CHAPTER III

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After a very bad experience of Mutiny Sir Syed Ahmed Khan decided to help his people and save them from total annihilation as a nation. He knew that he would have to fight against heavy odds. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan realized that the initial and the most important work to be done was to uplift the status and positions of the Muslims which had deteriorated especially after the Mutiny. After a careful examination of the various aspects of the above problem, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan arrived at the conclusion that the solution undoubtedly lay in the "Educational Reform".1

Thus, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan considered ‘Educational Reform’ as the only means to solve the problems of the Muslims in India by establishing a Muslim college in which Muslim children could be educated in both religious and secular subjects simultaneously.

EDUCATIONAL IDEAS OF SIR SYED AHMED KHAN:

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s educational ideas were based on the assumption that education was the panacea for all ills that had be set Indian society, and thus it

was this alone which could lead to the total regeneration of the people along political, social, economic and moral lines. He remarked:

"The only way to avail ourselves of the many roads to fame and usefulness is to cultivate our intellects and to confirm ourselves to the age."  

He believed that backwardness in education tended to degrade the Muslims in the social as well as political spheres. He pointed out that progress in each field is possible only through education.  

Hence, the first practical step taken by him in connection with his programme of educational reform was to found a school in Muradabad for the teaching of Persian. It was soon converted into a Tahsil (government) school of the town. This initiative taken by him discloses the scope of his future ventures. Of equal significance is the demand made by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to the government that the medium of instruction in its school should be English and not Urdu. Although, we are cognizant especially of his love for Urdu and the services rendered by him to the cause of its developments, nevertheless, he thought that the interest of the people it was necessary that they study the modern Science in English.

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3 *Aligarh Institute Gazette*. July 10, 1874. p. 25.
Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had a comprehensive programme in mind. In 1862 he was transferred to Ghazipur, where he set up a society for the translation of useful books into Urdu. In course of time this organisation developed into the famous Scientific Society of Aligarh and became an active organ of the Aligarh Movement. Two years later, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was transferred to Aligarh where he found a more favourable atmosphere for the growth and expansion of his activities. The society which was a small organisation at Ghazipur, soon developed into an active Aligarh Movement. Within two years 1864 to 1866, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was able to establish the Scientific Society. During this period he has set have popularised the cause of education by addressing large meetings. It may be added that he had now started taking preliminary steps to educate the people in political affairs as well.

It is interesting to observe that Sir Syed Ahmed Khan condemned the former Emperors and Rajas as tyrants and praised the British Government in the following words:

"It was ordained by a higher power than any on earth, that the destinies of India should be placed in the hands of an enlightened nation whose principles of government were in accordance with those of intellect, justice and reason." ⁴

To hear a person who was well versed in the history of Muslim rule say that it was nothing but tyranny and oppression seems quite startling. Thus in trying to rationalise the above statement, one may say that it was one of his grievous errors of judgement. In addition, a student of history can not swallow his verdict about, “The intellect, justice and reason” particularly in the decades following the great revolution of 1857. It is however, to be kept in mind that Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was convinced of the fact that in order to secure the goodwill of the British officers, which was indispensable for the progress of his people, the later should be prepare to go far enough to meet the former.⁵

In 1866, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan started a bilingual paper ‘The Aligarh Institute Gazette’ with the dual object of making the British Government aware of the conditions and affairs of the Hindustanees and creating in the later a taste for politics and acquainting them with the system of British administration.⁶

According to Hali, the paper soon became widely popular among the educated sections of the people, including the government servants. At least in Northern Hindustan, he states it brought about a change in the ideas of the people and raised the level of informations. Soon it became one of the most widely circulated paper. Considering the atmosphere of the post revolution period the courage exhibited by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and other contributors to the Gazette

in their criticism of government policies is remarkable. No doubt, the policy of the paper was based on unstilted loyalty to the British government; this, however did not deter its contributors from commenting on its action and policies whenever they thought it necessary in the interest of the people.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was so particular about maintaining the paper high standard and efficiency that he was able to publish the paper uninterruptedly for about 32 years in spite of financial difficulties and other obstacles. This is undoubtedly a remarkable achievement for its editor. In fact, the paper can be viewed as the first organ of Muslim public opinion as far as their social, political and educational problems were concerned.

During this period Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had only a vague idea of how to introduce Muslims to modern education and was constantly in search of patterns which he could reproduce in some tangible form. His trip to England in 1869 enabled him to give a definite form to his ideas. In a letter sent from London on 15 October 1869, to the Secretary of the Scientific Society, he wrote:

"I am happy that the Bengalees and Parsees have acquired modern culture but our brothers Hindu and Muslims are still living in a state of Barbarianism of their fore father and consider themselves superior to all other races. They are blind to the beauties of the modern gardens of gay flowers blooming before them." 7

He visited the universities of Cambridge and Oxford and made a detailed study of their organisation, residential system, traditions, teaching arrangements, buildings etc. Cambridge University impressed him more than Oxford and he resolved to use his energy and his experience in setting up a college for Muslims on the model of these British universities.

The visit to England (1869-70), by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was looked upon as an important event in the history of Aligarh Movement. He was deeply impressed by the progress of the European Nations, particularly when he compare it with the undeveloped condition of his own country. It was hear that his ideas of social and educational reforms seem to have taken shape, and plans were made for their implementation. Soon after his return, he started work on these projects. The first step was to publish a journal with a view to educate Muslim public opinion in favor of his schemes and ideas. The first issue of the Tahzeeb-ul Akhlaq (Mohommadan/ Muslim Social Reform) appeared on December 24, 1870. It soon became a pillar of the Aligarh Movement.  

Cantwell Smith thinks that the idea of publishing the paper was taken by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan from the ‘Speciator and Tatler’ (Magazines of London) on which it was modelled. In any case the scope of the Tahzeeb-ul Akhlaq was much wider than that of English journals.

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The main objective of the paper was to articulate and to clarify to the people that the charges brought against Islam by the Christian writers that it stood in the path of progress were baseless. The advantages and utility of modern Sciences were placed before Muslims in order to remove their prejudices. The baseless charges against Islam coined by hostile critics were to be exposed by a true presentation of facts in their correct perspectives. The Muslims were to be reminded of their glorious past and their rich cultural heritage. 10

The publication of this journal was a mile stone in the career of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. It propagated his ideas and made his projects and intentions widely known to his people. In short it played an important role in making Sir Syed Ahmed Khan the leader of Muslim India and Aligarh the centre of his great movement.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COLLEGE:

Having exposed the Muslim public to the new Scientific ideas, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s next immediate plan of action was to induce the Muslims to establish a college without further delay. Yet, it was not so simple: The mental climate of the country was still not congenial, due to this fact, he felt it was vital to assess Muslim public opinions before launching his educational schemes. He set up a committee consisting of men interested in the education of Muslims, called the ‘Kh wastgaran-i Taraqq-i Taleem-i Muselman’ on December 26, 1870 (and started

his Urdu monthly 'Tahzeeb-ul Akhlaq', two days earlier)

The first step the committee took was to launch a campaign to undertake a study regarding the attitude of Muslims towards modern education. This was in the form of an essay writing competition with prizes offered for the best essays. The committee received 32 articles. The committee summarised from these essays the causes of the failure of education as imparted in government institution under the following seven categories:

1. Absence of religious education in government schools.

2. Responsibility of English education for creating disbelief in one's faith.

3. Corruption of morals, lowering of standards of politeness and courtesy as by products of Western education.

4. Certain unwarranted prejudices against the study of English.

5. Absence of the association of Muslim with the educational policies of the government.

6. Wrong notion of rich and prominent Muslims that it was below their dignity to sent their sons to government institutions.

7. The Muslims preference of Military training to literary education.

The three main conclusions which these articles arrived at were:

a. Intelligent Muslims consider prejudice against Western education as illfounded and harmful to Muslims.

b. The government will not be able to provide the right type of education for Muslims.
c. The Muslims should themselves for their modern education, which must preserve their culture and religious beliefs.

A resume of conclusions with elaborate commentaries of the committee to the government of India and to the provincial government of Utter Pradesh, Madras, Bengal and Bombay. It was also widely publicized among Muslims. The committee decided to look ahead and to inaugurate an educational system for the future generation.\footnote{11}

It was therefore decided by the committee in November 1872 that the college should be located at Aligarh. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan accordingly applied for a large lot of land laying between the town and the old Maratha fort. The District authorities were not originally in favour of the allotment of the land to the committee but ultimately Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s request was granted.

The idea of the college which Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had conceived in England was thus becoming actualized before the public for the first time in a tangible form, and it soon began to take shape. The government of Utter Pradesh immediately responded with a promise of assistance as grant in aid whenever the college would be set up. The Secretary of the government of India conveyed to the committee in a letter dated August 9, 1872, the appreciation of the Governor General in Council of the idea of setting up a college. However, even before any materialisation of these ideas could take place, the very idea or notion of a separate

\footnote{11} Graham G. F. I., Loc. cit., p. 159.
college was made with oppositions from several quarters.

**OPPOSITION TO THE COLLEGE:**

Hali said that the two greatest critics of the Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College were deputy Imdad Ali Bakhsh Khan, a Sub Judge of Gorakhpur.\(^{12}\)

In Hali's opinion this opposition did not spring from any religious consideration but was based on personal jealousies and the fact that many English men hated Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's progressive ideas. These two officials hoped to win English favour by such opposition.

In addition a section of Muslims opposed the scheme for fear that Sir Syed Ahmed Khan might instill in the Muslim youth his own religious belief and make them put on “English Dress”.\(^{13}\) Some people feared that only Shiyah literature would be taught, while other religious minded people were opposed to giving a cash contribution that would be used to yield interest- which they regarded as sacriligious.\(^{14}\)

The critics sought the aid of religious divines, hoping that their Fatwa would create a pressure of Muslim opinion strong enough to bring Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to his knees. Maolvi Imdad Ali collected Fatwas from the devines of Delhi, Rampur and other places and declared that those who intended to set up the

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college were Heretics.\textsuperscript{15}

Maulvi Ali Bakhsh Khan went to Mecca and Medina in 1873 to collect Fatwas against Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and the proposed college. The verdict of the four Muftees of Mecca was that such a man was a follower of Satan and was misleading the true believers. Maulvi Bakhsh also went to Medina and secured a Fatwa which enjoined all believers to destroy the school if it ever came into existence.\textsuperscript{16}

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan regarded these Fatwas as medals in recognition of his services, and continued to hope that his opponents would ultimately realise their error and join him in his efforts.

**CAUSES FOR THE OPPOSITIONS:**

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan analysed the causes of oppositions to the idea of setting up of the college, and classified his opponents into seven categories.

1. Khabisun Nafs and Bad Batins (Wicked and Soul and Evil Hearts), who thought that all that Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was doing was for self glorification and enhancement of his personal influence with the government.

2. The Jealous, who opposed the college because they did not want the name of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to be associated with the college.

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 631.\
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., p. 633.}
3. The bigoted Wahabis, who thought that all Western education and contact with the people of the West and Christians was heresy.

4. The Selfish and self centred people, who would not part with their health even for a good cause. Their open hostility towards the school was designed to evade the demands of subscription.

5. The gutter Press, which aimed to increase its circulation on sensational tales, fabricated, to oppose his schemes.

6. The Be Tamyiz (The indiscriminating) who did not realise the difference between personal and social matters.

7. The nadan (the simpletones) who were guided by the above six categories of opponents.  

**INAUGURATION OF THE SCHOOL:**

Regardless of such initial oppositions, it was nonetheless decided that the school would be inaugurated on May 24, 1875, the birth day of Queen Victoria. The inauguration ceremony was presided over by the president of the managing committee, Maulvi Mohammad Karim. Moolvi Samiullah Khan, Secretary of the Fund Committee, who had played a prominent part in bringing the school into existence, was persuaded by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to lay the foundation stone of the school.

The school started teaching on June 1, 1875 with 11 students on the roll.

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17 *Aligarh Institute Gazette*. April 11, 1873, pp. 18-19
The Utter Pradesh government immediately announced a grant in aid of Rs. 350/- per month. The Nizam of Hyderabad granted a Jagir worth Rs. 90,000/- yielding a monthly increase of Rs. 200/-. Sir Salar Jung gave a grant of Rs. 30,000/- from his personal Jagir which accounted for another sum of Rs. 100/- per month.

The college fund committee instituted in May 29, 1875 twenty scholarships ranging from Rs. 5/- to Rs. 10/- per month to be awarded on merit basis. This proved to be an unhealthy inducement in the earlier stages. Students offered themselves for enrollment only for the sake of financial assistance. Maulvi Samiullah Khan wrote to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in 1875 that;

"Four more students have offered to join the school but their very first question was that how much pay (stipend) they would get. They do not consider it a school but a work house. " The number of students soon rose to 60 but many of them abundant their studies and left Aligarh due to the epidemic of Cholera which necessitated the temporary closer of the school from August 27 to September 5, 1875. 18

The school was visited by a number of prominent personalities during the period, including Sir William Muir, Lt. Governor of Utter Pradesh and the Maharajas of Patiyala. The school introduced the institution of visitors after the pattern of Oxford and Cambridge universities. Sir William Muir visited the school on November 12, 1875 and addressed the members of the various college

18 Letter preserved in the University Archives.
committees and other distinguished citizens of the district. He was presented with an address of welcome on behalf of the school in which the scheme of the college was describe in detail. It was mentioned that the college fund committee has decided to introduce two departments in the proposed college, the English department, to conduct classes upto high school for the first time being, with English as the medium of instruction; and the oriental department (to be developed into a full-fledged college by January 1876) to conduct study of Persian or Arabic on a compulsory basis. Other subjects were to be taught through the medium of Urdu with English as second language. It was in view of this arrangement that it was named Mohammdan Anglo Oriental College.\(^{19}\)

Sir William Muir visited the school for second time in October 1876. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan then announced that the college fund committee has raised a subscription to fund a scholarship after Sir William Muir's name to perpetuate this association with the college. Sir William Muir in return publicly acknowledged that during the whole course of his administrations he had found the Musalmans of upper India ever loyal and faithful to the Queen. This gave immense satisfaction to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, for it marked the success of an important aspect of his mission- to remove the suspicion of the British go. against the Musalmans.

**RAISING THE STATUS OF THE SCHOOL TO THE COLLEGE:**

At this point, when the school succeeded in obtaining the trust and

\(^{19}\) *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, April 10, 1902. p. 231.
confidence of the British government which they had lost during the time of the Mutiny, it was considered necessary to raise the school to the status of a college. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan devoted himself heart and soul to the construction of college building within less than two years, the ground was well prepared for the proper functioning of the college.

The foundation stone laying ceremony of the college was performed by Lord Lytton the Viceroy and Governor General of India, on January 8, 1877. The ceremony was virtually an imperial darbar. In his address of welcome, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan gratefully acknowledged the help he had received from various quarters, individuals and communities. He drew attention to some of the special features of the college, its basis of self help, its residential system and its sprit of tolerations- ‘co-existence’ in modern terminology. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan said:

“There have been before schools and colleges founded and endowed by private individuals. There have been others built by sovereigns and supported by the revenues of the state. But this is the first time in the history of Muslims of India, that the college owes its establishment not to the charity or love of learning of one individual, but to the splendid patronage of whole community. It is based upon the principles of toleration and progress which has find no parallel in the annals of the East.” 20

20 Mohsin-ul Mulk, Address And Speeches, pp. 23-40.
Sir Syed Ahmed Khan explained that the college aimed at the fusion of the spirit of East and West. The objectives which inspired the founders were:

To dispel those misty traditions of the past which have hindered our progress, to remove those prejudices which have hitherto exercised a baneful influence on our race, to reconcile oriental learning with Western literature and Science and to inspire in the dreamy minds of the people of the East, the practical energy which belongs to those of the West.  

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan announced that the main college library would be named after the Viceroy as Lytton Library. He also said that they would never adequately express their sense of gratitude to Sir John Strachey, without whose help the college would not have come into existence. The most important part of the proposal was the main hall where all important academic and social functions would be held. He announced that the Fund Committee had decided to perpetuate his association with the college by naming it Strachey Hall.

The foundation stone was lowered at the main gate of the present Strachey Hall. A scroll of paper on which were printed details of the history of the college was sealed in a bottle, and the Viceroy deposited it along with some silver and gold coins covered with a metal plate on which too was inscribed in English and Persian a brief history of the college.

21 Ibid., pp. 23-40.
Maulvi Shah Amanatullah of Ghazipur read out his congratulatory message after the foundation laying ceremony was over. He said that he had come personally to convey his gratitude to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan on behalf of the Muslims of Azamgarh, Mirzapur, Shahbad etc.22

The college began to function with arrangements for instruction in the following subjects:

Languages: English, Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit,

Moral Sciences: Logic, Rhetoric, Mental and Moral Philosophy and the Sciences of History; Natural Philosophy, Mathematics and Natural Science; Mohammedan Law, Jurisprudence and Theology.

**PROGRESS OF THE COLLEGE:**

The progress of the college from the time of its establishment was steady and speedy. Due to the strenous efforts of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and his friends, the college buildings rose rapidly. According to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, the actual process of construction would be powerful stimulation for the people’s enthusiasm. Hence, he took a deep personal interest in the planning and building of the college. The construction work was carried on vigorously till Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s death in 1898. By this time the magnificent plan was nearly half completed.

The finances for the construction of the college were met through various

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different sources. J. Kennedy, for example, states that;

"The two excellent supporters were the British government and Government of Hyderabad. In addition, excellent support was provided by Sir John Strachey, the Lt. Governor of North West Provinces (who was Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's firm friend). Additionally a group of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's personal disciples traveled far and wide to collect funds for his college." 23

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan collected money through all possible means and methods - donations, lotteries, sale of pictures, books, etc. He asked people to donate the fund on the occasion of various family functions. He even put on beggar's jholi (a piece of cloth hanging in the neck) and begged for money. Whenever some proposed to arrange some feast in his honour, he was asked to donate that money to the fund. In an article he said,

"We are now in such a predicament that even our friends are afraid of meeting us, as we ask them for donation- our face itself is now a silent beggar's bowl. I told a friend, brother it was ordained for me to beg so I fulfill the decree of my fate. But thank God, that I am not begging for myself but for my people." 24

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As a result, the financial condition of the college always remained strong. The academic work of the college was also improved and extended. The first college class was introduced in 1878, and within five years it became a first grade college. By 1888 it had began to teach upto the Calcutta University M. A. level and the Allahabad LL.B. level.\textsuperscript{25}

In 1883, when the Government Education Commission visited the College, W. W. Hunter, the president of the Commission noted that, "The teaching staff was both numerous and efficient. An English Principal and a reputed University directed the labour of a body of eminent orientalist and teachers, of whom any seat of learning might feel proud."\textsuperscript{26}

The college rooms were crowded with students and there was life and activity every where. The Commission recorded the following verdict on the work of the college;

"Among the reasons which are set to have deterred the Muslims from accepting the government systems we have mentioned, where the absence of all religious instructions, and the scant attention paid to morality and manner it is hear that the Aligarh college asserted its special excellence. Religious instructions was a part of daily exercise, and places of worship were to be found among the college buildings. The pious Muslims, therefore have no fear that their sons would grow up careless of


\textsuperscript{26} Mohsin-ul Mulk, \textit{Addressess and Speeches}. Op. cit., p. 61.
their ancestral traditional heritage or ignorant of religious faith. Their minds were at rest, on the question of mortality and good manners."

Ironically, however a segment of Muslim community was reluctant to send its children to the college due to the fear that the religion taught would be based either on the Shiyah theology or worse, that would be mixed and polluted with Western secular thought. Residence in the college was compulsory upon the students coming from a distance, in order to keep them constantly under closed scrutiny of the resident teachers. They were also encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities such as debates and sports.

Towards the end of 1883 the college got a Principal, Theodore Beck. Whose capability, infectious ardour, and generous disintrestness further improved the management and efficiency of the college. Sir Alfraid Croft, who reviewed the progress of education in India three years after the Education Commission, found the college striding rapidly on its way to academic success. He remarked:

"Young as it is, it has already given indubitable, signs of high place, it aspires to take among colleges of North Western Provinces, and at the last examination of the university for the B. A. degree is passed 8 out of its 11 candidates, five of them taking honours in literary subjects." 28

28 Croft, Review of Education in India. 1855. p. 322.
Hence, due to the above accomplishment in 1886 the tide of public opinions amongst Muslims for the first time began to flow in favour of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and the Aligarh College.\footnote{Morison T., The History of Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College. Allahabad: The poineer Press, 1903. p. 10.} Except for the short oppositions of Maulvi Samiullah Khan in 1889, which considerably reduce the number of students. Nevertheless, the growth continued till the end of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s life. In fact the year 1895 sees its climax, and is regarded as the golden age of the college. Theodore Morison (Principal after T. Beck), has stated;

“...This was a period of steady progress in all direction; the staff had attend stability as Sir Syed Ahmed Khan desired. The results of the university examinations were very favourable to the college and increased the popularity of the institution. Even the life of the Boarding House became fuller and more vigorous than it had ever been before. The students, who passed through the college in those years, retained a lively affection for it. And many of them have labored hard in after years to promote its prosperity.”\footnote{Ibid., p. 11.}

Despite the inability to produce any “Real Scholars”, the achievements of the college were nonetheless striking, specially when one takes into account the earlier apathy of the Muslims and the tremendous oppositions faced by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. For example, within two years of the establishment of the college (1880-82), students appeared for the university examinations, and by 1898, the
number of Muslim graduates had increased to 126. 31

The Muslim Princes, via direct correspondence and personal contact with Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, also became exited and took a special interest in the education of Muslims. In Hyderabad (Deccan) and Bhopal, Muslim schools were established and were well attended. The result of this awakening that a greater number of Muslims began to seek higher education. For example, within only half a dozen years of establishment of Indian universities (1858-63), there were some 399 graduates.

However, the educational achievements of the college must not be judged solely on the cognitive success of the number of successful candidates. Due considerations should also be paid to the impact at the effective level; success is changing Muslim attitude towards English education. The Educational Inspector of Lahore stipulated in his report of 1888-89 that;

"The Muslims have wakened up to the necessity of educating their sons. Their old backwardness and dislike of English education is being largely removed. In fact, they have taken English education as the only means of bettering their condition, and of rising to positions of trust and responsibility under the government." 32

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31 Ibid., p. 15.

Receiving the education at Aligarh, was beginning to be seen as important distinction, comparable perhaps to an Oxford or Harvard education. On October 23, 1892 Sir Auckland Colvin said;

"To have been an Aligarh man is, I have found over and over again, a passport to the respect and confidence of both Englishmen and natives. They carry with them the stamp of their training, they impress the mind of the men under whom the training has been accomplished." 33

One of the special features of the college was the opportunity offered to the students for completing their education in England. By 1893, as indicated by Mohsin-ul Mulk, the Mohommadan Anglo Oriental College has sent 31 students abroad, all of whom returned from British University as Barristers in Law. 34 Thus, compare to the earlier reluctant attitudes towards Western learning, this indeed, was a great tribute to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s success. The Agha Khan III has encouraged this policy by donating money for a scholarship to the most deserving student for foreign studies, which the trustees named ‘Agha Khan Foreign Scholarship’.

**COLLEGE AS A UNIVERSITY:**

The prodigious progress of the college encouraged the Muslim leaders to endeavour to attain the status of ‘Muslim University’ for Aligarh. It is interesting to note that the vision of the Muslim University lay in an embryonic form even

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before the inception of the Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College. This reason was demonstrated by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s letter dated May 15, 1870 to Mehdi Ali Khan (Nawab Moin-ul Mulk) in the following words:

"The college may expand into a university whose sons shall go forth through out the length and breadth of the land and to proclaim the gospel of free inquiry, large hearted tolerance of free morality." \(^{34}\)

The three years later Mr. Justice Mahmood, the distinguished son of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had drawn up a complete scheme for the Aligarh Muslim University and had presented it at the meeting of the Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College Foundation Committee held on February 10, 1873. However, because the time was not yet considered ripe for such an extensive scheme, a high school and later college was established. Thus, the above notion which had remained in abeyance emerged impetuously after 1886. In each address presented to the various Viceroyys and Lieutenant-Governors, and in every annual sessions of the All India Mohammadan Educational Conference the object of raising the Aligarh College to the status of the Muslim University had been referred to. Even the Late Theodore Beck and Theodore Morison during their respective terms as principals of the college made frequent references to this ideal in their numerous speeches, articles and lectures. However, it was Morison’s speeches which proved to have the greatest impact on this campaign. He said that;

\(^{34}\) Allana G., *Eminent Muslim Freedom Fighters.*

“After the attainment of the university, Aligarh would become the home of the school of thought which would actually permeate Muslim public opinion thought India. And, it would become the intellectual capital of a cultivated and progressive Islam.”

Earnest efforts began after the death of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in 1898. A ‘Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s Memorial Fund’ campaign was started under the leadership of Mohsin-ul Mulk to collect funds for the university. In addition, the movement acquired important momentum from the platform of the Mohammadan Educational Conference. The various addresses of the conference dealt with the above subject, thus indicating the urgency of the university for the Muslims of India. Maulvi Nazir Ahmed stated;

“I have never, during the whole of my life in this world, seen Muslims in India so united as on this present very urgent question of their higher education at Aligarh.”

It is at this juncture that the campaign received tremendous support in the form of significant allies - most notably the Agha Khan III, the Raja of Mahmudabad and Syed Husain Bilgrami.

35 Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College Magazine.  
Aligarh: January 1900. p.34.

36 Maulvi Nazir Ahmed, Zakaullah of Delhi.  
EFFORTS OF AGHA KHAN III TO ACHIEVE THE STATUS OF THE UNIVERSITY:

The Agha Khan III (Sultan Mohammad Shah was popularly known as His Highness Prince Agha Khan) and many other prominent Muslim leaders like Nawab Mohsin-ul Mulk, Raja of Mahmudabad and Syed Husain Bilgrami began to consider ways and means of translating the dream of Muslim University into reality. The project evoked the opposition of influential Englishmen who argued that a Muslim University would be undesirable because of its sectarian tendencies and particularistic teachings. 37

Some Hindu writers such as B.C. Pal identified the demand with a desire to establish a centre for the propagation of pan-islamism. 38

The Agha Khan III gave his whole-hearted support to the University scheme, for he felt that it was the best means for promoting the welfare of Muslims in India. 39

In 1902, he was invited to preside over an Educational Conference held at Delhi. It was hear that he made persuasive appeal to the Muslims and pointed out


that one of the clearest ways by which the decay of political power of the Muslims might be arrested was by the foundations of a great central Muslim university. He traced the causes of the intellectual and moral generation of Islam to the lack of an institution of higher learning. He remarked that in order to over come this, there was an urgent need for such an institution, not only for India, but also for Egypt, Persia and Turkey. Henceforth, the Muslim university in India would serve as a ‘light’ or ‘model’ for these Muslim countries. Furthermore, he stated that;

"We want to create for our people an intellectual capital- a city that shall be a home of elevated ideas and high ideals, a centre from which light and guidance shall be diffused amongst the Muslims of the world and shall hold up a noble standard of justice and virtue and purity of our beloved faith." 40

In addition, addressing the annual session of the Muslim Educational Conference in Bombay, he explained the objectives behind the establishment of the Muslim university in the following words;

"The farsighted among the Muslims of India desire a university where the standard of learning should be the highest and where with scientific training there shall be moral education through indirect but constant reminder of the eternal difference between right and wrong, which is the soul of education. I earnestly beg to you that the cause of

40 Morison T., Loc.cit., p. 2.
such a university should not be forgotten in the shouts of the marketplace that daily rise amongst us.\textsuperscript{41}

He also invited the King Emperor, Edward VII, who visited India as a Prince of Wales, to go to Aligarh on March 8, 1906. It afforded them an opportunity to see for themselves and appreciated thoroughly the work of the Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College. The visit of the Prince of Wales was a great event for the college. They visited the lecture rooms, Mosque and the founder’s tomb. A dinner was held in honour of their visit and was attended by over 200 guests. It was at this juncture that Nawab Mohsin-ul Mulk delivered his wonderful oration, addressing the Agha Khan, with arms outstretched, he said,

"I do not say that the flowers and the blooms of this garden are due to me. The spring is due to my friend, the garden and the flowers are also due to him and he is a friend of mine." \textsuperscript{42}

The Simla deputation of thirty six prominent leaders from the Muslim community, headed by the Agha Khan III, made a humble appeal to the Viceroy Lord Minto on October 1, 1906 for a separate electorate for Indian Muslims. They also appealed to the Viceroy for the foundation of the Muslim University at Aligarh. They said that;

\textsuperscript{41} Allana G., \textit{Loc.cit.}, p. 255.

\textsuperscript{42} Bhatnagar S. K., \textit{The History of Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College.}

"We are convinced that our aspirations as a community and our future progress are largely dependent on the foundation of a Muslim University, which will be the centre of our religious and intellectual life. We, therefore, most respectfully pray that your excellency will take steps to help us in an undertaking in which our community is so deeply interested." 43

In 1910 the Agha Khan paid a visit to Aligarh and in reply to an address presented to him by the Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College he said that he would undertake the responsibility to “build a mighty university worthy of Islam in India”. Moreover, he said that “The ideal before us to make this institution a great centre of research and learning, and a source of moral influence for the Muslims from the Atlantic to the great wall of China.” 44 More importantly, he also announced his subscription of Rupees Ten Lakh to the university fund.

In February 1911 a committee was formed to draft a constitution. The first meeting of the constitution committee was held at Aligarh on April 15-16, 1911 to consider the draft. At the same meeting a deputation consisting of Nawab Viqar-ul Mulk, Sahibzada Aftab Ahmed Khan and the President and the Secretary of the committee was formed to hold an informal discussion with Sir Harcourt Butler, the

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education member of the Viceroy's Councils. But before the deputation could proceed with its task, the Secretary Dr. Syed Ali Bilgrami died, and Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed was appointed in his place. The deputation made Sir Harcourt informally on May 16, 1911 and presented him a copy of the draft, constitution of the proposed university approved by the constitution committee. Sir Harcourt agreed to the proposal and told the Secretary of State would sanction the establishment of university provided, firstly, the Muslims had adequate funds, and secondly, that it did not go against the policy of the government. 45

Therefore, the Agha Khan, who originally planned to collect a Crore of Rupees, made a modest beginning by appealing for a sum of Rupees Twenty Lakhs, which later on was raised to Rupees Twenty Five Lakhs. But when the member of the constitution committee made Sir Harcourt, they were asked to collect at least Rupees Thirty Five Lakhs, Rupees Twenty Six Lakhs had been collected within a year of the appeal. The only Rupees Nine Lakhs more were required and the collection of these amount was therefore quickened. The 'Paisa Akhbar' and the 'Watan' published their appeals to Muslims for their contribution to the university fund.

Moreover, the appeals made by the Muslim leaders for contribution to the Muslim University Fund evoked a wide response. Even the students of a high school (Etawa) sacrificed one month's breakfast and fire works at Shab-i Barat to

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45 Aligarh Institute Gazette. August 2, 1911. p. 4.
add their ‘mite’ to the university fund. The committee for the collection of the fund was formed with the Agha Khan as Chairman. He was accompanied by Aziz Mirza, Shaukat Ali, and a small band of enthusiastic workers, who started making collections in Calcutta in January 1911.

It is important to note that Prince Agha Khan strenuously worked for the collection of the fund for the university. This can be seen in the statement he made when setting out on his fund collecting campaign;

“As a mendicant I am now going out to beg from house to house and from street to street for the children of Muslim India.” 46

They visited Allahabad, Lucknow, Kanpur and Rampur. Wherever they went, they received spontaneous and tumultuous welcome from the Muslim community. Tonki, in his book entitled, ‘Aligarh and Jamia’, says that;

“I, as a student of class fifth at that time, still remember how I jumped again and again to have a glimpse of Agha Khan and showered flowers on him.” Even the younger members of the audience ran to lift him up from the chair and carried him to his carriage on their shoulders. Amongst them were young men whose name later became famous in Muslim India like the great poet Iqbal and Dr. Ziauddin.” 47

Unparalleled welcome was given to his highness at Lahore in his drive for funds. The horses which were to drive his carriage were unharnessed and the

47 Ibid., p. 256.
carriage was drawn for miles by his enthusiastic admirers who had flocked in thousands to receive him at the railway station.⁴⁸

The deputation which had achieved such significant success, for greater efficiency now decided to divide into two groups one consisting of the Agha Khan, Shaukat Ali and Aziz Mirza left for Bombay; and the other consisting of the Raja of Mahmudabad, Aftab Ahmed Khan, Dr. Syed Ali Bilgrami and Dr. Mohammad Varsi proceeded to Karachi. The marchants of Bombay and else where contributed what ever lay in their power. Having become convinced that the desired target would be achieved the Agha Khan went to England to finalise the draft of the Royal Charter with the help of Parliamentary experts. The draft charter was to be presented to the King, after his coronation in London, by a small deputation consisting of Agha Khan, The Rt. Honorable Amir Ali and Nawab of Bhopal and Rampur.

During the absence of Agha Khan and others, the campaign back home was carried out by the Aligarh leaders: Raja of Mehmudabad, Nawab Viqar-ul Mulk, Shaukat Ali, Sahibzada Aftab Ahmed Khan and Aziz Mirza. They visited almost every place which lay within their reach, and with the help of local committees succeeded in making a slumbering community wide awake. The campaigners did not spare even distant areas like Balochistan and Burma. Thus, the whole of

Muslim India was brought under one canopy unanimously endeavouring to create the Aligarh Muslim University.

At this precise moment when the campaign for the proposed university was at its peak, a break was applied suddenly by Sir Harcourt Butler. In a letter of August 9, 1912 to the Raja of Mahmudabad, he wrote that the Secretary of State after mature consideration had decided that the proposed university would not have powers affiliation outside the locality in which it might be established.

The letter further discussed the distribution of powers between various body of the proposed university and objected to any denomination being given to the university. It also suggested that the proposed university should be called the 'University of Aligarh'. The times of London said that the government, accepting the deficiencies of prevailing systems of education, argued that the remedy did not lie in creating yet another affiliating university but in encouraging and develop in teaching and residential universities. An affiliating university would suffer form the examination, difficulties of supervision and inspection from one end of the country to the other. 49

Besides that, as already mentioned, the government also refused to permit the name 'Muslim', so that the university would be called 'Aligarh University' and not 'Muslim University'. Further more, the powers vested in the Viceroy under the provisional constitution where to be exercised by the government of India which

would obviously place the university under state control and reduce it to the status of government department. However, with government logic being neither convincing nor acceptable, Mohammad Ali reiterated the Muslim position. He said;

"The Muslims want to evolve a certain type of education suited to their needs and their genius and they want an All India Organisation for that purpose. The proposed Muslim University was primarily designed to furnish that organisation. But, if that university is to be deprived of the power of guiding Muslim education throughout India by well planned system of affiliation, the main object underlying movement falls to the ground." 50

The above decision of the government evoked wide consternation among the Muslims in regard to the British policy, specially at the time of the Tripoli and Balkhan was, in which British sympathy towards Christian was evident. And, this was the subject of discussion in every Muslim household. The Raja of Mahmudabad immediately convened a meeting of the constitution committee on August 12, 1912, to consider the foresaid letter. Having thoroughly discussed it he wrote to Sir Harcourt that the decision of the Secretary of State was entirely opposed to the basic principles on which the promoters of the proposed university had been working so long. Hence, the constitution committee felt that it had not authority to accept a decision of the Secretary of State which ran counter

to the very principles on which it was asked to frame a constitution for the 
university.

The foundation Committee even held a meeting on December 27, 1912 at Lucknow to consider the letter of Sir Harcourt. Mohammad Ali moved a resolution, seconded by Syed Husain Bilgrami, which insisted on affiliation and the denominational character of the university. Mohammad Ali also suggested that a deputation consisting of Agha Khan (President of the Foundation Committee), Raja of Mahmudabad (President of The Constitution Committee), Haji Mohammad Ishaque Khan (Secretary of Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College) and some other prominent leaders should meet the Viceroy. However, due to some unavoidable circumstances, the deputation was unable to meet the Viceroy. 51

The government maintained its rigid stance due not only to the objection raised by the committee in Sir Harcourt’s letter, but more importantly due to the fact that the affiliation demanded have ‘A Pan Islamic Flavour’. 52

The university movement did not stopped despite the refusal of the India office to accede to its condition. In fact, Muslim became more persistent. In light of this, the British government had a fear that Muslims would go to the Congress, and Aligarh would become a problem. “Very difficult.... to solve.” 53

53 Ibid., December 16, 1913.
Sir Harcourt told Sir James Meston that the way to manage Aligarh was to get the leading trustees together quietly and to insist on certain actions, on the threat of withdrawing the government grant. He also suggested that the Islamic College (Peshawar), Islamic College (Lahore), and projected colleges at Bombay and Decca and perhaps also at Calcutta should be supported so as to isolate Aligarh. The intention behind the British support to these colleges was to encourage the Muslims of these places to demand withdrawal of their funds and thus weaken the Aligarh University Movement in India.  

To undermine the movement further, Sir Harcourt proposed to go ahead with a Hindu University by granting an interview to the Maharaja of Darbhanga and Pandit Sunderlal. He hoped that, “If we settle with the Hindus about the university, Muslims will not have a leg to stand on.” Hence, Hardinge approved of this scheme and wrote back to him that: “I entirely approve of your suggestion that we should foster the tendency to isolate Aligarh.”

Meanwhile, Muslims showed dissension among themselves. Conflicting views were expressed on the proposed terms of the university movement. One group demanded the withdrawal of the university fund, the other wanted diversion of the fund to Turkey to aid and assist her against the allies. Since, none of the suggestions were following up, the Aligarh Muslim Foundation Committee

54 Butler papers. 1912-13.
55 Hardinge Papers: Harndinge to Butler, April 13, 1913.
convened a meeting in August 1913. Major Syed Bilgrami spoke in support of the affiliation move but at the same time insisted that they must struggle to meet all the conditions that go to make affiliation successful. He said that the affiliation was like a dream which was quite unrealistic and they must accept a local residential university. However, nothing substantial emerged out of the meeting. But on the other hand, the government persuaded the Hindus to accept its conditions for the establishment of the Hindu University. And this led to the passing of the Banaras Hindu University Act of 1915. The Hindus, although having started later, realised their dreams earlier than the Muslims.

Thus, the above government policy had strong repercussions for Muslims. The Muslim University Association convened a meeting on October 15, 1915, under the presidency of the Raja of Mahmudabad. The whole correspondence was read with an announcement that the government had declined to receive any deputation on behalf of the foundation committee unless that body was prepared to accept the principle underlying the Hindu University Act. A resolution was passed to accept the Muslim University on the lines of the Hindu University, but only after vigorous debate. Meanwhile, the first World War started and it was decided that there was no use taking up the matter with the government when it was busy with other matters. During this period, the Lt. Governor visited the Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College and assured the trustees of the college of his best

cooperation for the establishment of the university. He said;

"I must leave it to you, to decide when will be the appropriate moment to receive that imposing and large-hearted proposal to convert your college into a university. All that I can say is that when the moment will come you will have no more active friend and supporter than myself."  

On January 26, 1920, a meeting of the Muslim University Association resolved that there should be no further delay in the attainment of the university-they should get it within a year. On March 23-24, 1920, the draft bill of the Muslim University was presented to Miyan Mohammad Shafi, Education member of the Viceroy's Council. The bill was more flexible and liberal than the bills of the Deccan and Banaras Universities. It was introduced in the council on August 27, 1920. The Education member told the council of the urgency of founding a university for Muslims. After an animated discussion the bill was passed on September 9, 1920.  

The grant of the Muslim University Charter was a great step towards the advancement of higher education among Muslims. The dream of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan matured after a lapse of about half a century when the small college of 1875 grew into a university in 1920. This was largely due to the Agha Khan and other

57 Ibid., November 26, 1919. p. 15.
Muslim leaders. The grant of the university gave a deep satisfaction to the Agha Khan who wrote;

“When I look back on all that the Muslim University of Aligarh has stood for and achieved in past forty years, this is without doubt one of the facts of my life which I can recall and contemplate with real and abiding satisfaction. Where else then in a Muslim University would it have been possible to establish and maintain alongside and fully integrated with the libraries, the laboratories and all the facilities essential for a full understanding of our world and our time, a true centre of Islamic faith and culture in which can be expounded and practiced the principles of our religion, its universality and real modernity, its essential reasonableness, its profound spirit of tolerance and clarity and respect for other faiths. That I played my part in establishing such a centre is for me one of the happiest, most consoling and most fortifying thoughts to take into old age.”

The Aligarh Muslim University would remain as a living monument of the Agha Khan’s educational activities in the interest of Islam. One may very well assert that without him, the Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College at Aligarh would never have evolved into a Muslim University. This can be demonstrated by the fact that Maulana Shibli, paying tribute to the work done by Agha Khan for

Aligarh, wrote, “That which could not be achieved by six crore Muslims was accomplished by Prince Agha Khan.”

When Agha Khan visited Aligarh in 1936, the Vice-Chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University, Dr. Ziauddin, presented an address from the members of the Court of Aligarh Muslim University on February 15, 1936, emphasized in the most striking manner and emphatic language the status and authority of the leadership accorded to the Agha Khan with unanimity and enthusiasm by the Muslims of India. The address welcomed His Highness not only as “the most respected, the most trusted leader of the Muslim community, but also as a great statesman and educationist.” He said;

“It must be a matter of real satisfaction to your Highness that most of the expansion and development of the university are in large measure due to your Highness’ patronage and active support. The great founder of this institution expressed the hope that this institution would develop into a university, but the realization of the founder’s dream is precisely due to your Highness who worked for it with the zeal of a missionary. Your Highness infused a new life into the Aligarh Movement by touring the whole of India to collect funds for the establishment of the Aligarh Muslim University. Owing to the Agha Khan’s patriotic efforts our ‘Alma Mater’ has established a position among the universities of the world. So long as

60 Allana G., Loc. cit., p. 256.
this university continues to function, 'Your Highness' Agha Khan's name will be remembered with reverence and affections by the Muslims of India. We earnestly hope that under the fostering care and guidance of your Highness this institution will soon develop into a 'Cordova of the East.'”

The Times of London’ commended his services and said that,

“It is perhaps not too much to say that the sober and sane attitude of the Muslims of all sects in India during the recent unrest is more due to Agha Khan’s personal influence than to take of any other leader of the community.” 61

However, the Aligarh College after a long struggle achieved the status of the University, very soon became more than a seat of learning for the Muslims of India.

SUCCESSORS OF SIR SYED AHMED KHAN:

Towards the close of nineteenth century a great calamity befell the Muslims by the death of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan(1898). His passing away removed from the scene a great patriot and stanch pioneer of Western education in India. The poineer said that,

"With his death there died the most salutary and fruitful as well as the most powerful political force that has moved the Mohammedan world of India during last quarter of the century.” 62


Muslims of India in particular and India in general had lost a great leader who had piloted their ship to a safe destination through a turbulent ocean. He left his impact on every walk of life and consequently commanded universal respect. Morison remarked that,

"Neither in England nor in India have I met any man who inspired me with so strong a feeling of reverence."  

After Sir Syed Ahmed Khan the question arose about his successor. But it was easily solved. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s two co-workers were Moulvi Syed Mehdi Ali and Moulvi Mustaque Husain popularly known as Nawab Mohsin-ul Mulk and Nawab Viqar-ul Mulk respectively. The former was Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s immediate successor and the later came after him. They proved to be true successors of the departed leader. 

**NAWAB MOHSIN-UL MULK:**

Nawab Mohsin-ul Mulk was born on December 9, 1837 at Etawah. He received traditional education in a Maktab and started his career as humble clerk. By dint of perseverance he rose to the rank of Deputy Collector, winning high praises from his officers. Sir Salar Jung I, Prime Minister of Hyderabad, obtained his services for the Nizam’s Government. While in Hyderabad he acted as the Financial and political Secretary to the Government. In recognition of his services

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he was awarded the title of Munir Nawab Jung Bahadur in 1884 and Nawab Mohsin-ud Dawlah Mohsin-ul Mulk in 1887 by the Nizam. On both the occasions Sir Syed Ahmed Khan expressed his extreme joy and appreciation for the great services Mohsin-ul Mulk rendered to the Muslim community.\textsuperscript{65}

Mr. Howell, the English Official to Nizam, at a dinner, said,

"In Nawab Mohsin-ul Mulk we have a statesman of shrewd hard headed, practical ability who has climbed steadily upward on each steps of the official ladder and yet has retained sufficient versatility to represent His Highness Government on the very different sphere of official life in England, where he commanded as he does here, the respect and esteem of all those with whom he was brought in contact." \textsuperscript{66}

His contact with Sir Syed Ahmed Khan began in the year 1863, the year in which Sir Syed Ahmed Khan published his 'Commentary on the Bible', which resulted in a great hue and cry in Muslim community. Mohsin-ul Mulk was so shocked by his commentary that he wrote to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan a long letter and even said that he doubted whether he is a Muslim. But, when he visited Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, he was profoundly impressed by his lofty ideas that he became his life long companion. Under Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's guidance he took a leading part in propagating the aims and ideals of the Aligarh Movement and greatly contributed towards strengthening the foundation of the college.

\textsuperscript{65} \textit{Aligarh Institute Gazette}. April 9, 1887. p.15.

\textsuperscript{66} \textit{Aligarh Institute Gazette}. February 19, 1889. p. 10.
After his retirement from the Nizam’s service in 1893, he settled down at Aligarh. It is interesting to observed that the activities of the Educational Conference was confined to Awadh only due to the old age of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, but it was he who infused a new life into it.  

After Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s death all eyes turned to Mohsin-ul Mulk for the realisation of the dream of the great leader. When he assumed the Secretaryship of the college, it was completely without funds due to the embezzlement of a large sum of money by a clerk. But it was Mohsin-ul Mulk who succeeded in collecting Nine lakhs and Eighty Two thousand rupees within a very few years and enabled the college authorities to wipe off the financial deficit of the college. During his secretarship the college made much progress.

At the death of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in 1898 the total number of students were 343, while at the end of Mohsin-ul Mulk death in 1907 it rose to 862. Thus, we could say that if Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was heart of the Aligarh Movement, Mohsin-ul Mulk was the brain without whose co-operation the success of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan would have become difficult if not impossible. About the contribution of Mohsin-ul Mulk to the Aligarh Movement, Hali says that if no mention were made of his services ‘an important secret of his Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s success would remain hidden.

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68  *Aligarh Institute Gazette.* February 19, 1889.  p. 106
NAWAB VIQAR-UL MULK:

Another person who worked with Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, though differed from him on many occasion, was Moulvi Mushtaq Husain, who latter became Nawab Viqar-ul Mulk. He was born at Sarwah, a small village in Meerut district on March 24, 1841.

He entered in the judicial service of the government in very young age. The great famine of 1861 brought him close to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan who had been given the charge of Muradabad division and who entrusted Amroha Sector to Viqar-ul Mulk. In 1874, when again a famine appeared in Gorakhpur and Basti district and were again Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was commissioned to supervise the relief work, he requested Sir John Strachey to sent Viqar-ul Mulk for help and who very ably handled the relief operation. Hence amicable relations between Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Viqar-ul Mulk developed during this period.

Furthermore, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s Aligarh Movement appealed him and like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, and he also felt the urgency of the introduction of English and modern education among the Muslims. His article on the problem of Muslim education contributed to the committee for better diffusion and advancement of learning which won the second prize, reveals his interest in the upliftment of his community. He wrote extensively in the Aligarh Institute Gazette and the Tahzib-ul-AkhlAQ and his contribution was next only to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Mohsin-ul Mulk.
Sir Syed Ahmed Khan admired Viqar-ul Mulk no less than Mohsin-ul Mulk and had complete reliance on both of them. They also supported Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s mission as none else would have done.

During the end of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s life, he was greatly preoccupied with the management of the college, All India Mohammadan Educational Conference, The Anglo Oriental defence Associations, The Editorship of the Aligarh Institute Gazette and the Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq etc. Consequently most of the college work remained unattended. So Sir Syed Ahmed Khan passed on to Viqar-ul Mulk who looked after the dinning hall, hostel management and general discipline of the student.

Viqar-ul Mulk succeeded Mohsin-ul Mulk in 1908 as the honorary secretary of the college. His period of Secretaryship was a time when anti British feelings had taken root among the students. He himself did not like British influence in the college and during the life time of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan occasionally differed from him in this respect.

Muslim education was the focal point of his devotion while he himself did a lot to improve the Mohammadan Educational Conference, he suggested certain modifications to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan also to make it a more effective body.69 Moreover, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, in recognition of his services named one of the college building as Mustaque Manzil. He paid glowing tribute to him saying that he

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69 Aligarh Institute Gazette. October 29, 1891. p. 23.
could never forget the services rendered by him to the college.

Thus, both the successors of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan played a significant roll
in leading the college towards the road of progress.

**MR. H. G. I. SIDDONS - THE FIRST PRINCIPAL:**

Mr. H.G.I. Siddons, the head master of Mohammadan Anglo Oriental School became the first principal of the college in January 1877. While recommending him for the post head master Mr. Deighton, the principal of Agra College had said,

"*Mr. Siddons is far too good to lose, being both intellectually and socially much above the mark of head master in government schools.*"  
(Deighton's letter dated June 1, 1875 is preserved in University Archives.)

As academic head, Mr. Siddons was concerned with the supervision of teaching and he store hard to maintain a high standard. He took keen interest in the extra-curricular activities and treated the students with sympathy. An article in the Aligarh Institute Gazette published on February 17, 1880, saying that,

"*Mr. Siddons was as much devoted to the college as the 'Founder' and the members of the management committee. He left the college as he could not stand the hot summer of India and his health began to fail. He submitted his resignation on May 5, 1883 but desired to be relieved from*

70 Tufail Ahmed, *Musalmanon Ka Raoshan Mustaqbil.* Part III.  
February 1884, so that the authorities could conveniently recruit suitable successor. The managing committee which met on August 28, 1883, accepted his resignation and approved of the selection of Mr. Theodore Beck, whom Syed Mahmud had recommended from England." 71

THEODORE BECK:

Mr. Beck is one of the controversial figures in the history of the college. He has been loved, revered, hated and feared, high appreciated and strongly condemned. He has been given all the credits for the phenomenal success of the college and at the same time held responsible for the manifold ills which crept into its precincts. The strike of 1888 brought the boarding house under his authority and the trustees Regulation of 1889 associated him with the management of the college. He controlled the finance of the college as Honorary Registrar. As member of the Mohammadan Educational Conference and as Assistant Secretary of its Central Committee, he influence Muslim public opinion. He established intimate social relations with his students by visiting the hostel. He looked after sick students personally, got food cooked in his kitchen and helped needy students from his pocket. Thus Mr. Beck won their affection and regard in a remarkable measure.

Beck was much affected by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s death and he seemed to be losing all zest of life. He decided to devote himself to the collection of funds

71 Aligarh Institute Gazette. February 17, 1880. p. 35.
for the Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s Memorial. His health began to fail. He went to
Simla to recuperate and there on September 2, 1899, he breathed his last. He was
working upon an appeal to Muslims for the Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s Memorial
Fund, almost till the last day.

Mr. Beck’s last wish was that his grave should be paved with red bricks,
the favourite colour of the M.A.O. College and the English translation of the verse
inscribed on his tomb is as follows,

“Man lays stone on stone to build a house and calls it ‘my house’.
Neither mine, nor his, but only a place of shelter for the birds to pass the
night.” 72

Some of the leading Indian writers hold Mr. Beck responsible for bringing
about a change in the views of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. It may be pointed out that
almost all those writers who hold the view probably influenced by the statements
of Maolana Tufail Ahmed. However, Bhatnagar argues that Beck did his utmost to
create feelings of loyalty among the Muslims but there is no evidence to prove that
he was completely dominated by him in his political views. 73

THEODORE MORISON:

Theodore Morison assumed principal ship of the college on October 29,
1899. He stands midway between Siddons and Beck: Siddons stood on prestige
and dignity and did not encourage social relations with the staff or the students.

72 Tufail Ahmed, Loc cit., p. 323.

73 Bhatnagar S. K., Loc. cit, p. 89.
Beck was just contrast in the matter. Siddons was not interested in the affairs of the Management, while Beck took a leading part in the affairs as also in the elections of the management committee. Morison associated himself freely with his natives, colleagues and students and yet maintained distance which elicited respect.

He encouraged extra-curricular activities, the brotherhood, the duty society, etc. and at the same time laid the emphasis on the academic life of the college. Beck and Morison had only two things common - a sincere interest in the education and the well being of the Muslim community and the largest interest of the security of the British Empire. Otherwise in character, conduct and method of approach, the two stood poles apart.\textsuperscript{74}

Morison had submitted his resignation in June 1904, due to the domestic problems, on the completion of his five years contract.

**ROLE OF THE M. A. O. COLLEGE IN RAISING THE STATUS OF THE MUSLIMS:**

The success of the college in realizing its socio-political scheme can be described as the most phenomenal. During the Mutiny when Sir Syed Ahmed Khan can on the scene, the Muslims were blamed for the rebellion and were castigated as being disloyal. Thus, they were looked upon as the potential enemies of the British rule. Furthermore, the Muslims were hostile towards the Western mode of education and were also politically disorganized. It was Sir Syed Ahmed Khan

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., p. 138.
who, within a very short period, checked all the factors leading to decline and by his herculean efforts, set the Muslims back on the road of progress. Thus, it may be argued, was mainly effected through the M.A.O. College and by adopting a pro-British policy in their educational endeavours.  

Thus, the Aligarh movement and the college succeeded in transforming the view of the British Government towards the Muslims in India to the extent that the British generally began to consider Muslims as ‘truly loyal’ subjects. Moreover, the British officials in India took pleasure in declaring that to be an Aligarh student is to have a passport to the confidence of the British.

Politically the Muslims now organised as a solid block under the Aligarh leaders. In course of time they restored themselves to a position of great importance.

Lord Curzon aptly remarked that;

“Sir Syed Ahmed Khan showed a profound political insight in laying emphasis on education. For through education alone the Muslims could equip themselves with weapons which would enable them to recover any portion of their lost ascendancy in India.”


76 Ibid., p. 95.


The college produced Muslims who became prominent leaders of the community in various parts of India. (Appendix - G) In addition the Muslims of the college became the spearhead of the Muslim movements in various provinces of India.