CHAPTER-I
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IRAN DURING THE REIGN OF NASIRU’D DIN SHAH AND MUZAFFARU’D DIN SHAH QAJAR

1.(a): THE ORIGIN OF QAJAR DYNASTY:

The Qajars were one of the seven Turkish tribes which had supported the rise of power of Shah Ismail, the first Safavid ruler. Their fortunes had been at low ebb under Nadir Shah, but after his death they became dominant in Mazandern and made an abortive attempt to spread into southern Iran. One of them, Agha Muhammad Khan, was held at the court of Karim Khan who had defeated his father in battle. As a child he had been castrated by one of the Afsharids and his unfortunate condition and years of restraint bred a ferocious temper. Escaping from Shiraz he made his way to Mazanderan and united the branches of the tribe. From his new capital at Tehran, he ruled Iran from 1779, although not officially named as Shah of Iran until 1796. In the south Muhammad attacked the forces of Lutf Ali of the Zand line. Lutf Ali sought refuge in Kerman but was finally captured and tortured to death while Muhammad punished Kerman by putting out the eyes of 20,000 of its inhabitants. By the time he himself was assassinated in 1797, Agha Muhammad Khan had gained control of the whole of Iran, including Georgia.

His nephew and successor Fateh Ali Shah, who ascended the throne in 1797 at the age of 21, was a man of quite different
character. His reign ushered in a century in which Iran enjoyed comparative calm and peace while it suffered a moral and political decline. Direct contact with the European powers began under Fath Ali Shah with a treaty of alliance, signed in 1807 between France and Iran. Napoleon expected this treaty to open the way for French invasion of India by land, while Iran was received arms and military instruction to enable her to resist the expanding strength of Czarist Russia, which had annexed Georgia in 1801. However Napoleon soon came to terms with Russia and the hostilities which broke out between Russia and Iran were ended in 1813 by the Treaty of Gulistan confirming Russian possession of Georgia. In 1814 Iran and Great Britain signed a treaty of defensive alliance which although it remained in force until 1857 was never of any value to Iran.

In 1826 Iran and Russia again went to war and initial Persian successes were followed by a series of defeats culminating in the capture of Tabriz by the Russians. The Treaty of Turkoman Chai, signed in 1828 gave Russia the Iran districts of Erivan and Nakhichevan expected from Iran a large indemnity, reserved military navigation on the Caspian to Russian ship and granted capitulations in favor of Russia. A later annex to the treaty gave Russia special economic and tariff rights.

From this time until well into the twentieth century Iran was to be torn between the conflicting interests of Russia and Great Britain. Russia was embarked on a course of expansion in Asia and had visions of a warm water port on the Persian Gulf, while
Great Britain was faced with the need of controlling the Persian Gulf and all land areas adjacent to India, her great colonial prize.

Muhammad Shah the son of Abbas Mirza and grandson of Fateh Ali Shah ruled from 1834 until 1848. He did his utmost to improve the internal condition of the country, abolishing the practice of torture and forbidding the importation of slaves into Iran. During his reign Russia owed Iranian friendship in order to have a free hand in consolidating her gain in the Caucasus and in Turkestan. Muhammad Shah, supported by Russian, made an attempt to re-conquer Herat which was strongly opposed by Great Britain, who sent a British officer to organize the successful resistance of Herat.4

1. (b): Iran during the reign of Nasiru’d Din Shah:-

Nasiru’d Din Shah is regarded as the most outstanding ruler of Qajar Dynasty. He was the first to introduce western ideas in Iran. During the rule of Nasiru’d Din Shah, son of Muhammad shah, the fourth Qajar king, who ruled from 1848 to 1896, the government of the country found greater stability. He undertook three journeys to Europe in 1873, 1878, and 1889 respectively and Kept diaries which were printed in Persia. A renown writer Abdullah Jasibi stated about Nasiru’d Din Shah, “Nasiru’d Din Shah reigned about 50 years and travelled Europe many times and handed over Iran on the hand of foreign companies and countries for 32 years.5 The display an avid curiosity about all he saw and heard. Military matters were a major interest; with the need for the modernization of Iran’s army in mind he visited
munitions plants cannon factories, and powder plants, and looked into the possibility of bringing military advisers to Iran. He became convinced that Iran needed only to adopt Western skills and methods to take her place in the modern world.\textsuperscript{6} This was the first that a Persian monarch had left his dominions to travel in Europe and that too not with standing the opposition in the clergy.\textsuperscript{7} His travel Diaries, even though coloured by a superficiality of outlook are reminiscent of the fact that he was impressed by what he saw in Europe. In 1875 after returning from his first European visit, Nasiru'd Din Shah established councils of administration, which were intended to help the local authorities in their work, keep a cheek on the excesses perpetrated by the officials and counter act the legal prerogatives of the ecclesiastics, but the measurement with the strong resistance of the clergy, and had to be abandoned.\textsuperscript{8}

In 1859, the Persian, government laid a telegraph line from Ultaniya to Tehran the first experiment of its kind in Persia. But this line had soon to be relinquished because it was poorly constructed. Efforts were resumed in 1860 and by the end of the century, Iran came to possess telegraphic communications at most of the large towns. In 1865 connection was established with the outside world by the erection of a line from London to Bombay passing in transit through Iran. These communications brought the country into direct contact with Europe and helped the infiltration of the ideas of reform.
In the early years of his reign Nasiru'd Din Shah enjoyed the services of an honest and enlightened statesman, Mirza Taqi Khan Amir-i-Kabir. He was as Curzon described him, "One of the most remarkable figure of the century." Coming from a humble origin, he finally rose in 1849 to the position of Prime Minister. During his limited term of office (it lasted from 1849 to 1851 when he fell victim to court intrigue and the jealousy of the young Shah which led to his execution) he introduced several important progressive reforms, and it was under him that the idea of establishing a college on modern lines was conceived.

This college, known as the Darul-Funun, was founded in Tehran in 1851, several Austians being especially recruited to its staff. It started with a little over one hundred students on the rolls, almost all belonging to the upper classes. The main subjects taught here were Military Science, Mathematics, Medicine, Chemistry, Mineralogy, Geography and Foreign Languages like English, French, Russian or German. "Instruction in music and liberal arts was later introduced." There was even an auditorium where plays were performed by amateurs till they had to be discontinued because of the hostility of the clergy. The college had its own press and printed its own text books. "Teaching was according to European methods and Arabic theology and metaphysics were excluded from the curriculum."

Nasiru'd Din Shah did not probably anticipate that by opening his country to Western influences, however meager they might be, he was involuntarily facilitating the infiltration of those
ideas which gaining in strength world ultimately question the institutions of his despotic authority. It was not possible to covet the fruits of the industrial and economic revolution in Europe without at the same time, allowing such concepts of human destiny as liberty, fraternity and equality, which formed the very basis of that revolution, to assert themselves in the long run. And, therefore, when education began to spread and more contacts were established with Europe, there came into existence a small intelligentsia which, not content to remain under its accustomed conditions, demanded a change in the institutions that had outlived themselves.

There were some important landmarks which were regarded as important in order to awakening of Persia during the reign of Nasiru’d Din Shah. These were as follows: ——

(1) **The Question of Telegraphic Communication between England and India:**

One great difference between the progressive West and the unprogressive East lies in the nature of their communications. During the Indian Mutiny the need for direct telegraphic communication was seriously felt in England, and in 1859 an attempt was made to lay a cable down the Red Sea in correspondence with wires which stretched from Marseilles to Alexandria. But this attempt entirely failed. At that period Turkey had realized the advantage of the telegraph for the control of her wide-spreading empire. For her own ends she decided to construct a line from Constantinople across Asia Minor to Baghdad. It was
proposed that it should be continued thence to India by the British Government and in view of the failure in the Red Sea, this scheme was gladly adopted. Some years were consumed in negotiations and surveys, but in 1863 the Overland Telegraph Convention was concluded at Constantinople. Owing to the feeble control exercised by Turkey over the tribes to the south of Baghdad and the malarious climate (although these obstacles proved to be less serious than had been anticipated), it was decided to provide an alternative line through Persia to connect at Bushire with the cable to be laid down the Persian Gulf.

(2) **The First Telegraph Line in Persia, 1864**: 

Accordingly, negotiations were opened with the Shah for the construction by British officers of a circuitous line running from the Persian frontier near Baghdad to Kermanshah, Hamadan, and Tehran, and from the capital to Bushire. At first the proposal met with strenuous resistance from the reactionary party, but the Shah determined to benefit by the scheme, and by the end of 1864 the first single-wire line was constructed. The obstacles to be overcome were great, consisting in depredations by the tribes and ignorant obstruction by the Persian local officials; but the British officers and non-commissioned officers were a splendid body of men, and thanks to their tact and capacity the original concession was repeatedly modified and important developments were made.
(3) The Indo-European Telegraph Lines:

In 1870 Siemens Brothers rented wires from the British and German Governments between London and the Russian frontier at Alexandrovsk. From this point they constructed a double line via Odessa, Tiflis, and Tabriz to Tehran, where it joined the already existing system. The lines worked by the Indo-European Telegraph Company, as it was termed, completed direct communications between London and India, Bushire being connected by submarine cable with Jask; and from that station with Karachi both by a land line and by cable. In 1872 a third convention was concluded, by the terms of which three wires were provided, two for international and one for local use. There were no important changes until, in 1898, it was decided to construct a direct land line across South-Eastern Persia to Karachi. Mr. King Wood, who was instructed to make a survey for this line, and traveled together to Sistan. He subsequently constructed the Central Persia Telegraph Line, as it was called, as far as the British frontier. In his case the Persian officials were friendly, but the natural difficulties were greater, as the Lut had to be crossed. In spite of this, the line was successfully constructed, and constitutes another monument to British enterprise.

(4) The Reuter Concession, 1872:

In 1872 the Shah appointed his representative at Constantinople to the post of Sadr-i- Azam, an official which had not recently been filled. Mirza Husyan Khan, the new Grand Vizier, believed sincerely that the salvation of Persia lay in fulfilling
all treaty obligations towards Russia, while confiding the regeneration of the country to Great Britain. In pursuance of this policy, it was determined to create a gigantic monopoly through which were to be effected the construction of railways, the working of mines, and the establishment of a national bank. In return the custom and, indeed, almost all the resources of the empire were to be pledge. This concession was granted Baron Julius de Reuter, a naturalized British subject, whose scheme involved the floating of several companies to work the vast enterprise. With a native ignorance of European politics, the Shah started at this juncture on his first European tour, and was surprised and disappointed to find that strong indignation prevailed in the highest quarters at Perturbed against this extraordinary concession. In England His Majesty was equally disappointed to find apathy on the subject where he had expected to find enthusiasm. The feeling of Iran was also against the surrender to Europeans of such far-reaching control, and on this occasion public opinion was entirely sound. Consequently, upon the Shah's return to Tehran, the concession was annulled.13

(5) **The opening of the Karun, 1888:**

Among the concessions granted by Nasiru'd Din Shah was one by which the lower Karun was opened commerce. This was greeted with enthusiasm in the British Press, but when it understood that the stretch of river actually opened was only one hundred and seventeen miles in length, equivalent to rather less than eighty miles by land, the small importance of the concession
that had been gained becomes apparent. Nor did the special regulations fail to lessen the value of what the Shah had reluctantly conceded. By the Treaty of Turkomanchai Europeans are allowed.

(6) The Imperial Bank of Persia, 1889:—

Baron de Reuter had hitherto received no compensation for the annulment of his wide concession. Indeed, his caution-money, amounting to $40,000, was retained. In 1889 the Shah, in partial amends for this hard dealing, signed a concession in his favour for the foundation of a bank, to be called the Imperial Bank of Persia. This British enterprise was started with a capital of one million starlings and with the right to issue banknotes. It was also granted the exploitation of the mineral resources of Persia, with the exception of precious stones, gold, and silver. At first the managers of the institution bought their experience some what dearly; and the sudden and apparently permanent depreciation of silver constituted a heavy loss. But to-day, after carrying on operations for more than a quarter of a century the position of the Bank is fully recognized; and it can claim to have become a Persian institution of special value both to the Government and to merchants.

(4) The Tobacco Monopoly, 1890-1892:—

Less fortunate than the Imperial Bank of Iran was the fate of the Tobacco Monopoly. This ill-judged concession gave full control over the production, sale, and export of all tobacco in Persia. In return for these rights a sum of $15,000 was to be paid annually
to the Shah; in addition, after the working expenses and 5 percent had been set aside, His Majesty was to receive one quarter of the profits. The concession affected the position of tobacco growers, sellers, and smokers alike, and in Iran both men and women smoke regularly. Its gross unfairness was aggravated by the fact that many of the employees were drawn from a somewhat low class and by the lack of tact displayed in dealing with Persian rights. In short, first public indignation and then fanaticism was aroused. Haji Mirza Hasan Shirazi, the leading mujtahid, placed an interdict on smoking, and the order was obeyed throughout the land, the royal palace being no exception. Finally, after disturbances had broken out and intense hostility had been displayed towards Europeans, the Shah cancelled the concession and agreed to pay compensation to the extent of half million sterling. This sum was borrowed from the Imperial Bank of Iran and may be considered to constitute the beginning of the Persian National Debt.

(5) The Assassination of Nasiru’d Din Shah, 1896:

Nasiru’d Din Shah had been reigning Iran for fifty years till 1896. Preparations were being made to celebrate the auspicious event when suddenly as assassin, taking advantage of the Shah’s kindly custom of receiving petitions in person, fired at him and killed him. Thus, Nasiru’d Din Shah was rightly regarded by his subjects as the ablest man in his dominions. Splendidly virile and of striking appearance, he conducted all important affairs in person. In illustration of the Shah’s humour the following story
may perhaps be of interest. His Majisty once visited the famous Tak-i-Kisra, and while standing amid the ruins of this Sasanian palace asked his countries whether they deemed Noshirwan or himself the just monarch. The astute Persians were at a complete loss, as, if they said that their monarch exceeded Noshirwan in the virtue for which his renown is world wide, the Shah might look upon them as flatterers, whereas reply in the opposite sense might be badly received. Consequently they bowed obsequiously and kept to my own question. I am more just than Noshiswan.” The courtiers, whose relief was intense, broke out into loud exclamation of “may we be thy sacrifice!” The Shah whose mood was caustic, again spoke and said: “You have applauded my statement without waiting for my reasons, which is foolish. I will now give you my reasons. Noshirwan had his famous Vizier, Buzurgmihr, and whenever the monarch quitted the path of justice he was brought back to it by his remonstrate. I have only you, who ever try to force me out of the straight path, but in spite of you I am justice personified. Thus I am, more just than Noshirwan.

At the present day there is a tendency, more especially among the “Young Persians,” to disparage Nasiru’d Din Shah, and the fact is adduced that he discouraged the sending of boys to school in Europe. But it is certain that the Shah was far ahead of his people, and although his attempts at reform may not always have been successful, they were at one time indubitably genuine. Nasiru’d Din Shah was not exactly a great Shah and, towards the
end of his reign, he became indifferent, egotistical, and reactionary, but yet he was the best ruler produced by the Qajar dynasty.

1. (c) IRAN DURING THE REIGN OF MUZAFFARU’D DIN SHAH:-

Muzaffaru’D Din Shah, son of Nasiru’d Din Shah ruled over Iran from 1896 to 1907 A.D. After a youth passed in idleness and the pursuit of pleasure at Tabriz as sovereign he showed no more force or true concern for the affairs of state.

Muzaffaru’D Din Shah was at Tabriz at the time of his father’s assassination. He was accompanied by his journey to Tehran by the British and Russian representatives. There were fears that his brothers might fight for the throne, but they hastened to proffer their allegiance, and the new monarch entered Tehran without opposition and was crowned in peace.

(1) Financial Position of Muzaffaru’D Din Shah:—

It was generally believed that Nasiru’d Din Shah had left a full treasury to his successor, but upon examination it was found that little or no many had been saved and the rumors of hoarded millions were totally unfounded. The new Shah, whose health was bad, was most anxious to make a foreign tour almost immediately after his coronation. He desired more especially to undergo a cure at Contrexeville but doubtless he also wished to imitate his father’s example and enjoy the delights of Europe. He was, more ever, surrounded by a hungry horde of followers, who mingled with their congratulations strong hopes of speedy reward for past
services. The question of ways and means was thus one of urgency.

(2) **The Russian Bank:**

The Russian Bank is a branch of the Russian Ministry of Finance, and is used as a political instrument. Its operations are not conducted on business lines. Consequently the annual deficit must be great, not only from losses due to its operations, but also from the extravagant scale of its building and the huge salaries paid to its managers. However, by lending large sums on real estate and by other methods the financial grip of Russia has been riveted on Persia; and the results are held to justify the expenditure of a few million rubles.

(3) **Persian Loans:**

The raising of a Persian Government loan was attempted first in England but just then the Tobacco Monopoly and the Persian Bank Mining rights Corporation had given Iran a bad name on the London Stock Exchange; and it was evident that without the strong support of the British Government money would not be forthcoming. The security offered, namely, the custom southern Iran, was ample. But immediate control by the British capitalists was insisted upon, instead of eventual control in case of default; and ostensibly on this rock the loan foundered.

This gave Russia an opening of exceptional promise. In 1900 she agreed to lend Iran 22,000,000 rubles at 5 percent, with a sinking fund. The security was the Persian Customs exclusive of the Gulf ports. One condition was that the Persian Government
should repay the balance of the loan of half a million contracted with the Imperial bank of Persia to provide compensation for the Tobacco Monopoly; and all for a period of ten years no new loans should be contracted by Persia from any foreign power; and also that without the consent of Russia Customs dues should not be lowered. The loan was issued normally at 86 2/3 with a commission of 1.5 per cent. Consequently, when the sum due on account of the Tobacco Monopoly and the other bank debts had been paid off, little more than one million sterling was available to meet all the claim for arrear of salary and on other accounts. The result was that the first loan was very soon absorbed in totally underproductive expenditure. And in the following year a second loan was contracted on the same security for 10,000,000 rubles, or just over a million starlings. To the new loan was attached a concession for a road from the frontier town of Julfa on the Aras to Tehran via Tabriz. Certain rights to work petroleum and coal also acquired. These may prove to be of value now that the conversion of the road into a railway has become an accomplished fact.16

These two loans have been financially disastrous for Iran. Her annual revenue at that period was about 1,500,000, and yet, in three years sums almost equal to the revenue were borrowed and spent, with nothing in the way of reproductive expenditure to show for them. Since this date the debt of Persia has steadily increased, and according to the latest statistics it has now reached several millions.
Some politically conscious Persians of that period like Mirza Malkam Khan (1838-1908) stand out as the most outspoken critic of the old order. He was the son of a certain Mirza Yakub Khan, an American who became a convert to Islam. Educated by an American Society at Paris, he first appeared at Tehran as a conjurer, whose feats of legerdemain excited wonder among the simple Persians. As would have been the case in mediaeval Europe, his skill offended religious feeling, and the Shah, who was displeased with him on another account, ordered him to leave Iran. Same years after, in the 'sixties, he reappeared at Tehran and founded a Masonic Lodge. The Faramusu Khana, or “House of Forgetfulness,” as it is termed attracted the Persians strongly by its combination of novelty and many of the best families became initiated. He seems to have been inspired by the ideas of the social thinkers of Europe, who lived in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He stood for an orderly government based upon justice and equity. In his opinion the reforms introduced in Iran till then, such as the reorganization of the army, had failed to produced any useful result because of their secondary importance. It was like painting the upper story of a house, the foundation of which was entirely unsound and hollow. Malkam Khan advocated the utmost absorption of European influences. The flood of enlightenment released by the west was pressing upon the neighbouring countries, and the broader its passage of entry into Persia together were to be the benefit she would derive from the fruit of European civilization. In order to give a concrete shape to his views, Malkam
Khan went to the extent of framing a short of constitution, which he called the "Kitabeha-i-Ghalbi (The Heavenly Booklet), dealing with the reorganization of government and administration. While seeking to preserve the basis structure of Iran's political system, the principles propounded therein contained many elements of liberalism a significant thing for the period under discussion.

Nasiru'd Din Shah at first looked on this new departure as a passing fashion, but Ferrukh Khan, the successful negotiator of the Treaty of Iran, Frightened His Majesty by saying that, if he allowed his subjects to become initiated, they might conspire against him. Moved by this argument, the Shah imprisoned the Master of the Lodge, a prince of the blood, and other initiate and Malkam Khan was again ordered to leave Persia. Nothing daunted, he secured the support of Mirza Husayan Khan, at that time Persian Ambassador at Constantinople, and through his influence was appointed Minister in London in 1872. While holding this appointment he was given the title of Prince.

When Nasiru'd Din Shah visited England in 1889 he granted Malkam Khan, in return for a comparatively small gift, a concession for a Persian lottery. The Minister sold it for a large sum, and an English company was formed to work it. The mullah however, objected that these lotteries were a form of gambling, which is forbidden by the Holly Koran. Amin-u-Sultn took their part and tried to induce Malkam Khah to surrender the concession. The latter, however, pointed out that he had sold it and therefore could not do what was asked. Amin-u-Sultan then
sent abusive terms. He was thereupon dismissed from his post, and in a lesser degree to the Shah.

Determined to take revenge, Malkam Khan, with the co-operation of Jamal-u-din, published Kanun, which was written in excellent Persian, was considerable patriot, certainly roused Iran more than any previous writer had succeeded in doing.

Some important personalities of Iran and their activities and contributions to the Constitutional Movement are as follows:—

(A) SAYYID JAMAL-U-DIN :—

Sayyid Jamal-u-Din is considered as the founder of the national movement,17 who was an ardent propagandist of pan Islamic ideas and a vehement critic of the corrupt Government of Iran, rather than an advocate of liberal views. This remarkable man was the son of a village Sayyid of no position and was born in 1838 near Hamadan. After being educated Najaf, he resided for some years in Afghanistan and adopted the title of "The Afghan." He traveled and taught in India, in Egypt, and elsewhere, at one time settled in Constantinople. There he pretended to be a Sunni and gained fame as an eloquent and learned doctor of law. He was, however, accused of infidelity by the Shaykh-ul-Islam, the leading religious official in Turkey, and was obliged to leave the city.

His connection with Nasiru'd Din Shah was brought about through the deep impression made upon the Shah by certain articles which he wrote for an Arabic newspaper whose title may be translated "The Indissoluble Link." He was summoned to Iran
and made a member of the Royal Council, and his opinion carried great weight with the sovereign. This state of affairs naturally aroused the jealousy shed the paper *Kanun*, or "Law" referred to above. In it he recommended a fixed code of Laws and the assembly of a parliament. He denounced his enemy Amin-u-Sultan in violent terms; and the Minister, in retaliation, published any one who took in the obnoxious paper. The influence of Amin-u-Sultan, who induced the Ottoman Ambassador, press for his deportation. Knowing that the word "law" was obnoxious to the Shah, he stated that the *Sayyid* had caused disturbances by advocating the adoption of fixed laws, and had been expelled from India, Egypt, and Turkey. He gave it as his opinion that it would be dangerous to retain in Persia a man with such revolutionary ideas. The Shah agreed, and Jamal-u-Din was instructed to quit the country and travel.

He again met Nasiru'd Din Shah in Europe during that monarch's third journey; and the Shah, thinking him more dangerous abroad than in Iran, brought him back as an honoured guest. Jamal-u-Din took advantage of his return to preach his revolutionary ideas, and they made such progress the rising appeared imminent. The Shah wished to seize him, but he escape and took sanctuary at Shah Abdul Azim, a shrine close to Tehran. There he remained for seven months, fulminating against the Shah and advocating his deposition. Among his followers was Mirza Riza of Nuk, who afterwards assassinated Nasiru'd Din Shah. Jamal-u-Din was at length arrested in his house, which
adjoined the sanctuary, and was again expelled from Iran, in 1890. The Shah certainly appears to have treated with leniency a subject who was guilty of high treason. Handed over to the Turkish authorities, the Sayyid was taken to Basra, where he was kept under observation. He managed, however, to escape by steamer and joined Malkam Khan in London, where they edited the newspaper Kanun. Not long afterwards the Sultan, alarmed at the influence gained by this journal, thought it desirable to invite Jamal-u-Din to revisit Constantinople, where he was treated as an honored guest but was not free to leave.

On the assassination of Nasiru’d Din Shah, the extradition of the Sayyid was demanded together with that of three other revolutionaries. The sultan surrendered the three latter men, and they were executed, but he refused to hand over Jamal-u-Din who shortly afterwards died. Thus passed off the stage a man possessed of considerable capacity and much personal magnetism. Though unfettered by scruples, he was honest in his devotion to his Pan-Islamic and revolutionary ideas.

The greatest achievement of Jamaluddin Afghani’s political campaign in Iran was to gain the sympathy of the clergy. It is a proof of the tactical sagacity and shrewdness of this man that he realized the importance of this element for the success of this cause. The record of the clergy in Iran through not always very creditable shows nevertheless that they have stood from time to time in defense of national and humanitarian interests. Thus in despotic Persia they were considered by the ordinary people as the
“principle shield” between them and the absolute authority of the Shah. In 1804 and 1825 they expressed their support for the national cause by giving Religious sanction to the fight against Russia.\(^{18}\) No doubt during the reign of Nasiru’d Din Shah there was some decline in their power due to the “gradual reassertion of the civil authority”.\(^{19}\) Nevertheless they continued to retain their influence over the people as was clearly demonstrated by their leadership in the movement against the Tobacco Concession.\(^{20}\)

\(\text{(B) AYN-U-DOLA :—}\)

In 1903, upon the dismissal for the second time of Asghar Ali, Atabeg-i-Azam, by Muzaffaru’d Din Shah, a council of five Ministers was constituted to carry on the Government; but very soon afterwards Ayn-u-Dola, a prince of the ‘blood and son-in-law of the Shah, was appointed Minister of the Interior and assumed control of affairs. In the following year he was given the title of \textit{Sadr-i-Azam}, and he continued in this office until August 1906. Thus Ayn-u-Dola was the Minister under whose rule the constitutional conflict was brought about mainly by his reactionary stubborn character, His Highness calls for special notice.

As a youth he was educated in Tehran at the \textit{Darul Fanun} College. There the professors apparently found him intractable; for they presented a petition to the Shah in which they stated that they had tried flogging, starvation and other punishment, all in vain, and requested His Majesty to remove the unpromising pupil. The Shah consented and sent the young prince to Tabriz, to serve
Muzaffaru'd Din Shah. He grew up with his new master, became his Master of the Horse, and was honoured by the hand of his daughter in marriage.

(C) PRINCE MALKAM KHAN :-

Among the protagonists who attacked the old order was Malkam Khan, whose career was extraordinarily varied. He was the son of a certain Mirza Yakub Khan, an American who became a convert to Islam. Educated by an Armenian Society at Paris, he first appeared at Tehran as a conjurer, whose feats of legerdemain excited wonder among the simple Persians. As would have been the case in mediaeval Europe, his skill offended religious feeling and the Shah who was displeased with him on another account, ordered him to leave Iran. Some years after in the sixties reappeared at Tehran and founded a Masonic Lodge. The Faramush Khanba, or House of Forgetfulness, as it is termed attracted the Persians strongly by its combination of novelty and mystery and many members of the best families became initiated. Nasiru'd Din Shah at first looked on this new departure as a passing fashion but Ferrukh Khan, the successful negotiator of the Treaty of Paris frightened His Majesty by saying that if he allowed his subjects to became initiated they might conspire against him. Moved by this argument the Shah imprisoned the Master of the Lodge a prince of the blood and other initiates, and Malkam Khan was again ordered to leave Iran. Nothing daunted he secured the support of Mirza Husayn Khan at that time Persian
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hypocrisy of rulers, European interference etc. through his paper *Kanun* and other publications he exercised great influence on the intellectuals and those who supported the movement for Constitutional reform.  

The idea of religion also did not remain entirely unaffected by liberal ideas. In the forties a movement appeared in the form of *Babism* founded by Sayyid Ali Muhammad, who styled himself as the *Bab* or Gate "whereby men might win to the sacred mysteries and spiritual truths of which he had become the recipient. The creed soon attracted to its fold a large number of followers so that it began to be regarded as a potential threat to the established authority, and the chief religious divines in Iran issued a decree making it a capital offence for anyone to profess the Babi doctrine." Contemporary European writers imputed the wild estates won their great victories; and, as many Persians consider that the beliefs, such as those of communication and socialism, top the view heresy, while one historian went so far as to compare the more as of the Bab with those of Hasan-i- Sabbah, founder of the Assassins. In fact, however, Babism, apart from its doctrinal aspect, represented a revolt against religious fanaticism and tyranny, on account of which it became an object of hatred for the orthodox opinion. Western influences, seems to have also entered certain Babi practices, like the one enjoying greater freedom of activity to women. The followers of the movement were subjected to fierce persecution, which threw up some exceptional instances of individual courage and personal heroism. Finally in 1850, the
Bab himself was executed after which the headquarters of Baism were transferred abroad. The subsequent evolution of the Babi movement resulted in the emergence of Bahasim, known after the name of its leader Bahauullah. This sect must have continued to flourish in some force so that, at the beginning of this century, the strength of the followers was estimated at twenty percent of the total population. Attempts were made, even in our times, to suppress the religion the later was in 1955 which culminated in the killing and dispersal of the Bahis and the closing down of their places of worship. Towards the latter part of the nineteenth century the race for concession-hunting led by the English and Russian, began in Persia. In 1872, a naturalized British citizen, Baron Julius de Reuter, acquired from the Shah a monopoly for seven years of exploitation of mines, the control of government forests, the construction of railroad, tramways and irrigation networks, all the minerals except gold silver and precious stones, irrigation, road, factory and telegraph enterprises, and the establishment of a nation bank. In return the Shah pledged the entire customs of his empire for a period of twenty five years. The concession represented "the most complete and extraordinary surrender of the entire industrial resources of a kingdom into foreign hands". Eventually it was annulled not so much because of Persian sentiment, but at the pressure of Russian, who regarded the scheme as British-inspired. Finally this concession was cancelled and permission instead given for the foundation of a Persian state bank with British capital, which was to have the
exclusive right to issue banknotes; and accordingly in September 1889 the Imperial Bank of Persia began business. In the same year Dolgoruki obtained for Russia the first option of a railway concession for five years. In November of the following year the railway agreement with Russia was changed into one interdicting all railway whatsoever in Persia. In 1889 after negotiations for foreign loans Belgian officials were put in charge of the customs administration. By the turn of the century there had been a pronounced sharpening of Anglo-Russian hostility as a consequence of whole series of Russian actions not only in northern Persia where Russian ascendancy to a large extent had to be admitted, but as well in southern and eastern Persia which had hitherto been predominantly British preserves.

In the following year the Shah granted to one major Talbot, for a period of fifty years, the monopoly of buying, selling and manufacturing of all tobacco inside and outside Iran. As the term implies the concession, is fully executed, was bound to affect the Position of tobacco cultivators, sellers, and consumer's alike; and consequently public indignation against it was inevitable. After an agitation led by the clergy especially, the Shah was forced to rescind the concession and compensate to the value of half a borrowed from the Imperial Bank of Persia, and may be said to mark the beginning of Persian national debt.

There was a vague realization that the economic impoverishment of Iran, accompanied by the self-indulgence of her ruler and the avarice of Britain and Russia, was pushing the
country to the brink of ruin. In 1896, Nasiru'd Din Shah was assassinated by a fanatic who later turned out to be a disciple of Sayyid Jamal ul Din Affghani. The sign of the coming storm were becoming visible.

The rule of Muzaffaru'd Din Shah, who succeeded to the throne in 1896, was characterized by decay in administration and the gradual weakening of state authority. It also denoted the increasing preponderance of Russian influence in the affairs of Persia. The Shah contracted two huge Russian loans, which were frittered away after another were lavished upon the Russians and all customs receipts, with the exception of those of Fars and the Persian Gulf, were pledged to them.

In 1900 a Russian loan was given, to be followed by another in 1902 secured on the customs (excluding those of Fars and the gulf). Subsequently various short term advances and subsidies from the Russian treasury including advances to the heir apparent, Muhammad Ali, were made so that by 1906 some 87.5 millions were owing to the Russians. Under the 1891 Russo-Persian tariff treaty, trade between the two countries had increased, and when under the 1901 Russo-Persian commercial treaty a new customs tariff was announced in 1903, Russian expert to Persian were considerably aided and up to 1914 Russian commerce with Iran continued to grow.

The grant of these various concessions to foreigners and the raising of foreign loans gave rise to growing anxiety on the part of the Persian public. Further, large numbers of Persians had fled
the country and were living in exile. When a tobacco monopoly was granted to a British subject in 1890, various element of the population including the intellectuals and the religious classes, combined to oppose it. Strikes and riots threatened and the monopoly was rescinded. No effective steps, however, were taken to allay popular discontent. In 1901 protests were made against the loan and mortgages from Russia which were being contracted to pay for Muzaffaru'd Din Shah’s journeys to Europe. By 1905-6 the demand for reform had grown in strength and finally on August 5th, 1906, after 12000 persons had taken sanctuary in the British legation, a constitution was granted. A long struggle then began between the constitutionalists and the Shah. The Cossack Brigade, formed during the reign of Nasiru’d Din Shah, which was under Russian officers and was the most effective military force in the country, played a major part in this struggle and was used by Muhammad Ali Shah to suppress the National Assembly in 1908. Civil war ensured and Muhammad Ali Shah’s abdication was forced in 1909.

But Russia also after her defeated by the Japanese in 1904 was facing a crisis. The revolution which followed in the wake of the Russo-Japanese was greatly influenced the talent national movement in Persia. Britain encouraged this movement, more out of self-interest, since she hoped to profit by the establishment of a parliamentary regime in countering the influence of Russia, who was supporting the Shah. Agitation at last broke out openly, and in 1906 Persia comes to possess parliamentary institutions.
One of the most interesting features of the whole movement was the leading participation of the clergy in the incidents of the preceding years. Since the agitation against the tobacco monopoly till the granting of the Constitution they had been in the forefront of the struggle. It may seem surprising how a conservative and reactionary group like the Persian clergy, who were opposed to the very concept of reform, could identify themselves with a movement which was inherently progressive in character. Paradoxically enough, it was the sentiment against the West and the thing it stood for that brought about this alignment and made the clergy support a cause which by its very logic could not but ultimately intensify Western influences. May be they were also apprehensive of losing some of their traditional privileges if the old order were to continue. During the reign of Nasiru’d Din Shah, effort made towards, “the gradual reassertion of civil authority” had led to some decline in the power of the clergy and later it was intended, under his successor to introduce certain reforms in the judicial procedure which if implemented, would have affected their vested interests. In any case, under the new conditions, not only did the clergy succeed in retaining all the rights they previously enjoyed but also consolidated them. Their position was ensured when, at their insistence, a clause was inserted in the supplementary Fundamental Laws of 1907 envisaging the establishment of an ecclesiastical; committee to “carefully discuss and consider all matters proposed in the Assembly, and reject and repudiate wholly or in part, any such proposal which is at variance with the
sacred Laws of Islam, so that it shall not obtain the little of legality." Thus a blow was dealt to secularism even before democracy could get a real chance to function in Persia.

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