullas and instead of clipping their wings he enhanced their importance by appointing in addition to the already existing Sheikh-Ul-Islam, an Imam Juma in every important city of Iran. During this period a few really good Mullas of outstanding merits such as Haji Sheikh Mohmed Hasan, known as Javahir-Ul-Kalam, Sheikh

Murtazai Ansari and Sheikh Ahmed Ihsai were produced by Najaf **and** the fact that they were really great scholars in Muslim theology raised the status of the Mullahs in general, in **Iran**.

Nassiruddin Shah went a step further. He gave one of his daughters in marriage to Haji Mirza Abulkasim the Imam Juma in Teheran. This puffed the Mullahs up and either to make a display of their power or out of sheer stupidity they opposed Nassiruddin Shah in every progressive step he intended to take towards the improvement of his country.

When Nassiruddin Shah intended to build railways in his country and a small railway line between Teheran and Shah Abdulazim was completed as an experiment, Haji Mulla Ali Kanni started an anti-railway campaign. His line of argument was that the railway was built by Christians who were *Najas*, i. e. not clean. Although to call Christians '*Najas*' is a great violation of the Kurau which has described them in unequivocal terms as "The people of the book", his propaganda had such a powerful effect on the ignorant masses that Nassiruddin was compelled to abandon further schemes of building other railways. It is said that as long as this great dignitary was alive, his immediate followers and admirers could not make up their minds to ride on the railway already built.

When Nassiruddin Shah decided to build some more avenues in Teheran, the Mullahs protected on the ground that large sums of money spent on the avenues would affect the necessary repairs of the Mosques and the Tombs of the Imamzadas. These, they said, had a greater claim on the State Treasury than the building of fresh avenues which deserved to be condemned as a luxury. The Shah was lacking in personal courage and to avoid disturbance in the country he yielded to their protest and gave up **the idea**.

In the days of Muzafaruddin Shah the Mullas did still worse things. A few enterprising Zoroastrians started a sugar-factory at *Kuhrezak* a village about twelve miles' distant from Teheran. When the factory showed signs of prosperity, Haji Mirza Hasan Ashtiyani, one of the influential Mullas in Teheran, issued a *Fatwa*, a religious decree that the Muslims were forbidden the use of the sugar manufactured at the *Kuhrezak* factory. Without asking for the reasons for his *Fativa*, the public stopped using the *Kuhrezak* factory sugar and the factory had to be closed. No one had the right to question the authority of the Mullas, Their decision was final.

This was an oat and out raid on the people's rights. „ This stupid decision killed all initiative and the spirit of enterprise in the country. For some time the Proprietors of the factory could not understand the motive that had prompted the Mullas to ruin their lucrative business. But later on it was found out that the Eussians, who were the sole importers of sugar in Iran, fearing a competition from the local factory had bribed the Mullas into declaring the use of the locally made sugar as unlawful.

In spite of this clear proof of this treachery there was no perceptible change in the attitude of the ignorant people towards the Mullas. They derived their authority from the Imams and to defy them was as reprehensible as to defy the Imams themselves.

Our own Mullas in India are not less meddlesome than the Mullas in Iran. Our good* Mullas are really, " The representatives of the Prophets ". They usually confine their activities within the limits of their legitimate sphere. Outside religion, they never interfere in our affairs. But the pseudo-Mullas whose number is not infinitely small, are a regular nuisance in our country. They oppose every social reform measure that

our leaders take in hand and denounce it as a ' Bidat' or superfluous innovation. They are a positive hinderance in our way to progress.

A hundred years ago, things were so bad in India that if one learnt a word of English, the Mullas at once issued an edict of infidelity against him and his life among his brother Moslems became a Hell on Earth. If he put on a collar and a tie, he became an infidel. If one dined at table, he became a Christian by immitating Christians. If one did not trim his mustaches properly, he became a ' *Bafizi* \ If one shaved his beard, he became a ' *Kafir* '.

One can easily imagine the one thousand and one difficulties that the late Sir Sayyed Ahmed must have encountered in the founding of Aligarh College which paved the way for Western education among the Moslems. For a long time, the graduates of Aligarh College were not well talked of by the orthodox Moslems. They were looked upon as free thinkers. Fortunately for us, things have taken a different turn now. Aligarh College has developed into a Moslem University and the Moslems of India are being gradually convinced now that the graduates of Aligarh College have reudered and are rendering still, greater service to Islam than some of the best Mullas in our country.

In big cities, the graduates of Aligarh College who are usually better informed on Islamic matters than the so called Mullas themselves did yeoman service to Islam by disseminating the true knowledge of Islam and by encouraging to a very large extent freedom of thought and action among the Moslems. But in small places our pseudo-Mullas were and are still supreme and have been consistently retarding our progress by putting every possible obstacle in our way.

Thirty years ago, my father started dealing in corn in my native place Shikarpur, Sind. The corn business in those

days was entirely in the hands of the Hindus and my father was probably the first local Moslem in Sind to deal in it. It happened to be the famine days and the pseudo-Mullas in our country spread the idea that the famine was due to my father's doing the work of the Banias. They issued an edict of infidelity against my father and recommended a social boycott. My father took no notice of their edict and persisted in his business. This irritated the Mullas who extended their *Fatim* to our whole family and all my uncles and cousins were declared to be members of an infidel family. Our relations brought pressure upon my father and he was forced to abandon this lucrative business and take to something else.

In 1901, when I entered an English School, these very Mullas took my father to task and forced my father to drive me away from his house. My father did not know how to meet their virulent criticism and gave me a choice between leaving the school and leaving his house. I preferred the latter and took shelter in my aunt's house. I was not allowed to enter my father's house for nearly three years until a reconciliation was brought about between me and my father by the late Sardar Yakubkhan Durani, the father-in-law of Sir Gulam Husein Hidayatullah.

In May 1933 I was invited by the Calicut Mohomedans to deliver a series of lectures on Islam. Here I had the pleasure of meeting Sir Mahomed Habibullah, a great Moslem leader of repute who was invited to preside at the Kerala Moslem Conference. He told me that when he went to an English School the pseudo-Mullas had issued a *Fatwa* that after his death he should not be buried in a Moslem grave-yard with Moslem rites. On hearing this verdict he went straight to local astrologers and requested them to foretell the time of his death. The astrologers gave him the encouraging news that he would live until eighty five years of age. This settled the matter and

the young Mohmed said to his father, "We have a long time to think of what may happen after my death. In the meantime let them please themselves by issuing as many such edicts as they can. Time will set matters right." Had he at the threats of the Mullas given up his educational career, Indian Moslems would have lost a great Moslem worker.

Calicut Mohamedans are divided into two antagonistic parties of clappers and non-clappers. On tracing the origin of these parties, I was told that some twenty years ago a dispute had arisen among the local Mullas on the question of clapping at the close of the recitation of 'Kasidah-Madhiyyah' a praise poem in honour of Prophet Mahomed on the marriage occasions. Some of the Mullas were in favour of clapping and others were positively against it. This diversity of opinion on the part of these pseudo-Mullas over a petty matter which has very little concern with religion, has engendered a party spirit which is working havoc in society. Social reformers of Mr. Pocker's type have been doing their best to do away with this party spirit. But the opposition of the local Mullas is too strong for them to overcome.

Some twelve years ago at Belgaum, Mr. Abdul Eahman, a Cutchi Memon liquor contractor lost his three years old child. The local Mullas refused to bury this innocent child on the ground that the child's father was a liquor contractor. These very Mullas had raised no objection against the burial of the father of Mr. Abdul Rahman who was also a liquor contractor. There was sheer inconsistency in their behaviour. There was no rhyme or reason in their refusing the funeral rites to a Moslem child who was not responsible for the actions of his father. But the word of the local pseudo-Mullas was law. The poor Memon had to yield to the arbitration of some peace-makers according to whose decision the body was handed over to the Mullas who buried the child as an unclaimed corpse of a Moslem*

In the Karnatak, there is a large body of Mullas who have no other claim to Mullaship than being the legitimate sons or grand-sons of some officiating Mullas. They are the hereditary Mullas of the country and although some of them are utterly ignorant of Islam and are unfit to discharge the duties of the Mullas, no one can question their authority. No educated Mulla can replace them who by the usage of the country claim this position as a matter of right. There is no hereditary priesthood in Islam, but this does not affect the position of the hereditary Mullas here. It will take years before this stupid system can be wiped out.

The *parda* system which has been completely done away with in Turkey, Iran, Siriya and Egypt and is gradually disappearing from Iraq, still continues to be a religious institution in India. Educated Moslems in big cities are coming forward and breaking loose from it, but the lot of ignorant Musalmans is still deplorable.

The only way in which this evil can be remedied in India is the Official Board of Examination and the license system that can distinguish between the real Mullas and the unreal ones that have been masquerading as religious divines.

To revert to the history of the Mullas in Iran upto the year 1916, when the constitutional form of Government was settled in Iran and for a few years afterwards, Mullas continued to be in power. There seemed to be no hope of the decline of their power in the country. But time has its own cure. Their own actions betrayed their evil intentions. Political changes in the country brought about a general awakening among the people. What was ignored or tolerated in the past, was now scrutinised with care. The spread of education along the Western lines and the general enthusiasm for modernisation broadened the outlook of the people. Not only did they lose their old primitive

implicit faith in them, **but they** hated the Mullahs **and** their reactionary spirit with bitterness. At a great psychological moment when H. I. M. Reza Shah found that the whole country was against the Mullahs, he introduced a series of reforms which one by one broke their back.

Chapter XVIII

MULLAS' OWN ACTIONS RUINED THEM.

Elated with their exalted position in society, the Mullahs could not keep quiet and live on friendly terms amongst themselves. They vied with one another in displaying their literary attainments and wasted their talents in writing books on theology on controversial subjects which are of very little importance in everyday life. They criticised one another bitterly and at times they even issued edicts of infidelity against one another. The dumb deluded masses could not sit quiet unconcerned. They had to follow one Mulla or the other. Their submission to one Mulla evidently implied their opposition to his opponents- This led to bitter party feelings which involved the country into terrible feuds which lasted for generations.

The notorious fight at Hamadan which began somewhere in 1905 and lasted for over thirty years is a typical example of these feuds engendered by the party spirit. The question at issue was whether the pilgrims at Kerbela could offer prayers, facing the head of Imam Husein's tomb or not. Sheikh Ihsai, a leading Mulla at Hamadan gave his decision against it. A number of Mullahs denounced his judgment. This provoked the Sheikh's followers who attacked these Mullahs in the most vituperative language. This invited counter attacks on the Sheikh and thus the two parties were formed, the Sheikhias i. e. **the followers of the Sheikh and the Bala-Sariyas, i. e. a party in favour of offering prayers over the head of Imam Husein,**

III

A free fight began and one of the principal Mullahs of the Sheikhiya party was burnt alive with the holy Koran in his hands. Hundreds of heads were broken in the course of three months. Order was temporarily restored by the authorities but the hostility between the two parties continued for over thirty years. The Iranians cannot forget the tragedy of Hamadan which had reduced an important business centre into a scene of horror.

No two Mullahs could live at peace. Such scenes were repeated all over Iran. Even Haji Mirza Abul Kasim the Imam Juma of Teheran and the son-in-law of Nassiruddin Shah, the most learned and the most influential of the Mullahs was not an exception to the rule. No Mulla could oppose him for fear of losing his position. He took special delight in quarrelling and when he could not pick a quarrel with anyone else, he waged a regular war against his uncle Sadrul-Sudoor who was held in high esteem by the public.

This was not all. More than half of these Mullahs who claimed or pretended to possess the superhuman virtues of the Imams, were sadly lacking even in human ones. In their dealings with the public, they behaved much worse than some of the most wicked men of the world. They traded in Islam and in the display of their religious commodities they played all sorts of tricks and thus degraded themselves in the eyes of the public. Even the biggest Mullahs holding the titles of Hujjat-Ul-Islam or Sibghat-Ul-Islam or Sheikh-Ul-Islam, were, with a very few exceptions, corrupt to the core.

When Agha Sheikh Mohmed Takki of Ispahan, generally known as Agha Najfi, died in Ispahan, for three days the bazars were closed in his honour. People moved about in the streets, bare-headed and bare-footed, striking their heads with swords. The day of his death assumed the seriousness of the

tenth of *Mohrum*. All over Iran, his death was mourned and wild demonstrations of grief were made every where. Such was the height of the reputation and the respect he enjoyed among the Iranians.

Yet, a few months after his death, one by one his vices were exposed and the people were surprised to find that he was one of the greatest villains in the camp of the Mullahs. When his daughter, (one of his fifteen children) was married, her share of inheritance from her father was announced to be seventy-thousand *twmcmss* cash plus property worth two hundred-thousand *tumans*. There is no exaggeration in this. These are solid facts which I have ascertained from reliable sources. This announcement of the bride's share of inheritance, excited the curiosity of all those that were present at the wedding. For, everyone knew that Agha Najafi had inherited nothing from his father. From where did he acquire this fabulous wealth? Facts accumulated from all possible quarters and they threw light over this question. He had acquired this wealth by extorting money from the ignorant masses by using all sorts of disreputable means. Altogether it was an abominable affair.

I have heard hundreds of such stories of the Mullahs in Iran. I cannot enumerate them all. I have selected for my readers one or two typical ones in order to show to them to what extent the Mullahs had degenerated before the Pahlavi Rule came into existence. Their own behaviour had weakened their position, and ended the Mulla Rule for ever.

Chapter XIX.

OUTSIDE FORCES THAT ULTIMATELY BROKE THE BACK OF THE MULLAS.

By the year 1906 when the Constitutional Government was established in Iran, the Mullas had lost much of their prestige, but they still held certain rights and privileges which they could not easily be deprived of. They could not be dislodged from the offices which they had held for generations. Teaching profession was their monopoly. The dispensation of Law and Justice was also in their hands. Some taught in the Primary Schools in the village and city mosques and some of them were leaders of prayers, Marsyakhans or reciters of Kerbela tales or preachers. While others still, in various degrees of prominence, were interpreters of the Law, writers of contract-deeds etc., and Judges of civil and religious cases. They held Courts in their houses and decided disputes according to the Koran and the Hadis. Those who attained eminence, by reason of their learning or sanctity, were honoured with various titles such as Hujjat-ul-Islam, Sighat-ul-Islam, and Sheik-ul-Islam and were regarded as Mujtahids, the final authorities on Islamic matters.

With the exception of the Maktabas of the Mullas which were in a miserable state of affairs there was no local school on modern lines. Well-to-do people naturally did not think much of these Maktabas and sent their sons for education to Europe. The first Graduates of the Western Universities had a great opening in their backward country. But instead of improving their own careers they took to social service. They fought against the reactionary Mullas who opposed them at every step they took towards the improvement of the country. Some of these social workers had their tongues cut off and some of them lost their lives in the struggle. Those who survived, carried on the fight to its bitter end.

I had the pleasure of meeting one of these survivors, Sayyed Hu8ein Adalat, an old man of seventy-five who gave me a thrilling account of the patience and perseverenoe with which he fought with the Mullas to a finish.

At the age of twenty Sayyed Husein Adalat went to Russia to acquire some sort of education with no definite plans. For five years he studied the Russian language and literature. At Munich he came in contact with Sayyed Jamaluddin Afghani, a well-known pan-Islamist. His vitalising influence roused in him a desire to serve his country to the best of his ability. The Sayyed came back to his country with a resolve to introduce into his country Western ideas of freedom, democracy and nationalism.

When he reached Tabrez, his native place, he found the place a Hell on Earth, a striking contrast to what he had seen in Russia. "I made up my mind" said he, "either to rebuild my country or go back to Russia and settle there. I was disgusted with every thing. My own house looked horrible. I did not like the sight of my mother, brothers and two sisters who all looked dull, with no initiative in life, no ambition, no sense of honour and no idea whatsoever of what was going on in the world. They were quite contented with their lot and they were no more interested in this world than temporary residents in a hired house. This is what religion had taught them. To counteract this paralysing influence of the teachings of the Mullas, the members of my own family needed my foremost attention.

"Hence I set up a small school in my house and my brothers and sisters were my first pupils. I selected a few striking passages from the national literature of Russia, translated them into simple Iranian and read them to my pupils most of whom were my adult relations. I taught them for five years and during this period, I prepared for social work a group of young men and women who weie mostly related to me in one way or another and who had a burning desire to awaken their country.

"My sisters started a Girls' School and I opened a Boys' School. My brothers and other relations did propaganda work to attract the students to our new schools. We were hissed and hooted in society. The furniture of our schools was stolen. Boys and girls attending our schools were beaten on the way. But still we persisted in our work. For four years we continued our struggle with the Mullas and the fanatic public when later on patriots like Takizadah, the editor of the revolutionary paper 'Kahwa' at Berlin and Turbat whose wife is now the President of the Ladies* Club at Tehran and Sayyed Mohmed Abuziya the first editor of 'Iran' came to our help.

"These three gentlemen who had travelled much and who were advocates of liberal reforms proved to be a valuable addition. A few students who had graduated from the American College at Tehran also joined us. Our party grew strong and we drew up an elaborate programme for our work. The strength of my Madressa rose to seven-hundred and my sister had two-hundred girls on the roll in her school. I left the Madressa in charge of my friends and I myself started a news paper 'Hadid,' meaning steel. My criticism of the local officers being unpalatable to them, my paper was stopped. I changed my tactics and started another paper 'Suhbat*' which was meant to be an advice to elderly women. Each boy in the Madressa was supplied with a free copy of this paper with the request to read it to the female members of his house.

"In one of the issues I wrote " "Since Eve was created out of a rib of Adam he always loved her as his better half and they were always together. But we are ashamed to acknowledge our wives as our better halves and are hence looked down upon by other nations as deformed creatures. In order that we may escape the laughter and ridicule of the Europeans, either they must come down to our level and be deformed like us or we must progress and reform ourselves like them."

"This evidently meant that I was positively against the Qajar system. Serious attempts were made by the Mullahs to burn me alive but I had a good following and they could not do any harm to me. They instigated the Governor to punish me and to satisfy these Mullahs the Governor sentenced me to six years' rigorous imprisonment. The country was sufficiently advanced and this verdict of the Governor created a sensation not only in Iran but even among the Iranians that were living outside the country."

"For instance, the editor of the 'Misak' an important Iranian paper printed at Tiflis wrote:—"One of the serious defects in the drawing up of our constitution is a clause according to which nothing is permissible to be written against Shariat, the Law of Islam. The Law of Islam has been made elastic by the Mullahs. They twist it as they like. This is a dangerous instrument in the hands of the ignorant Mullahs. It is one of the most destructive measures in our constitution. This clause undoes all that we have been struggling for. We cannot go ahead as long as this clause continues to be in force. Sayyid Husein, the editor of 'Sohbat' has been tried for the breach of this rule and has been sentenced to six years' imprisonment. His services to the country have been ignored. His enthusiasm for the uplift of his country has been mistaken for a crime. He wrote an article on the rights of women as an experiment. He wanted to feel the pulse of his people as a guide for his future activities. But his whole scheme has been nipped in the bud. His imprisonment is a great shock to the nation. The Mullahs are still hindering our progress. The constitution is expected to give us freedom of tongue and pen. This is the case of a positive interference with our freedom of thought and action."

"Similar protests were made all over the country. The Central Government had to intervene and after my undergoing three months' imprisonment I was instantly released and was appointed an education officer at Teheran. By this time a large

number of social workers had sprung up in the country and there was a feverish excitement everywhere.

^{1,6} Maryam Khanam, a Kurdish lady and Nuru-Duja a daughter of one Imam-ul-hukama probably an Indian by origin, had just graduated from the American Girls' School at Teheran and were busily engaged in remodelling the society of women. One Tuba Khanam who had received a good education at home, opened a Model School for girls. She had great organising-capacity and had gathered round her a band of selfless workers who had raised her school to the status of a first rate institution. Later on when the Education Department opened a large number of Girls' schools, Tuba Khanam's institution was the only source of supply, to meet the growing demand for female teachers.

"I was transferred from Teheran to Gilan and from Gilan back to Teheran where I held several positions of importance in the Education Department. I retired from service some eight years ago and now I am engaged in writing text books for the schools."

Sayyed Ilusein is only one of the hundreds of progressive men of his time who have dedicated their lives to the service of the country. Another important worker of this period whose services to the country cannot be forgotten, was Haji Mirza Yahya.

He belongs to the gifted family of Mujtahids of advanced views known as Daulat Abadis. He is reported to be the first man who began the social reform movement in his country. He started a model school in Teheran. He composed text books for boys, which were calculated to inspire love for modernism. His small text book entitled "Ali" is a typical treatise on modernism. One of the striking passages in this book is the touching conversation between Ali a school-boy and his two sisters * Sakinah and Rukiyah. The girls express a desire for going to school and when

they are told by their brother that there is no school for them they burst into tears and hope for the day when schools will be opened for them.

The book became popular and the opening of the girls' schools became a burning problem of the day. The Mullas grew wild over this matter and denounced the book as propaganda for female education. According to their privileged interpretation of the Koran, it was a gross violation of the Law of Islam. They ordered his hands to be cut off. Luckily for him the Prime Minister who happened to be a man of progressive views came to his help and the edict was revoked.

A few years after this incident, his brother Haji Mirza Ali Mohmed joined him. Both the brothers made strenuous efforts to remould their country men, by preaching in public and by writing books. Mirza Yahya wrote a number of books on social reforms. Some of the best known among them are "Shahrah," a treatise on the system of education suitable for girls, "Armaghan-I-Yahya," a treatise on the problem of the bringing up of children and "Tassub-i-Atfal," the subject matter of which is a protest of the boys against the marriages settled by their parents.

Three years after the constitutional Government was settled, both the brothers were found to be too revolutionary for the country and were exiled. They went to Belgium from where they issued papers and pamphlets to awaken a national consciousness among their countrymen in Iran. Later on, the revolutionary party grew strong in Iran and Mirza Mohmed Ali was called back to the country to resume his activities. He became an active member of the Parliament but he was not destined to live long. After two years' hard work in the Parliament, he died of heart failure.

His brother Haji Mirza Yahya remained in Belgium where he could work for his country more uninterruptedly than in

Iran. He is said to be eighty years old now and is still **busily** engaged in his literary pursuits. He has spent practically **his** life time in a foreign country. Yet he has not ceased taking interest in the country he has left for good. He has given the **best** education to his girls one of whom is a great musician and another a competent educationist. He himself is not inclined to return to his country but he has sent both of his highly educated daughters to Iran to serve their motherland.

His sister Khanum Daulatabadi who is now an Inspectress of Girls' Schools in Teheran has a greater and still more creditable record of service to her country. I have to speak of **her** again in connection with the progress of women in Iran. This strong woman of the gifted Daulatabadi family is one of **the** few courageous ladies who have contributed to the modernism of Iran.

Meer Jehangir Khan, the editor of *Sur-I-Israfil', **the** trumpet call, is another patriot of this period who stirred up the people to their very depth. The short pithy verses he occasionally added in his paper had a galvanising effect on **his** readers. His short songs that were occasionally sung by boys and girls in the streets were strikingly dramatic in their effects. Who could not be affected by the joining of girls with their sweet silvery voices in singing a song the substance of which is as follows :—'The seventeenth century is gone, the eighteenth is gone, the nineteenth is gone; the twentieth is going on. O God, still no one is thinking of us'.

His progressive paper put new life into the dry bones of Iran. But the reactionary Mullahs were still too powerful to tolerate his revolutionary activities which they thought, were a menace to Islam. First, his hands were cut off and then he was strangled to death. He had been a wealthy man but at his death he did not leave even five Tuman worth of property. He had sacrificed every thing for the cause of his country. **His** life was gone. But his spirit still prevailed in the country. **The**

impressions -that he left by his writings, were deep and permanent.

Takizadah is another great man of this period. He has a long brilliant political career. His paper 'Kahwa' which he used to edit in those days in Berlin, enjoyed a world wide publicity. It had produced a masterly effect on the minds of his numerous readers. He is over sixty now and has retired from his political activities. At present he is doing* literary work in London.

Iran has produced hundreds of spirited workers of Taki-sadah or Meer Jahangir's type, every one of whom has served his country well in his own way. I have referred to a few of them in order to show to my readers that Iran's present modernism is not an abrupt departure from the past. It is not a sudden stroke of good luck as some people are inclined to say. It is a well thought out project. Different means and methods have been used at different times to carry out this project.

From 1900 onwards to this day there has been a continuous-movement of the country towards Westernism. Till 1925 the movement was occasionally obstructed and its speed had to be-slackened. But from 1926 the year of Reza Shah Pahlavi's, accession to the throne, the country has been moving steadily onward without its progress being always noticed by the-outside world.

On my return to India a friend of mine told me that he could not understand how the phenomenal advance of Iran towards modernism failed to attract the notice of the outside-world. "How is it" he said, "that the world knew nothing about the sweeping changes that were gradually taking place in the country at the earlier stages of her advancement? No country in the world," he said "has ever progressed in a way in which Iran is reported to have done. Human nature is the same-all over the world. Iranians are, after all, human beings. They

are not superhuman. How could they do things which no **one** else has done in the world. What little we know of modern **Iran** is a mystery to us. The sudden westernisation of Iran is nothing short of a miracle. Fortunately for me I am not a great believer in miracles."

He did not startle me in the least by this talk. He was right in his own way. Ever since my return to India, I have been hearing this kind of talk everywhere. Almost every outsider who is not acquainted with the history of Iran talks of Iran in the same strain. At Teheran I met an educated Musalman from Lukhnow who shocked me by saying that he had heard in India that the Mullas in Iran were all blown from the mouth of a cannon and that Muslim women were dragged out of their houses by force and paraded in the bazars against their will.

An American journalist told me in Iran that by his travelling widely in the country he had come to the conclusion **that the whole movement of modernisation in Iran was from the top to the bottom and not from the bottom to the top as it was the case with other countries.** As far as my information goes, he stayed a week in Teheran, a few days in Shiraz and a few days in Isphahan. Altogether he spent a few weeks in Iran. This is what he meant by his 'widely travelling in the country'. I fail to understand by what sources of information he came **to** this definite conclusion which he has carried away with him to America. Besides, he did not know a word of Iranian.

One can learn nothing by travelling in a foreign country without knowing the language and history of its people. The history of the Iranians is in itself a series of miracles.

After the conquest of Iran by the Arabs, for nearly three-hundred years not a word of Iranian was written or spoken. If **any** one uttered an Iranian word his tongue was cut off. Yet immediately after the decline of **the Arab Supremacy in Iran, the Iranians revived their native language. The Iranian**

literature of this period is considered to be the richest and the most prolific in the literary history of Iran. If this is not a miracle, then what is a miracle?

Who was Nadir Shah? An illiterate shepherd. "Where had he learnt the manoeuvres of war? In his windowless hut amongst his tribes people. History tells us that this very illiterate shepherd defeated the Afghans on one side, the Turks on the other side and stopped the Russian aggression for ever. He carried his conquests to India from where he carried to his country the famous Peacock throne which is the proud possession of Iran. Is this not a miracle? How many such instances do we find in the history of the world?

The Constitution of 1906 is another miracle. Who could dream then, that a backward country like Iran would abandon her centuries' old ideas of absolute monarchy and adopt a constitutional form of Government.

The Pahlavi Rule in itself is a great miracle. Who was Beza Shah? An ordinary soldier. Where was he educated? No where, I believe. An ordinary soldier with no education whatsoever and* no hereditary claim to the throne, by his ability and industry rose to be a King of Iran. Today he is known to be a great military- genius and one of the greatest Statesmen in the world.

The question why the world took no notice of the twelve years' systematic move of Iran towards Westernism is not difficult to answer. Forty years ago, Iran was a down trodden country. It had lost all its old importance. During the world-wide war though Iran had not joined the war; it had become a manoeuvring place for various conflicting foreign powers. The Russians, the Turks, the British had rushed in the country unopposed. For the country was in a helpless condition.No one could imagine then, that this helpless country in" the' space of a few years would revive its past glory, and come into

importance again. Evidently foreigners do not seem to have taken notice of the changes that the country has been undergoing during the last twelve years.

Besides, the Iranians are un-ostentatious people by nature. They talk little and do much. They have been working silently and smoothly with a definite end in view. None of the members of the Foreign Legation, probably, knew anything of Reza Shah until one morning in the year 1921 he overtook all the Government offices and became a Military Dictator.

Chapter XX.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES THAT PUT AN END TO MULLAISM FOR EVER;

By the end of 1925 the whole of Iran was unified. But the country was still immature in several respects. Certain social and political reforms were absolutely necessary for the centernal development of the country. In fact they were overdue. Justice was dispensed in the Mulla Courts and the foreigners had no faith in them. In the days of Nassiruddin Shah, European powers had acquired extra territorial privileges in the country. According to these privileges known as the capitulations, the representatives of foreign powers in Iran had established their own Courts at their various consulates. Thus if a dispute arose between an Iranian and a Russian or a Frenchman or an Englishman, the matter had to be settled in one of the foreign Courts and not in an Iranian Court.

The Iranians looked at these Courts with horror, but they could do nothing in the matter. They had no written Codes of civilised Laws which could be acceptable to foreigners. In 1918 an attempt was made to introduce a Civil Code modelled after the French Code. The Mullas had as usual protested against it and the scheme had to be abandoned as sacrilegious. In 1922 a further attempt was made to introduce a modern Commercial Code but as a result of the riots instigated by the Mullas this had also to be given up.

On His Majesty Reza Shah's accession to the throne, things **took** a different turn. His will became Law. Once the people came to know that he was personally interested in a particular measure, it was carried out without the slightest opposition **from** any quarter. Iran wanted a powerfull leader to guide **her** destiny and she has found **one** in Reza Shah Pahlavi.

In January 1926, a modern Commercial Code and a new Penal Code were introduced in the country without the slightest murmur on the part of the Mullahs. This put an end to the primitive methods of dealing with criminals by exacting blood money or an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. It looked like an open struggle with the Mullahs in more than one way. First, the sanctity of the Muslim Law based on the Koran and the tradition was defied. Secondly, it was a distinct signal to them that the department of Justice was to go out of their hands*. They had no reason to grumble. The country had been moving forward at a fearful speed. This was bound to happen sooner or later. If these reforms happened to hit them no one could help it.

In the same year compulsory military service was introduced. Mullahs were exempted. But to claim exemption they had to pass the examination held by the Official Board. This was the first time that an official check was introduced on the future output of the Mullahs. Hereafter they had to be manufactured at a new factory and their career was to be moulded by a different pattern to suit the altered conditions of life. On this occasion the Mullahs did not remain quiet. They made a powerful demonstration of their disapproval by instigating the shop-keepers to close the bazars and by holding protest meetings at Kum. Their rage was however pacified by some vague assurances and the scheme was pushed through.

In 1927 the Courts were reorganised on modern lines and the private Courts of the Mullahs were abolished. A new Civil Code providing for a uniform basis for the application of the Koranic Law, a new Criminal Code and new Rules of Judicial procedure based on the French model, were introduced. A new judicial department was organised and Mullahs were invited to fill up the new posts on attractive salaries. A large number of the Mullahs welcomed the offer and joined Government Service. According to the rules of this service they were not allowed to attend

public meetings. They were debarred from taking part in the social and political activities of the country. Even in religious matters they were not allowed to express their opinion as Mullahs. By this procedure the best and the most influential of the Mullahs were absorbed in the Civil Service of the country and the incompetent Mullahs were left to themselves.

In 1928, the capitulations were abolished on the ground that the new Courts with new Codes and new Procedure based on the Trench model, offered a sufficient guarantee for the safeguarding of foreign interests, This was a great relief to the Iranians. The Mullahs were convinced now that the Parliament was quite justified in remodelling the Judicial Department.

In the saijie year uniform dress for men was made compulsory. All Iranians were required by Law to put on a European costume. The Mullahs were exempted again, but to prove their Mullaism they had to appear before an Official Board for examination and procure a certificate or licence to wear the cloak and turban, the traditional marks of a Muslim divine. This was a severe blow to the Mullahs. But there was no way out of it. Times had changed. The country was determined to go ahead. The Mullahs had no other alternative than to adopt themselves to the changed conditions and move with the times.

One of the Members of the Parliament made no secret of it by saying, "we propose to drive the Mullahs into the open to eliminate those who have been masquerading as holy men and foster national unity by doing away with a variety of special clothing. Hitherto a man's costume has served to identify him as a resident of Tabriz or Mashhed rather than as an Iranian."

The Law was carried out without any hitch and in 1929 with the exception of the Mullahs no one could be seen in a village or a town in a non-European costume, European coat, Test and trousers took the place of flowing robes and Pahlavi caps drove away the Kulah and turbans and other forms of head*

gear. By this time about five per cent, of the Mullas were absorbed in Government service and about fifty-five per cent, of them were rejected by the Official Board for examination on grounds of incompetency or misbehavior. In the same year a [Registration Department was created and the Registration of deeds which was formerly the sole prerogative of the Mullas was transferred to the Ministry of Justice. Mullas were appointed to the new posts in this new department and this meant an additional reduction in the number of the Mullas.

Thus in 1929, about thirty-five per cent, of the Mullas were left out and their activities were restricted to matters dealing with marriage, divorce, attestation of oaths and the registration of wills. After this for two years, the Shah suspended further activities in this direction and until 1931 no new reform of a drastic type was instituted. By this two years' breathing spell, the Shah gave the country an opportunity to consolidate the reforms and get used to the changes that were strikingly revolutionary. Unlike Mustafa Kamal, H. I. M. Keza Shah Pahlavi has always moved with the caution and astuteness of a well seasoned politician. He was not unaware of the troubles that Amanullah's reforms had created in Afghanistan. Though there was no fear of a revolt or a rising in Iran, he thought it prudent to wait and watch the movements of his people.

In 1931, the Shah resumed his activities in the field of reforms and the only prerogative that the Mullas were allowed to retain in the matter of exercising judicial power in the sphere of marriage and divorce was also invaded. All marriage contracts and acts of divorce were required by Law to be registered with a Civil Official. This took away everything from the hands of the Mullas. Their roots were cut off and there was no chance of their future growth. Their religious authority was gone and hereafter the spirit of Islam and not the letter was to be followed.

The ground was absolutely clear now and some more reforms of a still more radical nature were instituted. According to the

"Mulla made laws of the country, the age of puberty of women was fixed at nine and that of men at fifteen. Child marriages had ruined the country. Children born of such marriages were usually of low vitality and they invariably died before the age of two or three. There were cases in which parents had lost **nearly** ten children in the course of their fifteen years of married life. There was a great stir in the country against this barbaric practice. Child marriages were stopped at once and Marriage Laws were enacted according to which the marriagable age for girls was fixed at sixteen and for boys at eighteen. Moreover, no boy or girl could contract a marriage unless both of them possessed a physical aptitude for it. This was a complete infringement of the Mulla-made Law which had been in vogue in Iran for centuries.

In 1932 the notorious custom of making public demonstrations of grief during the month of Moharum was forbidden by Law. This put a stop for ever to the centuries old practice of self-mortification and mourning processions of a gruesome nature. The only procession in which the Mullas used to make money once a year was also taken away from their hands.

This step has been mistaken by the Shia community in India and a few fanatics in Iran as an irreligious move. It all depends on what they mean by religion. If by religion, they mean mere formalism, a rigid adherance to all time-honoured customs without going into their history and detecting cause and effect, then according to them, with the exception of a handful fanatics that one sees here and there, there is no Muslim left in the world. The Turks, the Egyptians, the modern Iranians and all the progressive Muslims in Arabia and India and other countries in the world are from this point of view atrocious infidels in the guise of **Muslims. I would rather throw in my lot with these progressy; infidels than be a fanatical Musalman.**

However if they take a sensible view of Islam and can distinguish between the essentials and non-essentials in religion, they should give credit to Iran for taking the lead in many things, in which we the Indian Musilmans are still lagging behind.

To recapitulate, partly by their own actions, partly by political and social changes which broadened the outlook of the people and changed their attitude towards the Mullas and partly by legislative measures which directly or indirectly cut the ground from under their feet, the Mullas in Iran have been completely wiped out. Indian Musilmans seem to be under the impression that all the Mullas in Iran have, either been killed or driven away from the country. Nothing of that kind has been done. No physical force has ever been used against them. They are all alive. All that has taken place is a change in their career. Mullaism has ceased to be a profession and the Mullas have naturally taken to new vocations of life and have given up Mullaism for ever.

By the process of elimination fifty per cent of them who failed to satisfy the prescribed test were asked to give up Mullaism and take to something else. There was plenty of work in the country and the rejected Mullas had no difficulty in finding out new avenues for their employment. This was a welcome step to the public as well as to the better type of the Mullas. The former got rid of the parasites and the latter were glad to get rid of a non-genuine element from their camp. Out of the remaining fifty per cent nearly one-fifth were employed in the Judicial and Registration Departments on attractive salaries. The Judges of the High Courts and the Appellate Court are mostly Mullas whose salaries vary from two hundred to one thousand Tumans a month. Altogether about forty per cent of the Mullas were left in the country and a new way was found out to eliminate them and reduce their influence in the country to zero.

Instead of depending upon a certificate of scholarship from the Mulla Schools at Najaf, the Mullas were required by Law to get a license from the Official Board of examiners in Iran, The license was made renewable every two years. After the expiry of the license large numbers of them were refused a license on grounds of inefficiency, want of integrity or undue interference in State affairs. By this process their number went on decreasing and the time came when in 1936 in Isphahan from nine thousand Mullas only nine Mullas were left out and in Teheran not more than a dozen Mullas could be seen.

A few Mullas that have been left in the country are really the very best and the most enlightened of the lot. I had the pleasure of meeting some of them and their company was a great intellectual treat to me.

Aga Shariat Sanglachi is the only one of them or one off the very few privileged Mullas who have been permitted to preach in public. He is a man of profound learning and is well grounded in the history and philosophy of Islam. He lectures once a week on every Thursday night in the mosque adjoining his house. He begins his lecture exactly at 7 p. m. and closes it at 8. During my stay in Teheran I never missed a single lecture of his and every time I attended it, I found that I had learnt something new from him. He is a devout Muslim and a real *dervish*. To preach Islam, the spirit of Islam and not the letter, pure Islam free from priest craft or elaborate doctrinal trappings is a hobby with him. His lecture is full of logic and unlike the common run of Mullas, he never quotes a Koranic verse or a tradition of the Prophet, without explaining the principle underlying it.

The summary of his lectures is printed in a news paper ' Kanun Shuara' for which there is a great public demand. He has a dignified look and is held in high esteem by the people. More than once he has been offered a Professorship carrying a

isalary of three hundred Tumans a month in the Ecclesiastical College in Teheran, but he has refused it point blank on the ground that he is still a student and that he cannot spare time from his studies. He belongs to an old family of learned divines and his brothers who are equally learned are working as Professors in the Ecclesiastical College.

Another Muslim divine of progressive thought who deserves a mention in this connection, is Sheikh Abu Talib Tabrezi. He delivers religious sermons to the army and is paid for them. He holds Eozakhani meetings in his house every Saturday night. Private meetings for expressing grief at the martyrdom of the Imams are not forbidden. I was a constant visitor at these meetings which are usually attended by about forty or fifty men. I was delighted to notice that more or less they took the form of a literary club. Nearly one-fourth of them were learned divines who have changed their career and the rest of them were laymen but they were all the same well informed about their religion. Tea and fruit were liberally served and a few *Kalyam* changed hands among the visitors. In an informal talk, the topic usually turned on some knotty points in Islam, some complicated verses in the Koran or some traditions which can not stand the test of reason. Explanations were offered by Sheikh Abu Talib and the learned divines of his type. There was a lively exchange of views but there was not the slightest sign of the cock-fighting which in former times characterised the method of argument of Muslim priests. At the close of the informal discussion, the meeting took a serious turn and Sheikh Abu Talib or one of his comrades stood up to deliver a sermon. Its subject matter was usually a graphic description of the sufferings of the Imams which moved the audience to tears.

Sudī meetings are held upto this day practically in every locality. This is a much more sensible way of expressing one's sorrow and sympathy for the Imams than the public demonstration

by self-mortification or processions. One of the striking features of these meetings is the absence of reviling the first three Califs which was an important item at the former meetings. His Imperial Majesty Reza Shah is not against such meetings. He is not anti-Imam or anti-Islam. But he is positively against ultra-fanaticism which had hitherto distinguished Iran from the rest of the Islamic World. He is a sincere Musalman himself and he wants to see Islam spread in its reality.

He has appointed Muslim divines to preach Islam to the army which is his personal creation. He has started an Ecclesiastical College in Teheran in which Theology is taught along the lines of the Azhar University of Cairo. Every possible inducement is given to the students studying in this College, by way of free lodging and board and additional allowance for pocket expenses.

On the other hand he has stopped the pilgrims from visiting the holy lands of Kerbela and Mecca. This is usually pointed out as a positive sign of hostility or indifference to religion. This is purely an economic measure. Some say that this prohibition is grossly incompatible with the teachings of Islam. They may be right from their point of view. But this much is certain that the motive underlying it is not an attack on religion. Its sole object is to restrict the flow of Iranian money into foreign countries. It is a temporary measure and under the present economic conditions of the country it is almost a necessity. Industrialism is growing in the country by leaps and bounds. Machinery worth millions of Tumans is imported in the country every year. Transportation facilities have brought into the country a flood of cars and buses from foreign countries.

Iran is building up her* even resources with a marvellous rapidity. In spite of her rapid progress in every respect, she is not in a position to export to the extent she is importing.

Although she is trying her best to maintain the balance of trade by following a barter system and putting restrictions on the import of luxuries, every year there is an enormous excess of imports over exports. She is not willing to borrow money from foreign powers, because her past experience in this respect has been miserable. The only way in which she can maintain the economic equilibrium in the country is to put a stop to the unnecessary drain of her metallic money to the foreign countries.

The Shah is not against the pilgrimage. If the pilgrims can manage to visit the holy lands by carrying with them instead of metallic money, the Iranian goods which they can sell in these foreign countries, there is no objection to their doing so. In fact, this is what is actually happening. Eeligious enthusiasts carry carpets with them to Iraq, sell them for the price that they can get and thus meet the expenses of their pilgrimage to Kerbela. This is the reason why Iranian carpets are cheaper in Iraq than in Iran.

Besides, this is not a new thing in Iran. The Safavis had done it at a time when it could hardly be justified by the circumstances. Mr. Markham says in his history of Iran on page 280, "One of the wisest acts of Shah Abbas the Great was the turning of the tide of Iranian pilgrims from the Shrines of Mecca and Kerbela to the more truly national one at Mashhed, a city which he made the capital of Khurasan. By encouraging pilgrimages to the grave of Imam Reza, the Shah succeeded in retaining all the overflowings of religious zeal within his own dominions.

Kum was another holy city and almost in the centre of Iran. There is a mosque containing the tomb of Fatma, a sister of Imam Reza which attracts numerous devout pilgrims. By the wise policy of Shah Abbas, all the wealth which follows the track of great bodies of devotees, was retained in Iran and spent in the cities of Mashhed and Kum instead of forming a constant drain towards Syria and Arabia."

In conclusion the Shah has done nothing that may be taken as a revolt to Islam. In fact he has rendered a great service to Islam by purging the simple creed from the distorted interpretations and innovations of the Mullahs who had turned the austere monotheism of Islam into an elaborate priestcraft. He has changed the bigotted Mullahs in his country into open minded liberals always ready to give and take. They hold firmly to the tenets of their religion but their religion now is extremely simple. The core of Islam is theism plus certain practices. A strict belief in the unity of God, an equally strict belief in the divine mission of the Prophet and certain clearly defined duties such as prayer, fasting, almsgiving and pilgrimage constitute the real Islam. This is all that Islam means and this is what the Iranians are preaching and practising to-day.

Chapter XXI.

THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN MODERN IRAN.

After the transformation of the fanatic Mullas into open minded scholars of liberal views, the Shah's next care was to raise the status of women in Iran.

Forty years ago, the position of woman in Iran was abominable. From her very birth she was looked upon as a detestable creature. She was tolerated as a necessary evil. It was the will of God and the parents had to resign themselves to their fate. She was brought up with indifference, for, unlike a son she could be of no use to her parents in old age. It was a sin to educate her. She was a burden on her parents who were always on the look out for an opportunity to get rid of her by getting her married at the age of eight or nine. She had no will of her own and her consent was never obtained even if she was married at the ripe age of eighteen or twenty. Her sole business in life was to serve her husband who could beat her and even divorce her at his own sweet will. Wife beating was not a crime. The stick had descended from Paradise. It was meant to be used against wives, children and slaves. A wife could never be trusted by her husband. A dog was considered to be more faithful than a woman. She knew nothing of the rights that Islam had granted her and she was quite contented with her lot.

It cannot be denied that there were a large number of families that lived a better life in Iran but there is no gainsaying the fact that the general state of the society was still much worse.

During the days of the Constitution, things began to take a different turn. With the opening of the Madressas for boys

on modern lines there arose a desire for the opening of Girls' schools also. The American Mission responded to the demand and opened a girls' school in Teheran which was the first of its kind in Iran. Iran's entry into diplomatic relations with the foreign powers brought into the country a large number of diplomats, traders and visitors from the West who flooded the country with western ideas. Patriots from the various parts of Iran who were responsible for wringing a Constitutional Government from the unwilling Kajars, had stirred up the country to her depth. She was seething with discontent and was looking for a thorough change in her social life.

Poets and literary men changed their field of activities. Instead of writing verses on 'Gul' and * Bulbul' or entertaining people with their cock-and-bull stories, they wrote serious poems and dramas on the importance of the education of women.

The two volumes of 'Bagh-i-Bihisht' by Ashraf, which throw here and there sarcastic hints on the wretched condition of Muslim women in Iran, are an interesting reading on the subject. He ran down the whole Muslim community of Iran by saying "Though in appearance we look like Muslims, in reality we are infidels. Our Islam consists of polygamy and nothing else. A father takes his son to task for not going to school and the son finds fault with the father for dyeing his beard, to hide his age, in order to have a fourth wife."

Ishki, a revolutionary poet of this period, ran down his own father for maltreating his mother and said "Oh, Ishki, look, why have the girls put on the veils? They have a veil on their body but all the same their eyes are wide open. Innumerable are the evils of the veil. It is the veil that has demoralised our women. A slave can move about with his master, but a wife cannot go out with her husband who is supposed to be her master. *She* Is worse than'. a slave. What

erime has she committed that she is ashamed to show her face even to her own husband in society? What does her *chadar* or her face-covering imply? It is a burial covering. If it is not this, what else is it then? Let them die who bury their wives alive. If two or three men like me were to raise their voices against this monstrous custom, I am sure the Majlis would take up this matter for a serious discussion. If women put on veils as a sign of modesty, then half the pleasure of our social life is gone. If women are shrouded in burial costumes then half of our nation is dead."

Iraj Mirza, another well-known poet of this period, wrote "Oh God, how long will our men continue to sleep? How long will they keep their women in seclusion? Oh God, when will thou enlighten man to realise his absurdity? Is not woman a human being? Is she incapable of distinguishing between right and wrong? What woman needs, is the preservation of her chastity and not a sham *chadar* or a face-covering. You think that the *chadar* is a check on her going astray. You are mistaken. Shut her up in an iron safe, if you like. Still she will go astray if she is determined to do so. If she can go astray in spite of the veil, then why not unveil her? When she comes out in society, she will learn good manners. When she receives proper education, she will be proof against temptation. In Paradise we are told, there will be Huries. They will have no veils, there. Why should our Huries have veils here? If there is no woman in society, there can be no love in the world and without love the world cannot exist. Woman is a mirror reflecting divine beauty. But you have mistaken her to be an onion or a turnip needed only in the kitchen. She looks exceedingly ugly by wearing the veil. She looks anything but a human being. Our Prophet has never said in the Koran that our women should be made to look ugly. Show me that verse of the Koran or a tradition, that enjoins upon us to shut her up from society. I assure you that the Veil is contrary to the "teaching of the Koran. It has nothing to do with chastity.

" Look at our tribes women. They have had no veil for ages. Yet the standard of morality among them compared to our veiled city women, is high. How is it that there is no lack of chastity among them? The rose will not lose its colour or fragrance, if a Nightingale were to look at it, Oh God, how can I remain silent? Why hast thou created these Akhunds and Mullas? What was the good of creating snakes in gardens? Why hast thou let loose all possible evil forces for us, the Musalmans only?"

Arif Kazwini wrote " Unveil yourself Oh moon-faced damsel. Do not listen to the advice of the so-called Mullas who have now lost their reputation. Cast off the veil and expose your beauty. If anything happens to you I take the responsibility upon myself. The veil on the face of a woman closes the door to knowledge. Where is the hand of the educationist to open this door ? "

Later on Mr. Mahdi Hijazi Qulzam wrote seventy short poems known, as seventy waves of progressive thought. In one of them he said " Oh girls, the mothers of the future generation; Oh you, the only hopes of our future learn a lesson from the past and build your future. Arm yourselves with knowledge* so that every one may fear you and respect you. May you „ become the roses in the garden of knowledge and boys the sweet nightingales in it. Win the world by your good manners. Cast off the veil from your faces, so that the Sun of wisdom may rise from the East. Tear off the veil of ignorance and open your eyes. Oh, young women of Iran do not go against the times. Oh simpletons, how long will you continue to weep for the Imams. Instead of covering your faces, close your ears against the sermons of the Sheikh. The Sheikh of to-day is quite different from the Sheikh of yesterday."

There were several other poets who wrote more or less in the same strain on the emancipation of woman. I cannot quote

every one of them for want of space. I have picked up a few for my purpose to show my readers a specimen of the literature of this period. Lyrics, romance or didactic poetry were altogether out of vogue and the subject matter of the poems was social or political reforms.

After the establishment of the constitutional government, the press had grown very powerful. It made a vehement protest against the maltreatment of women in Iran and criticised the reactionary Mullahs right and left. It stirred the people to their depths and female education became the burning topic of the day.

In the *Suri-Israfil* we read "When will bribes go out of fashion and our so-called Mullahs come to their senses? When will law and justice be established in Iran? When will facilities be provided for the education of boys and girls? When will Islam be free from the influence of astrologers and our religious guides?"

The editor of the *Hadid* wrote, "Eve was created from a rib of Adam. Hence she was treated by him as a part of himself. We have neglected this part and the result is that we have all become paralytics."

In the *Setar-e-Jahan* we find "I went to a village and I was told that hundreds of parents had buried dozens of children in the course of twenty years of their married life. This was because ignorant mothers did not know how to bring up their children. The ignorance of women is the chief cause of the under-population of our country."

Again we read in the same paper, "In the past the child belonged to its parents. They did what they liked with the child; Now we have realised that it belongs to the State. Whether it grows into a good or bad boy or girl affects the whole

society. It is high time for us to devote serious attention to this question,"

This was the general tone of the press of this period. There was a feverish excitement all over the country. People were burning with a desire to educate their daughters. Clamour for social progress was the natural concomitant of political advancement. But, with all this no definite step could be taken in open defiance of the reactionary Mullahs. Iran was still governed, not by civil but by religious Law.

The way for an immediate organised invasion of the rights and privileges of the religious dignitaries was not open as yet. They held great power, inside as well as outside the Majlis. But as long as hundreds of patriots of the type of Khiyabani of Azerbaijan and Colonel Mohmed Takie were available in the country, men who were ready to lay down their lives in the cause of their country, there was a fair prospect of the emancipation of woman.

From 1906 till 1910, there was no peace in the country. The social workers were determined to carry on the reforms at any cost. They made desperate attacks against the Mullahs and hundreds of them lost their lives in the fearful struggle with these reactionary forces. The Mullahs carried the day. But the social workers changed their tactics and carried on the campaign in their own homes. They educated their wives and daughters and prepared them for the great task of working out the destiny of their sex in Iran.

Nothing could be a better proof of the great inherent powers of the gifted race of the Iranians than the fact that within a few years after the struggle, there were more than three hundred educated women in Teheran, who organised themselves into a band of social workers. Politics and social progress being

inseparable they took a keen interest not only in the working out of their own destiny but also in state affairs. They held meeting* in the houses of one another and discussed politics in secrecy.

From 1911 onwards, this band of educated women has played an incalculable part in the modernisation of Iran. Mr. Shuster, in his well-known book 'Strangling of Iran,' has given the following glowing account of the activities of the members of this Ladies' Club.

" It was well-known in Teheran that there were dozens of more or less secret societies among the Iranian women, with a central organisation by which they were controlled. To this day, I know neither the names, nor the faces of the leaders of this group. But in a hundred different ways, I learnt from time to time that I was being aided and supported by the patriotic fervour of thousands of the weaker sex."

" A few examples may suffice. While sitting in my office, one morning, I was told that one of the Iranian clerks wished to see me on an important matter. This young man now came in. I had never seen him. He said that his mother who was our friend had commissioned him to say that my wife should not pay a visit to the wife of a certain Iranian grandee by whom she had been invited. Since the grandee was an enemy to the Constitutional Government, my wife's visit would make the Iranians suspect me. I asked him, how his mother knew of this, private social affair of my wife. He said it had been discussed in the secret society of which his mother was a member. There is a saying in Teheran, 'when the women take part in a general agitation against a Cabinet of the Government, the situation becomes serious !'"

" When the properties of the estate of Shuau-Saltaneh were to be confiscated, the Russian Government gave But the pretext that the park of Shuau-Saltaneh in Teheran was mortgaged to

the Russian Bank. Every one knew that the claim was false. But to all demands that the Russian Bank should produce its books and other proofs, a deaf ear was turned."

"It was then that I received a striking proof of the courage and patriotism of an Iranian woman and the practical value of her support. An Iranian woman, one of the legitimate wives of the Prince, sent me through her brother, a document which contained the full lists and inventories of his lands and properties and a statement of his debts which made no mention of his debts to the Russian Bank. She did so because she believed, it was her duty to her country."

"With all this it was rumoured that in secret conclave the Deputies had decided to yield to the Russian Bank. The bazars and people of the capital were torn with anxiety. What could the nationalists do to hold their representatives to their duty?"

"The Iranian women supplied the answer. Out from their walled court yards and harems marched three hundred women with the flush of undying determination in their cheeks. They were clad in their black robes. They held pistols under their skirts or in the folds of their sleeves. Straight to the Majlis they went and demanded of the President that he should admit them all. The President consented to receive a delegation of them. In his reception hall they confronted him and lest he and his colleagues should doubt their meaning, these cloistered Iranian mothers, wives and daughters exhibited threateningly their revolvers, tore aside their veils and confessed their decision to kill their husbands and sons and leave behind their dead bodies, if the Deputies wavered in their duties to uphold the liberty and dignity of the Iranian people."

My honour to the veiled Women of Iran, Both with the idea of absolute dependence upon the fancy and caprices of men,

deprived of all opportunities to educate themselves along modern lines, watched, guarded and rebuffed, they took interest in the freedom of their country and offered their daily contributions to the cause of the country, watching its servants with a mother's jealous eyes and not failing in that tragic hour when men's hearts grew weak and the constant dread of prison and its tortures, the noose and the bullet had settled on the breast of the land;"

This was only a side show. The real sphere of the activities of these gifted ladies lay in the field of social work in which they have worked wonders. Each member of the secret society or societies of Iranian women frequently visited the women of her locality, to create public opinion in favour of the education of girls and the general uplift of women. They made friends with ignorant women and during their complimentary calls on one another, they gradually won over the ignorant women to their ways of thinking. They held weekly meetings to discuss the ways and means of raising the status of women in Iran.

At one of these meetings, one lady remarked, "Men have lost all sense of shame and honour. They have trampled upon our rights. They have ignored our education. They have treated us as slaves. Some of them are beginning to realise the wrong they have done us. But they are lacking in the frankness to admit their guilt and they have not the courage to take the lead in the uplift of women. They have lost their manliness. Let us give them a few lessons on this and work out our destiny in our own way."

Some say that Mrs. Peryam, an Armenian lady whose husband was a Commissioned Officer in the days of Mohmed Ali Shah was the founder of the Ladies' Societies. Some say that Masturai-Khanam Afshar was the founder and others suggest some other names. It is difficult to verify the various contradictory statements of the local people. From what I could gather, this much is certain that Masturai-Khanam Afshar, a

woman of undaunted courage and an extraordinary organising capacity, whether she was a founder or not, has played an important part in organising the educated women of her period into a band of women-workers for the freedom of their country from the shackles of traditionalism.

In 1910, there appeared an Iranian lady of a new type in Teheran. She did not believe in the weekly meetings of these women-workers. Not words, but deeds was her motto. Her name was Tuba Khanam Namus. She was the daughter of Mirza Husein Khan Sartep from whom she had learnt Iranian and French at home. At the age of fourteen she was married to one Mirza Abdul Husein Khan who was greatly interested in the education of women. He spent his spare time in the growth of her education, the foundation of which was laid by her father. After fifteen years of married life with this talented lady, he died of epilepsy. Tuba Khanam received several offers for marriage, but she rejected them all and made a vow to devote her life to the cause of her country.

She opened a girls' school in Teheran which was the first Iranian girls' school in Iran. Strictly speaking, the American girls' school was the first of its kind in Iran. I am told that much before Tuba Khanam's school came into existence, in addition to the already existing American girls' school, an Iran-Franco girls' school was started by a certain Mr, Ishar Khan a French convert to Islam who had married an Iranian woman. It is all true. But both of these schools were foreign institutions under foreign management. Tuba Khanam deserves the credit for opening the first purely Iranian school under Iranian management.

The edict of infidelity was passed by the Mullas against her. The tables and chairs of her school were stolen. Her pupils were beaten on their way to school. Their clothes were torn,

Their books were snatched away from their hands. She herself was molested and harassed in all possible ways. 'But she was a lady of iron will. She was determined to develop her school into a first rate institution at any cost. She appealed to the authorities for help. Fortunately for her, the Cabinet consisted of men of progressive views and she was supplied with half a dozen soldiers to escort the girls from their homes to school and back again.

In 1912 Maryam Khanam, a Kurdish lady and Nurudduja Khanam and Badrudduja Mihrtaj, the two daughters of one Imamul-Hukama who is generally reported to be an Indian or an Iranian born of an Indian mother, came out from the American school as the first Iranian girl-graduates. The first two of them joined Tuba* Khanam's school and the third undertook the organisation of a ladies' camp for social work. New classes were added to the school and by 1913 it grew into a really first rate institution and its diplomas were recognised by the Iran Government. Maryam Khanam moved about with a veil on, but the two Indian sisters put on English dress and went about freely with hats on. They are generally reported to have been converted to Christianity and it is on this ground that they escaped molestation from the ignorant masses and the Mull as.

Tuba Khanam was a born teacher. She treated her pupils with motherly affection and thus exercised an enormous personal influence over them. Almost all the girl-students who received diplomas from this school came out with a resolve to serve their country. They either served as teachers in the same school, opened new schools or carried on a propaganda for the emancipation of women.

Tuba Khanam had no time to attend the weekly meetings of the Ladies' Club. But all the same, her school supplied them with a large number of women-workers.

In *1914 the number of women-workers rose to 'over five hundred. Their working committee consisted of Muhtaram Khanam Iskandari, Durratul-Mali Khanam, Farrukh-Laka Khanam, Mihrtaj-Bakhshan the daughter of Imamul-Hukama, Fakhr-Unnisa who is now known as Fakhr-i-Adil and Khanam Daulatabadi. They spread their activities all over Iran. The country was instinctively yearning for a better life and in every important town, educated women of Tuba Khanam's type came forward to take the lead in the uplift of women.

Maryam Khanam Ardalan, the first graduate of the American Girls' School at Teheran, set up a small school at Tabriz which attracted a large number of girl-students, most of whom were her own relations. When her school began to show sign of prosperity, her husband who was employed in the Iranian Consulate was transferred to Turkey. She refused to accompany her husband to Turkey and preferred to stay at Tabriz to serve her country. For nearly six years she kept aloof from her husband and with no encouragement from the public, she struggled hard to improve her school.

In 1920 some more educated women came to her help and her school developed into a full grown institution on modern lines. Her students, on the completion of their course of studies, either joined her school as teachers or took to the propaganda **work**. Iranian women are by nature industrious and have a **a** great capacity for work. When once they take to a thing they never leave it half done.

In 1921 she left the school in charge of some of her relations and she herself took to propaganda work. At present she is an Inspectress of Girls' Schools in Teheran.

Another luminary among the women-workers of this period is Khanam Daulatabadi. She is a daughter of one Mirza Hadi

Daulatabadi, a Mujtahid of enlightened views who was held in high esteem by the people in Isphahan. She was educated by her father at home. In 1911 she opened a girls' school at Isphahan. She suffered a lot at the hands of the local Mullas. Had it not been for the help she received from her brothers who were all Mujtahids of advanced views, she would have been burnt alive. Her experience at the hands of the Mullas and the ignorant masses was in no way less bitter and trying than that of Tuba Khanam at Teheran. She fought with these reactionary forces to a finish and ultimately put her institution on a sound footing.

She started a paper 'Zaban-i-Zanan' or the tongue of women for propagating the doctrine of the freedom of women. This was the first paper of its kind and had a great circulation in the country. This paper had a great future, but unfortunately Khanam Daulatabadi occasionally indulged in politics and her adverse criticism of the officials brought her into displeasure with the party in power and her paper was suppressed.

« In 1920 she handed over her institution in Isphahan to Badrudduja Khanam and she herself came to Teheran where at the invitation of the Ladies' Club, she carried on the propaganda for the emancipation of women, with vigour and effectiveness. In addition to her other activities in this direction, she started a magazine dealing with social, economic and literary subjects. In 1922 she sold all her landed property that she had inherited from her father and went to France to acquire higher education.

In 1928 she returned from France and began to move about in the country without a veil. She has played an important part in the unveiling of Iranian women and at present like Khanam Maryam Ardalan she is an Inspector of girls' schools in Tehran,

Fakhr-i-Adil is another distinguished lady of this'periWL who has had a remarkable career in the uplift of her sex. She is a daughter of Colonel Murtaja Ali Khan, a Military Officer of enlightened views. She belongs to the first batch of Tuba Khanam's pupils. In addition to the diploma she had received from this school, her father had engaged private tutors to teach her English and French. At the age of twenty she opened a free school for imparting Primary Education to adult women. This was the first and the only school of its kind in Iran. For eight years she conducted this school with success. But later on, owing to adverse circumstances she was compelled to close the school and take up a position under the Ministry of Education. She is a poet of no mean order and her occasional poems which usually appeared in news papers make interesting reading.

Another talented lady who deserves to be mentioned in this connection, is Kbanam Parvin, the daughter of Itsam-ul-Mulk. Her father is the Librarian in the Parliament House Library and she herself is a Librarian at the Danish-Saraj-Ali. I have the pleasure of knowing both her father and this distinguished lady personally. She is a literary giant and is unquestionably a first rate poet among the modern writers in Iran. Her intellectual attainments in the field of Iranian literature are known all over the country. Oriental scholars in the West have spoken of her in high terms. She is reported to be an authority on mysticism in Iran.

She is a graduate of the American School. She knows English well and has mastered the French language. Her *Dican* of two hundred and thirteen poems has been recently printed in Teheran and is widely read in the country. She is an unassuming lady by nature and modest to the extreme. With the exception of a few occasional poem^ on the emancipation of women she does not seem to have taken an active part in the

progressive movement of the country. Directly she has done very little. But indirectly, by her culture, modesty and excellent character, she has had an inspiring effect on the women of her period.

These are some of the ladies of outstanding merit of the revolutionary period, that have played a heroic role in the emancipation of women. As far as possible I have tried to tap the most reliable sources for my information. But all the same it is quite likely that I may have omitted some still worthier persons who are largely responsible for the modernisation of Iran. My omission of these ladies should not be misconstrued as a deliberate attempt to belittle their importance.

My object in tracing the history of evolution is not to write a book on the lives of great men or women of the revolutionary period but simply to point out to my readers that the modernisation has not been forced on the country against her will. I have picked out a few specimens of prominent women-workers of this period to show that from 1910 onwards the country has been steadily moving towards Westernisation which was her ultimate goal. No one should blame me for my making mention of one worker and not of the other. For my purpose it matters little whether I mention X or Y though Y may have played a more important part than X.

Besides, no authentic book seems to have been written on the rise of Iran, as yet. One has to depend for information on the conflicting reports of the local people and it is no easy matter to verify these reports. There is a small book known as '**Beidari-Iran**' or awakening in Iran. But even this book is not up-to-date and is unsatisfactory in many respects. The Ministry of Education has offered a prize of five hundred Tumans for the best book written in Iranian on the period of the Iranian Revolution, leading to the accession of Reza Shah Pahlavi to the throne.

Prospective winners of the prize are busily engaged in the writing of this book and are reluctant to give out the information, they possess until the result of the competition is announced. This will be done soon and the book of the prize winner will be printed and published by the Ministry of Education.

Returning to the rise of women in Iran, in 1920 a committee of the alumni of the American Girls' School in Teheran started 'Vam-i-Nesvan', world of women or women's world, an important magazine in Iran. The committee was assisted and directed by Mrs. A. O. Boyce of the American Mission. The aim of the magazine was to give information and inspiration to the women of Iran. It dealt with all sorts of questions pertaining to woman. It devoted its special attention to hygiene, house-keeping and the training of children and gave news of the progress of women in other countries. Its circulation was more than twelve thousand copies per issue. It found its way into eighty cities and towns in Iran. The magazine lived for about twelve years and during the time of its publication, it exercised an enormous influence over men and women and made no small contribution towards the progress of women in Iran.

In 1921 when Reza Shah launched his great scheme of the internal development of the country, with the exception of the reactionary Mullas, the whole country was prepared for it. All intelligent men and women were yearning for a better life. Education of men and women on modern lines had become the burning problem of the day. But the priests were against it and there was little encouragement from the Government. Constant changes in the Cabinet made it difficult for the Central Government to maintain a consistent policy. Politicians made many promises but they seldom kept them. With all this the work done by the patriotic women of this period for the elevation of their sex was nothing short of heroic.

A gigantic move was made by them. Much was done in the field of the emancipation of women. But this was not enough. A good deal more had to be done. The life of an intelligent woman in Iran was still a Hell on Earth. She was a play-thing of her husband. Married life for a gifted or a spirited woman was intolerable. Religion or the Mulla made religion, to be more exact, had degraded her in society. Talented women of this period who could not agree with their husbands sought divorce and took to the social work. -

Reza Shales sole care was the emancipation of women. He conscientiously believed that no country in the world could prosper without the co-operation of its women with men. But he was cautious to the extreme. He had a thorough grasp of the situation. He watched with interest the women's movement and allowed the things to take their own course. From 1921 till 1925 he began to feel his way and in 1925 when his plans for breaking the power of the Mullas were ready, he put in motion forces which slowly but steadily cut the ground from under their feet. Every effective blow struck at the Muslim divines cleared the way for the social reforms and accelerated in more than one way the speed of the country's march towards modernisation.

By the beginning of 1928, the codification of new Civil and Criminal Law, the establishment of new Courts of Justice, compulsory Military service and a host of other minor reforms had given a death blow to the Mullas and the way for a forward march was made clear.

In the same year, the Mullas cut their own throats by offending the Queen, in public. The Queen, the mother of the crowned Prince visited Kum to participate in the Iranian new year services celebrated in the holy Shrine of Masuma the sister of **Imam Reza**. Inadvertently she happened to expose **her face during the service**. She was severely reprimanded by the

officiating Mulla who deplored the tendencies of modern women to depart from the traditional customs of the Islamic faith. This roused the fanaticism of the whole crowd and they made a similar demonstration of their disapproval of her behaviour.

The Queen informed the Shah by telephone, of what had happened at the Shrine. The news spread like wild fire and the whole country was up against the Mullas. By this time the Shah had not only grown powerful but extremely popular with his subjects. Respect for woman was an established Law in the civilised world. To show disrespect to a woman in public was a mark of barbarism. To disregard the position of the Queen was nothing short of treason. It was an open insult to the Crown and the country. The Shah made up his mind to teach the Mullas on this occasion a lesson.

With two armoured cars and a body of troops, the Shah arrived at Kum. He entered the holy Shrine and whipped the offender in the presence of hundreds of his brother Mullas and thousands of ignorant Muslim devotees. This is the only kind of physical force that the Shah is reported to have used against the Mullas. They deserved it. They dug their graves with their own hands. This eventful incident had a desired effect on the public and the prestige of the Mullas was lost for ever. From this time onwards throughout the year 1928 one reform after another was introduced with no regard to the susceptibilities of the Mullas and not the least fear of opposition from them.

After this incident the new Government had a free hand. The Ministry of Education reorganised its whole system of education on modern lines and opened hundreds of modern schools for boys and girls not only in big cities but also in towns and villages. With the opening of *Kndakistan* or kindergartens of the French type for children below the age of five and the founding or the complete reorganisation of the Medical College

the Law School, the Engineering College, the Industrial School, the Agricultural College, the Arts College and several other institutions of this type for providing higher education, co-education crept in, at the top and at the¹ bottom, almost unnoticed by the public.

At the end of this eventful year permission was granted to Muslim women to visit cinemas, restaurants and other public places. They were further allowed to speak to men in the streets and to ride with men in carriages with the tops down. Instructions were issued to the Police, to see that none of these women who wished to take advantage of these privileges was molested. A few months later, a still more drastic measure was taken by allowing police protection to those Muslim women who chose to appear unveiled in public. These privileges were taken full advantage of by women of advanced views who to popularise this new movement, invariably invited their ignorant women friends to the cinemas and cafes.

Khanam Daulatabadi who at this time had just returned from France where she had spent more than six years in acquiring the higher education of the French University, made herself conspicuous by moving about unveiled under police protection.

I had the pleasure of staying with her as a guest for more than a fortnight. Her after-dinner talk which usually turned on her experiences of this period was highly interesting.

On one occasion she said, when she was returning from Shimran by bus, Sheikh Taki a renowned Mujtahid from Isphahan happened to be sitting by her side. He requested one of the passengers to exchange seat, in order that the Mulla might avoid looking at the face of a woman which was a great sin to him. She also got up and requested another passenger sitting by the side of the Mulla to exchange seate. He complied with her

request and she sat by the side of the Mulla again and said to this dignitary "I like to look at your face. It is a great pleasure to look at you. You cannot prevent me from looking at you. If you do not want to look at me you are welcome to do so. You can put on a veil if you like. You can easily turn your loose cloak into a veil." All the people sitting in the bus enjoyed a hearty laugh at the cost of the Mulla. But the poor Sheikh said nothing and quietly blindfolded his eyes with a handkerchief. He knew very well that he could do nothing to her, because a soldier assigned to her protection was sitting in the bus.

A member of the Majlis told me that this very dignitary some twenty years ago was so powerful that if a similar incident had taken place in those earlier days when the Mullas were all in all, Heavens would have fallen on Earth.

Once, I am told that this very Sheikh fell ill at Isphahan and sent for a Christian doctor of the English Hospital to treat him. Immediately after the departure of the doctor, he ordered the chair on which the Christian doctor was seated to be burnt at once. This was not all. He further ordered that all the costly carpets of the room in which the doctor was seated should be removed and sent out for washing. The chair was immediately burnt and in a couple of hours* time the carpets were carried on a donkey to a tank. When the carpets were washed and dried and brought back by his servants, "Did you wash the carpets?" shouted the Sheikh. "Yes", replied the servants. "What about the donkey?" shouted the Sheikh again. "Did you wash the donkey before you reloaded the poor animal with the clean carpets?" "No", replied the servants. The Sheikh grew wild and said, "Listen, the unclean Christian doctor has contaminated my carpets. When you loaded them on the donkey, the animal must have sweated under the load and the sweat must have been defiled by the carpets and ultimately the sweat must have polluted the animal. The reloading of the purified

carpets on the polluted animal has made the carpets once again impure. Go back at once. Be wash the carpets and wash the donkey before you reload the carpets on him."

This sort of rabid fanaticism which was nothing short of stupidity, instead of lowering him in the estimation of the public made his position enviable. He was looked upon as an embodiment of purity and piety.

It is such stupid Mullahs who for the good of the Muslim community, have been driven away from the camp of the Mullahs and not the Muslim divines of the type of Agha Shariat.

To revert to the progress of women in Iran, in 1929 a trouble arose in Afghanistan. Amanullah's hasty reforms provoked the wrath of the Afghans who were still five centuries behind the times. The reactionary Mullahs excited the angry masses to the highest pitch and Amanullah had to lose the throne.

There was no fear of a similar rising in Iran. For the reforms in this country were not all introduced at once with haste but step by step and with great caution. All the same the situation in Iran was not altogether free from complications. The Shah of Iran could not ignore the fact that Afghans were the next door neighbours of the Iranians. Iran stood between the westernising influence of her advanced neighbours the Turks on one side and the demoralising fanaticism of her extremely backward Afghan neighbours on the other. Thus with his characteristic astuteness, the Shah suspended further reforms and permitted his country an interval of two years to assimilate the reforms that had already been introduced in the country.

Iran had already made a considerable progress. No reactionary force could obstruct her march towards modernism. There was some trouble in Ma^hhed but it was nipped in the bud.

Two years' breiaHing time made the people impatient. **The** press was clamouring for the complete emancipation of women. Meetings were held all over the country thanking the King for what he had done and urging him to do away with the veil. Theatrical performances were organised here and there to ridicule **the** veil. Speeches of celebrated speakers against the veil were recorded on gramophone records and these records were played in every house.

The following are some of the important articles of the news papers of this period. The editor of 'Sitarai Jahan' has played a great role in this movement. He had reserved one half of his paper for the contribution of public opinion on the unveiling of women.

On December 13, 1931, he wrote:—"It is not known how and when the veil was introduced in Iran. We cannot say that Islam is responsible for it. The Koranic injunction on this point does not seem to be distinct".

"The Koran says in Surai Noor Ch. 24:—"Ask women to cover their heads, their necks and their breasts. Let them not display their embellishments to any one except their husbands, father-in-laws, sons, brothers, nephews, their slaves and male children".

"It is not mentioned that they should cover their faces hands and feet. Apart from this we have other reasons to prove that it is not desirable to put on the veil. With regard to our Muslim divines they are not unanimous in the matter. Some are in favour of the veil and others are against it. Those that preach against the veil have no sound arguments to strengthen theic opinion."

It is written in Jawahirul-Kalam that' some one asked the Prophet whether a stranger could look at a woman. He is said

to have replied that he could look at her face, hands and feet. Some writers maintain that the Prophet himself permitted his daughter to go about with her face uncovered. If the veil is used for the protection of women, let me tell you that to-day, unveiled women are more protected than the veiled ones".

On February 21st 1932, the *Aindhai Iran* published the following:—"Before unveiling our women, we should try to educate them first. Without education they cannot move in society. We should pay no heed to their meaningless clamour against the veil until we have educated at least fifty per cent. of them".

On April 6, 1932, the editor of *Da vat-Islam* wrote, "Why are our women making haste in unveiling? Nowadays we hear everywhere, sometimes a murmur and at times a loud clamour against the veil. The reasons usually put forth are, that the veil is a hindrance to progress. With it they say, women cannot be of much use to society. There is already lack of work for men. How can we find work for women? Now they spend from ten to fifty Tumans on *chadars*. If they are unveiled, I cannot say how much more money they will spend on hats, stockings and face powder. Let us wait till they are properly educated and can understand the principles of domestic economy."

On April 30, 1932, Fakhri-Adil wrote in the *Aindhai Iran* "In Europe women, in addition to their home duties which they discharge with the utmost care, usually help their husbands in their outside work. But our women cannot perform even their home-duties well. We hope they will soon rise and take up their proper position in life."

This was the tone of the press of this period. The country was yearning **for** the complete emancipation **of** women. The **Mullas had been systematically eliminated from the field of their**

activities. No reactionary force was left in the country. Yet the Shah was cautious to the extreme. He did not believe in the hasty modernisation of his country. He stuck to his slow but sure policy of introducing the reforms by well measured doses.

Thus the question of the unveiling of women was left where it was and on the 15th of August of 1931, marriage reforms of a drastic character were instituted. The following are the essential points of these reforms:—

"(1) All marriage contracts and acts of divorce are required by Law to be registered with a Civil Official. (2) The minimum age required for marriage for a girl is sixteen and for a boy eighteen. (3) Marriage is forbidden to take place between those who cannot prove their physical fitness. (4) A wife can use her private property as she likes. (5) One cannot marry a second wife without the consent of his first wife. This consent has put a great check on polygamy, since it is not an easy matter to induce the first wife to permit her husband to marry a second one. (6) A wife can claim divorce from her husband on grounds of serious disagreement. (7) The boy and the girl must be given ample opportunity to mix with each other with the consent or connivance of their parents, at least for two years before they can contract a marriage. This amounts to a love marriage of the West with certain restrictions. (8) A Non-Iranian cannot marry an Iranian girl without obtaining permission from the Iranian Government. This is usually granted if the prospective bride-groom can prove that he can support the Iranian girl according to her status in life."

A friend of mine Mr. Maliki, the editor of 'Sitarai-Jahan' * was married at the age of thirty-two. His marriage took place during my stay in Teheran. It was performed in a European style. Men and women dressed in European costume were invited to the marriage. After the Nika ceremony was over,

the bride-groom introduced the bride to his friends. This was followed by a dance which lasted for about two hours. The married couple was the most prominent among the dancing pairs and the officiating Mulla was a quiet spectator of the scene. I cannot say what he thought of it in his mind. But to all appearance he showed no signs of disapproval. This is the way in which modern marriages are celebrated in Iran.

Mr. Maliki told me that he had made a vow at an early age not to get married until the country was prepared for such marriages. At the age of twenty a pressure was brought on him by his parents and his friends to get married, but he had defied them all and was waiting for the day when he could marry in a European style. He abhorred the polygamous marriages in his country. Now he was quite happy to realise his long cherished hope. "I have waited long" said he, "and have worked hard for this kind of marriage. For years and years together nearly half of my paper was devoted to the cause of women. Our work is done now. I can say with pride that in more than one way we are more advanced than the Turks." This was a bold statement, but it is by no means untrue.

In 1933 a Representative Committee of the Muslim ladies Oriental Conference of Beirut arrived in Iran. It was headed by Madam Noor Hamedah, a prominent member of 'The society for the emancipation of Muslim women.' Madam Janin, a French tourist, was also with the party. Altogether there were twelve Muslim ladies. The object of their visit to Iran was to elect representatives from amongst the women of Iran.

They were given a warm welcome by the Iranians. These ladies were pleased to notice that all Iranian women were not lacking in education, intelligence or patriotism. They already possessed a society for the elevation of women. This society had worked wonders during the period of its twenty years' activity.

If Osmanlies could boast of a woman like Halide Edib Hanum who in 1913 had addressed an audience of men on the uplift of women, with the traditional veil on her face, Iran could show a much better record of the work done by her progressive women even earlier than this.

In the last days of Nassiruddin Shah, there appeared in Tabrez an Iranian woman Zenub who was gifted with a marvellous capacity for organisation. On one occasion failure of crops caused famine in Tabrez. The grandees of the country closed their granaries and were waiting for a crisis in order to sell their corn at an exorbitant price. Zenub organised a party of women volunteers. She provided them with arms and leading this troop to the Governor, she threatened him with an assault if he failed to force open the granaries. The Governor took immediate fright and ordered the granaries to be opened by force. This was the work of a veiled woman of the Nineteenth Century in Iran.

Recently a Divan of one thousand verses by one Mahsharaf Khanam, a Kurdish lady has been printed in Teheran which is considered to be a good specimen of modern poetry. This Kurdish lady is said to be a contemporary of a well-known poet Yaghma who flourished in the latter part of the Kajar period. If attempts were made more Divans of this type written by the Iran women of this period could be traced. I am told that there were many prominent women writers of this period who for fear of opposition from the Mullas could not give publicity to their literary works. Since several other women of Mahsharaf Khanam's intellectual attainments can be traced in Iran, one cannot but admire the inherent powers of the gifted race of the Iranians who have been misrepresented by foreign travellers in the past as congenital idiots.

If such women could exist at a time when there was no sign of public or private education and when according to the

Mulla made religion, it was a heinous sin for a woman **to read** and write, it is no wonder that the modern women of Iran are more advanced than their sisters in the East. This is just what was expected of them. The Iranian women have been struggling for self assertion for ages. They were waiting for an opportunity to show to the world their sterling qualities which distinguish them from the rest of the Muslim women of the East. H. I. M. Reza Shah Pahlavi's accession to the throne, afforded them a golden opportunity and now they have shown to the world what they have been able to do in the course of a few years.

To revert to the visit of the Beirut Committee, at the time of the arrival of the Beirut ladies in Iran, there were more than a hundred ladies of Khanam Daulatabadi's type available in the country. Some of them had received a University education of the foreign countries, some of them were the Graduates of the American Girls' School at Teheran and others had acquired a sound home education under the care of their parents or their husbands.

In short, the Iranian women were well advanced and were so sure of farther support from their Government, in their struggle for the emancipation of women, that they took it to be an insult, to be guided by the Beirut ladies who proposed to convene a Muslim Women Conference in Teheran.

Khanam Daulatabadi told me that in 1928 on her return from France where she had been deputed by her country to attend the American World Women Conference which was holding its sessions in Paris, she stopped in Turkey and stayed with the Iranian Consul for a few weeks. During her short stay in Turkey, she formed a very poor opinion of the unveiled women of this country. Even twenty per cent of the women were not to be seen in the crowded bazars. In spite of Turkey being ten years ahead of Iran, in starting the emancipation of women,

Khanam Datflatabadi honestly believed that the Iranian women who were not unveiled as yet were more advanced than their already unveiled sisters in Turkey.

" Our Turkish sisters ", said she, " started the emancipation movement in 1900. Till 1912 they did nothing but talk. It was in 1913 that the Osmanali Womens Society opened the first girl's school in Estambole. We began our work not mere talk somewhere about 1910. In three years' time we opened such a large number of girl's schools in Teheran that when our Osmanali sisters in 1913 began to look for teachers for their girl's school, we stood in need of the appointment of an Inspectress of Girls' Schools to supervise our institutions".

"I was very reluctant" said Khanam Daulatabadi, "to co-operate with the Beirut ladies. But our traditional sense of hospitality compelled us to treat our guests with respect".

With a certain amount of reluctance on the part of the Iranian women, the Muslim Women Conference was convened and Madam Noor Hamedah was unanimously elected the President. The following resolutions were passed at the Conference:—

- (1) As soon as the majority of the Iranian women have been educated they shall ask Government to give them the right to vote.
- (2) The Government shall be asked to make Primary Education compulsory both for boys and girls and higher education voluntary.
- (3) The Government shall be asked to open Industrial Schools for boys and girls.
- (4) The study of the mother-tongue shall be made obligatory in all foreign schools in Iran.
- (5) There shall be medical examination of both men and women before marriage.
- (6) Boys and girls before marriage shall be given opportunities to know each other.
- (7) Such restrictions shall be put on polygamy as to make it impracticable.
- (8) The use of locally made articles shall be encouraged.

On reading to Khanam Daulatabadi, these resolutions, which I had got from old records, she shrugged her shoulders and remarked, "We had no need of passing these resolutions. Our present Government had already decided to carry them out. In fact some of these resolutions had already been carried out by our Government, not as a result of our discussing them at a Conference but at the desire of H. I. M. Reza Shah who is more interested in the uplift of our sex than the women workers".

While going through the old records of this period, I came across an interesting article which was published by *Aindahai Iran* on September 25th 1933, a few months after the visit of the Beirut ladies. The article runs thus:—

Miss D. M. M. Tava has sent us the following letter from Paris:—"I am twenty-six years of age. After finishing my school career in Iran, I have come to Paris to specialise, in Dentistry. I have been awarded a diploma and have been working in one of the hospitals. Last year I was invited to enter a beauty competition held here. Had it not been for an illness which prevented me from attending it, I would have got the first prize and would have been declared the queen of beauty from Iran. My photo which is enclosed in this letter is the best proof of the veracity of my statement. I want an Iranian husband with the following qualifications:—(1) His age should be between twenty-seven and thirty. (2) He should be tall, lean and somewhat dork. (3) He should belong to a respectable family. (4) He should not be a constant visitor to cafes and restaurants. (5) He should not be in debt. (6) He should not have another wife. (7) He should have a good all round education and should know at least two foreign languages. (6) He should have enough means to support a family in a decent way. (9) He should be a specialist in Science or the Arts. (10) He should possess a certificate of physical fitness from a recognised physician

One day, at a tea party I spoke of this letter to an Iranian friend of mine. He said in reply, with a certain amount of gravity on his face, ^{<4} Do not take this to be a joke Sir. It is a serious letter. This shows the refined taste of our ladies. This is the ideal that is set before our young men. If they aspire to have good wives, these are the qualifications that are expected of them."

To continue the history of the emancipation of women in Iran, in 1934 the Queen went to Europe unveiled and on her journey through Germany, she received with the consent of the Shah, an Official of the German Foreign Office who presented her with a bouquet of flowers as a mark of respect.

This portended the further emancipation of women. The news was hailed with joy in Iran and immediately after this, a hint was dropped to the women teachers that the Government would be much pleased if they would go unveiled to their schools. A few months later, formal orders were issued forbidding female teachers and pupils to attend Government Schools with veils. The public knew very well which way the wind was blowing.

In 1935 a literary academy of women was started and Shah Dukht Pahlavi the eldest daughter of the king was elected its President. Its aims are, (1) to encourage physical education among the girls and their teachers. (2) To promote the feeling of co-operation and philanthropic work among the members. (3) To discuss ways and means for improving the system of education and the promotion of the standard of morality in the country.

By the end of 1936, the country had made enormous progress in every respect. One sweeping change after, Another had been introduced in the ancient customs and habits of life. The Education Department, the Public Works Department, the

Health and Sanitation Department and the Judicial Department had all extended their fields of activities with an amazing rapidity. But the Shah was not satisfied with what was done. He was anxious to do what in his opinion ought to have been done.

On September 10, 1935, at the opening of the tenth Session of the Parliament, in reviewing the progress of the country in the course of ten years, His Majesty remarked, " With regard to the internal affairs of Iran, our nation has been in the past so held back by negligence, it has been so backward and so oppressed by poverty and want that the more we move forward the more apparent becomes the need for a further move. The only way by which we can draw nearer to our goal is to exert ourselves to our utmost capacity. Talk little of what you have done and much of what you have still to do. My instructions to you therefore are that in this Session the programme laid before you shall be substantial work and not an empty discussion ",

Chapter XXII.

THE VEIL OFF.

The year 1936 marks the culminating point in the emancipation of women in Iran. The 8th of January of this year is the epoch making day in the history of Iran. On this day the veil was officially off.. The 'Iran' the leading paper in Teheran, published the following account of this glorious event:— "Yesterday our dear native land entered a new Era in her social life. On this historic day, freedom of women was officially announced. One-half of the inhabitants of our country were given a new lease of life. Full credit for this boon is due to H. I. M. Reza Shah Pahiavi. This life-giving news has been received everywhere with applause. "

"At 3 P.M, H. I. M. Reza Shah Pahiavi, Her Majesty the Queen and Princess Shah Dukht drove in State towards the newly built Normal School outside the Daulat Gate. Crowds of men and unveiled women were standing in rows along the route announced for the Eoyal Procession, to cheer the Eoyal party. Two lady-students from the school of Medicine received the King, the Queen and the Princess at the gate and led the Eoyal Party to the Hall where they held a reception."

Mr. Sameeyee, the Chief Minister, introduced the wives of the Ministers to the King, the Queen and the Princess and requested the King and the Queen to give the diplomas to the successful students. The king gave them to the male students and the Queen to the lady-students. At the close of this function, the King addressed the mixed gathering of men and women of whom more than five hundred were unveiled women.

"I am extremely glad" said the King, "to see that our women by education have become aware of their position in life.

They have come forward to claim the rights and privileges that were overdue to them. There was a time when our women's function in life was only to look after their children. They were compelled to stay at home and were never allowed to go into society. Now they have reached a position in which in addition to their privileges of motherhood, they can also take part in the other activities of life. Formerly, one-half of our country was not taken into account, In other words one-half of our working force was left unemployed. No census was ever taken of women. It looked as if they belonged to a different species. This is a great day for you. Make full use of this great opportunity that has been given to you and work for the elevation of your country. Our land needs work, from women as well as men. My sisters and daughters, to-day you have entered society for the first time in your life. You must know what you are expected to do. The future lies in your own hands. You are the pioneers of the coming generation. It is you who have to make or mar your new career."

"His Majesty's speech was received with applause and in the midst of the deafening cheers of the men and women that had gathered there, the Royal party left the Hall."

On the night of this historic day a great reception was held in the Majlis buildings. The Cabinet Ministers, Members of Parliament, editors of news-papers and other prominent citizens came along with their wives and introduced them to one another.

On the same day, the Governors of different Provinces and District Officers held similar receptions in prominent places in their Provinces and Districts. The next day telegrams poured in from all quarters of the country, thanking the King and the Queen for initiating a change in society which was badly wanted.

One month after this great event, the *Ittilayat* published the following article under the heading of 'The Mulla's taking

the lead in the unveiling of women¹:—"We have received authentic reports from the various Provinces on the attitude of the Muslim divines towards the unveiling of women. We are glad to learn that our Mullas are gradually adopting the European costume and are bringing out their wives without veils in society. It is a matter of great consolation to know that there exists In our country a large number of our religious leaders who understand the spirit of Islam and the principle underlying the commands and prohibitions in our religion.

Our Muslim divines have begun to realise that their scholarship in theology or their piety does not depend upon the kind of dress they wear. Outward "appearance is quite different from the inner virtues. The veil had for ages kept our women in the dark and deprived them of the advantages of society. It was a great stumbling block in the way of our progress. Our Mullas had invented it. They have come to their senses now and they are positively against it. They say that the veil does not mean a *crepe-de-chine* or a horse hair face-covering about four inches square, It means something else. The verses of the Koran that are usually quoted in support of the veil have a much higher and a deeper meaning and a far greater purpose in view. The veil is a means to an end and not the end in itself. The end in view is nothing but chastity. We all know that the veil has not only failed to fulfill this purpose but has produced exactly the opposite results. It has defeated the purpose of the Islamic Law and it is no longer wanted now."

Two days after this, "Iran " published the following article under the heading of 'The clergy and the veil':—"The news has reached us from various quarters that our Mullas have been modernised in every respect. They have taken up the unveiling movement in real earnest. They are moving about freely with their unveiled wives in the streets. They have gone still further. They are preaching the unveiling of women with great

enthusiasm. They have gone into the question in detail and have made a thorough investigation. They have come to the conclusion that in view of the fact that according to the Koranic Law, women are not forbidden to expose their faces and hands and feet to the public, the removal of the veil is in full conformity with the Laws of Islam. Which Muslim divine, they say, will be prepared to admit that the misery, the bondage and the backwardness of half of our race are due to our strict adherence to the indisputable and inelastic Laws of Islam ? This sensible attitude taken by our Mullahs towards the emancipation of women has had a salutary effect on our society/

At Hamedan I met a large number of Mullahs who have been transformed into up-to-date gentlemen of the Western World. One day I was introduced to Sheikh Imad-Zadah who was once a fanatical Mulla. He is a changed man now, He invited me to dinner and introduced me to his wife who is a pretty lady of advanced views. We had no other topic at the table than the position of woman in Islam. Both husband and wife appeared to be strong advocates of the emancipation of woman. They vied with each other in espousing the cause of woman. "Why don't you advise your priests in India to take up the social reform movement among the Muslims ?", said Mrs. Imad-Zadah. I said, "I am ashamed to admit that in India we have a large number of Muslims who still believe that one goes to Heaven or Hell according to whether or not he wears a beard as long as one's fist, according to whether he puts on loose trousers or tight ones." They burst into laughter and Mr. Imad-Zadah remarked, "I pity you. You are much behind the times. Why don't you invite me to India ? I can work wonders there." I said, • ' I am too small a man to undertake this great work."

In conclusion, the progress of women has reached the highest point in Iran. My lengthy account of the process of the

transformation of the reactionary Mullahs into modernists and the gradual rise of women in Iran clearly show that the present progress of Iran is not a passing show as some superficial observers have mistaken it to be, but a permanent change. It is not a well-staged drama in which actors are made to play their parts at the dictation of the Stage-Manager as some of the American journalists are inclined to believe. It is a real transformation in the life of the people. The monumental structure of the social reform in Iran does not stand on a sandy foundation of impulse, but on the solid rock of conviction buttressed by liberal education.

Chapter XXIII.

THE HISTORY OF MODERN EDUCATION
IN IRAN.

Among the many changes that have taken place in Iran during the decade of Pahlavi Rule, few are more striking than the awakening interest in the problem of education.

At the beginning of Muzaffar-uddin Shah's reign, with the exception of the Darul-Funun, a School of Arts founded by Nassir-uddin Shah in Teheran, there was no State or State-aided institution in the country that could be called a school in the modern sense of the word. There did exist a few foreign schools established here and there by American, French and English Missionaries in Iran; but these schools were not of much use to the Muslim population of the country.

There was a long standing religious prejudice against the Christian Missioliaries. The Mullas looked upon their schools as the breeding places of infidels. Consequently, the Muslims in general did not look upon these institutions with favour. The only persons who took advantage of them were the Armenian Christians and the Jews of Iran. A few Muslim boys and girls of highly educated parents did avail themselves of the opportunities that were thrown open to them by philanthropic foreigners. But their number was extremely small and the public opinion against their attendance at these schools was so strong that even these few boys and girls could not continue their studies to the end.

I am told that on one occasion a Missionary lady invited an Iranian lady to her house to tea and seated her on a rocking chair in her drawing-room. The Iranian lady lost her balance and fell off the chair. She stood up with a shriek saying, " You put me on

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a Christian making machine. Fortunabely for me, Ifell off and your plans are upset now." The Missionary lady thought that her guest was joking. But the Muslim lady left the room in disgust before the tea was served and no doubt was left in the mind of the Missionary lady that her guest actually believed in what she had said.

With such apprehensions engendered in the minds of ignorant men and women of Iran by bigoted Mullas who usually misrepresented, these scored institutions of learning as Christian making workshops one can easily imagine under what difficulties the Missionaries must have struggled to put their institutions on a sound footing. One cannot but admire the patience and perseverance with which these educationists have continued their activities in Iran uninterrupted by the thousand and one obstacles that must have obstructed their way at every step..

Thus, so far as the Muslims were concerned these Missionary institutions ware of no use to them. The only institutions that were open to them. were the Mulla "maktebs". If the missionary schools were the breeding places of infidel the *Mulla* "maktab" were the breeding places of idiots. The Iranian proverb "A mule went to *maktab* and returned a donkey " is not altogether meaningless..

Well-to-do parents educated their children either by engaging private tutors for them or by sending them to foreign countries. But the poor ignorant masses continued to be ignorant for ever. Aminuldaulah an enlightened statesman of this period realisod for the first time that the country was going from bad to worse for want of education. He organised a committee of a few influeneial Iranians, to devise ways and means of instituting schools on moderm lines. The committee consisted of (1) Mirza ,. Mahmood Khan Miftahul-Mulk, (2)Mukhbirul-Saltaneh, (3) Ihtishamul-Saltaneh, (4) Mumtahirul-

Saltaneh, (5) Haji Mirza Yahya Daulatabadi, (6) Mirza Ghiyasul-Saltaneh Adib, and (7) Mirza Abdul Rahman.

Muftahul-Mulk Was the president of this committee and Haji Mirza Yahya was the secretary.

To sound the people on the new form of education which they were going to introduce in the country and to create a public opinion in favour of this innovation, they started a daily paper "Education" for free circulation among the masses. The importance of secular education was discussed in this paper and modern methods of acquiring it were popularised.

In the course of their three months vigorous propaganda of this type, the members of the committee received no response from the public. This was unbearable. They very nearly abandoned the scheme but Mirza Yahya a sincere worker of indefatigable energy was determined to push it through at any cost.

There was a lively discussion between him and Mukhbirul-fraulah on this subject and their correspondence which is mostly in poetry is recorded in Mirza Yahya's *urd-i-Uhishl* which is his autobiography.

To Yahya's appeal for co-operation in his scheme, Mukhbirul-Sklarteh Wrote, "The State does not want it. The country knows nothing about it. Abandon your scheme of instituting modern schools once for all. Granting that my opinion in matters of education counts for much, of what use can my opinion be when it is not wanted by the people?"

Mirza Yanya wrote in reply, "Every word we utter in favour of schoole, is desirable. It may be that out of the one hundred words we utter, ninety-nine of them may fail and the hundredth

word may have the desired effect. How long shall we remain disappointed? Education must be brought within the reach of the people in general. Our scheme may not succeed all at once. In the long run it is sure, to bear fruit. If our country* had known what to do and our government had shown, its willingness to do what it is expected to do, then there would have been no need for us to talk about it. There is no reason for us, to be disappointed. I assure you that sooner or later our country will acquire knowledge and make use of it for the good of the public. How long shall we be repeating, "I say and he says"? Give up this empty talk about yourself or others. Put forth your efforts and popularise education. The autumn wind is gone and the spring season is come. I have several arguments to prove that the scheme is hopeful. Bring forth your reasons if you have any to prove your case".

With such persuasive ways, Mirza Yahya put new life into his committee and at their own expense they opened all at once four boys schools namely—Muzaffariyyah, Ilmi, Iftitahiyyah and Rushdiyyah in four different localities.

The schools were opened. But no good teachers could be had in the country. Mirza Yahya and his colleagues picked up a few intelligent and promising young teachers from amongst those that were available then, and taught them what to teach and how to teach before they appointed them in their new schools. As there were no text-books worth the name, they prepared a graduated series of modern text-books dealing with a variety of subjects of every day interest to the pupils. They taught these text-books to the teachers and the teachers taught them to the boys at the schools.

*10 years later they thought of opening a similar school for girls but again they met with disappointment. This time the opposition was too strong for them to overcome.

By a stroke of luck, Swyed, Mohmed Tabataba'i, a Mujtahid of advanced views on education came to, their help and volunteered; to bring round the Multys. He did; not succeed with them, but all the same he did open a girls school and his eldest daughter Kamar Khanam took charge of the institution. The Mullas grumbled a lot, but they had not the courage to defy Tabataba'i who enjoyed a great reputation for his learning and piety and thus exercised a wide influence over the public.

Contrary to their expectations all the new schools were well attended. This encouraged the Committee to open a technical school providing free lodging and board for sixty boys to begin with. They wanted a financier and Prince Arfa a wealthy advocate of modern education came forward to their help. He welcomed their scheme and volunteered to support the institution single handed.

The school was opened in a hired building and within a year's time a philanthropic friend of Prince Arfa made a gift of a big house to the Committee and with an additional plot bought by Prince Arfa, a permanent building was erected for the school.

The school was named Danish after the poetic name of its donor Prince Arfa, Within a short time the school became very popular and the number of its students went up to three hundred. For nearly fifteen years Prince Arfa was the sole supporter of this institution which was ultimately handed over to the Ministry of Education. This is the only old institution of its kind which is still in a flourishing condition.

Prince Arfa, the founder of this institution, is one of the oldest, the wealthiest and the greatest living Statesmen of Iran, He has played an important part in the field of Education and his activities in this direction deserve a special mention. Prince Arfa

is *mother* a son nor a bother of a Shall and yet fee is known all over the world as a Prince. The story of his becoming a Prince without being connected with any Royal family in Iran is very interesting.

He belongs to a respectable family of merchants. His father was a very Wealthy man but at the end of his life he lost everything and Prince Arfa inherited nothing but the sterling quality of a gentleman. He started his career as an humble servant of the State and within fifteen years he rose to the important position of a Persian Consul in Russia.

In the earlier days of Muzaffar-uddin Shah, there arose a political dispute of a serious nature between Italy and Iran. The Shah convened a meeting of all his Foreign Consuls and asked them to find out a way in which the matter could be settled amicably. Agha Arfa undertook to settle the matter single handed. With the help of the Swedish King he settled the matter to the satisfaction of the Shah who conferred on him the title of Prince with all the privileges and allowances that were due to one. Ever since he has been known in Iran and all over the rest of the world as Prince Arfa.

Although His Imperial Majesty Reza Shah Pahlavi has bestowed all titles, this wonderful personality is still called Prince Arfa. He is ninety-six years old and is highly respected for his age and ability. With all his old age he is healthy, strong and active. He has built up a new theory of life and according to this new theory, he expects to live until he is one hundred and twenty-five.

He is a great patriot and his love for his country inspired him to build the technical school known as Danish and maintain it for over of ten years. Some ten years ago, the American Mission asked him by way of help in the cause of education a grant

either free or at a reasonable price, of his large property close to the American College at Teheran in order that they might build a hostel for girls. The plot which is now worth more than two hundred thousand Tumans was sold to them for a nominal sum of thirty thousand Tumaus. This WAS not an ordinary thing and the girls of this institute out of gratitude, have upto this day been praying once a week for his long life and prosperity.

He is a literary man of great ability and has written scores of books on social, political and philosophical subjects. His ¹ 'Masnavi-i-Tul-i-Umr', a book of two hundred verses on long life is the best known of his works. Opinions of the modern literary men of Iran on this small book have run into a big volume which has been recently printed at Teheran.

This is the only book of its kind in Iranian literature and deserves Wide publicity among the orientalists. Apart from its great literary merits, its subject matter is of world-wide interest. It starts with the assumption that the natural life among the lower animals is usually five times the period they take to attain their full development. Man being an animal first and every thing else afterwards, must follow the same rule. For instance, a horse takes five years to attain its full development and he usually lives upto the age of twenty-five which is five times the period requited for the full development of his body. By analogy the author comes to the conclusion that Man who usually takes twenty-five years to attain the full development of his physical and mental powers must live upto the age of one hundred and twietity*five, provided he takes the necessary precautions.

First, he must shake off the wrong idea which he has inherited from his forefathers that the natural life of Man is more or less sixty. He must start with the conviction that the natural life of Mah is one huhdred and twenty-five. He must develop a strong will to live upto this age and should not get

frightened by gray hair at the age of forty-five which is an indication of youth rather than old age.

Secondly, he should be inwardly and outwardly clean and take plenty of fresh air and exercise. His principal food should be salt, wheat-bread, milk, curds, and eggs.

Thirdly, he should be moderate in every thing, particularly in matters of eating and drinking and the satisfaction of sexual appetite.

Fourthly, he should be cool-headed and should never lose temper on any account.

I have the honour of knowing this prodigy personally and it is no exaggeration to say that whenever I spent a few minutes in his company, I felt ten years younger. On one occasion in the course of a friendly discussion with one of the literary men at his house which is a sort of a literary club, I flew into a temper. It was the heights of bad manners on my part to create a scene in the house of my host. But this wonderful young man of ninety-six coolly remarked, " You do not seem to have read my book on long life ". This brought me to my senses and I assumed a cheerful attitude, towards my opponent. "Believe me" said, he " I have never lost my temper in my life. This is the key to my retaining my youthful vigour at the age of ninety-six ".

In short, he is a wonderful personality. I have never come across one like him in my life. Usually he lives in France where he owns valuable property. He visits Iran regularly once a year to meet his two sons and encourage the literary men to write books on social subjects. Every year he prints at his expense some important books of every day interest for free circulation among the Iranians. Last year he printed for a similar purpose about ten thousand copies of two books of two

hundred pages each, containing all modern literature on the emancipation of woman.

A short summary of his life together with the opinions of the literary critics of Iran on his occasional poems has recently been printed in Teheran. His friends and admirers as a supplement to this book which they believe is very sketchy have written another book on his life which has run into five hundred pages. The book was in the press when I left Teheran.

To revert to the history of modern education in Iran, contrary to the expectations of some of the members of the committee of Aminudulah their four boys schools and one girl's school at Teheran proved to be an enormous success. This created a great enthusiasm among the social workers of whom there was no lack in the country. Similar committees were organised in all the important towns of Iran. Within a few years with no encouragement whatsoever from the government and little response from the public these committees spread a net work of schools all over the country. The members of these committees who were usually handicapped for want of suitable teachers opened night schools for the teachers and day schools for the boys. The teachers had to learn at night what they had to teach in the schools during the day. I was amazed to learn that in the face of extra-ordinary difficulties, the social workers as the result of a purely private enterprise, were in the course of their fifteen years activities from 1910 to 1925, able to open 612 schools in Iran.

But these schools were more or less of an elementary character. Of Secondary schools, barring the American school which was a foreign concern, there was none in the country. The country was still immature in several respects. There was some sort of Education Department but like other departments in the country it needed a thorough overhauling.

In the year 1925 on Reza Shah's accession to the throne of Iran, the Education Department was reorganised on modern lines. A Minister of Education with wide powers was appointed for the first time to run this department.

The course of studies was fixed and a Text Book Committee was appointed to make the necessary changes in the old curriculum. The schools were all on a voluntary basis. But the Elementary Education at these schools was made so attractive that all children between the ages of five and fourteen were anxious to attend them. To meet the growing demand for these schools, in addition to the already existing, six hundred and twelve private schools, hundreds of new schools, were opened by the Department every year until in 1935 the number of the Primary Schools rose to five thousand three hundred and thirty-nine in the country.

The following extract from the last year's report of the Education Department will give my readers a clear idea of the activities of the Education Department in this direction :—

"Recent achievements of the Ministry of Education from 1936 to 1937: (1) New projects in the Capital.—Classes added to Primary Schools, 48. New Primary Schools, 11. New Middle School classes, 9. Nursing School, 1. Special Music classes, 5. (2) New projects in the Provinces.—Classes added to Primary Schools, 270. New Kindergarten and Primary Schools, 118. New Middle and Higher classes, 43. Junior Normal Schools, 5. Nursing Schools, 2. Laboratories, 8. Libraries, 2. (3) Adult primary schools in 'Mierari, 91 classes. In the Provinces, 876 classes. (4) Schools opened throughout the country.—Primary Schools for boys, 769; for girls, 148. Middle Schools for boys, 46; for girls, 18. (5) Students enrolled to all schools in 1936. Primary boys, 85,215; girls, 35,324; Middle School boys, 6,778; girls, 1,001."

In spite of these gigantic activities on the part of the department, foreign institutions are also doing remarkably well. In the same year the American Mission opened four additional boys' schools with a total enrolment of 564 and four girls' schools with an enrolment of 378.

One of the prominent features of these schools is the uniformity of dress introduced by the Department for both boys and girls. To set an example and to encourage the spirit of democracy H. I. M. Reza Shah Pahlavi has educated his own children in these schools and during their school-career the Shah's children put on the same school-uniform and were subject to the same discipline of the school as others.

The activities of the department do not rest here. Ample provision has been made for facilities for higher education. Every important town has been provided with High Schools. There are no boarding houses attached to these schools. But the teachers at these schools who have been working with a missionary spirit usually make suitable arrangements for the board and lodging of those outsiders who cannot look out for themselves.

Some six years ago half a dozen Colleges were started in Teheran for providing higher courses of study in science, medicine and literature. There was no talk of a private or a State University as yet.

In 1934 a duly constituted Teheran University was founded at the capital city of Iran and about a dozen foreign experts were engaged on short-term contracts to teach at this University science, medicine, jurisprudence and foreign languages. The constitution of this University is very much similar to that of the State University of Egypt which came into existence in March 11-1925. The Minister of Education is the ex-officio

Grand Maître or Chancellor of the University. One of the Secretaries of the Minister with certain powers delegated to him is the Rector or the administrative head of the University.

The University is divided into six faculties—(1) The faculty of Arts, (2) The faculty of Medicine, (3) The faculty of Science. (4) The faculty *hi* Law and Political Economy, (5) The faculty of Engineering, and (6) The faculty of Theology. Each faculty is a complete unit consisting of six members and the Chairman who are all dominated by the Minister of Education from amongst the Professors serving in that faculty.

The Deans of these six faculties and six more members nominated by the Minister from amongst the Professors of the faculties form the Council of Education or the Senate which is the Supreme deliberative body *Hi* all academic matters.

The meetings of this academic council are usually convened by the Secretary or the Rector who is an intermediary between the council and the Minister.¹ The statutes of the faculties are determined by law and no alterations can be made without the sanction of Parliament.

" The official language of the University is Iranian. But the lectures on higher studies particularly on science and medicine are delivered by foreign experts in German or French or English; This affords no difficulty to the University Students because the teaching of one of the European languages such as English, French or German has been made compulsory at the secondary schools. Vigorous attempts are being made to translate scientific books from foreign languages into Iranian; But still to keep in touch with a growing foreign literature on science and medicine a certain amount of knowledge of one European language or the other is indispensable to the Iranian students.

The striking feature of this University which distinguishes it from the rest of the Universities of the world is a conspicuous lack of the elective element. The members of this deliberative body are all government servants. They have to depend on the good-will of the minister not only for their renomination but for several other things. Their very existence in the department depends upon the minister. Consequently they cannot show much of their independent spirit at the council meetings. In the ordinary course of affairs they would always sound the views of the minister before they make up their mind to give their decision on a particular measure.

In theory it is so but in practice it is not. I had a long discussion with some of the members of the council on this peculiar feature of the constitution which to me does not look like one. It cannot be called a constitution in the real sense of the word. It is all a one man show. "Yes" said, one of the members of the council, "it is a one man show. But it is a good show. You must bear in mind that we are all nationalists with one common goal in view. We do not waste time on empty discussions. If we disagree on certain points we soon come to an amicable understanding. So far no occasion has arisen on which the Minister has gone against our will because of his being the man in power. The ultimate aim of our University is to make the academic council elective. But we cannot do it all at once. Our University is only two years⁵ old. We have to wait for some time till we can introduce the element of election. Gradually it will be done. Our Municipalities are all run on almost similar lines. The Presidents of our Municipalities are all paid servants of the Government. More than one-half of their members are nominated by the Government. Yet our Municipalities are doing excellent work and are running more smoothly than some of your Municipalities in India. We are all one people with one common interest in view. The good of the people is our ultimate goal."

From what I have seen in Iran, I think he was *right* in what he said to a very large extent. As far as possibly the Minister of Education does not interfere with the inner working of the faculties. The present Minister of Education Agha Hikinat is a highly enlightened democrat. He has been educated in the American College at Teheran and has thoroughly imbibed the virtues of his American teachers. He treats his subordinates as his friends.

One day I went to see Dr. Saddique, the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, at his office at the Danish-Sara Ali. An Iranian lady came to see him who was introduced to me as the sister of Agha Hikmat the Minister of Education. She was a married lady of about thirty-five years of age. She was anxious to join the Arts College, hut she possessed no diploma of a Secondary School. She said, "I have studied at borne and I know much more than the diploma headers of the Secondary Schools." Dr. Saddique said in reply, "I am extremely sorry to tell you that Rules do not permit me to admit you in the College without the necessary diploma of the Secondary School. If you bring a written order from your brother, I will make an exception in your case- She said, "My brother does not want to interfere in your arrangements. He has asked me to see you. If you can find out a way for my joining the College, I shall feel much obliged."Dr.Saddique said,"The only way in which I can help you is to admit you on payment of fees on the clear understanding that you will not he allowed to sit for the final examination. You will get the training hut not the diploma at the end of your studies". She said, "This is all that I want. I want to get the benefit of the higher education which our country has provided for us." The conversation ended here and the lady left Dr. Saddique with thanks.

This incident reminded me of an English lady who ten years ago was learning Iranian at the School of Oriental Studies in

London at the age of sixty and was paying two pounds per lecture. When I asked this lady the reason why she was so keen on learning Iranian at that age, she replied that she was so much enamoured of the translation of the Shah Nama in English that she had made up her mind to learn Iranian in order to enjoy the book in the original. I was under the impression that it was only English ladies of her type that studied, for the sake of study. I was pleased to learn in Iran that there were also Iranian ladies of this type.

This is a peculiar characteristic of the gifted family of Agha Hikmat. It is a big family and almost all the male and female members of this family are highly educated and have high ideals before them.



Chapter XXIV.

THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

The present system of education has four distinct aims in view—to maintain the ancestral pride of the Japanese system of education, the amalgamation of the heterogeneous elements into the homogeneity of the American system, the democratic nationalism and polish of the French system and the gentlemanliness of the social or humane Universities of England.

In order to achieve the first end, every endeavour is made to develop ancestral pride among the youths of the country. They are taught by degrees, at every stage in their educational career, the ancient history of Iran. Particular emphasis is laid on the thrilling accounts of the heroic deeds of the prehistoric Iranians. Great interest is taken in Archaeology and the reports of the researches of archaeological experts are published every year and circulated through news-papers, in order to keep alive public interest in the past.

The following extract from the lecture of Dr. Olmstead, Professor of oriental history in the University of Chicago, and an authority on antiquities and the recent discoveries at Persepolis, will not be without interest.

"Last night you heard Professor Pope's eloquent address, on Iranian art. To-night I have a much simpler thing to do. I want to tell you the reason why I have come to Iran. I propose to write* another book about Iran. An important part of the ancient history of the Near East has not yet been brought to the notice of the European world. I mean, the period which begins with Cryus the Great and ends with Mohammad, the period of the Achaemenians, Parthians, and Sassanians. This period of twelve centuries is one of the greatest eras in history and should not be treated merely in chapters in the histories of Greece and Rome.

More than a quarter of a century ago, I travelled in this part of the world. I found the East politically under the influence of the West but still the ancient East in thought and life. Things are quite different now. Politically your country is completely independent. You have adopted the Western methods of progress in the industrial and mechanical realms. What will be the conditions of the future? If one were to study carefully the conditions of your people two thousand years ago, one will see that the East will never entirely become the West. The East will adopt whatever western cultural ways it needs; but whatever does not suit its type of thought, it will reject.

In the excavations at Susa, Persepolis, Damghan and Ray, pottery has come to hand, dated before the historical eras of Babylon and Egypt. Experts are busy in studying the connections between Central Asia and Babylon. But there are a thousand other mounds in Iran crying out to be excavated. If we could do more digging in Azarbaijan, we would uncover many more facts about ancient times. Last week Dr. J. Christy Wilson showed me an ash mound near Tabriz which the villagers had partially dug into. At the bottom of their excavation, pottery was found which in my opinion belongs to a period at least 5,000 years ago.

Who will undertake the opening up of these mounds which were formed at a time when houses were made of wood and thus reveal for us the type of houses of the ancestors of the Iranians? Until Hamadan is excavated, our information about the Medes who once were one of the greatest nations of the world, will continue to be incomplete.

Our information about Persepolis has been greatly increased. Recently 29,000 tablets have been found there, which will make clear the type of government and the civilisation of ancient Iran.

and this will perhaps be counted one of the greatest discoveries of the last century. When these tablets are deciphered, our opinion of ancient Iran will be entirely changed. Of all the nations which have existed in Iran, none has suffered more at the hands of the historians than Parthians. Their civilisation has much more to it than the pieces of pottery and the coins found in Mesopotamia, can indicate. The remains of this civilisation must be found in Iran. I suppose that their capital, Hecatompolis must be looked for at Damghan. We have not found it as yet and we must wait for some new discovery."

Such lectures go a long way to arouse the national sentiment of the youths who are ceaselessly stirred to revive the past glory of their forefathers. Great stress is laid on the teaching of Shah Nama a monumental work in Iranian literature, both at schools and colleges. At the end of the academic year important scenes from this epic poem are staged at schools and colleges and almost all the dignitaries of State are invited to attend them. Tarikh-i-Bastan a great scholarly work of modern enterprise, the history of ancient Iran in three volumes is another book which, is taught chapter by chapter from the lower standards at schools to the M.A. course at colleges.

Modern Iranians are not satisfied with the results of the discoveries of archaeological experts of Europe in Iran. They depend upon their own exertions and with this object in view every year, scores of Iranian students have been going to foreign countries, to specialise in archaeology.

One of the immediate results of this spirit of independence and the sacred desire on their part to maintain their ancestral pride, is the establishment of the Farhangistan Iran, a board of philological experts whose business it is to select pure Iranian words or coin new ones from the old stock and make them current in place of foreign Arabic words which are gradually being-driven out of the language.

This attitude on the part of the Iranians, which is prompted by purely patriotic motives, is misunderstood by Indian Moslems and mistaken for an irreligious move or a direct insult to the Arabs.

On this point, I had a long discussion with some of the eminent scholars in Iran. They all said with one voice that they had the highest respect for the Arabs, their culture and their language. Their present tendency, they say, of displacing Arabic-words by pure Iranian ones, is intended to maintain the dignity and purity of their native tongue.

On my return from Iran, an Indian Moslem friend of mine told me that he could not understand how the Modern Iranees could tolerate the presence of French, English and Eussian words, new-comers to their language, but could not bear the sight of Arabic words which have enriched their language for more than a thousand years. He became very angry and said that Iran could not offer any sensible explanation for this, out and out anti-Islamic rage. "This is bound to provoke," said he, "Every Moslem or well-wisher of Islam."

It is true, that a large number of modern English, French, Russian and Swedish words have been allowed to remain in their language and no attempt is made to get rid of them. To all appearance, it looks unfair that foreign words from European countries should be welcomed like the European dress and old Arabic words should be discarded like the ancient native costume of the Iranees. But things are not what they appear to be. Iranees are, in fact most considerate in this as in other matters. What appears to be inconsistency is, in reality, true consistency.

The European words that have crept into Modern Iranian, are, not only new-comers to the Iranian language, but they are also new comers to European languages themselves. To be fair to the nations that are responsible for the

coinage of these new words to signify their modern inventions and discoveries, the Iranees have purposely retained these words intact in their language. They do not want to coin Iranian words for these foreign words which represent new objects in life. They do not want to take credit for the inventions of those objects in which they have had no hand whatsoever.

Take for instance such words as " Railways, " Machine, 'Engine', 'Automobile'¹, 'Gramophone', 'Laboratory', 'Oxygen', 'Hydrogen', * Nitrogen', 'Aeroplanes', ' Zeppelin' and a host of others. The Iranees could have coined Iranian words for these new comers to their language if they had a mind to do so. But they honestly believe that these words have come into existence as a result of the strenuous labours of the Europeans. Therefore they have allowed them to stay in their language as respectable settlers.

With regard to Arabic words, they believe that the ancient Iranees knew much more than the Arabs. The conquered people have shown to the world in more than one way, that they are a gifted race. The Arabs gave the Iranees the religion. But the Iranees in return taught the Arabs good many things which they did not know. Even the Arabic grammar, the Arabic lexicon and the best commentaries on the Koran were written by the Iranians. They believe that Arabic words have crept into the Iranian language not as a matter of necessity not because the Iranian language was lacking in them, but because of sheer force.

After the conquest of Iran by the Arabs, for nearly three hundred years, the Iranians were not allowed to read or write their language. After the decentralisation of the Caliphate, when the Iranian patriots began to revive their old native tongue, they could not express their ideas in pure Iranian. By force of habit and want of practice they expressed their thoughts in some sort of Iranian, one half or threefourths of whose words Mere Arabic or of Arabic origin.

Modern enthusiasm to revive and maintain the past glory of Iran has prompted the Iranians to make a vigorous research in their past and as a result of their feverish activities in this direction, they have been gradually dispensing with the foreign Arabic words and replenishing their language with pure Iranian words in their place. Every Iranian scholar will admit that the modern words *Bimaristan* and *Timaristan* which mean a hospital and a lunatic asylum, sound much simpler and are more dignified than the bombastic Arabic words, *Darulshafa* and *Darul-Majanin*.

I think there is nothing new in this attempt on the part of the Iranees to purify their language and thus make it simpler and more dignified. It is a sign of modernism. Englishmen have been trying their best to encourage the use of simple words of Saxon origin in preference to bombastic words derived from Latin or Greek. "He died a poor man" evidently sounds much better than "he expired in indigent circumstances". No modern English writer indulges in the old style. This does not mean an insult to the Greeks or Romans. There is a similar tendency, if I mistake not, on the part of the Urdu scholars in our country to avoid as far as possible the use of high sounding Arabic words in their language. If this is not taken as an insult to the Arabs or an attack on Islam why should the Iranians be singled out and blamed for doing something which is their legitimate right.

To return to the system of education, every possible step is being taken to make the students feel that they are Iranees first and everything else afterwards. The Armenian Christians, the Zoroastrians and the Moslems have all been welded into one people. Communal schools have been closed. Foreign schools maintained by Christian Missionaries are allowed to continue, but the Bible is forbidden to be taught in the classes. It can be taught only to the Christian students in a chapel. However, there is no objection to the general principles of Christianity being taught in public provided they are meant to

improve the general conduct of the boys and not to induce conversion to Christianity.

Uniformity of dress is made compulsory at schools in order that the students may feel that they are all one people. Broad principles of Islam and the history of Islam are taught right from the lowest standard to the top, in order that the Moslem students may grow up not as fanatic Sunnies or Shias but as broad minded Irani Moslems. The Non-Moslems are however permitted to appoint their own religious instructors at schools for imparting religious education to the boys and girls of their own communities.

In short, religion is taught as a means to an end and not the end in itself. Every religion is respected. Controversies between one religion and another are avoided. Deliberate attempts to convert people from one religion to another are discouraged.

As a result of this liberal education, graduates coming fresh from the Colleges enter life not as Moslems or Christians or Zoroastrians but as Iranees with one common goal of contributing to the greatness of the country.

At the beginning of my sojourn in Teheran I came across one Dr. Abdurrazak Hazik whom throughout my stay in Iran I believed to be a devout Moslem. I was introduced to him by a Moslem friend and he introduced me to a large number of his Moslem friends including a few Moslem divines. From his name, from his association with the Moslems and from the general tone of his conversation, I could never entertain a doubt about his being anything but a Moslem.

Towards the end of my sojourn, an American Professor from the Alborz College at Teheran, surprised me by saying that

Dr. Abdurrazak was a Christian. To verify this statement, I went to Dr. Abdurrazak and asked him whether it was a fact that he was a Christian. He replied with a smile, "Of course I am a Christian. What made you think that I am not?" I said, "Your name, your conversation and your close association with the Moslems."⁷ He said, "Bear in mind Sir, that we are Iranees first and Moslems or non-Moslems afterwards. Some of my relations are Christians, some of them are Moslems and some are Atheists. Yet this makes no change in my relations with them. We still meet as relations. I bear an Irani name. I am proud of it. Why should I change it?"

This came to me as a surprise, because in India this sort of breadth of views is very rare. In London, ten years ago I remember putting a rather impertinent question to Lord Headlay as to whether his becoming a Moslem had disturbed his relations with his wife and his children. His reply was that his wife and his son, on their way to the Church used to drop him at the Mosque and used to pick him up again on their way back. I was under the impression that in Europe and Europe alone this sort of things could happen. But from Dr. Abdurrazak's instance, I was pleaded to learn that in an Asiatic country like Iran also liberality of view is not wanting. Thought is free and the object of education which is the expansion of the human mind is being realised in the fullest sense of the term.

Judging from the trend of events in India, I am ashamed to admit that we are far behind the times still. It looks as if it will take us centuries to develop this mentality.

On one occasion I took Dr. Banajit an Indian friend of mine in Tehran to Agha Shariat Sanglachi, to attend his sermon in the Mosque. At the close of his sermon I introduced Dr. Ranajit to Agha Shariat, as a Hindu friend of mine from India. He gave him a warm welcome, offered **him a cigarette**

and remarked with a smile, "Why do you emphasise his being a Hindu? We are all Aryans. I am glad to receive this Aryan brother of mine. His being a Moslem or not does not affect me in the least. My religion is love, I love every body and hate none. My sermons are not meant for the Muslims alone. I deal with the broad principles of Islam which are the highest common factor in every religion. The Koran is a book of guidance for all. Have you forgotten the well-known verse of Moulana Eumee which says. "We have picked up the marrow from the Koran and cast off the bones to the dogs?"

My friend was overjoyed to hear these remarks of the liberal minded learned priest and said, "Moulri, why don't you advise your Moulanas in India to adopt a similar attitude towards the Hindus there?" I said, "It makes two to quarrel. The Pandits are as much to be blamed in India as our Moulanas."

If Dr. Ranajit was struck by the extraordinary liberal mindedness, of the Moslem priest, I was equally struck by the warm heartedness of our Indian businessmen in Tehran. They are mostly Sikhs and are dealers in motor accessories. Their long stay in Tehran has brought about a permanent change in their temperament. They have developed a Cosmopolitan spirit and are quite different from their people in India. One and all they invited me to their homes, introduced me to their family members and gave me the warmest welcome. They called me an Indian brother and treated me as more than a brother. Sardar Saheb Singh, a prominent Sikh gentleman and Mr. Akali another equally prominent Sikh made much of me and took me every night to their homes or restaurants and lavished their hospitality on me. During my sojourn in Tehran I spent my days in the company of the Iranees and my nights in the company of my Indian friends. Dr. Eanajit who may be described as an Ideal Indian, has a large number of Irani friends and has practically settled there.

He told me that after having stayed for ten years in Tehran where no body cared to know whether he was a Hindu or a Moslem or a Christian, he would not like to go back to India where every day in his life he was likely to be reminded that not only is he a Hindu but a Sikh. It is a pity that a broad minded Indian gentleman like Dr. Ranajit has stuck to Iran and is not returning to India where he could exercise an inspiring influence on his countrymen here.

Another noteworthy point in the system of education followed by the Tehran University is the emphasis laid on the teaching of the principles of democracy at schools and Colleges. This is done in more than one way. Uniformity of dress is insisted on by the Department, both for boys and girls at schools and Colleges. The object underlying this rule of the Department is on one hand to discourage the boys of aristocrat families from entertaining ideas of superiority over the rest of the boys and on the other hand to prevent the boys of poor parents from developing an inferiority complex.

Children of the Ministers and other dignitaries of the State are taught along with the children of the domestic servants of these dignitaries on terms of equality. H. I. M, Reza Shah Pahlavi has set the most praiseworthy example to the country by educating his own sons and daughters in ordinary schools and subjecting them to the school discipline.

Unlike India, there are no Raj Kumar or Atchison Colleges for the sons of the nobility in Iran. All State children have equal rights and privileges against the State. "Heaven does not create men over men or men under men." The State makes no distinction between the nobility and the commoners. There is no privileged class in Iran, Titles have been - altogether abolished. Every dignitary of the State is addressed as Mr. so and so.

Extra curricular activities of the American system of education have been introduced at Schools and Colleges. These give the students ample opportunities to mix on terms of equality not only with one another but even with their teachers and Professors. Every opportunity is given to them to develop a high sense of self-respect and independence of thought.

The Scout movement is in full swing at schools. This is another way in which the spirit of democracy is given free scope for development. The heir-apparent has taken the lead by being the Head of the Scout movement and the Shah's eldest daughter Shah Dukht Pahlavi is the Head of the Girl Guides. Scout camps are organised once or twice a month and the sons of aristocrats and poor peasants are taught to throw in their lot with one another. Teachers and Professors make it a point to mix with their students unreservedly and at times outside gentlemen of position are also invited to attend the camps.

Discipline is maintained at schools not so much by Rules and Regulations as by love. Outside the classes teachers and students meet as friends. I have often seen Dr. Grove of the American College and several other Professors playing friendly Tennis with school-boys.

One thing that deserves special mention is the interest the school authorities have been taking in Iran in the behaviour of their boys not only at schools but even outside the walls of the institutions. Rules of correct behaviour in polite society form a part of the curriculum at school. At the close of the academic year regular oral or written examinations are held in 'etiquette'. To the picnic parties, school excursions and other terminal or annual functions of the schools distinguished ladies and gentlemen are frequently invited, to give the students opportunities of observing the behaviour of the distinguished guests.

On one occasion I was invited by the Hostel Superintendent of the American School to dine with the school-boys. Nothing could give me greater pleasure than to watch the very perfectly gentlemanly behaviour of one, hundred and fifty boys at the dining tables. I was particularly pleased to see two small boys on our table speaking in a friendly style to the Superintendent and cracking jokes with him like grown up men. I was struck with the extraordinary smartness of these two boys who were introduced to me as Kanga brothers, the sons of Dr. Kanga a Parsee gentleman from Karachi. Dr. Kanga deserves the credit of taking the lead in the right direction by sending his sons for education to his ancestral country.

Some of the Parsees in India seem to be labouring under the wrong impression that they are not welcome in Iran. Iranes are well known for their hospitality. If they can welcome the Shikhs from the Punjab who have for a long time monopolised the business in motor accessories in Iran, I cannot understand why they should be reluctant to extend similar hospitality to the Parsees of India who are their kith and kin. It should be borne in mind that the Iran of today is quite different from the Iran of yesterday.

In conclusion, Iran after making a thorough study of the educational system of the different countries in Europe has evolved a new system of her own which has retained all the good points of these systems, without detriment to her own ancient culture. She has taken what was best in these systems and has rejected the rest. Iranes have a great gift of drawing upon others without losing their own integrity. The present system of education in Iran has all the virtues of the different systems in Europe; yet it cannot be said to be a copy of any one of them.

Chapter XXV.

AGRICULTURE.

Agriculture is the mainstay of the country and the Iranian Government is sparing no pains or expenses to improve the condition of the Irani farmers. A few years ago the Irani farmer occupied a much lower position in society than that of our Shudras in the pre-historic period of India. Humble, illiterate and unused to any other occupation in life than that of raising his crops, the Irani farmer seldom realised his importance in society and never dreamt of claiming his due share in the affairs of his country.

Want of transportation facilities cut him off from the civilised people of the cities and killed in him all initiative or desire for a better life. His surplus stock yielded next to nothing. His wants were extremely limited. He ate, drank and dressed like a primitive man and he ploughed, sowed, reaped, thrashed and winnowed with pre-medieval methods. He had no will of his own and was entirely at the mercy of his landlord who could do with him what he liked. Medical help was beyond his reach and when an epidemic broke out thousands of the village people died unattended and unnoticed by the outside world.

Sfe years ago the 'editor of 'Sitariai Jahān' wrote the following article on the life in villages—"I visited a village in which an astrologer had set up as a doctor. He was treating the cases of ophthalmia with strong purgatives and appendicitis with bleeding, cupping and branding. He had nearly killed half of the villagers who put this down more to *Kismet* than to his dangerous quackery. This is not all. Village women have been practically killing' their * children by wrong feeding and rough handling and have been unnecessarily weeping over their lot."

The editor was right. This was really the case with most of the villages in Iran. The life of the villagers was a perpetual misery. Like the lower animals they filled their stomachs with whatever they could get and knew nothing about what was going on in the world. Improvement of crops did not interest them in the least and rotation of crops, use of fertilisers and harrowing by machine were unknown to them.

Things have taken a different turn today. Irani villagers enjoy greater comforts and are perhaps more prosperous than the members of their class in some of the most advanced countries in the world. No where is the transformation of life so clearly to be seen in Iran as in the case of villagers. The Iranian Government is taking great interest in them and every possible effort is made to improve their lot.

The problem of transportation facilities has been tackled in all aspects. Old roads and bridges have been thoroughly repaired and every year hundreds of miles of new roads for heavy motor traffic are being constructed. Narrow impassable tracts have been widened and every village has been connected with one important town or the other by a motor road or an easily passable mule tract joining the motor road. Hundreds of motors have been passing every day through most of the villages and restaurants and hotels of modern conveniences are springing up in villages to provide the travellers by motor with lunch, tea and dinner. A villager is no longer cut off from the civilised world. Close contact between the villagers and city people is further maintained by making the cities dependent on villages for the supply of milk, curds, butter, eggs and fowls.

Dairy and poultry farms have been started in villages on co-operative lines. Free advice is being given to the Managers by a big staff of the touring officers of the Agricultural Department. Live stock experts have been moving about in

villages and offering a free advice! on the scientific ways of animal breeding. Pedigree animals are imported from all parts of the world and are distributed free of charge among the villagers to improve their local breed. Social workers have been lecturing in villages on the general principles of morality, domestic economy and personal hygiene. Compulsory European costume for men and women has brought with it the use of forks and spoons in villages. Touring medical officers have disseminated the knowledge of microbes in villages and the villagers are now more afraid of these tiny creatures than of wild animals. Epidemics of periodical occurrence have practically disappeared from villages.

Elementary Schools have been started in almost all the big villages or groups of small villages. Attendance at these schools is not compulsory, but all the same these schools are usually full to their utmost capacity. Every year about half a dozen adults from every village are sent to attend the Adult Classes in the neighbouring towns. Expenses are borne either by the landlords or the Agricultural Department.

Agricultural Schools have been started in almost all the important towns of Iran. Special facilities are offered to the sons of farmers to attend these schools. Model farms are attached to these schools and once or twice a month farmers are invited to attend the practical demonstrations at these farms. Students of these schools are reminded at every stage in their educational career that they are there, not to pass their examinations and afterwards hunt for Government jobs but to return to their fields, and add to the prosperity of their country by improving the quality and quantity of their crops by modern methods of sowing.

The eternal problem of providing the Irani farmer with that fixed and working capital of which no less than his class

in other countries, he stands continually in need, has been solved by the Iran Government in a most satisfactory manner. Agricultural Banks have been started to advance money to the farmers on easy terms. The money lending Jews in Iran who like our Sahukars or Mahajans in India used to ruin the farmers by lending them money at cent per cent interest, have stopped their money lending business for ever.

Besides, Sale Societies have been organised by Government to provide the farmers with standardised seeds, at a reasonable price on credit and to buy the crops at the rates fixed by Government experts. They are no longer duped by the unscrupulous merchants who used to take undue advantage of their ignorance in the past.

Villagers are exempted from the payment of all sorts of Taxes which the town people have to pay. Even their crops are free from taxes in villages. There are no Talaties or Revenue Officers to harass the villagers. The crops are taxed at the gates of the cities and the Government experts who fix the rates take into account the tax that the purchaser has to pay at the city gates. Thus, although in the long run the farmers have to pay sufficiently heavy taxes for their crops they do not feel the burden. One of the redeeming features of this system is the extraordinary cheapness of food stuffs in villages.

As a result of the enormous activities of the Industrial Department, all sorts of factories have been opened in villages. Decent quarters with well laid out gardens in front of them have been built for workmen. This provides the villagers with non-agricultural work which was unknown before. The wages of the workmen and the hours of work are fixed by the Industrial Department. The factory-owners are required by Law to provide some sort of recreation for the villagers.

His Imperial Majesty Reza Shah Pahlavi is taking a personal interest in the welfare of the villagers and has been paying surprise visits to these factories to look into the comforts of the workmen. He usually calls the managing staff of the factories and tells them in the presence of the workmen that they are not there to make money but to provide the villagers with work and teach them hygienic ways of living.

On my return from Iran, I halted for a night at the Quazvin Hotel. Here I met Mr. Arthur Uppan Pope, the Director of an institute for Iranian art and archeology at New York. He was on his way to Persepolis with half a dozen American students. He told me that he had visited almost all the Eastern countries and had seen much of the European world. He was positively of the opinion that no country in the world could have progressed so rapidly in the course of ten years as Iran had done. "Three years ago" he said, "I passed through Kurdistan and there was no sign of a primary school in any village. This year I noticed hundreds of schools in the same district and several industrial factories within the reach of every five or six villages. I visited some of these factories and I saw the villagers working there all dressed in European costume. They were looking much healthier, cleaner and more smart than before. I was particularly struck with the decent quarters built for them".

I told him that I had seen still more striking things in Iran. At the end of August 1936 the government had decided to introduce adult education in the country. At the beginning of September, hand bills were circulated announcing that night-classes for adults would be opened from the middle of the month. Fifteen days later, it was officially announced that 750 classes were opened all over the country and still there was a demand for more. In the same month two morning classes were opened for adult women in Tehran and within a week the number of pupils rose to seventy-five*. After a few

weeks two more adult women classes were opened in the city.

"Now" I added, "I have received news from Iran that on November 29, a circular was issued to all provincial departments of the Ministry of Education, stating that in order to inake available for villagers, the city education classes, the land owners in every city should be asked to bring into the city, two young peasants from every village they own. They have been further asked to employ these candidates in the day time and send them to the adult schools in the evenings. Moreover government has decided that hereafter the head of a village shall always be chosen from the literate mon of this type in order that he may fulfil the duties of village head-ship in the best possible manner ".

. He was lost in amazement and said nothing. It is impossible for any one away from Iran to realise the speed with which Iran has been moving forward.

At Tehran I met Mr. Ansari an Indian agricultural specialist of the Indore Institute of Plant Industry. He was deputed by the Government of India to make a study of cotton crops in Iran. He told me that he had visited a very large number of farms in Iran and was surprised to notice the enormous progress of the country in this direction which was nothing short of a miracle. "The Iran Government" said he, "has been taking an extra-ordinary interest in the welfare of the farmers. The agricultural department is reported to be a baby of five years. < Yet it has worked wonders in Iran during the short period of its existence a period which ordinarily is hardly enough for making a start".

In short the whole country is stirred and every new department is working to its utmost capacity to contribute to the

greatness of the country. The maintenance of peace and order* in the country, extensive use of machinery with modern methods of cultivation scientific ways of dealing with the crop pests, and improved means of transportation, these and several other things such as improved conditions of village life, and agricultural advances from the State, additional facilities for borrowing money at low rates of interest from the agricultural banks and co-operative societies, have opened a new era in the agricultural produce of the country.

One of the explanations for the enormous amount of money that the country can afford to spend on such unproductive schemes as the construction of avenues and the laying of gardens in cities to satisfy the aesthetic taste of the Iranees, particularly in these days when other countries in the world are mostly facing a financial crisis, is the fact that the productive capacity of the agricultural land has been doubled, trebled and in certain cases even quadrupled.



Chapter XXVI.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

The Public Health Department of the Iran Government is a now department and is concerned with two things, the prevention and the treatment of diseases.

Under the former heading come sections dealing with general sanitation, epidemics, child-welfare, sanitary engineering, bacteriological and chemical laboratories, anti-rabic and vaccine institutes, while under the latter category fall sections responsible for general and opthalmic hospitals, special hospitals for epidemic diseases, treatment centres for venereal diseases and tuberculosis, medical stores, pharmacies and lunacy administration.

It is not possible to give a detailed account of the work of this department, but brief reference to the more important sections will give to my readers some idea of the wide sphere of its activities.

Small-pox which used to sweep away every year thousands of children has completely disappeared from the country. Ophthalmia a local disease which used to blind thousands of its victims in the past has been brought under control. Cholera, a periodic disease in Iran which in former times used to spread like wild fire in villages is of rare occurrence now* Tuberculosis has been reduced by modern standards of living.

No foreigner is allowed to land in Iran without a certificate from the medical officer of his country to the effect that he has been inoculated against cholera, plague and typhoid and vaccinated against small-pox at least three months before his landing in Iran. Vigorous precautionary measures are taken at Qum and at Mashed, the two important places of pilgrimage in Iran, at the busy seasons.

Venereal diseases are treated free and confidentially at the venereal centres in big cities and at the general hospitals in small towns. Besides, there is a large number of French, German and Russian venereal specialists in Tehran who have a large private practice. This does not mean that there is too much venereal disease in Tehran. Iran is in a transitional state. Tehran is growing into a big city of Europe on modern lines. It cannot escape the vices of the big cities in Europe.

Hidden vices are coming to the surface now. The Horrors of venereal diseases are so widely broad-cast in the country; and there is so much free literature on this subject that on the smallest suspicion or at the appearance of the slightest symptom, people rush to the private practitioners or the general hospitals.

Ten years ago, with the exception of two British hospitals at Bushire and Abadan, a British Missionary Hospital at Isphahan and two American Mission hospitals at Hamadan and Tehran, Iran had no modern hospital of its own. Today it has got its own doctors, its own nurses and its own hospitals every where. There is no town in Iran which is not provided with an up-to-date hospital of its own. The old-fashioned Hakims have disappeared and modern doctors with foreign qualifications or graduates of the Local Medical College at Tehran have taken their place. The local doctors and nurses are all working in a Missionary spirit.

There is a great awakening of the hygiene and sanitary conscience in the country. Sanitary Inspectors trained at an institute of hygiene are appointed in all big or small towns to look after the sanitation of the country. Pure water supply and the proper drainage of cities are receiving the best attention of the Sanitation Department.

Maternity Homes managed by qualified lady doctors, midwives and nurses have been started in all big cities and towns*

Women social workers have been frequently visiting these institutions to see whether ignorant women have been taking the full advantage of these facilities.

In short, this new Department is hardly eight years old and yet like other new departments in the country it has worked wonders during this short period.

Chapter XXVII

THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

The Public Works Department which was never heard of, before the present era, has been working day and night and spending fabulous sums of moneys on the improvement of old roads, the construction of new roads and the erection of public buildings all over Iran.

The one mile long tunnel on the road from Karaj to Chalus which has been constructed to save a distance of twelve miles, is said to have cost millions of Tumans. The city avenues have been all well laid according to modern standards and are kept under constant repair. If the repairs of the city road are taken in hand, the work is done both day and night and finished within the shortest possible time in order that the public may not be put to inconvenience.

Scores of thirty to forty feet wide, well paid avenues with decent foot-paths on both sides have been newly constructed in Teheran to give this capital-city the appearance and reality of a modern city in Europe. Every month some new public buildings have been springing up on the sides of these avenues to meet the growing demand for the offices of the new departments. To beautify the city private owners are being induced by an advance of money on easy terms to renew their buildings on the sides of the avenues according to the modern standards of comforts and the aesthetic taste of the country. The result is that no old building can be seen on the sides of the important avenues in the city.

Every year hundreds of miles of important motor roads are being constructed to connect one city with another. These roads are always kept in proper⁴ repairs and no rut is permitted to remain even for a week. In former times in Winter owing to a

heavy snow fall most of the roads used to get blocked and for months together, there used to be no communication between one city and another. Today hundred of villagers are employed by the P. W. D. to remove the blocks of snow from the roads and keep them clear for motor traffic. Engineers and Sub-Engineers are constantly on the move in the Rainy season.

Within the last few years thousands of Primary Schools, Middle schools and Secondary schools have been opened by the Education Department. The Department could not afford to wait till all the necessary buildings were erected by the State. Private buildings were hired for temporary use and the work was carried on until the new buildings could be erected by the Public Works Department. Today all these schools have been provided with State buildings. In some cases private buildings have been bought and altered by the Department to suit the purpose but in a large number of cases new buildings have been erected.

Two years ago the foundation stone of the University buildings was laid by His Majesty Reza Shah Pahlavi on a suitable site in Tehran. The Shah in his usual laconic style remarked, "The buildings ought to have been erected long long ago. Now that you have begun late, finish them soon." Within one year and a half all the University buildings which are ten times bigger than the University buildings of Bombay have been completely constructed and most of the Colleges that were formerly held in hired buildings are gradually now being shifted to these new palatial buildings.

One cannot understand the gigantic speed with which the construction work is being done in Iran. Borne was not built in a day, but modern Iran undoubtedly seems to have been built in a day.

The railways are being built up at a startling speed. There is a widely spread rumour in the country that within three

years' time the Shah intends to interlink the whole of Iran with the railways. Looking at the natural barriers of insurmountable nature that separate the cities in this highly mountainous country, this seems a physical impossibility. But during the last few years Iran has done many impossible things and this may be an additional feat.



Chapter XXVIII.

REGISTRATION DEPARTMENT.

The primary function of the Registratioq Department in Iran, is the registration of births. The registration of deeds is a secpndary concern. Its activities are spread all over the country. There is no village or a section of a city or town in Iran without a registration office.

Every inhabitant of the country is required by law to register at one of these offices his date of birth, his personal name, family name, occupation in life and his place of residence. He is further expected to supply the office with three copies of his photo. A copy of this information duly signed by a responsible officer of the registration department is returned to him together with one of the copies of his photo which is attached on this copy. This is called a document of "Huwiyyat" which corresponds to a pass port in European countries.

Every one, male or female young or old, is expected to be in possession of this document of Huwiyyat. One cannot travel by car or on foot from one city to another or from one village to another without this pass port; which is checked and registered at every police station in the course of his journey. When a traveller reaches his destination, he is expected to report himself to the police and give his address. If he fails to do so he can easily be traced by the police through his entries at the different police stations and fined upto fifty tumans.

This new system in Iran, which probably is un-heard of in other countries serves more than one purpose.

This system keeps the police well informed not only of the movements of men of questionable character, but also of the movements of respectable people whose **safety is guaranteed at every stage of their journey.**

Visitors from foreign countries, naturally do not take kindly to this apparent source of annoyance at every stage of their journey. There is a still further restriction on the movements of foreigners which they usually mistake for mistrust. When a foreigner gets a visa from the Iranian Consul in his country, the latter always makes a note on his pass port that the visa is valid only for a period of one month from the date of his landing in Iran. On the expiry of this period, he is expected to apply to the police for an extension of the period to any length of time he likes to stay.

This is a mere formality. As far as my knowledge goes no foreign visitor is ever troubled by the police on this account. I myself had to go through this formality and It took me very little time to secure the necessary extension. However I know of a case in which an Indian gentleman, a representative of a sports depot in India, was brought into trouble for staying in Tehran beyond the period specified in his pass port, without securing the necessary permission for extending his stay.

This gentleman did not know a word of Iranian or French. He could not explain his case and he was fined eight tumans. He said that he was unnecessarily fined and given trouble for nothing. His ignorance of Iranian was certainly not an offence. But his non-conformity with the rules of a foreign country, was undoubtedly an offence. He was not right in saying that he was fined for nothing. If the foreigners visit Iran without knowing the language of the country and without making proper enquiries from the Iranian Consuls in their countries about the procedure they have to follow they are bound to get into trouble. They cannot blame the Iran government for their own mistakes.

Chapter XXIX.

BELIEFS AND SUPERSTITIONS.

The transition from a despotic to a constitutional form of government has brought about important changes not only in the organisation of the various developments but also in the centuries old beliefs and superstitions of the Iranees.

The fatalistic notion of *Kismet* inculcated by the doctrine of predestination has undergone a considerable change. Now everyone believes that fortune helps those who help themselves. Epidemics which in the past were looked upon as a curse of God are now attributed to the neglect of sanitary precautions and want of quarantine regulations. Sooth-sayers and astrologers are no longer in demand. Beliefs in the baneful effects of an " Evil Eye " or the influence of witch-craft are things of the past. *Dervishes* who used to promise paradise to their followers and perform miracles by means of their ecstatic dances have disappeared from the country., fortune-telling by means of cards or a tray of dried beans, coins, beads and other small objects which were manipulated according to some traditional formula is looked upon with ridicule. No one believes in it and no one practises it. The sorcerer's profession which consisted in providing love-spells and potions has come to an end.

One day I was invited by an Indian friend to an Iranian film "Du-Chashm-i-siyah " which has been brought to Tehran by an Indian film company. The film describes an Iranian story, but it has also a tinge of Indianism. One of the important characters in the story is an old Indian Sadhu with a long imposing beard foretelling some misfortune and suggesting some precautionary measures to help an Iranian traveller throughout his hazardous journey in India through forests. It was very well received but the real reason why it received favour with the Iranees was their curiosity to see an Indian Sadhu.

A host of Iranees told me that they were very sorry to note that the Indians still believed in these white bearded devils. "Thanks to God", they said, "We have no such devils in our country now to guide our destinies,"

Jim and *Paris* are believed to be the creation of the fertile imagination of fools. The houses that for ages were believed to be haunted by malevolent *Jins* and declared un-inhabitable have been rebuilt and are now used for Cafés which are visited by thousands. No one believes in Talismans that were once supposed to be specific remedies for certain ailments. Ceremonies at births and deaths have been considerably simplified.

I came across Sirdar Iqbal's book on Modern Iran which was printed and published only four years ago. With due deference to Sirdar Iqbal's erudition and his wide experience as a traveller in the east, I must say that his long chapter on the superstitious beliefs of the Iranians is out of date. The Iranees have out-grown these ignorant beliefs now. I can assert without fear of contradiction that even old village women do not entertain them. I have the pleasure of knowing Sirdar Iqbal personally. I met him in London ten years ago. I hope he will not take this criticism of mine in a bad light. I am sure that if he cares to revisit Iran today he will revise his judgment and admit that a considerable portion of his book is out of date now.

Things are changing in Iran at a stupendous speed. Mr. Pope, the director of Iranian Art and Archeology in New York told me that three years ago when he visited Isphahan he was given to understand that there were nine thousand Mullas in it. "This year" he said, "I am told that there are only nine Mullas in it." Mullaism has completely disappeared and with it is gone all that symbolism which had shrouded the simple creed of Islam into Multifarious forms of mystification.

Chapter XXX., ECCLESIASTICAL DEPARTMENT.

The wholesale westernisation of Iran should not be mistaken for anti-Islamism. An American journalist told me in Tehran that the modern Iranees had abandoned Islam for ever. "If they are not out and out Non-muslims", he said. "They are not Muslims in the orthodox sense of the word. Their belief in Islam is completely shaken. After a few years, they will have to accept Christianity which unlike Islam is not incompatible with their tendencies to modernism. If they do not accept Christianity the second alternative left open to them is to become atheists. They have done away with the Mullas. With the exception of Shariat Sanglachi and half a dozen more who seem to be free thinkers or philosophers, no Mulla can be seen in the city of Tehran. Moharum celebrations have been stopped. No one is allowed to go to Kerbala or Mecca on pilgrimage. The Purdah system has been done away with. Muslim women can be seen dancing with their husbands in the open. Permission to marry four wives is hedged, round with many restrictions. Sigha has been practically stopped. Funeral ceremonies have been considerably curtailed. Beards have altogether disappeared. Muslim turbans and caps have been replaced by European hats. If this is not a revolt against Islam, then what is Islam?"

It was a revelation to him when I told him that it was not a revolt against Islam. I advised him to read "The spirit of Islam" by Ameer Ali to know what is Islam and what is not Islam.

With all these things I have seen thousands of Musalmans offering prayers five times a day and living an honest straightforward life which is the sum and substance of Islam. Hospitality, charity and service to humanity the inherent qualities of the Iranees are a sufficient indication of their Moslemship. The principal object underlying Islam is to make us tread on

"Sirat-i-Mustakim" a straight road, the road to righteousness, a road which the modern Iranees endeavour to tread.

Iran has purged Islam of many of its superfluous appendages which have clung to it either through the mis-understanding of its followers or through the deliberate innovations Of the priests. Semi-educated Mullas who had made it a business to play on the fancy of their ignorant credulous followers, have been compelled by law to give up this dishonest profession and take to something else. The better type of them have been provided with jobs in state service.

The most learned and refined among them have been appointed as Professors at the "Danishkadah-Makul-Wa-Mankul " an ecclesiastical college recently established at Tehran. Suitable students are attracted to this College by free lodging and board and an additional allowance for out of pocket expenses. The subjects taught at this College are Arabic, Literature, the Koran and its commentaries, theology, logic and philosophy, history of Islam and traditions and French, German or English. It is a four years course and the graduates of this College are expected to become the future Mullas of the country. New classes have been opened in this college to teach elocution, oratory and the art of preaching. The successful candidates in these newly opened classees are expected to take up government jobs of preaching pure Islam in Iran.

On November 4, H. H. Shah Mahmud Khan the Afghan Minister of War who is the uncle of the present Amir and General 'Omar Mohammed Khan, commander-in-Chief of the army of Afghanistan paid a visit to Iran. On November 8, these distinguished visitors were invited by the Minister of Education of Iran to visit some of the important institutions of higher education in Tehran. The Afghan Minister showed great keenness on his visiting these institutions, particularly the Ecclesiastical College

of which he said he had heard a lot in Afghanistan. After going round the various institutions, the Afghan Minister visited the Ecclesiastical College where he spent more than an hour. He was accorded a great ovation by the staff and the students to whom he put many searching questions pertaining to Islam. He was very much pleased with their answers and expressed a desire to attend a specimen lecture on the commentary on the Koran. Mr. Asar the principal of the college was asked by the Minister of Education to deliver his usual lecture on this subject to his students. The Afghan Minister listened to the lecture with rapt attention and at the close of the lecture made the following remarks:—"I am immensely grateful to H. M. the Shah for the great services that he has been rendering to Islam. In his great anxiety to improve the material prosperity of his country he has not lost sight of the spiritual needs of his people. By this institution he has been disseminating the true knowledge of Islam and reuniting the Moslems of the world by the bonds of brotherhood which of late have become rather loose. Islam has been much mis-understood and it is only by such means that the real teachings of Islam can be revived."

These remarks of the Afghan Minister clearly show that the time is soon coming when Afghanistan will also follow in the foot-steps of Turkey or Iran.

On my return through Iran, I was led by an Arab acquaintance of mine to an institution at Najaf Known as, "Jamiyyat-ul-Kabitat-ul-Ilmiyyat-ul-Adabiyyat" an association of the Moslem divines which is trying to move with the times. When I visited this institution, I was introduced to Sayyed Abdul-Whab, the Secretary of this institution who gave me a warm welcome. He phoned up a number of Moslem divines, the prominent members of this association to meet me. I was very pleased to meet these **progressive Moslem divines.**

This institution is working very much on the lines on which the Ecclesiastical College has been started at Teheran. One of the peculiar features of this institution is the teaching of logic and philosophy side by side with theology together with one of the European languages.

The institution has been started not by the Iraq Government but by the Moslem olivines themselves. Some orthodox Mullas are against this institution but the Iraq Government and the younger generation are in favour of it. The students are made to sit on chairs and benches and not to squat on the ground in the old fashioned way. The members of this institution are all broad-minded Moslems. There is no trace of fanaticism in them. The president of this institution had a long talk with me in Arabic, in the course of which he remarked with a smile :—

"We are not unaware of what is going on in our neighbourhood. The Mullas have been driven away from Turkey. In Iran they have met with the same fate. Modernism is the crying need of the day. A powerful young party is springing up in our country whose motto is, "Down with Mullaism". Before a serious situation is created for us here which judging from the trend of events, is sure to arise sooner or later, we have come forward to move with the times. Our institution is a link or a happy compromise between Mullaism and Modernism."

He proposed to his colleagues to make me an honorary member of this institution. I accepted his offer with thanks but at the same time I could not help remarking that with no beard and mustaches I could not suit this holy body of Muslim savants. The secretary said in reply. "You forget that we are a link between Mullaism and Modernism. One of the members of our association is a French Professor of Arabic at the Paris University. We respect people for their learning and not for their outward appearances".

Chapter XXXI.

MILITARY DEPARTMENT.

This department which is under the Minister of War, is up to this day receiving the personal attention of the Shah. Military Schools and Military Colleges have been founded for the training of officers on modern lines. In addition to a large number of local instructors, foreign experts are appointed on a short term contract system to be replaced, by suitable Iranians as they become available. Every year scores of officers are sent to foreign countries to receive a technical training in the use of modern weapons of war. Thousands of new recruits are enlisted every year in the different branches of the army. The salaries of the soldiers and officers have been made particularly attractive. No service is so well paid in the country as the Military Service.

Iran is making her own arms and ammunition now. She is no longer dependant on the outside world for the supply of the war-materials. Huge sums of money are being spent on the equipment of the soldiers and the officers. They are all well fed, well clothed and well lodged. The Shah personally supervises their lodging and boarding houses. All kinds of aeroplanes are to be found flying in the country. Flying is finding favour with the Iranees.

A large number of European visitors to Tehran told me that to-day Iran was one of the best armed countries for her size in the world. Military service has been made compulsory. By the introduction of the passport system according to which every one is expected to carry his passport with him when he is on move from one city to another or from one village to another, no one can escape it. Besides Military life has been made so attractive that young men are anxious to obey the call when it comes. Though the Military Budget has been kept a secret still, it is **the confirmed opinion** of some of the foreign Ministers in Tehran **that**

very few countries in the world can afford to spend the fabulous amount on the army which they guess Iran is spending today.

It looks as if Iran is preparing for a war. No one can gauge with certainty her real intention in making these huge preparations. But my impression is that it is a part of the general scheme namely to make Iran prosperous and independent of foreign intervention. This has been the sole care of His Imperial Majesty Reza Shah Pahlavi from the very beginning of his accession to the throne of Iran. His ambition is to make Iran a model country in the world in every possible respect. He has rejuvenated the whole country and what may be mistaken by outsiders for her anticipating a war is nothing but a healthy sign of her youthful vigour.

Chapter XXXII.

COMMERCE OF IRAN.

More prominent than anything else are the commercial activities of Iran. Organisation in commerce which was unknown before, is the order of the day. Thousands of limited companies have been formed for the import and export of goods on a large scale. A large number of them have been granted monopolies to deal in particular varieties of goods. To gain the confidence of the share-holders and the credit of the outside world the Iran Government holds shares in most of these concerns. Official Auditors annually audit the accounts of these companies.

Model shops have been introduced in Tehran to teach the shopkeepers the modern art of salesmanship. *Kalai Iran* which is a huge concern of Iran-made articles and which, very much like the Selfridge Stores of London maintains more than a dozen show rooms and stocks everything from a pin to an elephant, is the most significant, of these shops. Every shop maintains an attractive show room.

Prices of the articles for sale are mostly fixed. With no exception of those petty dealers who used to indulge in the past in the primitive method of quoting a high price at first and coming down gradually and settling the bargain by taking oaths by "Allah" and 'Ali', no shopkeeper believes in haggling.

Decency is the prominent feature of modern shops. Shopkeepers, salesmen and saleswomen are all smartly dressed in European costume. They receive the customers with, "Very pleased to see you" and send them off with "Thank you." Even the cobblers and shoe-makers are smartly dressed and are maintaining sitting rooms furnished with sofas, chairs and small tables with news papers and ash-trays placed on them.

One of the most striking things that one notices in **the** bazars is the extraordinary cleanliness of the barbers' shops. The barbers are required by Law to put on a clean white gown which is a part of their prescribed uniform. Their sitting rooms are much more attractive than those of the cobblers and shoe-makers. The floors of these rooms are invariably carpeted. There are huge mirrors on the walls. A hat's stand forms a necessary part of their furniture.

They sterilize their instruments for every customer. This is something which I had never seen or heard of before. Dr. Chaufer of the Mission Hospital at Ishphahan told me that he had never heard of barbers sterilizing their instruments even in London. An American journalist told me that there were some saloons in America where the barbers sterilized their instruments before using them, but that they were very few and very expensive.

In short, Iran is showing signs of her determined modernism everywhere and in every department of life. A detailed account of what strikes a foreign visitor at every step that he takes in his 'stroll through the crowded fashionable Khiyabans in Tehran would fill volumes.

Chapter XXXIII.

FOREIGN TRADE.

In order to maintain a balanced budget in commerce, various restrictions have been put on foreign imports which seem to have caused some annoyance to the foreign dealers in Iran. For instance, the import of such luxuries as biscuits, jellies and all sorts of pickles and preserves and toys has been completely stopped. Iran is manufacturing these things on a large scale. To encourage her locally manufactured articles which are in no way inferior to the foreign ones, very rightly she has stopped the import of foreign goods of this type.

With regard to other articles that do not fall within the category of luxuries specific permission has to be obtained from the Iran Government before any such thing can be imported. Besides, the quantity has to be fixed and the quality has to be approved by the Commerce Department. Moreover, only those countries are permitted to import which encourage the export of the Iran goods. To-day by encouraging her own industries by means of monopolies and strict Government supervision, Iran is in a position to export a large number of articles that have a prospect of a good foreign market.

The quality of her cotton and wool has been considerably improved. Her insisting on fast colours and the introduction of new designs in the carpet industry together with a systematised labour have led to a large output of carpets for which Iran is anxious **to** improve the foreign market.

Surplus fruit which in the past for want of knowledge of preserving or drying on scientific lines and want of transport facilities used to rot, is now being preserved and scientifically dried on a grand scale. The old artistic brass industry which **for want of a** foreign market was dying, has been revived. **I am not an industrial expert. I cannot enumerate the thousand and**

one articles in which Iran is specialising to-day and for which she wants a foreign market.

In order to encourage her exports, she has adopted a sort of a barter system with foreign countries. Export for import is her commercial policy. As a result of this policy, some of our Indian merchants who used to import goods from China and Japan are permitted to do so provided they can export Iran goods to these countries or to any other country in the world to the extent to which they import; foreign goods in Iran.

Very recently, Dr. Schacht a commercial expert from Germany with Dr. Smend the German Minister and three high officials of the German Government visited Tehran where they were entertained by the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Finance and Foreign Affairs at the Iran Club. After a few days' stay in Iran, Dr. Schacht in his interview with the representatives of the Tehran Papers is reported to have made the following remarks :—

"This is the first time that a member of the German Cabinet has set foot on the soil of Iran. I have made a full survey of the financial and commercial aspects of this growing country. I hope that my observations in these matters will have a desirable effect and hereafter our commercial relations with Iran will be established on a sounder basis. There are many products of Iran which can satisfy the needs of Germany. And since modern Iran has entered upon a period of remarkable industrial progress, she too needs many products of Germany, for her growing industries. Therefore the closer our commercial relations are established, the better for us both. The present method of Iran's foreign trade, I mean the barter system, is the best plan she could adopt at the present state of affairs. Germany's general plan of foreign trade is very much the same. Considering the world wide commercial conditions to-day and the state of international trade, in my opinion, this is the only profitable method in business,"

Chapter XXXIV. RAILWAYS.

Three years ago, Iran was one of the very few countries in the world which was entirely without railways. In 1888 a six miles long railway was opened from Tehran to Shah Abdul-Azim, a suburb. But strictly speaking this could hardly be called a railway. It was not worth the name. In March 1916 another small railway constructed by a Eussian Company was opened between Julfa on the Eussian frontier and Tabrez. This too was more of a tramway than a railway.

It was only in 1934 that the Parliament decided to provide the country with railways. A railway building department was started under Mr. Ahai, the Minister of Communications. Two gigantic schemes were taken in hand. In the North, the Capital city of Tehran was to be connected with Bander Pahlavi an important port on the Caspian Sea; and in the South, with Bander Abbas on the Persian Gulf.

The Northern-line which was the more difficult of the two and which involved great engineering skill, engaged the first and foremost attention of the Department. Last year in the month of November, there was a great rumour in the country that the Shah had expressed a desire in one of his speeches that the railway should reach Tehran by the middle of February 1937. An American Professor of the Alberz College on hearing this rumour is reported to have made a remark in the College Magazine that this was a physical impossibility. He was right from his point of view. It was not an easy task to build a railway on the Alberz Mountains. Huge tunnels and long bridges had to be constructed before a railway track could be opened for traffic. All the same his innocent remarks were mistaken for an insult to the enormous capabilities of the Iranees of which they have given ample proofs during the last twelve years of the Pahlavi Bule. He was taken to task by the Iran

Government and was forced to expunge his remarks from the Magazine. He did so but I doubt very much whether he could be convinced then that the railway ^{it} could reach Tehran exactly by the middle of February 1937.

On the 19th of February 1937, train whistles were heard in Tehran. The Northern line was completed. Thousands of spectators were at the station to admire the arrival of the northern railway at Tehran. They exulted with joy at this great industrial achievement. They saw for the first time in their lives, the great railway the life-line of the country which in a short space of time had covered 461 Kilometres of insurmountable mountains. The line stretches from Bander Shah in the South-East corner of the Caspian Sea to Tehran.

For nearly two weeks the local papers filled pages after pages with a graphic account of the railways. They printed photographs of the bridges, tunnels locomotives and the stations.

The following is the translation of some of the striking passages from the 'Iran':—"Yesterday was a day of general celebration. All over the town private houses, public buildings and shops* flew national flags. Everybody was talking about the new railways. Practically the whole of the town was at the station. The crowd at the foot of the Pahlavi Avenue where the station is located was unprecedented. 3 p. M. was the time fixed for the opening ceremony of this railway. Thousands of citizens were invited to this important ceremony. With the exception of the Officials of the Kampsax Consortium who were in charge of the construction, the guests were all Iranees. They occupied the places assigned to them on both sides of the railway track. In the centre of the track special seating accommodation was made for the Royal party with elaborate arches and decorations stable for the occasion. His Majesty the

Shah and His Highness the Crown Prince arrived at the station exactly at 3. The clapping of hands to cheer the Royal party and the deafening shouts of "Long live Reza Shah Pahlavi" continued for over five minutes. When they had taken their seats the Minister of Communications read the report of the construction which was followed by a brief speech from His Majesty Reza Shah Pahlavi.

At the close of the Shah's speech the Minister of Communications presented to him a gold tray containing two gold nuts, a gold spanner and a pair of gold scissors and requested him to tighten the last bolt of the Northern railway with his own hands. His Majesty took one gold nut and tightened it on the bolt with the gold wrench and H. H. the Crown Prince took the other and tightened it in a similar manner. A few metres from the place where this ceremony was performed, a red-white-and-green ribbon was stretched across the track. His Majesty cut this with gold scissors and immediately after this, the first train which had been waiting nearby came whistling and passed His Majesty. This was followed by a passenger train and goods train loaded with rails and sleepers. The ceremony ended with the introduction of the Chief Engineer and other railway Officers of the Kampax to His Majesty who congratulated them on their brilliant achievement."

The following is the short summary of the report of the Minister of Communications:

"In addition to the 461 Kilometres of the Northern section, rails have been laid for 336 Kilometres on the Southern section also. The total length of the Trans-Iran-Railway is 1387 Kilometres. Now a section of only 590 Kilometres remains to be done. To date, apart from the cost of the rolling stock, a sum of R.Ls. 810,588,000 equivalent to 50 million Dollars in American money has been spent on the construction. 108 bridges the smallest of them exceeding 15 metres

in length have been built. 94 tunnels totalling 23,410 metres in length have been constructed. The Tehran station is under construction. It will have 20 important buildings and the total cost will reach 80,000,000 Rials which is equivalent to one Crore and a quarter of Rupees in Indian money."

The President of the national * assembly delivered a long address on the arrival of railway in Tehran. Among other things he said, I am often told by foreigners that this is one of the very best railways in the world. It is a master piece of construction. One thing of which every Iranee ought to feel proud is the fact that not a Penny has been borrowed from foreign countries in this connection. It has been financed from Iranian Funds."

In short, this is a great feat of engineering skill that stands to the credit of the Pahlavi Rule. People are dreaming dreams that within ten years all natural barriers will be overcome and all important towns in the country will be connected by a net-work of railways. Judging from the trend of events, I am inclined to believe that the time is fast approaching when their dreams will be realised to the fullest extent.

Chapter XXXV. INTELLECTUAL PROGRESS.

Foreign visitors to Iran are often surprised to find how high a degree of education and culture has been attained by both men and women in the course of Iran's fifteen years' march to modernism. In official circles, the generality of men in addition to a fair knowledge of Arabic and Turkish, speak French with fluency and many read if they do not speak English.

A stupendously large number of Primary Schools in villages and every section of large cities with a variety of inducements held out to poor parents to send their children to these schools, a fairly large number of Secondary Schools and Colleges in big towns for imparting technical, professional and cultural education, ample adult education, made available in cities as well as in villages both to men and women, and compulsory Military Service which in addition to Military training also provides a short course of education, these and a large number of private classes opened by patriotic literary men in their neighbourhoods have broken illiteracy to a startling extent.

Newspaper reading has become almost a necessity with people. There are more than seventy papers, periodicals and magazines printed at Tehran. The 'Iran' the morning paper 'Ittila-at' the evening paper are the two leading papers in Tehran which have the widest circulation. 'Sitara-i-Jahan' is the third best paper in Tehran. No house, no firm and no shop can do without the *Iran* or *Ittila-at* or *Sitara-i-Jahan*.

One of the striking features of journalism in Iran is the spirit of patriotism pervading through it. With the exception of a very few papers that can make both ends meet, a large number of them are running at a loss. Mr. Malaki the editor of 'Sitarai-Jahan,' an enthusiastic young man of more than average

intelligence who could have made a mark in any other department of life has stuck to this line with no other motive than serving the cause of his country. The success of his persistent writings on the uplift of women and the consequent satisfaction that he has done something for his country, are a sufficient inducement to him to stick to this non-paying profession.

Mr. Sai, who is probably the youngest among the journalists, is running his weekly paper '*Nasimshimal*' a literary paper, at a considerable loss partly with a view to keep alive the memory of its founder who was a great social reformer and mostly with a view to serve his country. With a similar object in view, he has printed scores of modern books in Iranian literature at a great momentary loss. Mr. Mutiee the editor of *Kanuri-i-Shuara*, is running his weekly on similar lines and has devoted one half of his paper to the printing of the weekly sermons of Agha Shariat Sanglachi with a view to preserve and give wide publicity to this highly enlightening matter of public interest. In short, every editor has been doing his best to serve his country in one way or another.

Literary men have abandoned their hackneyed methods of writing cock and bull stories or encomiums or love songs. This sort of literature has gone out of fashion now. The Iranians have now taken to writing on modern subjects. Patriotism, service to humanity, position of women in society and upbringing of children are the usual themes of their writings. Much original work is being done in the field of drama and novel writing.

It is a pity that our Bombay University knows nothing about this modern literature and the University Authorities have not been able to trace any modern book worth prescribing to replace '*Kalilla-wa-Damnah*', '*Anwalr-i-Suheli*' * '*Divan-i-Hafiz*' * '*Akhlaqui-Muhsini*' and * '*Tayyibat-Sadi*' which for the last fifty

years are being prescribed for the First Year and Inter Arte Examinations and which find no room in the curriculum of the Iran University.

Nobody here seems to have taken notice of Iran-I-Bastan, the newly vvrritten authentic history of Iran in three volumes of nine hundred pages each which' is the result of the laborious research of Hasan Pairyaha an authority on the history of Iran. The translation of Malcolm's history of Iran by Mirza Hairat which in the face of this new history is nothing short of an insult to Iran and which has no room in any of the libraries of Iran is still being taught by our University at the B. A. Examination.

Literary Ctebs play an important part in moulding the taste of literary men. Anjamani-Adabi which is the personal creation of Shah-Zadah Afsar, the Ex-President of the Iran Parliament is the most prominent of these centres of learning. It has got about 150 members every one of whom is a literary figure of high intellectual attainments. None but an approved author in Iranian prose or poetry is eligible for membership of this learned body. The members meet once a week in the house of Shah Zadah Afsar who has set apart a spacious hall in his buildidg for winter meetings and an open ground in the garden in front of his house for summer meetings. The members and outsiders interested in this field of intellectual activities are all entertained to tea and cigarettes. Specimens of new poems are recited and criticism is invited on them.

Agha Aurang the Deputy President of the Parliament, a gifted speaker with a fund of humour and a poet of no mean order is the centre of attraction at these meetings. Maliku-Shura Bahar who is the greatest modern poet of Iran and whose poems have been largely quoted and translated by Prof. Brown in his book on 'Modern Prose and Poetry of Iran, is conspicuous by his absence at the meetings. On ascertaining the reasons

for his absence, I was told that since his poems were often recited as model verses and were highly praised by the audience, he thought it bad taste to be present at these meetings. During my eight months' stay at Tehran I never missed a single meeting of this academy which was a great intellectual treat.

"Women are conspicuously asserting themselves in this field of intellectual life. Khanam Parvin Itsami is recognised to be a first rate modern poetess. Her occasional poems which usually adorn the columns of important news papers are read with keen interest and relish. Her Divan of 220 pages which has been recently printed and published at Tehran does credit to her poetic genius. She very often attends the meetings of this literary academy. She knows English and French very well. She is a librarian at the Danish Sarai Ali. Like her father who is the librarian of the Parliament library, she is a great reader.

Literary women of Khanam Parvin's type are not only the co-members of the literary academy or other literary clubs but they have also formed literary clubs of their own. Kanum-i-Banwan is the most prominent of their clubs. Agha Hikmat the able Minister of Education who is largely responsible for the phenomenal spread of Western education in Iran has been taking personal interest in the intellectual activities of women. He has provided them with a magnificent building with a tennis court, a spacious open ground for playing volley ball and such other outdoor games, a well equipped library and a well furnished sitting room. The librarian and a few clerks are paid by the Education Department. The members of this club who are mostly women teachers at public and private schools meet here every day and hold public meetings once or twice a month which are usually attended by the Minister of Education and other dignitaries of State, along with their wives. The subjects discussed at those meetings are usually the ways and* means of ameliorating the condition of women in Iran.

One of the multifarious activities of this club is the social service to their sex. Khanam Mahmud a German lady of dynamic energy the wife of Mr. Mahmud the head of the Wireless Department has organised a band of social workers who visit poor men's houses and teach their daughters, sisters or mothers housewifery, economic methods of modern cooking, sewing and sanitation. The ladies' club has been publishing a monthly magazine which gives a brief account of their social and intellectual activities and a summery of lectures delivered by prominent male or female speakers at their meetings.



Chapter XXXVK

SOICAL AND DOMESTIC LIFE.

The momentous nature of the transformation of Iran is nowhere better illustrated than by the changes effected in the lives of her people. The dynamic influence of the West has brought about a thorough change in the every day life of the Iranees. Every house is furnished in a European style. Sitting on carpets is out of fashion. Hat-stands, ward-robcs and dressing tables, dining tables and dinner-wagons, forks and spoons, dinner sets and tea-sets and sofas and chairs are as much in demand for home establishment as cooking pots. The social intercourse of men and women which was not permitted before, is the order of the day. Men visit women unreservedly and women visit men with similar feelings of freedom for congratulation and condolence and very often for the transaction of business. The striking feature of this transformation of society is the rapidity with which it is spreading in villages.

One day on my way back from Hamedan to Tehran, I happened to make the acquaintance of a young lady who was a fellow traveller with me in the bus. She belonged to a Criminal Tribe of the Ashar, the members of which at one time were reported to be monstrous murderers. She struck me as a refined person and specially remarkable for the characteristic Irani courtesy and hospitality. She asked me whether I could break journey at Quazvine and stay a few days with her in order to get an idea of country life. With some difficulty and after a good deal of natural hesitation, I was prevailed upon to accept this offer.

She took me to her house and introduced me to her husband and other members of her family as a friend of hers with whom she had made acquaintance in the bus. Her husband kissed me as an oriental mark of respect and remarked with a smile, "Sir, we

are tribes people. We have been brought up in villages cut off from the civilised world. We are born robbers and murderers."

This frightened me out of my wits. But the gentleman noticing a change in my countenance said, *' Listen, I have not finished what I wanted to say. Be at ease. We are not what we were before. We are different people now. Had my wife brought you to me some five years ago and introduced you in a way in which she has done to-day, my sense of propriety would have been shocked and I would have instantly killed both you and my wife. If I had not done it, my tribes people would have killed me along with you for lack of a sense of honour.

Our present King has revolutionised us all. We have given up once for all our centuries old customs and sentiments under the benign rule of His Imperial Majesty Keza Shah Pahlavi; high way robbers and murderers have been turned into peaceful citizens. Our whole life is changed. A husband is no longer jealous of his wife. He has confidence in her and she has confidence in him. We have been living altogether a new life now. We are building up new traditions. I cannot say whether we have quite the polish and the refinement of manners of the city people but I am proud to say that we are no longer the barbarous tribes of the past.

We are not as free and as happy as we were before. We have been shifted from our strongholds. I was the Chief of my tribe. I have been detached from my followers. We are living here under certain restrictions. We have been granted lands for cultivation. We have been sufficiently compensated for the loss of our fields; but our movements are being watched. Naturally, we do not like this; but we are gradually getting used to this new life. We are convinced that this change is for our good and the good of the country at large."

After giving me a short account of the transformation of his life, my host entertained me to tea. I spent three days with my interesting host and hostess and I was pleased to observe that there was very little change between the life of the country people and that of the refined men and women of the capital city of Iran. They dine at tables, eat with forks and spoons and scrupulously observe the table manners of Western people.

I am afraid, my description of the social life of the Iranians may sound like a fairy tale or a specimen of oriental exaggeration even to those who may have visited Iran within the last two or three years. I have tried to explain in a previous chapter that the emancipation of women has been going on in Iran from the very beginning of the Constitutional Government. Social unrest was the natural concomitant of political unrest.

The process of the transformation of society has been continuing in Iran uninterruptedly unnoticed by foreigners. The present radical changes which came on the surface only a year ago in a mature form are the result of the twenty years internal development which was steadily going on under the surface. The westernisation of Iran is not skin-deep. It is in the blood. It is running through the very veins of the country.

Internally as well as externally men and women have become Europeans in the best sense of the word. Men are all clean shaven and women have invariably bobbed hair. Women find it as much a necessity to visit the barber's shops as men. To meet the growing demand of women barbers who have a better aesthetic taste than men and who can attend to their sex better than men, a large number of women have taken to the barbers profession.

Dining at restaurants has become a fashion. In cities nearly fifty per cent of men and women dine out. Restaurants have

been made attractive by providing music. The Iranian and Turkish dancing girls are invariably in attendance at these restaurants to amuse the guests with oriental music and their artistic oriental dances.

Hotels are wonderfully clean and well provided with modern comforts and conveniences which one may expect in a first rate hotel in Europe. They provide bed and break-fast at moderate charges. For lunch and evening meals the guests usually go to restaurants where one can get a decent lunch or dinner for the payment of eight kirans which is a little more than one Rupee in our money.

Lughanta is one of the most prominent and most frequently visited restaurants which has accommodation for eight hundred guests inside the building and for about a thousand more in the open*. Chilau-Kabab is its speciality. Formerly it was a residential place of the Kajar Chiefs and now it is a place of luxuries. The old paintings of the Kajar Kings, Princes and their Ministers still attract a large number of foreign visitors. It has a huge square pool of water with a large number of ornamental fountains in full play. Dining tables and chairs surrounded by beautiful flower pots are arranged on all the four sides of this square. This site is particularly attractive in the evening when the whole garden is lit up with hundreds of coloured electric lights. People usually invite their friends to lunch at such restaurants which are attractive and cheap.

A craze for outdoor life and spending one's holidays in the suburbs is another prominent feature of modernism which strikes a foreign visitor in Iran. On Friday the Moslem day of rest or other festive days the shops in cities are closed Thursday being a half-holiday nearly eighty per cent of the city people make preparations for going out to spend their week ends.

]Every city is surrounded with gardens or some picturesque natural spots that attract the city people on holidays. Several hilly places which were obscure villages in the past are developing into healthy holiday resorts for the city people. Shimran about twelve miles away from Tehran which was a small village before, has grown into a fashionable holiday resort. Hundreds of new buildings have been constructed by wealthy citizens of Iran as their Summer residences. The Shah himself has set an example in this direction by building a magnificent palace with about five hundred acres of compound. Ideal spots of land shaded by evergreen trees with tiny streams of water running in front of them provide the middle class holiday makers with temporary lodgings, where they eat, drink and make merry for the day.

The peculiar feature of these holiday trips is the presence of women everywhere. Woman is in full possession of the rights that have been granted to her sisters in Christian lands. She is no longer a slave or a toy of her husband, She is a companion of her husband in the strict sense of the word. She claims equality with him. She dines with him at the table and accompanies him on his pleasure trips. "Ladies first and gentlemen afterwards" is the rule of conduct strictly observed in society. No husband can dream of visiting a cinema or a drama without taking his wife with himself. In case of poor people, their wives who usually work as teachers, clerks or saleswomen, to supplement the small earnings of their husbands' share the expenses.

Another equally striking feature of modernism in the domestic life of the people is the breaking down of the old system under which the head of the family always lived together with his married sons and his grand-children. As soon as a son gets married now, he sets up a new house for himself and does not like to throw his responsibilities on his father or mother, or take

up an additional responsibility of looking after his parents who are expected to make provision for their old age.

In big business-cities like Tehran and Isphahan the telephone has become a necessity. There is no Government office or private firm or shop or house of a prominent citizen without it. In order to save time many business transactions are done by telephone. Vague visits without appointments are discouraged.

Once when I wanted to see the Minister of Education I telephoned him to give me time. He asked me to see him at 2 p. M. When I went to his office at the appointed hour, I was surprised to see that the peon at the door had a list of visitors of the day with different times marked against them. The moment I entered the sitting room, I was asked by the peon whether I was Professor Moulvi. On my saying "Yes" to his inquiry, I was asked to go straight to the Minister without sending in my visiting card. The Minister gave me nearly half an hour and as soon as I came out another visitor went in who was asked to see him at 2-30.

Iranees to-day are thoroughly modernised and there is not the least sign of orientalism to be noticed anywhere. Even the orthodox Mullahs have learned the necessity of keeping pace with western civilisation.

Agha Shariat Sanglachi to whom I have made some reference in the previous chapters and who is a recognised Head of the Mullahs in Iran, once invited me to lunch at his house. He seated me on the ground and served me lunch in the old oriental style. But all the same he brought forks and spoons both for himself and for me. When he began to use the forks and spoons I asked him for fun's sake whether he was right in using forks and spoons and violating the Laws of Islam by imitating the *Firangies*. He burst into laughter and remarked:—

"I haven't seated you at the dining table not because I don't like it but because I cannot afford to have this luxury. I am a great admirer of European ways. To eat with forks and spoons is more hygienic than eating with hands. There were no forks and spoons in the days of our Prophet and no knowledge of the havoc the tiny microbes play in our lives. We are using many things to-day which did not exist in the days of our Prophet. If the use of forks and spoons is 'Bidyat' an unlawful innovation as some of the ill-informed and illogical Mullas are reported to believe, then driving in cars, travelling by buses, steamers and railway trains is all 'Bidyat'. For, the Prophet never used them. The illuminating of his tomb at Medina with electric lights is also a 'Bidyat'. Our whole life to-day accordingly will be in one way or another a 'Bidyat'. I am sure if the Prophet were to come back on Earth to-day, he would by all means prefer a comfortable motor drive from here to Medina to a tedious troublesome camel ride. My dear good friend, don't take me to be still living in the Nineteenth century. We are living in a progressive world. We Moslems, if we have a mind to live, must move with the times or else we should all commit suicide and go to the other world where there is no *Bidyat."

This is the spirit of the Modern Mullas in Iran. One can easily imagine to what depth westernism has permeated the social life of the people.

Chapter xxxvii. THE ECONOMIC CHANGES.

It is interesting to note that the world-wide problem of non-employment which has puzzled the economic experts of the world and for which no satisfactory solution seems to have been found as yet, does not seem to worry Iran in the least. There is plenty of employment in Iran.

There is enough of work for men and women in every department of life. The ever extending Education Department in Iran has decided to make education free and compulsory all over the country; but the scheme cannot be pushed through not so much for want of money as for want of men. Hundreds of teachers coming fresh from the normal schools are appointed at the beginning of the academic year and yet, there is a demand for more, because many new Primary and Secondary schools are being opened every year to abolish illiteracy in the country which is the goal of modern Iran. The ambition of the Iran Government is not only to make education compulsory for boys and girls but also for adult men and women. Hence for some years to come, demand for fresh graduates is bound to be keen. The opening of new industries has created a demand not only for mental labour but also for educated men with technical skill and a large number of clerks for office work. Firms and limited companies want clerks to keep accounts for them.

According to the revised terms of the treaty with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, a certain percentage of the employees must necessarily be Iranees. This has created another good opening for the educated and non-educated Iranees. The evergrowing Police Department wants graduates of Secondary schools for its police training institutions- Military schools and Military Colleges which promise a bright career, are **absorbing**

a large **number** of. educated **men** that are fit **for** a military career. The railway contracts are given to foreign companies on the clear understanding that as far as possible they have to employ Iranian labour. This has created another growing **demand for** skilled and non-skilled labour.

Peace and order in the country and security of life and property which were conspicuous by their absence in the past and which are the prominent features of the Pahlavi Bule, now have prompted the wealthy Jews of the country to invest their large savings in erecting huge buildings for commercial purposes in large cities. Wealthy native Iranees who for fear of thieves used to bury their wealth underground are gradually digging up their hidden wealth and spending it on building new modern houses to satisfy the aesthetic taste which is inborn in them.

Besides, every year a large number of public buildings is being erected for the offices of the various new departments which have come into existence. This has brought into importance the profession of carpentry and masonry which pay well. A newly acquired taste for European furniture such as hat-stands, ward-robres, tables, sofas and chairs has created an enormous demand for skilled labour in this direction.

The Public Works Department is employing thousands of labourers for the making of new Khiyabans in cities and the construction of new roads and bridges outside the cities. A large number of Engineers, Sub-Overseers and clerks is being absorbed in this department every year. Extensive motor service is responsible for the net work of hotels and restaurants that are springing up in cities and villages to cater for the passengers. This is a new line of business which was almost **unknown to the people before.**

The enormous , activities of the Education Department which have created a great enthusiasm for education have opened careers for literary men and printers and publishers. Hundreds of stationery and book shops have come into existence and are doing splendid business.

Women have given up their primitive craze for heavy ugly silver or gold ornaments and have acquired a refined taste for Western dresses. Instead of locking up their money in ornaments which were seldom used, they freely spend it now on Western gowns of artistic designs, stockings, shoes and hats and several other requirements of a modern lady. This has given rise to hundreds of tailoring shops for women which were unknown before.

Thus there is plenty of work not only for men but also for women. Five years ago when the question of the unveiling of women was being discussed in the papers, the two important arguments that were brought against it and were made much of by the opponents were:— the tendency on the part of women to spend money on frivolities when they are left to themselves and a total absence of prospects of employment for them.

Actual facts have shown that both apprehensions were ill-founded. It is true that today women do spend a great deal on frivolities. But it is in the very nature of woman to do so. However the redeeming feature of this change is her diversion from her primitive habits of investing money in ornaments which was a dead loss to the country. This kind of investment locked up the money and prevented it from the circulation which is absolutely necessary for the economic health of the country. The second objection has been more than fully answered by the fact that there is no woman in Iran who with an ability and will to work is unable to find employment.

Chapter XXXV111.

FINANCE.

With all her enormous expenditure on her huge productive and unproductive schemes, today, Iran is financially more sound than she was ever before, during the past two hundred years of her history. She is indebted to none. She is building up her own resources. She is averse to borrowing money from the foreign powers for fear of their unnecessary intervention in her State affairs. From her experience in the past, she has learned one lesson and that is to be absolutely independent of foreign intervention. Even to carry out her huge project of building railways, she is not borrowing money from the outside world. She is buying the machinery from Europe on the instalment system and is very prompt in paying up these instalments in time.

There is one question in this connection which needs a satisfactory answer. Where is the money coming from to meet the growing demands of the country? This is a mystery which every foreign visitor is anxious to solve. But so far none of them has been able to find a satisfactory solution. I tried to probe several local Officers and the Members of Foreign Legations on this point. Some gave an evasive reply and others offered some vague explanations which did not satisfy me.

The general impression in the country however seems to be that things are managed in Iran with strict economy. The Iranees know the proper use of money. They know how to spend, when to spend and where to spend. The salaries of Government servants are low from top to bottom. Yet there is no dis-satisfaction among the Government servants. They are all working on patriotic lines and public service is looked upon as a service to the country. Every endeavour is being made to make the best use of time, money and energy.

His Imperial Majesty Reza Shah Pahlavi possesses the rare gift of putting the right man in the right place. Every member of his Cabinet is a genius in his own way. Mr. Dawer the Finance member is a great expert in dealing with money matters: In spite of the huge sums of money that are spent on such unproductive schemes as the building of Khiyabans, erecting of public buildings and the construction of bridges and tunnels and an enormous expenditure on the Military Department, the budget of which is not made public, the financial genius of this gifted expert has been able to afford the luxury of a balanced budget.

In these days of world-wide trade depression when some of the most advanced countries in Europe have been floundering in a more or less serious financial crisis, Iran is launching her new schemes involving an enormous expenditure without the least fear of financial trouble. His Imperial Majesty Reza Shah Pahlavi has worked many wonders and this is one of them. Long live Reza Shah Pahlavi!

THE END





سرور محمد علی خان صاحب
 SIR THOMAS C. DINSHAM, Kt., M.V.O., O.B.E.



امین الملک سر میرزا اسماعیل دیوان عالی میسور
 AMIN-UL-MULK SIR MIRZA M. ISMAIL, K.T., K.C.I.E., D.S.E.,
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لبره تلفون ۴۱۷۸۷

اردی بهشت ۱۳۱۷

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قیمت چهار روپیه

