CHAPTER-III
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"Malik'ush Sh'uara Bahar or Muhammad Taqi Bahar holds a very eminent place in the contemporary poetry. He is considered to be one of the greatest poets of early 20th century Iran. He was also a famous politician, journalist, historian and a professor of literature. He was born in 1886 December A.D./1304 A.H., in Sarshoor district of Mashhad,"¹ the capital city of Khurasan. (a northern provinces of present day Iran). His family was known as Saburi. Bahar's father Muhammad Kasim Malikus Shura Saburi used this name as his poetic title which was used for the first time by Ahmed Sabur. By the course of time, the family of Bahar's father became famous by this title.

Sabur was an inhabitant of Kashan. He was a famous poet and his fame rest on qasida writing. Abbas Mirza, son of Fateh Ali Shah Qajar admired him much. His father Muhammad Kashim left Khurasan for Kashan. Bahar's father was also born in the same place. But they never forgot Kashan and Sabur. Mirza Ahmed Sabur

was martyred in the battle between Iran and Russia in 1668 A.H.,
during the time of Fateh Ali Shah Qajar. According to the book
"Myrattaal Kasan" he had a son named Muhammad. Muhammad
had two sons, one was Ahmed and other was Jainul Abedin Hakim
basi, who was a student of Dr. Nasiruddin Shah. Ahmed had a son
named Bakar and Jainul Abedin had a son too, named Hussainkali.

But Bahar wrote in his autobiography about his family that
his father's name was Muhammad Kasim, better known as Saburi,
was born in 1255 A.H., that means after 27 years of his death. His
father Muhammad Bakar and Muhammad Bakar's father Abdul
Kadir was from Kashan.

Bahar went to school when he was four years old. His teacher
was his aunt who was also inhabitant of his own village. There was
a girl named Sagiri of his age and she was his classmate. He read
holy Quran near his aunt. He went to male school at the age of six
years. He studied Persian and holy Quran there. He also read the
Shahnama with his father. During holiday, his father tried to
understand him the stories of Shahnama. This book helped him
enough in order to know about Persian language, rhetoric and
ancient history of Persia. After few years of reading the Shahnama,
he was able to compose poems in imitation of the poetry of
Shahnama.
Bahar began his primary education when he was three years old. His mentor was his father, Muhammad Kazem Saburi. He was a poet laureate or the official court poet of Mozzaifar-ud- Din Shah (the fifth Shah of Qajar dynasty, reigned 1896- 1907), and he was titled as king of poets (in Persian: Malikush Shu’ara).

In addition to that private Schooling Bahar also attended one of the traditional School (in Persian: Maktab Khaaneh) in Mashhad. It has been documented that Bahar could recite by heart a very good portion of the Koran at a very young age. To complete his knowledge of Persia and Arabic, he also attended the classes of the literary skilled persons such as Adib Nishabouri and Ali Darehgazi for years.

Bahar composed his first poem at the age of eight, and chose the name of Bahar as his penname (in Persian Takhallos) In fact, Bahar chose that pen-name after the name of Bahar Shirvani, a poet and close friend of his father, after Shirvani died. Shirnani was also a poet who was very famous during Nasir-ud-Din Shah, the fourth Shah of Qajar dynasty (reigned 1848-1896). Bahar used to say that he got expertise in composing poetry because he read the Shahnama and the book namely Sad Kalmeh. At first he wrote according to the style of the Shahnama. After reading his poem his father gave him ten rupees.
Thereafter, when Nauroj took place in the 5th month of Sawal, he said:-

His father admired him and gave him prize. He learned about literature from his father. At the age of fourteen, Bahar could fluently speak Arabic, and later he was able to learn how to speak and write French under the able guidance of Adib Nisaburi, a renowned literary figure and poet of Mashad. Bahar also learnt Arabic and Persian language from his father. Actually his study life began after the death of his father at the age of eighteen.

His father wanted him to go abroad and learn foreign languages and equipped himself with the most modern development of the literature and culture of the foreign countries.

After the death of his father, Bahar came to Tehran. But he was sent abroad by the senior administrators to acquire modern
education. But there were two major problems appeared before him. One was that after his father demise his mother, brothers and sister remained alone. Moreover, their early education was still not completed. Secondly, the Iranian National Movement took place after two years of his father's death.

At the age of eighteen, he lost his father and started to work as a Muslim preacher and clergy. At the same time he composed a long ode (in Persian Qasida), and sent it to Mozzaffar-ud-Din Shah Qajar. He was very impressed by that poem and sent Malikush Shuwara of that time to his home with hundred tuman and wanted to give him the title of Malikush Shuwara. But he had to face many troubles in order to gain that title.

Many poets and scholars did not believe that Bahar could compose such type of high quality poems. They used to say that he recited his father's poetry. On the other hand some are of the opinion that Bahar composed these poems which were recited by his father at the last part of his life. Then he was examined in the presence of commanders of Khurasan and in the literary meetings. But he overcame all these examinations and proved that he composed all these poems himself. But they again used to say that there was a man behind him who composed these poems for him.
In the mean time, spread word in Mashad that Mozaffaruddin Shah will come to Khurasan. Bahar was confirmed for his title Malikush Shuwara after Sabur and he was also known to Shah. He composed a qasida through which he requested Shah as follows:

ربیم موفقیت خویش روایران
ایا خراسان دیگر چه خواهی از یزدان

Bahar reproached those people who did not recognize him and addressing them he says:

توضیک مبنایی زبانی زبانی دیگر
چرا بای خرده بهنه‌هم این به‌مان

At last main improvisation came and he was asked to compose rubai in front of the contraries. He was asked to compose a rubai on four subjects like praise, light, salt and plane tree. He composed a poem on the spot and recited before them:

به خرده‌الی آن سان چکام به سراهم
که سفال‌خورده سخندان سرونشندان نتوان
They gave him another four topics like dare, grapes, banner and stone. He composed as follows:

 bravery was noble, brave, brave, brave,

 I love your story, what you did, what you did,

 He was given another four topics like flower, cigarette, tulip flower and whey. He composed as follows:

 to help the one who is wandering there,

 Then a young boy wrote four topics in a small paper and forwarded to Bahar and asked him to compose a rubai so that he
could rely on him. He composed a rubai:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{چون آینه نور خیز گشتی، احسنت} \\
\text{چون آره به خلق تیز گشتی، احسنت} \\
\text{در کف ش ادبیاتان جهان کردن پای} \\
\text{غوره نشده مویز گشتی، احسنت}
\end{align*}
\]

Bahar had to face many difficulties just one year after of his father’s demise.

Bahar as his new poet laureate and gave him the title of new king of poets (Malikus-Shu’ara) upon a royal order. Bahar succeeded his father, Saburi, as court poet of the reigning monarch, Mozaffaral Din Shah (reigned 1896-1907). Gradually, however Bahar broke away from the court and became a sympathizer with the revolution.

In A.H. 1328 (A.D. 1910-11) the Democratic Party of Persia came into being under the leadership of Haydar Khan ‘Amu-Oghli one of the pioneers of the Nationalist movement and Bahar was elected to its provincial committee. The same year he started Naw Bahar which voiced the policy of the new party. “This paper”, in the words of Browne, “had a special importance on account of its extreme boldness and fiery denunciations, especially against the Russian aggressions.”

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Eventually this paper was stopped as a result of the pressure brought upon the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the Russian Legation in Tehran, but it reappeared the next year under the title of Taza Bahar. In A.H. 1330 (A.D. 1912) this in its turn, was suspended by the Government and Bahar was expelled to Tehran. The poet, however, returned to Mashhad the following year and revived the New Bahar, but once again the paper suffered the same fate.

In A.H. 1332 (A.D. 1913-14) Bahar was elected to the third Majlis and he moved to Tehran. In A.H. 1335 (A.D. 1916-7) Bahar founded a literary association called Danish-Kada and started a journal under the same title which published the proceedings of the association. In this journal, Bahar expressed his conservative literary tastes, upholding the classical style against that of the avant grade poets. About the same time the Naw Bahar also resumed publication but towards the beginning of 1918 it was again banned because of its opposition to the Government.

In A.H. 1338 (A.D. 1919-20) Bahar was put in charge of the semi-official Iran. Following the Coup d’Etat of February, 1921. He was imprisoned and his period of confinement lasting for three months. Subsequently, in A.H. 1341 (A.D. 1922), he began to publish the Naw Bahar as a weekly magazine. He was elected successively
to the fourth, fifth and sixth Majlish after which he temporarily retired from public life and devoted himself to his literary work.³

At the onset of the Constitutional Revolution of Iran (1905-1911), Bahar resigned as the poet laureate to join the movement for the establishment of a parliamentary system in the country. Bahar became an active member of the Mashhad’s branch of the society for prosperity (in Persian Anomane-Sa’adat), Which was promoting the establishment of parliament in Iran. He published his Journal of Khorasan (with collaboration with Hussein Ardebili), New spring (in Persian: Nobahar) and Fresh spiring (in Persian: Taazeh Bahar) respectively first in Mashhad and later in Tehra.

In his journals, he wrote many articles which played very significant roles to encourage the nation to stand up for the establishment of a parliament and for the new institutions, new forms of expression, and a new social and political order. After the triumph of the Constitutional Revolution, Bahar was repeatedly elected as a member of the parliament which was named as the National Consultative Assembly of Iran (in Persian: Majless-e-Shoraay-e-Melli-e-Iran.)

3. Rashid-i-Yasami, Adabiyat-i-Muasir. P-30
In 1918, when Ahmad Shah Qajar, the seventh and the last ruler of Qajar dynasty, was in power, Bahar renewed himself. He abandoned the activities as a clergy; he became completely a new man. At the same time, Bahar with the collaboration of writer and poet Saeed Nafisi, poet and historian Gholam, Reza Rashd Ysaemi, and historian Abbas Eghbal Ashtiaani founded the Daneshkadeh Literary society (in Persian: Anjuman-e-adabi-e-Daneshkadeh). Daneshkadeh Magazine (in Persian: Majaleh-e Daneshkadeh) was the monthly publication of that society, in which besides prose and verses, very informative and useful articles like “Literary Revolution”, “How other Nations view us” and “The Literary History of Iran”, were also published. In fact, that magazine was Bahar’s actual mean of publishing the result of his literary research and introducing Western literature to Iranians. The magazine also played a key role in strengthening and developing the contemporary style of the Persian Literature.

During Reza Shah Pahlavi (reigned 1925-41) and after the establishment of Tehran University (1934), Bahar was appointed as a professor and started to teach Persian Literature at the Faculty of Literature in Tehran University. At the same Period, he dedicated most of his times to edit and write various books on Persian
During Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (1941-79) and in 1945, Bahar was asked by the then prime Minister, Ahmed Ghavan (also known as Ghavan-o-Saitaneh), to serve as the Minister of Culture and Education in his Cabinet, which he agreed to but served only for a very short time. Earlier in the same year he and Ahmed Ghavan had created Tehran Democratic Party (hezb-e-Democratat-e-Iran).

In the last year of his life, Bahar sadly suffered from the communicable disease of Tuberculosis and left Iran to seek medical treatment in Lausanne, a city in the French speaking part of Switzerland, situated on the shores of Lake Geneva. Bahar stayed in Lausanne for only a few months and returned home soon after. It was not much longer after his return to Tehran that his health status turned from bad to worse. He died shortly after on April 21, 1951 at his home in Tehran. His tomb is in Zabur-o-dowleh cemetery in Darband, located in shemiran, north of Tehran.

He also wrote a novel, essays, a literary style and grammar and treatises on the works of great Persian poets and historians. "His Diwan was published in 1936 A.D."4 In the course of his tenure

as professor, he dedicated most of his time in writing and editing many great pieces of literary and historical works on Persian literature and history of Iran. Notable amongst numerous works written and edited by Bahar are:--

(a) Tarikh-e-Sistan (History of Sistan).

(b) Sabk Shinasi (Methodology, Which concerns the variety of styles and traditions of the Persian Prose).

(c) Char Khitaba in 1305A.H. solar.

(d) Tarikh-e-Mokhtasar-e-Ahzab-e-Siassi Iran in A.H. 1323 solar (A Concise History of the Political Parties of Iran)

(e) Mojmalal ol-Tavarikh o vol Qesas (concise Histories and tales).

(f) Javame’ ol-Hekayat (Anthology of stories).

(g) Two volumes of verse, consisting of his own poems.