INTRODUCTION
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Muslim society in India towards the close of 18th century presented the sad spectacle of inertia and degeneration. Dire ignorance, conservatism and traditionalism, rampant in the society, had shaken the foundations of its edifice and brought it to the verge of complete collapse. Reluctance to face the challenges of the West which came with the advent of the British rule in India showed that the community had lost all the vitality, vigour and creative force of a living nation.

Furthermore, in the twilight of the Mutiny of 1857, the Muslim had become ruined, both politically and economically. During this hour, a great savior of the Muslim community, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan spread and diagnosed the prevailing disease minutely and prescribed the correct medicine, education and endeavoured to establish the Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College in the mid-nineteenth century.

The present study is an account of the various phases through which Muslim society, particularly in the domain of education during the eighteenth and mid-nineteenth century. More specifically, the role of the Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh in changing the destiny of Indian Muslims, who were in the course of decline in various fields like education, social, political, economic, etc. will be discussed.

In approaching the core of this thesis, I have progressed from the general to the particular, from the macrocosm of the nineteenth century to the microcosm of a Muslim university (Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College).
Sir Syed Ahmed Khan appreciated the urgency of social and religious reforms to face the challenges of the new scientific age, particularly in the following areas.

1. Constant attack from Christian critics.
2. The danger arising from the rationalistic and agnostic spirit of the age.
3. The spiritual, intellectual, moral and material decadence of the Muslims in India.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan prepared the Muslims to face the above challenges of the new age. He assumed that the panacea was modern education. Although he appreciated the old Muslim educational system, he rejected its validity for the new age. He stated,

"The old thread with which the ribs had been tied was now broken and a new thread was needed to re-tie them.

Moreover he maintained that the old educational system would lead Muslim to retrogression. So, he wrote to one of his friends:

"My dear, there will be no use of such Madarsas. It is pity that the Muslims of India are drowning and there is no one to save them. Oh, they discarded the elixir and swallow the poison….believe me, the water has come upto their lips and there is very little time left before they drawn."

Finally, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan succeeded in leading the Muslims to the path of progress by establishing the Muslim College at Aligarh. This period can be considered one of the most fascinating period in the dismal history of Indian
Muslims, because during this hour of need the Aligarh College with all its forces was organised. It can be regarded as the starting point of a slow awakening of the Muslim community in India.

This thesis concentrate on the further endeavours made by various Muslim leaders to expand the Muslim College into a university. Three major points can be considered significantly in this thesis.

First, the university movement which was envisioned by the founder of the college faced an early sad back due to the death of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in 1898.

Second, the question of the university was reviewed vigorously after six years when the Agha Khan III issued a ‘Now or never’ appeal at the Mohammadan educational conference at Nagpur in 1910. From that point on earnest efforts were made by Agha Khan, Aftab Ahmed Khan, T. Beck, Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Shaukat Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, etc. to raise the funds for the proposed university. Eventually, after a long and persistent struggle, the dream of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was translated into reality in 1920.

Third, the Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh played a momentous role in changing the destiny of Muslims of India in various domains of life-social, political, educational and economic, etc. Moreover, it prepared the Muslims to demand their own Muslim state in the mid-nineteenth century.

These chapters are the heart of the work. A critical analysis has been made to evaluate the success and failure of the college. In this evaluation, attention is drawn towards two major conclusions, firstly, the success of the college in raising
the economic standard of Indian Muslims and enabling them to regain the confidence, status, identity, etc. which they lost during the great rebellion of 1857. Consequently, all these above factors lead to the creation of the Muslim independent state Pakistan.

Secondly, to look to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s objectives from another angle, it can be said that the primary purpose of the college envisioned by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was to infuse, defuse and harmonized the best element of knowledge of both East and West-scientific as well as religious. In short he made an effort to re-council the two domains of knowledge.

However, it will be argued that the above lofty ambitions could not be achieved. This is probably because Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s primary ambition was to uplift the Muslim community socially and politically. Moreover, religion was not to be taught at the expense of scientific knowledge. Furthermore, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s interpretations of the faith of his dearly-held beliefs and values scandalized the ‘Status quo’ ulemas who came to regard him as a renegade and heretic. Consequently, he could not apply his re-appraisal religious ideas upon which his proposed synthesis rested. On the contrary, religion at Aligarh was left in the hands of Ulema, who for the most part opposed Western and scientific education. Henceforth, the traditional petrified religious views mainly alienated the students from the Western Skeptical and liberal method of education.

Western education became an instrument and a vehicle for Western culture, values and attitudes, which the Ulema regarded with the disdain. The net
result of the above was that there emerged a wide gulf between the products of the two paradigms or systems of education existing in India. Scholars who came out of the traditional religious colleges looked upon their counter parts from the modern Western institution of education as Kafirs (unbelievers), while these Westernised Kafirs showed little respect and regard Ulemas.

In sum then it can be concluded that while Aligarh and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan contributed significantly to the socio-political uplift of Muslims in India, they could not synthesis the two modes of education. Nevertheless, this failures can be regarded as a very important historical event, since it was the first attempt made by Indian Muslim leaders of the Aligarh college to grapple with this pertinent issue.

**STATEMENT OF PROBLEM:**

While undergoing the Bachelor and Master degree courses in Education, the researcher had come across the contribution to education and the various books written on education by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan.

The Monumental contribution of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to the field of education inspired the researcher to take up this topic for study on a wider scale. In an attempt to understand and explore the basic principles and philosophy of this stalheart educationist, the researcher has selected this topic of research work leading to the Doctor of Philosophy degree in education. The researcher, after careful thought has decided to entitle this thesis as **Educational Thoughts and Contribution of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan - A Study.**
The ancient concept of education was lofty and the educational system was designed to impart knowledge and also to kindle the spirit of learning, research and inquiry. The teacher-pupil relationship stood on a high pedestal and devotion was the key note of every intellectual activity. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan has achieved a unique place on account of his many sided contributions to the new educational thought. No historian of the educational movement can ever afford to ignore him except to the countries determined and to that of the educational process. To any student of education, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan comments himself without much persuasion or prodding. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan has been one of the illustrious educationists of India. His thoughts and ideas on education, no doubt, will not only create interest in teachers, parents and educationists in the education of younger generation but will also serve as a feed back to the future planners of education in the country.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was a well read educationist. He had great interest in the education of his own people than in the Indian masses. He was always of the opinion of introducing a better system of education in the country.

**NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE:**

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s contributions in education are far too large in magnitude but unfortunately he was not given due recognition and appreciation as he deserved. The reason for not getting appreciable recognition may be that he was a very dedicated and silent worker, working without the spirit of showmanship. Ironically enough, he got more recognition in foreign countries that
gave him a great incentive to work all the more with great zeal and zest. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s wide experience can be used to make educational system more effective. He has expressed his valuable views on education at all levels including primary and basic education, secondary education, higher education, teacher education, vocational and technical education.

Thus, this research work is an attempt to cover broadly the salient features of his personality, his educational philosophy and his practical experiments with the new educational methods. In simple words, this is merely a detailed and comprehensive study of this great personality, his life history, his educational philosophy and his contribution to the new educational movement. Through the medium of this thesis, the researcher has made humble efforts to put forth his ideas on education in the best possible manner. In doing so the paraphernalia chiefly comprises of his original writings both in English and Urdu and also the secondary sources.

Initially, the research work began with the critical and careful analysis of almost all the available books one by one in order to understand his concepts, methods and new ideologies in education.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

The main objective of this research work is to make an attempt and unfold the educational thoughts and contributions of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Some of the other objectives of this study are;
1) To introduce this unknown educationist to the people who do not know how much he had contributed in the field of education.

2) To make an attempt to study and understand the educational thoughts and contribution of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan.

3) To study the contribution of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to modern literature.

4) To study and understand the contribution of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to social and educational field.

5) To study the efforts of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan for the establishment of the Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College.

6) To study the educational thoughts and contribution of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan for the spread of English and higher education among Muslims and for the whole community.

7) To study the present status of Aligarh Muslim University, its effects and its contribution and achievements for the whole community of India.

**SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:**

The facts pertaining to the life history and contributions of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to education are based on the information provided by the Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. These facts are also based on the contents of the books written by him. (APPENDIX - D)
Additional information has also been collected from the books written by other writers about the views of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. (APPENDIX - E)

**METHOD OF INVESTIGATION:**

This work is mainly a library work. The researcher followed the ‘Historical’ method of investigation.

**SCHEME OF THE CHAPTERS:**

This thesis consists of five chapters. They are divided as under;

**Chapter I: Life History Of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan:**

This chapter deals with the ancestors of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, his birth and childhood, his personality and character, his influence on eminent persons and the honours and the awards received.

**Chapter II: Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s Social and literary Contributions:**

This chapter deals with the Rebellion of 1857, Causes of Mutiny, Ramification of the Mutiny and services rendered by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan during Mutiny. The educational thoughts of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan reflected in his books are also discussed in this chapter.

**Chapter III: Efforts for the Establishment of The Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College:**

This chapter is devoted to the contributions of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to different social and educational activities. His involvement in different conferences, seminars and commissions are also dealt in this chapter. This chapter also deals with the efforts of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan for the establishment of The
Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College Fund Committee. The work and functions of this committee are discussed in this chapter. The history of the Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College is also dealt in this chapter. The educational thoughts and the reasons behind the establishment of this college are also covered in this chapter.

Chapter IV: The Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh:

The services rendered by Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh for the spread of higher education for whole community are studied in this chapter. The educational efforts of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh for the spread of higher and specially the modern education are explained in this chapter. The causes of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s success for the establishment of Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College are also discussed.

This study also deals with the efforts of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and other Muslim leaders to transform the college into a university. The Muslim leaders like the Agha Khan, Mohsin-ul Mulk and Viqar-ul Mulk played a vital role in achieving the objective.

Chapter V: Summary and Conclusion:

In this chapter the researcher shares his views and ideas with the views and ideas and educational thoughts of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. The Researcher also gives his opinion and suggestions. Some of these are as under;

1) The researcher has called Sir Syed Ahmed Khan as ‘The Gandhi of 1857’
2) If the Muslims of India had accepted Sir Syed Ahmed Khan as their leader, today, there might be many more Muslim universities in India.

3) Today there is very much need of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's Educational movement which he started after the Mutiny of 1857 to overcome all the educational problems and backwardness of Indian Muslims.

4) Unnecessary wastage of money on the wedding ceremonies in Muslim families should be stopped and the same amount should be utilised to solve the educational problems of Indian Muslims.
CHAPTER I

THE LIFE HISTORY

OF

SIR SYED AHMED KHAN
CHAPTER I

THE LIFE HISTORY OF SIR SYED AHMED KHAN

HIS ANCESTORS:

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s ancestors originally hailed from Arabia. The rulers of the Umayyad and Abbasia dynasties made things so hot for the Fatimids that many Syed families had to live their hearths and homes, and thus they scattered all over Asia. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s fore-fathers were also amongst those who bade good-bye to their ancestral home. At first they made Damghan Khan, an ancient town of Iran, their home. Subsequently, they shifted to Herat. A member of that family came to India during the reign of Shah Jahan, and ever since his arrivals, this family was connected with the Moghal Court till the reign of Akber Shah II. Syed Hadi, the grand father of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, on whom the title of Jawad Ali Khan was conferred and was honoured with the “Mansab-e-Hazari Zat” by Alimgir II. When Shah Alam II was ascended the thrown the decoration title of Jawad-ud-Daula was added to the previous and he was appointed the Chief Moral Censor. Later on he was made the Qazi of the Army.¹

Syed Hadi’s son, i.e. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s father, Mir Muttaqui was a stoic. Shah Alam II continued the same favours to Mir Muttaqui. When Akber Shah II became the Moghal Emperor, he retained his position in Darbar-e-Aam as

well as in Darbar-e-Khas. But since he was a King only in name and did not enjoy the power of bestowing the necessary robes and other relevant privileges to the beneficiaries, Mir Muttaqui deemed it futile the title and Mansab of his father. He however wielded a great influence in the court as he had very friendly and cordial relations with Akber Shah since his princehood.\(^2\)

The noblemen of Delhi of those days considered swimming and the practice of the bow and arrow as a sign of nobility. Mir Muttaqui acquired efficiency in both these arts. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had also learnt these arts from him. Mir Muttaqui went through life like a stoic and was a well-balanced and straight-forward man. The signs of the mode of life could be seen reflected in Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s maternal grandfather Khwaja Fareeduddin was a descendant of Khwaja Mohammad Yusuf Hamdari. He was greatly admired for his scholarship and was particularly very expert in Mathematics. Khwaja Fareeduddin had written a number of small pamphlets on astronomy which were unfortunately destroyed during the Mutiny in 1857.\(^3\)

The East India Company needed a superintendent for Madarsa-i Alia in Calcutta, a noted college for teaching Arabic and Persian. Khwaja Fareeduddin was appointed to this post on a salary of Rupees 700/- per month. During the regime of the Marquis of Wellesley he went to Iran as an ambassador where he gave a brilliant account of himself. After coming back to India he was sent to

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2 Ibid., p. 15.
3 Ibid., p. 18.
Burma by the East India Company as a political agent. After he returned from Burma he was made a Tabesildar of Bundelkhand in Uttar Pradesh.


**BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD:**

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was born in Delhi on October 17, 1817 (5 Zilhija 1332). Since there was a long gap between Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s birth and that of his elder brother, there was a great rejoicing at the new arrival. Ever since his ancestors came to India, probably during the reign of Shah Jahan, the family had been holding high positions in the Moghal Court. His paternal grandfather, Syed Hadi was a Hazari Mansabdar and was invested with the title of Jawad-ud-Daula, by the Emperor Shah Alam. His maternal grandfather, Khwaja Fariduddin Ahmed was the Prime Minister of the Emperor Akbar II, who conferred on him the title of Dabirud Daula, Amirul Mulk and Muslehn Jung. His father Mir Muttaqui was associated with the Moghal court throughout his life.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was born at the time when the Moghal Empire was cracking. The British rule was gaining ground in India. The time-honoured India ways and customs were giving way to the English culture. The atmosphere of Delhi was filled with the lament and sobs of the dying Moghal Empire. Not only was the loss of power bitterly felt by Indians but the growing apprehension that
their religion and culture might be in jeopardy created an atmosphere of pessimism. The Muslims were particularly grieved because of the loss of their political power. The luxurious way of living to which they were used for a pretty long time, coupled with the prevailing atmosphere of ignorance and superstitions, demoralise them.

Continuous failures and miseries had filled their minds with misplaced type of contentment. Never before had the Muslims neglected their religious duties. Religion always proved to them a sort of dynamic force. They fought battles and laid down their lives in the defence of their religion. But with the decline of the Empire, their religious sentiments also came to the freezing point. On the contrary, Christian missionaries were quite active in the field of the propagation of their different from the old one. The Indians, therefore, looked at it with the awe and suspicion.

As mention earlier, Mir Muttaqui led a stoical life and as such paid little attention to his domestic affairs. It is, therefore, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s mother who deserves all credit for bringing him up in an excellent manner. She had not read anything more than the Holy Quran and a few elementary Persian books. But she had the natural ability for bringing up children. She reared her son with all the tenderness of a mother and yet she could be very firm. She would teach her little son the rudiments of reading and writing and before sending him off to sleep she would make him repeat what he had learnt in the course of the day. She believed
in discipline. It would be interesting to give an incident narrated by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan himself to prove this statement:-

"I was about 11 or 12 years old when I slapped an old and aged servant of my family for some mistake of his. When my mother came to know of this she was much grieved and annoyed and ordered the maid servant to drive me out of the house. The latter acted accordingly. I took refuge in my aunt's house. After three days my aunt brought me to my mother and requested her to forgive me. But my mother insisted on my apologising to the servant. I obeyed her and then only I was forgiven."  

The following incident as narrated by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan proves what a broad outlook and sense of responsibility she had:

"When my elder brother was on the death-bed, my mother always used to be at his side. This continued for a week and then my brother expired. As usual, there was a customary mourning. It so happened that the marriage of one of our close relative was to take place after few days. All preparations for the marriage had been made, and only after four days the 'Nikah' ceremony was to be solemnised. My relatives according to the usual custom, wanted to postpone the marriage. When my mother came to

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know of it she went to their house after three days and told them that she had come to attend the marriage ceremony. It would not be post-poned. She said that when she herself was giving them permission and was participating in the ceremony no one had a right to criticise them.”

Hali writes that Sir Syed Ahmed Khan use to say that his mother always kept aside 50% of the income for charities. She got many poor girls married from that specific fund. She also helped secretly many destitute Muslim women who observed Parda. Widow re-marriage was not favoured during those days. But she induced many poor widows to re-marry. She would go to her poor relatives and helped them on some pretext or another.

There is another very interesting statement of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan regarding the sagacity of his mother. He says;

“When I was a Munsif at Delhi, my mother often advised me that if I had to go to a place frequently I should go there sometimes in a carriage and sometimes on foot, because fortune was not always steady. I followed her advice.”

It was its her mother’s prudent and effective training that Sir Syed Ahmed Khan picked up praise worthy habits right from his childhood. It will not be out of

5 Ibid., p. 25.
6 Ibid., p. 25.
7 Ibid., p. 27.
place to narrate an incident of his childhood to show the deep impression of the training of his mother.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan himself says;

"When I was quite young, I was to be honoured with a Khilat (i.e. a gift of gold embroidered costume) and was required by the Emperor to be present at the palace in time. In spite of the vigilance of my mother, I over slept on the day fixed for the occasion till the function was formally over. Later on, I happened to meet the Emperor, who very affectionately asked me why I was late? The courtiers prompted me to say that I was very sorry. But I kept quite. The Emperor again asked me as to why I was late? I looked straight into the Emperor's face and told the truth." 8

HIS EDUCATION:

The ‘Bismillah’ ceremony of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was performed by Shah Ghulam Ali, a great and holyman of those days. The entire family of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was the disciple of Shah Ghulam Ali. After the ceremony was performed Sir Syed Ahmed Khan started reading the holy Quran under a common teacher who was already employed in his house. After he had finished that he began reading Persian and later on Arabic. But he did not acquire efficiency in either of the two languages. He then turned to Mathematics in which subject his family was considered to be match-less. Here again he did not acquire efficiency

8 Ibid., p. 35.
and took a liking for astronomy. He also studied the Science of Medicine from his Maternal uncle. At the time he gave up formal studies he was about 18 or 19 years old. After that he studied by himself. He had the advantage of enjoying the company of eminent scholars of the time such as Mirza Ghalib, Azurda, Schbai, etc. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan received his early education from his mother, Azizunnisa Begum—a lady of remarkable intelligence and sagacity. Thereafter, he studied Arabic and Persian and turned to Mathematics and Geometry. At the age of 18 he finished the first phase of formal education, but maintained his interest in reading. He has also developed acquaintance with famous writers and Persian Scholars of Delhi like, Sahbai, Ghalib and Azurda and used to attain the meeting of the learned societies of the city. The second phase of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s formal education began at the age of 29 when he was transferred from Fatehpur Sikri to Delhi while in the service of the East India Company. First, he refreshed his early studies and then studied Fiqh with Maulvi Nawazish Ali, the famous preacher and preceptor of Delhi. With Maulana Maksusullah, he studied Hadith and Quran extensively.

**HIS GOVERNMENT SERVICES:**

When his father died, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was advised to serve the Moghals, following the family tradition. But foreseeing the finale of the Moghal drama, he decided, much against the wishes of his friends and relatives to start his career as Serishtadar under the East India Company. In the following year, 1839, he was promoted to the post of Naib Mir Munshi to the Commissioner of Agra
Division, Robert Hamilton. In 1841 he qualified himself for the post of Munsif and was posted at Mainpuri. When transferred to Fatehpur Sikri in 1842, Emperor Bahadur Shah bestowed on him the hereditary title of Jawad-ud Daula Arif Jung. Working in different places in Delhi (1846 - 1854) and in Bijnore (1855 - 1858), Moradabad - Sadar Musulim (1858 - 1862), Ghazipur (1862 - 1864), Aligarh (1864 - 1867), Banaras - Judge of Small Cause Court (1867), Aligarh (1876) he retired in 1876 from the post of Subordinate Judge under the British Government of India with the title of Companion of the Order of the Star of India which was conferred on him in 1869 in London. After his retirement he was made Knight Commander of the Star of India and was also taken on the Governor General’s Council. In 1881 he was again nominated to the Council for five years. In 1882, he was made a member of the Government appointed Education Commission and in 1887 a member of the Public Service Commission. In these position he did his best for the betterment and welfare of the people of India and for his own community.

**HIS PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER:**

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan possessed a magnificent personality which very few possesses. One was impressed by meeting him for the first time. Hali writes, “Whoever saw him first, definitely thought him a to be a great man.” Colonel Graham compares his face to that of a lion. He was very fair and red, tall and stout with strong limbs and well proportioned. His face was very dignified and rather stern but as Colonel Graham writes, “Depicted joyfulness, while talking”. He was not very talkative. So very often people misunderstood him to be proud. From all
his achievements one can gather that he was a man of firm determination and nothing could discourage him. In spite of all oppositions from his colleagues and community he did not give up the idea of founding Muslim university. He never wished anything for himself. But whatever he wished, he wished for his people. From the number of friends he had one can have an idea about Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s being a great philanthropist. His house was a guest house on account of continuous arrival of friends. Every time there were a few guests on his dining table. In spite of his friendship with English people he avoided all the things prohibited by the religion. Colonel Graham writes that when Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was invited to a dinner at Duke of Argylle’s and when he was offered wine he says I don’t take drink of Noah but I take Adam’s drink (water).  

He was fond of reading books and for this purpose he had a library at home where selected books from all over the world were bought and preserved. He himself was fond of books and admired all those who were fond of reading like him and so he allowed Shibli to use his library.

Throughout his life Sir Syed Ahmed Khan worked hard and his habit of hard work kept him firm in every difficulty and he was never discouraged by any obstacle in his way. Continuous thinking, determination and ever increasing hard work helped Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to win the race. He worked so hard in England about Khutbat-i-Ahmadia that his thighs were swollen and his legs pain

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continuously but in spite of all these physical ailments he set continuously to write the book. Even in old age his hard work never stopped. On the contrary, as Hali writes, he was like that traveler who entered cold countries for a walk and he preceded on his speed increased.\textsuperscript{10} He always prepared for the forthcoming task much earlier than the fixed time. He was all the time busy with his office work, college work and writing books, preparing speeches, preparing budgets, writing articles to periodicals, writing letters to trustees, government’s offices, managing college library, traveling to other towns in order to collect funds. He had also many other activities. In spite of being so busy he never left any work incomplete. His intelligence was due to his hard work and perseverance. One European author writes, “I know about many such people who were known to be intelligent but at last I came to know that they were very hard working. This is true of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan also.”\textsuperscript{11}

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan always worked independently. Whether social, religious, political or any other problems, he trusted on his own conscience and intelligence. He possessed very noble heart and very powerful brain. Hali writes, “A philosopher, a person who is away from evil, just determined about his words, kind to his subordinates, hard working and resolute, then no doubt he is a nobleman.”\textsuperscript{12} Everyone loved him and respected him. He devoted almost 60 years

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid., p. 409.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., p. 414.

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p. 419.
of his life to public service and during his last 30 years people were deadly against him and were bent on finding fault with him. His opponents were looking out for an opportunity to find out something in his character which would make people distrust him. But all their attempts failed to find faults with his stainless character. All they could do was to call him a Christian, a Naturalist, a Kafir.

His honesty was well known to both his friends and opponents. Honesty and truthfulness create bravery, freedom, sincerity and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had all those qualities. A philosopher had said, “If honesty and truthfulness is to be personified it will definitely take the form of a lion.” Hali says, “It is so true of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Looking at him one remembers the philosopher’s words.” Sir Syed Ahmed Khan never hesitated to speak out what he thought true and acted accordingly. His community went against him but he never did anything against his conscience in order to please them.

Just as he was truthful and honest in his outlook, he admired all those who were honest like him. Once Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was made an ‘Imam’ at the time of offering prayers and Khan Bahadur Munshi Ghulam Nabi refused to do the prayers behind him thinking him to be a non-Muslim. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had to break Namaz and then come to him and asked him to become an Imam. But he said, “I am not fit to be an Imam. Please let me know your religion.” Sir Syed Ahmed Khan said, “I belong to Shafai Sect.” He at once said, “Then come on, I am willing to perform prayers behind you. You are fit to be an Imam in every respect.” After this incident Sir Syed Ahmed Khan respected and favoured Khan
Bahadur all the more. Once Imam Bakhsh asked Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, "What have you seen in Munshi that you are so kind to him?" Sir Syed Ahmed Khan said, "Nothing, just as I am mad he too is mad."\(^{13}\)

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan loved all the people whether his opponents or friends. He loved his mother deeply and his own children too. He educated the grand children of his brother and treated his cousin's grand children as if they were his own and educated them fully. He was very generous and broad minded. He never bought any property for himself. Whatever he earned he spent it for his family, for upliftment of the poor and deserving people. He worked hard at the time of Famine at Muradabad. Hali writes that Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's generosity was not limited to money matters only. He was like that fruit tree which is useful to the people with its shadow, fruit and wood. His favours were shown to all people belonging to any community or creed. Hali writes, "Once a Jew named Sali came to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan at Ghazipur and told him that he has been wandering throughout India for a job and could not succeed in getting one. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan asked him what salary he wanted? He said Rs. 10/- or 15/-. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan said that he would give Rs. 25/- and he should teach him Hebrew. A friend of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan writes, "That man kissed Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's beard with extreme happiness and said, "I never come across any man who offered me more than I wanted."  

\(^{13}\) Ibid., pp. 429-430.
One thing was prominent in Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s character and it was self-confidence. He had firm faith in whatever he thought to be true and nothing on earth could alter his mind. This quality helped him because if he had not been firm about his ideas he would have never succeeded in carrying out his mission in spite of peoples’ opposition. Usually, people with firm minds and self-confidence succeed in their ambitions.

He was very good writer and eloquent speaker. Whatever he wrote, he wrote for the sake of the people. He used very simple language in order to express his lofty ideas. Language was a mean to express his ideas and not an end in itself. His words went right into the hearts of the people. In order to collect the funds for the Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College he used to give speeches to the public and he would pour out his heart in his speeches and people very often were moved to tears on hearing his speeches.

Once, in his speech he said, “Thanks to God Almighty that in India these two communities have settled in such a manner that their houses are attached to one another. They breath the same air, drink water from the same river, share pleasures and pains with each other and separating them surely destroy their future. O, Hindus and Muslims, are you the residents of countries other than India? Have you not settled on the same earth? Are you not buried in the same earth? You live and die on the same land. Remember that ‘Hindu’ and ‘Muslim’ are religious words. Otherwise all Hindus, Muslims and Christians who live in India belong to the same community.”
Sir Syed Ahmed Khan has the credit of being an eminent educationist of his time even though he himself was unaware of the modern education. He ranked among the eminent persons in the time when even the great scholars were unable to bring any reforms in the field of education. His magnetic personality could attract such individuals who, like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, were the product of old traditional education and all of them were unaware of the future respect that would be bestowed on them and were leading their life as the persons unknown to the public. He was able to win persons like Mohsin-ul Mulk, Wiquar-ul Mulk, Altaf Husain Hali, Maulana Shibli Noman, etc., who brightened his company. A great man always has sincere and true admirers who respect him for his mission and the greatness that a person commands, is only due to true and sincere friends. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan can rightly be proud of his co-workers as they were the men famous for their own qualities and were respected by all their co-religionists.

Besides his magnetic personality we find in him other noble qualities such as desire for social and cultural reforms, enthusiasm for participation in the literary debates, oratory and penmanship, resistance to general opposition, ability to collect funds for college, ability of administration and construction of buildings, organising abilities, etc. All these abilities were centered in him and could use all of them to the best possible way. He was prominent for his loving and sympathetic attitude. He was daring, ambitious and broadminded. He had a helping nature and was ever ready to sacrifice for the good cause of his community and the country.
Sir Syed Ahmed Khan from his very childhood had adapted the style of Delhi. A round cap, long shirt, a Moghal Payjama, and was always tying a handkerchief round his neck. But when he sailed to England he changed his style as per advice of some friends and adapted Turkish cap, Turkish coat and trouser and boots. After this he never changed his style.

His cosmopolitan nature had influenced the prominent persons of all races and secured their active support for his movement. Colonel Graham writes, “Sir Syed Ahmed Khan is so completely master of this art that natural distinctions disappear before him and rising above all accidental conditions of climate and race of latitude, longitude and ethnic idiosyncrasy, he gazes, by dint of his own power of judicious generalisation, upon an image which is non other than of human nature itself. He preserves the patriotism and pride of the stock from which he sprung and has diverted himself of all its prejudices.”¹⁴

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s personality and his socio-educational reforms influenced many eminent persons. Among those who are attracted by his movement were Munshi Karamat Ali, Munshi Zakaullah of Delhi, Dr. Nazir Ahmed, Maulana Shibli Nomanii and Maulana Altaf Husain Hali. Among those who frequently contributed to Tahzibul Akhlaq was one Munshi Chiraagh Ali. He was a government servant and has a religious bent of mind like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and was often disturbed by the criticism of Missionaries

on Islam. When he came in contact with Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and his movement he offered his active support to it and devotedly worked for it. He contributed valuable articles in Tahzibul Akhlaq on religious, moral and educational topics.

Another man who was influenced by the movement and had offered his ardent support to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was Mehdi Ali entitled Mohsin-ul Mulk. He was brilliant writer and was prominent among Muslims for his eloquent writings. Like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan he too was inclined for a new Quranic interpretation and had helped Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in writing essays on the life of Prophet Mohammad and supplied Sir Syed Ahmed Khan with valuable details for his work. He was active worker and had a firm belief for educational upliftment of Muslims. He also shared Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s conviction that what was most needed for this was sound education. Education was the hope of the Muslim community. It had been among the prime cause of that communities greatness in the past. It would banish the false religion of superstition idolatrous, custom and pleasant fable; but would make the true religion of the Quran shine brilliantly. He worked shoulder to shoulder with Sir Syed Ahmed Khan for the cause of education and devoted himself for the welfare of the college and succeeded Sir Syed Ahmed Khan as secretary of the college at Aligarh. In the year 1898 Sir Syed Ahmed Khan passed away peacefully to his Eternal Abode. This came as a shock to his countrymen as well as Muslim masses. The loss at the movement seemed unbearable and the whole Muslim community was plunged in grief at his demise.
The Muslim community had the good fortune of the leadership of Nawab Mohsin-ul Mulk who ably led the movement of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. He along with the admirers of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan decided to raise a most fitting memorial in his memory. The overwhelming decision was to raise Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College to the status of a university. In these efforts the services of another prominent Muslim his highness the Agha Khan was ably utilised. He toured the whole of India to collect munificent donations in order to build the Muslim university at Aligarh.

Maulana Altaf Husain Hali, the eminent poet of Urdu who was a close collaborator and also a contemporary of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was enamoured by the activities of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. In the lifetime of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan he decided to write an authentic biography of him. Due to some unforeseen difficulties the biography could not see the light of the day during the lifetime of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Soon after his death Maulana Hali spent six vigorous years to the incomplete biography and brought it out with a masterly pen depicting the inner traits, character and the educational reform and philosophy of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. This even today ranks as the pre-eminent biography written by a man who not only was closely associated with Sir Syed Ahmed Khan but also felt the impact of his personality. It would not be wrong to state that what Boswell proved to Dr. O. Johnson, Hali proved it to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan.

Another contemporary figure of our present day Indian conditions Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was greatly influenced by the life and work of Sir
Syed Ahmed Khan. It was his special attempt while studying the trends of Muslim thought in India to make a judicious study of the movement started by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. The books written by him and the works undertaken by him soon absorbed attention of the young and ebullient Maulana Azad.

In his recent and most well known book ‘India wins Freedom’, Maulana Azad refers to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in the following words.

“I first came across the writings of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. I was greatly impressed by his views on modern education. I realised that a man could not be truly educated in the modern world unless he studied modern Science, philosophy and literature. I decided that I must learn English.”

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan did not only influence the great men of his time but also contemporaries of all ages who like him were responsible to bring about socio-educational reforms in this country. The Banaras Hindu University which came into existence after movement of Aligarh is the direct influence of his educational reforms.

AWARDS AND HONOURS RECEIVED:

On Monday 14th of May 1888, at a ceremony which took place in the Great Hall of Aligarh Institute, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was awarded the honour of Knight Commander of the Star of India (K.C.S.I.). The collector on behalf of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, pinned the Star of India to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s

chest and put the ribbon and medal around his neck.\textsuperscript{16}

In 1889, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was greatly honoured by the University of Edinburgh in recognition of his valuable services to letters and learnings. It is the custom in England for scholars to honour people who have either distinguished themselves in the academic field or who have devoted their lives to the enlightenment of others, by having the degree of Doctor of Law (L.L.D.) conferred upon them by some university. This great reputation Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had won for himself as an author through such works as the Khutbat-i Ahmadiya was recognised as much in England as it was in India. Moreover the efforts he made to found the Madrasat-ul-Ulum and the constant encouragement he had given to the education of the Indian Muslims had established him as one of the greatest champions of modern learning. For these reasons the famous university of Edinburgh decided, without prior information, to confer on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Law (L.L.D.).\textsuperscript{17} Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s memorial stamp was released on October 17, 1973.

\textbf{DEATH OF SIR SYED AHMED KHAN:}

The affairs of the college occupied Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s time and caused a good deal of strain on him. In spite of that he was hale and hearty. But in


\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p. 218.
1895 he received a great shock that lasted till the end of his life. His head clerk in whom he had great trust embezzled funds to the extent of One Lakh Five Thousand Four Hundred and Nine Rupees.\(^{18}\)

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan hardly recovered from this blow that he met with another greater shock. In 1897, the illness of his son, Syed Mahmood, in whom the entire Muslim nation took pride, made him a broken hearted man. He tried to bear it with courage and passions but the shock was so great that it did have its effects. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan never uttered a word of complaint to anyone. Nearly a couple of months before he died, he had ceased to speak to anybody. He would simply say 'Yes' or 'No'. His great friends Mohsin-ul Mulk and Syed Zainul Abdeen used to sit by him for hours together, perfectly silent. One day, Zainul Abdeen asked him why do you always keep quite? Sir Syed Ahmed Khan replied,

"The time is approaching fast when I will be eternally quiet. I am therefore, getting accustomed to it."\(^{19}\) In spite of ill health and an upset mind the welfare of the college was ever present in his thoughts. The dreaded moment, after all, arrived and on March 27, 1898, at 10 A.M. the great educationist, writer, patriot and social reformer breathed his last. He was mourned deeply all over the country by the public, the government, the Hindus and the Muslims. The newspapers wrote articles

\(^{18}\) Ibid., p. 258.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., p. 265.
on his life and works. Papers in England also mourned his death. The mourning and the bouquets of encomium on Sir Syed Ahmed Khan were not merely conventional but were emblems of deep sincerity. Immediately after his death a committee was set up to establish the Muslim university and donations poured in readily.  

Hali says;

"Somebody has said that a good friend is like a tree laden with fruits. So long as it is green, people sit under its shade and enjoy its fruits and when it gets dried it gives them the benefit of fire-wood. The same was the case with our hero, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. He was a friend of the same sense. So long as he was alive he helped everybody with his hands, feet, tongue, pen and wealth and when he died he set the impression of his love and great work on the heart and minds of the people so that his incomplete work may be completed."  

References:

20 Ibid., p. 280.

21 Aligarh Muslim University- Contribution and Achievements.

22 Khaleque Ahmed Nizami, Sir Syed Album.

Delhi: Adarah-i Adabiyat-i Delhi, p. 94.