CHAPTER-VI

SONS, DISCIPLES AND EMINENT CONTEMPORARIES OF SHAH WALIYULLAH MUHADDITH DEHLAWI
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Sons, Disciples and Eminent Contemporaries of Shah Waliyullah Muhaddith Dehlawi:

6.1: Worthy sons and Successors:

Shah Sahib left four deserving sons behind him Shah `Abdu-al-`Aziz (Rah.), Shah Rafi`u-al-Din (Rah.), Shah `Abdu-al-Qadir (Rah.) and Shah `Abdu-al-Ghani (Rah.). Each one of them is the firmament knowledge`s & excellences and luminous Moon.

Disciple`s compass of Shah Sahib is very specious, Hundreds of students came from all directions of reigns and Profited from him. Many gentlemen came from Haramain Sharifain to learn arts and Sciences from him. It is difficult to find out the Catalogue of his studentship. But some among from his eminent Disciple besides his deserving sons are come as Shah Nurullah, Maulana Jamaluddin, Shah Amir Kashmiri and Shah Abu Sayyid. If it is said that all the scholars of present day India are his spiritual Disciple it shall not be improper in any way. In most of the Madrasas of Indo- Pakistan sub-continent the tradition of leaving certificate on the virtuous Tradition of holy prophet was done by him.
6.2(a): Shah ‘Abdu-al-‘Aziz (Rah.):

Shah ‘Abdu-al-‘Aziz (Rah.) also known as Gholamun Halim (Malfuzat-i-‘Azizi, p. 97) was one of the most erudite scholars of his time hailed by some of his contemporaries as the Siraju-al-Hind (Light of India) and Hujjatu Allah (Evidence of God). He was born on 25th Ramadan, 1159 A.H/11th October, 1746 A.D. as indicated by Ghulam Halim, the name given to him indicating the year of his birth. Shah ‘abdul ‘Aziz, after memorizing the Bountiful Qur’an, earned systematic education under the guidance of his father which helped him to attain proficiency in different branches of learning. By the time Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz was sixteen years of age, Shah Waliyullah (Rah.) departure, but he continued his studies under Sheikh Nurullah Budhanawi (Rah.), Sheikh Muhammad Amin Kashmiri (Rah.), Maulana Khawajah Aminullh and Shah Muhammad ‘Ashiq bin ‘Ubaidullah Phulti (Rah.), the last mentioned being one of the favourite disciples of the late Waliyullah (Rah.). Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz has given an account of the teachers including his father under those whom he studied different subjects. As related by him he was taught Muwatta along with Musawwa and Mishkatu-al-Masabih by his father. Husnu-al-Husn and Shima’eel-i-Tirmizi were also studied under his father and brother Sheikh Muhammad. The initial part of Sahihu-al-Bukhari upto Kitabu-al-Haj was taught to him by Sayyed Ghulam Husain Makki (Rah.), Jam’ee Tirmizi and Sunan-i-Abu Daud by Zahrullah Muradabadi (Rah.), part of Sahih Muslim and
Sunan-i-Ibn Majah by Muhammad Jawwad Phulti (Rah.), certain parts of Maqasid-i-Jami‘u-al-Usul and Musalsalat by Maulawi Jarullah (Rah.) and the remaining parts of the Sihhah Sittah by Sheikh Nurullah (Rah.) and Khawajah Amin, both were the disciples of his father. He was awarded the certificate of competence by his cousin and spiritual descendants of his father Shah Muhammad ‘Ashiq bin ‘Ubaidullah Phulti (Rah.) and Khawajah Muhammad Amin Kashmiri (Rah.). Both these persons had been the disciples of his father and were authorized to teach Hadith as mentioned in the Tafhimatu-al-Ilahiyyah and Shifa‘u-al-Ahl. Sheikh Muhammad‘Ashiq had also accompanied Shah Waliyullah Muhaddith Dehlawi (Rah.) when the later had studied Hadith under Sheikh Abu Tahir Kurdi Madani (Rah.). The authorization certificates issued to him have been cited in Al Irshadu fi Muhimmatu-al-Asnad.

Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.) was tall of delicate built and Whitish colour, wide-eyed and had a compact beard. He wrote the Naskh₁ and Riqa”² and was proficient in archery, horse riding and music. He taught his own brothers Shah ‘Abdul Qadir (Rah.), Shah Rafi‘uddin (Rah.) and Shah ‘Abdul Ghani (Rah.) as well as his son in law Maulana ‘Abdul Hai (Rah.). His other distinguished disciples were Mufti Ilahi Bakhsh Kandhalwi (Rah.), Sayyed Qamruddin Sonipati (Rah.), Shah Ghulam ‘Ali Mujaddidi (Rah.) and Maulana Sayyed Qutbu-al-Huda of Rae Bareli (Rah.).
A number of his other disciples were initially taught by his brothers and awarded authorization certificate by him. Shah Muhammad Ishaq b. Afzal ‘Umri (Rah.), the grand-son, used to recite a portion of the Generous Qur’an every day which was elucidated by Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.). He had actually kept up the practice of his father who used to deliver lectures on Qur’anic exegesis in his manner. The Shah had completed the exegesis of the Merciful Qur’an up to the eighth verse of the *Suratu-al-Ma`eedah* before his death. Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.) carried it forward to the thirteenth verses of *Al Hujurat*, when it was picked up by his daughter’s son Shah Muhammad Ishaq (Rah.) as mentioned in the *Maqalat-i-Tariqat*. He was endowed with a unique retentive memory and being precocious, began teaching others at the age of fifteen. There was always a rush of students who wished to study under him and on occasions even distinguished scholars attended his lectures.

Shah ‘Abdu-al-‘Aziz (Rah.) was afflicted at the age of twenty five by different chronic diseases those who developed into such ailments as hypochondria, leprosy and partial blindness. Some of his companions have enumerated fourteen troublesome diseases that distressed the Shah with bodily and mental sufferings. He formally entrusted the liability of teaching the students of his brothers Shah Rafi`uddin (Rah.) and Shah ‘Abdul Qadir (Rah.), but Continued to deliver lectures, writing and giving juristic opinion. He used to deliver sermon on
exegesis of the Bountiful Qur’an every Tuesday. As his age advanced he was unable to stroll between the old and new seminary and also continue lecturing to those attending him. Between the ‘Asar and Maghrib prayers, he went from his Madrasah to the Jami’ Mosque sustained by two persons. Those who wanted clarification on any issue waited for him on the road.

His disease had resulted in loss of appetite and he often used to go without any type of food for several days. Sometimes he had a continued spell of fever. In his introduction to the Manaqib-i-Haidariyah he relates:

I regret the deficiency in this introduction which was due to my ailments which have resulted into loss of appetite which persists like long spells of fever. This is perhaps owing to gastric derangements; there is constant depression weakness, toothache with pain in bones all over the body.

In one of his letters to Amir Haider bin Nurul Husnain Bilgrami he says:

You want to know the condition of your friend; know that it is worse, deteriorating day by day. There are different diseases, external as well as internal, which have made him extremely nervous and restless. Each one of these ailments such as piles, gastric complete loss of appetite continuing for days together and movement of gasses causing
suffocation when moving to the region of heart and splitting or unbearable headache in the case of their movement higher towards the head are enough to make one completely restless; to the Lord I complain and seek the remedy. It has become difficult even to speak let alone to dictate any tract or message.

Despite all these troubles, the Shah remained affable, gracious and polite to his visitors and retained a ready wit. His gatherings were enlivened with strange disclosures, enlightening verses and the news about distant lands and people which were so graphically described by him that one thought that the Shah had been witnessed to them. Although the Shah had never been to any city other than Calcutta, he had such a curious mind that he used to obtain all the details about other places that could be learnt from books and the people coming to Delhi from outstations.

People from different walks of life used to call upon the Shah poets and writers wanted to have his advice on their creations, the poor came to get his recommendations for assistance from the grandees and nobles, some had medicines prescribed by him while others were guided by him on the path of spirit for attaining spiritual perfection. Scholars and spiritual mentors coming from outside Delhi were normally his guests and stayed with him until the task they had come for had been accomplished. If anyone having differences with the Shah on
religious matters came to see him, he explained away the different views in such a manner that the visitor departed convinced that there was actually no difference of opinion between them.

Sheikh Muhsin bin yahya Turbati says in the *Al Yaniˈu-al-Jani*:

He occupied such of distinction and fames that people all over India deemed it a privilege to be taught by him or even his disciples. None could be compared to him in any branch of learning. It was through his ready wit that he silenced his adversaries by clever and amusing remarks. His gift of the gab, cogent arguments and excellent mode of expression had gained for him a place of eminence among his contemporary scholars.

The Shah had also been endowed with an exceptional insight and sagacity which had helped him to make an excellent Interpreter of dreams. His Interpretations were always so correct that it appear as if he had already witnessed the coming incident. This is undoubtedly a distinction enjoyed only by those who are perfect in spirit. He enjoyed many more peculiar Characteristics which, in brief can be describe as special favour from God bestowed upon him. The following lines, by an ‘Arab poet, if applied to him it would appear to be originally correct, without the least exaggeration!
Characteristics unnumbered I have never seen-!

That has rated this man as a thousand of them-!!

It is virtually difficult to enumerate his distinguishing traits and Characteristics. All of his works are generally cherished by the scholars because of their cogency and fluency and powerful diction capable of capturing the minds and hearts. Whenever he came across any weak argument and objectionable opinion, he refuted it in harmless manner. In theological matters, refutation of Shi’ism was his favourite subject. He has discussed the Shi’ite creed from an intellectual plane with such a force and conviction that the objections raised by him have yet to be controverted.

His works were as under:

A commentary on the Qur’an entitled *Fathu-al-‘Aziz* was dictated by him during the period of his serious illness. It was a voluminous work consisting of several parts but a greater part of it was lost during the disorder following the revolt of 1857, and one part of the beginning and two of the last portion are extant now. Another copious work was his *Al Fatawah fil Msa’il-i-Mushkilat* ³, but now only its summary in two volumes is available. *Tuhfa Ithna ‘Ashariyah* ⁴, is his work of exceptional merit. Among the other works of Shah deserving a mention here is the *Bustanu-al-Muhaddithin*, a biography of the works on Hadith with
biographical note on the transmitters and scholars of Hadith but it remained complete. On the principles of Hadith criticism, he wrote *Al Ujallatu-al-Nafiyah* in Persian language for the students of Hadith. On Rhetoric’s and Theological dialectics his two excellent works are *Mizanu-al-Balaghah* and *Mizanu-al-Kalam* respectively. In one of his works entitled *Al Sirru-al-Jalilu fi Mas’alat-i-al-Tafzil* he has delineated the comparative distinctions of the first four Caliphs while in the *Sirru-al-Shahadatain* he has recounted the martyrdom of Imam Hasan (Rad.) and Husain (Rad.). He also wrote a tract on genealogy, the *Ta’biru-al-Ruyat* is on interpretation of dreams and several other brochures. In the field of Logic and Philosophy, he wrote a number of commentaries on various books as the *Mir Zahid Risalah Mir Zahid Mullah Jalal Mir Zahid Sharh-i-Muwaqif* and *Hashiyah Malaku Saj* of which the last mentioned are known as ‘Aziziyyah. He also wrote commentaries on *Sharh-i-Hidayahtu-al-Hikmah* of Sadr Shiraji and on the Arjuza-i-Ismi. He also wrote a number of letters to the scholars and litterateurs of his time, and some lyrical glosses on certain odes of his father. Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz was a talented scholar with a complete command over the pen: his works in prose are forceful and eloquent while his poetical compositions bear witness to his spontaneity and melody.
Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz died at the age of eighty years on the morning of 7th Shawwal, 1239 A.H/5th June, 1824 A.D. He was buried outside Delhi near the grave of his father.  

6.2(b): Propagation of the Shaha’s Mission:

The renovatory endeavours of Shah ‘Abdu-al-‘Aziz (Rah.) can be divided into five categories as follows:

1. Popularization of the message of the Bountiful Qur’an through its exegesis in order to reform the popular creed of the masses by creating a direct link between them and the scripture.

2. Promoting the study of Hadith by making arrangement and for its teaching and preparing teachers for its further mission.

3. Controversing the heterodoxical Si‘ite creed by exposing the conspiracies designed to undermine the reverence in which the companions of the Generous Prophet (Sm.) and the Merciful Qur’an were held by the Muslims.

4. Revival of the Jihad or fighting for the sake of God in order to prepare the Muslims to face the danger to Muslim political power in India and to safeguard their freedom.

5. Grooming a group of persons who could carry on his reformatory work in future.
6.2(c): Popularization of the Qur’anic teachings:

Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.) was vastly successful in exposing the Qur’anic teachings among the masses and reforming their unsound creed and customs, a great mission of his father Shah Waliyullah Muhaddith Dehlawi (Rah.). His august father had departed before he completed the exegesis of the eighth verse of the fifth chapter i.e. *Suratu-al-Ma`idah* of the Generous Qur’an. Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.) took over the exegesis where his father had left and continued it in his lectures until he died while explaining the meanings of the thirteenth verses of Chapter *Suratu-al-Hujrat*. The exegesis was carried a dead by Shah Muhammad Ishaq (Rah.) the grandson of Shah Sahib, who had been educated under the care of the Shah.

Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.) used to deliver lectures on the Generous Qur’an on Sundays, Tuesdays and fry days which were attended by all the scholars as well as the non-professional men with great enthusiasm. An eloquent speaker as he was, he seemed to be at his best while delivering lectures on the Generous Qur’an. His charming sermons created an eagerness among the people of Delhi, the metropolis of India, to know more about the Merciful Qur’an which in turn gave birth to a movement for reforming the popular creed of the masses. His lectures also interested the Scholars to translate the scripture into local language and write commentaries on it, a trend which continues to this day. Millions of people were
thus to reform themselves by going back to the Qur’an for guidance and enlightenment. In the then madrasa system of education in India, exegesis of the Generous Qur’an did not occupy any place of importance from Jalalain and Baidawi only was included. The exegesis of the entire Qur’an was then not a part of the syllabus). The Shah’s endeavours in this regard resulted in restoring the subject its due place in the Curriculum, more extensive and deeper studies of the Bountiful Qur’an were undertaken and, above all, the misconception that placing the Merciful Qur’an directly in the hands of the masses. The Shah succeeded in dealing a death-blow to these misapprehensions.

The foremost intellectual contribution of Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.), which also contributed to the success of his mission, was his exegesis on the Generous Qur’an in Persian, Known as the Fathu-al-‘Aziz, it is also called Tafsir-i-‘Azizi and Bustanu-al-Tafsir. This work was dictated by the Shah who says that it consisted of the commentary on Suratu-al-Fatihah and suratu-al-Baqarah and from Suratu-al-Mulk to the last Chapter of the Holy Qur’an. However, neither, the exegesis of the second chapter, Suratu-al-Baqarah was complete, nor there is anything to shed light on the reason for its remaining incomplete. The present edition of the work, which has seen several reprints, contains the exegesis of this Surah up to verse184 in its first part. The second part covers from Suratu-al-Mulk (67th chapter) to Al
Mursalat (77th chapter) and the third the remaining 33 chapters, that is from Suratu-al-Nabah to Suratu-al-Nas.

Haidar ‘Ali Faizabadi (Rah.), a disciple of the Shah (d. 1299/1822), subsequently wrote the commentary of the Qur’anic chapters left by the Shah. In the Muqalat-i-Tariqat Muhammad ‘Abdur Rahim (Rah.) relates: Maulawi Haidar ‘Ali, author of Muntahilu-al-Kalam completed the exegesis of the chapters not covered by the Fathu-al-‘Aziz in 27 parts in compliance with the wishes of Sikander begum, the ruler of Bhupal, which has been seen by the writer of this lines. 9

A part of this complementary work, containing the exegesis of the fifth part of the Generous Qur’an 10 is available in the Nadwatu-al-‘Ulama’a Library.

Another exegetical work in Urdu entitled the Tafsir-i-‘Azizi alias sermons of Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz was published by Ansari press, Delhi in 1259 A.H/1843 A.D. It is a compilation by Abu Farid Muhammad Imamuddin who relates that the work consists of the lectures delivered by the Shah on Tuesdays and Fridays which were committed to paper by a few of the lectures. The work bears the exegesis of Suratu-al-Mu’minin (23rd chapter) to Al Suratu-al-Saffah (37th chapter) Although the exegesis of the Merciful Qur’an by Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.) remained incomplete, it contains considerable material and discusses problems not touched
earlier by other exegetes or which were being deliberately ignored by his contemporary scholars owing to the popular yet unsound beliefs and customs of the people in those days. To cite a few examples, the shah’s commentary on the verse: “He hath forbidden you only carrion, and blood, and swine flesh and that which hath been immolated to (In name of) any other than Allah (Q. 2:173) is particularly illuminating. Similarly the Shah’s exposition of magic in connection with the Qur’anic phrase: Suleiman disbelieved not (Q.2:102) and several other verses show the depth of his knowledge and incisiveness of his inquiry.

6.2(d): Promotion of the study of the Hadith:

The part played by Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.) in fostering the development of Hadith is comparable in the religious and intellectual history of India. He continued to teach the subject for nearly sixty four years. He delivered lectures on the Sihhah Sittah 11 and wrote some valuable works like the Bustanu-al-Muhaddithin and Al ‘Ujallatu-al-Nafi’a which promote a correct understanding of the Hadith literature and help in appreciation of the unique scholarly attainments of the earlier scholars in this field. These works are realy a concentratedessence of hadith literature. The number of those who studied the Hadith under the Shah runs into hundreds of which quite a large number attained proficiency and eminence and devoted their lives to the teaching and propagation of the science in India and Hijaz. More than forty such scholars have been listed in the seventh volume of the

There is a long list of scholars who were awarded proficiency certificates by the Shah for the teaching of Hadith. We give here the names of only those who were celebrated for their spiritual perfection or were known for their achievements in other fields.

(I) Shah Ghulam ‘Ali Dehlawi ¹²

(II) Shah Abu Sayyed Dehlawi (Rah.) ¹³

(III) Shah Ahamad Sayyed Dehlawi (Rah.) ¹⁴

(IV) Maulana Fazlur Rahman Gajnawi Muradabadi (Rah.) ¹⁵

(V) Maulana Buzurg ‘Ali (Rah.) ¹⁶
(VI) Shah Basharatullah Bahraichi (Rah.) \(^17\)

(VII) Shah Panah ‘Ata Salonowi (Rah.) \(^18\)

(VIII) Sheikh Zahburul Haq Phulwarwi (Rah.).

Maulana Shah Muhammad Is’hAQ Dehlawi (Rah.) was the most illustrious among the scholars of Hadith mentioned here. Who migrated to Hijaz in 1258 A.H/1842 A.D where he achieved prominence and taught large number of Scholars? In India his notable disciples who continued to apply their energies to the propagation of Hadith were Maulana Sayyed Nazir Husain Muhaddith Dehlawi Alias Mian Sahib, Qari ‘Abdur Raman Panipati, maulana Sayyed ‘Alam ‘Ali Muradabadi, Maulana Mufti ‘Abdul qayyum \(^19\), Maulana Fazlur Rahman Ganj Muradabadi, Nawab Qutbuddin Dehlawi \(^20\), Maulana Ahmad ‘Ali Saharanpuri \(^21\), Mufti Inayat Ahmad Kakorwi \(^22\) and several other scholars. As stated by the author of Nuzhatu-al-Khawatyir this is the only chain of Hadith teachers whose proficiency certificate is most valued in India.

Sayyed Nazir Husain Muhaddith Dehlawi (Rah.) (d. 1320 A.H/1902 A.D), among the disciples of Maulana Shah Muhammad Is’hAQ Dehlawi (Rah.), continued to teach Hadith in Delhi for a long time and groomed several teachers

Shah ‘Abdul Ghani (Rah.), (d. 1296 A.H/1879 A.D), was taught by Shah Muhammad Is’haq Dehlawi (Rah.); who had migrated to Medina. He had the honour of teaching the Hadith to a great many students who imparted education of this discipline in the Madrasah of India. Such eminent Scholars are as Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi (Rah.) and Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanuthuwi (Rah.). Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi (Rah.) was in turn the preceptor of Maulana Yahya Kandhelwi (Rah.) and Maulana Khaili Ahmad Saharanpuri (Rah.), Maulana Khaili Ahmad Saharanpuri (Rah.)’s stature as a teacher of Hadith is indicated by the fact that he had taught Sheikhlul Hadith Maulana Muhammad Zakariyah (Rah.), Who wrote the *Awjuzu-al-Masalik*. The great service to Hadith
rendered by Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanuthuwi (Rah.)’s disciples like Maulana Sayyed Hasan Amrowi (Rah.) and Sheikhu-al-Hind Maulana Mahmud Hasan Deobandi (Rah.) as well as Maulana Anower Shah Kashmiri (Rah.) and Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani (Rah.) hardly need be mentioned here. Similarly, the caliber of the Shah as a teacher of Hadith is amply demonstrated by the Al Yani ’u-al-Jani fi Asanid-i-al-Sheikh ‘Abdul Ghani which was written by one of his disciples Maulana Muhsin bin Yahya Turhati (Rah.).

6.2(e): Training of future leaders:

The success of any reformer depends, to a large extent, on the guidance and training of future leaders who may be able to carry on his mission even in the changed circumstances without compromising the basic ideas and values of the founder of that movement. It was perhaps the will of God that Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz excelled many a spiritual guides and his own predecessor’s even though some of his disciples appear to have attained even greater spiritual perfection than him. Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, was destined to, guide several men of vaulting ambitions who revolutionized the lives of millions during the next hundred years.

Finally Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (1159/1746-1239/1823) was the most erudite and glorious divine of his time. The dissemination of the science of Qur’an and the Hadith that took place in his time—of course, through him has had no precedent in the annals of Islamic India. There is no nook and corner in India where Shah
‘Abdul ‘Aziz’s disciples may not be found. The statement of a non-Indian scholar has already been quoted above that during his travels in India he did not meet any scholar of Hadith who was not a disciple of Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz. Maulana ‘Ubaidfullah Sindhi is of view that if ten persons benefitted from the great qualities of Shah Waliyullah (Rah.), from Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz’s qualities must have benefitted at least ten thousand persons. 23

In short, the foundation Hazrat Shah Waliyullah (Rah.) had laid for the renaissance of the religious science was brought to consummation by Hadrat Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz. He established such a standard of knowledge whereby the religious science came to attain a special honour and dignity. Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, after the death of his august father, serves the cause of religious science in Delhi for a long period of sixty years. Besides teachings he wrote several books among which his Tafsir-i-Fathu-al-‘Aziz, a commentary on the Qur’an, Bustanu-al-Muhaddithin, on the history of the classes of Traditionist and their compilations and the Tuhfa-i-Ithna ‘Ashariyah on the reality of Shiaism are really very famous. The last named book is such an opus magnum of Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz that there exists no example thereof on this topic in the entire Islamic Literature.

The achievements of the Shah’s chief disciple Sayyed Ahmad Shaheed (1201-1246 A.H/1786-/1831 A.D) are alone sufficient to demonstrate the role played by his reformist movement in the making of present day Islam in the Indo-Pak-Subcontinent. The unprecedented popular enthusiasm generated by the Sayyed for reverting back to the original Islam, with closest proximity to the manners and morals of the Holy Prophet (Sm.), remains matchless in medieval Islam. We also do not find people, in such a large numbers, who, following the lead of Sayyed, were not only fighters for the cause of God but also mentors of creed and morals and exerted such a healthy influence on the coming generations. The Sayyed was not only the first man in this Sub-continent to arouse the masses for armed resistance to the alien rule; he also warned the neighbouring countries of the gathering storm, and established a truly Islamic state on the pattern of right guided caliphate. It would be no exaggeration to claim that those associated with the Sayyed’s movement were the pioneers of India’s freedom struggle. Popularization of religious knowledge through translations and composition of tracts in the languages spoken by the people was due to mainly to scholars who followed the path shown by the Sayyed. \(^{24}\) The religious, social and political awakening witnessed later on among the Muslims was the result of gigantic endeavours made by the Sayyed and his followers which did not leave untouched the language and literature and ideas and ideals of the Indian Muslims who gradually became
conscious of the need for social reforms and giving up un-Islamic rites and customs that had been accepted by them.

The tremendous religious emotion, both in its depth and range, stirred by the Sayyed in the masses has been attested by several distinguished Scholars. We cite here the notices of only a few of these, Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan of Bhopal (d. 1307 A.H/1889 A.D), the noted Arabist and scholar, had been a witness to the efficacy of the sayyed’s guidance of his disciples and contemporaries. He relates in the Tiqsar-o-Juyudu-al-Ahrar that:

A sign of God he was in guiding the people on the right path and making their hearts leaned towards God. A large number of these became pure-hearted saints through the potent influence exerted by him, while his spiritual successors swiped the country clean of all unsound innovations and polytheistic thoughts and practices. He summoned the people back to the path of Qur’an and Sunnah and one can still see the influence of his sermons.²⁵

He writes further:

In short, there was none so Godly and skill in spirit in the whole world in those days, nor was there any mystic or religious scholar who
exerted such a salutary Influence even over one-tenth of the people as he did.²⁶

Another renowned scholar, Maulana Haider ‘Ali Rampuri (d. 1273 A.H/1856 A.D), who had the honour of being a student of Shah ‘Abdu ‘Aziz (Rah.) has paid glowing tributes to the sayyed in his Siyanatu-al-Nas:

The sun of the saiyid’s guidance illuminated the lands and hearts of the people, crowds flocked to repent of their sins at his hands and to take the righteous path of the Qur’an and Sunnah during his travels under taken through distinct regions to teach the right way of following the faith of Muhammad (Sm.). Those who had been blessed with understanding were helped by God to take the path shown by him.²⁷

Abu Ahad was another scholar who had had the opportunity of meeting quite a large number of the saiyid’s followers or those who had seen him. He relates:

More than forty thousand Hindus or other untrustworthies embraced Islam on his hands while three million Muslims took oath to fealty to him. If all those who pledged obedience to the saiyid’s spiritual
disciples were also taken into account, the number would surpass tens of millions.

There many more evidences to this effect registered in the Sawaneh Ahmadi. In this connection, the statements of Maulana Wilayat ‘Ali and Maulana Karamat ‘Ali can be seen in the author’s “A misunderstood Reformer”

6.4: Maulana ‘Abdul Hai Budhanawi (Rah.) and Maulana Muhammad Isma‘eel Shaheed (Rah.):

Two of the talented disciples and close relations of Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.), were Maulana ‘Abdul Hai Budhanawi (Rah.) and Maulana Muhammad Isma‘eel Shaheed (Rah.). The Shah also acknowledged their earning for in one of his letters he saluted them as the crown of exegete’s, pride of Scholars of Tradition and the first among researchers.

In the same letter he expressed:

Both these are in no way inferior to this humble self in exegesis, Traditions, Law and Jurisprudence, Logic and other branches of learning. I find myself incapable of thanking God for the grace deposited on them. You should regard them as God blessed Scholars and refer to them matters found insolvable by you.
Other scholars of the time too, held Maulana ‘Abdul Hai Budhanawi (Rah.) as a specialist in rational sciences while the Shah considered him as the most advanced among his disciples in so far as the exegesis of the Generous Qur’an was concerned. The Shah often remarked that Maulana ‘Abdul Hai Budhanawi (Rah.) was as learned as he himself was. The Shah even paid him the well deserved compliment by addressing him as Sheikhu-al-Islam, a title sparingly used for the most celebrated scholar of a time.

In sincerity and God-consciousness Maulana ‘Abdul Hai Budhanawi (Rah.) surpassed his erudition and intelligence. He took oath of fidelity to the Sayyed although the latter was younger to him and had even been his student. He left all of his literary pursuits to follow the guidance of the Sayyed on the path of spirit and Jihad, devoted his energies and talents to further the mission of his spiritual mentor and ultimately died fighting in the way of God. Gifted with the qualities of courage and ambition to the same extent as he was a man of intellect, Maulana Muhammad Isma’il Shahid (Rah.) could be described as one of those master minds who are born after centuries. A man of unusual brilliance, he was capable of making addition to any branch of learning. Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.) once addressed him in a letter with the title of Testimony of Islam (Hujjatu-al-Islam) His works show the same freshness, vigour, Eloquence and contemplation on the Qur’an and Hadith which Characterize the writings of Shah Waiyullah Dehlawi (Rah.).
A distinguishing feature of Maulana Muhammad Isma‘eel Shaheed (Rah.) was that instead of keeping step with the scholars of his time who had limited their activities to entirely intellectual and literary pursuits, he chose to act as a leader in the field of social and religious amendment. His work entitled Taqwiyatu-al-Iman proved uniquely successful in propagating puritanical creed among the masses. It did the job which could have hardly been accomplished by any governmental effort. Maulana Rashid Ahmad Ganguhi (Rah.) testifies that more than two hundred thousand persons had reformed their creed during the life time of Maulana Muhammad Isma‘eel Shaheed (Rah.) and nobody knows how many people have benefited thereafter from him.

The zeal for reformation and revivalism of Shah Muhammad Isma‘eel Shaheed (Rah.) sharpened by the Sayyed’s guidance, prepared him to fight for the cause of God though his tongue, pen and arms, as the chief lieutenant of his Murshid or the spiritual guide, and ultimately he laid down his life in the battle of Balakot. Iqbal has accurately depicted his accomplishments in one of his quatrains in which he writes:

Often they bank upon Eloquence and arguments, often they take up the sword and lance for the right cause. Chain armour they done sometimes beneath the garb.
Diverse are the means employed, for lovers they are.

6.5: Shah Muhammad Ishaq (Rah.) and Shah Muhammad Ya‘qub (Rah.):

In the teaching of religious science, particularly of Hadith the place of Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.), was taken by his two grandsons, Shah Muhammad Ishaq (Rah.), (1197-1262 A.H/1783-1846 A.D), and Shah Muhammad Ya‘qub (Rah.), (1200-1282 A.H/1786-1865 A.D) Both were sons of Shah Muhammad Afzal, a son in law of Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.) The Shah had nominated Shah Muhammad Ishaq (Rah.) as his successor and shifted all his books, house etc. to him. Shah Muhammad Ishaq (Rah.), in the presence of Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.) continued to teach Hadith to the students for twenty years in the seminary of Shah in Delhi from 1239 A.H/1824 A.D. to 1258 A.H/1842 A.D. In 1239 A.H/1823 A.D, Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.), entrusting Madrasa-i-Rahimiyyah before his death to Muhammad Ishaq, appointed him as his successor. Till 1257 A.H/1841 A.D he rendered the service of disseminating and propagating the science of Hadith. Almost the whole of India benefitted from his educational graces. He translated the Mishkatu-al-Masawih into Urdu, which, at his instance, was transformed into commentary by his well-guided pupil, Maulana Qutubuddin Khan, and is known as Mazahir-i-Hoq, Mi`ata Masa`il and Rasa’il-i-Arba’in are also his noteworthy works. Emigrating from India in 1257 A.H/1841 A.D to Makkah Mukarramah, he settled there until his death. Being an erudite scholar of Hadith, he attracted a large number of
students including scholars like Sheikh ‘Abdullah Siraj Makki. Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.) often used to thank God for providing him such successors as Shah Muhammad Isma‘eel (Rah.) and Shah Muhammad Ishaq (Rah.) and also often read the Qur’anic verse; Praise be to Allah who hath given me, in my old age Isma‘il and Is’haq (Q, 14:39) Shah Muhammad Ishaq (Rah.) died at Makkah Mukarramah on 27th Rajab1262 A.H/5th July1846 A.D. and was buried near the grave of sayyedah Khadijah (Radi.)  

It is said in *Tarjuma-i-Tazkiratu-‘Ulama-i-Hind*:

It is particularly markable that during the freedom fight of 1857 most of the pupils, of Shah Muhammad Ishaq Dehlawi (Rah.), took part as ‘Ulama in this movement, the most noteworthy amongst them being Mufti ‘Inayat Ahmed Kakorwi (Sadar Amin, Bareilly) (Rah.), Maulana ‘Abdu-al-Jalil Ka‘eeli (‘Aligrahi) (Rah.), Mufti Sadaru-al-Din Azarda (Rah.), Shah Abu Sa‘id Mujaddidi (Rah.), the father of Shah ‘Abdul Ghani Mujaddidi (Rah.) and the pupils of their pupils, i. e. the ‘Ulama of Deoband, e. g. Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanutuwi (Rah.), Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (Rah.), Maulana Muhammad Mazhar Nanutuwi (Rah.), Maulana Muhammad Monir Nanutuwi (Rah.) etc.
Shah Muhammad Ya‘qub (Rah.) also taught at Delhi for a considerable length of time but migrated to Makkah Mukarramah along with his brother Shah Muhammad Ishaq (Rah.). He had among his students such luminaries as Saiyid Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan of Bhopal and several others. He departed at Makkah Mukarramah on Friday, 27th Dhiqan, 1282/9th April 1866 and was buried in the Jannatu-al-Mu‘allah cemetery.

6.6: Other Disciples:

A number of the Shah’s chief disciples later became learned scholars who founded their own seminaries for teaching religious branches of learning. They infused a new life in the system of religious education. A few of those known for the depth of their learning or as successful School Masters those who continued the mission of Shah Waiyullah Muhaddith Dehlawi (Rah.) are mentioned below:

- Maulana Ilahi Bakhsh Kandalwi (Rah.)
- Maulana Imamu-al-Din Dehlawi (Rah.)
- Maulana Haider ‘Ali Rampuri (Rah.)
- Maulana Haider ‘Ali Faizabadi (Rah.), author of Muntahiu-al-Kalam
- Maulana Rashidu-al-Din Dehlawi (Rah.)
- Mufti Sadru-al-Din Dehlawi (Rah.)
- Shah Rafi‘uddin (Rah.)
• Shah ‘Abdul Ghani (Rah.)

• Shah ‘Abdul Qadir (Rah.), etc.
Notes and References:

1. Shah Isma’eel Shahid was the son of Shah ‘Abdul Ghani (Rah.). All the four sons of Shah namely, Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.), Shah Rafi’uddin (Rah.), Shah ‘Abdul Qadir (Rah.) and Shah ‘Abdul Ghani (Rah.) achieved eminence after the death of their father. Their deaths occurred in a reverse order, viz, the youngest among them Shah ‘Abdul Ghani (Rah.) died in 1227 A.H/1812 A.D, then Shah ‘Abdul Qadir (Rah.) in 1230 A.H/1815 A.D, Shah Rafi’uddin (Rah.) in 1232 A.H/1818 A.D and then at last Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz (Rah.) in 1239 A.H/1824 A.D

2. The bold erect writing in which the Qur’an is usually inscribed Modern Arabic hand writing works are generally in Naskh

3. Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz was known for his deep insight in to the Hanafite Fiqah and according to some, he had an edge in this matter even on Shah Waliyullah

4. A critique of Si’ite faith and doctrines

5. The Arabic lyrics of Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, particularly his ode known as Qasidatu-al-Lamyah, reproduced in the Nuzhatu-al-Khawatir, shows his exquisite artistry surpassing even his father Shah Waliyullah. The spontaneity and case of expression, a quality normally found in the poets composing in their mother tongue, is the chief Characteristics of Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz’s lyrics. A similar mastery over Arabic is to be found in the works of Mufti Sadaruddin Khan, a pupil of the Shah. Pl. See Maulana ‘abdul Hai’s Ath Thaqafatu-al-Islamiyah fil Hind and Nuzhatu-al-Khawatir


7. In the old Curriculum of Arabic Madrasah’s the exegesis of the second chapter Suratu-al-Baqarah

8. The introduction to the work by the shah (Page-3) shows that he had taken up the work as the instance of his brother Maulana Muhammad in 1208/1794 in order to continue the mission of his father
9. First few pages of this work are missing

10. Muqalat-i-Tariqat Aias Fazail-i-‘Axzizi, Hydarabad, 1292 A. H. P. 33

11. The six most authentic works on Hadith

12. Spiritual disciple of Mirza Mazhar Jan-i-Janan


15. The Chief Spiritual disciple of Shah Muhammad Afaq celebrated as a saintly soul


17. An eminent Sheikh of the Mujaddaiyah Order

18. An eminent Sheikh of the Chistiyyah Order

19. Son of Maulana ‘Abdul Hai Budhanuwi, who was a spiritual successor to saiyed Ahmad Shahid

20. Author of Muzahiru-al-Haq

21. Commentator of Sahihu-al-Bukhari

22. Teacher of Maulana Lutfullah ‘Aligrahi

23. Shah Waliyullah ki Siyasi Tahrik, P. 64

24. The earlier indifference to the vernacular in intellectual endeavours had resulted in creating a gulf between the faith and practice of Indian Muslims. The masses had become completely cut off from the scripture and the Sunnah and their teachings

26. Ibid, P. 110


28. For a detailed account of the saiyyid’s movement “saiyyid Ahmad Shahid” (4 Volumes) by Ghulam-i-Rasul Mehr. “Siratu saiyyid Ahmad Shahid” by the writer of these lines and saiyyid Ahmad Shahid-His life and Mission by Mohiuddin Ahmad can be seen. The great reformatory work performed by the saiyyid’s spiritual disciples has also been described in some detail in Al Zikru-al-Jali fi Karimat As saiyyid Muhammad ‘Ali by Afsatud Douah Jan-i-Janan Khan published from Sikandarabad in 1305/1888


30. Maulana Muhammad Isma’eeel Shahid (Rah.), Mansab-i-Imamat

31. Pl. See Nuzhatu-al-Khawatir, Vol, VII, for further details

32. Tarjuma-i-Tazkiratu-al-‘Ulama-i-Hind, P. 409, Karachi

33. The interest taken by saiyyid Nawab Siddiq Hasan khan, both as a scholar of Hadith and a patron in the capacity of ruler of Bhopal, had made that state a center for propagation of this branch of learning. He got Fathu-al-Bari, published, for the first time, from Egypt at a cost of Rs 50,000

34. Originally belonging to Tonk