CHAPTER VI

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The English East India Company, consequently, succeeded to the imperial heritage of Muslim India and as a result, the Muslim community gradually came under severe stress and strain in their various walks of life. The community sunk with the breakdown of their politico-economic structure and simultaneously the intellectual and religious leadership of Muslim India fell from its earlier eminence.

The hegemony of crescent in India for centuries, could not lead to 'Islamisation of Hindu India', nor the pervasive influence of Indian culture and civilization, which had been 'predominantly Hindu' could absorb Islam. Islam in India, due to its long association with Hinduism, had been, at the best, acclamatised but remaining true to its rigid monotheistic iconoclastic belief, it had always retained its 'religious individuality'. Therefore, religion had become the dominant differential between these two important communities of India, with a long story of divided co-existence.

The Muslim India, at the outset, detested the English rule with the deepest suspicion and jealousy as
the former lost its political power to the latter and did not appreciate nor adopt to the influx of western ideas and enlightenment, and despised it as 'high way to infidelity'. On the other hand, indiscreet evangelical preachings by Christian missionaries and the British attitude of suspecting the Muslims and conciliating the Hindus, fanned the hostility. The advent of 'New education and Learning' brought much profit and privilege for an emerging Hindu literate class where as the 'New Learning' intensified the Muslim indifference. And this accentuated inter-communal rivalry, wide disparity and discontent between Hindus and Muslims later on. With a touch of bitterness R. M. Sayani observed, the Muslims "were soon reduced to a state of utter poverty. Ignorance and apathy seized hold of them while the fall of their former greatness rankled in their hearts."  

In addition to their sad economic dislocation, social degeneration, caused by the political disruption, Indian Islam faced challenges of syncretistic Hinduism in one hand and western rationalism and liberalism on the other. Thus, in this predicament, a few Muslim leaders

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1 Sayani, Presidential Address, INC, 12th Session, Calcutta, 1896.
made a bid for inner renewal of Islam through puritanic appeal to the religion of the Koran.

Earlier, a renowned theologian, Maulana Shaik Ahmad Sirhindi, (1562-1624) of the Naqshbandi order, did assert for a puritanical revivalism of Islam, exhorting the Muslims to return to the *Sharia*, but opposing the doctrine of Unity of Being (Wahadatu'l Wajeed) and Akbar's catholic doctrine of Din-i-Ilahi. But with Shah Wali-Ullah of Delhi (1703-1762) a profound theologian, the revival of Islamic religious consciousness got a momentum. He had firm faith in the power of Islam and in his attempt to regenerate Muslim society reconciled divergent views like Shaik Ahmad's Unity of Experience and Ibn Arabi's Unity of Existence. His mission was to restore Islam to its pristine purity, as well as to reorient intellectual life of Muslims. "You are honourable," remarked Wali-Ullah, "because you followed Islam. Now you are degraded, because you betrayed Islam." Wali-Ullah's approach to religion had points in common with that of Muhammad Ibn 'Abd-al-Wahhab', (1703-1787), the founder of the Wahhabi movement, but his thought too had deeply influenced the

2 Shah Wali Ullah, *Tafhimat-i-Illahya*, pp. 53-54.
intellectuals of two incompatible schools, such as revivalistic conservatism and rationalist modernism, in other words fundamentalists and modernists alike in subsequent generations.

Inspired directly by the Wali-Ullahi movement of purification of Islam, Dar-ul-Ulum, the religious seminary at Deoband, became the centre of religious revivalism and political confrontation with the alien ruler. Ulemas and nationalist leaders, like Maulana Azad, associated with this seminary, took active part in the freedom struggle. On the other hand, Wali-Ullahi movement, too, encouraged the militant movement of the rehabilitation of Islam in India, categorized because of its resemblances with the Wahhabi movement of Ne-jd. Its leader Sayyid Ahmad Barelvi (1782-1831) made a vigorous and determined effort to resuscitate classical Islam, purging all its un-Islamic accretions and superstitions. The movement assumed a distinct political orientation, as like 'Mujahidin', they preached holy war against the infidel governments, i.e., the Sikhs in the

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3 Established by a famous theologian Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanatawi (1832-1879).

4 Aziz Ahmad, Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment, p.209.
Punjab and the British in Bengal. It became more and more militant and developed into a series of political struggles and 'left a rich legacy of revolt to Indian Mussulmans'. Even long after the death of Sayyid Ahmad Barelvi the movement lingered on till 1870s, organising various rebellions and network of conspiracies and culminating in the murder of Chief Justice Norman, (20 September 1871) and Viceroy Lord Mayo, (8 February 1872) by a wahhabi convict named Sher Ali, in the Anadamans. Thus, Wahabism was a 'puritan upsurge', but from the rank of Wahabis was born the first terrorists and first political convicts.

Similarly, another Muslim insurrection, the Fara'izi movement, in spite of its difference with Wall- Ullahi movement, defended the socio-economic interests of the Muslim peasants against the Hindu Zamindars and European indigo-planters. Titu Mian, another leader of the Islamic upsurge of South Bengal, was also inspired by the Wahhabi creed and had a close link with Sayyid Ahmad.

5 W. W. Hunter, The Indian Mussulmans, pp. 84-100.
6 Founded by Haji Sahri' at-Ullah and after him, his son Wudud Mian (1819-1860) led the movement.
7 24 Perganas, Nadia and Faridpur.
Compared to the Farah'izi movement his programme was more militant and his insurgency was directed against the Hindu landlords and British rule.

The movement of 'Mujahidin' was in many ways a unique one in the history of Indian Islam. "It was its first mass political movement and its last to use a Toynbeean term 'Arachaic' effort to recover India from the British and their Hindu and Sikh allies. Its impact on the re-orientation of religious faith and practice was revolutionary and more lasting." The Wahhabi movement for the establishment of Dar-ul-Islam in place of Dar-ul-Harb quickened the political consciousness among the Muslims. Their iconoclasm and radicalism alarmed the Government as the Wahhabis 'went about their work not as reformers like Luther and Cromwell but destroyers in the spirit of Robespierre'.

Might be, like the later Khilafat movement which was exuberantly and aggressively Muslim, the Wahhabi movement was not exactly anti-Hindu, yet these movements had strong communal character and did help the growth of

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separatism among the Muslims. The communal bias of the creed destroyed the prospect of a mass struggle against common enemy and therefore, helped the British rulers for its brutal suppression. 'The Government, however, did not accept the Wahhabi movement on its face value as a purely religious movement, but scented deep political motives behind it'.

The British Government again held the Muslim community as the prime movers in the rebellion of 1857, and developed a more hostile attitude towards it. Thus, after the ruthless suppression of Wahhabi movement, and the rebellion of 1857, the sufferings of Muslim community became more disastrous and led by some of their religious leaders preferred to withdraw into the seclusion of religion. But at this moment when the calamity had become two severe for his community, Syed Ahmed Khan, the foremost leader and thinker of Indian Islam in nineteenth century, came out to arouse his co-religionists to a new life of light and learning, harmonising rationally the Islamic thought with western culture. Like Ram Mohan Roy of Hindu India, Syed Ahmed was the progenitor of 'Muslim modernism' in India. His task of careful assimilation of

European culture with that of 'Islam' saved the community from social and political back water as well as his unique strategy of Anglo-Mohammedan rapprochement turned Indian Muslims to be an effective religio-political unit, with a separate identity in Indian politics.

During the rebellion of 1857, Syed Ahmed had remained a staunch loyalist and by virtue of this he tried to build the Anglo-Mohammedan understanding, extricating and exonerating his community's participation in the rebellion by a forceful analysis of its causes in his Urdu pamphlet, entitled *Risala-Ashab-i-Bhagwat-i-Hind*. Syed asserted: "The Muhammedan did not contemplate Jehad against the Christians prior to the outbreak." To him, the non-admission of a native as a member into the Legislative Council was the original cause of the outbreak. Syed also attributed the revolt to the fraternal feeling that grew between Hindus and Muslims serving under one regiment. "If separate regiments of Hindoos and separate regiments

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11 *Risala-Ashab-i-Bhagwat-i-Hind*, translated into English by his two European friends as *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*.

12 Ibid., p.8.

13 Ibid., p.11.
of Mahommedans had been raised, this feeling of brotherhood could not have arisen and, in my opinion, the Mahommedan regiments would not have refused to receive the new cartridges." Thus, in his forceful defence of his community, he advocated: "It is idle and wicked to connect the revolt with the principles of our religion, for how can religion foster cruelty, tumult and disorder."

Syed, too, gave great emphasis on the affinity between Islam and Christianity in order to materialise the rapprochement between the Christian government and its Muslim subjects. He pointed out: "God has said that no people of other religions can be friends of the Muhammedans except the Christians" and earnestly desired that "the Crescent and the Cross being united should shed their light over India."

Refuting the statement of Hunter that 'the Mussal­
mans of India are, and have been for many years a source of

14 Ibid., p.51
16 S. Ahmed, On the Present State of Indian Politics, p.49.
17 Sir Syed's address to Sir Auckland Colvin, 10 March 1888, AIG, 15 March 1888.
chronic danger to the British power in India', Syed reacted: "As a cosmopolitan Mahommedan of India, I must raise my voice in opposition to Dr. Hunter in defence of my fellow countrymen. "If Government do not deal openly and fairly with its Mahommedan subjects, if it deals with them in the underhand way recommended by Dr. Hunter," warned Syed, "I foresee much trouble both in our days and hereafter." Working tirelessly for the rapprochement Syed was successful within two decades following the revolt of 1857, in weaning the government from its policy of suppression to one of conciliation and on the other hand 'weaning the Muslim community from its anti-government attitude to one of acquiescence and participation'.

Syed Ahmed was profoundly influenced by his visit to England and it had deep impact upon his future public life. Prescribing the strategy of 'loyalism in politics' for his community he then worked for their 'modernism' re-interpreting the Islamic Ideology. Syed was not a profound theologian, yet for the justification

19 Ibid., p.52.
20 W. C. Smith, Modern Islam in India, p.16.
of his modernist programme of reform and education he made a dynamic effort in interpreting the Koran expedient to a rationalist neo-Mu'tazilite line. Accepting the Koran as the true source of Islam, he would assert that a true faith in its pristine purity was absolutely free from many a prevalent super-natural and irrational elements.

He held the Koran as the word of God and it must be in conformity with Nature as the work of God and there could not be any contradiction between the two. But Syed's interpretation of Islam, which contained some elements of radicalism and rationalism, was opposed virulently by theologians in India and abroad and it had very little impact upon the Muslim peasants. Moreover, it was rejected by the Indian Muslim elite that accepted his political and educational leadership. Though he had to encounter a conservative challenge in religion and a pan-Islamic challenge in politics yet Syed fashioned Islam to be 'thoroughly compatible with progress' and prepared the ground for his co-religionists to acquire 'the culture of

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22  Theodore de Bary & Others, *The Sources of India*, p.743.
nineteenth century Britain, with its new learning, its liberal and humanitarian morality and its scientific rationalism. The foundation of M.A.O. College at Aligarh in 1875 (which subsequently grew into Aligarh University) to extricate his community from the morass of ignorance and medievalism was the climax of Syed's efforts.

In this programme, Syed considered the British help and patronage to be indispensable and stated that the avowed objects of the institution were to make the Mussalmans of India worthy and useful subjects of the British crown. He confessed that his stand of loyalism to the foreign rule was due to the 'genuine appreciation of the blessings of good government'. But Syed was careful enough to see that 'Mussalmans may acquire an English education without prejudice to their religion'.

'I want you to dive deep into English literature and science, but at the same time, asserted Syed, 'I expect you to be true to your faiths'. The whole community

24 Address presented to the Viceroy Lord Lytton on 8 January 1877.
25 The Prospectus of the M. A. O. College.
26 S. Ahmed, Majmu's Lecturer, p.130.
never felt the impact of this modernisation but there emerged an upper class Muslim elite as Syed excepted and he forged an alliance between the former and the ruler, which endured till the end of British rule. But the traditional socio-religious differences between the Hindus and the Muslims became more pronounced with the growth of educational consciousness.

In fact, Aligarh emerged very soon as the centre of Muslim modernism. But, besides, stimulating western learning it helped to reintegrate Indian Islam and became the nursery of ideas for political separatism. Great emphasis was given for the use of Urdu, as the national language of Indian Muslims. The first three British principals of Aligarh College T. Beck, T. Morrison and W. A. J. Archbold devoted themselves as to the ideals of Syed, in promoting both educational and political awareness of the Muslim community. In the beginning, Mr. Beck was the confident and adviser of Syed and used to work in close collaboration with British civil service.

The foundation of the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental Educational Conference in 1886 by Syed was an effective complement to the Aligarh movement which had already made phenomenal success in preserving the communal identity.
The Educational Conference was set up to enrich Urdu, and to promote western education, yet it held its sessions at the same time as those of the National Congress. Very soon the Conference, developed itself to be a forum for the dissemination of Muslim political opinion. Might be, according to some, Syed never advocated separatism yet his earnest endeavour to preserve communal identity did encourage the leadership for Muslim separatism of which Syed Ameer Ali, Mohammad Iqbal, Muhsin-al-Mulk, Agha Khan, Sayyid Husayn Bilgrami, Mian Mohammad Shafi etc., were conspicuous.

Syed turned hostile to the National Congress, and to its demand of 'representative Government' as he held the view that 'the larger community would totally, over-ride the interests of the smaller community'. In speeches delivered at Lucknow on 28 December 1887 and at Meerut on 16 March 1888, he strongly opposed the policy and programme of the Congress. Indian Patriotic Association and other Associations were formed to mobilize the opinion of the landlords and influential sections of Indian society against the Congress. A separate association for the...
Muslims called, Anglo-Oriental Defence Association of Upper India was established to mobilize Muslim public opinion as well as to safeguard their interests.

At the beginning, Syed Ahmed had sympathy with the Congress movement and exhorted the countrymen at Gurudaspur, 'to become, one, heart and soul, and act in unison' and again at Lahore, he explained 'in the word nation include both Hindus and Mahommedans, because that is the only meaning which I can attach to it'. But as soon as he came 'to perceive that the Government was unfriendly to the Congress movements he changed his attitude. His sense of political opportunism was prompt to seize the practical advantage which would accrue to the interests of minority. ...He counselled his co-religionists to refrain from political agitation, and as a body, they followed his advice'. He was of opinion that 'the Congress cannot rationally prove its claim to present the opinions, ideals and aspirations of the Muslims'. In

28 Speech at Gurudaspur, 27 January 1884.
29 Speech at Lahore, 3 February 1884.
connection with the National Congress, he replied to Mr. Hume, "I should remain as firmly opposed to it as ever and I earnestly beg all the Mahommedans of India to be constant and determined in their opposition..." 32

"Inspite of the general opposition of the Muslims to the founder of the Aligarh College in the domain of religion, social reform and even education," remarked Mohamed Ali, "the Muslims had almost to a man followed the lead of Syed Ahmed Khan in politics."

Thus Aligarh movement in its attempt to build 'Muslim Identity' created Muslim political reaction towards the National Congress and widened the psychological gulf between Hindus and Muslims. This was the first overt step towards the birth of an Islamic state-Pakistan. Religion was utilized for sinister political purposes and therefore the evolution of nationalism received a great set back. The passion of animosity against the Congress gradually brought in its train a general spirit of opposition to the Hindus.

On the other hand, Hindu revivalism, too, stimulated Muslim separatism. The Muslims began to distrust the

32 The Pioneer, 10 November 1888.
33 Mohamed Ali, Lecture on The Muhammedan Programme, 24 February 1907, Home Political Progs,B,1913,No. 149.
National Congress from the nineties as the national movement came under the influence of Hindu revivalism and appeared to be a strictly 'Hindu Nationalism'. The fundamentalist and missionary movement of Arya Samaj, the celebration of Ganapati Puja and Shivaji festival introduced by Tilak and the 'Vedantic monism' of Swami Vivekananda, gave momentum to the cause of Hindu revivalism. Moreover, the agitation over the Age of Consent Bill, the formation of Anti Cow killing Societies, Hindi-Urdu controversy, communal riots, rocked the Hindu-Muslim unity and therefore the political collaboration between Hindus and Muslims became impossible. But this development, during nationalist movement reacted upon the Muslims, fundamentally in two ways i.e. the feudal elite supported the Aligarh movement and politics of loyalism in one hand and on the other the traditional theologians who strongly opposed modernism of Sir Syed. But nationalist Muslims like Tyabji, Sayani etc. retained their identity and continued to oppose the separatist trend of Aligarh movement.

A section of Muslims brought up by the religio-political tradition of Aligarh hardened their reliance

on British protection, reflecting their hostility towards the Congress. Of all the galaxy of leaders, thinkers and poets who supported and sided with the Aligarh movement, the most conspicuous were Muhsin-al-Mulk, Chiragh Ali, Syed Ameer Ali, Altaf Husayn Hali, Muhammad Shibli Numani and Nadir Ahmed.

In religion and politics the views of Ameer Ali 35 (1849-1928), the founder of National Mohammedan Association in Calcutta in 1877 were almost identical with those of Sir Syed. He was an ultra-loyalist and believed in the modernist approach to Islam and a pro-British tradition in politics. Earlier, he conceived the idea that Hindus and Muslims constituted two separate nations in India and his Mohammedan Association in Calcutta 36 pressed for similar views. He endeavoured much for the promotion of loyalty of his community towards the British government. The founder of the London branch of Muslim league, Ameer Ali, ever remained an uncompromising fighter for a separate electorate. His thought and political activities were motivated to secure exclusive

35 Ameer Ali, the jurist, and the author of The Spirit of Islam.
political rights for his community but it did a great harm to the cause of Hindu Muslim unity and amity during the nationalist movement. Shibli Numani (1857-1914), a prolific Urdu writer and historian, had been associated earlier with Aligarh Institute, but he came increasingly under the influence of the Pan-Islamic movement and became hostile towards its policy of political loyalty.

A close associate of Sir Syed, Altaf Husayn Hali (1837-1914) was the most distinguished poet of his generation. His famous poem *Musaddas* composed in Urdu, depicting the glorious Islamic past with an overtone of revivalism and political romanticism, became a powerful instrument of religio-political propaganda. So also Nadir Ahmed (1831-1911) pleaded to reconcile the Sharia with the everyday needs of Muslims and urged that the laws of the British Government, being the source of peace and prosperity for Muslims, deserved the same implicit obedience as the Sharia.

On the other hand, a severe reaction to Syed

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37 *Madd-O-Jazz-i-Islam* (The Flow and Ebb of Islam) popularly known as the *Musaddas-i-Hali*.

Ahmed Khan's modernist rationalism was epitomised in the emphatic traditionalist approach of the theologians of Deoband who drew inspiration from the teaching of Shah Wali Allah and the martyrdom of the Wahabis. Dar-ul-Ulum, the seminary of traditional Islamic learning at Deoband was too deeply concerned with the challenges that the Christian missionaries and the Hindu revivalist movements offered to Islam. The visit of a non-Indian Muslim, Syed Jamal-al-Din-Afgani, built consciousness of solidarity among Indian Muslims as well as a strong awareness of a 'Pan Islamism'. Muhammad Qasim Nanatawi, the first Principal of the seminary, was a competent administrator and a gifted polemicist had developed a forceful technique of refutation of the anti-Islamic polemics of Christian missionaries and Hindu Arya Samajists.

Mawlana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (1828-1905) as the head of Deoband Seminary opposed speculative naturalism

39 Afgani, a crusader of Pan Islamic movement and a determined enemy of western imperialism refuted Syed Ahmed's strategy of Anglo-Muslim alliance. Syed and Muhsin-al-Mulk, (1937-109) fought incessantly against Afgani's ideology of Pan-Islamism as it tended to arouse British suspicion about the loyalty of the Indian Muslims.

of Syed Ahmed in religion and his mission of political separatism in national politics. 'For all practical purposes, however, Deoband became the anti-thesis of Aligarh; ... and developed a tradition of distmst of, and later hostility to the British presence in India...’. The rift between Aligarh and Deoband became so fierce that the earnest effort of Muhsin-ul-Mulk to bring them closer became futile.

Maulana Mahmud Hasan (1851-1921), the successor of Gangohi was a dynamic theologian of great capacity. Under his able guidance Deoband emerged to be an outstanding theological seat of classical Islam of international reputation. His 'Jami-yyat-al-Ansar' became the centre of Islamic brotherhood and he had been credited with planning a call and programme (da'wat) for Muslim India before the First World War when the political movement of the Indian National Congress had not yet become revolutionary. Hasan endeavoured much to enlist the support of Turkey and Afghanistan for the cause of India's freedom struggle. In Afghanistan was organised an Indian 'Government in exile' with a Hindu agitator, Raja Mahindra Pratap, as its prime-minister and included among other Ubayd-Allah Sinöhi, a

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41 Ibid., p.6.
disciple and emissary of Hasan.

In spite of its excessive stress on rigid orthodoxy and 'Pan Islamism', Deoband made a deep impact on the nationalist movement by encouraging anti-imperialist, rather, anti-British agitation.

An old Aligarian, Shibli Namani, unable to collaborate with Syed's thought on theology and politics, turned to be an outstanding Deobandian and contemplated of guiding Indian Muslim politics under his leadership. He had great admiration for the high idealism of the Congress, and his scholarship and ideology greatly inspired, two of his notable disciples, Muhammed Ali (1879-1931) and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1959). Both Ali and Azad struggled much in stirring and organising the Muslim mass against the British regime.

As a reaction to the Hindu revivalist movement and modernist trend in Islam, many a Muslim parallel of orthodox Anjumans and communal societies sprang up, such as Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam, Nadwat-ul-Ulama, and Anjuman-i-Naumania etc.  

42 Founded in 1885 at Lahore.
43 Founded in 1894 at Lucknow.
One of the most vigorous revivalist organisations was the Ahmadiyya heresy founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1839-1908) of Qadian. Mirza Ghulam began his religious career as a champion of 'Islamic orthodoxy' initially challenging the onslaught of Arya Samajists, and Christian missionaries and, opposing the naturalistic interpretations of Islam initiated by Sir Syed. Ahmed claimed to be the Messiah for the Christian, the Mahdi for the Muslims, and Krishna for the Hindus etc., and as such the promised prophet of every nation, appointed to collect all mankind under the banner of one religion. "God has sent me to reform this sad plight and to lead mankind back to His pure Unity," claimed Ahmed. But Ghulam Ahmad set his voice against all political demands and advocated loyalty to the British government. Ahmadi followers sharply reacted over the demand for self government and Home Rule. An Ahmadi paper Al-Fazal commented "Indian should be thankful to God for having placed them under a Government which pays special attention to their prosperity and supplies means for their progress. It is

44 His polemics in his work, Baratin-i-Ahmadiyya, p.25-27.
45 Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Qadian, Hindu-Muslim Problems and its solution, p.35.
pity that those Muhammedans who have been allured by politics and have no religious leader to guide them are supporting Hindu in demanding self-government. But their participation in politics is sure to kill them."

So also there emerged within Islam neo-traditionalist Ahl-i-hadith of which Siddiq Hasan Khan (1835-1889) and Nazir Husayn were prominent. They were not revolutionary like the Deobandists, yet the Ahl-i-hadith movement concentrated its activities for the propagation of 'hadith' opposing the speculative rationalistic modernism of Aligarh movement, (which were considered to be anti-traditionalist innovations) was well as Christian missionaries, Hindu Arya Samajists, Ahmadis and the Shi'is.

In spite of the opposition of the Muslim traditionalists, the Muslim awakening in nineteenth century both in religion and politics, was enormously influenced by the modernist trend of Aligarh movement. Standing in between two schools of ideology, the nationalist Muslims sometimes appreciated the liberal views of Syed Ahmed in religious matters in one hand and received encouragement

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46 Al Fazal, 28 July 1917, Home Political Progs Deposit, F.No.39.
from the Deobandists to support the Congress movement on the other. However, by the dawn of twentieth century, the Aligarh movement even having its no effective identity with the Muslim mass could raise a strong psychological barrier between the Hindus and the Muslims in national politics.

Under the careful supervision of Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Morrison, Secretary and Principal respectively of Aligarh college, and V iqar-ul-Mulk Mustaq Hussain, later on, Aligarh was emerging as the permanent political and intellectual centre for the Indian Muslims. As early as 1901, the Aligarh leaders were thinking to have a separate political organisation for the Indian Muslims, but from 1903, Aligarh Institute Gazette, stressed exclusively on Muslim religious unity and the need of an organisation thereof.

The partition of Bengal, into basically two religious divisions, by Curzon opened a new phase of alienation and antagonism between the Hindu and Muslim

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47 Succeeded Mohsin-ul-Mulk as the Secretary of Aligarh College.

48 AIG, 21 February, 4 July and 18 July 1903.
communities. The nationalists regarded it as a device to disrupt the unity of the nation, to weaken the growing political consciousness of the people of Bengal and 'to destroy the closer affinity of the Hindus and Muslims'. The Government stirred the communal bogey to liquidate the nationalist movement. Both the Lieutenant Governors of the newly created province, in succession, Fuller and Hare, played off the two sections of the populations against each other and aroused animosity between the two communities. In fact, Hindu orientation of the anti-partition movement intensified Muslim political reaction. 'The Muslims were galvanized by these great events, and their leading men, one and all, spontaneously came to think that the times required instant activity, if they aimed at self-preservation in the political deluge that looked like swamping them as a community'. But the role of British authorities and the political passion of Aligarh elite, consolidated the cause of 'Muslims separatism' and in a short-period the Muslim politics got momentum, with Simla Deputation on 1 October

49 Banerjea, A Nation in Making, pp.187-188.

1906, in the formation of All India Muslim League on 30 December 1906 and in the device of communal representation, constitutionalised in the Indian Council Act of 1909. The Congress movement had to face a formidable challenge.

Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Principal Archbold, and Colonel Dunlop Smith were busy in secret negotiation, to make necessary preparation for the Muslim Deputation to the Viceroy Minto. The Principal did advise Mohsin-ul-Mulk 'to act quickly', and to press for 'introducing the system of nomination or granting representation on religious lines'. The prospect of representative institutions for India had been perplexing the Muslims as they feared that in all constituencies they would be outvoted by the Hindus. Simla Deputation led by Aga Khan, claimed separate electorates for the Muslims as well as safeguards for the interests of the community. 'We venture, in deed, with your Excellency's permission to go a step further, and urge that the position accorded to the Mohammedan community in any kind of Representation, Direct or Indirect, and in

51 Archbold's letter to Mohsin-ul-Mulk, 10 August 1906 mentioned in Rajendra Prasad's India Divided, pp.112-113.

52 The Imam of the Ismailis.
all other ways affecting their status and influence, should be commensurate, not merely with their political strength, but also, with their political importance and the value of the contribution which they make to the defence of the Empire...". "Minto then read his answer," recorded Mary, Countess of Minto, "which he had thought most carefully... I am entirely in accord with you, please do not misunderstand me... in the meantime I can only say to you that the Mahommedan community may rest assured that their political rights and interests as a community will be safeguarded by any administrative organization with which I am concerned..."

An evaluation of Morley and Minto papers show that, the suggestions and negotiations for the deputation were as if eagerly awaited and certainly, no time was lost in exploiting the situation to the full. The Congress leadership nor the politically conscious Hindus in general did attach much importance to the performance of Minto at Simla. 'We are in entire sympathy with the aims and

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53 The Mohammedan Deputation and Address, 10 October. 1906, The Indian Nation, 15 October 1906.
54 Mary, Countess Minto, India, Minto and Morley, 1905-1910, pp. 45-47.
aspirations of our Mahommedan brethren. Hindus and Mahommedans are, after all, children of the same soil. Their interests are the same, and their hopes and yearnings must be the same'. But Morley congratulated the Viceroy on his address and informed him 'Any how, you have done a valuable day's work, whatever the future may produce'. Thus the aspirations of the Mahommedans 'had not merely been acknowledged, but in fact had been raised unexpectedly high by the head of the Indian Government himself'.

As a logical sequence of the Simla Deputation, the All Indian Muslim League was formed on 30 December 1906, (While the Mohammedan Educational Conference was having its session at Dacca) with Aga Khan as the permanent President of the League and Nawabs Vikar-ul-Mulk and Mohsin-ul-Mulk as the joint secretaries of the provisional committee. The Muslim League, which emerged as the nucleus of Muslim politics in later years, was dominated by the Aligarh leaders and members of the

56 The Indian Mirror, 4 October 1906, Quoted in M. N. Das, India under Morley and Minto, p.175.
57 Morley to Minto, Vol.I, 5 October 1906, Ibid.
58 M. N. Das, Op cit., p.175.
Mohammedan Educational Conference and enjoyed too the tacit support of the Viceroy Minto who had been thinking 'of a possible counterpoise to Congress aims'. "The Muslim League", remarked Mohamed Ali "was a natural development of the education which Aligarh had been giving for the last thirty years."

The League stuck to the objectives of promoting Muslim loyalty to the British government and protecting as well as advancing the political rights and interests of the Muslims. Moreover, the League passed the resolution in supporting the partition of Bengal and condemning the boycott agitation.

The Muslim League was a sectarian political organisation and at once it stood against the Congress movement and national aspirations. Chirol, widely known for his pro-government and pro-Muslims stand, confessed that the Muslim League was intended to serve as a centre for "the maintenance and consolidation of the communal

59 Mary, Countess Minto, India, Minto and Morley, pp.28-29.
60 Mohamed Ali, On the Muhammedan Programme, 24 February 1907, Home Political Progs B, 149, 1913.
61 League Resolutions, The Pioneer, 2 January 1907.
62 Ibid.
interests of the Mohammedans all over India in their social, educational and economic as well as political aspects.

The notable impact was that the Government of Eastern Bengal 'gained considerable moral strength after the League came into existence at Dacca, with an All-India Moslim body supporting the partition'. The League of Eastern Bengal was dominated by Nawab Salimullah Khan of Dacca. Pampered and patronized he remained as the main prop of the East Bengal government and used to set his co-religionists against the anti-partition movement. The riots at Camila and Jamalpur were caused due to his intrigue. Throughout the disturbed tracts of Jamalpur placards were posted up inviting an attack by Muhammedans on Hindus. An inflammatory pamphlet Lal-Istahar (Red pamphlet) of which the writer and publisher were unanimous, excited the Muslim fanaticism against the Hindus to a large extent. "The Muslims," observed Mohamed Ali in 1907, "had hitherto stood aloof from one great political body in India, namely, the Congress because they did not trust the

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63 Vo Chirol, Indian Unrest, Op cit., p.32.
64 M. N. Das, Op cit., p.179.
65 IBR, Paper No.46, File 476/193, pp.11-12.
company they were invited to join, and did not approve the methods of that body." But most of the Indian Muslims began to identify with the Muslim League whereas the Congress was more strongly believed to be a Hindu organisation and therefore League Congress political rivalry sometimes led to Hindu-Muslim communal confrontation. Though a few of the Muslim leaders, like Abdul Rasul, and Liakat Hossain joined their heart and soul with S. N. Banerjee, B. C. Pal, and A. K. Dutta, yet to the vast mass of Muslim population, the movement was a Hindu affair. 'These developments helped the Viceroy in his efforts to prove that the general Indian unrest was one sided ... predominantly Hindu agitation'. Thus the emergence of Muslim politics and government's recognition of communal interest led to the rise of Hindu parties, such as the Punjab provincial Hindu Sabha, and subsequently All India Hindu Mahasabha, and the intensification of terrorist activities both inside India and abroad.

The British strategy of recognising a separate identify for the Muslims led to religious and cultural

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68 Formed in 1907.
69 Formed in 1915.
division between Hindus and Muslims and thereby the national movement came under a severe stress and strain. The confusion was worst confounded with the introduction of Indian Councils Act of 1909 of which Morley and Minto were principal authors. Morley's scheme of mixed electoral college which might have prevented Hindu-Muslim division in politics was abandoned due to pressure from different parties including Minto, Muslim League and Ameer Ali Delegation. Morley at last assured the deputation of the London branch of the Muslim League (led by Ameer Ali) 'that there should be a separate Mahommedan electorate - an electorate exclusively Mahommedans'. It was rather the rise of the Muslim middle class which made both Minto and the League more apprehensive about their possible alliance with the Congress. So, in order to sabotage the attempts at communal unity, conservative communal politics was encouraged. The Viceroy expected to get more political gains for the empire by dividing Indian nationalism with communal electorates.

Minto and the Muslim League diplomacy triumphed, and the Indian Councils Act of 1909, piloted by Morley.

70 Viscount Morley, Indian Speeches, 1907-1909, p.105.
granted separate electorates for the Muslims. The Act of 1909 was undoubtedly a victory of Muslim separatism, and after gaining minority rights the League marched ahead to achieve a separate nationhood.

The Muslim upper class welcomed this development with deep gratitude. As Muhammed Shafi congratulated Dunlop Smith "The hearts of the Mahomedans of India were filled with deep gratitude to the Government,... that the state of things thus created would secure the stability of the British Government, which they look upon as their very own, and would prevent the Hindu dream of Swaraj from being realized". The Congress leadership at first was slow to grasp the vicious implication of this system of communal electorate, but in due course came to realise that 'the representation granted to Muslims was not only unjust but monstrously unjust'. The Lahore Congress protested against the Reform Act of 1909, as it created 'the unjust, invidious and humiliating distinctions between Moslem and non-Moslem subjects of His Majesty in the matter of electorates, the franchise and the

72 Gokhale to Wedderburn, 3 December 1909, Gokhale Papers.
qualifications of the candidate. Thus that the Indian nationalism had to face the menace of both colonialism and communalism.

As a reaction to the religio-political self-assertion of the Muslims, the Hindu Mahasabha endeavoured to protect the rights of the Hindus and some of the Congress stalwarts like M. M. Malaviya, Lajpat Rai and B. G. Tilak gave support to this cause of Hindu identity. Revolutionary literature began to feed the extremists with Hindu religious overtones. Blending of religion and politics by both the communities, and inspired by the British, not only widened the gulf between the Muslim leaguers and the Hindu nationalists but violence, repression and more violence became the order of the day. That the hatred of the Hindu terrorists was directed against the agents of British imperialism can be ascertained from the facts like the assassination of William Wyllie, the political Aid-de-Camp at the India office, London (in July 1909) and of Jackson at Nasik (in December 1909) and the attempt on the life of Minto (in November 1909) and that of Lord Hardinge (in December 1912).

73 Resolution No. IV, Lahore Congress, 1909, it was re-iterated in Calcutta 1911, Bankipur, 1912 and Madras, 1914, Congress Sessions.
The revocation of Partition in 1912 under Hindu political pressure and the successive misfortunes befalling Ottoman empire, Persia and Morocco in 1911, 1912, and 1913 inflamed Muslim feeling in India against the British rule. The emerging educated Muslim youth could not admire the achievements of the League; on the other hand they became increasingly imbued with the Pan-Islamic sentiment with the growth of disillusionment among Indian Muslims, who thought they had been dropped 'like a hot potato by the Government'. Syed Ahmed's policy of unconditional loyalism and anti-Congress stance stood discredited. A change in feeling became apparent, when the League at its session of December 1912 did not adhere to its political ideal of 'loyalty' and demanded instead a form of self-government suitable to India. The nationalist Muslims like Tyabji, Sayani and Mohammed Ali Jinnah (who was then a staunch Congressman) denounced the introduction of separate electorate and urged the leaders of the League to be with the Congress. Two emerging Muslim leaders such as Maulana Azad and Mohamed Ali were engaged in bringing home to their brethren the essential community of interests.

Mohamed Ali, Congress Presidential Address (Second Series) 1911-1934, p.627.
between them and the Hindus. The Firangi Mahal, an Islamic seat of extreme orthodoxy, supported the cause of National Congress in politics, due to commendable lead of Azad. A profound Arabic and Persian scholar, Azad interpreted Islamic scriptures from rationalistic point of view, and ridiculed both 'loyalism' and modernism', of Aligarh as well as reactionary attitude of the traditional theologians. He upheld the Pan-Islamic views based on those of al-Afghani and emerged as the chief theoretician of the Khilafat movement. Earlier he came in contact with the Arab and Turk revolutionaries. "I was more convinced than ever that Indian Muslim must cooperate in the work of political liberation of the country. ...I felt it necessary to create a new movement among Indian Muslims and decided that on my return to India I would take up political work with greater earnestness," recorded Azad. Two weekly journals, al-Hilal and al-Balagh, edited by him off and on, propagated his radical views both on religion and politics with its moving and forceful style. 'Al-Hilal created a revolutionary stir among the masses'. Another ardent

76 Ibid.
advocate of Pan-Islamism was Mohamed Ali (1878-1931) a disciple of Shibli Numani. Orthodox and aggressive Mohamed Ali took up journalistic career and his two papers Comrade and Hamdard aroused anti-British feeling among the Muslim middle class and helped 'to swell the mighty current in favour of nationalism'. The publication of his fiery article The Choice of the Turks in Comrade led to his internment for five years and then he emerged as the most dynamic and influential leader of Muslim India, a crusader for the Turkish cause and chief architect of the Khilafat movement. His Khilafat conference founded in 1919, led a great mass of Muslims into the National Congress.

The Moderates' policy of 'pacification' towards the Muslims, the political discontent of Muslims against the British for the revocation of Partition accompanied by a tense and explosive Pan-Islamic emotionalism called forth the League-Congress rapprochement and this was matured in the Lucknow Pact of 1916. On behalf of the Muslims, the Raja of Mohmudabad, Wazir Hasan, Mazhar-ul-Haque worked for the League-Congress amity, and M. A. Jinnah, who drafted the Lucknow Pact was hailed as 'the

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best ambassador of the Hindu-Muslim community'.

The Pact was approved by the Congress leaders including Tilak. The President of the Lucknow Congress told that 'The Hindu Moslem Question has been settled and the Hindus and the Mussalmans have agreed to make a united demand for the self-government'. 'The only feature of its proceedings deserving of special mention was the disaffiliation to the old Provincial Punjab Branch of the League which under the leadership of Mr. Mian Mohammed Shafi had adopted a somewhat conservative attitude and refused to be dictated to by the central committee'.

The Lucknow Congress also forged unity between the two wings of the Congress, Moderates and Extremists, who had parted company since Surat session. 'It was truely an enlivening spectacle to see Tilak and Khaparde sitting side by side with Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh and Surendra Nath Banerjee'.

79 Political Progs Deposit, February 1918, No.32.
Congress agreed to the scheme of separate Muslim electorate (which it hitherto had strongly condemned) and secured Muslim support for its demand of self-government. Because of this impact, the national movement assumed a more formidable character. But overwhelmed at the prospect of Hindu-Muslim unity the Congress leaders never cared to think that the recognition of minority right would assert triumph of communalism over nationalism. Tilak, the leader of Hindu resurgence, supporting the communal representation, remarked: 'it has been said by some that we, Hindus, have yielded too much to our Muhammedan brethren... I would not care, if the rights of self government are granted to the Muhammedan community only'.

Thus by 1916, Congress and Muslim League became united, and held their annual sessions from 1917 to 1921 simultaneously in the same cities. Since most of the Muslim leaders belonged to both these organizations, coordination in their policy and programme became easier and very soon League Congress Entente presented a formidable front in the Khilafat agitation. The advanced wing of the Muslim intellectuals and the 'Ulemas' having anti-

81 Address of Tilak, INC, Lucknow, 1916.
imperialist and Pan-Islamic stand supported the Muslim League. 'Some Muslim believed that the way of salvation lay in waging war against the infidel Government of India either personally or by recruiting or sending money to Mujahidin'. Leaders like Mahmud al Hasan, Abdul Bari, Ajman Khan and Ansari, Abul Kalam Azad and the Ali brothers sent agents to the Frontier Province, Afghanistan and Arabia with the object of inducing the Turks to advance with the assistance of Germany towards India, which would rise in their favour and overthrow the British yoke. 'Maulvi Obeidulla Sindhi, trained at the great seminary of Deoband, had proceeded to Kabul in August 1915, tried to organize an attack on India, set up a provisional Government with Raja Mohendra Pratap as the President, Barkatulla, (a friend of Syamiji Krishnavarma and member of the American Ghadar Party) as Prime Minister and himself as a Minister'.

Jinnah, the crusader of Hindu Muslim unity then, felt that 'the whole country is awakening to the call of

82 SCR, 1918, p.175.
84 SCR, p.177-178.
destiny ... and its rise from a new born movement in
the direction of national unity, which has brought Hindu
and Mussalmans together'.

But the atmosphere had not been 'rid of the
menace of sectarian thunder' as Jinnah upheld. There
was a large body of Indian Muslims, who considered it
their duty to remain loyal to the government and help it
in the war'.

The new epoch of Hindu-Muslim collaboration,
since Lucknow Pact (1916) proved transitory and illusory
without being real union of hearts. The principle of
Muslim separate electorate recognised by the Hindu
leaders as well as Pan-Islamism, hinged on religious
revivalism, and did build only a facade of unity. The
Congress leaders failed to understand then, that it was
the urge for Pan Islamism rather then the impulse of Indian
nationalism which bound them with the Hindus. The
nationalists too, could not calculate the vicious

85 Presidential Address to the All India
Muslim League, Lucknow, 1916.

86 Tarachand, Op cit., p.415.
communal trend of 'the separate Muslim electorate' with seeds of partition latent in it. Not being a genuine union, the Hindu-Muslim concordat had a short span of life and it ended with the failure of Khilafat agitation later on. Not many nationalist Muslims remained to participate in the national movement led by the National Congress. Ironically, the British statesmen, from the very beginning showed reluctance to recognise the nationalist Muslims as a factor in Indian politics.